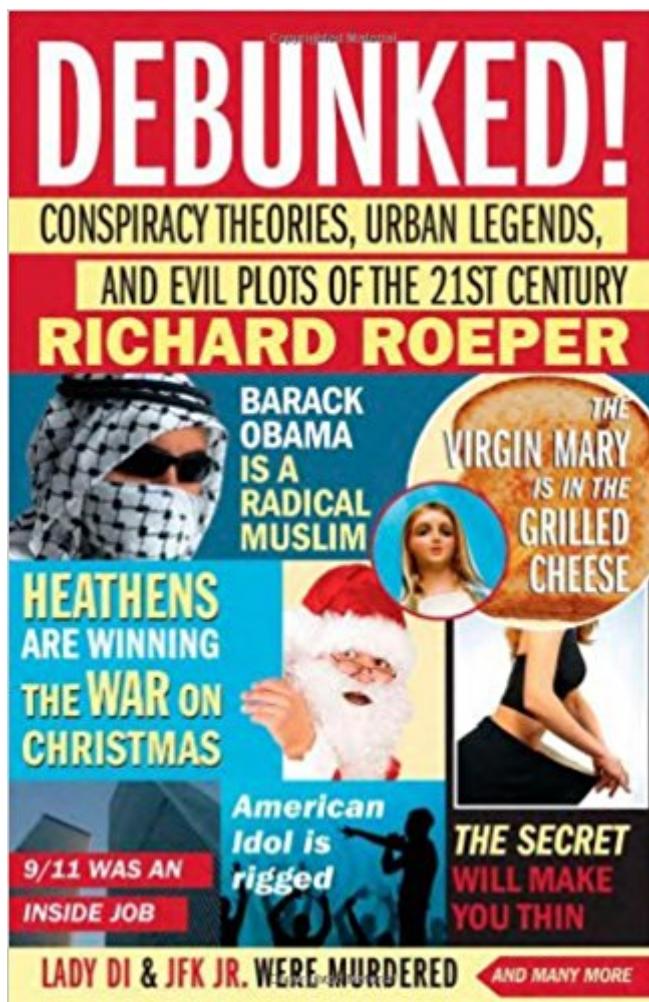


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Debunked!: Conspiracy Theories, Urban Legends, And Evil Plots Of The 21st Century



Synopsis

You know what's really going on, don't you? Flight 93 secretly landed in Cleveland, where the passengers were whisked off to a NASA facility. Nostradamus predicted JFK Jr.'s plane crash, which was engineered by the One World Government. Online poker sites are rigged to knock out the short stacks. Donald Rumsfeld was behind the bird flu panic. Â That's what it's like to live inside the mind of the 21st-century conspiracy theorist, who believes that all you have to do is look at the signs and you'll see what's really going on. And thousands if not millions of people actually believe this is the way the world works.Â Debunked! is a breezy but fact-filled dissection of more than two dozen of the most popular urban legends and conspiracy theories of the 21st century. As he did in *Urban Legends* and *Hollywood Urban Legends*, and as he has done in dozens of columns for the *Chicago Sun-Times* over the last decade and a half, Richard Roeper lays out the basics of each conspiracy theory, quotes some of the true believers—and then tears the theory apart with his bare hands.Â This book will provide you with invaluable ammunition for the next time you communicate with someone from that other, shadow world—that place where secret tribunals pull the strings and influence the outcome of everything from terrorist attacks to professional sporting events.

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Customer Reviews

In this age of new conspiracy theories being hatched daily, we are in need of a thoughtful work to shed the light of reality on many of them. Unfortunately, this book is not it. Most of the chapters, if

submitted as Jr. High English or Creative Writing assignments, would be lucky to receive a passing grade. One problem is that it is too ambitious for the amount of work the author was willing to put in: He takes on 28 issues of varying significance (from 9/11 to the Virgin Mary in a grilled cheese sandwich,) and tries to cover them all in less than 200 pages of actual text. The results are necessarily superficial, but the author's attitude and choices make them even more so. For example, on the nuanced issue of media bias, the author merely compiles a simple list of 55 conservative columnists, publications, commentators and bloggers, sandwiches it between two sarcastic comments, and Presto! That's his chapter debunking "The Vast left-Wing Conspiracy." If you want to see urban legends debunked, go online to [...] and avoid wasting your time and money on this amateurish effort.

I have to hand it to Richard Roeper, he has taken on a task that should have been done a long time ago and achieved something worth while. Much like cleaning out an old garage, he has dared to throw down the gauntlet and show just how silly and stupid most theories are. What makes this work so entertaining is that Roeper doesn't bother to hide his contempt for the theories themselves. He also has fun with the people who push these theories which I am sure he enjoys doing. I read his columns and reviews and will admit I do not agree with all of his viewpoints. What makes this book enjoyable is that it is, like his columns, written in his own voice and opinion and very readable. Richard Roeper encourages debate and that makes it very enjoyable to read his work.

Light easy reading, but a bit superficial. Doesn't quite hit the sweet spot between too light and too much info. Too many arguments boiled down to "c'mon, really?" Still, fun to re-visit the creative conspiracy theories.

This book is more witty than analytical, but it's a good, quick read that points out that just about every conspiracy theory is riddled with problems and errors. If you want a more analytical look at the place of conspiracy theories in contemporary American Life, I suggest Jonathan Kay's *Among the Truthers*.

I bought this when I used to read Roeper every day (I find his columns lacking ever since he decided to take on 3+ jobs at once) and it is his writing at its best. So many great arguments, makes you wonder about people sometimes

So many of the articles in this book have explanations for conspiracy theories "debunked" by explanations such as "how could so many people be fooled" or "wouldn't someone have seen it". If the book had more humor (OK, 9/11 isn't a funny subject, but many of the topics are), it would have gained at least one star from me. However, I found it flat, repetitive, and generally boring. I know Roeper can do better then this.

Absolutely delightful book! Sorry it ended. His opinions, wording, use of imagery, stories - all made the reading witty and well done!

The NFL is completely rigged. Princess Di was murdered, 9/11 was an inside job, Barack Obama is a radical Muslim, the Virgin Mary's face can be seen in certain frying pans and grilled cheese sandwiches, Flight 93 secretly landed in Cleveland, where the passengers were whisked off to a NASA facility. Yeah, we laughed too. Popular film critic Richard Roeper tackles some of the most outlandish conspiracy theories, urban legends and evil plots of the 21st century in a thin tome that's a hoot . . . when it's not a holler. Pithy prose may put to sleep (or at least in a deep dormant state) all these notorious scandals and notorious scams, but you will read stay awake, giggling and guffawing, at just how gullible people can be. Now about Donald Rumsfeld being the mastermind behind the bird flu . . .

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