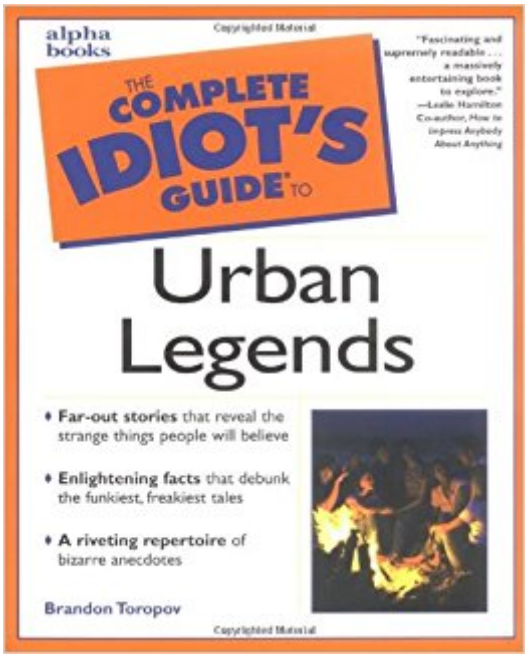
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Complete Idiot's Guide To Urban Legends



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Synopsis

Some stories are so good, we think they ought to be true, even if they aren't. Urban legends, or myths, passed on at office water coolers, over the Internet and in coffee houses, are stories that sound almost if not completely plausible. If anything, they're entertaining. The Complete Idiot's GuideA (R) to Urban Legends gathers numerous fables and tells you the whole story! Historic and psychological underpinnings are also discussed.

Book Information

Series: The Complete Idiot's Guide

Paperback: 308 pages

Publisher: Alpha; 1 edition (April 11, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0028640071

ISBN-13: 978-0028640075

Product Dimensions: 7.3 x 0.7 x 9.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds

Average Customer Review: 2.9 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #2,675,460 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #67 inÃ Â Books > Humor & Entertainment > Humor > Urban Legends #1551 inÃ Â Books > Literature & Fiction > Mythology & Folk Tales > Fairy Tales #4555 inÃ Â Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Sociology > Urban

Customer Reviews

Some stories are so good, we think they ought to be true, even if they aren't. Urban legends, or myths, passed on at office water coolers, over the Internet and in coffee houses, are stories that sound almost if not completely plausible. If anything, they're entertaining. The Complete Idiot's Guide to Urban Legends gathers numerous fables and tells you the whole story! Historic and psychological underpinnings are also discussed.

Brandon Toropov, author of The Complete Idiot's Guide(r) to Getting Along with Difficult People and co-author of The Complete Idiot's Guide(r) to the World's Religions, is a Boston-area writer who has appeared on more than 100 local and national broadcast programs.

I had been wanting to brush up on some urban legends, so i purchased this book (used, thankfully). I normally enjoy the Idiot Guides, but this one not so much. I read it in about 2 hours time.I started it

like any other book, but it quickly became quite boring. i ended up skimming through most of the book, only slowing down when i came to the actual stories. I liked the actual urban legend stories that were including, but that’s pretty much all i enjoyed.I wouldnt recommend this for anyone who wants to add the actualy Urban Legend tales to their library. I only spent a few bucks on it, but it seriously wasn’t worth it.

I stayed home sick one day and decided to read this book. It was straightforward, interesting, fun, breezed right through it. I love books about urban legends anyway, but I also enjoy how they add history, Like "Did Shakespeare write Shakespeare?" and "Did Catherine the Great really do it with a horse?"Also, it has a lot of emails that are circulated, since email is a big part of our lives nowadays which makes sense about how they can get passed from person to person so quickly.I like the sidenotes that have "don’t believe it" (you get the background on stories that are too weird to be true) or "fable facts" (trivia related to the legends) also "strange but true" (extended anecdotes, case histories, or other tidbits) and "legend lingo" explains the more difficult vocabulary words. There is even a chapter on what an urban legend is, and how to spot one. For example, is the story demonstrably false? Has the story appeared in multiple versions? Does the story carry an important lesson or warning? I remember being scared many times during my childhood because i thought the star tattoos were laced or if i went to the movies, i would be stuck with an HIV infected needle. It’s great to put my fears to rest, but still entertaining!!!

The book started out well and interesting, promising to debunk all the misconceptions made with urban legends. Something happened though. Somewhere along the line it stopped being interesting.I know I expected more emphasis on the psychological and folklore aspects of urban legends, but that wasn’t touched on in any sort of inventive manner. Once a psychological aspect was touched upon, it was brought up with every legend in the chapter only stated a little differently. This made for rather tedious reading since the author had a rather snide sense of humor and seemed to be mocking anyone who had ever fallen for an urban legend. Now I’m not stupid, but there are some urban legends I’ve thought twice about. That doesn’t make me stupid, it makes me human.Most of the urban legends themselves I’d heard before so there really wasn’t much new there and the gory ones were even watered down. While some of it was interesting, too much of the book was repetative from chapter to chapter for me to really like it.

This book may well be interesting, but it is not written by a folklorist and offers up some incorrect

information. Folklorists would not call an urban legend a contemporary myth as the author claims; myths and legends are extremely different types of folk narrative. Any author who makes a mistake like that (even first year folklore students learn this stuff!) shouldn't be teaching others about the topic. The fact that this books begins by giving out misinformation from the first few pages (and it never quite manages to define folklore at all!) makes it a poor choice for those interested in Urban Legends. Search for a book by Jan Brunvand and find out what folklorists, who devote their lives to the scholarly study of legends like these, have to say on the matter.

It seemed to me that this author found a way to link all of the mentioned urban legends to sex in some way. I found his statements for his reasoning to be confusing at best and downright silly at most times. As a continuing scholar of urban myths and legends, I think this book serves only to insult the intelligence of the average reader who does not know much about urban legends. The only reason the boook got three stars is the urban legends speak for themselves as classic tales everyone knows happened to someone they knew.

Well worth it for 10 page rigourous Introduction..legend "lingo' like FOAF means 'friend of a friend'...impossible to verify for attribution. 3 page Glossary of terms about tall tales. Perpetual propagation...most are utterly false,but play to a common fear,or concern...Poltergeists! Anecdotes for skeptics.

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