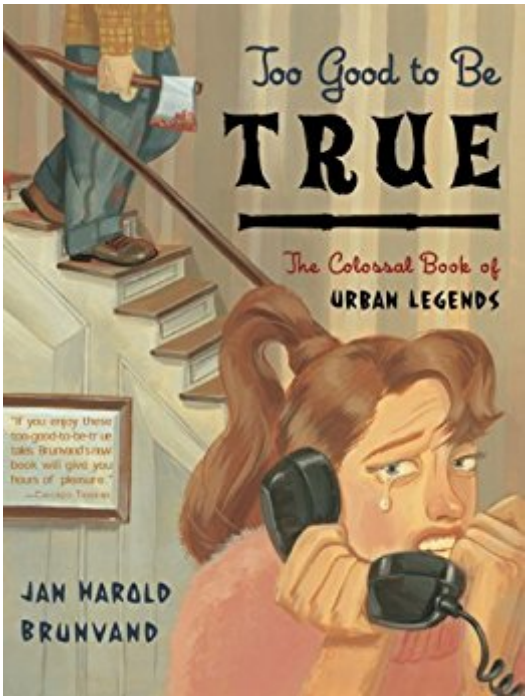
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Too Good To Be True: The Colossal Book Of Urban Legends



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Synopsis

"If you enjoy these too-good-to-be-true tales, Brunvand’s new book will give you hours of pleasure."Ã¢â ¬â •Chicago TribuneA fabulously entertaining book from the ultimate authority on those almost believable tales that always happen to a "friend of a friend." Alligators in the sewers? A pet in the microwave? A tragic misunderstanding of the function of cruise control? No, it didn’t really happen to your friend’s sister’s neighbor: it’s an urban legend. And no matter how savvy you think you are, you are sure to find in this collection of over 200 tales at least one story you would have sworn was true. Jan Harold Brunvand has been collecting and studying this modern folklore for over twenty years. In Too Good to Be True he captures the best stories in their best retellings, along with their latest variations and examples of how the stories have changed as they move from person to person and place to place. To help you find your favorite, Brunvand has arranged the tales thematically. "Bringing Up Baby" is full of episodes of child-rearing gone wrong, including the grisly tale of the drugged out baby-sitter who mistakes the kid for a turkey. "Funny Business" showcases stories of infamous lapses in customer service, such as the story of the shockingly expensive chocolate chip cookie recipe. And "The Criminal Mind" features both brilliant --if they were real --scams, as well as the purported antics of the less mentally gifted. Whether you want to become an expert debunker or just have plenty of laughs, this book will surprise and entertain you. Illustrated throughout."Informative and entertaining.... Brunvand has collected more than 200 of the most-repeated and best-known examples of modern folk-myth."Ã¢â ¬â •Tampa Tribune "[N]ot only an entertaining anthology, but an excellent introduction to the study of folklore itself."Ã¢â ¬â •Publishers Weekly "A fun read... . All the classics are here from the killer upstairs to the Kentucky Fried Rat."Ã¢â ¬â •New City "Resonant stories that express our hidden anxieties ... make us laugh, [or] arouse our fascinated horror."Ã¢â ¬â •San Francisco Chronicle Book Review "Informative and entertaining... . Brunvand has collected more than 200 of the most-repeated and best-known examples of modern folk-myth."Ã¢â ¬â •Tampa Tribune "[N]ot only an entertaining anthology, but an excellent introduction to the study of folklore itself."Ã¢â ¬â •Publishers Weekly

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Customer Reviews

Fun book full of UM’s that I’ve heard over the years and some new ones.

Mr. Brunvand’s book is a delight to read simply as a collection of Urban Legends - the stories play on our love of fun, irony, mischief, coincidence or even morbid twists of fate. But anyone could compile a bunch of urban legends. The real meat of the book is in Mr. Brunvand’s analysis of each legend, or group of legends. It is pretty amazing to see him trace the origins of each legend and pick apart the contents. Several of the legends actually have their root in real events, but most are pure fancy. Why do I give it only a four star rating? I save the fifth for truly outstanding books. This one is fun, but not a must-read.Format of the book: The author divides the book into chapters based on the theme of the legends. Each chapter has many legends (from his "files"), interspersed with his analysis. In his analysis, he may talk about the feasibility of a legend, the origin, other occurrances of the same or similar legends in history, or sociological aspects of the legend."Parental advisory": A few of the legends have some somewhat twisted sexual content.So bottom line: Fun book - it will keep you entertained and give you the upper hand next time someone tries to tell you one of these legends.

For those who don’t know, Jan Harold Brunvand has a column out in Salt Lake City, but has acquired a following all across the country, or rather the world. He is the leading scholar on the subject of urban legends, those sometimes funny and often terrifying stories you first heard on the

playground or by the watercooler, which are always supposed to be true but can’t be proved because they happened to a friend of a friend of a friend . . . This book, the "Colossal Book of Urban Legends" is really an updated combination of most of Brunvand’s previous books, such as "The Vanishing Hitchhiker", "The Choking Doberman" and "The Baby Train". In other words, if you are going to buy this book, I doubt think you’ll want to buy all the previous ones, though there might be a few stories in those not included here.

I heard all the stories growing up. Most of them anyway. Some of them I even believe until I read this book. It is amazing how vulnerable we can be to urban legends. Just because she said that he said. Kind of like all the arguments and debates about vitamins whether they don’t or do work. I recall the whole eggs debate, butter And a host of other savory items that were supposed to be really super bad for you... But I guess it was just a country crockÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â| No pun intended

I took a folklore class about two years ago and we were required to get this book. It has such interesting stories, some of which give you chills, while others make you laugh or lift a brow. It served me well in my class, and while most people want to get rid of their college text books, I had to keep this one!

Too Good to be True explians the backgrounds to the stories we’ve all heard. I find it particularly useful for replying to Urban Legends that I get in my email. :-)The downside is, knowing the facts behind the stories takes away the delicious thrill of fear that you get hearing and re-telling the stories.

This book would make excellent summertime reading. Certainly the author’s dedication to dispelling urban myths is laudable. What caught my attention was the repeated instances of the media parroting these legends in popular print and TV. To my mind this shows the real bias in the news industry-not a left-of-center political bias, but a strong tendency to substitute "human interest" and entertainment for research and critical reporting. What I was surprised to find was the lack of analysis explaining why certain myths keep returning and why the public insists on believing them. Sure, there are capsule summaries after each story, but these mainly consist of "see my book xxxx for the story behind this myth". I could be a cynic and say this is a blatant attempt to sell more books; however I think it is the annoying (to me anyway) practice of authors using themselves as sources. If I have to see "book xxx" to find out about a legend, why should read this book in the first

place?

Really good read. Came in handy the day I got called to jury duty.

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