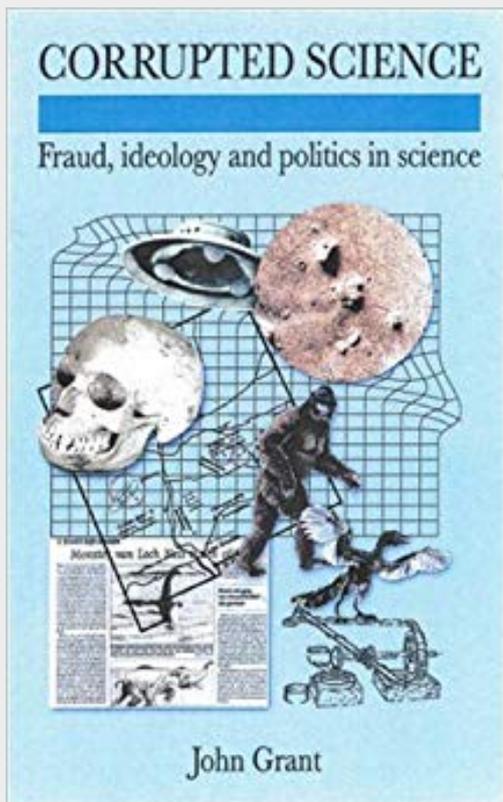


Corrupted Science: Fraud, Ideology and Politics in Science *by* John Grant



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In *Discarded Science*, John Grant took a fascinating look at all the things science got wrong through the centuries. But at least those were honest mistakes. Grant's equally absorbing follow-up examines something more sinister: deliberate hoaxes and frauds. He takes us through a rogue's gallery that features faked creatures, palaeontological trickery, false psychics, and miracle cures that aren't so miraculous. See how ideology, religion, and politics have imposed themselves on science throughout history, from the Catholic Church's influence on cosmology to Nazi racist pseudoscience to the Bush Administration's attempt to deny climate change. The themes, while entertaining as ever, are serious and timely.



Reviews of the **Corrupted Science: Fraud, Ideology and Politics in Science** by John Grant

1. Dream

John Grant writes with humor and it shines thru in all his works. I first became aware of him from his brilliant 'Directory of Discarded Ideas' back in the late Seventies. Still have the hard bound book and it is highly praised. This book has some of the same undertones and make it a must have for folks like me. In fact, I have also purchased all his available works that are available electronically. I frequently delve into them and enjoy the offbeat writing. If you like something a little offbeat this it it. This review applies to all John Grants works. The 'Directory of Discarded Ideas' is a rock solid 5 Star book.

2. Darkraven

I loved reading this little book, and it's a great value for the money. Each scientific scam has its own little section, so it's easy to read in 5 or 10 page chunks if that's your style of reading. The one problem I had was that the author kept inserting his own politically-inspired, holier-than-thou diatribes into the text. I'm no fan of George W. Bush, but as others have mentioned, equating the Bush administration's misuse of science to Hitler's and Stalin's is a bit over-the-top. There were also too many instances where the author accused scientists involved in "scams" of being corrupt, when it easily could have been the case that they honestly believed the science they were espousing, but were simply wrong.

Even with my little complaints about the author's injection of his own person viewpoints into the book, I'm looking forward to reading his previous book on Discarded Science.

3. Whitescar

Good descriptions of the problems not publicized.

4. Shakataxe

There are many writers who view themselves as iconoclasts in terms of science. They want to render asunder any notions of science being a solid tool of enlightened thinking. Their approach is to gainsay scientific information such as the Anthropogenic climate change in some cases. In others it is either a post-modern or fundamentalist religion that sparks their furor.

In those examples the books and their conclusions are most often filled with banal and subjective tropes. Some books such as those published by Regnery Press, are simply filled with lies. John Grant's book *Corrupted Science* does not fall into either of the suggested categories. He states from the beginning that "Facts do not lie". Their interpretation can be distorted of course.

Grant is clearly motivated by politics however and the corrupted science he proffers as examples are weighing heavily on notions such as Nazi science and global warming denial. He does back them up with solid references but as he admits from the beginning, the pursuit of science starts from the subjective ideas of scientists and those notions are largely culturally based.

With the spate of retractions from major (and minor) scientific publications currently, we are witness to several forms of corruption. They come from several causes ranging from fairly benign data sloppiness to the fear of not publishing enough. They also are extremely egregious in the case of Woo Suk Hwang and his fraudulent publications on cloning in 2004 or Andrew Wakefield's outrageous claims that vaccines cause autism.

Grant examines reasons for scientific fraud and they include personal grudges and animosity in the case of Arthur Eddington and his feud with former student Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar. Sometimes they are simply a result of cherry picking data in order to enhance one's own research, publication numbers and personal status.

These are all part of a crescendo that leads to his main culprit and that is science based on ideology. Twisting or simply creating lab results that bolster for instance Stalin's reliance on "vernalization" or Hitler's "Aryan science" have wreaked havoc on millions of people over the years and did not enhance science at all. Grant is particularly harsh regarding Bush's reliance on industry led research that favored big business.

The book is fairly interesting but is replete with Grant's own personality. It is a bit outdated given events that have occurred during the eight years since its publication. More of his examples than not, have been written about much so his additional information tends to be somewhat peripheral.

If Corrupted Science were the reader's first foray into the history of bad science there is much to learn and many ideas to pursue for further research.

5. Jake

This guy has an amazing grasp of history of science. Parts of the book are excellent reading.

But there is a down side. If you hate (passionately) George Bush and tend to ridicule anti-marxists then you will enjoy all of this book. But if you are a conservative or a theist then you will not like some chapters.

I have a habit of mentally constructing counter arguments when I read dogma in books; it's a game I enjoy. So extreme rhetoric does not bother me. However, skip the book if you do not enjoy reading some chapters that might remind you of scientism as it might be discussed at the local Progressives club.

6. Jack

See Sharp Press has added many excellent books to the library of

Freethought, but none of them I've read is more important than Grant's excellent analysis of one of today's most serious cultural problems in the U.S. He rightfully begins with how scientists fail to maintain their integrity because they are human, all too human. Ego, greed, self-delusion, ideology, and theology all have lead even some of the greatest scientists to failures of integrity. The rest of the book is about how corporations and governments corrupt science to enhance profits or serve an ideology. It is discouraging that both always find some scientists who are willing to be whores. It is appalling that science-denial by corporations and governments have had such horrible consequences, making literally tens of millions of people permanently afflicted by physical or mental disabilities or killing them. The worst offense is the one most discussed in the book, the science-denial that has prevented the U.S. from doing anything effective to lessen or prevent the catastrophic climate change that is happening RIGHT NOW and will only get worse. What the fossil-fuel corporations have done is bad enough. Much worse is what the U.S. government has done. The 9th chapter is the most demoralizing. It describes the heinous tactics used by Bush 2 and Trump, both of them ignorant science-deniers who brought many other science-deniers into their administrations, to prevent anything effective being done about climate change. What this book offers to readers is literally life-or-death knowledge and a clear call to action. And, as the whipped cream topped with a cherry, the writing is very good. I highly recommend this book. G. Richard Bozarth

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