

False

How Mistrust, Disinformation, and Motivated Reasoning Make Us Believe Things that Aren't True

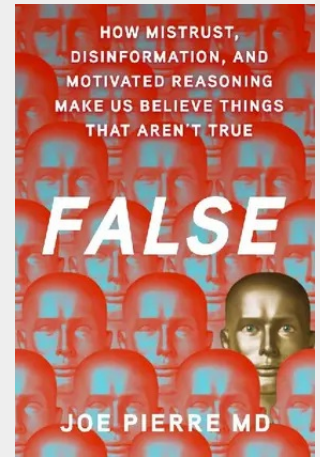
An illuminating exploration of the psychology of false belief that lies at the root of science denialism, political polarization, and rampant belief in misinformation and disinformation. Microchips in our vaccines, stolen elections, climate change denial—in the face of a bewildering range of misbeliefs that stem from mistrust of informational sources, exposure to misinformation and disinformation, and partisan polarization, it's easy to dismiss those who disagree with us as "delusional", "psychotic", or merely "ignorant". But what if none of these judgments are supported by how we really come to believe things, and the truth is that we are all prone to false beliefs? What can we do to protect ourselves in this post-truth world? Drawing on decades of experience as a psychiatrist and clinical professor, Joe Pierre invites readers to journey with him through the normal quirks of brain functioning—such as "heuristics", cognitive biases, motivated reasoning, cognitive dissonance, and bullshit receptivity—that create the cognitive vulnerabilities to false belief innate within us all. With a cross-disciplinary approach, False illuminates the psychology of false belief that lies at the root of contemporary media mistrust, science denialism, and political polarization, and highlights that contrary to popular opinion, deficits of intelligence and mental health are usually not to blame. With a refreshingly unbiased lens, Pierre suggests an antidote to false beliefs and makes the case for softening our convictions, viewing our ideological opponents with compassion, and mending the rifts in our relationships as individuals and societies alike.

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