DEMON-HAUNTED WORLD

BY CARL SAGAN

Carl Sagan was a famous scientist, now deceased, who worked for many years at NASA. He begins with a sobering assessment of the current state of the battle between science and pseudoscience in the world today. He goes into great detail on the subjects of pareidolia, hallucinations, and illusions in order to explain the popular infatuation with aliens. He discusses UFO’s, crop circles, planetary images, alien abductions, and other related subjects.

He really got into some serious history when discussing witch burnings and The Inquisition. It is one of the most poignant and powerful chapters I have ever read in any book.

He devotes a chapter to letters from disgruntled UFO believers. They’re funny (or tragic, depending on how you look at it).

He provides a toolkit (a list a skeptical techniques to apply to each and every problem) and a list of logical fallacies with examples. This is a must-read chapter for every skeptic: strike that – This is a must-read chapter for ... every person.

He provides several interesting stories showing how powerful belief can be – even AFTER it has been revealed to be false!

He contrasts religion and science and concludes that much of religion can, in fact, be scientifically tested.

He examines the morality of scientists involved in working on things that lead to death and destruction.

He discusses skeptical attitudes (control that ego!).

He goes on the offensive against U.S. educational results

and backs it up with devastating statistics (we stink).

GRADE A-

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