



Annals of Gullibility: Why We Get Duped and How to Avoid It

Stephen Greenspan

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The first book to provide a comprehensive look at the problem of gullibility, this groundbreaking work covers how and why we are fooled in areas that range from religion, politics, science, and medicine, to personal finance and relationships. First laying the groundwork by showing gullibility at play in the writings of historic authors we all know, developmental psychologist Stephen Greenspan follows with chapters that describe social duping across the gamut of human conduct. From people who pour bucks into investment scams, to those who follow the faith of scientologists, believe in fortunetellers, or champion unfounded medicine akin to snake oil, we all know someone who has been duped. A lot of us have been duped ourselves, out of naive trust. It's not a matter of low intelligence that moves us to, without evidence, believe the words of politicians, salesmen, academics, lawyers, military figures, or cult leaders, among others. Greenspan shows us the four broad reasons we become drawn into gullible behavior, and he presents ways people can become less gullible.

Greenspan takes us into the vast realm of gullibility from the fictional Pied Piper to the historical Trojan Horse, then through modern-day military maneuvers, political untruths, police and criminal justice scams, and financial and love lies. While there have been earlier books focused on liars and manipulators of all sorts, this is the first to focus on the gullible who are their victims, and how the gullible can become less likely to be taken again.

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Alyson Ward:

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