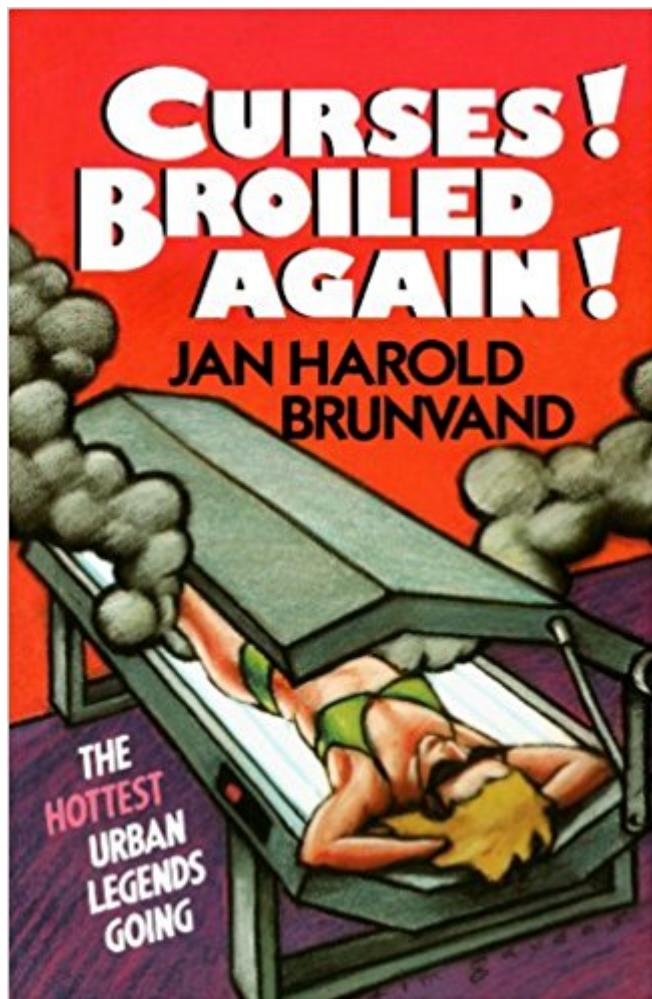


The book was found

Curses! Broiled Again!



Synopsis

From the master folklorist and sly wit, Jan Brunvand, comes a collection of all-new urban legends. Did your cousin's wife's dentist's daughter go to the tanning parlor once too often and had her insides cooked? Has your husband's brother's nephew teacher try to make a dead rabbit look alive? If so, you've heardâ •or you yourself may have toldâ •two of the seventy-plus legends in this collection. Urban legends are "those bizarre but believable stories about batter-fried rats, spiders in hairdos, Cabbage Patch dolls that get funerals, and the like that pass by word of mouth as being the gospel truth." But of course, though often told as having happened to a FOAF (friend of a friend), they aren't true. Included in this collection are legends about sex, horror, cars, business, and academia. Among them are "The Bible Student's Exam," "The Pregnant Shoplifter," "The Ice Cream Cone Caper," "Don't Mess with Texas," and "Mrs. Fields' Cookie Recipe."

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Customer Reviews

Syndicated columnist Brunvand here presents a collection of columns about legends that haunt the public consciousness but have little or no basis in fact, including tales of poisonous snakes in amusement parks, airline pilots locked out of their flight cabins and AIDS Mary, who intentionally spreads disease. PW found that "much of the material is ho-hum and all too familiar." Illustrated. Copyright 1990 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Jan Harold Brunvand lives in Salt Lake City, where he is professor emeritus at the University of

Utah. He is the author of numerous books, including *The Vanishing Hitchhiker*; *The Choking Doberman*; *The Baby Train*; *Too Good to Be True*; and *Be Afraid, Be Very Afraid*.

I was looking for Urban Legend books for use in my classroom. I found many written by Brunvand at a good price, so I bought the lot without previewing his work. This was a mistake on my part because his books are very academic. I was looking for stories to inspire creative writing, but these are more informational than entertaining. I was disappointed, but at the same time I recognize the value of the book. The author goes through many stories, categorically, and debunks the myths. He generally gives short versions of common stories. It was educational, but not in the way I was hoping.

Very interesting book

Just ok

This is the fourth book in Jan Harold Brunvand's series on urban legends. It follows *The Vanishing Hitchhiker*, *The Choking Doberman* and *The Mexican Pet*. This book tells interesting, and mostly untrue stories that were circulating in the late eighties. Stories are organized into seven chapters which have the themes of "horrors," automobile legends, animal legends, accidents and mishaps, sex and scandals, business, professional and government legends, and academic legends. A few favorites:- A mother steams the stamp off of the envelope containing a letter from her prisoner-of-war son to find the message "They've cut off my hands!"- A woman sells her cheating husband's car for a dollar and sends him the money.- A dog follows a visitor into the house from the front yard and makes a mess of the place. It turns out the dog was a stray and each woman assumed it belonged to the other.- A woman feels bad about a funeral service with few attendees, so she signs the guest book. Later she receives a large sum of money designated in the deceased's will for "whomever attends my funeral."- There is supposedly an academic policy that a student will be given "straight A's" for the semester if his or her roommate commits suicide. As in previous volumes, the stories are entertaining and their debunking is instructive. The book does show it's age in that many of the stories seem no longer to be in circulation. For a more serious and methods-oriented discussion of urban legends and other folklore, see the most recent version of Brunvand's text, *The Study of American Folklore: An Introduction*.

Everyone has heard at least one of the legends presented in this book. While I hadn't heard of many of them, there were a couple that were familiar to me. The legend that was the most familiar to me was the one that states that if you are in college and your roommate commits suicide you will get an automatic 4.0 Grade Point Average for the year. There were others that I heard as jokes, and some that were presented as real. Jan Brunvand is a columnist who specializes in urban legends. He has put together a collection of legends in this book and he has organized them into several subject headings: Horrors, Automobile Legends, Animal Legends, Other Legends of Accidents and Mishaps, Sex and Scandal Legends, Business/Professional/and Government Legends, and Academic Legends. By far, my favorite section of the book was the one with the academic legends. I don't know if it was because I am still close enough in age to the college years that I still appreciate some of the legends and myths, but I found those to be the most entertaining. The format of each essay is that Brunvand identifies the legend, tells the main story of the legend, and then tries to trace the origins of the legend. Sometimes we find out that there is a true life story behind the legend, and it just got twisted in the retelling, and other times we simply learn that nothing like that ever happened, even though it feels like it could have. Naturally, some legends are more interesting than others. As a whole, this was a very interesting book and it exposed me to some urban legends that I'm sure to recognize when I hear them. This book is worth reading.

Curses! Broiled Again! By Jan Harold Brunvand

Myth and Legend

Curses! Broiled Again! is a book of a lot of urban legends. The legends are about horrors, Cars, animals, accidents and mishaps, sex and scandal, business and government and academics. The book is about a woman who writes legends in a newspaper. She hears legends from people and people write to her about legends they've heard. My favorite one is called The Unstealable Car. It's about this guy who has a classic sports car and every night he keeps it parked in a garage, has cardboard sheets under the wheels, has thick steel staples sunk into the concrete of his garage, and attaches the car using heavy chains around the car and staples, which are secured with several locks. He parks the car facing the garage wall, with a tarp on top. When he takes off the tarp to reveal the car, it's all locked up but is facing the garage door and there's a letter under the wiper blade is a note that says, "If we want the car, we'll take it." The author wrote a bunch of short stories. I liked the book because it was a lot of stories so it flowed very well. I would recommend this book to people who like legends and short stories.

It appears that many of those who have reviewed this book misunderstood its purpose. It is not a

"scary story" book; rather, it is a compilation of common urban legends and myths, complete with debunkings. I thought this book was vastly interesting and entertaining. If you're interested in whether some of the stories you've heard are true or not, or in how urban legends get altered as time goes on, you should definitely give it a read.

As a Pagan Wiccan living in darkest Christian America, this book is an excellent source for debunking the "true stories" of ritual abuse, poison and razor blades in Halloween candy and other urban legends, preached as gospel truth in our faces by the Jack Chick Fundies and other wastes of protoplasm. We have to deal with such nonsense being promulgated as veriest truth by such creatures all the time. Having such a clever, entertaining book to provide debunking material is a definite asset.

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