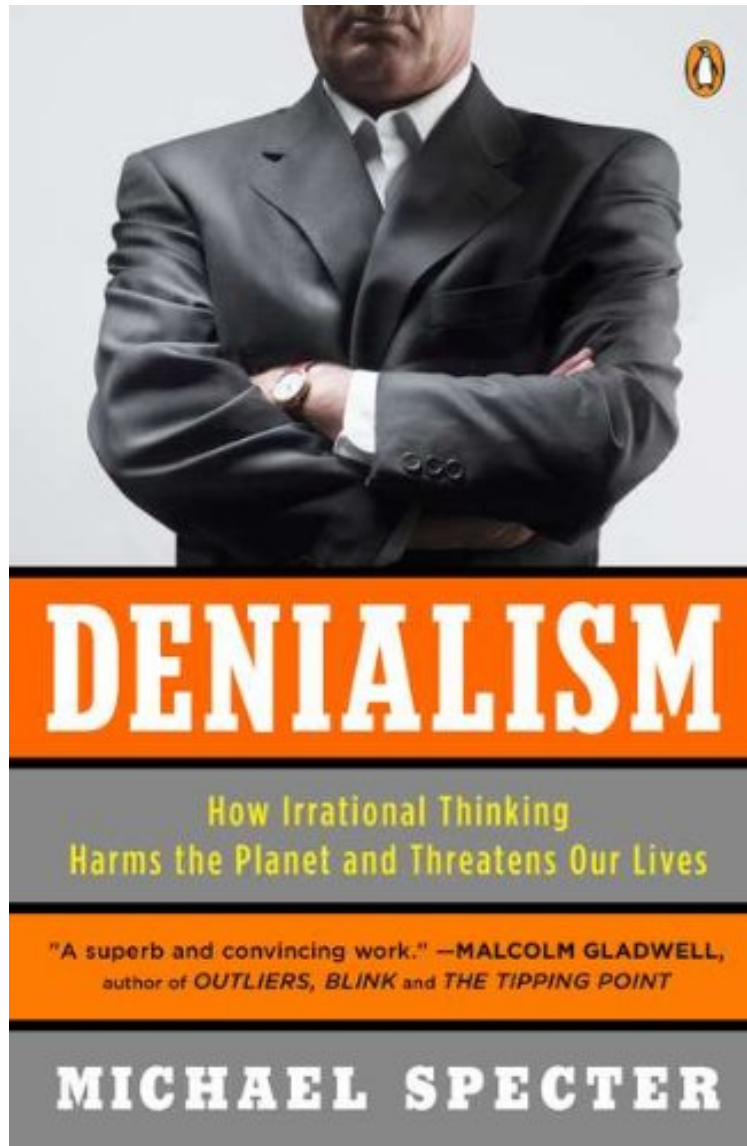


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# Denialism: How Irrational Thinking Harms the Planet and Threatens Our Lives

*Michael Specter*

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**Michael Specter : Denialism: How Irrational Thinking Harms the Planet and Threatens Our Lives** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Denialism: How Irrational Thinking Harms the Planet and Threatens Our Lives:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A factual analysis of myths which outrage communities

worldwide. By Customer A very accurate representation of myths and conspiracy theories surrounding modern biotechnologies. I really enjoyed reading it and think it might be eye-opening to some people. However I think it misses the psychology which enables these movements to grow, understanding of which is the first necessary step to educate people and diffuse a more educated perspective. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Loved it By Dana L. Manchester I enjoyed the depth of discussion on a variety of topics and issues. Particularly the GMO and the implications for the 3rd world. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Popular myths debunked By Hellis35 Good treatment of the Vioxx, organic foods, genetically modified foods and the like. The last couple of chapters on technology are superfluous for most people. A good read.

"A superb and convincing work." -Malcolm Gladwell At a time when our planet is in dire peril, Americans mistrust science more than ever. Few journalists appreciate what is at stake better than Michael Specter, who has spent the last twenty years reporting on everything from the AIDS epidemic to the digital revolution. In *Denialism*, he eloquently shows how, in a world where protesters march against childhood vaccines and Africans starve to death rather than import genetically modified grains, we must reconnect with the rational thinking that has underpinned the advance of civilization since the eighteenth century. What emerges is a manifesto that brilliantly captures one of the pivotal clashes of our era.

From Publishers Weekly Although denialists, according to Specter, come from both ends of the political spectrum, they have one important trait in common: their willingness to replace the rigorous and open-minded skepticism of science with the inflexible certainty of ideological commitment. Specter analyzes the consequences of this inflexibility and draws some startling and uncomfortable conclusions for the health of both individuals and society. For example, though every reputable scientific study demonstrates the safety of major childhood vaccines, opponents of childhood immunization are winning the publicity war; childhood immunizations are tumbling and preventable diseases are increasing, often leading to unnecessary deaths. Specter, a New Yorker science and public health writer, does an equally credible job of demolishing the health claims made by those promoting organic produce and all forms of alternative medicine. Specter is both provocative and thoughtful in his defense of science and rationality though he certainly does not believe that scientists are infallible. His writing is engaging and his sources are credible, making this a significant addition to public discourse on the importance of discriminating between credible science and snake oil. (Nov. 2) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Specter is both provocative and thoughtful in his defense of science and rationality though he certainly does not believe that scientists are infallible. His writing is engaging and his sources are credible, making this a significant addition to public discourse on the importance of discriminating between credible science and snake oil. Publishers Weekly A lucid and insightful book about a very frightening and irrational phenomenon the fear and superstition that threaten human science and progress. A superb and convincing work. Malcolm Gladwell, New Yorker staff writer and author of *Outliers*, *Blink*, and *The Tipping Point* *Denialism* tells stories I know well, at least in outline. But Michael Specter very valuably gathers them under one roof and gives them a name. Specter describes the increasing public willingness to deny the hard-won facts of science in favor of myths and shoddy investigation. In the process, the denialists are enabling disease and poverty, denying the advances of science to those in need. David Baltimore, president emeritus, Biology California Institute of Technology We are bombarded with information and misinformation about the foods we eat, the medicines we take, the water we drink, the very air we breathe. Michael Specter shows us how to accurately assess the impact of science on these and other essential elements of our daily lives. Written in clear and accessible language, this uniquely valuable book explains an often confusing world." Jerome Groopman, M.D., Recanati Professor, Harvard Medical School, author of *How Doctors Think* About the Author Michael Specter writes about science, technology and global public health for the New Yorker, where he has been a staff writer since 1998. He has twice received the Global Health Councils Excellence in Media Award, as well as the Science Journalism Award from the American Association for the Advancement of Science.