

Testimonials and Plausibility

Testimonials as Evidence

Urine Therapy

Human thoughts and behavior are highly unreliable

Senses

Deceit

Self-deception

Memory issues

Probability and testimonials

Health, Disease as an Example of Personal Testimony

Disease vs. illness

Outrageous claims are made about the effectiveness of many “alternative” treatments that have little or no scientific merit.

Herbal therapy

Aroma therapy

Magnet therapy

Prayer healing

Urine therapy

Alternative treatments heal the “sick”

Are there other explanations?

YES!

Ten competing explanations offered in text

Placebo effect

Spontaneous remission

Disease ran its course

Diseases are often cyclical

Misdiagnosis

Worried well

Symptomatic relief

Hedged bets

Derivative benefits

Distortion of reality

Cognitive Dissonance

No need for conscious fraud or dishonesty

Many (large numbers of) testimonials don't solve the problem

Plausibility

Some beliefs are more likely to be true than others

Does life on other planets exist?

Do these other intelligent life forms visit Earth?

Are humans being abducted and experimented on by alien beings?

Did Cartman really get an anal probe?

Claims of alien abductions

Stories of alien abductions are very reliable!

Reliability vs. validity

Contamination effects

Questions to ask yourself about abductions

How likely is it that aliens exist and can/want to visit Earth and abduct humans?

Why do aliens look so much like us?

Why is there no physical evidence of abduction?

If aliens are so advanced why do they abduct and study humans in the manner specified by abductees?

How do aliens choose who will be abducted?

How do they transport the abductees to the spaceship?

Einstein's theory of relativity?

Can abductions be explained any other way?

Sleep paralysis

Hypnagogic imagery

Similarity to near death experience