

Re: Rampant Pseudoscience in Astrophysics Brings Death

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.physics/2004-06/3315.html>

From: gswork (gswork_at_mailcity.com)

Date: 06/10/04

Date: 10 Jun 2004 00:45:39 -0700

Clevine@hfx.eastlink.ca (Craig Levine) wrote in message
news:<a59ef9e7.0406090816.2483f15a@posting.google.com>...

> cs_cagle@direcway.com (CCRyder) wrote in message
news:<5a4ee64.0406082036.18a42bd@posting.google.com>...

>

> <twaddle snipped>

>

> Long time no hear from Chuckie.

>

> I think I posted this a couple of years ago in reply to one of

> your...odd...rants (I didn't creat this. It can be found using a

> Google search):

[snipped]

I like that list. I've read a few 'crackpot' theorists and do indeed see these points in many of their posts.

several things surprise me about the people who generate these theories though:

a) not given due process in peer review, maybe because peers are part of the 'conspiracy', but then you'd think the truth of their theory would shine through by experimentation in a scientific community that resists new ideas naturally, but really does cave in when the experiments give consistent data. I have read a couple of them claim that their theory is about to hit the big time, and peer review, this is good – if it happens

b) These theories are not often idle or intellect-free musings, they are often quite intricately constructed drawing on quite a broad cross section of skills and have clearly received quite some effort over time, even if they fall over due to an inconsistency on page 1. This makes them somewhat sad, a wasted effort perhaps, a lost intellect. Such is the commitment devoted to the theory that (ironically like the scientists they hold in low regard) the purveyor is unwilling to 'let

go' of it.

Overall i think a bit of crackpot theory is good, it stirs the pot (well, at least a good one can) and actually helps re-affirm the veracity of the theory they set out to depose by confirming that even a reasonably well thought out attempt to offer an alterantive doesn't cut it.

Very occasionally there is 'crackpot' theory which does in time turn out to be true, the qualitative difference is that such theories are self-consistent and lend themselves to some kind of experimental proof (or support anyway)