

Re: How do I convince my son's teachers that the US landed men on the Moon?

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The analogy with the Shackleton expedition is good, but I fear my son's two "doubting Thomas" teachers would sidetrack us by asking for evidence to prove that Shackleton and his crew ever made their expedition. We'll try to keep it focused on the Moon with simple science and pictures.

How do these things get started, and why do they persist? One could probably write a book on that! My current thinking is that there are several types of personalities that promote these "conspiracy" or "hoax" stories. A few type-players

(1) Pranksters. They are laughing up their sleeves at anyone foolish enough to fall for their "evidence". Their primary motivation is self-amusement.

(2) Shysters. (E.g. some film "documentary" producers.) They are laughing on their way to the bank. Their primary motivation is self-enrichment.

(3) Manipulators. They are using this as a way to discredit the US, or the space program, or all of science, or whatever they dislike or mistrust. Their primary motivation is political.

(4) Gullible. Some will believe anything they are told, or anything they are told not to believe. Many of these people also think that TV all-star wrestling is for real. Logical arguments are generally wasted on these types.

(5) Uneducated. These people respond well to common-sense arguments and may even have the patience and intelligence to understand scientific explanations.

I want to thank everyone who has helped by giving good arguments for Type 5 persons. My son was in this category for this subject, but has graduated to Type 6 Informed. Thanks!

As for my son's two teachers, I am tentatively classifying one as mostly Type 5 (with a little Type 4 mixed in) and the other as a rather

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nasty pure Type 3.