

[PDF] It's Not News, It's Fark: How Mass Media Tries To Pass Off Crap As News

Drew Curtis - pdf download free book

Books Details:

Title: It's Not News, It's Fark: How

Author: Drew Curtis

Released: 2007-05-31

Language:

Pages: 288

ISBN: 1592402917

ISBN13: 978-1592402915

ASIN: 1592402917



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Description:

From Publishers Weekly The editorial principle behind Curtis's Web Site Fark.com is remarkably simple: readers submit news stories with their own wacky headlines, inviting snarky commentary from other readers. Here, he steps back to examine why "Mass Media" keeps churning out the sort of inane stories that are "supposed to look like news" that make the site so wildly popular. The critique is familiar—see Barry Glassner's *The Culture of Fear*, among others—but Curtis delivers it with richly sarcastic humor. A section on hysteria over unlikely disasters, for example, punctures alarmist stories with one-line synopses like "Oh my God, there's bacteria on everything." Other chapters explore fake news trends, such as "Equal Time for Nutjobs," which explains how 9/11 conspiracy theories manage to get public airing, or the proliferation of nonevents that are little more

than publicity stunts. But the anger behind his criticisms of media companies for producing such nonsense is defused by the acknowledgment that readers actually want to be titillated. Unfortunately, the pleasure of reading Fark.com online, where you can always add your own two cents to the conversation, doesn't always translate to the printed page; old user comments aren't so much comic relief as tacked-on disruption. *(June)*
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From Curtis, founder of the hugely popular Web site Fark.com, recalls how and why he got the idea to feature news that is really "Not News." The genesis for the site was correspondence Curtis exchanged with a friend he'd met while living in England; much of it was trading odd news stories. On a whim, in 1997 he registered the domain name Fark.com while he pondered what to post. He decided to use the site as a clearinghouse for odd bits of news and commentary by contributors. Curtis includes excerpts from Fark.com--searching for modern descendents of Genghis Khan, tools Britons use for flossing--and biting commentary on modern news gathering, which Curtis complains has grown inane under the pressure of a 24/7 news cycle. Among his criticisms: canned seasonal stories, out-of-context celebrity comments, articles that are actually advertisements, and headlines that contradict articles. What's most fun about Fark.com, which is used by radio DJs and commercial news outlets, is its rewritten headlines and streaming commentary. *Vanessa Bush*
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