



Education as a hope in uncertain times

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Why Deny?

The Psychology of Public Misunderstanding of Science

Many individuals are perplexed by family members, friends, and co-workers who avoid vaccinations or believe climate change is a hoax. Democracies depend on educated citizens who can make informed decisions about scientific issues. The COVID-19 pandemic brought these issues into sharp relief. In *Science Denial: Why It Happens and What to Do About It*, Sinatra and Hofer examine the psychological factors contributing to science doubt, resistance, and denial. This presentation will focus on the themes from the book including the role of psychological constructs such as cognitive biases, emotions, identity, epistemic cognition, and motivated reasoning in public (mis)understanding of science. Sinatra will overview significant motivational and emotional challenges to public understanding of science and provide research-based solutions to each challenge for individuals, educators, policy makers, and science communicators.



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