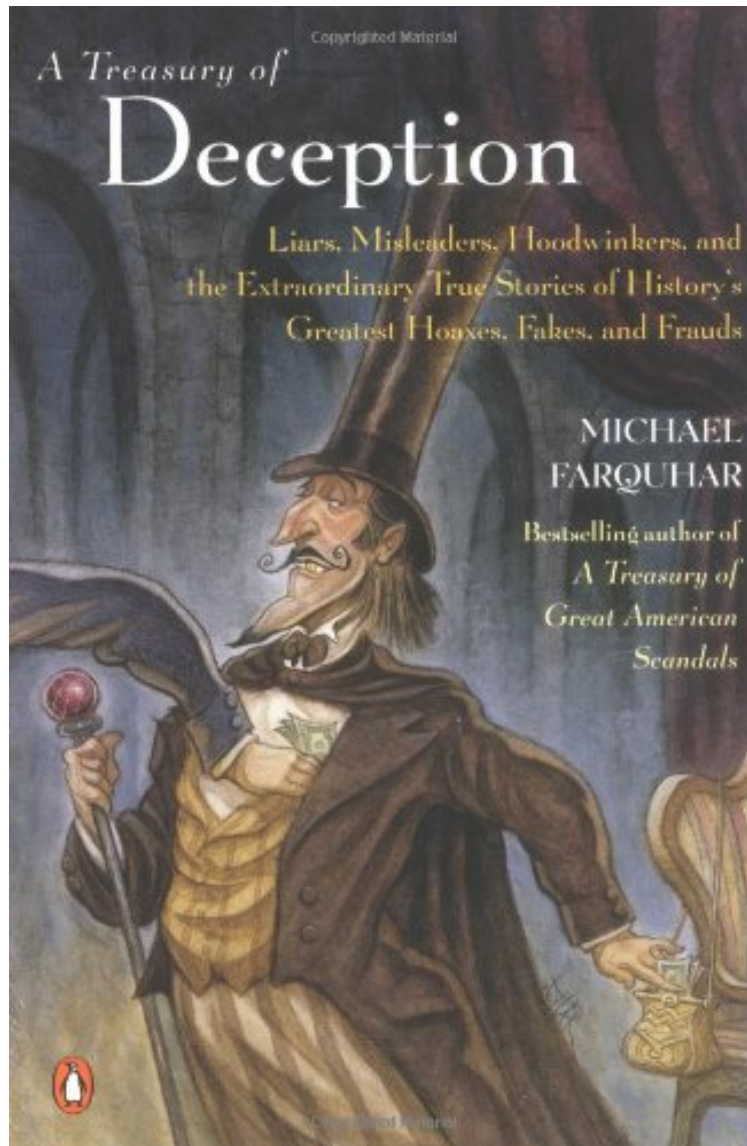


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A Treasury of Deception: Liars, Misleaders, Hoodwinkers, and the Extraordinary True Stories of History's Greatest Hoaxes, Fakes and Frauds

Michael Farquhar

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Michael Farquhar : A Treasury of Deception: Liars, Misleaders, Hoodwinkers, and the Extraordinary True Stories of History's Greatest Hoaxes, Fakes and Frauds before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Treasury of Deception: Liars, Misleaders, Hoodwinkers, and the

Extraordinary True Stories of History's Greatest Hoaxes, Fakes and Frauds:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I'd Give Him Ten Stars If I Could
By RedI have been madly recommending these books to all of my Historically inclined buddies, and some of my not-so-Historically inclined buddies, too! Having roared my way through his other books, Michael Farquhar takes the cake with *A Treasury of Deception*. With his typical irreverent and comedic style (this man should create a stand-up act), Farquhar lampoons the likes of P.T. Barnum, Nostradamus and even Hitler. Big name cameos aside, this historian digs through the headlines of times long past to tell us stories of unbelievable cons and the crooks who perpetrated them - and whether the names are familiar or not, I've found myself in tears laughing. I've read some rather scathing opinions of Mr. Farquhar's work; everything from calling him rude and callous to hollering at his "shoddy research". I'm no historian, but even if Mr. Farquhar's work was completely contrived, I would read and enjoy his book because I'M NOT READING IT FOR A HISTORY LESSON. If I get one along the way, great. If I'm worried about veracity, I can do my own research. But I'm reading this book for a laugh, and that's exactly what I'm getting. Great book - you're really missing out if you skip this one.

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Liars Hall of Fame
By Nick Howes
The famous and the anonymous infamous are included in this light account of great liars of history. There are commoners who claim to be kings when they are conveniently absent. Leading the pack is the story of imperious, obnoxious Anastasia, reputed daughter of Czar Nicholas of Russia, subject of an Ingrid Bergman movie. Anastasia was committed to mental institutions late in life and is still believed by diehards to be the lone surviving Romanov despite DNA tests that proved the contrary. There are scientific frauds like the lady who gave birth to bunnies or the Piltown Man, the numerous literary frauds like the Hitler diaries and Clifford Irving's hoax biography of Howard Hughes. There's the story of the evil Elders of Zion hoax about supposed Jewish plans for world domination invented by the Czar's secret police to justify their pogroms (and a perennial favorite of microcephalic antisemites ever since), the Southern slave who mailed himself to freedom in New England, the reprehensible Jerry Falwell blaming 9/11 on gays, lesbians, pagans, and others he didn't like, journalistic hoaxes, and more. Enough to inspire any liar. One of Farquhar's more entertaining stories is from Nazi Germany, although actually widely regarded itself as a hoax based on Berlin water-cooler storytelling. The story is that a few years before the war began, Nazi intelligence, which anticipated war with Stalin's Soviet Union, called in all the letters from the Russians that had been accumulated in the bureaucracy's files. By judicious culling, they assembled a sheaf of documents which required only a couple outright forgeries to convey a tale of conspiracy involving the Soviet Army's appeal for German neutrality in an overthrow of Stalin. A Russian agent with access to Stalin contrived to get the documents to the dictator who read them and promptly purged the army, killing or exiling all the field marshals and generals, 80% of the colonels, all the way down the line to the lowest officer rank of lieutenant, 50% of whom were killed or sent to Siberia. Soviet defenses were disembowled just a year or two before Hitler's invasion. Stalin was forced to bring Gyorgi Zhukov in from Mongolia to lead the army because there was no one else. Ever after, the Army and the NKVD (and its successor the KGB) were blood enemies. So the story goes. The fact is, the paranoid Stalin was a more rapacious killer than Hitler, but kept it inside his own borders, which had little impact outside Russia. Even Lenin, no stranger to murder for the good of the state, thought Stalin was the last guy in the world who should lead the Soviet Union. In short, Stalin was perfectly capable of ordering such a wide-ranging, murderous purge himself and had proven it many times. He didn't need the Nazis' help. But the Nazi middle-management swore by the story which has no solid proof to back it up. If documentation ever shows up, it would go down as one of the great espionage coups of all time.

A collection of short stories for bedtime reading.
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. It'll Do
By Lost in Thaw
I don't think I have any other Michael Farquhar books, but I will most likely buy more. This book is maybe mildly informative, but it is highly entertaining and a very easy piece of reading material....the kind best enjoyed when one is relaxed and doesn't want to ponder. Since I am a Civil War fan (don't call me a buff, I don't know what a "buff" is, but I don't like the sounds of it) I do more than enough pondering when I read, so I'm always up for something light-hearted and this *Treasury of Deception* does quite nicely.

We may say that honesty is the best policy, but history to say nothing of business, politics, and the media suggests otherwise. In this infinitely citable book, the author of two bestselling treasuries of scandal recounts some of the greatest deceptions of all time. With what forged document did the Vatican lay claim to much of Europe? Who wrote Hitler's diaries? Why do millions still believe the vague doggerel that Nostradamus passed off as prophecy? Organizing his material by theme (con artists, the press, military trickery, scientific fraud, imposters, great escapes, and more), Michael Farquhar takes in everything from the hoodwinking of Hitler to Vincent the Chin Gigantes thirty-year crazy act. *A Treasury of Deception* is a zestful, gossipy exposé and celebration of mendacity. *A Treasury of Deception* also includes: Ten tricksters from scripture Ten great liars in literature Ten egregious examples of modern American doublespeak Ten classic deceptions from Greek mythology

About the Author Michael Farquhar, a former writer and editor at The Washington Post, is the bestselling author of

numerous books, including the critically acclaimed *Behind the Palace Doors* and *Secret Lives of the Tsars*, as well as the popular Penguin "Treasury" series: *A Treasury of Royal Scandals*, *A Treasury of Great American Scandals*, *A Treasury of Deception*, *A Treasury of Foolishly Forgotten Americans*, and his latest title, *Bad Days in History*. He lives in Washington, D.C.