**Belief**

**According to the Greeks, as an awful lot of things were, the amethyst protected its owner from getting loaded. The word itself means “not to intoxicate." It's a violet or purple variety of quartz. Don't count on it to prevent a hangover. (Bernie Smith, in The Joy of Trivia, p. 340)**

**When people show you -- or tell you -- who they are, believe them the first time. (Maya Angelou)**

**Aroma folklorists insist believers can get rid of depression by sniffing cotton balls dabbed in peppermint oil. And can hurry themselves off to sleep by sniffing lavender. (L. M. Boyd)**

**Another belief of mine: that everyone else is an adult, whereas I am merely in disguise. (Margaret Atwood)**

**More persons, on the whole, are humbugged by believing nothing than by believing too much. (P. T. Barnum, American showman)**

**Tell people there’s an invisible man in the sky who created the universe, and the vast majority will believe you. Tell them the paint is wet, and they have to touch it to be sure. *(George Carlin)***

**A person lives by believing something, not by debating and arguing about many things. (Thomas Carlyle)**

**Believers in the 14th century thought mild-mannered people who chewed catnip would become violent. So it became the custom for the royal hangmen to take a bite or two of it before going to work. (L. M. Boyd)**

**They conquer who believe they can. (John Dryden)**

**A Romanian village is enjoying a tourist boom, thanks to “humping hill" that is believed to help couples conceive. The mayor of Horea, Corneliu Olar, is determined to promote the hill as a tourist attraction, and has planted extra bushes to provide privacy for couples. “It has been a tradition for more than three centuries," Olar says. “Romanian kings have come and gone, but the humping hill has always been there." (The Week magazine, June 16, 2006)**

**Credibility Gap: When you find something a little hard to believe -- like a mimeographed love letter. (Quoted by Earl Wilson, Publishers-Hall Syndicate)**

**Who believes it? That depends on who says it. (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**Old-time Americans tossed salt over their left shoulders as some sort of token gesture, but I forget why? To hit the devil in the eye. Some believed spilled salt indicated the devil was at hand. The left shoulder throwers mocked the notion. (L. M. Boyd)**

**The dust of exploding beliefs may make a fine sunset. (Geoffrey Madan, essayist)**

**Early beliefs:**

**Aztecs – “dead warriors become hummingbirds"**

**Incans – “gold is sweat of the sun"**

**Incans – “stars, moon, and sun arise from lake"**

**Ancient Egyptians – “human's created from tears of sun"**

**Mayans -- monkeys are “protectors of artists and dancers"**

**Incans – “moon goddess under attack during eclipse" (by a giant snake; Inca people made loud noises to scare it away). (Philip Wilkinson, in DK Illustrated Dictionary of Mythology)**

**When you first were told the earth is round, did you think that meant it's round but flat like a pancake? Researchers say this is the belief of more than half of all youngsters under 10. (L. M. Boyd)**

**We know from tomb art that the ancient Egyptian pharaohs believed in sex after death. (L. M. Boyd)**

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**Belief consists in accepting the affirmations of the soul; unbelief, in denying them. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)**

**Shallow men believe in luck or in circumstance. Strong men believe in cause and effect. (Ralph Waldo Emerson)**

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**The original Henry Ford didn't eat breakfast. Said it slowed his thinking. (L. M. Boyd)**

**Fortune tellers of old India smashed hens' eggs against a special egg-breaking board, then interpreted the patterns of shattered shell fragments thereon. (L. M. Boyd)**

**Why is there such a gap between what I'd like to believe, and what I do believe? (Ashleigh Brilliant, in Pot-Shots)**

**If you must tell me your opinions, tell me what you believe in. I have plenty of doubts of my own. (Goethe)**

**My daughter, Judy, had a doll back in the '50s that lost a leg, leaving her in tears. That night, after Judy was in bed, I sat down and fashioned a new leg for the doll. I then laid the doll beside Judy as she slept. The next morning, Judy came out of her room hugging her doll, her eyes shining with happiness. “I didn't used to believe in the Good Fairy," she said. “But now I do because you can't sew this good.” (Betsy Sharrow, in Reminisce magazine)**

**Something else Sylvester Graham claimed about his invention, the Graham cracker, was that it dulled lust. Maybe that was a selling point at the time. (L. M. Boyd)**

**Mass movements can rise and spread without belief in a god, but never without belief in a devil. (Eric Hoffer)**

**A belief is not merely an idea the mind possesses; it is an idea that possesses the mind. (Robert Bolton, author)**

**Stonewall Jackson let it be known to a few that his feet were cold almost all the time. He thought lemon juice might improve the circulation. So he sucked lemons all through the Civil War. Historical footnotes say he was rarely seen without a squashed lemon in his hand. (L. M. Boyd)**

**King Henry VI banned kissing in England in 1439 because he thought it spread disease. (*Uncle John’s Bathroom Reader: Extraordinary Book of Facts, p. 65)***

**The Pilgrims refused to eat lobsters because they thought they were really big insects. (*Uncle John’s Bathroom Reader: Extraordinary Book of Facts, p. 65)***

**Some Malaysians protect their babies from disease by bathing them in beer. *(Noel Botham, in The Ultimate Book of Useless Information, p. 163)***

**Among the pilgrims who joined the First Crusade in the spring of 1096 was a group from the Rhineland who dutifully marched behind a goose and a goat in the belief that the creatures had been filled with the Holy Spirit and would guide them to Jerusalem. Perhaps their zeal was understandable since one of the leading crusaders, Peter the Hermit, had an almost reverential love for his donkey. *(Geoff Tibballs, in The Giant Bathroom Book of Dumbology, p. 200)***

**I wouldn't believe in anything if it wasn't for my favorite astrological mood watch. (Steve Martin)**

**Those are my principles . . . and if you don't like them, well . . . I have others.**

**(*Groucho Marx*)**

**People are never so ready to believe you as when you say things in dispraise of yourself: and you are never so much annoyed as when they take you at your word. (W. Somerset Maugham, in A Writer's Notebook)**

**As Moses could not grasp the fact that he had been singled out by Jehovah to lead the Israelites from Egypt, so too will you often find it hard to believe the directions you receive. (Guideposts)**

**Two people were killed and nearly 50 injured by spent bullets in 1972 when hundreds of Cambodian troops open fire at the moon to prevent its destruction by a mythical giant frog. Ancient Cambodian legend has it that the moon is under threat of being eaten by an outsize amphibian called Reahou, so at each eclipse the soldiers fire into the sky to stop the frog in its tracks. *(Geoff Tibballs, in The Giant Bathroom Book of Dumbology, p. 200)***

**A people that no longer can believe anything cannot make up its mind. It is deprived not only of its capacity to act but also of its capacity to think and to judge. (Hannah Arendt)**

**People almost invariably arrive at their beliefs not on the basis of proof but on the basis of what they find attractive. (Blaise Pascal)**

**We need fewer beliefs and more belief. *(Bishop James Pike)***

**Race car drivers won't wear green. At least, most won't. That's what one of same contends. He contends further they won't allow peanuts in the pits. Superstitious bunch, he says. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Legend has it that unless the ravens remain at the Tower of London, the structure will fall and the British Empire with it. Currently, eight ravens are in residence at the site, and their maintenance is provided by the Department of the Environment. Each bird is named and has its own heated cage. A Yeoman Warder with the title of Ravenmaster cares for them. To keep the birds from flying away, the flight feathers on one wing are clipped. But since ravens court in flight, the Tower birds weren't able to breed, and replacements were brought from Scotland, Wales or west England. That is, until 1989, when the first raven in over four hundred years was actually born at the Tower. His name? Ronald Raven! (L. M. K., in Reader's Digest, March, 1991)**

**Women wear engagement and wedding rings on the third finger of the left hand (not counting the thumb), because an ancient belief held that a delicate nerve runs directly from that finger to the heart. *(Bernie Smith, in The Joy of Trivia, p. 21)***

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**Many a Roman soldier believed the garlic he ate gave him courage. And it was this courage, he surely assumed, that kept the enemy at bay. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**The old Romans thought a person's health changed every seven years. They also thought a mirror reflected a person's health, good or bad. It was a twist on this combination that gave us the superstition a broken mirror foretold seven years of bad luck. *(L. M. Boyd)***

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**An idealist believes the short run doesn't count. A cynic believes the long run doesn't matter. A realist believes that what is done or left undone in the short run determines the long run. (Sydney J. Harris, Field Newspaper Syndicate)**

**I would never die for my beliefs, because I might be wrong. (Bertrand Russell)**

**Optimism is the belief that things are going to get better. Hope is the belief that we can make things better. (Rabbi Jonathan Sacks)**

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**Those native Americans known as the Senecas neither spanked nor criticized their children. But they did threaten to send them off to the woods for the bogeyman to catch. The Senecas' bogeyman was name Longnose. He chased bad children and ate them. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**It's said early Senecas believed their prayer words were carried to the Great Creator on rising smoke. (L. M. Boyd)**

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**If you do not live what you believe, you will end up believing what you live. (Venerable Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen)**

**There is a folk belief that if you bury a statue of St. Joseph on a piece of property, it will be sold more quickly. When I was getting ready to move, I took the St. Joseph from my Nativity scene and buried him near my front door. A few days later a woman made an offer. Since she had to sell her property I suggested she enlist the help of the saint as well. After a month of burying the statue all over her lawn, she had no nibbles and in disgust put the statue out in her trash. A week later she opened her local paper and read: “Town Sells Landfill to Private Developer.” (Frances Lacasse, in Reader’s Digest)**

**Tell someone there are 300 billion stars in the universe and he'll believe you. But tell him a bench has just been painted and he has to touch it to be sure. (Edna McCann, in The Heritage Book)**

**You can be anything you want to be in life. All you have to do it is believe in yourself. (Usher, R & B singer-composer)**

**How beliefs warp reality: Have you ever felt that someone who disagrees with you politically is a little nuts? A new study from psychologists at Duke University indicates that you may be on to something -- no matter which side of the aisle you're on. Researchers found that when a group of about 190 people, evenly divided between self-identified Republicans and Democrats, were confronted with potential solutions to problems about which they had deeply held beliefs, such as climate change or gun control, they became increasingly likely to deny that the problems even existed. When Republicans were shown climate-change solutions that were merely inconvenient, they tended to agree that global temperatures were rising because of human activity. But if the proposed solutions involved government regulations and economic harm, they were much more likely to say that Earth wasn't warming at all. Similarly, when Democrats who supported strict gun control laws were presented with evidence that more access to guns actually reduced the number of violent home invasions, they suddenly became more likely to think that home invasions weren't a significant problem. "In any issue where people's cherished beliefs are in play, you're going to see some amount of solution aversion," study co-author Troy Campbell tells Wired.com. "If you don't want the solution to happen, then you deny that the problem exists." (The Week magazine, December 5, 2014)**

**Would you believe in what you believe in if you were the only one who believed it? (Kanye West, musician)**

**We believe whatever we want to believe. (Demosthenes)**

**Many a chimney on houses in Britain's Channel Islands has a large stone sticking out of it. Like a seat. That's what it was put there for. To give passing witches a place to rest and warm themselves. Better outside than in, the builders believed. (L. M. Boyd)**

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