

SHADOW OF A DOUBT - The Electronic Edition
MARCH 1995
An electronic publication of the National Capital Area Skeptics

Saturday, March 18, 2 p.m.
Chevy Chase Library, Maryland
8005 Connecticut Avenue
1 mile inside the Beltway at MD Exit 33 ... 1/4 mile north of
East-West Highway
Free and Open to the Public

WHEN SCIENTISTS FOOL THEMSELVES

Robert L. Park
Department of Physics
University of Maryland

We are fascinated with science precisely because of its power to surprise us. Indeed, when first discovered, superconductivity and radioactivity appeared to violate immutable laws of science. Most incredible new scientific findings, however, are simply wrong. Often they are the result of subtle flaws in instruments or interpretation. Moreover, because even scientists tend to see what they expect to see, a false report by a respected colleague often carries other scientists along on the road to ignominy. This will be illustrated with examples ranging from Joe Newman's "energy machine" to "cold fusion." Current scientific controversies, such as the biological hazards of power line fields, will be examined for similar characteristics.

ROBERT L. PARK is Professor of Physics at the University of Maryland and Director of the Washington Office of the American Physical Society. He writes a weekly electronic commentary on science issues that is widely read by scientists, science journalists and government officials, and is a frequent contributor on the Op-Ed pages of major newspapers and on television and radio news programs. A former chairman of the Department of Physics at the University of Maryland, he is author of more than a hundred scientific papers in experimental surface physics and is the founding editor of the international journal Applications of Surface Science.

Other items of interest to skeptics:

* Operation Right to Know is sponsoring a noontime picket line on Wed, March 29 at the General Accounting Office, Washington DC (441 G. St at 4th NW) to emphasize GAO's current probe into

the Roswell Incident and to end UFO secrecy. For more information contact ORTK@AOL.COM

* The Center for Frontier Sciences, Temple University is sponsoring a talk by Professor Daryl J. Bem titled "Does ESP Exist? Experimental Evidence for an Anomalous Process of Information Transfer", to be held on Thursday, March 23, at 2 pm at the Kiva Auditorium, Ritter Annex, Philadelphia, PA.

* Dr. Sally Feather, daughter of J.B. Rhine, has been appointed as Executive Director for the Foundation for Research on the Nature of Man (FRNM), Durham, NC. Thus the organization that was founded to carry on Dr. Rhine's work is now headed by his daughter.

* Environmental skepticism and bureaucracy is the latest topic addressed by Gabor Levy, Consulting Editor of American Laboratory, whose editorials often deal with subjects of great interest to skeptics. For more information, contact me at the email address below.

* The Fourteenth Annual Meeting of the Society for Scientific Exploration will be held in Huntington Beach, California, June 15-17, 1995. The major themes of the conference are Survival Research and Puzzles in Archaeology, with talks such as:

- * "Did Biela's Comet Cause the Chicago and Midwest Fires?"
- * "Post-mortem Survival-the State of the Debate"
- * "Analysis of Anomalous Audio and Video Recordings"
- * "Evidence Suggestive of Reincarnation"
- * "A Statistical Study of Angular Placements of Features on Mars"
- * "Acoustical Properties of Ancient Ceremonial Sites"
- * "Limits in Mathematics and Music"
- * "Artificial Structures on Mars"
- * "The Age of the Sphinx"
- * "Sacred Sites and Sacred Science"

For more information, contact me at the email address below.

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> Mike Epstein                mse@enh.nist.gov <
>   Research Chemist, NIST, Gaithersburg, Maryland <
>   and VP, National Capital Area Skeptics <
> [Opinions expressed are mine ... not necessarily theirs] <
> PHONE: (301) 975-4114      FAX: (301) 975-3845 <
> =====<
> "Science is one of philosophy's tools, but it advances <
> only one small step after another. The small "nos" it <
> reveals to us are nevertheless precious. If the large <
> questions remain essentially the same, at least the <
> terms in which they are asked are becoming more and <
> more precise" - Lestienne [The Children of Time] <
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