



"Maharishi Effect Claim"

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Although seemingly bizarre on its surface, researchers at Maharishi International University claim to have amassed extensive evidence for the claim that groups practicing advanced TM techniques have profound, direct, and only beneficial effects on societies both near and far--lowering crime, diminishing wars, reducing auto accidents, and making people feel better in general. Even a cursory look at their publications reveals that they seem to use highly sophisticated research methods and statistical techniques, and that graphical displays of their results appear to show remarkable effects.

I will discuss a variety of problems with both the research claimed to prove the Maharishi Effect, and with the theory that is claimed to predict it. My presentation will be non-technical, and I hope to stimulate discussion about more general issues of how research into paranormal claims ought to be treated in scientific circles, by the media, and by the public.

Saturday, August 19, Bethesda Library, 7400 Arlington Road, Bethesda, Maryland

Call the NCAS Skeptic Line at 301-587-3827 for further info.

NCAS Elections

After the April elections, the NCAS Board is now the following:

- Joe Himes, President
- Gary Stone, Vice President
- Marvin Zelkowitz, Secretary
- Grace Denman, Treasurer
- Chip Denman, Spokesman

Board:

- Al Baer
- Mike Epstein
- Herb Federhen
- Curtis Haymore
- Patti Maslinoff
- Pam O'Neill
- Sean O'Neill
- Eugene Ossa
- Maggie Ragaisis
- Walter Rowe
- Jamy Swiss

Meeting dates for 1995-1996

- September 16, Bethesda Library
- October 14, Davis Library
- November 4, Bethesda
- December 2, Bethesda
- January 27, Bethesda
- February 17, NCAS Weekend
- March 23, Davis
- April 20, Davis
- May 18, Davis
- June 15, Bethesda

Bethesda Library -- 7400 Arlington Road (near Bethesda Metro)

Davis Library -- 6400 Democracy Blvd (near I-270)

All dates are Saturday. We regret our inability to always meet near a Metro station due to demands by school staff for library space.

As Carnival Season Gets Underway, Statistician Considers the Probability of Hocus Pocus (From University of Maryland press release)

Combine knowledge of probability with a background in magic and what do you get? Chip Denman, manager of the Statistics Laboratory at the University of Maryland and a founder of the National Capital Area Skeptics (NCAS). Denman mixes his passions --- probability, statistics and conjuring --- to help explain how people can be tricked by carnival games and bogus palm readers.

Chip, a current NCAS board member, will be at the Maryland State Fair in Timonium in late August at the University of Maryland booth. Stop by and say hello.

NCAS Joke of the Month

I went to this restaurant last night that was set up like a big buffet in the shape of an Ouija board. You'd think about what kind of food you want, and the table would move across the floor to it (Stephen Wright).

Last Change: August 7, 1995