



## **Here We Go Again: The Campaign to Include Creationism in the Public School Science Curriculum**

**Deanna Duby**  
**Director of Education Policy Research**  
**People For the American Way**

In the last two years the controversy over introduction of Creationism into the public school science curriculum has again intensified. Although Supreme Court decisions hold that Creationism is a religious doctrine, proponents still argue that it is a scientific theory deserving of equal treatment in science classes, along with the theory of evolution. Ms. Deanna Duby, a former public school teacher, now an attorney and Director of Education Policy for the 300,000 member constitutional rights organization, People For the American Way, will present this talk. This will be followed by audience questions and discussion.

Ms. Duby directs PFAW's activities related to public schools, including the compilation of "Attacks on the Freedom to Learn," an annual report on attempts to censor programs and materials in classrooms and libraries. PFAW monitors Religious Right political groups and their efforts to control curriculum in public schools.

**Saturday, March 23, 1996, 2:00 -- 3:30pm**  
**Davis Library, 6400 Democracy Road, Bethesda, Maryland**

**Free Admission; All Welcome - Members and Nonmembers**

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

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### **Did you know why ...**

 **Walking under ladders is bad luck? --**

Aside from the obvious danger of being hit by a falling paint can, the ladder leaning against a wall forms a triangle, and is thus symbolic of the Trinity. The ordinary layman would not wish to pass through such a sacred arch.

 **Brides are carried across the threshold? --**

The practice stems from Roman days when a bride must be carried over the threshold to declare that she loses her virginity unwillingly.

 **Thirteen is unlucky? --**

Supposedly there were 13 at the Last Supper.

 **Lighting three cigarettes on one match is unlucky? --**

During the Boer War, several instances occurred of soldiers lighting up three cigarettes on one match, and the third one to do so was shot by the enemy. Lighting of the first two cigarettes apparently gave the enemy enough time to aim at the light and shoot the third unfortunate soldier. (Editorial Comment: Lighting even one cigarette on one match is unfortunate, but I'll stop editorializing here.)

 **Rice is thrown at weddings? --**

Another Roman tradition. When the bride came home, wheat was scattered over her head as a token of plenty and fruitfulness.

 **and some cures: for hiccups --**

If you find a horseshoe, then whenever you get hiccups, look at the horseshoe and remember where you found it. The hiccups will disappear (Pliny in 77 AD).

 **and finally, a cure for toothaches --**

Bite off a piece of wood from a tree that has been struck by lightning (Pliny, again).

(Source: *A Dictionary of Superstitions* by I. Opie and M. Tatem (Eds.), Oxford University Press, 1989.)

## **Still Time to Run**

Want to help set direction for NCAS next year? Elections for 8 new board members will occur in April. If interested send a short biography immediately (by March 10) to Marv Zelkowitz, NCAS Secretary, at 10058 Cotton Mill Lane, Columbia, MD 21046 or via e-mail to mvz@cs.umd.edu.

## **Have something to say?**

NCAS is always looking for submissions for its newsletter, *The Skeptical Eye*. If you would like to submit something, use the new email address S\_Eye@cs.umd.edu.

## **Science and Pseudo-Science**

Johns Hopkins School of Continuing Studies, in cooperation with NCAS, is presenting a series of lectures at its Columbia, Maryland center on Thursdays, from March 21 until May 2 (except for April 4) at 7pm. The cost for the series is \$90 (\$70 for NCAS members). Call JHU at 410-516-4842 for information. Call 410-516-8516 to register.

## **Renewal time?**

Is your membership to NCAS due for a renewal? Check the date on your mailing label, and if so, send \$20 for 1 person (\$30 for 2 at same address) to NCAS, 8006 Valley St., Silver Spring, MD 20910.

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