



From the Bally to the Blowoff: Facts and Frauds of the American Sideshow

Todd Robbins (the master of ceremonies/medicine show pitchman for The Big Apple Circus) will be speaking. Todd is a magician and sideshow worker with a long time interest in the history of the field. Next fall he will be opening a one-man off-Broadway show that will incorporate some of this sideshow material. He promises that in addition to giving a talk, he will demonstrate some of the sideshow stunts.

Saturday, January 18, 1997, 2:00pm -- 3:30pm

**Bethesda Library,
7400 Arlington Road,
Bethesda, Maryland**

Free Admission; All Welcome - Members and Nonmembers

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

Skeptical TV on ABC

(From CSICOP Press Release:) **Friday, Jan. 3, 10pm Eastern, 9 Central:** A 20/20 piece on "multiple chemical sensitivity." **Monday through Thursday, Jan 6-9, 7am Eastern:** One Good Morning America piece each day on issues such as people's fear of electric and magnetic fields. **Thursday, Jan. 9, 10pm Eastern, 9 Central:** A one-hour special, Junk Science: What You Know That May Not Be So, hosted by John Stossel. (NCAS hopes that these will be more skeptical than other recent TV pieces on these topics.)

Skeptical Awards

The Council for Media Integrity (CMI) and the Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP), will be holding a press conference on Thursday, January 9, 1997. Attending the event will be **Bill Nye** from the television series *Bill Nye the Science Guy*. Targeted at young people, the show makes science fun, lively, and fascinating. Nye will be receiving the Council For Media Integrity "Candle in the Dark" Award for his outstanding contributions to the public's understanding of science and scientific principles. The Council also plans to present an award to **Dan Aykroyd**, host of the new television program, *The Psi Factor*. Dubbed "The Snuffed Candle Award," it is meant to recognize Aykroyd for encouraging credulity, presenting pseudoscience as genuine, and contributing to the public's lack of understanding of the methods of scientific inquiry.

More Candles in the Dark

"I worry that, especially as the Millennium edges nearer, pseudoscience and superstition will seem year by year more tempting, the siren song of unreason more sonorous and attractive. Where have we heard it before? Whenever our ethnic or national prejudices are aroused, in times of scarcity, during challenges to national self-esteem or nerve, when we agonize about our diminished cosmic place and purpose, or when fanaticism is bubbling up around us-then, habits of thought familiar from ages past reach for the controls.

"The candle flame gutters. Its little pool of light trembles. Darkness gathers. The demons begin to stir." -- Carl Sagan (1934--December 20, 1996) *The Demon-Haunted World: Science As a Candle in the Dark*,
