



Shadow of a Doubt

THE MONTHLY CALENDAR OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA SKEPTICS

October, 1999



NCAS - The National Capital Area Skeptics Presents

GHOSTBUSTING 101

The 1999 Fall Workshop

October 16, 1999

Best Western Leesburg Dulles, Leesburg, VA

When things go bump in the night, what's a scientist to do?

Just in time for Hallowe'en, the National Capital Area Skeptics presents a full-day program that examines investigations of the spirit realm, from the 19th century to present day. The sessions offer diverse viewpoints on attempts to apply science and technology in the assessment of age-old traditions and beliefs.

Session highlights include:

- "If the spirits are willing..." Chip Denman will give a brief history of seances and mediums and those who investigated them during the heyday of the Spiritualist movement. He is a statistician at the University of Maryland where he teaches "Science/Pseudoscience" for the University Honors Program, and past-president of NCAS.
- "Ghosts and electromagnetic anomalies" Joe Holbert conducts "ghost tours" in Leesburg, Virginia, and investigates the possibility that ghosts are associated with very low-level electromagnetic fields. He will describe his personal research.
- "Modern mediums and psychic readings" Spiritualism lives on today in such mediums as James Van Praagh, best-selling author of Talking to Heaven, and thousands of lesser known "psychic readers." Kari Coleman will discuss her personal experiences and methods used in giving readings. She is an actress whose skeptical writings have been published by the James Randi Educational Foundation.
- "High tech communications with the hereafter: Ghost photos, ghost detectors, electronic-voice phenomena, and phone calls from the dead." Dr. Michael Epstein will present an overview of technological efforts to record evidence of spirits. He is a chemist at NIST, a former vice president of NCAS, a recent recipient of an award for excellence in education, which promotes skeptical thinking.

Registration

[\(PDF Brochure and registration form\)](#)

\$25 if postmarked by September 25, 1999

\$30 after September 25, 1999

Send registration (Name, address and telephone) to:

Ghostbusting 101
NCAS
PO Box 8428
Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

Workshop

- 9am - 5pm, Saturday, October 16, 1999
- Best Western Leesburg Dulles

726 East Market Street

Leesburg VA 20176

(703) 777-9400

- Registration includes am and pm breaks plus handouts. (Note, lunch is not included with the workshop registration. Several restaurants are near hotel.)

All Welcome - Members and Nonmembers

For additional information call NCAS at 301-587-3827 or send email to ncas@ncas.org.

NCAS Board

The NCAS officers for 1999-2000 are as follows:

Executive Committee	Paul Jaffe, President	Gary Stone, Vice President
Marv Zelkowitz, Secretary	Grace Denman, Treasurer	Chip Denman, Spokesman
Other Board Members	Barry Blyveis	Jonathan Boswell
Mike Epstein	Herb Federhen	Jim Giglio
ZoAnn Lapinsky	Rita Malone	Eugene Ossa
Walter Rowe	Scott Snell	Jamy Ian Swiss
Helen Hester-Ossa, Eye editor (non-voting)		

NCAS in the News

The latest issue of *Skeptical Inquirer* mentions NCAS (page 20) for putting the Condon Report online. This is in Robert Sheaffer's regular "Psychic Vibrations" column. The Condon report on UFOs is at <http://www.ncas.org/condon>.

Fortean Annual Meeting near DC

The International Fortean Organization (INFO) will host FortFest in November in the Washington DC area. This year's meeting is Nov 6 - 7 in College Park, MD. Speakers include John Michell, Budd Hopkins, John Keel, David Walsh, Michael Grosso, Paul LaViolette, Vincent Bridges, Doug Skinner, Antonio Huneus and Tom Vallone.

More information is available on INFO web site at: <http://www.research.umbc.edu/~frizzell/info> (Advance registration until October 13.)

New Book Available

HOW WE BELIEVE: The Search for God in an Age of Science by Michael Shermer of the Skeptic Society.

At the beginning of the 20th century social scientists predicted that belief in God would decrease by the end of the century because of the secularization of society. In fact, the opposite has occurred. Never in history have so many, and such a high percentage of the population, believed in God. To find out why, social scientist Dr. Michael Shermer has undertaken a monumental study of religion and the belief in God that includes the results of an exhaustive empirical study that asked 10,000 Americans why they believe.

Time to Renew?

Check your mailing label. If the renewal date has passed, please send \$20 (for 1 person) or \$30 (for 2-member households) for a one-year renewal to the NCAS address at the top of this page or you will be dropped as a member.