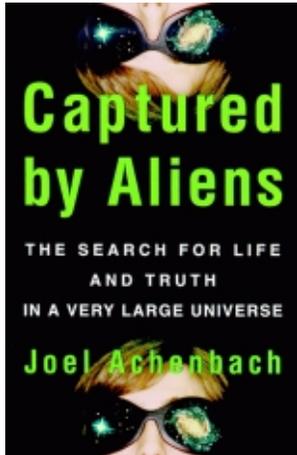


a special talk by

Joel Achenbach

Washington Post reporter, NPR commentator, and author of



CAPTURED BY ALIENS

"SCIENCE WRITING AT ITS BEST"

Michael Shermer, publisher *Skeptic Magazine*

Joel Achenbach puts the ET debate into the context of the space program, discoveries in astronomy, and the hunger for meaning and spiritual nourishment in an era when science often doesn't provide the answers that people desire. He finds that the topic of extraterrestrial life is poisoned by wishful thinking, by the natural human yearning to make contact with our brothers and sisters in space. But he also finds some fascinating, admirable, and maddening characters who have pursued the truth about extraterrestrial life.

Achenbach suggests that the search for life elsewhere leads us on a looping road back to the fundamental questions about life on Earth. To think coherently about extraterrestrial life, we first must come to terms with who we are, why we exist, and what it means to carry around in our cells an evolutionary history that took four billion years to unfold. Achenbach's message is that it is a wonderful and thrilling thing to be a sentient human being – a creature capable of foolish romanticism – in a universe that is mostly rocks and gas and dust and empty space.

AFTER HIS TALK,
MR. ACHENBACH WILL
SIGN HIS BOOK, WHICH
MAY BE PURCHASED AT
THE EVENT.

Saturday, December 16, 2000, 2 pm - 3:30 pm
Bethesda Branch of the Montgomery County Library
7400 Arlington Road, Bethesda, Maryland
(a short walk from the Bethesda Metro station)



National Capital Area Skeptics Public Lecture Series

FREE admission - Everyone welcome - members and non-members

For more information call the 24-hour NCAS Skeptic Line recording at (301) 587-3827

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Shadow of a Doubt

THE MONTHLY CALENDAR OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA SKEPTICS

D E C E M B E R

A C H E N B A C H ' S B O O K F O R S A L E A T D E C E M B E R

For your convenience, NCAS has arranged for Vertigo Books to make copies of Joel's book, *Captured by Aliens*, available for purchase at our December 16 talk. Please also consider how many friends on your holiday gift list might enjoy receiving from you this thoughtful book personalized by Joel himself.

J A N U A R Y M E E T I N G T O P I C

For the January 20, 2001 meeting, Dr. Jeff Lewis, an epidemiologist, and Dr. Dave Cragin, a toxicologist, will talk on "Eating Candy for Longevity and other toxic sciences."

M I C H A E L S H E R M E R S O C I A L

Michael Shermer, publisher of *Skeptic* magazine and author of several books of interest to skeptics (e.g., "Why people believe weird things," "Denying history") will be in town the weekend of December 2nd. A social gathering at the Denmans' home is planned for 8pm on Saturday, December 2nd. Come join us for dessert and an interesting discussion. Leave your name on the NCAS skeptics phone line if you are planning to come and for directions.

N C A S E M A I L L I S T

NCAS maintains two different email lists for members. If you have an email account and are not yet on our email distribution send a message to ncas@ncas.org. State which list you would like to be on:

- Ncas-share -- A discussion group where members can pass information to other members of the group and have discussions on topics of interest.
 - Ncas-Shadow -- A list with very little traffic. The major purpose of this list is to distribute an electronic version of this calendar to members.
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N C A S . O R G T O C H A N G E

Sometime between now and early 2001 the computer hosting the NCAS web site will change. You should not see any changes once we switch over to the new machine, but computers being what they are, if there are any glitches in our web site, that is probably the reason. We will try and fix those problems as soon as we can. A major reason for the change is increased web space, which we hope will enable us to post audio and maybe video files of some of our meetings.

T I M E T O R E N E W ?

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.



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S i l v e r S p r i n g , M a r y l a n d 2 0 9 0 7

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