

# Childhood Vaccine Controversy Arthur Allen

Arthur Allen will speak about recent controversies regarding the safety of childhood vaccines. He will touch on scientific issues as well as the motivation, ideology and historical role of anti-vaccine activists in America. Allen is a freelance writer who regularly contributes health, science and other articles to The Washington Post, Salon.com and other publications.

Saturday, March 17, 2pm-3:30pm  
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  
e-mail: [ncas@ncas.org](mailto:ncas@ncas.org)  
[www.ncas.org](http://www.ncas.org)

NCAS is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization which promotes critical thinking and scientific understanding. **NCAS...for good reason**



Advance Notice — 7:30 pm, Saturday, April 21

### Jamy Ian Swiss THE HONEST LIAR

Cecile Goldman Theater  
District of Columbia Jewish Community Center  
1529 16th St NW, Washington DC

Special fund-raising performance for  
the National Capital Area Skeptics  
Suggested donation: \$10 members / \$15 non-members

Advance reservations: 301-587-3827 or  
[ncas@ncas.org](mailto:ncas@ncas.org)

Master of deception Jamy Ian Swiss is one of the original co-founders of NCAS. Now based in New York, he brings a sophisticated show of magic—honest lying—to audiences around the world. His special “Cracking the Cons” was recently seen on Discovery Channel.

**“Don’t miss astonishing magician Jamy Ian Swiss”**  
*Vanity Fair* magazine

**“Jamy Ian Swiss makes one understand what a terrifying art form pure sleight of hand can be. He is James Bond with a deck of cards for a pistol.”**  
Penn & Teller

**“a finely tuned sense of the absurd”**  
*Washington Post*



# Shadow of a Doubt

THE MONTHLY CALENDAR OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA SKEPTICS

MARCH 2001

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## The 2001 NCAS Workshop, May 19 & 20: *Understanding Belief - How we know what isn't so*



*Why do people believe and perceive what they do? How does science "know" what is or isn't? What perpetuates beliefs that have no basis in fact? What can and should you do?*

Join NCAS in scenic Winchester, Virginia on May 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> as we explore these issues and more in our annual workshop. We will begin around 8:30 am on the 19<sup>th</sup> and break around noon on the 20<sup>th</sup>. We'll examine how people arrive at their belief systems, how science works in practice, how false beliefs are carried through pseudohistory, the basics of logical reasoning, and much more.

Registration is \$55 per person before May 1 and \$65 thereafter. Registration includes breaks on Saturday and Sunday, Saturday lunch, and workshop materials. Hotel accommodations at the Hampton Inn in Winchester (1204 Berryville Ave, Winchester VA 22601 tel. 540-678-4000 - Just off I81 exit 315) are available through the hotel at \$72 per night (Continental breakfast included). Recommended, but not required, advance reading: "*How We Know What Isn't So*" by Thomas Gilovich. Mail registration to NCAS 2001 Workshop Registration, PO Box 8428, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Call 301-587-3827 for details or email [ncas@ncas.org](mailto:ncas@ncas.org). **Members and non-members alike are welcome.**

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### Alternative Medicine

**NIH Funds Research into "Distant Healing" for 150 HIV Patients** (From CSICOP press release) - Elisabeth Targ was awarded a three-year study through NIH's National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM). Targ speculates that healers can effect healing at a distance through "the agency of God, consciousness, love, electrons, or a combination." In 1998 Elisabeth Targ published a study in the *Western Journal Of Medicine* claiming that HIV subjects who unknowingly received distant healing showed significantly improvement over the control group. Her NCCAM-funded study will include 150 HIV patients and is intended to build clinical evidence for distant healing. The funding for Targ's clinical trials is expected to amount to more than 2 million dollars of federal funds over the next few years. Judging by federal appropriations, Congress shows no skepticism of federally funded alternative medicine research. According to a December 2000 AAAS R&D Funding Update, the NCCAM's FY 2001 budget is \$89 million-a 29 percent increase over last year's and the largest increase of any NIH institute appropriation for FY 2001.

[By contrast from Bob Park's "**What's New**" for **March 2, 2001**]: Aside from bio-medicine, the president's budget provides little cheer for scientists. Scant on detail, the Bush plan seems to trim research at NSF by about 1% and at NASA by somewhat more. But DOE's Office of Science, appears to bear the brunt of the bad news. DOE spending would drop \$0.7 billion or 3.5%, but DOE would take on \$0.6 billion in new spending for fossil fuels, home weatherization and defense programs, leaving Science, Energy Supply and Waste Management to absorb the \$1.3 billion shortfall. If the cut is prorated, Science drops almost 13%.]

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### 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.



**National Capital Area Skeptics**  
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<http://www.ncas.org/>