

Pseudoscience and the U.S. Patent Process

Mark Banash, Ph.D.

The topic of this talk is the patent process in the US. Did you know that an invention doesn't have to be described in a scientifically accurate way to be granted a U.S. Patent? Learn why respected companies will invest millions in a startup that cannot explain its processes and products rationally. And hear how companies can sell such products without understanding how they work.

Mark Banash has a Ph.D. in Chemistry from Princeton and a B. A. with a major in Chemistry and minors in Math and English from the University of PA. He is currently employed as a research scientist at Millennium Inorganic Chemicals in Baltimore as well as at Howard Community College as adjunct faculty. He also writes science fiction and serves as the producer of the audio series "The Funnt File" (<http://members.aol.com/tharsispro/series1.html>) which often deals with skeptical themes.

Saturday, April 21, 2pm-3:30pm
Bethesda Branch of the Montgomery County Library
7400 Arlington Road, Bethesda, Maryland
(a short walk from the Bethesda Metro station)

**RESCHEDULED
FROM OCTOBER**



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
www.ncas.org

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

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

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



April 2001



Shadow of a Doubt

THE MONTHLY CALENDAR OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA SKEPTICS

THE TENTH EUROPEAN CONGRESS IN PRAGUE

On September 7-9 the 10th European skeptical congress will be held in the city of Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic. All skeptics are invited to attend. There will be an interesting scientific program, and in addition, one or two excursions will be organized through this ancient city, in the very hearth of Europe. Attending the congress will offer an excellent opportunity to meet skeptics from the eastern and central parts of Europe. The venue of the meeting is in the distinguished building of the Czech Academy of Sciences. **Contact:** icaris@bohem-net.cz Web: sisyfos.hyperlink.cz/10esc

Postal: ICARIS CONFERENCE MANAGEMENT "10 ESC"; Nam. Dr. Holeho 8; 180 00 PRAHA 8; Czech Republic.

CSICOP'S 25th ANNIVERSARY PARTY

Sunday, April 22nd, 2001 (12:30 - 4:30pm) at the Center for Inquiry-International; 1310 Sweet Home Road; (off of Maple, opposite the University of Buffalo's Amherst Campus); Amherst, New York 14226; Buffet \$10.95 per person. The topic for the meeting is "Skeptic's Odyssey: 25 Years and Counting" with speakers:

Paul Kurtz, Chairman, Professor Emeritus, SUNY at Buffalo
Joe Nickell, Ph.D., Senior Research Fellow
Bela Scheiber, Local Groups Liaison, Boulder, Colorado

Barry Karr, Executive Director, CSICOP
Henry Gordon, magician, Toronto
Lee Nisbet, Professor of Philosophy, Medaille College

BE PREPARED FOR FRIDAY THE 13th

This year there are two Friday the 13ths, but to make this a regular annual event CSICOP will choose only one date per year to act as the National Superstition Bash Day.

This year's event will take place on July 13th and will include a major press campaign to all national media outlets. CSICOP hopes to farm media inquiries to local groups throughout the country that are holding a Bash of their own. (See <http://www.csicop.org/superstition>).

Groups and individuals can participate, share their ideas and receive further information by contacting: Program Director Amanda Chesworth at a.human@mindspring.com

SKEPTICS IN THE MEDIA

- FOX Family's EXPLORING THE UNKNOWN returns: (hosted by Michael Shermer and X-Files star Mitch Pileggi) starting Thursday, April 5 at 10pm, following Major League Baseball, which will hopefully provide a good lead-in audience for the show. More details as we get closer, but if the ratings are good they may order more shows to be produced.

- Beginning with the April issue, Scientific American now has a "SKEPTIC" column written by Michael Shermer. The first column is entitled "Colorful Pebbles and Darwin's Dictum," based on a line from a letter Darwin wrote in which he noted that "all observation must be for or against some view if it is to be of any service." And special acknowledgment to Editor-in-Chief John Rennie for his support of skepticism and critical thinking in science.

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.



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<http://www.ncas.org/>