

National Capital Area Skeptics Public Lecture Series

How to convince a skeptic

Tom Napier, Philadelphia Association
for Critical Thinking

Thousands of Americans profess paranormal powers but few are willing and able to demonstrate them under proper experimental conditions. Most claim this is because skeptics' tests are too hard or unfair.

Can a test of an extraordinary ability be both fair to claimants and convincing to skeptics? Tom Napier explains how calculating the odds lets us distinguish between a real, though fallible, ability and mere chance.

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Tom Napier graduated BS in Physics and MS in Electronics from Aberdeen University, Scotland. At the University of Leeds he helped design a cosmic ray experiment for the ESRO II satellite. He then moved to the European Space Technology Center in the Netherlands and later to CERN, the European particle physics laboratory.

Transferring to the commercial applications of technology, Tom was appointed Development Manager of Nuclear Enterprises Ltd in Edinburgh, Scotland, makers of radiation detectors and electronic equipment for medical research.

Tom came to the USA in 1981 where he is now an electronics consultant and a writer of technical articles.

Tom has studied fringe science topics for many years and regularly speaks on related subjects. He helped found the Philadelphia Association for Critical Thinking in 1994. He edited the group's newsletter for five years and remains a member of PhACT's Council.

**Saturday April 5th, 2-4 pm
B-CC Services Center
4805 Edgemoor Lane
Bethesda MD**

The center is located in downtown Bethesda, across the street from the rear of the Bethesda Metro station. It is on the plaza level of the Metropolitan complex, above a Montgomery County parking garage. *Free parking in the garage on weekends.*



National Capital Area Skeptics Public Lecture Series

FREE admission – Everyone welcome – members and non-members

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

e-mail: ncas@ncas.org

On the web: www.ncas.org



Shadow of a Doubt

THE MONTHLY CALENDAR OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA SKEPTICS

APRIL 2003

SCIENCE AND THE MEDIA

A new monthly web column by Matthew Nisbet is exclusively at the CSICOP website www.csicop.org. For example, recently: The Skeptical Environmentalist: A Case Study in the Manufacture of News: How did a book authored by an obscure Danish academic with little or no expertise in environmental science become an international media event? Or more precisely, what was so newsworthy about this book? To read the column, go to: <http://www.csicop.org/scienceandmedia/environmentalist/>.

THE SKEPTIC ENCYCLOPEDIA OF PSEUDOSCIENCE

By Michael Shermer (General Editor), Pat Linse (Contributing Editor). Two volumes, 903 pages; Retail: \$185.00; Skeptics Price: \$99.00. This is now available at www.skeptic.com.

ONE NATION WITHOUT GOD?

Secularism, Society, and Justice

Conference sponsored by the Council on Secular Humanism from April 11-13 at the Capitol Hilton in Washington DC. Registration fee \$179 (Students \$99). Speakers include secular humanists as well as skeptics such as Paul Kurtz (CSICOP), Massimo Pigliucci (University of Tenn), and Eugenie Scott (National Center for Science Education). Information at: www.secularhumanism.org/conference/

ALTERNATIVE REALITIES CONFERENCE

(Roan Mt.) Elizabethton, Tennessee

The next public awareness gathering of the United States UFO Information and Research Center will be held on the last weekend of June from Friday evening, June 27th through Sunday Afternoon, June 29th. Sponsored by the US UFO Information and Research Center. Advanced registration fee is \$50. (Late fee \$65) For more information contact USUFOCenter@USUFOCenter.com.

NCAS ELECTIONS

Spring is the time for the annual elections for board positions in NCAS. If you are interested in working with other NCAS Board members on skeptical issues important to you, contact the NCAS board at ncas@ncas.org.

GALAPAGOS ISLANDS TRIP

July 3-July 17, 2003

Travel with William McComas, Skeptic's Society member, veteran tour leader and evolution educator for an in-depth custom expedition to "Darwin's Islands." Discuss evolution and natural history in lively evening sessions and enjoy the markets of the highlands of Ecuador and the colonial atmosphere of Quito. The trip is strictly limited to 20 participants with only 6 spots remaining. Travel arrangements are being made by Myths and Mountains. Details at <http://mythsandmountains.com/LAGalapagos2003>.

TIME TO RENEW?

Check your mailing label. If the renewal date has passed, please send \$30 (for 1 person) or \$40 (for 2 member households) for a one year renewal to the NCAS address below, or you will be dropped as a member.

DIVERSITY

State Rep. Daniel R. Foley (R), whose district includes Roswell, introduced a bill in the New Mexico Legislature to designate an annual Extraterrestrial Culture Day to recognize contributions of space aliens to the culture and economy of Roswell. (From "What's New" – March 21)



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