

# Junk Science & Junk Justice

## How Does Our Legal System Litigate With Science?

### Roberta Shaffer

Roberta Shaffer will look at recent examples of the use of scientific evidence/expert testimony in American courtrooms. As more of our litigation involves questions of science, what standards are our judges using? How have these standards evolved over the years? Does junk science necessarily lead to junk justice?

In August 2005, Roberta I. Shaffer became the Executive Director of the Federal Library and Information Center/Federal Library and Information Network at the Library of Congress. Before assuming this post, Shaffer was the Director of External Relations and Program Development at the College of Information Studies, University of Maryland—College Park. She taught courses on information use and users, legal information, management, and strategic planning.

Shaffer received a bachelor's degree in Political Science with a concentration in demography from Vassar College; her law degree is from Tulane; and her master's in librarianship from Emory. She is admitted to the District of Columbia, Texas and United States Supreme Court bars.

2 - 4 pm, Saturday  
May 13, 2006

Montgomery County Library  
Bethesda Branch  
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)



# Shadow of a Doubt

THE MONTHLY CALENDAR OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA SKEPTICS

May 2006

## NCAS Board Notes:

- The 2005-2006 NCAS Lecture season ends in May. There will be a social for NCAS members in June—details forthcoming.
- The Board has decided to resume holding monthly NCAS events in Virginia as well as Maryland, true to the “Capital Area” part of our name and mission. In the coming 2006-2007 lecture season, talks will be at the Tysons-Pimmit Library in Virginia on September 9, November 11, December 9, and January 13. Dates are being reserved for NCAS talks at the Bethesda Library in February, March, April and May. The NCAS annual program will be held in October at a venue to be determined.
- The popular April 8 lecture on “Psi Perceptions” ran long—there was social time after the talk in lieu of a Board meeting.
- Please always check the NCAS hotline (301) 587-3827 for any last-minute program changes.
- Please contact the NCAS Board any time by email to [ncas@ncas.org](mailto:ncas@ncas.org) <<http://us.f607.mail.yahoo.com/ym/Compose?To=ncas@ncas.org>> or call (301) 587-3827. ☎

## Learn about the single most important tool of a skeptic:

*Smithsonian Residents Associate Program presents:  
The Brain: Structure, Function, and Abilities*

*Tues., April 18 - May 23, 6:30 p.m.*

In this basic course, neurologist Richard Restak presents an easy-to-understand illustrated overview of the human brain. He examines the brain's structure and components, its conscious and unconscious opera-

tions, and the communicative abilities of brain cells. The course highlights new evidence indicating the brain remains malleable and can be modified by life experiences. It's never too late to improve brain function.

### *APR 18 Introduction to the Science of the Brain*

History of brain science, from Greek pre-Socratic philosophers to current neuroscience; the emergence of the “neuron doctrine” and discovery of the importance of electrical and chemical transmission within the brain.

### *APR 25 The Organization of the Brain*

Contributions made by each of the brain's main areas.

### *MAY 2 The Functions of the Brain*

Brain functions at the microscopic level.

### *MAY 9 Technology and the Brain*

Culture rather than biology as a driving force in the brain's evolution, and new insights into the understanding of our perceptions, emotions, and social interactions.

### *MAY 16 Cognitive Enhancement*

Contributions of meditation, drugs, and physical and mental exercise for brain functions. The social and ethical implications of using brain science to improve mood, productivity, and intelligence.

### *MAY 23 New and Novel Applications of Brain Research*

Why treatment strategies aimed at the brain may provide a solution for obesity. How new information about the brain's pleasure pathways may hold a key to healing behavioral addictions to shopping, gambling, and sex.

6 sessions; **Tickets:** Gen. Admission \$130, RAP Members \$84, Senior Members \$75; **Location:** Indicated on ticket. **Telephone:** (202) 252-0012

**Website:** <http://residentassociates.org/start.asp> ☎