

Episode 537

THE
**SKEPTIC
ZONE**
PODCAST

3 Feb 2019

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The Skeptic Zone Podcast



Rob Palmer

Episode 537 - 3 Feb 2019

Who is
"The Well Known-Skeptic"?

Homeopaths caught out
giving bad advice

We remember Barry Williams
a year on from his death



1
00:00:09,110 --> 00:00:05,990

[Music]

2
00:00:11,910 --> 00:00:09,120

welcome to the skeptic zone the podcast

3
00:00:22,070 --> 00:00:11,920

from Australia for science and reason

4
00:00:24,900 --> 00:00:22,080

[Music]

5
00:00:30,630 --> 00:00:24,910

yes it's a skeptic zone podcast episode

6
00:00:32,240 --> 00:00:30,640

number 537 for the 3rd of February 2019

7
00:00:34,950 --> 00:00:32,250

which it Saunders here with you from

8
00:00:39,180 --> 00:00:34,960

Sydney Australia with the cicadas

9
00:00:42,510 --> 00:00:39,190

buzzing - they buzz - they chirp out the

10
00:00:45,420 --> 00:00:42,520

window the Sun beating down the humidity

11
00:00:47,910 --> 00:00:45,430

climbing and my head a muddle with jet

12
00:00:51,630 --> 00:00:47,920

lag back home once again well for the

13
00:00:55,110 --> 00:00:51,640

short term anyway just flew in ah less

14

00:00:57,240 --> 00:00:55,120

than 48 hours ago 36 hours ago maybe as

15

00:00:59,009 --> 00:00:57,250

a result this week's episode of the

16

00:01:00,750 --> 00:00:59,019

skeptic zone is a little truncated I

17

00:01:02,670 --> 00:01:00,760

hope you understand I hope you

18

00:01:04,680 --> 00:01:02,680

understand it's sometimes difficult to

19

00:01:07,430 --> 00:01:04,690

put everything together when there are

20

00:01:10,230 --> 00:01:07,440

other things going on especially

21

00:01:12,719 --> 00:01:10,240

long-distance travel nevertheless I hope

22

00:01:14,580 --> 00:01:12,729

an entertaining show for you we're going

23

00:01:16,890 --> 00:01:14,590

to be interviewing Rob Palmer the

24

00:01:19,350 --> 00:01:16,900

well-known skeptic you might not know of

25

00:01:21,930 --> 00:01:19,360

him you might not be that well-known to

26

00:01:24,660 --> 00:01:21,940

you he's relatively new on the scene I

27

00:01:27,209 --> 00:01:24,670

met Rob some years ago not many in Las

28

00:01:27,899 --> 00:01:27,219

Vegas and he now writes for skeptical

29

00:01:30,660 --> 00:01:27,909

inquirer

30

00:01:33,770 --> 00:01:30,670

Rob also works closely of susan gerbic

31

00:01:36,450 --> 00:01:33,780

from guerrilla skepticism on wikipedia

32

00:01:38,749 --> 00:01:36,460

also from the pages of the skeptic

33

00:01:42,359 --> 00:01:38,759

magazine a report I wrote way back in

34

00:01:46,620 --> 00:01:42,369

2005 about homeopathy and tumbling

35

00:01:50,429 --> 00:01:46,630

busting uncovering some very bad advice

36

00:01:52,709 --> 00:01:50,439

given out by homeopaths in Sydney and to

37

00:01:55,649 --> 00:01:52,719

mark the one-year anniversary of the

38

00:01:57,899 --> 00:01:55,659

death of our dear friend and much mr.

39

00:01:59,429 --> 00:01:57,909

Barry Williams the former president and

40

00:02:02,370 --> 00:01:59,439

former editor of the skeptic magazine

41

00:02:05,700 --> 00:02:02,380

I'm going to run an interview from the

42

00:02:08,340 --> 00:02:05,710

archives way back in 2002 when Barry

43

00:02:11,160 --> 00:02:08,350

Williams was interviewed on ABC radio

44

00:02:14,130 --> 00:02:11,170

here in Australia and as listeners know

45

00:02:15,720 --> 00:02:14,140

we have the award every year now the

46

00:02:17,340 --> 00:02:15,730

Barry Williams award known as the

47

00:02:19,740 --> 00:02:17,350

wallaby and this is for sceptical

48

00:02:21,720 --> 00:02:19,750

journalism yes we still miss Barry he

49

00:02:24,540 --> 00:02:21,730

was a huge influence on skeptics in

50

00:02:27,360 --> 00:02:24,550

Australia so I hope you enjoy hearing

51
00:02:29,880 --> 00:02:27,370
Barry from way back in 2002 talking

52
00:02:32,619 --> 00:02:29,890
about the sceptics a big thank you to my

53
00:02:34,869 --> 00:02:32,629
new patreon since last week

54
00:02:37,720 --> 00:02:34,879
I'm very touched and pleased to have

55
00:02:41,199 --> 00:02:37,730
some more people come on board with \$5 a

56
00:02:43,059 --> 00:02:41,209
month which all goes to help a lot to

57
00:02:45,489 --> 00:02:43,069
those people who contributed a bit more

58
00:02:47,440 --> 00:02:45,499
lately I'm back in Australia now so I

59
00:02:49,390 --> 00:02:47,450
can get together your goodies parcel

60
00:02:52,209 --> 00:02:49,400
that will be coming out to you this week

61
00:02:54,190 --> 00:02:52,219
and somebody picked me up on something I

62
00:02:56,709 --> 00:02:54,200
said last week if you recall I was

63
00:02:59,530 --> 00:02:56,719

wandering around the California Academy

64

00:03:03,789 --> 00:02:59,540

of Sciences and I said I think I said

65

00:03:08,349 --> 00:03:03,799

it's hard to underestimate how the value

66

00:03:10,360 --> 00:03:08,359

of these places I meant to say it's hard

67

00:03:12,459 --> 00:03:10,370

to overestimate the value of these

68

00:03:16,059 --> 00:03:12,469

places I've got my estimation completely

69

00:03:18,490 --> 00:03:16,069

wrong I think thanks to those people who

70

00:03:20,470 --> 00:03:18,500

pick me up on that stage and at the end

71

00:03:23,349 --> 00:03:20,480

of the show for more announcements from

72

00:03:25,569 --> 00:03:23,359

me but for now it's time for me to run

73

00:03:27,729 --> 00:03:25,579

downstairs Pat the cats again who are

74

00:03:31,659 --> 00:03:27,739

very happy to see me after well six

75

00:03:34,839 --> 00:03:31,669

weeks away open the fridge I'll open the

76
00:03:36,580 --> 00:03:34,849
open the cupboard and have some Vegemite

77
00:03:37,690 --> 00:03:36,590
toast while I do that I hope you enjoy

78
00:03:56,080 --> 00:03:37,700
the skepticism

79
00:03:59,030 --> 00:03:56,090
[Music]

80
00:03:59,569 --> 00:03:59,040
and joining me now all the way from New

81
00:04:02,089 --> 00:03:59,579
Jersey

82
00:04:03,410 --> 00:04:02,099
it's the well-known skeptic well known

83
00:04:06,259 --> 00:04:03,420
well we'll get to that in a minute

84
00:04:08,509 --> 00:04:06,269
Rob Palmer hello Rob hello Richard a

85
00:04:11,720 --> 00:04:08,519
pleasure to talk to you again now we

86
00:04:15,099 --> 00:04:11,730
first met I think it's icon or was it

87
00:04:17,870 --> 00:04:15,109
attempt some years ago and I think I

88
00:04:19,969 --> 00:04:17,880

boldly went up and put a microphone in

89

00:04:22,129 --> 00:04:19,979

your face well we met a little bit

90

00:04:24,260 --> 00:04:22,139

earlier than you sticking the microphone

91

00:04:25,670 --> 00:04:24,270

in my face you might not have remembered

92

00:04:27,560 --> 00:04:25,680

because it was in a bar and some alcohol

93

00:04:29,510 --> 00:04:27,570

was involved it was in the lobby bar at

94

00:04:30,980 --> 00:04:29,520

the Excalibur I think that was the

95

00:04:32,480 --> 00:04:30,990

Wednesday when we were all checking in

96

00:04:33,950 --> 00:04:32,490

and I met you right there so actually

97

00:04:35,990 --> 00:04:33,960

the first time I met any skeptic

98

00:04:38,300 --> 00:04:36,000

including Susan garvik whose team I'm on

99

00:04:40,790 --> 00:04:38,310

and other people who had come to join us

100

00:04:43,999 --> 00:04:40,800

I met you and Bob novella and other

101
00:04:45,860 --> 00:04:44,009
fairly skeptical famous people and I was

102
00:04:47,749 --> 00:04:45,870
quite blown away and yeah we hung out a

103
00:04:50,450 --> 00:04:47,759
little bit and then I think it was the

104
00:04:53,089 --> 00:04:50,460
next day after Susan's presentation that

105
00:04:54,529 --> 00:04:53,099
you caught me off guard in the hallway

106
00:04:56,089 --> 00:04:54,539
and stuck the microphone in my face and

107
00:05:00,020 --> 00:04:56,099
I got interviewed for the very first

108
00:05:04,850 --> 00:05:00,030
time on a sceptical subject well and now

109
00:05:06,500 --> 00:05:04,860
I noticed that you're writing the

110
00:05:08,990 --> 00:05:06,510
skeptical Inquirer

111
00:05:11,930 --> 00:05:09,000
under the moniker of the well-known

112
00:05:14,420 --> 00:05:11,940
skeptic this has been quite rapid can

113
00:05:16,850 --> 00:05:14,430

you give me a brief overview of from

114

00:05:19,100 --> 00:05:16,860

that moment when I first stuck a

115

00:05:21,760 --> 00:05:19,110

microphone in your face till now what

116

00:05:25,879 --> 00:05:21,770

you've been up to to reach these

117

00:05:27,980 --> 00:05:25,889

wonderful heights of skepticism yeah I

118

00:05:29,779 --> 00:05:27,990

don't know about Heights but it has been

119

00:05:31,879 --> 00:05:29,789

a while right and it's still going on

120

00:05:33,879 --> 00:05:31,889

and I would have never expected it then

121

00:05:37,939 --> 00:05:33,889

yeah actually just going back a few

122

00:05:40,580 --> 00:05:37,949

earlier years that was 2017 when that

123

00:05:41,960 --> 00:05:40,590

saikhan happened that I met you a few

124

00:05:43,580 --> 00:05:41,970

years older than that I didn't even know

125

00:05:46,670 --> 00:05:43,590

there was a skeptical movement frankly

126

00:05:49,370 --> 00:05:46,680

um I was a skeptic my whole life but I

127

00:05:50,930 --> 00:05:49,380

first heard a podcast called the

128

00:05:52,909 --> 00:05:50,940

skeptics guide to the universe which I'm

129

00:05:56,149 --> 00:05:52,919

sure all your listeners know about and

130

00:05:57,680 --> 00:05:56,159

that was about 2012 and then I started

131

00:05:59,480 --> 00:05:57,690

going oh this whole thing is cool does

132

00:06:00,439 --> 00:05:59,490

actually is a skeptical movement here

133

00:06:02,120 --> 00:06:00,449

and I started listening to other

134

00:06:03,920 --> 00:06:02,130

podcasts and yours was one of the other

135

00:06:06,050 --> 00:06:03,930

ones that I found probably the second

136

00:06:07,200 --> 00:06:06,060

one and I really got into it listen to

137

00:06:09,420 --> 00:06:07,210

all of them every way

138

00:06:11,970 --> 00:06:09,430

and on one episode susan gerbic was

139

00:06:13,650 --> 00:06:11,980

being interviewed and that's how i found

140

00:06:15,660 --> 00:06:13,660

about the gorilla skeptics and that's

141

00:06:17,370 --> 00:06:15,670

what led me to go to saikhan and meet

142

00:06:21,030 --> 00:06:17,380

you and the other good folks there and

143

00:06:23,070 --> 00:06:21,040

that was quite fascinating as far as a

144

00:06:25,320 --> 00:06:23,080

well-known skeptic thing I met the

145

00:06:26,820 --> 00:06:25,330

novellas there we actually sat at the

146

00:06:29,750 --> 00:06:26,830

same table at a luncheon and I got to

147

00:06:32,730 --> 00:06:29,760

know Jay and Bob and Steve and Evan and

148

00:06:35,250 --> 00:06:32,740

that was really cool and then I sent -

149

00:06:38,430 --> 00:06:35,260

no who's that noisy and Jay loves that

150

00:06:40,710 --> 00:06:38,440

segment and Jay for some reason when he

151
00:06:42,390 --> 00:06:40,720
introduced the segment instead of just

152
00:06:44,250 --> 00:06:42,400
saying the name of the person Rob Palmer

153
00:06:48,060 --> 00:06:44,260
sent it in said and Rob's a well-known

154
00:06:50,070 --> 00:06:48,070
skeptical and I I became like that was a

155
00:06:52,650 --> 00:06:50,080
joke to my friends like how the hell are

156
00:06:55,110 --> 00:06:52,660
you well known as and and really was odd

157
00:06:56,610 --> 00:06:55,120
and I I didn't understand why Jay said

158
00:06:59,580 --> 00:06:56,620
it but it was the coolest freaking thing

159
00:07:01,260 --> 00:06:59,590
I just couldn't believe it so you know

160
00:07:02,670 --> 00:07:01,270
fast forward some months I'll tell you

161
00:07:04,530 --> 00:07:02,680
about that but when I got the offer to

162
00:07:06,150 --> 00:07:04,540
Rifa skeptical inquirer and I needed a

163
00:07:08,280 --> 00:07:06,160

column name how could I not go with that

164

00:07:10,320 --> 00:07:08,290

yeah that sounds good to me

165

00:07:14,250 --> 00:07:10,330

now Susan good that go chorus plays a

166

00:07:15,780 --> 00:07:14,260

big part in your skeptical activities

167

00:07:17,190 --> 00:07:15,790

over the last few years she's a dear

168

00:07:18,660 --> 00:07:17,200

friend of the skeptic zone and of course

169

00:07:21,150 --> 00:07:18,670

actually I had the pleasure of seeing

170

00:07:25,140 --> 00:07:21,160

Susan only about four weeks ago here in

171

00:07:25,980 --> 00:07:25,150

San Francisco and she and you I

172

00:07:27,960 --> 00:07:25,990

understand

173

00:07:31,080 --> 00:07:27,970

well you've got some projects or you

174

00:07:32,940 --> 00:07:31,090

helped on certain various projects yeah

175

00:07:34,920 --> 00:07:32,950

so besides the guerrilla skeptics which

176

00:07:39,090 --> 00:07:34,930

of course is my big thing

177

00:07:41,510 --> 00:07:39,100

Susan is known as the the vamp the Greve

178

00:07:44,250 --> 00:07:41,520

Vampire Slayer I guess I would say she

179

00:07:47,370 --> 00:07:44,260

does psychic stings and I was involved

180

00:07:49,560 --> 00:07:47,380

with one of those and she's going to be

181

00:07:51,000 --> 00:07:49,570

writing an article about that and you'll

182

00:07:53,580 --> 00:07:51,010

learn the details of that shortly

183

00:07:55,530 --> 00:07:53,590

oh it's something to look forward to now

184

00:07:57,390 --> 00:07:55,540

tell me more about your work with Susan

185

00:07:59,190 --> 00:07:57,400

with guerrilla skepticism and how

186

00:08:01,020 --> 00:07:59,200

important that's been to you yeah that's

187

00:08:03,060 --> 00:08:01,030

quite amazing I mean I used to be a kind

188

00:08:06,060 --> 00:08:03,070

of a couch potato skeptic and I'd watch

189

00:08:07,680 --> 00:08:06,070

these you know horrible shows that just

190

00:08:09,630 --> 00:08:07,690

had pseudoscience nonsense all on

191

00:08:11,490 --> 00:08:09,640

television or or my friends would talk

192

00:08:13,740 --> 00:08:11,500

to me about it and I'd argue with them

193

00:08:16,020 --> 00:08:13,750

you'd argue on you know common threads

194

00:08:17,250 --> 00:08:16,030

on YouTube or Facebook and no one would

195

00:08:18,930 --> 00:08:17,260

ever change their mind

196

00:08:21,270 --> 00:08:18,940

and then I heard about this great way

197

00:08:22,890 --> 00:08:21,280

that somebody who wants to do something

198

00:08:24,990 --> 00:08:22,900

but doesn't really have any particular

199

00:08:28,050 --> 00:08:25,000

skillset as an investigator could help

200

00:08:30,120 --> 00:08:28,060

spread the word to the public not

201
00:08:33,270 --> 00:08:30,130
skeptics per se but people looking for

202
00:08:36,659 --> 00:08:33,280
information so Wikipedia as Susan you

203
00:08:38,850 --> 00:08:36,669
know preaches is the like number one

204
00:08:43,530 --> 00:08:38,860
source of information in the world it's

205
00:08:45,930 --> 00:08:43,540
the fourth largest web site that's hit

206
00:08:48,030 --> 00:08:45,940
in the English language only behind I

207
00:08:49,470 --> 00:08:48,040
think it's YouTube and Facebook that's

208
00:08:51,450 --> 00:08:49,480
sort of a thing but it's the only one

209
00:08:54,420 --> 00:08:51,460
with actual encyclopedic information

210
00:08:57,420 --> 00:08:54,430
it's an encyclopedia so what our team

211
00:08:58,920 --> 00:08:57,430
does is we take away pseudoscience we

212
00:09:01,560 --> 00:08:58,930
take away the nonsense and we add

213
00:09:03,930 --> 00:09:01,570

science we add skepticism to articles

214

00:09:06,570 --> 00:09:03,940

that need it we write brand new articles

215

00:09:09,450 --> 00:09:06,580

if it's necessary for our skeptical

216

00:09:11,400 --> 00:09:09,460

spokespeople we write it for different

217

00:09:12,690 --> 00:09:11,410

concepts like we write them maybe I

218

00:09:15,150 --> 00:09:12,700

think we actually did this icon

219

00:09:17,970 --> 00:09:15,160

Wikipedia article that's sort of a thing

220

00:09:20,690 --> 00:09:17,980

and we make all sorts all sorts of small

221

00:09:23,250 --> 00:09:20,700

improvements to many many articles and

222

00:09:25,530 --> 00:09:23,260

the great thing about this is like

223

00:09:27,750 --> 00:09:25,540

anyone can do it from you know their

224

00:09:30,270 --> 00:09:27,760

laptop and you make an impact that's

225

00:09:32,280 --> 00:09:30,280

quite frankly unbelievable I've been

226

00:09:34,470 --> 00:09:32,290

doing this for a couple years and if you

227

00:09:36,120 --> 00:09:34,480

look at the page views that I have this

228

00:09:38,520 --> 00:09:36,130

is the time as the pages have been

229

00:09:40,110 --> 00:09:38,530

accessed just the major articles I've

230

00:09:41,310 --> 00:09:40,120

written not little tiny changes I make

231

00:09:44,490 --> 00:09:41,320

because we don't count those but we do

232

00:09:46,020 --> 00:09:44,500

count the big pages it's it's axe it's

233

00:09:47,910 --> 00:09:46,030

astounding that that somebody who was

234

00:09:50,130 --> 00:09:47,920

sitting on a couch a few years ago with

235

00:09:52,740 --> 00:09:50,140

no hope of doing anything it's like a

236

00:09:56,430 --> 00:09:52,750

million just about a million point five

237

00:09:58,100 --> 00:09:56,440

right now that's just those 1718

238

00:10:00,540 --> 00:09:58,110

articles that I've worked extensively

239

00:10:02,280 --> 00:10:00,550

that so many people have read them it's

240

00:10:04,620 --> 00:10:02,290

and right now it's ratcheting up at

241

00:10:06,690 --> 00:10:04,630

about 55,000 people every month read

242

00:10:09,360 --> 00:10:06,700

those articles the whole team is

243

00:10:11,640 --> 00:10:09,370

something like 38 million so far it's

244

00:10:14,540 --> 00:10:11,650

it's quite an astounding concept that

245

00:10:17,130 --> 00:10:14,550

someone with no real skill set at

246

00:10:19,890 --> 00:10:17,140

investigative journalism or anything can

247

00:10:22,350 --> 00:10:19,900

do this once you're trained by a Susan

248

00:10:24,000 --> 00:10:22,360

garvik and join our team you can do this

249

00:10:26,700 --> 00:10:24,010

and make that kind of an impact it's

250

00:10:29,700 --> 00:10:26,710

astounding I agree and it's why I'm

251
00:10:30,930 --> 00:10:29,710
happy to promote guerrilla skepticism on

252
00:10:33,660 --> 00:10:30,940
Wikipedia because I know that

253
00:10:37,350 --> 00:10:33,670
good that organizations doing I've seen

254
00:10:39,210 --> 00:10:37,360
talks by Susan outlining in detail what

255
00:10:41,280 --> 00:10:39,220
good it's doing so congratulations on

256
00:10:43,680 --> 00:10:41,290
that and Richard I have to thank you

257
00:10:46,770 --> 00:10:43,690
Richard my god dear of our group of a

258
00:10:47,790 --> 00:10:46,780
little bitty group of 144 people 10% or

259
00:10:49,110 --> 00:10:47,800
Australian's Wow

260
00:10:51,150 --> 00:10:49,120
and that's not a cook that's not a

261
00:10:53,580 --> 00:10:51,160
coincidence and hey I'm in the group

262
00:10:54,810 --> 00:10:53,590
because of you you know because I listen

263
00:10:56,940 --> 00:10:54,820

to the skeptics on all the way from

264

00:10:59,520 --> 00:10:56,950

America oh there you go that's it that's

265

00:11:01,140 --> 00:10:59,530

very good to know but now let's let's

266

00:11:02,370 --> 00:11:01,150

look at the fact that you're writing for

267

00:11:04,650 --> 00:11:02,380

skeptical inquirer

268

00:11:06,120 --> 00:11:04,660

did somebody approached you how did that

269

00:11:09,540 --> 00:11:06,130

come about yeah that's one of the most

270

00:11:11,160 --> 00:11:09,550

bizarre stories in my lifetime well so

271

00:11:13,740 --> 00:11:11,170

skeptical inquirer was actually the

272

00:11:16,740 --> 00:11:13,750

magazine that turned me into a skeptic

273

00:11:19,380 --> 00:11:16,750

by the way I spoke at Psych on 2018 just

274

00:11:20,280 --> 00:11:19,390

this last year and that was another like

275

00:11:22,380 --> 00:11:20,290

event that I would have never

276

00:11:23,420 --> 00:11:22,390

anticipated and when I spoke about was

277

00:11:26,460 --> 00:11:23,430

the gorilla skeptics

278

00:11:27,990 --> 00:11:26,470

it was a very cool chance to be able to

279

00:11:31,470 --> 00:11:28,000

do that in front of the you know the

280

00:11:34,320 --> 00:11:31,480

whole group of skeptics but one of the

281

00:11:36,060 --> 00:11:34,330

things I mentioned there is that this

282

00:11:37,650 --> 00:11:36,070

skeptical Inquirer magazine is what

283

00:11:39,480 --> 00:11:37,660

turned me into a skeptic when I was a

284

00:11:40,830 --> 00:11:39,490

young teenager and now I'm writing for

285

00:11:42,300 --> 00:11:40,840

them I mean who you know who'd have

286

00:11:44,040 --> 00:11:42,310

thought that would have happened I mean

287

00:11:45,840 --> 00:11:44,050

frankly I'm not a young pup and that

288

00:11:47,820 --> 00:11:45,850

it's still around it's quite amazing but

289

00:11:50,310 --> 00:11:47,830

that I got actually a paid job writing

290

00:11:52,230 --> 00:11:50,320

for that magazine is quite astounding so

291

00:11:55,470 --> 00:11:52,240

the way it happened is I wrote you

292

00:11:58,020 --> 00:11:55,480

you're involved again here I I wrote you

293

00:12:00,630 --> 00:11:58,030

because I heard you guys talking you

294

00:12:01,950 --> 00:12:00,640

were talking to a skeptical activist

295

00:12:05,310 --> 00:12:01,960

from Europe I don't remember the

296

00:12:07,710 --> 00:12:05,320

gentleman's name the topic was the lack

297

00:12:12,180 --> 00:12:07,720

of skeptical outreach in the skeptical

298

00:12:15,780 --> 00:12:12,190

community you recall that not instantly

299

00:12:18,720 --> 00:12:15,790

not off the top of my head after 536

300

00:12:21,180 --> 00:12:18,730

episodes it's hysterical every interview

301
00:12:23,730 --> 00:12:21,190
but no this is interesting carry on so I

302
00:12:25,650 --> 00:12:23,740
wrote you and said hey I know you know

303
00:12:27,870 --> 00:12:25,660
about guerrilla skeptics how did you not

304
00:12:30,000 --> 00:12:27,880
interject well one skeptical outreach

305
00:12:31,650 --> 00:12:30,010
path is guerrilla skeptics so we got to

306
00:12:32,940 --> 00:12:31,660
the end of your podcast that didn't come

307
00:12:34,920 --> 00:12:32,950
up and I had to write you about it

308
00:12:36,870 --> 00:12:34,930
basically saying oh why didn't you bring

309
00:12:38,010 --> 00:12:36,880
that up and you thought enough about it

310
00:12:40,110 --> 00:12:38,020
to read it on the air and that was

311
00:12:41,670 --> 00:12:40,120
fantastic but I put a lot of time into

312
00:12:44,200 --> 00:12:41,680
writing that letter to you because I

313
00:12:46,960 --> 00:12:44,210

wanted to get my thoughts you know actor

314

00:12:49,120 --> 00:12:46,970

and once I had done that I realized this

315

00:12:51,160 --> 00:12:49,130

is almost an article here I maybe put

316

00:12:53,770 --> 00:12:51,170

another hour into it and then I got it

317

00:12:55,270 --> 00:12:53,780

published not unscoped acquired directly

318

00:12:57,490 --> 00:12:55,280

there's a local group which I was

319

00:12:59,380 --> 00:12:57,500

already scheduled to do a talk to about

320

00:13:01,510 --> 00:12:59,390

gorilla skeptics and they said fantastic

321

00:13:03,130 --> 00:13:01,520

we'll publish it so this was the

322

00:13:04,450 --> 00:13:03,140

Philadelphia Association for critical

323

00:13:07,270 --> 00:13:04,460

thinking which I believe you spoke at

324

00:13:09,070 --> 00:13:07,280

many years ago I could have yeah in

325

00:13:12,310 --> 00:13:09,080

Philadelphia many groups around yeah

326

00:13:13,840 --> 00:13:12,320

yeah they have an archive list and I

327

00:13:16,660 --> 00:13:13,850

think I saw your name on there it was

328

00:13:18,400 --> 00:13:16,670

quite amazing and so I that was one of

329

00:13:20,200 --> 00:13:18,410

the first presentations I got to do and

330

00:13:21,730 --> 00:13:20,210

and it was because they published my

331

00:13:24,370 --> 00:13:21,740

article which was based on what you read

332

00:13:26,230 --> 00:13:24,380

so that was cool and then I thought hmm

333

00:13:29,590 --> 00:13:26,240

you know why not try to go all the way

334

00:13:31,240 --> 00:13:29,600

with this I talked to Susan Susan is an

335

00:13:33,370 --> 00:13:31,250

author for skeptical Inquirer and she

336

00:13:36,010 --> 00:13:33,380

said yeah sure send it off to bury car I

337

00:13:37,780 --> 00:13:36,020

did and before I knew it without any

338

00:13:40,090 --> 00:13:37,790

interface back and forth there came out

339

00:13:42,970 --> 00:13:40,100

on the web I was astounded it's it's

340

00:13:46,720 --> 00:13:42,980

it's a wonderful story Rob and folks

341

00:13:48,160 --> 00:13:46,730

I'll link to Rob's page on the show

342

00:13:50,800 --> 00:13:48,170

notes for this week's episode and you

343

00:13:53,350 --> 00:13:50,810

can look and you can read Rob's articles

344

00:13:55,720 --> 00:13:53,360

as published in skeptical Inquirer or

345

00:13:57,370 --> 00:13:55,730

Rob congratulations again it's it's

346

00:14:00,210 --> 00:13:57,380

wonderful to know that somebody who

347

00:14:02,650 --> 00:14:00,220

listened to the skeptic zone went on to

348

00:14:04,600 --> 00:14:02,660

to really start to make make a

349

00:14:07,090 --> 00:14:04,610

difference and I think that's that's

350

00:14:08,890 --> 00:14:07,100

something to be very proud of thank you

351
00:14:10,330 --> 00:14:08,900
thank you so much Richard and thanks

352
00:14:11,520 --> 00:14:10,340
again for helping me get involved in all

353
00:14:27,699 --> 00:14:11,530
this

354
00:14:31,220 --> 00:14:27,709
[Music]

355
00:14:33,139 --> 00:14:31,230
hey Sam have you ever wondered what

356
00:14:35,090 --> 00:14:33,149
skeptics are up to in countries where

357
00:14:37,190 --> 00:14:35,100
English is not necessarily the first

358
00:14:38,900 --> 00:14:37,200
language or are you interested to learn

359
00:14:41,329 --> 00:14:38,910
about some fascinating and sometimes

360
00:14:43,579 --> 00:14:41,339
very bizarre Europe related facts events

361
00:14:45,050 --> 00:14:43,589
or people from history of skepticism or

362
00:14:47,660 --> 00:14:45,060
do you just want to know who's been

363
00:14:50,420 --> 00:14:47,670

really wrong lately you can find out all

364

00:14:53,930 --> 00:14:50,430

about that and more on the award-winning

365

00:14:56,569 --> 00:14:53,940

show the ESP the European sceptics

366

00:15:00,050 --> 00:14:56,579

podcast so where can people find the

367

00:15:01,970 --> 00:15:00,060

show you can find it online at the ESP

368

00:15:04,819 --> 00:15:01,980

dot EU but you can also follow us on

369

00:15:07,670 --> 00:15:04,829

Twitter at es podcast and d'ascoyne you

370

00:15:09,620 --> 00:15:07,680

or like us on Facebook oh and you can

371

00:15:12,889 --> 00:15:09,630

contact the show by sending an email to

372

00:15:15,019 --> 00:15:12,899

info at the ESP dot EU if you want to

373

00:15:17,630 --> 00:15:15,029

subscribe do a quick search for the

374

00:15:20,300 --> 00:15:17,640

European sceptics podcast on SoundCloud

375

00:15:23,000 --> 00:15:20,310

iTunes stitcher or whatever you get to

376
00:15:28,270 --> 00:15:23,010
your podcast the European skeptics

377
00:15:31,000 --> 00:15:28,280
podcast the real ESP experience

378
00:15:32,930 --> 00:15:31,010
[Music]

379
00:15:52,060 --> 00:15:32,940
crazy

380
00:15:54,620 --> 00:15:52,070
I don't know why you can't believe as

381
00:15:57,140 --> 00:15:54,630
part of the ongoing series of reports

382
00:16:00,020 --> 00:15:57,150
and interviews and reviews from the

383
00:16:01,820 --> 00:16:00,030
skeptic magazine going back over the

384
00:16:04,790 --> 00:16:01,830
years now this is the journal from

385
00:16:07,070 --> 00:16:04,800
Australian skeptic while allow me to

386
00:16:15,470 --> 00:16:07,080
read one of my own reports dating back

387
00:16:17,540 --> 00:16:15,480
to 2005 homeopathy exposed again no

388
00:16:22,310 --> 00:16:17,550

matter how many times it's knocked down

389

00:16:27,080 --> 00:16:22,320

it still bounces back unfortunately and

390

00:16:30,050 --> 00:16:27,090

this can be found on page 58 of volume

391

00:16:32,900 --> 00:16:30,060

25 number 2 of the skeptic magazine with

392

00:16:35,570 --> 00:16:32,910

links in this week's show notes and this

393

00:16:37,660 --> 00:16:35,580

report revolves around one of my earlier

394

00:16:40,940 --> 00:16:37,670

investigations into homeopathy

395

00:16:43,160 --> 00:16:40,950

Australian skeptics has long regarded

396

00:16:48,650 --> 00:16:43,170

homeopathy as little more than outdated

397

00:16:50,930 --> 00:16:48,660

quackery a visit to ww-watch org will

398

00:16:54,740 --> 00:16:50,940

give you a comprehensive explanation of

399

00:16:57,170 --> 00:16:54,750

this so-called medicine in 2002 skeptics

400

00:16:59,900 --> 00:16:57,180

show Freeman exposed the fraudulent sale

401
00:17:03,560 --> 00:16:59,910
of fake vaccines for meningococcal

402
00:17:06,170 --> 00:17:03,570
disease hepatitis B and influenza these

403
00:17:08,660 --> 00:17:06,180
homeopathic vaccines were available via

404
00:17:10,970 --> 00:17:08,670
the internet or phone orders from gentle

405
00:17:13,190 --> 00:17:10,980
heal proprietary limited of seven hills

406
00:17:16,370 --> 00:17:13,200
New South Wales and Newton's pharmacy

407
00:17:19,940 --> 00:17:16,380
York Street Sydney Cheryl's actions led

408
00:17:24,260 --> 00:17:19,950
to a ban on the vaccines and gentle heal

409
00:17:25,760 --> 00:17:24,270
went on to win the 2002 bent spoon award

410
00:17:28,880 --> 00:17:25,770
now the bent spoon of course is the

411
00:17:30,830 --> 00:17:28,890
Australian skeptics annual award for the

412
00:17:33,200 --> 00:17:30,840
most preposterous piece of paranormal or

413
00:17:35,740 --> 00:17:33,210

pseudo scientific people have things

414

00:17:39,290 --> 00:17:35,750
changed in the last three years

415

00:17:41,420 --> 00:17:39,300
remembering this was written in 2005 the

416

00:17:45,230 --> 00:17:41,430
Sydney launch of world homeopathy

417

00:17:46,549 --> 00:17:45,240
awareness week April 10 to the 16th took

418

00:17:49,110 --> 00:17:46,559
place at Circular

419

00:17:51,600 --> 00:17:49,120
now circular key for international

420

00:17:53,280 --> 00:17:51,610
people it's the area in Sydney which is

421

00:17:56,010 --> 00:17:53,290
famous for the Opera House and the

422

00:17:57,900 --> 00:17:56,020
Sydney Harbour Bridge having an interest

423

00:18:01,350 --> 00:17:57,910
in this topic I attended to see what was

424

00:18:03,210 --> 00:18:01,360
going on for information booths some

425

00:18:06,539 --> 00:18:03,220
live music a few people milling around

426

00:18:09,900 --> 00:18:06,549

and not much else I was handed a flyer

427

00:18:12,600 --> 00:18:09,910

about the wonders of homeopathy which

428

00:18:15,120 --> 00:18:12,610

said in Part D do you know that

429

00:18:18,049 --> 00:18:15,130

homeopathy can achieve impossible cures

430

00:18:21,060 --> 00:18:18,059

for example a boy cured from autism

431

00:18:23,850 --> 00:18:21,070

homeopathy can even work faster than

432

00:18:26,220 --> 00:18:23,860

antibiotics homeopathy can treat viruses

433

00:18:28,830 --> 00:18:26,230

like measles flu and herpes

434

00:18:31,860 --> 00:18:28,840

the only real information it contained

435

00:18:36,299 --> 00:18:31,870

was that the Australian homeopathic

436

00:18:39,299 --> 00:18:36,309

Association Inc aah a plan to have a

437

00:18:42,450 --> 00:18:39,309

booth at the forthcoming parents babies

438

00:18:42,930 --> 00:18:42,460

and children's expo at home Bush Olympic

439

00:18:45,150 --> 00:18:42,940

Park

440

00:18:48,659 --> 00:18:45,160

if these people think that homeopathy

441

00:18:50,730 --> 00:18:48,669

can cure autism which is absurd what

442

00:18:53,730 --> 00:18:50,740

would they be telling parents at this

443

00:18:56,159 --> 00:18:53,740

Expo I had my suspicions which were

444

00:18:59,250 --> 00:18:56,169

confirmed later that week when Peter

445

00:19:01,110 --> 00:18:59,260

Bowditch and I attended the Expo Peter

446

00:19:05,039 --> 00:19:01,120

Bowditch of course a longtime skeptic

447

00:19:08,340 --> 00:19:05,049

famous for ratbags calm at the aah a

448

00:19:10,710 --> 00:19:08,350

booth we approached an attendant can you

449

00:19:12,900 --> 00:19:10,720

use homeopathy to vaccinate babies

450

00:19:15,630 --> 00:19:12,910

against polio mumps and other diseases

451
00:19:18,180 --> 00:19:15,640
oh yes indeed homeopathy can vaccinate

452
00:19:20,299 --> 00:19:18,190
your baby against any disease and it's

453
00:19:23,730 --> 00:19:20,309
completely safe my fears were confirmed

454
00:19:26,100 --> 00:19:23,740
we move to another attendant we've just

455
00:19:29,520 --> 00:19:26,110
been told that you can use homeopathy to

456
00:19:32,700 --> 00:19:29,530
vaccinate babies I never knew this her

457
00:19:34,650 --> 00:19:32,710
reply was instructive well we have to be

458
00:19:36,810 --> 00:19:34,660
careful what we say you know but yes

459
00:19:39,120 --> 00:19:36,820
homeopathy is a far better way to

460
00:19:41,549 --> 00:19:39,130
vaccinate babies and is much safer than

461
00:19:45,090 --> 00:19:41,559
what the government is doing those

462
00:19:46,919 --> 00:19:45,100
vaccines actually cause diseases more

463
00:19:49,289 --> 00:19:46,929

conversation with the pair reinforce

464

00:19:51,750 --> 00:19:49,299

this view with further warnings about a

465

00:19:54,919 --> 00:19:51,760

global conspiracy by pharmaceutical

466

00:19:57,680 --> 00:19:54,929

companies against alternative medicine

467

00:19:59,750 --> 00:19:57,690

letting the cat out of the bag

468

00:20:02,330 --> 00:19:59,760

representatives of the Australian home

469

00:20:04,280 --> 00:20:02,340

Apothic Association Inc have publicly

470

00:20:06,410 --> 00:20:04,290

stated at the parents babies and

471

00:20:08,510 --> 00:20:06,420

children's expo that homeopathic

472

00:20:11,330 --> 00:20:08,520

vaccines are a valid way to immunize

473

00:20:13,970 --> 00:20:11,340

babies and that parents should not use

474

00:20:15,980 --> 00:20:13,980

conventional vaccines this is like

475

00:20:18,470 --> 00:20:15,990

saying that parents should take down

476

00:20:22,640 --> 00:20:18,480

their pool fence and replace it with a

477

00:20:24,140 --> 00:20:22,650

line on the ground drawn with chalk with

478

00:20:26,150 --> 00:20:24,150

the hall full of thousands of visitors

479

00:20:28,220 --> 00:20:26,160

milling around over the three days of

480

00:20:30,650 --> 00:20:28,230

the expo we can only wonder how many

481

00:20:34,010 --> 00:20:30,660

parents were duped by this disgraceful

482

00:20:36,740 --> 00:20:34,020

advice from people posing as health care

483

00:20:39,260 --> 00:20:36,750

experts homeopaths were not the only

484

00:20:41,630 --> 00:20:39,270

exhibitors to give us cause for concern

485

00:20:43,700 --> 00:20:41,640

entering the expo we were confronted

486

00:20:46,460 --> 00:20:43,710

with the alarming sight of babies and

487

00:20:48,920 --> 00:20:46,470

toddlers undergoing chiropractic

488

00:20:50,720 --> 00:20:48,930

adjustments this stand also had

489

00:20:53,030 --> 00:20:50,730

brochures recommending against

490

00:20:56,870 --> 00:20:53,040

vaccinations pointing out a supposed

491

00:20:58,340 --> 00:20:56,880

link to cut death when quizzed one of

492

00:21:01,490 --> 00:20:58,350

the chiropractors said she would

493

00:21:04,040 --> 00:21:01,500

recommend homeopathic vaccinations over

494

00:21:06,380 --> 00:21:04,050

conventional ones during our visit we

495

00:21:08,810 --> 00:21:06,390

resisted the temptation to take the

496

00:21:11,210 --> 00:21:08,820

homeopaths and chiropractors to task as

497

00:21:14,030 --> 00:21:11,220

this would have not proved productive on

498

00:21:16,760 --> 00:21:14,040

the day it was more important for us to

499

00:21:18,940 --> 00:21:16,770

see firsthand what was going on and to

500

00:21:21,290 --> 00:21:18,950

give these people enough rope

501
00:21:23,560 --> 00:21:21,300
however we made sure that

502
00:21:26,480 --> 00:21:23,570
representatives of valid medical

503
00:21:29,420 --> 00:21:26,490
institutions also exhibiting at the expo

504
00:21:32,390 --> 00:21:29,430
were made aware of the actions of their

505
00:21:34,670 --> 00:21:32,400
fellow exhibitors the reps from the

506
00:21:37,490 --> 00:21:34,680
Children's Hospital at Westmead were

507
00:21:39,530 --> 00:21:37,500
particularly horrified also on the way

508
00:21:42,200 --> 00:21:39,540
up Peter and I made our concerns known

509
00:21:45,710 --> 00:21:42,210
to the organizers of the Expo who seemed

510
00:21:47,870 --> 00:21:45,720
to be disturbed in our findings I must

511
00:21:51,110 --> 00:21:47,880
say that the Expo itself apart from the

512
00:21:53,240 --> 00:21:51,120
quackery was a truly wonderful affair

513
00:21:55,460 --> 00:21:53,250

and I would recommend it to any parent

514

00:21:57,530 --> 00:21:55,470

there were certainly enough reps from

515

00:22:00,230 --> 00:21:57,540

valid medical institutions and other

516

00:22:02,090 --> 00:22:00,240

companies to make it worthwhile I have

517

00:22:04,310 --> 00:22:02,100

no reason to suppose that the

518

00:22:06,680 --> 00:22:04,320

representatives of the homeopathic

519

00:22:08,210 --> 00:22:06,690

Association both of whom would probably

520

00:22:10,730 --> 00:22:08,220

regard themselves as qualified

521

00:22:13,340 --> 00:22:10,740

homeopaths do not believe in the advice

522

00:22:15,950 --> 00:22:13,350

they were giving how else could they

523

00:22:18,230 --> 00:22:15,960

possibly defend their actions I suspect

524

00:22:21,440 --> 00:22:18,240

they think there is nothing that cannot

525

00:22:23,810 --> 00:22:21,450

be prevented or cured by homeopathy to

526
00:22:26,570 --> 00:22:23,820
them it is simply the best health care

527
00:22:29,240 --> 00:22:26,580
system there is and nothing could

528
00:22:32,810 --> 00:22:29,250
convince them otherwise a real case of

529
00:22:34,850 --> 00:22:32,820
being totally closed-minded following

530
00:22:37,000 --> 00:22:34,860
our exposure of the conduct of the

531
00:22:39,260 --> 00:22:37,010
Australian homeopathic Association Inc

532
00:22:41,630 --> 00:22:39,270
Australian skeptics issued a press

533
00:22:44,690 --> 00:22:41,640
release which resulted in a number of

534
00:22:48,770 --> 00:22:44,700
interviews on ABC radio stations and a

535
00:22:55,460 --> 00:22:48,780
warning to parents so far the aah a has

536
00:22:57,620 --> 00:22:55,470
made no comment on the matter so that

537
00:23:00,049 --> 00:22:57,630
report was from 14 years ago and of

538
00:23:02,240 --> 00:23:00,059

course not much has changed really when

539

00:23:04,419 --> 00:23:02,250

we think of organisations in Australia

540

00:23:06,980 --> 00:23:04,429

like homeopathy Plus still advocating

541

00:23:11,419 --> 00:23:06,990

that homeopathy can cure just about

542

00:23:13,880 --> 00:23:11,429

anything and not so long ago being taken

543

00:23:17,029 --> 00:23:13,890

to task in court over their claims about

544

00:23:18,590 --> 00:23:17,039

homeopathic vaccines in the coming weeks

545

00:23:21,200 --> 00:23:18,600

I'll look for some more interesting

546

00:23:24,169 --> 00:23:21,210

reports and items and interviews

547

00:23:26,270 --> 00:23:24,179

covering the 30-plus almost 40 years now

548

00:23:48,289 --> 00:23:26,280

of the journal from Australian skeptics

549

00:23:49,970 --> 00:23:48,299

the skeptic upcoming events now here are

550

00:23:53,210 --> 00:23:49,980

some upcoming events in Australia the

551
00:23:56,870 --> 00:23:53,220
Canberra skeptics proudly presents fake

552
00:23:59,330 --> 00:23:56,880
news what it is out works and how to

553
00:24:04,850 --> 00:23:59,340
counter it now this will be on Tuesday

554
00:24:07,100 --> 00:24:04,860
the 12th of February 20 1968 Vell :

555
00:24:09,740 --> 00:24:07,110
community services which is in Chandler

556
00:24:12,740 --> 00:24:09,750
Street Belconnen in the AC t the cost is

557
00:24:15,919 --> 00:24:12,750
free and the speaker is Jeff Malone in

558
00:24:18,049 --> 00:24:15,929
this presentation Jeff Malone provides a

559
00:24:21,320 --> 00:24:18,059
critical account of the phenomenon of

560
00:24:25,430 --> 00:24:21,330
fake news and how the challenges it

561
00:24:27,649 --> 00:24:25,440
poses might be addressed on fake news

562
00:24:31,280 --> 00:24:27,659
very topical in this day and age and

563
00:24:32,770 --> 00:24:31,290

dinner will follow the lecture for more

564

00:24:35,580 --> 00:24:32,780

information visit

565

00:24:40,730 --> 00:24:35,590

www.mptv.org/outdoorwisconsin

566

00:24:47,019 --> 00:24:44,149

and coming up in Sydney on the 7th of

567

00:24:50,029 --> 00:24:47,029

February we have Australian skeptic

568

00:24:53,520 --> 00:24:50,039

skeptics in the pub this month the talk

569

00:24:55,890 --> 00:24:53,530

will be citizen science

570

00:24:57,660 --> 00:24:55,900

now this is from 6:00 p.m. in the

571

00:25:00,860 --> 00:24:57,670

Occidental hotel which is in New York

572

00:25:03,330 --> 00:25:00,870

Street Sydney just near Wynyard station

573

00:25:05,700 --> 00:25:03,340

again I certainly intend to be there

574

00:25:07,970 --> 00:25:05,710

myself to do some interviews citizen

575

00:25:11,130 --> 00:25:07,980

science it's got it all big data

576

00:25:12,930 --> 00:25:11,140

feelgood factor it's an antidote to fake

577

00:25:15,990 --> 00:25:12,940

news and it's making the world a better

578

00:25:17,940 --> 00:25:16,000

place so why is the scientific community

579

00:25:21,150 --> 00:25:17,950

still divided on whether it's worth

580

00:25:23,220 --> 00:25:21,160

engaging with citizen science come in

581

00:25:26,160 --> 00:25:23,230

here Paul Fleming's from the Australian

582

00:25:28,800 --> 00:25:26,170

Museum and Patrick Tuohey --get from the

583

00:25:32,070 --> 00:25:28,810

Office of environment and heritage put

584

00:25:34,860 --> 00:25:32,080

the case for why citizen science has so

585

00:25:37,500 --> 00:25:34,870

much to offer and you can check out both

586

00:25:40,820 --> 00:25:37,510

these events by links in this week's

587

00:25:44,250 --> 00:25:40,830

show notes or by using the meetup

588

00:25:47,640 --> 00:25:44,260

website and application just search for

589

00:25:48,780 --> 00:25:47,650

Australian skeptics or social skeptics

590

00:26:00,950 --> 00:25:48,790

camera

591

00:26:08,240 --> 00:26:06,200

[Music]

592

00:26:09,800 --> 00:26:08,250

barry williams from the australian

593

00:26:12,260 --> 00:26:09,810

skeptics is speaking here with Newsradio

594

00:26:14,150 --> 00:26:12,270

science editor steel carry ila skeptics

595

00:26:15,770 --> 00:26:14,160

a journal quarterly Journal published by

596

00:26:17,060 --> 00:26:15,780

the skeptic in which we cover the broad

597

00:26:18,830 --> 00:26:17,070

range of things were interested in

598

00:26:20,780 --> 00:26:18,840

paranormal and theater scientific claims

599

00:26:21,950 --> 00:26:20,790

that sort of stuff I bet you were really

600

00:26:23,720 --> 00:26:21,960

interested a few weeks ago when the

601
00:26:26,480 --> 00:26:23,730
latest one the Water Products came on

602
00:26:28,430 --> 00:26:26,490
the market oh yes in fact we spoke to

603
00:26:31,130 --> 00:26:28,440
some of your colleagues at on Media

604
00:26:32,450 --> 00:26:31,140
Watch on ABC TV about that and gave them

605
00:26:34,490 --> 00:26:32,460
some good information I hope I'm there

606
00:26:36,260 --> 00:26:34,500
but yeah we deliberately on Newsradio

607
00:26:37,670 --> 00:26:36,270
Scientology we'd totally avoided the

608
00:26:39,560 --> 00:26:37,680
topic because there was no scientific

609
00:26:41,300 --> 00:26:39,570
backing for anything claims being made

610
00:26:43,730 --> 00:26:41,310
and we sort of figure why given

611
00:26:45,380 --> 00:26:43,740
publicity yeah well precisely the

612
00:26:48,260 --> 00:26:45,390
correct attitude actually I mean the

613
00:26:50,330 --> 00:26:48,270

story got legs that I didn't deserve and

614

00:26:53,360 --> 00:26:50,340

people saw a lots and lots of bottles of

615

00:26:54,950 --> 00:26:53,370

water I would share of GBF jbf effect I

616

00:26:57,500 --> 00:26:54,960

suspect does that worry you that the

617

00:27:00,320 --> 00:26:57,510

standard of Australian journalism is

618

00:27:02,690 --> 00:27:00,330

such that supposedly reputable sections

619

00:27:03,200 --> 00:27:02,700

of the media will give stories like that

620

00:27:05,120 --> 00:27:03,210

legs

621

00:27:07,130 --> 00:27:05,130

it absolutely upholds me as a matter of

622

00:27:09,320 --> 00:27:07,140

fact of one of my great bait players is

623

00:27:11,690 --> 00:27:09,330

the lowering standards in our media

624

00:27:14,240 --> 00:27:11,700

journalists are properly skeptical of

625

00:27:15,650 --> 00:27:14,250

political claims and economic claims and

626

00:27:17,420 --> 00:27:15,660

things like that and I go along with a

627

00:27:20,270 --> 00:27:17,430

great deal of interest and and

628

00:27:21,590 --> 00:27:20,280

governments and large institutions can't

629

00:27:23,810 --> 00:27:21,600

get away with anything when it gets to

630

00:27:25,010 --> 00:27:23,820

something at scientific journalists sort

631

00:27:26,480 --> 00:27:25,020

of throw their hands in the air and say

632

00:27:28,190 --> 00:27:26,490

I don't understand that sort of stuff

633

00:27:29,930 --> 00:27:28,200

and any sort of rubbish will get through

634

00:27:32,240 --> 00:27:29,940

well it's something scientific it seems

635

00:27:33,530 --> 00:27:32,250

to be a short circuit in the brain this

636

00:27:35,030 --> 00:27:33,540

at all I wouldn't understand that it's

637

00:27:37,430 --> 00:27:35,040

too hard for me and they just publish

638

00:27:38,660 --> 00:27:37,440

anything the eyes glaze over and all of

639

00:27:40,460 --> 00:27:38,670

a sudden anyone who knows anything about

640

00:27:42,410 --> 00:27:40,470

science becomes what they term a boffin

641

00:27:44,240 --> 00:27:42,420

indeed I love this thing with the

642

00:27:45,710 --> 00:27:44,250

planetary alignment which is happening

643

00:27:47,360 --> 00:27:45,720

now it's not really in the limit but

644

00:27:49,910 --> 00:27:47,370

it's a lineup of planets almost in

645

00:27:51,500 --> 00:27:49,920

alignment and the claims that you know

646

00:27:53,090 --> 00:27:51,510

all sorts of wonderful things are going

647

00:27:54,260 --> 00:27:53,100

to happen this time considering last

648

00:27:55,580 --> 00:27:54,270

time this happened it was all supposed

649

00:27:56,900 --> 00:27:55,590

to be doom and gloom this time

650

00:27:58,640 --> 00:27:56,910

everyone's gonna be really nice to each

651
00:28:00,980 --> 00:27:58,650
other yeah interesting thing about that

652
00:28:02,150 --> 00:28:00,990
planetary alignment actually I've just

653
00:28:03,740 --> 00:28:02,160
finished reading a book called bad

654
00:28:06,170 --> 00:28:03,750
astronomy looking into a lot of these

655
00:28:06,920 --> 00:28:06,180
sort of claims and the closest alignment

656
00:28:10,240 --> 00:28:06,930
of planets

657
00:28:13,100 --> 00:28:10,250
in recorded history was in I think 1162

658
00:28:15,200 --> 00:28:13,110
when the planets most of the planets

659
00:28:16,880 --> 00:28:15,210
lined up and about a about a 10 degree

660
00:28:18,840 --> 00:28:16,890
span of the sky and of course not

661
00:28:20,639 --> 00:28:18,850
nothing really startling happening

662
00:28:23,129 --> 00:28:20,649
sixty-two or nothing redacted to find

663
00:28:26,159 --> 00:28:23,139

out about and then of course there was

664

00:28:28,190 --> 00:28:26,169

one in nineteen sixties where the

665

00:28:30,870 --> 00:28:28,200

planets lined up to about 18 degrees

666

00:28:32,070 --> 00:28:30,880

that were supposed to call do cause doom

667

00:28:34,740 --> 00:28:32,080

and catastrophe and of course nothing

668

00:28:36,240 --> 00:28:34,750

happened then of course last there was

669

00:28:41,610 --> 00:28:36,250

two years ago about this time two years

670

00:28:42,960 --> 00:28:41,620

ago 2000 there was a 25 degree alignment

671

00:28:44,490 --> 00:28:42,970

so-called of the planets and that

672

00:28:46,230 --> 00:28:44,500

included the Sun and everyone said

673

00:28:48,509 --> 00:28:46,240

that's it the world will come to an end

674

00:28:49,799 --> 00:28:48,519

earthquakes you know goddamn yeah there

675

00:28:51,119 --> 00:28:49,809

are gonna be here for quite some time

676

00:28:52,590 --> 00:28:51,129

wives and the polls we're going to

677

00:28:55,740 --> 00:28:52,600

switch and almost anything you can think

678

00:28:57,450 --> 00:28:55,750

of because absolutely zero happen as you

679

00:28:59,129 --> 00:28:57,460

would expect with the famous saying what

680

00:29:01,350 --> 00:28:59,139

I'm looking up my window Agassi for

681

00:29:02,820 --> 00:29:01,360

Carver amazing one of that name it

682

00:29:04,889 --> 00:29:02,830

doesn't mean anything but every time

683

00:29:08,999 --> 00:29:04,899

this happens the same sort of people

684

00:29:11,060 --> 00:29:09,009

keep raising their heads and others keep

685

00:29:13,320 --> 00:29:11,070

listening to them what does that say it

686

00:29:15,119 --> 00:29:13,330

and well again if you get a lot of it

687

00:29:16,860 --> 00:29:15,129

gets back to the fact that most people

688

00:29:19,470 --> 00:29:16,870

don't have the faintest idea of anything

689

00:29:21,419 --> 00:29:19,480

to these about slants I mean if you

690

00:29:23,039 --> 00:29:21,429

understand even a small bit about of

691

00:29:26,820 --> 00:29:23,049

astronomy in astronomy is by far the

692

00:29:28,379 --> 00:29:26,830

most popular of the amateur Sciences you

693

00:29:29,850 --> 00:29:28,389

would know that you know the number of

694

00:29:31,529 --> 00:29:29,860

planets in the solar system and at any

695

00:29:32,730 --> 00:29:31,539

given minute and then they given day in

696

00:29:34,950 --> 00:29:32,740

any given year they all have to be

697

00:29:36,600 --> 00:29:34,960

somewhere and they take of all sorts of

698

00:29:39,029 --> 00:29:36,610

configurations with each other as you

699

00:29:41,070 --> 00:29:39,039

would expect and but just because

700

00:29:42,600 --> 00:29:41,080

suddenly go out of the script at night

701
00:29:44,100 --> 00:29:42,610
and you can see a number of them in the

702
00:29:46,740 --> 00:29:44,110
sky at once people start saying this

703
00:29:48,960 --> 00:29:46,750
must be mysterious why do you watch the

704
00:29:50,610 --> 00:29:48,970
x-files no no you can't watch that sort

705
00:29:54,360 --> 00:29:50,620
of thing you can't a sit down and enjoy

706
00:29:58,289 --> 00:29:54,370
it I it's not that I mean I have no

707
00:29:59,909 --> 00:29:58,299
moral objection to fantasy at all it's

708
00:30:01,769 --> 00:29:59,919
just enough I've always been a fan of

709
00:30:03,240 --> 00:30:01,779
science fiction I like I like reading

710
00:30:05,549 --> 00:30:03,250
sponsoring you like Star Trek things

711
00:30:07,499 --> 00:30:05,559
like that you know just think that one

712
00:30:08,909 --> 00:30:07,509
should get a cameraman pointing out

713
00:30:11,310 --> 00:30:08,919

isn't a director but it's like a lot of

714

00:30:13,200 --> 00:30:11,320

the value of science fiction lives and

715

00:30:15,930 --> 00:30:13,210

exercising your own imagination if

716

00:30:16,950 --> 00:30:15,940

you're watching a movie version that

717

00:30:19,499 --> 00:30:16,960

you're relying on somebody else's

718

00:30:21,629 --> 00:30:19,509

imagination and it sort of destroys your

719

00:30:23,159 --> 00:30:21,639

illusions or dominance of course you've

720

00:30:25,200 --> 00:30:23,169

got to admit that you know today's

721

00:30:26,850 --> 00:30:25,210

science fiction most likely will be

722

00:30:28,990 --> 00:30:26,860

tomorrow's science fact that's been the

723

00:30:30,880 --> 00:30:29,000

that's been the real surfer Oh

724

00:30:32,140 --> 00:30:30,890

to a very large degree that's right the

725

00:30:34,870 --> 00:30:32,150

interesting thing about it is though

726

00:30:36,220 --> 00:30:34,880

that no matter how much we imagine the

727

00:30:37,930 --> 00:30:36,230

future is going to be different we're

728

00:30:39,310 --> 00:30:37,940

always far too conservative with our

729

00:30:41,500 --> 00:30:39,320

imagining science fiction writers

730

00:30:43,930 --> 00:30:41,510

actually don't predict the future all

731

00:30:45,490 --> 00:30:43,940

that accurately because they love

732

00:30:47,440 --> 00:30:45,500

thinking with today's brain about what

733

00:30:49,570 --> 00:30:47,450

tomorrow is going to be like and you

734

00:30:51,669 --> 00:30:49,580

know scientific and technological

735

00:30:53,200 --> 00:30:51,679

changes have been much more rapid than

736

00:30:54,850 --> 00:30:53,210

actually if you trace it through science

737

00:30:57,520 --> 00:30:54,860

fiction in reality they're much more

738

00:30:59,770 --> 00:30:57,530

rapid now the skeptics have a new CD at

739

00:31:01,810 --> 00:30:59,780

a cd-rom which goes back through the

740

00:31:04,659 --> 00:31:01,820

history of the publication tell me about

741

00:31:10,690 --> 00:31:04,669

it yeah we we've been publishing a

742

00:31:12,070 --> 00:31:10,700

magazine now for 22 years and we kept

743

00:31:14,350 --> 00:31:12,080

back issues because people are always

744

00:31:16,510 --> 00:31:14,360

interested things so we decided we'd and

745

00:31:18,970 --> 00:31:16,520

we had one of our members is on it we're

746

00:31:21,149 --> 00:31:18,980

bang on computer stuff and he said no

747

00:31:23,950 --> 00:31:21,159

problem we'll translate it to a CD I

748

00:31:25,210 --> 00:31:23,960

needed all the hard work and it was hard

749

00:31:27,789 --> 00:31:25,220

work we got a lot of it we didn't have

750

00:31:29,440 --> 00:31:27,799

an electronic format so it's scanned it

751

00:31:31,539 --> 00:31:29,450

all and put it into a CD and there's 20

752

00:31:33,370 --> 00:31:31,549

years worth of our magazine it covers

753

00:31:36,299 --> 00:31:33,380

every issue that we've ever covered from

754

00:31:38,980 --> 00:31:36,309

alternative medicine creationism

755

00:31:41,470 --> 00:31:38,990

pseudoscience of various kinds UFOs the

756

00:31:44,500 --> 00:31:41,480

whole box and dice astrology those sort

757

00:31:46,720 --> 00:31:44,510

of New Age beliefs and we put it all on

758

00:31:48,310 --> 00:31:46,730

a CD we a couple of books we published

759

00:31:50,770 --> 00:31:48,320

in the past or gone on there as well and

760

00:31:53,950 --> 00:31:50,780

people can get that method that CD from

761

00:31:56,080 --> 00:31:53,960

us and on reams of implement more than

762

00:31:57,490 --> 00:31:56,090

4,000 pages worth of information they're

763

00:31:59,380 --> 00:31:57,500

a single topic a single story that

764

00:32:02,710 --> 00:31:59,390

stands out some of the the weird ones

765

00:32:04,810 --> 00:32:02,720

with health claims are but peculiar the

766

00:32:07,000 --> 00:32:04,820

the group of Christian fundamentalists

767

00:32:08,740 --> 00:32:07,010

who insist the universe was built 6,000

768

00:32:10,630 --> 00:32:08,750

years ago and that they have scientific

769

00:32:12,549 --> 00:32:10,640

evidence for it's pretty weird I had a

770

00:32:14,350 --> 00:32:12,559

friend who was into all that he believed

771

00:32:16,810 --> 00:32:14,360

that I sort of told him all about how

772

00:32:19,390 --> 00:32:16,820

things will decay in time and how you

773

00:32:21,370 --> 00:32:19,400

can use carbon dating to prove things

774

00:32:24,010 --> 00:32:21,380

are older than six or seven thousand

775

00:32:26,110 --> 00:32:24,020

years and and no it's all made up he

776

00:32:27,880 --> 00:32:26,120

said you can't convince some people of

777

00:32:29,620 --> 00:32:27,890

the scientific facts behind an issue

778

00:32:31,419 --> 00:32:29,630

they don't want to hear those sort of

779

00:32:33,070 --> 00:32:31,429

things and a lot of a lot of strange

780

00:32:34,840 --> 00:32:33,080

beliefs have a pseudo religious

781

00:32:37,480 --> 00:32:34,850

component that one is just a bit more

782

00:32:38,799 --> 00:32:37,490

blatantly religious but if they know the

783

00:32:40,270 --> 00:32:38,809

answers before they start asking the

784

00:32:41,529 --> 00:32:40,280

questions you see but any answer that

785

00:32:42,570 --> 00:32:41,539

comes up that doesn't match their

786

00:32:45,210 --> 00:32:42,580

prejudices or pretty

787

00:32:47,310 --> 00:32:45,220

positions is automatically described as

788

00:32:48,779 --> 00:32:47,320

being fallacious well that's not the way

789

00:32:50,549 --> 00:32:48,789

science works I mean science is my

790

00:32:53,220 --> 00:32:50,559

doodles are wrong predictions over the

791

00:32:55,080 --> 00:32:53,230

years finest F but where you learn from

792

00:32:57,870 --> 00:32:55,090

your mistakes across our kids going head

793

00:32:59,610 --> 00:32:57,880

and progressing whereas things like

794

00:33:02,580 --> 00:32:59,620

religion and the stick with the same old

795

00:33:04,259 --> 00:33:02,590

tried-and-true barry williams on the

796

00:33:06,720 --> 00:33:04,269

australian skeptics who is skeptical of

797

00:33:07,430 --> 00:33:06,730

everything except the limitations of

798

00:33:17,690 --> 00:33:07,440

science bed

799

00:33:23,580 --> 00:33:21,030

calling all skeptics or listeners the

800

00:33:25,950 --> 00:33:23,590

you live end or near Glasgow are already

801
00:33:28,620 --> 00:33:25,960
planning to visit sometime then you're

802
00:33:31,770 --> 00:33:28,630
in luck because Glasgow skeptics have

803
00:33:33,360 --> 00:33:31,780
got your Monday nights sorted we are

804
00:33:35,880 --> 00:33:33,370
committed to filling up every available

805
00:33:38,940 --> 00:33:35,890
Monday night talks on science and

806
00:33:41,220 --> 00:33:38,950
skepticism past speakers include Eugenie

807
00:33:43,530 --> 00:33:41,230
Scott Jerry Coyne make up Marshall Nate

808
00:33:46,710 --> 00:33:43,540
Phelps tormund Cecil from cognitive

809
00:33:48,870 --> 00:33:46,720
dissonance PZ Myers Richard Wiseman EC

810
00:33:51,480 --> 00:33:48,880
drilling Noah Heath and Eli from the

811
00:33:53,820 --> 00:33:51,490
scathing atheist Simon Singh Rebecca

812
00:33:56,730 --> 00:33:53,830
Watson and a multitude of local

813
00:33:59,070 --> 00:33:56,740

academics and skeptics there's literally

814

00:34:01,410 --> 00:33:59,080

nothing better you can do on a Monday in

815

00:34:04,230 --> 00:34:01,420

Glasgow it doesn't involve taking your

816

00:34:06,390 --> 00:34:04,240

clothes off so come join us we've also

817

00:34:08,639 --> 00:34:06,400

got a vibrant online community you can

818

00:34:10,919 --> 00:34:08,649

find us on Facebook Twitter and get

819

00:34:16,860 --> 00:34:10,929

involved with the discussion class go

820

00:34:16,870 --> 00:34:27,559

[Music]

821

00:34:33,480 --> 00:34:30,089

thank you for listening to the skeptic

822

00:34:37,079 --> 00:34:33,490

zone and a big shout-out to Zack - Zack

823

00:34:40,649 --> 00:34:37,089

who now likes to tell people what a

824

00:34:44,280 --> 00:34:40,659

silly idea ear candling is because his

825

00:34:46,710 --> 00:34:44,290

mother told me a nice little bit of

826
00:34:49,680 --> 00:34:46,720
feedback from from people who listen to

827
00:34:53,159 --> 00:34:49,690
the skeptic zone yes ear candling is

828
00:34:55,770 --> 00:34:53,169
very stupid sack I am looking forward to

829
00:34:57,450 --> 00:34:55,780
catching up with friends at skeptics in

830
00:34:59,460 --> 00:34:57,460
the pub this week in Sydney as you heard

831
00:35:01,680 --> 00:34:59,470
a bit earlier on in the show hopefully

832
00:35:03,870 --> 00:35:01,690
may not will be there and will be

833
00:35:06,270 --> 00:35:03,880
running around doing interviews and a

834
00:35:08,160 --> 00:35:06,280
big THANK YOU to Trish Han who last

835
00:35:10,530 --> 00:35:08,170
month that skeptics in the pub stood in

836
00:35:14,460 --> 00:35:10,540
for Maynard and I and did some

837
00:35:16,140 --> 00:35:14,470
interviews of her own Trish look out now

838
00:35:19,200 --> 00:35:16,150

I know how good you are at interviewing

839

00:35:21,569 --> 00:35:19,210

don't be surprised if I ask you to do

840

00:35:23,099 --> 00:35:21,579

some more thank you very much to my good

841

00:35:24,599 --> 00:35:23,109

friend Lara Benham who you hear

842

00:35:27,089 --> 00:35:24,609

occasionally on the sceptic zone who

843

00:35:30,870 --> 00:35:27,099

looked after all my recording gear while

844

00:35:33,900 --> 00:35:30,880

I was away all bar a little bit of gear

845

00:35:35,760 --> 00:35:33,910

I use on the road but all my good

846

00:35:37,980 --> 00:35:35,770

microphones she looked after Thank You

847

00:35:41,190 --> 00:35:37,990

Lara and while I'm in the thanking mood

848

00:35:43,829 --> 00:35:41,200

big thank you to my dear friend dr.

849

00:35:46,500 --> 00:35:43,839

eugenie Scott in Berkeley who was so

850

00:35:48,990 --> 00:35:46,510

kind to me while I was visiting the area

851
00:35:50,960 --> 00:35:49,000
but for this week this is Richard

852
00:35:57,960 --> 00:35:50,970
Saunders signing off from hot and muggy

853
00:36:00,960 --> 00:35:57,970
Sydney Australia you've been listening

854
00:36:05,490 --> 00:36:00,970
to the skeptic zone podcast please visit

855
00:36:08,549 --> 00:36:05,500
our website at WWF Tech's on TV for show

856
00:36:12,049 --> 00:36:08,559
notes contacts and to access the back

857
00:36:14,730 --> 00:36:12,059
catalog of episodes going back to 2008

858
00:36:18,000 --> 00:36:14,740
you can follow the skeptic zone podcast

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00:36:20,309 --> 00:36:18,010
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860
00:36:21,590 --> 00:36:20,319
Facebook page or leave a review on

861
00:36:23,870 --> 00:36:21,600
iTunes

862
00:36:27,230 --> 00:36:23,880
you can also support the sceptic zone

863
00:36:29,950 --> 00:36:27,240

via patreon or PayPal the sceptic zone

864

00:36:32,360 --> 00:36:29,960

podcast is an independent production

865

00:36:34,460 --> 00:36:32,370

reviews and opinions expressed on the

866

00:36:36,830 --> 00:36:34,470

sceptic zone are not necessarily those

867

00:36:38,610 --> 00:36:36,840

of Australian skeptics or any other

868

00:36:52,280 --> 00:36:38,620

skeptical organization

869

00:36:55,800 --> 00:36:54,390

hello people who listen the

870

00:36:57,240 --> 00:36:55,810

afterthoughts people who listen at the

871

00:37:00,660 --> 00:36:57,250

end of the show yes we can play the dice

872

00:37:15,350 --> 00:37:00,670

game again in fact hmm let me looking in

873

00:37:18,960 --> 00:37:15,360

the cupboard behind me okay the classic

874

00:37:21,630 --> 00:37:18,970

six-sided die this week instead of the

875

00:37:23,250 --> 00:37:21,640

10 sided die and I have one here which

876

00:37:26,520 --> 00:37:23,260

was a souvenir from the South Point

877

00:37:30,720 --> 00:37:26,530

Casino from the days of Tam how about

878

00:37:35,130 --> 00:37:30,730

that it's a red sort of semi-transparent

879

00:37:38,310 --> 00:37:35,140

dye with a serial number one 992 if

880

00:37:40,370 --> 00:37:38,320

you're interested Las Vegas Nevada okay

881

00:37:44,040 --> 00:37:40,380

so six sided here we go use your

882

00:37:47,520 --> 00:37:44,050

mystical predicting power and see if you

883

00:37:49,590 --> 00:37:47,530

can predict the number to be shown on

884

00:37:54,630 --> 00:37:49,600

the top side of the die here we go

885

00:37:56,000 --> 00:37:54,640

throwing now three first numbers see

886

00:38:05,850 --> 00:37:56,010

let's try it again

887

00:38:07,980 --> 00:38:05,860

here we go six and the last number fell

888

00:38:13,470 --> 00:38:07,990

off the table mm-hmm always does that