

"I think we have more machinery of government than is necessary, too many parasites living on the labor of the industrious." —

Thomas Jefferson
(1743 - 1826)

Phactum

The Newsletter and Propaganda Organ of the
Philadelphia Association for Critical Thinking
April 2010

editor: Ray Haupt email: phactpublicity@aol.com
Webmaster: Wes Powers <http://phact.org/>

Saturday, April 17, 2010 at 2:00 PM

At Community College of Philadelphia in the Small Auditorium in the Bonnell Building.
Enter on 17th street about 300 feet south of Spring Garden Street.

Dr. David Cattell, Chairman of the Physics Department of Community College of Philadelphia, will host Dr. David Cragin, a toxicologist., who will discuss:



Cartoon by Gruhn
gruhn@webdonuts.com
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Financial meltdowns, man-made disasters, and the human mind: Risk and numbers

Why do sophisticated companies with intelligent employees make poor decisions managing risk? Are the challenges in managing risk just an issue of education or are there evolutionary reasons why people have difficulty in understanding risk? Dr. David W. Cragin, Adjunct Professor, Department of Health Policy and Public Health, University of the Sciences, Philadelphia and Professor, International Program in Pharmaceutical Engineering Management of Peking University in Beijing, China and Councilor of PhACT will give a talk that explores numbers and how our mind evaluates and interprets them.

... as all history informs us, there has been in every State & Kingdom a constant kind of warfare between the governing & governed: the one striving to obtain more for its support, and the other to pay less. And this has alone occasioned great convulsions, actual civil wars, ending either in dethroning of the Princes, or enslaving of the people. Generally indeed the ruling power carries its point, the revenues of princes constantly increasing, and we see that they are never satisfied, but always in want of more. The more the people are discontented with the oppression of taxes; the greater need the prince has of money to distribute among his partisans and pay the troops that are to suppress all resistance, and enable him to plunder at pleasure. There is scarce a king in a hundred who would not, if he could, follow the example of Pharaoh, get first all the peoples money, then all their lands, and then make them and their children servants for ever ... Benjamin Franklin

Errors

Wes Powers had sharp eyes when he noticed a typo invisible to a computer spelling checker. It seems that Phactum's misspelling prone editor declared in the PhACT Calendar that on Sunday, May 17, 2010 "Joe Nickell and other PhACT folks will embark on an expedition to **fine** the Jersey Devil in the New Jersey Pine Barrens." That is all fine, says Wes, but just how much should we fine him, and for what? Harumph ... fine thing!!

Letters to the Editor

Editor: As a skeptic and a classicist I thought I should point out that the quotation attributed to Cicero, which appears on p. 2 of the February issue of Phactum, is false. The source of the quotation: A Pillar of Iron, by Taylor Caldwell (1965), is a work of historical fiction.

Here's a good note on the history of this spurious line:

<http://bit.ly/a05fbu>

Dennis M. McHenry II
Latin Teacher | AHS,
Allentown NJ

“The budget should be balanced; the treasury should be refilled; national debt should be reduced; and the arrogance of public officials should be controlled.” – NOT said by Cicero (106-43 B.C.), but should have been.

Editors note: My thanks to Mr. McHenry. I appreciate being corrected when making factual errors, misquotes, misattributions, etc.

Editor: In the March 2010 issue you mention that Senator Arlen Specter recently said \$45 billion is lost annually to Medicare fraud, and ask how this could be known without action's being already under way against the perpetrators. Although it's unfortunate you apparently didn't get the chance to ask him to explain the basis for this figure, it's not hard to imagine how it might have been derived.

For instance, it may be that data are available on the total number of each sort of procedure billed to Medicare, and that data are also available on the total number of each sort of procedure performed in facilities equipped for it. If discrepancies are found between these figures for a given procedure, it might be inferred that the difference is due to fraud. This inference could be made with even greater confidence if it's found that the first figure is always, or almost always, greater than the second. Another type of evidence that the cause of

the discrepancies was fraud would be a finding that the first figure tends to be larger more often for expensive procedures, and smaller more often for less expensive ones.

Yet, if the data are available only in cumulative form, it could still be impossible to identify the individual fraudsters. If Specter suggested that the health care bill would help combat this problem, he may have been thinking of its provision for funding of a transition from paper to electronic medical records. This might greatly facilitate cross-correlation of data on procedures performed vs. billed, and thereby make it possible to identify those committing fraud.

Eric Hamell
Philadelphia

Editor: I was somewhat surprised to hear Ted Goertzel, as quoted by Becky Strickland in the March 2010 issue, say there's been very little scholarly research on conspiracy theories. I don't know about full-length books, but there's a very influential essay by historian Richard Hofstadter, "The Paranoid Style in American Politics," that first appeared in the November 1964 issue of Harper's. The Wikipedia article about it, at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Paranoid_Style_in_American_Politics, includes a link to the full text.

Strickland is also not the first to suggest that conspiracy theorists have a paranoid personality. Something I read as a teenager (I think it was sociologist Hans Toch's *The Social Psychology of Social Movements*) discussed at length the relation between conspiracy theories and what Adorno et al. had dubbed "the authoritarian personality" in a book of the same title.

“A Conspiracy!” cried the delighted lady, clapping her hands. “Of all things, I do like a Conspiracy! It’s so interesting!” - Lewis Carroll, *My Lady, Sylvie and Bruno* (1889)

Also, several years ago Skeptic had a front-cover article titled "Farrakhanspiracy!" which explored the close kinship between the world views of Louis Farrakhan and Pat Robertson, both apparently derived from Seventh Day Adventism.

The Hofstadter essay is available as part of a collection of the same title from powells.com, as is the Adorno book. Eric Hamell
Philadelphia

Editor: This article from Wired provides a fascinating look into the fact that placebos used in clinical studies seem to be becoming more & more effective. For the same reasons given in this article, alternative therapies could also give users an apparent benefit (at least for psychiatric and pain related issues):

http://www.wired.com/medtech/drugs/magazine/17-09/ff_placebo_effect?currentPage=all

It's a fascinating article that is also very credible. David W. Cragin, Ph.D., DABT, Adjunct Professor

Department of Health Policy and Public Health,
University of the Sciences,
Philadelphia

Editor: I enjoyed the March 2010 Phactum, With the colorful format, the many cartoons and images, and the usual wide variety of subjects, it's far more than a newsletter of local events. Even so, the new calendar format is a mild improvement, and I appreciate the extensive coverage of the Wagner Free Institute of Science, Science on Tap, The College of Physicians of Philadelphia, the APS Museum calendar, The Academy of Natural Sciences Center for Environmental Policy, The Penn (Univ. of PA) Science Cafe, and the Chemical Heritage Foundation. It's hard to imagine a better resource and guide for Philadelphians and visitors. Keep up the great work!

I'd like to make a couple of corrections on my own articles in that issue. In "...Other Earths?", paragraph 6, I misstated the relationship between planetary orbital distance and the period of a star's wobble; in fact, the period INCREASES for greater distances between planet and star, while the FREQUENCY of the wobble decreases. Also, in "Apocalypse 2012...», the last three dates shown should have been 12/21/2012, rather than December 12. I hope those mistakes were more amusing than confusing for your readers.

As always, I'm looking forward to the next issue.
Paul Schlueter III
Dallas, PA

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Various Ruminations

Collected/Written by Ray Haupt
(with help from others)

American History Buffs

I had the good fortune to attend a meeting of ARRTOP, the **American Revolution Round Table of Philadelphia**. This is a local group dedicated to the study of America during the Revolutionary Period. The meeting focused on Revolutionary War Spy Technology, the speaker being John A. Nagy, scholar and author of the book "Invisible Ink" (see page 5). ARRTOP events are free and some are listed in the Calendar section of this newsletter. Check out www.rrttop.com

Mystery Beast Sighting

Here is a web link about a mystery beast sighting in New Jersey ... a few miles north of the New Jersey Pine Barrens. Perhaps in the course of the PhACT Jersey Devil Expedition in May perhaps we can fine him.

<http://www.app.com/article/20100312/NEWS/3120357/>

Mystery-beast-glimpsed-twice-in-Manalapan-Marlboro-area

And here is a second sighting in that area, a mountain lion it is claimed. No evidence has been found to present to an expert other than a footprint likely to be a dog or coyote.



Cartoon by Dave Lowe
<http://www.paraabnormalthecomic.com/>
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We shall fine the coyote too.

<http://www.app.com/article/20100315/NEWS/100315081/Another-mountain-lion-sighting-reported-in-Manalapan>

Government Efficiency

Get a load of this! Bob Shallit, a reporter at the Sacramento Bee, reported on March 13, 2010 that two IRS agents delivered a bill to a California business man, a car-wash operator, demanding the princely sum of \$.04 for delinquent tax payment from 2006 plus \$202.31 in fines and interest; a grand total of \$202.35.

Two agents were dispatched to collect a less than chicken feed account. It seems the IRS has some deficiencies in discretion and prioritization, generally not reassuring traits, but might be useful to fine the Jersey Devil.

<http://www.sacbee.com/2010/03/13/2604016/irs-suits-pay-visit-to-car-wash.html>

A Win in the UK for Science Based Medicine:

Simon Singh wins appeal in libel suit.

Dr. Stephen Barrett reported in Consumer Health Digest, April 1, 2010:

British science writer Simon Singh has won an appeal in the libel suit filed against him by the British Chiropractic Association (BCA). The case arose after Singh wrote in a newspaper column:

"The British Chiropractic Association claims that their members can help treat children with colic, sleeping and feeding problems, frequent ear infections, asthma and prolonged crying, even though there is not a jot of evidence. This organization is the respectable face of the chiropractic profession and yet it happily promotes bogus treatments."

In ordinary English, this passage would be interpreted as Singh's opinion that the treatment claims are false and that the BCA promotes them anyway. It would not mean that the BCA believes they are false. However, the trial judge ruled that the word "bogus" must be interpreted as "deliberately dishonest," which would mean that instead of examining the truth or falsity of the claims, the trial would focus on whether or not the BCA believed them. In overturning the ruling, the Court of Appeal concluded that Singh's statement was an expression of opinion that he has a right to defend. <http://www.casewatch.org/foreign/singh/appeal.shtml> *The BCA can appeal to a higher court, withdraw the suit, or proceed to a trial that is likely to embarrass the chiropractic profession.*

British libel laws are heavily weighted against writers because suits are not easily dismissed and defense costs are so high that few defendants can afford to make their case. A campaign to modify the law has aroused considerable support from the press, legislative leaders, and the general public. Interest in the case also appears to have had an effect on chiropractic Web sites. Last year that hundreds of chiropractic Web sites were taken down following questions by bloggers and urgent instructions from chiropractic organizations to avoid breaking the rules on medical claims for chiropractic services.

<http://www.quackometer.net/blog/2009/06/chiropractors-told-to-take-down-their.html>

Quackwatch and Dr. Barrett need your help in maintaining and expanding their activities. If you haven't already done so, please read <http://www.ncahf.org/digest09/09-45.html> and send a contribution.

Despite recession, Tooth Fairy remains generous

Delta Dental, a nation wide dental insurance company, has released the fascinating statistics that Tooth Fairy payments are now \$2.13 per tooth, up 13% over last year despite the recession. We commend the Tooth Fairy for helping keep the economy robust.



<http://www.walletpop.com/blog/2010/03/24/despite-recession-tooth-fairy-remains-generous/>

The Pennsylvania Lottery, Innumeracy, and 7's

The Philadelphia Inquirer reported that on April 1, 2010 the Pennsylvania Lottery winning number was 7777. This was a very popular number and 3,107 gamblers happily collected \$2,500 for a \$.50 bet, \$5,000 for a \$1.00 bet.

On this particular drawing the state lost money having to shell out \$7.77 million to the lucky winners. Furthermore, on that day the Super 7 jackpot was \$7.3 million and the Cash 5 top prize was \$770,000. This sounds like Nirvana for Numerologists.

The article goes on to state that since the Big Four lottery began in 1980 the number 7777 has won only twice. Only twice? The probability of a win on any day is 1/10,000 and there have been about 10,700 days since then. Two wins sounds pretty good, but not unusual.

Also, there is something fishy about the \$7.77 million payout. If all winning ticket holders had bet \$.50 the payout would be \$7.77 million. None bet \$1.00?

See the article by Peter Mucha at:

<http://www.philly.com/philly/news/89689007.html>

On this day in 1790

On April 17, 1790, exactly 220 years before the April 2010 PhACT Meeting, Philadelphia's greatest citizen, Benjamin Franklin, died. Franklin was born in Boston on January 6, 1706 and was the tenth son of Josiah Franklin, a soap maker. Franklin was a man of immense curiosity, broad interests, and accomplishments. He has been aptly described in at least one biography as a "polymath", a person of great and wide learning. As a young man in 1728, Franklin had composed his own mock epitaph which read:

The Body of

B. Franklin

Printer;

Like the Cover of an old Book,

Its Contents torn out,

And strip of its Lettering and Gilding,

Lies here, Food for Worms.

But the Work shall not be whilly lost:

For it will, as he believ'd, appear once more,

In a new & more perfect Edition,

Corrected and Amended

By the Author.

He was born on January 6, 1706.

Died 17

Franklin was buried beside his wife, Deborah, in Christ Church burial ground at 2nd and Market Streets in Philadelphia. The inscription on the stone is simply "*Benjamin and Deborah Franklin—1790*".

Help!!!!

The PhACT council would like to apply for 501c3 (formal nonprofit status) to help us attract a funding base, to allow deduction of contributions, and continue to host excellent speakers and programs. Our members represent a diverse array of talents and abilities. We would appreciate hearing from any member who could assist us in applying for 501c3 status. If you can lend a hand with this please contact our president, Eric Krieg, at EricKrieg@verizon.net



We can also use your help in other ways such as being an event organizer to help present programming and other tasks that arise for small organizations. As always we are eager to get your input in letters and articles for Phactum. Please, take time to write and send letters and articles to Ray Haupt at phactpublicity@aol.com

Invisible Ink: Spycraft of the American Revolution by John A. Nagy

Publisher: Westholme Publishing December 2009
Hardcover 384pp
ISBN-13: 9781594160974 ISBN: 159416097X

During the American Revolution, espionage was critical to the successes and failures of both Continental and British efforts, and those employed in cloak and dagger operations always risked death. While the most notorious episode of spying during the war—the Benedict Arnold affair—was a failure, most intelligence operations succeeded. Spycraft was no more wholly embraced than by the American commander-in-chief, George Washington. Washington relied on a vast spy network and personally designed sophisticated battle plan deceptions and counterintelligence efforts, some surprisingly modern in form. In *Invisible Ink: Spycraft of the American Revolution*, award-winning author John A. Nagy briefly traces the history of spy techniques from ancient China through Elizabethan England before embarking on the various techniques used by spies on both sides of the war to exchange secret information. These methods included dictionary codes, diplomatic ciphers, dead drops, hidden compartments (such as a hollowed-out bullet or a woman's garter), and even musical notation, as well as efforts of counterintelligence, including "Black Chambers," where postal correspondence was read by cryptologists. Throughout, the author provides examples of the various codes and ciphers employed, many of which have not been previously described. In addition, the author analyzes some of the key spy rings operating during the war, most notably the Culper ring that provided information to Washington from inside British-controlled New York City. Based on nearly two decades of primary research, including the author's discovery of previously unrecognized spies and methods, *Invisible Ink* is a major contribution to the history of conflict and technology.



March 2010 Meeting Report

On March 20, 2010 Professor Lionel Tiger, an anthropologist at Rutgers University, was our guest speaker. He discussed the topic "The Decline of Males" based on his book of that title published in the year 2000.

Dr. Tiger discussed how American family and sexual norms have drastically changed over the last half century, in large part due to the fact that, because of effective contraception, women have gained power to control whether or not to bear children and when.

Interestingly, Dr Tiger observes, as contraception has become commonplace access to abortion has likewise become easier to obtain. The net result being major changes in family structure, that more women opt to have children without male partners, and more men are bereft of family life.

Women are working more and earning more; men working less and earning less. In that time period women have gained in status in almost every area of endeavour and in education have eclipsed men. He notes that in the early 1960's Ivy League universities were a male domain, today well over half of students at undergraduate and graduate

level are women. Furthermore, of students that do attend universities women are graduating at a higher rates than men in most fields of study. There are many other social ramifications of female emancipation, one being voting patterns that differ from that of men.

Dr. Tiger shifted gears to briefly discuss his more recent book, "God's Brain" (March 2010) where he argues that while the perceived truths of religion may be questionable religion does serve to unite various societies and does have an evolutionary basis. In chapter 6 of "God's Brain" Dr. Tiger describes a band of chimpanzees that congregate in a clearing. Their interactions at this time seem to display certain rules of order and morality, and even appear to treat fellow chimpanzees with some disabilities in a supportive manner. Much of this behavior centers around forming social hierarchies. Gorillas and various Old World monkeys have been observed displaying similar behavior adding credibility to the notion that religion among humans has an evolutionary basis found among primates.

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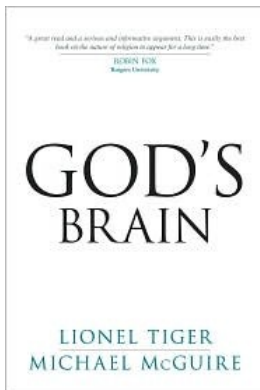
God's Brain

By Lionel Tiger and Michael McGuire

Prometheus Books March 2010

Hardcover, 265pp \$25.00

ISBN-13: 9781616141646 ISBN: 1616141646



In the fractious debate on the existence of God and the nature of religion, two distinguished authors radically alter the debate. Taking a perspective rooted in evolutionary biology with a focus on brain science, renowned anthropologist Lionel Tiger and pioneering neuroscientist Michael McGuire elucidate the perennial questions about religion: What is its purpose? How did it arise?

What is its source? Why does every known culture have some form of it?

Their answer is deceptively simple, yet at the same time highly complex: The brain creates religion and its varied concepts of God, and then in turn feeds on its creation to satisfy innate neurological and associated social needs.

Brain science reveals that other primates and humans alike are afflicted by unavoidable sources of stress that the authors describe as "brainpain." To cope with this affliction people seek to "brainsoothe." We humans use religion and its social structures to induce brainsoothing as a relief for innate anxiety. How we do this is the subject of this groundbreaking book.

In a concise, lively, accessible, and witty style, the authors combine zoom-lens vignettes of religious practices with discussions of the latest research on religion's neurological effects on the brain. Among other topics, they consider religion's role in providing positive socialization, its seeming obsession with regulating sex, creating an afterlife, how religion's rules of behavior influence the law, the common biological scaffolding between nonhuman primates and humans and how this affects religion, a detailed look at brain chemistry and how it changes as a result of stress, and evidence that the palliative effects of religion on brain chemistry is not matched by nonreligious remedies.

Concluding with a checklist offering readers a means to compute their own "brainsoothe score," this fascinating book provides key insights into the complexities of our brain and the role of religion, perhaps its most remarkable creation.

PhACT Participates in the Bucks County Science Fair

The Bucks County Science Fair

On March 16, 2010 three PhACT members, Tom Napier, Eric Krieg, and Ray Haupt, served as judges to distribute three \$100 prizes to students displaying strong critical thinking skills in planning and executing their projects at the Bucks County Science Fair for middle and high school students. The event was at Delaware Valley College, an agricultural college, near Doylestown, PA.

There was a very large number of exhibitors packing the exhibition hall. We decided that we would simplify the task of judging by dwelling on middle school exhibitors, grades 6, 7, and 8, only. We then spent the morning inspecting exhibits, looking for kids who were scientific in attitude and approach to the investigation at hand. The task proved to be deliciously difficult as there were many students with outstanding exhibits.

We discussed our impressions over lunch, then returned to the exhibit hall to interview students who routinely were knowledgeable in their topics. We finally narrowed our selections down to three middle school students pictured below with PhACT president Erick Krieg at the awards ceremony on March 12.

Timothy Ireland's (left) project, "**Bio Gas the Future of renewable energy**", was to design a device to collect methane gas from cow manure. He designed and built, with some power tool help from his father, a device to do just that. Timothy did achieve a high concentration of methane gas but lacked the expensive instrumentation to precisely determine the concentration. Timothy is in 8th grade at Pen-Ryn Middle School, his science teacher being Ellen Leaper.

Jaclyn DiYeso (center) had heard that fruit and vegetables placed inside a pyramid would maintain freshness longer than stored in other ways. She devised the project "**Pyramids - do they have the power to preserve**" to test this idea with several kinds of fruits and vegetables in various environments such as an open plate, a paper bag, plastic bag, and inside the pyramid. Conclusion: pyramids have nothing to do with ripening. She was knowledgeable about ethylene gas as a ripening agent. Jaclyn is a 7th grade student at St. Andrew Middle School, her science teacher being Barbara Gdovin

Blake Vuocolo's (right) project, "**Could a Single Sneeze Cause a Dangerous Disease?**", examined the idea that food served in restaurants (and at home) might be contaminated with bacteria. She obtained samples of lemons at many restaurants, grew cultures in Petri dishes, and performed

analysis using a microscope. Rest assured there are plenty of bacteria in the food we eat. Blake is in 7th grade at Holicong Middle School, her science teacher being Robert Meletti.

This was an uplifting day. The students were outgoing and well able to defend their methods and conclusions. Although some experiments did not work or the testing method was flawed the students honestly acknowledged the shortcomings. That is good science and shows a high level of integrity. Failed experiments or faulty methods often yield valuable knowledge and are an everyday occurrence in the lives of trained professional scientists.

Other Science Fair Matters

As things worked out during this season of Science Fairs it so happens that, unknown to us until after the fact, PhACT member Al Fonda was a judge at the George Washington Carver Science Fair for students in Philadelphia County. Al judged the physics section for middle school (grades 6- 8) which was at Temple University. The high school competition was also at Temple University while the science fair for grades 1-5 was at the Academy of Natural Science.

In addition, PhACT member Dr. Henry Disston Jr., the main mover and shaker for Delaware Valley Science Fairs (DVDF), is President of that organization and spends countless hours working on youth science education. This is a major personal undertaking in time and energy on the part of Dr. Disston. The payoff is huge. See the DVSF website at <http://www.drexel.edu/dvsf>

In 2009 PhACT offered a \$100 student prize at the Bucks County Science Fair. In 2010 we raised sufficient money to expand that to three \$100 prizes, and in fact we exceeded our fund raising goal and already have \$103 available for prizes in 2011. Perhaps we can set a higher goal for more prizes and perhaps to expand our activity to include Philadelphia County's George Washington Carver Science Fair. I invite readers to participate in Science Fairs as judges, observers, and, of course, as financial contributors. Ideas and opinions on this matter are important and widespread participation among PhACT members and Phactum readers is desirable. Let us hear your suggestions and opinions on this matter.

We thank all those PhACT folks who contributed in this very worthy project and we would be curious to learn about others who may have participated recently or long ago as students, parents, or judges.

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Eric Krieg with Science Fair Prize recipients.
See video of PhACT's portion of the awards ceremony:
<http://sharing.theflip.com/session/317c67d860210b621446a248b13a1f62/video/11714894>

THE HARD PROBLEM OF CONSCIOUSNESS

BY DON NIGRONI

The easy problems of consciousness are correlating the neural activities of the brain with the mental activities of the mind, but the hard problem is explaining the very existence of the immaterial mind and its interaction with the physical brain. Attempting to solve the hard problem and desiring to avoid supernaturalism and occultism at all cost, some philosophers and scientists have felt compelled to deny the existence of consciousness itself and the contents of consciousness, though both are obvious, even sometimes painfully so. Regardless, they have felt trapped by unpalatable alternatives.

Accepting Cartesian dualism would mean that the immaterial mind was independent of the physical body yet could somehow interact with the material brain. The mind was created by God, thus, supernaturalism, and the immaterial mind and the physical brain can interact, hence, occultism. We can easily eliminate the supernaturalism by contending that the immaterial mind naturally arises or emerges from the physical brain. At some point of complexity, the human brain, which eventually develops an estimated hundred billion neurons with a hundred trillion interconnections, produces consciousness, allowing us to have conscious experiences. This would avoid supernaturalism but not occultism because the immaterial mind arises from the material brain, hence, occultism, and the immaterial mind and the physical brain still interact, thus, more magic.

But maybe consciousness and its contents are merely epiphenomena generated by the brain. Yet such epiphenomena are immaterial and still exist. Then perhaps there isn't any consciousness at all but just a bundle of perceptions produced by the brain. But all of our perceptions are immaterial. You can't analyze a sensory perception of a

tree existing in your mind into molecules and atoms and subatomic particles like you could an actual tree existing in the physical world. Light bounces off the actual tree and hits your eyes where it's eventually converted into electrical signals that are transmitted by your optic nerves to your brain where somehow electrical and chemical processes mysteriously produce a colorful, three dimensional sensory perception of said tree. But the actual tree in the physical world, the light that passed from the tree to your eyes, the electrochemical reactions in your eyes, the electrical signals in your optic nerves and the electrical and chemical processes in your brain were all material, whereas the sensory perception of the tree in your mind was immaterial. Bundle theorists reject all supernaturalism. They also discard an awful lot of occultism by denying consciousness and that the mind can affect the body. But even they still accept just a wee bit of charm. Whether it's all just epiphenomena or merely a bundle of perceptions, you still have the immaterial being produced by the material, thus, occultism.

But, if it's absurd to deny consciousness and its contents, at least our own, and impermissible

to resolve the hard problem by resorting to mysticism or magic, then that problem is patently unsolvable.

Don Nigroni received a BS in economics in 1971 from St. Joseph's University and a MA in philosophy from Notre Dame in 1973. He retired in 2007 after working for 32 years as an economist with the US Bureau of Labor Statistics. He now spends much more time hiking, mountain biking, kayaking and bird watching.



Cartoon by T. McCracken
<http://www.mchumor.com/>
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Are Aliens Nesting at the Heinz NWR at Tinicum?

By Don Nigroni

The Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum, located in Philadelphia near the airport, preserves the state's largest remaining freshwater tidal marsh. The refuge is home to many wildlife species such as White-tailed Deer, Red Fox, Bald Eagle and even the Great Horned Owl. During March 2010, some of both of the latter species were on nests there incubating eggs. People should enjoy this rare treat from a distance and not for too long because they might abandon their nests if harassed leaving their eggs unhatched or their chicks to starve to death and violators can be fined, in the case of the Bald Eagles, up to \$20,000!

In May 2010, Joe Nickell will come to Philadelphia to give a speech and then, along with fearless PhACT members, venture deep into the mysterious Pine Barrens of South Jersey in an attempt to uncover the true identity of our local monster, the Jersey Devil. In his article entitled Siege of 'Little Green Men': The 1955 Kelly, Kentucky, Incident which appeared in the November/December 2006 issue of the Skeptical Inquirer, Nickell explained what really caused the curious events that occurred during that August night in 1955. He had gone to the area to give a speech in Hopkinsville, Kentucky at the Little Green Men Festival commemorating the 50th anniversary of the encounter. Based on eyewitness descriptions of the supposed aliens such as having conspicuous pointed ears (surely ear tufts) and huge eyes (perhaps facial discs) and their reported behavior like floating through the air (apparently gliding), Nickell concluded that they were really a pair of Great Horned Owls. In his article, he also noted that the Flatwoods Monster, which appeared in West Virginia in 1952, was really a Barn Owl and that Mothman, which appeared in the same state in 1966, was actually a Barred Owl. And in my July/August

2008 Phactum article entitled What Was the Evesham Jersey Devil?, I stated that that monster was also really a Barn Owl. All three of these owl species are nocturnal but such owls are

seldom seen at night by people because diurnal humans tend to be asleep then and even when awake are not wandering about in the woods and, even if someone was trying to see them at night, they are trying not to be seen.

Nevertheless, a mating pair of Great Horned Owls has been nesting at Tinicum for many years. I have occasionally seen them there during the daytime, nesting, roosting and even sometimes flying about but never at nighttime. However, on March 6, 2010, I, along with John Sharkey and others, went on an Owl Prowl from 6:30 pm to 7:50 pm at the refuge in an attempt to see them at night. While we had a hard time seeing the nest, we were never quite sure that we could make out the female on the nest and were absolutely certain that we couldn't see the male at all, though he must have been somewhere nearby, we did hear a lot of

communicating, faint hooting, between the male and female when we were far from the nest. The night was clear and the refuge is in the city of Philadelphia but it was quite dark nonetheless. Their fluffy plumage is such that they can fly without being heard by their prey, such as mice and voles scurrying along the ground. And apparently some people in the proper frame of mind and under the right conditions, such as in the Kentucky case where a meteor was reported as being a spaceship, the owls were out in the open on a farm and artificial lighting was provided by farm lights, can mistake these terrestrial owls, when seen at night, for extraterrestrial aliens!



A GOOD, BUT NOT A GREAT HORNED OWL

Cartoon by T. McCracken
<http://www.mchumor.com/>
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On Addiction, Diagnosis, and Treatment

by Paul Schlueter III

Let's begin with the full disclosure part; as a teen in the late '70s, I could have best been described as a pothead. Alcohol gradually became more-readily available as pot law enforcement became stricter and its price went up, and coincidentally as I reached legal drinking age, so it gradually became the substance I used most. I played around with cocaine, meth, and LSD (in the forms available in the early '80's), but never really became enthused with any of them (meth turned out to be useful on AMs following too much partying, but I didn't use it recreationally). In the mid-1980s, one episode of what is now called "binge drinking" was a factor in my arrest and conviction for homicide, for which I've ever since been a state prison inmate serving Life (which, by statute, is non-parolable in PA). These facts have colored my life history, and they have also caused me to become involved (semi-voluntarily) in various forms of Addiction Diagnosis and Treatment.

I have never formally studied these fields from a medical or sociological perspective. That is not to say that I haven't had the opportunity to form opinions on the subject, from my admittedly biased perspective.

Pot as a "Gateway Drug"

There's a term that annoys me to no end: "gateway drug." The concept is that smoking pot opens some gateway to the use of "harder" drugs, and the primary point of the term's existence is to support the definition of pot-smoking as criminal behavior. This is more than a chicken-or-the-egg issue; from a conservative viewpoint, "pot must be controlled," regardless of whether or not it is "worse" than legal drugs such as nicotine, caffeine, and alcohol.

The simple fact is that pot is NOT some gateway to other

drugs; it is a means to achieve a particular sort of high, different than that reached with any other drug. For millions of people, the use of pot has NOT led to the use of "harder" controlled substances, and for most people, alcohol only "follows" pot because it becomes legal at a certain age, making it more available. Those who use "harder" drugs would have done so, with or without pot, in any case. It was their life-choices, not pot, that led them to that point.

Nicotine is also a controlled drug, and until recently it has also been one that certain teens took up relatively early in life (even though law has long prohibited sales to minors, teens have managed to skirt that law as long as it has been in place). As a demonstrably "addictive" substance, nicotine is probably the closest thing to a "gateway drug" out there, yet even it doesn't quite fit the bill. Smoking doesn't lead smokers to pot use, or to cocaine, heroine, or the rest. It CAN be said to lead to caffeine and alcohol use, but the most important factor is actually a SOCIAL one. We choose our friends according to what, among their behaviors and attitudes, appeal to us, and then we share behaviors and attitudes with them.

In fact, it is my general position that there is NO "gateway drug", but rather a social and biological disposition in favor of coping with life by seeking the altered perceptions provided by mind-altering substances. For some people, social restrictions are effective at discouraging such behavior, particularly if it doesn't appeal to them in the first place. For other people, there is a general attitude that ignores certain social mores, and seeks excitement, entertainment, pleasure, and social connection through exercising "vices" with others of like mind. The "gateway" isn't the drug, it's the social con-



Corrupt coffee-company executive enticing impressionable youth

Cartoon by Nick D. Kim
<http://www.lab-initio.com>
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“Every form of addiction is bad, no matter whether the narcotic be alcohol or morphine or idealism.”

Carl Gustav Jung (Swiss psychiatrist, Psychologist and Founder of the Analytic Psychology, 1875-1961)

I feel that any form of so called psychotherapy is strongly contraindicated for addicts. The question "Why did you start using narcotics in the first place?" should never be asked. It is quite as irrelevant to treatment as it would be to ask a malarial patient why he went to a malarial area. -

William S. Burroughs (1914-1997), American Writer

nections an individual has, and the substances one uses conform more to his/her chosen group's tastes than to any other clear factor.

What defines an "addict?"

Probably the simplest definition of addiction is "that which forms a habit." I've felt more addicted to certain relationships with other people than to any drug I've ever used, under that simplified definition! When it comes down to that, is my habit of writing with my left hand an addiction? Obviously, the definition needs a finer edge.

A common tool for defining addiction is the use of lists of questions relating to sets of behaviors that often accompany a substance's use. There are two problems with such lists; they're made up on an anecdotal basis (sometimes by people who have never actually used the involved substance), and the interpretation of answers is pretty much an arbitrary exercise.

Certainly, there's an appeal to something as simple as a short questionnaire. At best, such lists might help an interested person assess the degree of their associated negative behaviors, and perhaps they lead some few people into therapy/treatment. But what good is the list you take to the alley and offer the crackhead there, when he'll lie as he answers (such questions are invariably transparent), when he'll bluntly tell you that he's addicted and doesn't care, and when the next thing out of his mouth will probably be some sort of request for money to buy another rock? Lists aren't necessary when the diagnosis is already obvious, and they aren't subtle enough to effectively define a point of demarcation between "addicted" and "not addicted."

In fact, THERE IS NO CLEAR DISTINCTION! Addiction isn't really a black vs. white matter, but instead it involves many subtle shades of grey. Some people will lie about using a substance, but not otherwise have problems with that behavior. Others might spend money they really

can't spare on their addiction, yet they can otherwise function quite effectively. Some people will need their "fix" three times a day, while others may only "need" theirs on Saturday night (or to get through Church with the family on Sunday morning). A recent men's magazine poll indicated that 20% of women have never had sex unless they were intoxicated, because of various body image and inhibition issues; does that mean that they're addicted to the substance they use to get intoxicated? Or to the sex itself, if its enjoyment justifies such self-medication?

The point is, there are probably dozens of associated behaviors when it comes to using a mind-altering substance (or trying to generate the production of endorphins in your own body with high-risk activities, sex, or extreme exercise). There are associated social behaviors, associated financial costs, associated moral/ethical choices, and a widespread and complex interplay of factors that need to be discovered, analyzed, and evaluated if you really want to determine HOW ADDICTED a person is to any substance or activity. That degree of subtlety and insight takes a highly-trained person many hours of fact accumulation, discussions with the patient, and trained, rational thought.

Yet, in most cases, it just comes down to one question: has

the behavior FORCED the subject into discussion? If you HAVE TO be evaluated for addictive behavior it's pretty certain that you'll end up being declared an addict. If it's not a big enough deal to justify such enforced attention, then you basically don't have to consider yourself an addict, no matter how habitual your behavior may be. That's exactly equivalent to saying that if you've been arrested by Police, you're a criminal, but if you've managed to avoid arrest, you're NOT a criminal. This isn't rational determination, or scientific analysis... it's definition by circumstance! Unfortunately, the vast majority of "addiction treatment" follows just such a determination of its need.



Cartoon by Gruhn
gruhn@webdonuts.com
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The Treatment of Addiction

Sadly, there's a common fallacy that goes with the declaration of addiction. According to the myth, "One can never actually be cured of an addiction; the best you can do is to be forever 'in recovery'." This myth follows the observation that many people "relapse" and resume the addiction related behaviors after undergoing treatment. The fact is, many people DON'T relapse ,.. ever! I smoked cigarettes (and was unquestionably addicted to nicotine) from age 18 until my 33rd birthday, when I simply determined to give it up. I quit "cold-turkey", with no associated "treatment" and never once lit up in the 15+ years since (nor do I feel any lingering desire to do so). Why is that anecdotal fact any less compelling than the anecdotal evidence that led to the formation of the "Addicts can't be cured" myth? Where is the controlled, large-scale, peer-reviewed, bias-neutral research that can statistically support the myth? It remains, to my knowledge, simply believed by so many that its provenance isn't even required. Meanwhile, there's a whole industry that relies on treating addicts, and what better way to perpetuate their income source than by supporting the need for "lifelong" treatment?

By far the most popular form of addiction treatment is the 12-step Group, where fellow addicts pursue a faith-based and highly dogmatic set of rituals. There are lots of cute little phrases that people learn to recite ("I'm sick and tired of feeling sick and tired," etc.), "sponsors" who've been there too, and plenty of alternate addictive substances on-hand (how many AA meetings have you ever seen where there's no smoking, no caffeine, no chocolates/sweets, and no hanky-panky with your fellow addicts allowed?) To participate, one must admit that the addiction is something they have no power over, and they must turn over control to a generic "higher power."

Alternative programs have sprung up, to serve those of us who don't believe in "higher powers". Rational Recovery is one example. These seem to be based on the some principles of pseudo-science as the 12-step programs, but simply without reliance on supernatural intervention. The success of treatment is the best measure of its value, and these peer groups would be at the bottom of the heap in that regard, if it weren't for the somewhat less effective method of an individual simply making a half-hearted attempt at "quitting" without any treatment at all.

Only slightly better are treatment programs that engage

"trained facilitators" as part of an institutionalized program (this could apply to a corporate effort, a program sponsored by an educational or governmental institution, or a religious institution, as well as other possibilities). Whoever sponsors the program, their selection of which program to follow is almost invariably a political or financial decision, NOT based on any serious scientific criteria. The result is that most of the "facilitators" are trained by some popular "guru" who happens to have published some successful self-help or pro-

gram-based books on his particular pet theories. I have yet to see much distinction between these "gurus" and those who promote homeopathy, chiropractic, or faith healing. There may well be several very effective, well-educated people with actual expertise, but their books tend to lack strong popular appeal, so they aren't readily noticed by the sponsoring institutions. Who do you think really sets a scientifically conscientious researcher to the task of ferreting out the most efficacious addiction treatment program for their institution to employ? The choice is simply made by the executive stuck with the task, based on his own biases or those of the secretary he passes the choice along to. Since the program is probably largely a public relations exercise to begin with, what better choice than the most popular "guru" of the field? What motivates the slightly better effectiveness of these programs is only the desire for facilitators to keep their jobs when the budget comes up for review; poor success rates mean you'll be on the unemployment line, so you come up with SOME way to show the best possible success rate.

Next, in the increasing order of success rates, is the independent "Rehab" facility. Some rehabs, set up to serve the public relations needs of officials and celebrities, are little more than spas with an in-house 12-step program. Others, set up to serve as enforced treatment facilities for the Judicial system or private sector clients, are contracted to provide services based in part on their ability to demonstrate a particular standard of success. Another factor in obtaining the contract may be competitive bidding for payment rates, which obviously works in opposition to quality of care. Where the patients themselves (or, more often, a health care insurer) is responsible for payment, the quality of care is likely to be moderately higher.

The very best quality of addiction treatment is most reasonably going to come from medical and/or psychiatric Doctors, treating patients on an individualized, long-term basis.

If you look at history you'll find that no state has been so plagued by its rulers as when power has fallen into the hands of some dabbler in philosophy or literary addict. - Desiderius Erasmus c.1466-1536, Dutch Humanist

I did it to myself. It wasn't society...it wasn't a pusher, it wasn't being blind or being black or being poor. It was all my doing. - Ray Charles (1930 - 2004) American Musician

Semi-professional therapists, working on a similar individualized basis are likely to offer care nearly as effective, perhaps at a slightly lower cost. The key to these is that the treatment needs to be based on the best medical information, and the best scientific approach, available to the practitioner. Also important is the degree of specificity that individualized care can provide; a therapist or Doctor can precisely tailor a patient's treatment to his or her specific life experiences, social circumstances, biological influences, and psychological needs. Unfortunately, the costs of such treatment are also likely to be prohibitive to all but the wealthiest patients.

Conclusion

We can't turn on the TV without seeing something about a celebrity going into rehab. Tiger Woods cheated on his wife numerous times, so he had to be treated for "sex addiction." Governors and Senators have recently had to follow the same path, for reasons of political expediency. Celebrities everywhere routinely pop in and out of drug and sex rehabs, sometimes as the aftermath of some scandal, sometimes just because they felt the need for "attention."

As we go about our own lives, we also routinely hear chit-chat about this or that person who has "an addiction" to anything from chocolates to weird sex to bungee-jumping to sleeping pills. We love to be judgmental about the vices we perceive in others, and the neat thing about calling someone an addict is that the word immediately puts them on the defensive, and then we can trot out that OTHER tired phrase, "He's in denial!" I'll go so far as to say that you probably know somebody who is addicted to discovering the addictions of people around him/her! They probably watch soap operas and Oprah too.

It isn't my purpose to demean ALL addiction diagnosis and treatment. Obviously, there are many people in this world who have a disease of unhealthy reliance on substances or activities that do them more harm than good, and who would benefit from evidence-based treatment designed to address the causes underlying that behavior, in order to help break the cycles of dependency, reform, relapse, and resumption of dependency.

However, it has become far too easy to just point the fin-

ger and cry "Addict!" against our fellow humans, who are all complex individuals with private lives we can only begin to grasp from our position of moral superiority. The witch-hunt has to be recognized for what it is, and rational minds need to step in to ensure that Reason trumps Pop-Psychiatry and Talk Show diagnostics. We need to work to remove some of the social stigma that goes with a diagnosis of addiction, so that people who are actually in need of qualified help will be more willing to admit their need (while it should be its own topic of discussion, decriminalizing ordinary drug addiction/use as long as treatment is voluntarily sought before associated behaviors become otherwise criminal is probably in our society's best interest, too). We also need to make effective treatment reasonably affordable, to make reliable information readily available, and to hold the practices of the industry accountable to the highest standards of scientific procedure. This isn't a game we can leave to the Woo-Woos and their hocus-pocus.

Paul Schlueter III is serving Life in Prison in NE Pennsylvania. His supporters have recently created a website about him: www.jaylbird.org As for substance abuse, the associated misjudgments and the scofflaw attitude of youth, Schlueter credits nearly 25

years of forced close association with others of such mindsets for having demonstrated to him the folly and wastefulness of such behaviors. He is now substance free and law abiding by conscious, voluntary decision.

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MCHUMOR.com by T. McCracken



"When I was on amphetamines in my wild youth, I could write a 25 page paper in an hour on a manual typewriter, but not in any known language."

Cartoon by T. McCracken
<http://www.mchumor.com/>
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PHACT CALENDAR

Dr. David Cattell, Chairman of the Physics Department of Community College of Philadelphia hosts meetings of **PhACT** - at 2:00 PM on the third Saturday of most months at Community College of Philadelphia... Parking is easily available and is free for PhACT attendees at CCP events. Enter the college parking lot on 17th Street which is one way south bound. This meeting site is handicap accessible. **PhACT Meetings are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.**



Saturday, April 17, 2010 - Financial meltdowns, man-made disasters, and the human mind: Risk and numbers. Why do sophisticated companies with intelligent employees make poor decisions managing risk? Are the challenges in managing risk just an issue of education or are there evolutionary reasons why people have difficulty in understanding risk? **Dr. David W. Cragin**, Adjunct Professor, Department of Health Policy and Public Health, University of the Sciences, Philadelphia and Professor, International Program in Pharmaceutical Engineering Management of Peking University in Beijing, China and Councilor of PhACT will give a talk that explores numbers and how our mind evaluates and interprets them. **NOTE: This meeting will not be in the usual location. It will be in the Small Auditorium in the Bonnell Building. Enter on 17th street about 300 feet south of Spring Garden Street.**

Saturday, May 15, 2010 - Join us for a dinner where **Joe Nickell**, a popular writer and paranormal investigator at *Skeptical Inquirer*, will be our guest speaker. Details on Page 23.

Sunday, May 16, 2010 - For the more adventurous **Joe Nickell** and other PhACT folks will embark on an expedition to find the Jersey Devil in the New Jersey Pine Barrens. PhACT member **Don Nigroni** will be our guide on this expedition. All are welcome to participate. This event is free.

Friday, April 9, 2010 at 8:00 PM: Delaware Valley Mensa General Membership Meeting: SIDE EFFECTS OF MEDICINES AND OTHER PEARLS - **Alan Vogenberg**, a seasoned Pharmacist, will discuss the side effects of medication. These are often called adverse drug reactions. Alan will discuss drug/drug interactions (what drugs interfere with the actions of other medications). He will also be talking about the correct times, with or without food, and other pearls dealing with storage, what to expect, and unexpected effects from medications. Prepare to be entertained by this lively, original and animated speaker.

Prior to the meeting, those who can, are invited to attend the pre-General Membership Meeting Dinner at a secret location someplace in the heart of "the City with a Million Eat'ries" 's very own Chinatown or Ol'City. This is an excellent opportunity to have a good meal and get to speak with the evening's guest, one on one. Contact Pete Stevens (pete.stevens@phila.gov) to reserve your place at dinner, by NOON, Friday, April 9, 2010.

The General Membership Meeting will be held at the Police Administration Building, 750 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA. This meeting is DVM's only activity specifically open to the public, so feel free to invite your friends and relatives. Door prizes will once again be awarded, sponsored by Chocolate. The dinner is at 6:00 and the meeting will begin promptly at 8:00. The meeting is free.

PS: Don't let traffic on the Schuylkill Expressway interfere with attending. Consider taking SEPTA and exiting at Market Street East / Gallery, it is only a two block walk to the Police Administration Building. Contact

Pete Stevens (pete.stevens@phila.gov) for more information.

Saturday, April 10, 2010 at 8:00 PM - Brahms' Requiem. The Bucks County Choral Society with the Riverside Symphony conducted by Thomas Lloyd. Kevin Deas, bass-baritone, and Katy Gentry, soprano. At New Hope - Solebury High School, 182 West Bridge Street, New Hope, PA. Advanced pricing: Adults - \$22 Seniors - \$17 Students - \$5 At-the-door pricing: Adults - \$25 Seniors - \$20 Students - \$5. more information: 215-598-6142. www.buckschoral.org
Also on Sunday, April 11 at 4:00 PM at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1000 W. Main Street, Lansdale, PA

Wednesday, April 14, 2010 at 7:30 PM. - Metanexus Lecture: Peter Dodson, Professor of Anatomy and Paleontology, University of Pennsylvania. "**God and the Dinosaurs**". At Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church 625 Montgomery Avenue, Bryn Mawr, PA.

"Evolution is God's way of creating. Dinosaurs are just as much a part of Creation as are the most elegant animals alive today. As a scientist I study Creation, which points to the Creator (Romans 1:20). As an evolutionary biologist, I study the laws by which the Creator has created over billions of years. I do not have to choose between faith in God and faith in science. I know that God's works are trustworthy (Psalm 33: 4). Truth cannot contradict truth. As Darwin correctly notes, there is grandeur in this view of life."

Wednesday, April 28, 2010 at 7:30 P.M. - Barbara Mitnick will present an illustrated talk titled *Picturing the Revolution: The Pennsylvania/New*

The **PhACT Calendar** is open to members and non-members who wish to announce meetings and events of other groups of which they are interested or affiliated. These events should be of some general interest to the Skeptical or Scientific community and should be within a reasonable radius of Philadelphia. Send submissions to the editor at phactpublicity@aol.com. Keep the announcements brief. Space is limited and insertions will be made on a first come-first served basis after the needs of PhACT are accomplished. Phactum does not accept paid advertising but the editor will accept cookie bribes.

Jersey Connection. Free. The American Revolution Round Table of Philadelphia at Broad Axe Tavern, 901 West Butler Pike, Ambler, PA 19002 Telephone: (215) 643-6300. www.arrtop.com

Saturday, May 1, 2010 Public Paranormal Investigation of Eastern State Penitentiary Cost : \$100 per person for 9 hours at the prison!! from 5pm - 2am. There will be a brief guided tour along with the history of the prison, then we will break off into groups and start investigating. you will be grouped with experienced investigators and learn how to perform a true paranormal investigation in one of the most active locations in our area. The best part is, all Proceeds are going directly to the Hospital Restoration Project at Eastern State! let's help preserve this piece of history! Details to follow. See the PIRA website: <http://home.comcast.net/~parainvestigator/Index/Main.html>

Saturday, May 1st, 2010, 10:00 -11:30 AM at the Henry George School of Social Science , 413 South 10th Street, Philadelphia 19147, 215-686-5322 **THE FISH BELONG TO THE PEOPLE!**

Fish in U.S ocean waters belong to all of us equally and are part of the ocean commons; a living public trust asset passed from one generation to the next. Increasing demand for seafood necessitates new ways to conserve and share the fish that we have. Unfortunately, the latest proposed way to 'share the fish' is to implement an outdated privatization approach akin to the giveaway of land. An earth-sharing alternative offers public control of our fish stocks and collects rent for the public to reinvest in fishery management.

Ben Bowman, Policy Analyst, Food & Water Watch; Former Principal Strategic Analyst, Dept. of Primary Industries, Victoria, Australia <http://www.henrygeorgeschoolphila.org>

Wednesday, May 05, 2010 at 06:00 PM - 08:00PM at University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archeology and Anthropology. **Great Archaeological Discoveries: The Easter Island Statue Project.** A lecture by Dr. Jo Ann van Tilburg.

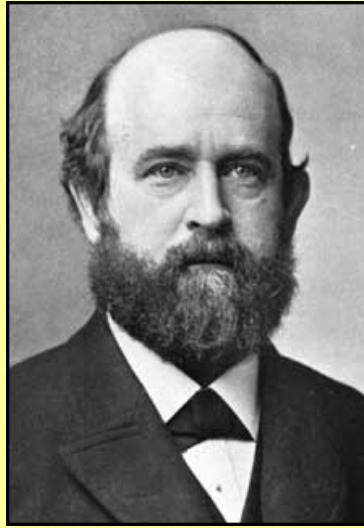
Statues with human heads-on-torsos carved from hardened volcanic ash cover the coast. The islanders call them "moai," and they have puzzled people for years. \$5.00 Advance General Admission. \$10 at the door. FREE for Museum Members.

Wednesday, May 26, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. Pulitzer Prize winning author Edwin G. Burrows on his new book *"Forgotten Patriots: The Untold Story*

SOCRATES CAFE is moderated by: Lewis Mifsud, Ph.D., P.E., a member of PhACT and of The American Academy of Forensic Sciences, at the Springfield Township Public Library (215-836-5300) at 1600 Papermill Mill Road, Wyndmoor, PA. 19038. This philosophical discussions group is free and open to the public. Join us and share your critical thinking, questions and opinions.



Henry George (1839 - 1897)



Henry George, a journalist and self-taught political economist, was born September 2, 1839 at 413 South 10th Street in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He died on October 29, 1897 in New York City during his second campaign for the office of Mayor. His ideas and writings inspired an international social movement of enormous importance to secure true liberty and equality of opportunity for all by permanently ending all forms of monopoly — most importantly, that of land rent monopoly. The Henry George School of Social Science was established in New York City in 1932 to make sure the truths revealed in Henry George's writings remain part of the public dialog.

of American Prisoners During the American Revolution" The American Revolution Round Table of Philadelphia at Broad Axe Tavern, 901 West Butler Pike, Ambler, PA 19002 Telephone: (215) 643-6300. www.arrtop.com

Wednesday, Jun 02, 2010 06:00 - 08:00 PM at University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archeology and Anthropology. **Great Archaeological Discoveries: The Sutton Hoo Ship Burial and the Origins of the English Speaking Peoples.** A lecture by Dr. Richard Hodges.

Dr. Hodges will examine the extraordinary objects found in these excavations which reveal a story of how the English peoples began to have a new identity as well as new ambitions. \$5.00 Advance General Admission. \$10 at the door. FREE for Museum Members.

Thursday, June 3, 2010 at 7:30PM Central Library, 1901 Vine Street. Born in Somalia and raised Muslim, **Ayaan Hirsi Ali** fled to Holland—where she eventually became a member of the Dutch parliament—to avoid a forced marriage. An outspoken advocate for women's rights and a staunch critic of Islamic extremism, Ali made a documentary about domestic abuse among Muslim women with director Theo van Gogh, who was subsequently killed by an Islamic extremist. Continuing death threats have forced her into hiding. Her first book, *The Caged Virgin*, was a collection of essays concerning the oppression of Muslim women. In *Nomad*—the follow up to her no. 1 bestselling memoir *Infidel* - Ali tells the story of her search for a new life in the United States. 215-686-5322
Cost: \$14 General Admission, \$7 Students

Tuesday, June 15, 2010 at 7:30PM Central Library, 1901 Vine Street. Called "America's foremost literary pugilist" by a reviewer for *The Village Voice*, **Christopher Hitchens** is a prolific and controversial writer, as well as a popular radio and TV commentator. A self-styled "radicalist," Hitchens is notorious for his strong opinions and conflicting views—he was against the Vietnam War and for the Iraq invasion. He has written books excoriating Mother Teresa, Bill and Hillary Clinton, and Henry Kissinger, as well as biographies elevating Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, and George Orwell. His polemic against organized religion, *God Is Not Great*, was a no. 1 New York Times bestseller and a finalist for the National Book Award. Providing new insight into his life and beliefs, *Hitch-22* sheds light on the formative experiences and personal relationships with famous writers and political figures that helped make him the intellectual he is today.
Mr. Hitchens will be interviewed by Marty Moss-Coane, host of WHYY's *Radio Times* with Marty Moss-Coane.
Cost: \$14 General Admission, \$7 Students

Saturday, June 26, 2010 at 7:00 PM - A Revolutionary War Era Panel Discussion at Valley Forge National Park Theater between Dean Malissa as General George Washington, Steven Edenbo as Thomas Jefferson, and Bill Ochester as Benjamin Franklin. The Moderator will be John A. Nagy, author and President of the American Revolutionary War Round Table of Philadelphia. Free. www.arrtop.com



Science on Tap, A Science Café

Science on Tap is a monthly gathering in Philadelphia for anyone who is

interested in getting together with other people to discuss a range of engaging science topics.

Held at National Mechanics, a relaxed, convivial bar in Old City, *Science on Tap* features a brief, informal presentation by a scientist or other expert followed by lively conversation. The goal is to promote enthusiasm for science in a fun, spirited, and accessible way, while also meeting new people. Please come join the conversation! On the **second Monday of each month at 6:00 PM.**

What's On Tap

Monday, April 12, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.

"What's in your Air? Low-tech Tools for Finding Out"

Gwen Ottinger, Research Fellow, Environmental History and Policy, Chemical Heritage Foundation

Chemicals released from motor vehicles, power plants, and industrial facilities can have a negative effect on the quality of the air in residential communities. Just how big is the effect? Finding out is a challenge—but several Delaware Valley communities are tackling it with the help of innovative, low-tech monitors. Ottinger will talk about the monitors and their potential for evaluating and improving air quality in local communities.

Gwen Ottinger holds a Ph.D. in Energy and Resources from the University of California, Berkeley. Since 2001, she has conducted research on the use of science in environmental justice activism, with particular interest in how community groups use air monitoring technology in grassroots campaigns.

Presented by the Chemical Heritage Foundation.

National Mechanics 22 South Third St. Philadelphia PA 19106
215-701-4883

Free and Open to the public (age 21+) or minors accompanied by a chaperone 25+. Want to join the Science on Tap mailing list? Contact us at scienceontapphilly@gmail.com and include

"subscribe to mailing list" as the subject line

Science for what ails you

The science café movement began in Leeds, England in 1998 when a local pub decided to foment a new kind of barroom brawl—a scientific debate. The idea took off as a unique way to advance public understanding of science. Now, there are locations from Maine to California where, for the price of a beer or a glass of wine or a cup of coffee, anyone can discuss scientific ideas with leading experts in their fields and learn about developments that are changing our lives.



"You can bet the EPA will make a big deal out of this..."

Cartoon by Nick D. Kim
<http://www.lab-initio.com>
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2009-10 Penn Science Café Schedule

The Penn Science Café, the lecture series that hauls science out of the lab and treats it to a night on the town. Free and open to the public, it's an opportunity to pitch questions to leading scientific experts.

6 P.M. @ the MarBar, 40th and Walnut street location, 2nd floor of the Marathon Grill, menu items available for purchase
RSVP to Jordan Reese, jreese@upenn.edu or 215-573-6604.
RSVP's are encouraged, but we aren't sticklers.

- **April 14**, Josh Plotkin, Department of Biology : **A Viral Evolution**
- **May 12**, Robert Kurzban, Department of Psychology: **The Cognitive Process Behind Hypocrisy**



THE WAGNER FREE
INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE
OF
PHILADELPHIA

1700 West Montgomery Avenue
, Philadelphia, PA 19121

ph 215-763-6529 www.wagnerfreeinstitute.org

The Wagner Free Institute of Science announces its free science courses for Winter/Spring 2010. The courses run from five to ten weeks. Lectures are held in the evening and last approximately one and a half hours. The courses are taught on an introductory college level and are appropriate for adults wishing to enrich their knowledge of the sciences, as well as for motivated junior and senior high school students.

Introduction to Pollination Biology, Professor Tatyana Livshultz. Monday, April 5, 2010, beginning at 6:30 PM. 6 Mondays. Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, 100 N. 20th Street. This course will survey the science of pollination biology, including the discovery of plant pollinations in the late 17th century, plant adaptation to animal pollination and how they evolve, and the importance of pollination to human society. This course requires preregistration. To preregister, call 215-763-6529, ext. 23, beginning Monday, November 16, 2009.

Introduction to Birding in the Delaware Valley, Professor Clifford Hence. Wednesdays, April 7 - April 28, 2010 (6:30-7:45 PM) and Saturdays, May 1, 8 & 15 (3 field trips from 8:00-11:00 AM). Independence Branch of the Free Library, 18 S. 7th Street and three field trips to local parks. This course will provide an introduction to birding in the region, including when and where to bird, and how to identify species in the field. No preregistration required.

All courses, unless otherwise indicated, are offered free of charge. For full course information and syllabuses, call 215-763-6529 or visit www.wagnerfreeinstitute.org

Lectures

Wednesday, April 7th, Lecture at 5:30 PM - "A HISTORY OF TAXIDERMY" - An illustrated presentation by Dr. Pat Morris, London University

What makes taxidermy so interesting? Whether encountering thousands of specimens at a museum like the Wagner Institute, or just a few in a hunter's trophy collection, viewing taxidermy can be captivating. On Wednesday, April 7th, Dr. Pat Morris, a retired London University professor will explain his theories about why people find the display of mounted animals to be so fascinating. Dr. Morris is a leading British mammal ecologist who has been researching the history of taxidermy as a lifelong hobby. He has traveled through most of Europe and the USA, seeking out interesting taxidermy specimens and stories.

His presentation will consider taxidermy from its roots as a business in the 19th century, reviewing the history of preserved animals, and attempts to find the oldest surviving specimens. Dr. Morris will also explore the diverse and amusing uses of taxidermy – including major museum exhibits, stuffed pets, hunting trophies,

animal furniture, and squirrels playing cards. His lecture will also discuss changing public attitudes toward taxidermy.

Dr. Pat Morris will speak in the Wagner Institute's historic lecture hall. Images of his research will highlight his discussion. In conjunction with the lecture there will be an exhibition of work created by Animal Sculpture students from the Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial on display in the museum.

Dr. Pat Morris has published academic papers and several books on the history of taxidermy. He is a retired staff member of Royal Holloway College (University of London), where he taught biology and supervised research on mammal ecology. Dr. Morris lives in England with his wife Mary, where their house is home to the largest collection and archive of historical taxidermy in Britain.

Come early to explore the Wagner's National Landmark building and its unparalleled collections. The museum will stay open late (4 – 7 PM) for this event. The Lecture begins at 5:30 PM.

Saturday, April 24, 2010 - Family Program - 3rd Annual Natural History Road Show. Presented by the Wagner Free Institute of Science

and a panel of experts specializing in plants, shells, insects, rocks and minerals

Presentation at 1:00 PM. Road Show from 2:00 to 4:00 PM

Bring your treasures!

Thursday, May 20, 2010

"Silent, Weird, Beautiful: Philadelphia's City Hall and It's Architect" Presented by DR. MICHAEL LEWIS, Williams College. 4:00 - 7:00 PM Lecture at 5:30 PM

In the Wagner Collection

The Wagner Free Institute of Science features some threatened and endangered specimens in its historic collection. One such animal is the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, a critically endangered bird that has not been sighted in the United States since the 1940s. Widely thought to be extinct, two of these birds are on view at the Wagner Institute's museum, as its collection was completed at the turn of the 20th century. Searches to rediscover this bird have occurred since 1948, and it was thought to have been rediscovered in 2005. And although a photograph of this bird would bring a \$50,000 reward, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology suspended its searches in fall 2009.





The College of Physicians of Philadelphia

BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICAN MEDICINESM

The College of Physicians of Philadelphia

19 South Twenty-Second Street

Philadelphia, PA 19103

(215) 563-3737 x304

http://www.collphyphil.org/prog_calendar.htm

College of Physician lectures and programs are free. There may be a fee at some receptions.

Friday, April 16, 2010 9AM - 11AM

As We Live and Die: Preparing Your Own Personal Health Care Agenda

Join us for an informational program on the importance of documenting the health care you want in the event of an accident or illness that leaves you unable to express your wishes. A two-part program, including a panel discussion with leading experts and a question-and-answer session where you can talk one-on-one with representatives from the Pennsylvania Bar, AARP, other organizations that advocate for older adults, and health care providers.

Moderator: Willo Carey, Executive Director, Wider Horizons, WHYY

Panel includes:

- Estella Hyde, Volunteer President of Pennsylvania Executive AARP
 - Gail Inderwies, RN, BSN, MBA, CHPN, Executive Director, Keystone Hospice
 - Shari Odenheimer, Blank Rome LLP
 - Duane Kirksey, MD, MSCE, Assistant Professor of Medicine, Temple University
 - Chaplain John Ehman, University of Pennsylvania Health System Pastoral Care Department
 - Invited panelist: Honorable Senator Arlen Specter
- In conjunction with National Health Care Decisions Day, this event is sponsored by The College of Physicians of Philadelphia, PhillyHealthInfo.org, the Delaware Valley Health Council, WHYY and its Caring Community coalition, the Philadelphia Free Library, DocuBank, and the AARP

Thursday, April 29, 2010 6:30PM

Demon Possession and Exorcism: Medical Explanations?

Although modern people often dismiss demon possession and exorcism as fantasy or superstition, these two phenomena actually exist. They transcend time and culture, with documented cases appearing in virtually every part of the world, in every religion, and in every century of recorded history. Explanations for their occurrence are offered by theologians and anthropologists, but what about physicians? What medical explanations exist to account for the suffering of people who think they are possessed by demons and the success of exorcism in relieving these same sufferers? Join Kathleen Sands, PhD for an illustrated lecture exploring the medical history of demon possession and exorcism.

Speaker: Kathleen Sands, PhD, is a humanities professor at the University of Maryland and Thomas Edison State College. She is also the author of *Demon Possession in Elizabethan England* and *An Elizabethan Lawyer's Possession by the Devil: The Story of Robert Brigges*. Her work has been anthologized in a popular university textbook, *The Witchcraft Reader* (second edition), edited by Darren Oldridge.

Sponsored by the F.C. Wood Institute for the History of Medicine.

Register for this event: <http://www.eventbrite.com/event/523451658>

Friday, May 7, 2010 4 - 5PM

Grand opening of the New Garden Tour, Benjamin Rush Medicinal Plant Center

When the College was founded in 1787, Dr. Benjamin Rush suggested that the College create "a garden of simples [herbs] to physic the citizens of Philadelphia." In 1937, the Philadelphia Section of the American Herb Society designed and planted the garden that, with a few improvements,

appears today. Long an oasis in the middle of the city, the garden has been open for years and maintained by the Women's Committee of the College. With a generous grant from the Groff Family Memorial Trust, the College has revamped the presentation of the garden's history and the importance of medicinal herbs. During spring, 2010, the College debuts new signage, a new brochure on the garden, and an audio tour to enhance the experience of visitors who visit the Mutter Museum.

Sponsored by the F.C. Wood Institute for the History of Medicine.

Monday, May 10, 2010 5:30 - 7:30PM

Public Health and Preventive Medicine Section Poster Session

Regional public health activities and research will be showcased using posters by professionals and students from public health and related disciplines. The Section will also recognize specific individuals and organizations for their distinguished leadership in the field of Public Health. This event serves to increase the awareness of the public health work in the Philadelphia region. Open to the public, interested individuals will have an opportunity to meet and discuss important public health issues with public health and medical professionals, community organizations, faculty and students.

Sponsored by the College's Section of Public Health and Preventive Medicine.

Register for this event: <http://www.eventbrite.com/event/512581144>

Wednesday, May 19, 2010 6:30PM

What Mark Twain Might Tell Us (And Ask Us) If He Could Join Us Tonight

Mark Twain, one of America's premier spokesmen, had a lot to say about the medical profession. Twain's works are rich in medical imagery and medical themes. He experimented with many of the alternative care systems available in his day—partly because of his frustration with traditional medicine and partly because he hoped to find the "perfect" system that would bring health to his family. Twain's medical commentary provides a unique perspective on American medicine, as fresh and relevant today as it was over a century ago.

K. Patrick Ober, MD, Professor of Internal Medicine and Associate Dean for Education at Wake Forest University School of Medicine, Winston-Salem, NC and author of *Mark Twain and Medicine: Any Mummery Will Cure* will explore Twain's personal perspectives on the complex interactions between doctors, patients, and medicine, with an emphasis on the humanistic viewpoint.

Sponsored by the Wood Institute for the History of Medicine and the Sections on Medicine and the Arts and Medical History.

Register for this event: <http://www.eventbrite.com/event/512562087>

Wednesday, May 19, 2010

Pennsylvania Medical Humanities Symposium: Through the Lens of Time: Perspectives on Medicine and Health Care

May 19 (Evening) and May 20 (8AM - 5PM)

The Eighth Annual Pennsylvania Medical Humanities Consortium meeting will be held at The College of Physicians of Philadelphia on Wednesday evening, May 19 through Thursday afternoon, May 20, 2010. This year's theme, *Through the Lens of Time: Perspectives on Medicine and Health Care*, will present papers, panels, workshops, readings or performances that examine a topic relevant to medicine and health care from a historical perspective. All presentations will represent the orientation of at least one of the medical humanities, including history, literature and the arts, bioethics, philosophy, religious studies, and social sciences.

For further information contact Rhonda L. Soricelli, MD, Chair, Planning Committee, at RLSoricelli@comcast.net.

The Mutter Museum

19 South 22nd Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19103.

Hours of operation: Monday-Friday, 10am-5pm

Saturday & Sunday, 10am-5pm

Closed on Thanksgiving Day, December 25th, and January 1st.

General Admission (Ages 18-64): \$14

Children (Ages 6-17): \$10

Senior Citizens (Age 65+): \$10



APS Museum Calendar: January – May 2010

Second Sundays at the APS Museum 1-4pm

APS Museum, Philosophical Hall, 104 S. 5th St.

Family-friendly afternoons (ages 5+) at the APS Museum, featuring activities and/or demonstrations inspired by the Dialogues with Darwin exhibition.

Sunday, April 11, 2010: Book arts with artist Rosae Reeder

Sunday, May 9, 2010: Make your own magic lantern

The Tract House: A Darwin Addition

January 29-April 11, 2010 Hours: Friday-Sunday, 11 a.m.- 5 p.m.

First Fridays until 8 p.m.

231 N. Third St.

The Tract House: A Darwin Addition presents an evolutionary twist on classic religious tracts. Artist Lisa Anne Auerbach and a graphic designer have created printed ephemera based on writing that was both commissioned from artists and solicited from the public. The completed tracts are displayed at 231 N. Third St. where visitors can peruse the many versions and take what they wish, free of charge. Auerbach hopes that the tracts will “educate, activate, infuriate, explicate, obfuscate, and titillate.” The project focuses on the democratic aspect of the printed image – the implied necessity for dissemination of the multiple.

Saturday, April 10 - Sunday, April 11, 2010 (all day)

Print Aweigh, Take Away!

Join in for a weekend of hands-on science, history, art activities and a walking tour that will all make a great impression. The APS Museum, the Independence Seaport Museum, and the Printing Office and Bindery at Franklin Court have joined forces to celebrate an age-old technique for communication – printing words on paper.

APRIL 10 & 11

APS Museum

104 S. Fifth Street

10am – 5pm

- Go treasure hunting for fossils, pigeons and much more in the Dialogues with Darwin exhibition
- Have fun creating prints with stencils and stamps with artist Martin Campos
- Make your very own book with renowned book artist Rosae Reader

- Grab a free copy of our quirky Walking Tour Map

APS Museum Walking Tour

Guided tours leave from the APS Museum Noon and 2pm

(or follow our map on your own; you choose the time)

- Experience the most off-beat sites in historic Old City including Cappelini Jr. Stamps and Hobbies (313 Market Street) for out-of-this-world model trains, planes and space vehicles, Victor Gordon (31 N. 3rd) for African masks and Pierre’s (211 N. 3rd Street) Philadelphia’s premiere costume store.
- Wend your way to artist Lisa Anne Auerbach’s Tract House which offers an evolutionary twist on the classic religious publications called tracts

The Tract House: A Darwin Addition

231 N. 3rd Street

10am – 5pm

- Browse and take home some colorful free tracts inspired by Darwin and evolution
- Create your own tracts – we’ll post them at the Tract House! Printing Office and Bindery at Franklin Court (part of Independence National Historical Park)
320 Market Street (enter through courtyard)
11am – 5pm
- See a working model of the printing press used by Ben Franklin and learn how he would have used it
- Watch demonstrations of the art of pamphlet sewing

Independence Seaport Museum 10am – 5pm

211 S. Columbus Blvd. Penn’s Landing

Children \$7 Adults \$12 Seniors \$10

Independence Seaport Museum (April 10 Only)

211 S. Columbus Blvd. Penn’s Landing 1 – 3pm:

- Anchors Aweigh! Climb aboard the historic War Cruiser Olympia to check out the exhibit The Bounding Billow: Sailors Printing on the High Seas.
- Watch Cannonball Press artists crank out shipboard leaflets using an 1895 letterpress – free copies for all.

All events are free unless otherwise noted

Friday, April 16, 2010 at 5:30 PM

Here, George Washington Was Born: Memory, Material Culture, and the Public History of a National Monument

Benjamin Franklin Hall, 427 Chestnut Street

Seth C. Bruggeman is assistant professor of history and American Studies at Temple University where he also coordinates the public history program. He holds a Ph.D. in American Studies from the College of William and Mary. His teaching and research specialties concern memory, commemoration, and material culture. Remembering George Washington at the Sites of his Birth - The National Park Service’s George Washington Birthplace National Monument has commemorated Washington and his life for nearly eighty years. For much of that time, however, nagging questions about the monument’s authenticity have pitted the many heirs to Washington’s legacy against one another. Seth Bruggeman reveals how these questions have often masked even broader debates about the meanings of race and gender in American memory. He will explore these contests of memory for what they reveal about the history of commemoration in this country and the challenges of doing public history.

Reception: 5:30 p.m., Program: 6:00 p.m.

RSVP: sduffy@amphilsoc.org or call Reception Desk (215) 440-3400

Sunday, May 09, 2010

Second Sundays: The Magical Magic Lantern

Before the invention of movie and slide projectors, audiences were delighted by the magic lantern. On May 9, make your own magic lantern with artist Shelley Hedlund of MYX: Multicultural Youth eXchange. And don’t forget to check out the Dialogues with Darwin exhibition, which features modern interpretations of magic lanterns created by artist Eve Andrée Laramée.

This Second Sunday is a collaboration between the APS Museum and MYX: Multicultural Youth eXchange. Second Sundays are family-friendly afternoons (for ages 5+) at the APS Museum, featuring activities and/or demonstrations inspired by the Dialogues with Darwin exhibition.



Connecting people to nature since 1812.

The Academy of Natural Sciences Center for Environmental Policy “Philadelphia’s Window on the Environment”

Center for Environmental Policy
The Academy of Natural Sciences
1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103
www.ansp.org/environmental/ | 215-299-1108 | cep@ansp.org

Upcoming Public Events

Tuesday, April 13, 2010, 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm

“Why Saving Species Matters: How protecting species and ecosystems around the world affects our health, our pocketbooks and the kind of world we leave for our children”

Join us for a discussion about the rapid loss of species and ecosystems like rainforests and coral reefs around the world. Learn what we can do to help halt species loss and work toward conservation of natural resources. Find out about life-saving medicines derived from natural compounds that are used to treat cancer and other diseases. Learn about ongoing efforts to protect our most threatened ecosystems and promote sustainable development, and how the United States can be a leader in international conservation.

Panelists will include:

Dr. Thomas Eugene Lovejoy III: chief biodiversity adviser to the president of the World Bank, senior adviser to the president of the United Nations Foundation, and Biodiversity Chair of the Heinz Center for Science, Economics, and the Environment

Samuel C. Blackman, MD, PhD: pediatric oncologist and Associate Director of Experimental Medicine/Oncology at Merck Research Laboratories

Jeff Wise: Director of the Alliance for Global Conservation, Director of the Pew Environment Group’s Global Conservation Initiative

Dr. David Velinsky (moderator): Vice President of the Academy of Natural Sciences and Director of the Patrick Center for Environmental Research

There will be an opportunity for audience members to pose questions throughout the program. For more information on this issue, visit: www.actforconservation.org.

Reception: 6:00 – 6:30 pm Forum: 6:30-8:30 pm

Register: biodiversityspeciesmatter.eventbrite.com/

This program was made possible by The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Academy of Natural Sciences Center for Environmental Policy through the generous donations of the William Penn Foundation and the Environmental Associates of the Academy.

**Tuesday, April 20, 2010 - 6:00-6:30: Reception
6:30 - 8:30: Program**

“Marcellus Shale: The Science and the Policy”

The Marcellus Shale is a geological feature a mile underground that runs from West Virginia to New York. Embedded within the shale is one of the largest reserves of natural gas in the world. With new technologies that make it practical to drill at these depths, and with ever increasing demands for energy, many people are looking to the Marcellus Shale under

Pennsylvania as an important resource for the 21st century.

Yet, moves to drill in the Marcellus Shale have raised questions as to environmental impacts and effects on the people and places of the region. Join us for a panel discussion with scientists and other experts who will help unravel some of the issues that have come to the forefront as moves to drill get underway. Don't miss this discussion of the one of the most important and complex topics on the horizon for Pennsylvania.

Featuring:

Terry Engelder, Ph.D., Professor of Geosciences, The Pennsylvania State University

Michel Boufadel, Ph.D., P.E., P.Hydro., Professor and Chair, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering Temple University

Kenneth J. Warren, Esq., Co-Chair of the Environmental Practice Group, Hangley, Aronchick, Segal & Pudlin General Counsel, Delaware River Basin Commission

RSVP: marcellusshaletownsquare.eventbrite.com/

**Thursday, April 22, 2010 6:00 - 6:30: reception
6:30 - 8:00 pm: program**

“Imagining Philadelphia's Future: The Plans and the Realities”

What does it take to create change (social, political, community, civic) in Philadelphia? Who has the vision, the power, and the resources? What is gained or lost in the process? Join us for a lively discussion of the past, present, and future of city planning, from the days of Edmund Bacon to casinos, the convention center, and the future of I-95. The dialogue will help shape the content of the Philadelphia Encyclopedia. Featuring:

Jethro Heiko: Strategic Organizing director, The Action Mill

Scott Knowles: editor and co-author of *Imagining Philadelphia: Edmund Bacon and the Future of the City*

Spencer Finch: Director of Sustainable Development Programs Pennsylvania Environmental Council

Harris Steinberg: Executive Director, PennPraxis

Craig Schelter: Principal, Schelter & Associates

Ariel Ben-Amos (moderator): Young Involved Philadelphia

Program will be in the Butterfly Gallery, Academy of Natural Sciences. Seating is limited.

Register: philadelphiaencyclopedia.org

Monday, May 10, 2010: 6:30 pm: reception with light refreshments 7:00pm:program Annual Cheryl Beth Silverman Memorial Lecture, featuring Dr. Sylvia Earle, Oceanographer.

Dr. Sylvia Earle Oceanographer, marine conservationist and author of *The World is Blue: How Our Fate and The Oceans Are One*. Dr. Earle was the 2004 recipient of the Academy's Richard Hopper Day Medal. She will discuss her latest book, highlight recent research, and show a short film.

RSVP: <http://annualsilvermanlecture.eventbrite.com/>

This program is co-sponsored by The Academy of Natural Sciences and The Explorer’s Club with the generous support of The Silverman Family.

Unless otherwise noted, all Town Square programs are held in the Auditorium, Academy of Natural Sciences, 1900 Benjamin Franklin Pkwy, Philadelphia PA. All Town Square Events are free and open to the public. For more information, contact

cep@ansp.org.



Laurel Hill Cemetery

3822 Ridge Avenue - Philadelphia, PA 19132.
215-228-8200 <http://www.thelaurelhillemetery.org>

Hours of Operation:

Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:30pm

Saturday-Sunday 9:30am-4:30pm

Closed Major Holidays

Admission to Laurel Hill Cemetery is always free

Saturday, April 10, 2010 at 3 P.M. - TITANIC'S FLOATERS: Recovery, Preparation, and Disposition. - According to the statistics from the existing records of the White Star Line, managing company of the R.M.S. Titanic, there were 98 passengers destined for Pennsylvania on that fateful voyage in April of 1912. Of that number, 45 were from the Philadelphia area. Six of these are entombed or memorialized at Laurel Hill Cemetery.



Every year in April, Laurel Hill Cemetery commemorates the solemn anniversary of the sinking of the "Ship of Dreams." The event commences with a walking tour of Laurel Hill, where we visit the burial places of the Titanic passengers, and hear their unique stories. The tour continues at West Laurel Hill Cemetery, where six additional Titanic-related men and women rest. Following the walking tours, a slide-supported presentation will highlight the connection between Philadelphia and the Titanic; this year's focus is not on the survivors or the bodies immediately recovered at the scene of the disaster, but on the bodies that later re-emerged from the depths. The evening is always capped off by a sumptuous feast that replicates the one served aboard Titanic on that final, fateful day.

Widener University Professor and Resident Folklorist, Dr. J. Joseph Edgette, hosts this annual event, which will take place starting at 3:00pm on Saturday, April 10, 2010. The cost is \$25 per person for the tours only, and \$75 per person for the entire package, including tours, presentation and dinner. Advance registration is required. Space is limited, so make your reservations early by calling 215-228-8200.

Sunday, April 11, 1:00pm (game starts at 2:05pm)

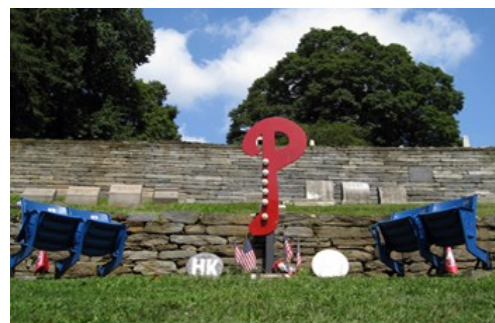
A Sunday Afternoon of All Things Baseball: THE HARRY KALAS MUSEUM EXHIBIT PUBLIC OPENING

Baseball fans one and all are invited to attend the official public opening of the Harry Kalas Museum Exhibit at Laurel Hill Cemetery, the late sportscaster's final resting place. Many of the items featured in the exhibit personally belonged to Harry Kalas, bearing great sentimental value for fans and friends alike. Among some of the most intriguing items are the blue blazer and white loafers that were hung in the dugout as part of the Phillies' tribute to Harry last season.

After viewing the exhibit, ticket holders will be able to watch the Phillies take on the Houston Astros under the afternoon sun on a large screen while enjoying cold beer, hotdogs, soft pretzels, popcorn, and other ballpark favorites. Guided tours to Harry's gravesite, where original seats from Veterans' Stadium have been installed, will also be offered.

Author Randy Miller, whose book, Harry the K: The Remarkable Life of Harry Kalas, just hit bookstores, will be on-hand to speak with fans, and promote and sign copies of his book. A dollar raffle will provide those who enter a chance to win tickets to an upcoming Phillies weekend home game. Baseball arts-and-crafts table projects will keep the sport's youngest fans entertained.

Tickets are all-inclusive, and guarantee unlimited access, food and drink. Cost: \$40 for adults and \$10 for children ages 12 and under. Purchase your tickets in advance Online, or by calling 215.228.8200.



Saturday, May 1, 2010 at 10 A.M. NATURE IN THE NECROPOLIS: BIRDS AND BLOOMS

Laurel Hill is our nation's first garden cemetery, and we will walk through this beautiful park-like landscape overlooking the Schuylkill River, while we learn about its history, and try to identify as many birds as possible of those that we see or hear. Near the end of migration season, we may still find some temporary visitors, as well as permanent residents and those who reside here for the whole summer. Share your knowledge or just enjoy nature all around you in the midst of the city. Bring binoculars. Bird book, notepad and pen are optional. Torrential rain cancels the program; drizzle does not.

The program cost is \$20 per person with discounts for members, seniors, and students. Children under 12 are free. For reservations: 215.228.8200 or tours@thelaurelhillemetery.org.

**Events and exhibits at
Chemical Heritage Foundation
315 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106**

Tel: 215-925-2222 • Fax: 215-925-1954

<http://www.chemheritage.org>

Events are free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.

Tuesday, April 13, 2010 - 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Brown Bag Lecture: Chin Jou, "How the Calorie Leapt from Chemistry Lab Obscurity to Diet-Culture Eminence"

Chin Jou discusses the history of the calorie starting with chemist Wilbur Olin Atwater's (1844–1907) experiments using bomb and respiration calorimeters in the 1890s. She then examines how the calorie became central to a new diet culture, as legions of young middle-class women took up calorie counting in the 1910s and 1920s. The talk also underscores the ways in which the concept of the calorie transformed our vision of food, causing us to focus on the number of calories in a particular food item rather than on the food itself, and speculates on why calorie counting became such a popular and enduring means of weight management.

Chin Jou received her Ph.D. in history from Princeton University in 2009, after defending her dissertation, "Controlling Consumption: The Origins of Modern American Ideas about Food, Eating, and Fat, 1890–1930." She is currently a DeWitt Stetten Postdoctoral Fellow in the History of Biomedical Sciences and the Technology of Medicine at the National Institutes of Health.

Wednesday, April 14, 2010 - 6:30 pm (free)

Science fiction movie in cooperation with The Secret Cinema X: The Unknown (1956, Dir: Leslie Norman)

"You're a scientist...you should be locked up!" Visiting American researcher Dean Jagger faces wrath from worried parents and mistrust from the military as he investigates a mysterious force that is causing death and mayhem in the Scottish moors, in this top-notch serious science-fiction thriller from Britain's legendary Hammer Films. Despite this lack of faith in his theories (and his brusque manner), Jagger successfully reasons out the cause of the strange goings-on: a giant mass of intelligent, radioactive mud has emerged from the center of the Earth, starved for energy and multiplying in size! This intelligent UK predecessor to The Blob features crisp black and white photography (largely shot at night), and excellent acting from a cast that includes Leo McKern (the ring-seeking villain from Help!) and singer Anthony Newley.

Followed by a discussion led by Michael Wellenreiter, film director and Assistant Professor, the University of the Arts.

Tuesday, April 20, 2010 - 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. Yoshiyuki Kikuchi, "The Emperor's Chemists at War: Joji Sakurai during the Russo-Japanese and First World Wars, 1904–1919"

World War I (1914–1919) has been given an important place in the historiography of chemistry in the twentieth century, especially for its role in triggering the mobilization of chemical expertise for war purposes. In this presentation Kikuchi aims to modify this global picture by applying it to the case of Japan. He will argue that the involvement of civilian chemists with war-related research activities began there much earlier, during the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), by focusing on the R&D of tear gas by Joji Sakurai, one of the elite chemists in Meiji, Japan. Kikuchi contends that these

two wars transformed Sakurai from a civilian chemistry professor into a national figure at the crossroads of science, technology, and the military, who significantly influenced the course of development of the Japanese scientific research system in the interwar years.

Yoshiyuki Kikuchi was awarded his B.A. and M.Sc. in history of science from the University of Tokyo, and then a Ph.D. in history of science from the United Kingdom's Open University in 2006. In 2008–2009 he was the Sidney M. Edelstein Fellow at the Chemical Heritage Foundation. Currently, Kikuchi is a postdoctoral fellow in the History of Modern Physical Sciences, Program in Science, Technology, and Society, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Tuesday, April 27, 2010 - 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Matteo Martelli, "'Natural and Secret Things': The Alchemical Work of Pseudo-Democritus in Its Greek and Syriac Tradition"

The treatise ascribed by Byzantine manuscripts to Democritus is the oldest alchemical work known in the Western world. The reconstruction of this treatise allows us to understand the origin of Greek alchemy and its relationship to ancient craftsmanship (both Egyptian and Persian). In addition, by studying this writing—which was translated into Syriac and Arabic languages—we can follow the first steps taken by the Middle Eastern culture toward assimilating the heritage of Greek scientific knowledge.

Matteo Martelli's early research focused on Greek alchemy, with particular regard to its beginnings, and was preparation for his Ph.D. dissertation in Greek philology. In addition, during a research stay in Paris, at Unité Propre de Recherche du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, he widened the scope of his inquiry to include the Syriac tradition. He is now completing the critical edition of the alchemical writings by Pseudo-Democritus, with an Italian translation and commentary.

Tuesday, May 4, 2010 - 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Regina Lee Blaszczyk, "Plexiglas: From the Eyes of Aviation to McDonald's Golden Arches"

This talk focuses on the history of innovation at the Rohm and Haas Company (now part of Dow Chemical) during its first hundred years, with reference to one of its most important products: Plexiglas acrylic plastic. Developed in Germany during the 1920s, Plexiglas helped transform aviation during World War II and revolutionized the look of roadside advertising in postwar America. Suburbanization went hand in hand with new forms of roadside architecture and drive-by advertisements made from Plexiglas. This talk shows how the Rohm and Haas tradition of collaboration with the customer helped grow the Plexiglas market from the 1930s through the 1960s.

Regina Lee Blaszczyk is an award-winning historian of corporate innovation and consumer society. She is the author or editor of six books, most recently American Consumer Society, 1865–2005: From Hearth to HDTV (2009) and Rohm and Haas: A Century of Innovation (2009), which was written for the company's one-hundredth anniversary.

Ongoing exhibitions

Gallery hours are 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday-Friday.

(Free and open to the public)

Transmutations: Alchemy in Art (exhibit) :

Monday-Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., by appointment only

Call 215-925-2222 to make an appointment.

The Whole of Nature and the Mirror of Art: Images of Alchemy (exhibit)

Du Pont Gallery

Marvels and Ciphers: A Look Inside The Flask

1 March - 10 December 2010

5:00 PM on Saturday, May 15, 2010 at The Sorella Rose 1800 Bethlehem Pike Flourtown, PA 19031 (215) 233-0616

Come to PhACT's annual dinner/fundraiser at The Sorella Rose in Flourtown, a gourmet restaurant at a suburban location just outside Northwest Philadelphia. Our guest speaker at this occasion will be **Joe Nickell**, a popular writer and investigator at *Skeptical Inquirer*. Joe is a man of many interests and wide fascinating experience. He will be talking about his investigations into various

paranormal phenomenon, crypto zoology, UFO's, vampires, and anything else that might be on his mind.

This event is open to all who may wish to attend. The cost is \$35 per person and an RSVP is a must.

To make a reservation please send a check payable to PhACT for \$35.00 per adult to:

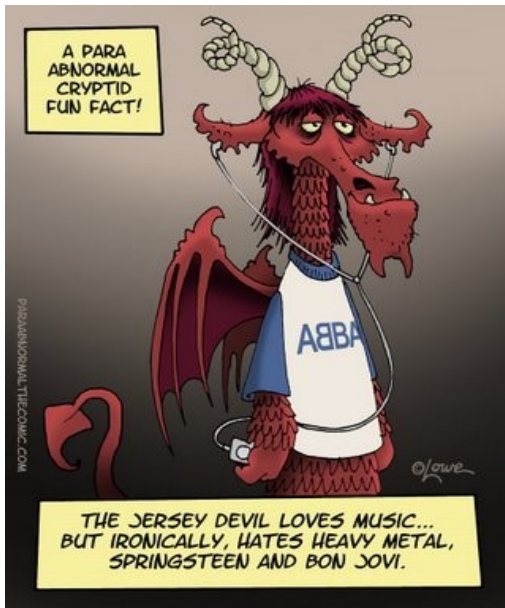
Bob Glickman
653 Garden Road
Glenside, PA 19038
215-665-2089



Joe enjoying the pleasant, if somewhat spaced out, company of habitués at the Mars Bar.



Joe on a barefoot walk over hot coals. Hot sauce or mild?



A PARA
ABNORMAL
CRYPTID
FUN FACT!

THE JERSEY DEVIL LOVES MUSIC...
BUT IRONICALLY, HATES HEAVY METAL,
SPRINGSTEEN AND BON JOVI.

Cartoon by Dave Lowe <http://www.paraabnormalthecomix.com/>
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Jersey Devil Hunt!!

On **Sunday, May 16, 2010** you are invited to join PhACT for a Jersey Devil Expedition in the New Jersey Pine Barrens where we expect to fine the Devil. Our banquet speaker, Joe Nickell, will be on hand for this most scientific of adventures. Our guide will be Don Nigroni who has explored much of the New Jersey Pine Barrens area known as the Wharton Tract. Don is an avid bird watcher, local historian, and folklorist. We will meet at a location and time yet to be determined and will be driving along mainly sand roads through some boggy terrain. Be sure to bring insect repellent, sturdy shoes, and a camera. High altitude gear will not be needed. This event is free.



I support the aims of PhACT and would like to join/rejoin for the next year. The annual membership is \$15 and \$10 for students which includes e-mail delivery of Phactum.

If you wish **US Mail delivery annual membership is \$25.** Checks should be payable to **PhACT.**

Membership dues of \$ _____ enclosed to pay for _____ years of membership.

Donation of \$ _____ enclosed for additional support
Donation of \$ _____ dedicated for High School Science Fair prizes

**Mail checks to:
PhACT
639 W. Ellet Street
Philadelphia, PA 19119**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E_mail _____

The Philadelphia Association for Critical Thinking is grateful for the hospitality extended by Community College of Philadelphia and especially Dr. David Cattell, Chair of the Physics Department, for hosting PhACT and giving us access to such excellent facilities. Part of CCP's mission is to serve Philadelphia as a premiere learning institution and PhACT is pleased to support this goal by having talks on wide ranging, engaging, and educational topics.

Phactum is, in theory, distributed 6 times a year and is the main propaganda organ for the Philadelphia Association for Critical Thinking.

If you are not a supporting member/subscriber we invite you to become one. \$15 for a one year membership to PhACT with email Phactum subscription. \$25 for US Mail subscription. \$10 for students, email only. Donations are welcome.

Send letters of rebuttal, ideas, short essays, poetry, opinion pieces, complaints, and lavish praise to Ray Haupt, Phactum editor, at phactpublicity@aol.com.

PhACT's High School Science Fair Student Prize Funds

Total contributed for 2010 prizes = \$318.00
2010 Goal = \$300.00

Excess funds applied to 2011 prizes = \$18.00
4 contributions in February = \$85.00
Total 2011 Prize Fund collected = \$103.00
2011 Goal = ????

Please donate. Small contributions are preferred and donations in excess of the 2011 goal will be applied to the 2012 Prize Fund or some other youth science education project not yet determined.

ALL money collected for this project will be used for student prizes. PhACT members and others are invited to participate as judges. Contact Eric Krieg for more information: erickrieg@verizon.net

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Contact the editor, Ray Haupt: phactpublicity@aol.com

The PhACT Council 2010

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The PhACT website is: www.phact.org