

hat
ay.
-

Phactum

The impossible some-
times permits itself
the luxury of occur-
ring.

~ (Charlie Chan's
Chance)

The Newsletter and Propaganda Organ
of the Philadelphia Association for
Critical Thinking
July / August / September 2017

editor: Ray Haupt email: phactpublicity@aol.com

Ark Encounter



In August of 2017 the humble editor of Phactum decided to travel to Williamstown, Kentucky, the site of Ark Encounter, a full size and accurate representation of Noah's Ark and the brain-child of Ken Ham, an Australian evangelist and Young Earth Creationist. The Ark shown here supposedly conforms to dimensions and descriptions as related in the Holy Bible and interpreted by scholars. Whatever the degree of accuracy it is an impressive structured 510 feet in length, 85 feet wide,

and 51 feet high. A massive wooden structure. The picture on the front page was the only one where I managed to get a view of the entire length of the Ark, unfortunately obscured by some trees. I have other pictures but due to lack of a 35 mm lens I was not able to photograph the entire length from a clear viewing point. The mashup of two photos below do show the entire Ark from the port side (left), a quite handsome image from a distance, perhaps two football fields away. Unfortunately I have no sophisticated photo handling software, but I suspect that readers get the idea. The starboard side is less picturesque and one



doubts that Coast Guard scrutiny would be favorable. Nonetheless, there it is; an accurate replica of the Ark that saved all humanity and all species except for those that it didn't save.

Phactum Table Of Contents

Upcoming PhACT Events	p. 6
Letters to the Editor	p. 7
Various Ruminations	p. 8
Apr/May/June 2017 Meeting Reports	p. 13
Baseball - Poetry	p. 17
By Albert Fried-Cassorla	
In re: Acts & Facts	p. 18
By Paul Schlueter III	
Useful Definitions of Ideologies	p. 21
By Paul Schlueter III	
Thugs and Bullies	p. 22
By Paul Schlueter III	
PhACT Calendar	p. 23
At the Wagner Free Institute of Science	p. 27
At Laurel Hill Cemetery	p. 28

Phactum's Roster of I.R.E. (Infamous Rational Errors)

Phactum contributor Paul Schlueter III has accumulated over time a vocabulary listing of many of the egregious flaws of thinking, devious tactics of argument, and some pretty cool Latin phrases that might sound impressive used at a social gathering. This listing is nowhere near complete, but has been made into a pamphlet that is available free and only at PhACT Meetings.

Meeting attendees are invited to take one and are invited to participate in expanding the listing in the next edition as it is intended to be a collaborative project. Definitions and examples should be short and to the point and may be submitted to the *Phactum* editor at: phactpublicity@aol.com

New entry: OBSCURANTISM - A style of speaking or writing characterized by deliberate vagueness or abstruseness, often with some self-serving motivation. Politicians, philosophers, and clergy are common practitioners of obscurant rhetoric to blur knowledge.

Notice the tower by the rudder. It has a bungee jumping platform on one side, zip lines on the other. Perhaps Noah's sons and daughters in law were into extreme sports. On that day neither of those activities were in progress. I can not say that I know what the purpose of a rudder is in such a vessel as it has neither sails, oars, or engines and the major function of the Ark is to just float around until the waters of the Flood



subside. Perhaps an experienced mariner can provide some ideas on that mysterious matter of the rudder.

The starboard side of the Ark is a bit less romantic in its nature, and one suspects a wee bit less Biblical. Modern Ark Building Codes that did not plague Noah are with us today, and one can be grateful as the interior was well air-conditioned and ventilated as one would hope for an enclosed floating zoo.

Speaking of zoo, Ark Encounter does have a zoo, Ararat

Ridge Zoo, a few hundred feet from the starboard side. It features a collection of non-carnivorous creatures including camels, ostrich, goats, kangaroo, llamas, and some horned antelopes that I think may be gnus. The zoo was very small, but the animal pens quite large and well tended. Admission to the zoo is part of the General Admission fee which is \$40 for adults, \$31 for old coots like me.

One popular attraction close by the zoo is camel and donkey rides. Kids seem to enjoy it, except perhaps one bored young lady pecking away on her cell phone.

It did not rain the day I was at the Ark so I had few con-



WELCOME TO THE ARK



Noah is in his 600th year and much has happened. His father, Lamech, passed away five years ago, and his grandfather, Methuselah, died in the past year at the age of 969.

Seven days ago, the Lord commanded Noah to enter the Ark along with his family.

So Noah, his wife, Emzara, and their three sons and their wives spent the past week loading the animals and are now storing the last of the provisions on the Ark.



They need to hurry—the storm is almost here.

cerns of major flooding, but a few thousand years ago things were different and there was a sign from The Lord shown on the previous page. Noah and his family took the sign seriously and loaded up for a great adventure such as being the last eight people on earth, a kind of dubious status in my humble opinion.

Noah and his crew quickly assembled every species of animal, two of each kind, and loaded the Ark, presumably by way of the long gangway on the port side of the vessel. Today visitors enter the Ark through a series of ramps at the stern, near the rudder. There are no steps to contend with and entry is easy if the crowd is not too overwhelming. I was there on a Tuesday, the crowd being big in my opinion, but the parking lot no where near capacity.

The ramps lead to the first of three decks containing exhibits such as animal pens and dioramas depicting some aspect of Ark Life.

The picture below shows why God started the Flood. Things were going badly on Earth with wild salacious parties at Sodom and Gomorah as



Noah had provided a great abundance of small cages for small animals. Did not many animals become carnivorous after the Fall? How did Noah handle that situation? Explanations are welcome. Send a Letter to the Editor.



depicted in a diorama. To be honest, it looks like a pretty good party to me.

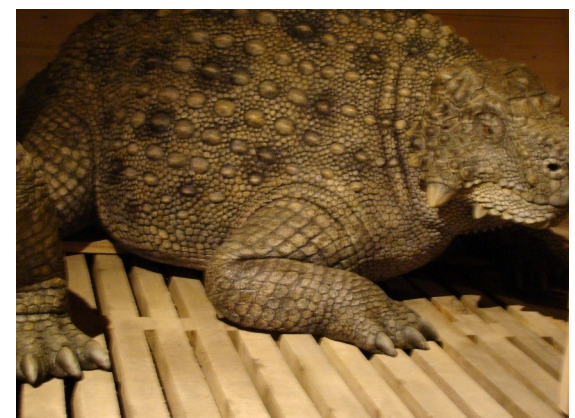


Larger animals, mammal, reptile, and amphibian were kept in larger cages. Only one pair of a Kind was needed as that Kind will in some way divide, not evolve, to form many sub-species of the Kind. The picture below shows a representative of the Pareiasaur Kind which in my opinion is kind of ugly and kind of extinct.

The cage exhibits did not lend themselves well to grab-shot photography, and I was reluctant to use flash although it is permitted in most places on the Ark.



On a more serious than lascivious partying note, this pre-Flood diorama shows a dinosaur about to attack slaves/gladiators in the arena. That



should pretty well prove that the Flintstones are good history, men and dinosaurs trod the Earth together.

Two other decks in the Ark show dioramas and other exhibits of daily life on the Ark, and of course the Creation story itself is told, with Adam and Eve in the Garden. An



interesting retelling of the tale with good graphics and dioramas. Nicely done.

On the second or third deck is a colorful diorama depict-

ing Noah leading his family in prayer. In the diorama are Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, their wives, and Noah's wife. The women's names are not revealed in the Holy Bible, but names have been derived from many extra-biblical sources. Unfortunately I did not write down the names being used at Ark Encounter.

For the purpose of easy identity at Ark Encounter the name Emzara is used for Noah's wife who for centuries did bear no children for Noah, but about a century before the Flood had three sons. At that time Noah was a mere boy of 500 years, about 600 during the Flood, and he lived another 350 years after the waters did subside. He was 950 years of age at his death, only 19 years short of his grandfather, Methuselah, who was 969 years of age at his demise.

I think there is little doubt that Emzara is Mrs. Noah's correct name since the facilities restaurant is called Emzara's Kitchen. The restaurant is big, biblical in scale, and quite inexpensive for an impressive buffet of Southern Cuisine.

I found Ark Encounter to be very well done, pleasant, and quite interesting. During my visit no one attempted to evangelize me, the staff were very polite as were the tourists, and the exhibits were very well rendered. It may be a bit kooky, but so is Disneyland.

Ω Ω Ω

one
WORLD
two **VIEWS**

<p style="text-align: center;">BIBLICAL CREATION MODEL</p> <p>Life came from life, personally crafted by the uncreated God of the Bible.</p> <hr/> <p>Animals were created as distinct kinds about 6,000 years ago.</p> <hr/> <p>Changes within kinds are the result of design features.</p> <hr/> <p>No new animal kinds develop—animals cannot change into totally different kinds.</p> <hr/> <p>Modifications are changes in structures that already exist.</p> <hr/> <p>Fossils were formed quickly due to the Flood and localized post-Flood catastrophes.</p> <hr/> <p>Death is an unnatural enemy introduced by Adam (1 Corinthians 15:26); one that will be removed by Jesus Christ.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NATURALISTIC EVOLUTIONARY MODEL</p> <p>Life spontaneously came from non-life; life is an unintended natural phenomenon.</p> <hr/> <p>All animals have descended from a common ancestor at least 3.5 billion years ago.</p> <hr/> <p>Changes that animals undergo are purely undirected natural phenomena.</p> <hr/> <p>Animals change into completely different animals [kinds]; modifications are potentially unlimited.</p> <hr/> <p>Modifications eventually result in entirely new structures.</p> <hr/> <p>Over millions of years, fossils were formed gradually or in localized catastrophes.</p> <hr/> <p>Death, like life, is a meaningless chemical phenomenon.</p>
---	--

UPCOMING PHACT EVENTS

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 costs \$4.00 for all day. Enter the college parking garage on 17th Street which is one way south bound. It opens at 1:00 PM and closes at 6:00 PM. This meeting site is handicap accessible. **PhACT Meetings are Free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.**



Lectures are generally at Community College of Philadelphia in Lecture Room C2-28 in the Center for Business and Industry at the corner of 18th and Callowhill Streets, at 2:00 PM, unless otherwise noted. **Please try to arrive a few minutes early as the College now requires that meeting attendees sign in for security reasons. ID must be shown.**

Saturday, September 16, 2017 at 2:00 PM. The PhACT Lecture Series begins for 2017/2018. In Lecture Room C2-28 in the Center for Business and Industry at the corner of 18th and Callowhill Streets.

Kenneth Silber, a science and politics journalist, will lecture and lead discussion.

Science and Politics in a "Post-Truth" Era. Political polarization has grown in recent years, with bitter arguments not just about policies but about facts and sources. Respect for expertise has waned in the face of rising populism. What are the implications for science? Political writer Kenneth Silber sketches the historical rise and success of American science and its prospects in the current political environment

Ken Silber is a writer and fact checker for Scientific American among other publications. He is currently working on a history of the Erie Canal. He has a website: <http://quicksilber.blogspot.com/>.

Saturday, October 21, 2017 at 2:00 PM. PhACT Lecture. Topic to be determined In Lecture Room C2-28 in the Center for Business and Industry at the corner of 18th and Callowhill Streets.

Saturday, November 18, 2017 at 2:00 PM. PhACT Lecture. Topic to be determined In Lecture Room C2-28 in the Center for Business and Industry at the corner of 18th and Callowhill Streets.

Ω Ω Ω

Letters to the Editor

Letters and Rants to the Editor are encouraged.
Send to PhACTPublicity@aol.com

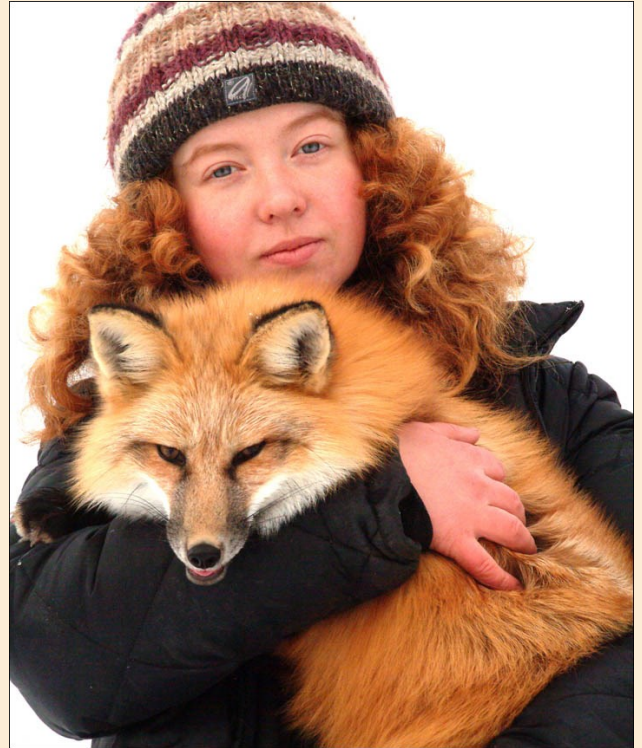
Editor: There's an article in the May 2017 Scientific American about a long-running experiment to domesticate foxes. The experiment has been going on since 1959. What they do is continually select for tameness for the foxes they breed. What's particularly interesting is as the foxes have become tame and doglike in their behavior, their appearance has also become more doglike--mottled coats, floppy ears, shorter snouts, etc.

The article is written by an 83-year-old woman who has been with the experiment from the beginning. She writes: "...nothing could prepare me for the events of the evening of July 15, 1974...Pushinka [a tame vixen] rested at my feet. I heard footsteps in the distance but thought nothing of it. Pushinka, however, sensed danger. But rather than hiding or seeking my protection, she sprinted toward the perceived intruder and did something that I had never seen her do before or would see again: she barked, sounding like a guard dog...Never before had Pushinka acted in a truly aggressive, let alone fierce, manner to any human..."

About two minutes after reading that passage, the doorbell rang. His Royal Iceness Glacier barked. That's common in many other dogs, but HRI Glacier never barks at people at the door or people walking by the house. (He only barks at me, but that's another story.)

Howard J. Wilk
Philadelphia

From Siberian Times, 27 November 2012



Irina Mukhamedshina, 22, PhD student of Novosibirsk Institute of Cytology and Genetics with Nyuta the fox

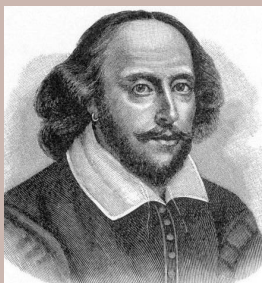
<http://siberiantimes.com/science/casestudy/features/how-i-trained-my-fox-called-anna-to-be-like-a-household-pet->

Ω Ω Ω

Your thoughts and opinions are important.

So why not share those thoughts with other Phactum readers? We appreciate letters and articles about almost any topic including the seething brains of Lovers and Madmen. We would very much like correction on matters of factual error and polite expression of disagreement of opinion. Please, no partisan politics or angry rants about religion. You may rebut the ill-tempered Editor's ramblings with impunity as we promise not to stick pins in effigy dolls. Original poetry is welcome. No Kardashian tails, please.

Send submissions to the Phactum Editor at : phactpublicity@aol.com



"Lovers and madmen have such seething brains
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends."
"

— William Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream

Various Ruminations of Woo Woo and Real Science and some Gossip

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

Opioid Celebrity Deaths and a Grim Coincidence

At the PhACT meeting of April 16, 2017 Dr. Paul Offit discussed a portion of his new book *Pandora's Lab: Seven Stories of Science Gone Wrong*. He presented two sections of the book, one being the matter of death and various infirmities caused by illicit use and over prescription of various opioid drugs.

Two days later there was a news announcement indicating that the cause of death of Prince, a popular pop music icon who died on April 21, 2016, was due to over prescription of opioids for pain relief.

The plight of Prince is sadly too common as thousands of people die each year of that cause. Most victims are mainly unknown, but there plenty of celebrities who had died because of improper use of opioids. John Beluschi is one, Chris Farley another. Add in Janis Joplin, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Heath Ledger, Brittany Murphy, Anna Nicole Smith, Whitney Houston, and Lenny Bruce. Sigmund Freud died of morphine overdose. River Phoenix succumbed to opiates as did Michael Jackson, Sid Vicious, Bruce Lee, and in 1977 The King, Elvis Presley died of a heart attack quite possibly induced by overuse of various drugs including Pethidine, also known as meperidine and Demerol, which is a synthetic opioid.

Interesting that so many victims are musicians.

More on Pandora's Lab

In the Sunday Inquirer of April 16, 2017, one day after Dr. Offit's presentation at PhACT, writer Sandy Bauer presented a short discussion of *Pandora's Lab: Seven Stories of Science Gone Wrong*. Well done.

The article may be viewed on line at:

<http://www.philly.com/philly/health/5-questions-On-heroin-DDT-lobotomies-and-how-science-eventually-gets-it-right.html>

Opium vs Opioid - What's the Diff?

As a layman not well tuned in to drug matters I have often heard of opiates and opioids but never really thought about how they might be different.

They are, apparently, not so terribly different.

An **opiate** is a substance derived from the poppy plant which contains opium. Opiates are sometimes called "natural" since the active ingredient molecules are made by nature, not manufactured by chemical synthesis. Common



opiates include morphine and codeine, both made directly from poppy plants.

An **opioid** is a substance that is synthetic, meaning the active ingredients are manufactured via chemical synthesis. Opioids may act just like opiates in the human body, because of the similar molecules. Oxycontin is an opioid.

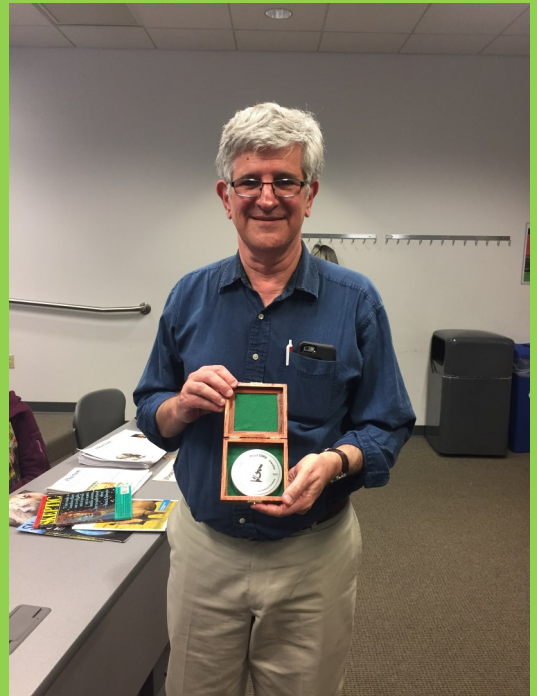
The terms are often used interchangeably. On the street, "heroin" may mean synthetic, natural, or semi-synthetic compounds. Manufactured opioids like Oxycontin are sometimes called "synthetic heroin". Genuine "heroin" as originally formulated is technically considered an opioid, since it is chemically manufactured, although molecules from the

Truth in Advertising



Defender of Science

At our April 2017 meeting PhACT was proud to present Dr. Paul Offit with a token of esteem and appreciation, specifically an engraved medallion acknowledging him as a Defender of Science. Dr. Offit has been a marvelous physician, humanitarian, educator, author, and scientist. It's been an honor to associate with him and we hope that association continues for many years.



opium poppy plant are used in the process. Some of heroin's active ingredient molecules are not found in nature.

Currently many references are using opioid to refer to all opium-like substances (including opiates and opioids), and limiting the use of "opiates" to only natural opium poppy derived drugs like morphine.

Love the Flat Earth Movement

The Denver Post had an interesting and amusing article on July 13, 2017 entitled "I'm A Skeptic. And I Love The Flat-Earth Movement". The author, Craig A. Foster, is a professor of psychology at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs and is a member of several skeptical organizations including Colorado Skeptics, National Center for Science Education, and Committee for Skeptical Inquiry. He is not a Flat-Earther.

In his essay Foster briefly discusses three contradictions: conspiracy theories, science denial, and science education. In each category Foster is optimistic that the anti-science espoused by Flat-Earthers and other science deniers such as anti-vaxxers and Creationists will only serve to encourage real science to eventually be embraced.

The article is short and may be accessed at:

<http://www.denverpost.com/2017/07/13/im-a-skeptic-and-i-love-the-flat-earth/>

The web site for Colorado Skeptics is:

<http://www.coloradoskepticsociety.com/>

We notice that there are several "Flat Earth Societies" so it is a bit difficult to know which one is the original and which is the most authoritative. One is: <https://www.tfes.org/> This site seems to be active and up-to-date and rather interestingly reports that basketball super star Shaquille O'Neil is a new member of TFES. This group

does have an online discussion forum that is very active: <https://forum.tfes.org/>. It might be interesting to explore and Flat Earth folks are welcome to participate in Phactum by presenting ideas in short letters and articles.

Meanwhile I remain skeptical until compelling argument is presented.

PhACT and School Science Fairs in 2018

PhACT is planning to participate as judges in the Philadelphia and Bucks County school science fairs in 2018. We will be concentrating on middle school, grades 7, 8, and 9. We are hoping to raise \$600 for awards to 12 students who display critical thinking skills to prove or disprove their hypothesis. We are seeking cash donations for this project which are tax deductible and may be submitted to PhACT at www.phact.org.

Gambling Addiction

♠♣♥♦ **UK** 'This year was almost the end' - Ex-England star Steven Caulker bravely reveals considering suicide as he battled drink and gambling addictions

Former Tottenham and QPR defender Steven Caulker contemplated suicide as he struggled with drink and gambling problems during one of the lowest points of his career. Caulker has given a frank interview about his major issues with mental illness and how he is thankful to still be alive. The 25-year-old had the world at his feet after making his breakthrough at Tottenham and earned a call-up into the England squad where he scored on his debut and played against Sweden back in 2012. But it was a completely different story away from the pitch as Caulker came close to ending his own life after struggling to deal with mental health issues.

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/sport/football/news/steven-caulker-suicide-tottenham-england-10709598>

♠♣♥♦ **USA** **Nevada Casinos Win More Than \$991.6M From Gamblers in May**

Casinos across Nevada in May posted their third monthly year-over-year revenue increase in a row, pumping the optimism of state gambling regulators. The casinos statewide won more than \$991.6 million from gamblers last month, according to data released Thursday by the Nevada Gaming Control Board. The figure represents an increase of 3.5 percent over the year and the second-highest monthly revenue in 2017. Table games made up \$344.4 million of May's revenue. Slot machines yielded casinos \$647.2 million

<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/nevada/articles/2017-06-29/nevada-casinos-win-more-than-9916m-from-gamblers-in-may>

♠♣♥♦ **USA** **Editorial - Gambling not the way to prop up budgets**

\$57.6 million was put into video-gaming terminals last year in Bloomington, which collected \$730,795 in gaming tax revenue. The state's share, minus the winnings paid out, was 25 percent, or about \$3.7 million. That last detail - that government gets a cut of the action from every transaction - is one of the important things about the explosion of state-licensed video gaming, which Illinois legalized in 2012. It makes gaming an important revenue stream to municipalities at a time of tremendous financial uncertainty in Springfield. And therein lies the risk. This money cannot be seen as a permanent fix to budget problems. Yes, people should be able to spend their money however they want. And business owners have every right to make money. However, we can't shake the troublesome feeling that video gaming sites are targeting those who can hardly afford it, and governments are the fiduciary equal of accessories after the fact.

<http://www.pantagraph.com/opinion/editorial/editorial->

[gambling-not-the-way-to-prop-up-budgets/article_cab6334b-93cf-56a5-8e6f-1d77dd2e79de.html](http://www.winnipegjournal.com/gambling-not-the-way-to-prop-up-budgets/article_cab6334b-93cf-56a5-8e6f-1d77dd2e79de.html)

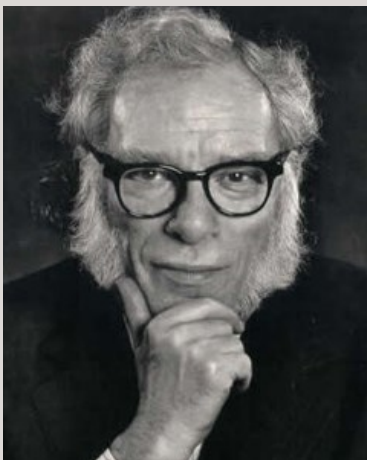
♠♣♥♦ **Canada - Gambling and trauma study coming up short of participants**

A new study offering help to individuals who have problems with gambling and trauma in the province is finding it tough to find participants. The study, titled Online Coping skills counselling for problem gambling and trauma, is a university-based study running out of Boston University, the University of Windsor and the University of Manitoba and conducted by Dr. David Ledgerwood out of Windsor, Dr. Lisa Najavits in Boston and Dr. Tracie Afifi in Winnipeg. Researchers want at least 84 people to sign up, which they say would net them 70 for the study. But as of Monday, they had seven. "It's tough," Najavits said. "The vast majority of people with problem gambling never seek out treatment. They're known to be a very, very hard group to connect with.

<http://www.winnipegsun.com/2017/07/10/gambling-and-trauma-study-coming-up-short-of-participants>

♠♣♥♦ **USA - Philadelphia - William Dombrow Guilty Of Fleecing Fellow Priests to Fund Gambling**

A Catholic cleric with a penchant for high-stakes gambling and the renowned pop-jazz orchestra Philly Pops has admitted embezzling over half a million dollars from the Philadelphia priests' retirement home where, as rector, he undertook administrative duties. Monsignor William Dombrow embezzled over half a million dollars from a retirement home for priests, which he used for gambling, fine dining and indulging his expensive passion for Philly Pops. The court heard that much of the money in the account came either from the life insurance payouts of residents of the home who had died, or it had been bequeathed to the home by parishioners in their wills. Dombrow used much of the money to pay off gambling debts, and to go on gambling sprees at casinos in Aruba and Florida



“I am an atheist, out and out. It took me a long time to say it. I've been an atheist for years and years, but somehow I felt it was intellectually unrespectable to say one was an atheist, because it assumed knowledge that one didn't have. Somehow, it was better to say one was a humanist or an agnostic. I finally decided that I'm a creature of emotion as well as of reason. Emotionally, I am an atheist. I don't have the evidence to prove that God doesn't exist, but I so strongly suspect he doesn't that I don't want to waste my time.”

~Isaac Asimov (1920-1992), Professor of biochemistry, writer

<https://www.casino.org/news/william-dombrow-pleads-guilty-fleeing-flock-fund-gambling-lifestyle>

♠♥♦ USA - Pennsylvania Slots at your local watering hole? Pa. eyes video gaming terminals

As Pennsylvania's financial hole grows deeper, lawmakers are eyeing a proposal that could allow up to 35,000 slots-like video gaming terminals at bars, bowling alleys, fire halls, social clubs and other businesses. "People have turned a blind eye to the fact that there's illegal video gaming already going on in Pennsylvania," one of the strongest proponents, Rep. Mike Sturla said Monday. According to the state police, more than 15,000 illegal gaming machines are currently operating statewide. (Some proponents have offered a 40,000 figure. Given the nature of the business, tracking the flow of money can be difficult.) The proposal has garnered strong opposition, including from most of the state's existing casinos, due to fear it would cut into existing gambling revenue and open the door to more underage and problem gambling.

http://www.pennlive.com/politics/index.ssf/2017/05/video_gaming_terminals_neighbo.html

♥♦ USA West Virginia fares poorly in gambling study

In order to call out the states where the gambling problem is most prevalent, WalletHub's analysts compared the 50 states across 15 key metrics. The data set ranges from presence of illegal gambling operations to lottery sales per capita to share of adults with gambling disorders. West Virginia is the fourth-most gambling addicted state, according to a report released this week by WalletHub. Nevada came in as most addicted, followed by South Dakota, Montana and then the Mountain State. Of the five states bordering West Virginia, Ohio was 10th, Maryland 14th, Pennsylvania 27th, Virginia 28th and Kentucky 47th. (Full report link available)

https://www.theet.com/news/free/w-va-fares-poorly-in-gambling-study/article_7afc6eb9-d6ab-5298-b147-2ff231d07639.html



Dr. Stephen Barrett Reports in Consumer Health Digest

▶▶ "Radiation harmonizer" flunks test (April 23, 2017)

CHOICE testing of the Geoclense Home and Workplace Harmonizer has found that it does not work as claimed. The device is a block of green plastic resin with a plug molded into the back. Orgone Effects Australia claims that when its \$165 device is plugged in, it will neutralize harmful effects of radio and electromagnetic frequencies from sources such as Wi-Fi, mobile phone towers, your home's smart meter, your neighbor's television, "noxious resonance from mold and fungus," and even "human-generated bioplasmic radiation" such as "imprints" from emotional stresses and "psychic attacks." The tests found that the device drew no power when plugged in, had no effect on nearby magnetic fields, and failed to detect other measurable effects that the marketers touted. [Good vibes guaranteed? CHOICE, March 6, 2017]

Note: CHOICE is a products/services testing organization based in Australia. It is similar to Consumers Reports in the United States.

▶▶ Raw milk still a serious problem (May 26, 2017)

After tabulating data from 2009 through 2014, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued another warning about the risks associated with consumption of raw (unpasteurized) dairy products. Outbreak-related disease burden associated with consumption of unpasteurized cow's milk and cheese, United States, 2009–2014 which may be found at: <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/eid/article/23/6/pdfs/15-1603.pdf>

Emerging Infectious Diseases 23:957-964, 2017] The CDC report concluded:

The growing popularity of unpasteurized milk in the United States raises public health concerns. We estimated outbreak-related illnesses and hospitalizations caused by the consumption of cow's milk and cheese contaminated with Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli, Salmonella spp., Listeria monocytogenes, and Campylobacter spp. using a model relying on publicly available outbreak data. In the United States, outbreaks associated with dairy consumption cause, on average, 760 illnesses/year and 22 hospitalizations/year, mostly from Salmonella and Campylobacter. Unpasteurized milk, consumed by only 3.2% of the population, and cheese, consumed by only 1.6% of the population, caused 96% of illnesses caused by contaminated dairy products. Unpasteurized dairy products thus cause 840 times more illnesses and 45 times more hospitalizations than pasteurized products. As consumption of unpasteurized dairy products grows, illnesses will increase steadily.

▶▶ "German New Medicine" founder dies (July 9, 2017)

Ryke Geerd Hamer, the developer of "German New Medicine," (<http://germannewmedicine.ca/home.html>)



has died at the age of 82. Hamer claimed that cancer is caused by sudden emotional conflict and can be cured if the conflict is resolved. He further claimed that his method is a "Germanic" alternative to mainstream clinical medicine, which he claimed is part of a Jewish conspiracy to decimate

non-Jews. Hamer held a medical license from 1963 until 1986, when it was revoked for malpractice. Swiss and German medical groups have criticized his methods, and anti-quack activists regard him as one of the world's most dangerous quacks

<https://sciencebasedmedicine.org/the-iron-rule-of-cancer-the-new-german-medicine-and-cancer-quackery/>

▶▶ **France to mandate vaccinations (July 2, 2017)**

French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe has said it is "unacceptable" that children are "still dying of measles" in the country where some of the earliest vaccines were pioneered. Three childhood vaccines, for diphtheria, tetanus and polio, are currently required in France. Eight more, including measles and whooping cough, will be required by 2018. To fight against smoking, Philippe also announced that the price of pack of cigarettes will be go up from 7 to 10 euros.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/france-vaccination-mandatory-2018-next-year-children-health-measles-dying-anti-vaxxers-edouard-a7824246.html>

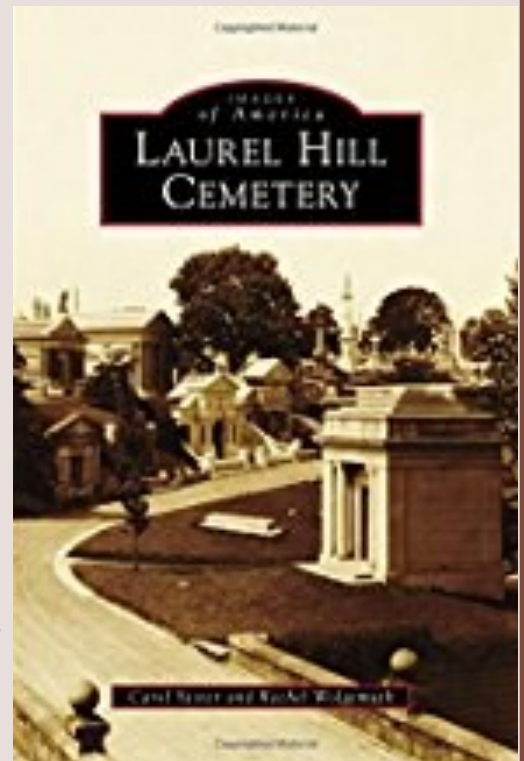
[Forster K. The Independent, July 5, 2017]

Ω Ω Ω

Laurel Hill Cemetery (Images of America) by Carol Yaster and Rachel Wolgemuth

- **Publisher:** Arcadia Publishing (August 7, 2017)
- **Paperback:** 128 pages
- **ISBN-10:** 1467126551 **ISBN-13:** 978-1467126557

Established in 1836, Philadelphia's Laurel Hill Cemetery was one of the earliest rural cemeteries in America. The picturesque views and outstanding horticulture, along with sculptures and monuments designed by notable artists and architects—like Alexander Milne Calder, Alexander Stirling Calder, Harriet Frishmuth, John Notman, and Thomas Ustick Walter—attracted thousands of visitors. Laurel Hill became the desired place of burial for Philadelphia's elite and the final resting place for those with last names like Widener, Wharton, Meade, and Elkins. The cemetery's design was much admired and widely imitated, both locally and nationally. While the 20th century ushered in a steep decline for Laurel Hill, the establishment of a friends group in 1978 and the cemetery's designation as a National Historic Landmark in 1998 signaled a transformation for the cemetery. Laurel Hill entered a new century as a revitalized and relevant institution. Once again, the cemetery is regarded as an important part of the community, a worthy destination for visitors, and a place to share in the stories of the men and women whose lives shaped both Philadelphia and the nation



The authors: Carol Yaster is the president of the Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery. Rachel Wolgemuth is an author and historian with a background in cemetery research.

Meeting Reports - April / May 2017

Reported by Jennifer Cortese and Nicolas Bugueno,
Physics students of
Dr. David Cattell at Community College of Philadelphia.

Dr. Paul Offit, a pediatrician and vaccinologist, discussed his new book *PANDORA'S LAB: SEVEN STORIES OF SCIENCE GONE WRONG.* Saturday, April 15, 2017

Reported by Jennifer Cortese

Dr. Offit's lecture on scientific inventions that changed the world for the worse was very thought-provoking. I thought that his discussion of pain and addictive medicine was the most intriguing. It seems that humans have been trying to treat pain without causing addiction for thousands of years. It is interesting that at one point in time the use of opium and morphine was believed to be acceptable, even for children, for many different common ailments.

I did not realize that the invention of the hypodermic needle by Alexander Wood was actually an attempt to combat the addiction that often follows the use of drugs such as morphine. Furthermore, I was surprised to learn that doctors would even instruct patients how they could inject morphine themselves at home!

As a Chemistry major, I liked that Dr. Offit explained the steps by which drugs like heroin and opioids came about. I did not know that heroin was a derivative of morphine that was created specifically in an attempt to diminish the addictive properties of the substance. Adding an acetyl group did not help to make the drug any less addictive, and yet chemists continued to search for ways to modify components of morphine! These chemists had good intentions, yet the chemicals that they created, such as heroin and oxycontin, became widespread and caused many people to become hopelessly addicted. It is understandable that pain relief and addiction often come hand in hand, as the relief of pain in and of itself can be an addiction that people seek. Adding in the addiction caused by chemicals only makes the creation of these drugs more dangerous.

Learning about the progression from opiates to morphine, heroin, and opioids makes me wonder what new, exciting drug will be produced next that results in mass addiction. Researchers have been trying to separate pain relief from addiction for hundreds of years, so I do not believe that they will stop now. There was once a time when heroin was sold over the counter while aspirin required a prescription, which demonstrates how little we initially understand about the chemicals that are produced. I wonder if one day researchers will truly be able to understand the underlying causes of addiction and ultimately get rid of the addictive properties all together. Somehow, I doubt that this will ever happen, but I would be surprised if chemists ever stop trying to create this ultimate pain relief drug!

Reported by Nicolas Bugueno

Dr. Paul Offit, a vaccinologist at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, presented a presentation on his book "Pandora's Lab: Seven Stories of Science Gone Wrong." Focusing on 7 areas where science development brought on more harmful than beneficial results, it reminds us that science development is not a path without thorns, most of time created by ourselves.

Eugenics is a scientific idea, which seeks to control breeding in order to increase the occurrences of highly desired traits. With roots as far back as Plato's idea of a guardian class, Francis Galton was the first to attribute it to humans that questioned

whether a human ability is hereditary. More extreme events then developed with Adolf Hitler's belief in a Germanic master race. Science has progressed, however, to disprove most of this idea even presenting the genetic problems that arise when there is little genetic diversity. An increase in the desired traits also increases the possibility of attaining undesirable and many times unhealthy traits that could be phased out with genetic diversity. Another issue that was discussed thoroughly was the history in medicine's development for pain treatment. Starting with the development of morphine from opium in 1803, Frederick Sertürner sought to eliminate the addictive qualities of opium but was unsuccessful. Despite his acknowledged failure, the drug was still marketed and went unnoticed for around 20 years transforming opium addicts into morphine addicts. History repeating, this time seeking to eliminate morphine's addictive qualities, heroin an opioid drug made from morphine that was marketed in the late 1900's. Felix Hoffman who ironically synthesized aspirin, one of the most used and beneficial drug today, also was responsible for synthesizing heroin one of the most harmful substances that is three times more addictive than morphine. Heroin's availability during this time was incredibly accessible due to the growth of pharmacies, being able to be bought over the counter for 30 years. On advertisements, it was even said to be safe for use among pregnant women as morphine addicts turned into heroin addicts. These factors along with others started the drug problem in the U.S. as by 1918 more than 200,000 heroin addicts existed in NYC and by the mid 1960's ~ 500,000 addicts in the U.S. Now aware of dangers drugs posed to society, solutions to this problem entered the political agenda giving rise to President Nixon's declaration of a "War on Drugs". Currently, however, the next drug unaffected by this is opioids. Oxycodone, which is again derived from opium and contains addictive qualities transitioned heroin addicts into today's opioid addicts.

All in all this brings into question whether there are some areas where science development cannot progress without bringing harmful problems along with it. Painkiller's addictive side effects may be decreased in the future, but as like all science development, an issue will always exist of how we view and use this technology, beneficially or abusively.

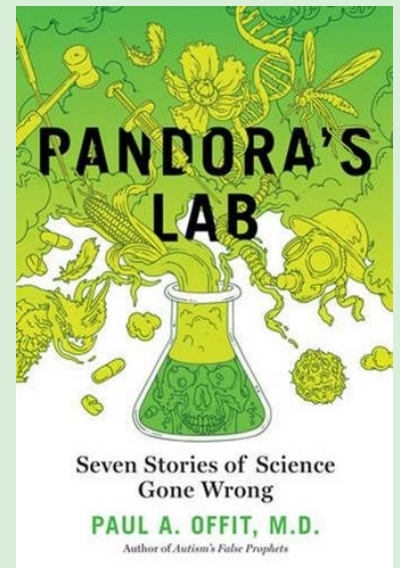
Ω Ω Ω

Pandora's Lab: Seven Stories of Science Gone Wrong by Paul A. Offit, M.D.

Hardcover: 288 pages

Publisher: National Geographic (April 4, 2017)
ISBN-10: 1426217986 ISBN-13: 978-1426217982

What happens when ideas presented as science lead us in the wrong direction? History is filled with brilliant ideas that gave rise to disaster, and this book explores the most fascinating—and significant—missteps: from opium's heyday as the pain reliever of choice to recognition of opioids as a major cause of death in the U.S.; from the rise of trans fats as the golden ingredient for tastier, cheaper food to the heart disease epidemic that followed; and from the cries to ban DDT for the sake of the environment to an epidemic-level rise in world malaria. These are today's sins of science—as deplorable as mistaken ideas from the past such as advocating racial purity or using lobotomies as a cure for mental illness. These unwitting errors add up to seven lessons both cautionary and profound, narrated by renowned author and speaker Paul A. Offit. Offit uses these lessons to investigate how we can separate good science from bad, using some of today's most controversial creations—e-cigarettes, GMOs, drug treatments for ADHD—as case studies. For every "Aha!" moment that should have been an "Oh no," this book is an engrossing account of how science has been misused disastrously—and how we can learn to use its power for good.



More books by Dr. Offit may be found at: <https://www.alibris.com/search/books/author/Paul-Offit?aid=3716740>

PhACT Expedition to Valley Forge National Park Saturday, May 20, 2017

Notes and photographs by Kim Sheridan

On Saturday, May 20, 2017, the intrepid PhACT Expeditionary Force searched for ghosts at Valley Forge National Historic Park.



Fearless leader Eric Krieg held the team spellbound with terrifying tales of spooks and specters, before capably guiding them through woods and meadows, across streams, and over hill and dale.

At Lafayette's Quarters, the ghost-busting duo of Doreva and Eric went to work, searching for spirits in the 1763 house. To Eric's puzzlement, none were found.



Not giving up so easily, they tried again, looking for hobbits this time, at the P.C. Knox Estate. Again, nothing.





Eric did his best to convince our merry band that he'd found a gnome in a gnome hole. We remained skeptical.



Ghosts or not, we soaked up the historical flavor of Knox's Quarters and Valley Forge Farm.



Plants, not ghosts, turned out to hold the most interest for our courageous explorers.

Jeff and Robb shared fascinating facts about the flora they found along the path.

Eric demonstrated the Velcro-like traits of cleaver for Becky.



Birds were plentiful, including a beautiful Green Heron in a marshy area along the trail back to the picnic grounds, where our lunch awaited us.

All agreed it was a fine day to take in the history and natural history of Valley Forge!



Many thanks to **Eric Krieg** for a great job leading this hike, and to **Robb Kerr** and **Jeff Cooney** for their botanical expertise!

Ω Ω Ω



Baseball!

By Albert Fried-Cassorla

Solid "thwack" of wood on ball!
the best sports sound there is of all.
Slide into second, cloud of dust.
Watch those vicious cleats - you must!
Jump over the catcher -- somersault why don'tcha!
'Cause when you win the game and cross home plate
the whole darn team'll be there to greet ya!

- Albert Fried-Cassorla, 4-13-15
Photo credit: Morguefile free photographs

Albert Fried-Cassorla is Adjunct Professor of English at Gwynedd Mercy University, a playwright, poet and the founder of the Melrose Park Philosophy Club. See him read this poem on youtube.com by there for Poem A Single Rose June 26, 2016. He may be reached at

albfcc@verizon.net



In re. "Acts & Facts"

by Paul Schlueter III

"Acts & Facts" is a publication of the Institute for Creation Research (www.icr.org), based in a P.O. Box in Dallas, TX. I'm reviewing their March 2017 issue, Vol. 46, No. 3. According to James Durrant, their Executive Editor, the ICR's mission is "to demonstrate how science confirms the Bible." Toward this end, the ICR is just beginning their long-planned construction of the ICR Discovery Center for Science and Earth History. ICR is "recognized as a non-profit ministry" under tax law (§501(c)(3)), and all contributions to their organization are tax deductible.

The cover of this issue implies the sort of propaganda the text offers. The cover photo shows a group of people with hands stacked atop one another, team huddle style. Cover text states "All in favor..." (an article on p. 5), "Evolutionary Clock Futility" (p. 16), "Convergent Evolution Is A Seductive Intellectual Swindle" (p. 17), and "Are Planets Only Thousands Of Years Old?" (p. 20). The seductive message of this cover is that, if we're all in favor (like a proper team), then each of these anti-scientific propositions must be true.

ICR's Chief Executive Officer, "Dr." Henry M. Morris III, D.Min., penned the article "All In Favor..." Morris addresses the reason ICR's Discovery Center is so crucial: In 2008, it was announced that the Perot Museum of Nature and Science was coming to Dallas, and "the enormous fundraising effort bumping \$200 million seemed to shout the desperate need for something to counter that attempt to present the awful distortion of nature as the 'god' of creation." According to Morris's view, "[t]he Perot Museum planned to showcase the 'evidence' in a magnificent edifice designed to present the half-truths and outright lies of evolution to the hundreds of thousands of young people in North Texas." Ah yes, he has been sure to invoke an imaginary threat to the YOUNG people from a museum of actual science! Threats to children can be relied upon to incite irrational worry.

ICR has received over \$10 million (depending on how one reads the article, they might have received \$20 million - it's not exactly clear) toward beginning their project, and anticipates the need for at least \$20 million more. Some of their funding apparently comes from wealthy contributors (one was cited as donating \$4.5 million), and there's a dollar-for-dollar "matching offer" from an unidentified source to encourage further donations. However, "most gifts...have not exceeded \$100. Every gift counts, and every gift counts with the Lord." The ICR's battle against the "outright lies" of science is projected to be costly, and dependent upon believers who can only spare less than \$100 - the poorest (and most credulous) believers.

The next article is presented under the heading "Research," written by Dr. Tim Clarey, Ph.D. in Geology from Western

Intelligent design is not science, [but is] grounded in theology [and] cannot uncouple itself from its creationist, and thus religious, antecedents.

~ District Judge John E. Jones III in *Kitzmiller v. Dover Area School District* (2005).

For it is the natural tendency of the ignorant to believe what is not true. In order to overcome that tendency it is not sufficient to exhibit the true; it is also necessary to expose and denounce the false.

~ H.L. Mencken (1880 - 1956)

Michigan University, and a "Research Associate" for ICR. Telling indicators of Dr. Clarey's professionalism are his footnoted references; the first two reference his own previous articles in Acts & Facts, and the third references another ICR publication. Oh, and also Genesis. In fact, most of the articles in Acts & Facts include numbered references, lending them a fallacious resemblance to sciency writing. They also invariably include biblical quotes.

Dr. Clarey asserts that he can "give[] compelling confirmation of the biblical Flood account described in Genesis 7." Based on ICR's own research project data, 404 "stratigraphic columns" from South America show that S.A. was once flooded. He even presents six figures (diagrams), a sequence which ends up showing about 2/3 of the continent colored in green, blue, and purple. Though Dr. Clarey never offers any specific dating technique (nor even a specific date), he asserts that this flooding event is THE flood of the bible. In support of the global scale of this event, he cites his own previous work (1,100 other "boreholes" from North America and Africa), which he claims show similar flooding. As for the un-flooded areas, Dr. Carey simply declares that "the highest hills were only flooded by a modest amount of water." Yet, according to his own figures, the Andes region and huge parts of the northern and east-central continent weren't flooded at all. There is no discrepancy, because the Doctor ignores his discrepancy while supposedly explaining it.

Why didn't peer review catch this? Apparently the ICR only reviews staff research with an editorial staff of peer believers. It has been pointed out (elsewhere) that "they don't take back Ph.D.s," and in Dr. Carey's case, I'm sure that's a comfort.

In the following article, Dr. Jake Hebert, Ph.D. (Physics, University of Texas at Dallas) attempts to debunk "old-earth geologists Gregg Davidson and Ken Wolgemuth presenting four supposedly unanswerable arguments for an old earth." (in biologos.org, July 2010) Using pseudoscience, mystifying jargon, and "relevant citations" not permitted by space limitations, Dr. Hebert applies his own expertise (Physics?) to refuting Christian geologists with whom he doesn't agree, thus (of course) refuting secular geology as well. His most compelling statement is: "Perhaps we can learn a lesson here - fallacious arguments can seem very convincing, even though they are wrong." Indeed so, Doctor!

On page 16, the Director of Life Sciences at the ICR, Dr. Jeffrey P. Tomkins, Ph.D. (Genetics, Clemson University) calls the evolutionary clock futile. He alleges that "evolutionists assign millions of years to fossils...in an attempt to bolster evolutionary theory, which needs the magic of 'deep time' to seem plausible." Oh, so now it's science that relies on "magic?" Then, citing the Journal of Creation, "five decades of molecular clock research data have provided only contradictions and discrepancies." There's a sweeping discreditation if I've ever read one.

Dr. Tomkins's big revelation is that fossil remains of members of the tomatillo family were found in rock strata from Argentina which is dated to 52 million years of age. He alleges that "the fossil tomatillo fruits look exactly like those growing today, exhibiting no evolution over the alleged eons of time." From such stony observations, the geneticist analyzes a fossil's visual appearance (no genes involved), and feels comfortable proclaiming "empirical scientific facts support the Bible."

In the Convergent Evolution article (pp. 17 - 19), Dr. Randy J. Guliuzza, P.E., M.D. (University of Minnesota), and the ICR's National Representative, attempts to hold the careful specificity of science against itself. He claims that when biologists describe evolutionary convergence (the independent development of similar characteristics between separate species, even over vast periods of time) they are necessarily REFUTING the existence of common descent (through which each species inherits its characteristics, slightly altered, from its ancestors). I'll let Dr. Guliuzza hang himself:

"When looking at similar features, which evolutionary explanation is legitimate - convergence or common descent? Or should both be taken as imaginary scenarios?"

The Doctor uses the familiar "false dichotomy" technique to suggest that only one explanation, OR its alternate, can be correct. In fact, science recognizes that BOTH convergence and common descent are commonplace, and also that they are distinct phenomena. To those vested in supporting Creationism, the presence of multiple evolutionary processes is instead proclaimed "proof" that there's no such thing as evolution! In reality, bats and birds evolved wings independently. Dolphins and bats evolved echolocation independently. One process (convergence) does not preclude the other, and all of these creatures gradually inherited characteristics from their ancestral species AS WELL AS benefitting from convergent evolution.

Dr. Guliuzza also offers another egregious misrepresentation of the findings of science in order to "prove" his own foregone conclusion:

"The general evolutionary view - that nature acts as an exercising agency to mold passive or-

ganisms into unlimited forms over time as they are docilely driven by environmental challenges - is bankrupt. No scientific paper has ever quantified a 'selective pressure.' "Converged,' 'conserved,' or other evolutionary words that project volition onto nature serve as rescuing devices."

Actually, real science doesn't view nature as an "exercising agency, particularly not one that acts with any sort of volition or design*. Nature doesn't "mold" organisms; organisms randomly mutate, by the simple (usually passive) mechanism of imperfect copying as genetic material is passed between generations. Selective pressures are the very real environments within which various mutations compete, and they have been documented in tens of thousands of REAL scientific papers, subjected to REAL peer review, and corrected when errors have been discovered. Selective pressures include predators, diseases, food sources which may be more easily exploited by one form than its competitor, changes in weather conditions, changes in vegetation coverage (both for camouflage and for sunscreen effect), and even the drift of continents to different regions across the globe (just to list a few).

As this cursory review of Acts & Facts demonstrates, it is the purveyors of such religion-based denialism who are intellectually "bankrupt." The ICR shamelessly presents its own in-house "expert" doctors as if their titles and credentials make them immune to distorted thinking. Each of these apostates of Reason has abandoned his education in favor of biblical fantasy and myth, yet he clings to his academic credentials as a self-serving "appeal to authority." It is sadly evident that their audience, people who are equally deficient in logical capacity, either don't know better (from a lack of education) or are willing to sell out their integrity for the benefit of hucksters who thrive on selling bunkum to the faithful.

Acts & Facts is a beautifully prepared glossy magazine which is apparently distributed free, through a network of true believers who sincerely hope to proselytize the world. The website icr.org/store, and the Acts & Facts magazine itself, offer page after page of ads for DVDs, books, homeschool resources, student guides, etc., all aimed at promoting their distorted perceptions of science in place of the actual science they perceive as a threat to their beliefs. Cognitive dissonance is no longer a passive symptom of honest misperception; it has clearly become the very deliberate strategy of cynics who twist and torture authentic Reason. These Creationists are not hapless victims; they are active aggressors who will deliberately lie in opposition to any non-religious pursuit of the facts of geology and biology, which readily disprove their mythical story of Creation.

*I am on record as opposing the occasional practice of some Journalists (even science writers) of anthropomorphizing evolution with phrases that can support a reader's inference of volition, design, or planning in the processes of evolution. Creationists pounce on such artistic phrasing in support of their bunkum. Such language weakens the public's understanding that evolution is a random "shotgun effect" of millions of mutations, only a few of which turn out to cause speciation or benefit the survival of one species over its competitors.

Ω Ω Ω

Paul Schlueter III is a High School graduate who did poorly in Biology class, yet a lifetime of ordinary reading enables him to spot and point out many of the obvious errors of "science" perpetrated in the name of unsupportable Creationist myth, even when offered by credentialed windbags. Ironically enough, Schlueter is the one behind bars for life.

MCHUMOR.COM by T. McCracken



"Although the Weather Service hasn't predicted rain, certain indicators can't be ignored."

Cartoon by T. McCracken
<http://www.mchumor.com/>
 Used by Permission

Useful Definitions of Ideologies

By Paul Schlueter III

In the April/May 2017 Free Inquiry, p. 44, article writer James J. Hughes quoted some interesting definitions of ideologies. The original source cited is "Understanding Libertarian Morality: The Psychological Dispositions of Self-Identified Libertarians," in PLOS ONE 7, No. 8 (2012). The co-author of this article which Hughes named is psychologist Jon Haidt, who was researching moral intuitions (particularly those which seem to be innate and instinctive to people). First Haidt lists morals:

- ◆ Care/Harm: Protecting others from harm.
- ◆ Fairness/Cheating: Treating others in proportion to their actions.
- ◆ Liberty/Oppression: Judgements about whether subjects are tyrannized.
- ◆ In-Group Loyalty: To your race, group, family, nation.
- ◆ Respect for authority/heirarchy.
- ◆ Sanctity/Purity: Sanctity/degradation, avoiding disgusting things, food, and actions.

Haidt found that Conservatives, Liberals, and Libertarians differ in their relative sensitivity to (or observance of?) these foundation moral traits:

- ◆ LIBERALS are more sensitive to the first two.
- ◆ CONSERVATIVES are less sensitive to the first two, but more sensitive to the final three.
- ◆ LIBERTARIANS are most sensitive to the third, and less sensitive to the other five.

For more of the underlying research and reasoning, please refer back to the original article by Haight, et al. Keeping this list handy could prove useful when considering how to best categorize ourselves and others, and when deciding how to frame discussions we hope will appeal to others. Because these characteristics appear to be inborn, it would seem to be unlikely that one would readily change his/her ideology in response to argument. However, knowing the ideals which appeal to such individuals might sway their specific support for/opposition to a proposal.

My own informal and non-scientific survey (discussions with friends) indicates strong disagreement with these findings among (approximately conservative) evangelical Christians and Correctional Officers. The primary objection is that "Science is unreliable anyway." There is a ready response: "Show me the gene that is responsible; they can't point it out." (Note: Scientists admit this - the traits are probably the result of many genes interacting in complex ways.) Many direct the conversation toward their opposition to "Determinism" (the idea that our ideas and behaviors are inherited), and specifically the argument that "Gays aren't bom that way; they learned it from their environments." Often cited is the argument that "Liberals want to make us believe that nothing is anybody's fault, but we all have to be responsible for our choices." I found it interesting that not one evangelical person held out the argument for evangelization: the idea that people's beliefs and behaviors are subject to their being convinced that the Church/God favors a position which the believer should adopt. Indeed, if we accept the moral foundations described above as a guide, then the heavily religious (and particularly the evangelical) would mostly fall under the Conservative ideology.

My experience discussing this subject suggests that, like Global Climate Change, this topic immediately obtains liberal support, and conservative opposition. As such, it would offer little value in terms of legislation or social policy, causing more of the same old partisanship and division.

Some of my black friends have gravitated toward the Libertarian idea, and specifically cited racist tyranny as their life experience and factual basis. Few blacks in prison with me seem to hold personal Liberal philosophies (most tend toward Conservatism), though many offer liberal-sounding arguments when seeking privileges or goods from others. I'd like to see research that studies these ideas in the context of race/culture.

Thugs and Bullies

By Paul Schlueter III

Having addressed some of the political and ideological views of my fellow prison inmates (see page 21 in this Phactum), I realize that one personality type (comprising two classes) is absent: Thugs and Bullies. The classes are primarily distinguished by the individual's underlying wealth and power. The thug is essentially lacking in wealth and authority, while the bully tends to have one, the other, or both.

What thugs and bullies have in common is their apparent enjoyment of the use of violence or authority to force others to bend to their will. Thugs are characterized by a relatively high level of physical strength and ferocity. Bullies enjoy the support of underlying support networks (gangs, police authority, powerful relatives, etc.) which guarantees their dominance in conflict.

Both thugs and bullies seem to use a mental algorithm of consequence in selecting their victims. First, is the victim likely to submit? Second, if the victim fights back, is the victim likely to prevail (either through his own strength/ferocity, or through the support of his own network)? Third, is there a good chance that the victim can be intimidated against reporting the abuse he suffers? If not, then fourth, how well does the thug/bully believe he can withstand the consequences of being caught abusing the victim?

Thugs and bullies both seem to have a very good sense of how best to demonize and alienate the victim from his support network. In prison, calling someone a "child molester" is all but guaranteed to cause him to be shunned by anyone who would otherwise support or assist him; offenses against "the weak" are also cited as derogatory character stains (though it is notable that thugs and bullies thrive on intimidating "the weak," it is "manly" to victimize any other man to his face, no matter how poorly equipped he might be to stand up for himself).

Thugs and bullies also seem to share an overblown sense of entitlement, especially in regard to their entitlement to victimize anyone who can be victimized. This is, in fact, the defining characteristic. A thug/bully takes what he wants, dehumanizes and belittles the victim as part of the offense, and invariably does so from a position (imagined or real) of his own superior power. If successful, he will return to his victim again and again, with ever-increasing demands.

Another factor thugs/bullies have in common: If they are shown that the victim is not worth the consequences he'll suffer for offense, then the thug/bully will seek out easier prey instead. Where the old concept of judging a man by how mighty his enemies may be defines his strength and courage, observing that one's victims exhibit weakness and cannot reasonably compete on the abuser's level is the mark of a thug's or bully's cowardice.

Thugs and bullies rarely respond to shaming, because that requires them first to value the opinions of others, and they uniformly lack such concern. Thugs and bullies tend to "gang up" and lend one another support and backup, but only to increase their own likelihood of domination. Thugs and bullies exhibit little or no loyalty to anyone, outside of their immediate benefit, and can be relied upon to readily turn in their own ("snitch") as a means to reduce their own punishment when being held accountable for their abuses.

Both thugs and bullies are adamantly enraged by the "offense" of one of their victims reporting their abuse. Interestingly, among those in authority (or empowered to exert authority), the best way to identify those with a tendency to bully is to observe their response to the idea that their actions might be reported to higher authority for review; people with integrity are usually willing to face review and confident that their actions will be upheld as valid, while bullies know that their superiors are likely to recognize the inappropriate nature of their actions.

As one might expect, prison is a great place to observe thugs and bullies in their never-ending hunt for their next victim.

PHACT CALENDAR

Upcoming PhACT Events

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 on the free parking garage on 17th street on the left hand side before Callowhill Street. It opens at 1:00 PM and closes at 6:00 PM. 17th Street is one way south bound. This meeting site is handicap accessible. **PhACT Meetings are Free and open to the public unless otherwise noted. Please try to arrive a few minutes early as the College now requires that meeting attendees sign in for security reasons. ID must be shown.**



Saturday, September 16, 2017 at 2:00 PM. The PhACT Lecture Series begins for 2017/2018. In Lecture Room C2-28 in the Center for Business and Industry at the corner of 18th and Callowhill Streets.

Kenneth Silber, a science and politics journalist, will discuss Science and Politics in a "Post-Truth" Era.

See page 6 for more details.

Saturday, October 21, 2017 at 2:00 PM. PhACT Lecture. Topic to be determined. In Lecture Room C2-28 in the Center for Business and Industry at the corner of 18th and Callowhill Streets.

Saturday, November 18, 2017 at 2:00 PM. PhACT Lecture. Topic to be determined. In Lecture Room C2-28 in the Center for Business and Industry at the corner of 18th and Callowhill Streets.

The Philadelphia Area Center for the History of Science (PACHS) maintains an extensive calendar of events about the history of science, technology and medicine that may contain some interesting events not listed in the *Phactum* Calendar. Check out their website at:

<http://www.pachs.net/events>

Lectures and Other Events of Interest for Skeptics Around Philadelphia

See websites for details

Thursday, August 31, 2017 University of Pennsylvania Museum
 Friday, September 1, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society
 Saturday, September 2, 2017 American Philosophical Society
 Tuesday, September 5, 2017 Eastern State Penitentiary
 Wednesday, September 6, 2017 Philadelphia Nerd Nite
 Wednesday, September 6, 2017 College of Physicians of Philadelphia
 Friday, September 8, 2017 Delaware Valley Amateur Astronomers
 Saturday, September 9, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society
 Monday, September 11, 2017 Science on Tap
 Monday, September 11, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society
 Monday, September 11, 2017 Free Library of Philadelphia
 Tuesday, September 12, 2017 Penn Science Café
 Wednesday, September 13, 2017 Rittenhouse Astronomical Society
 Thursday, September 14, 2017 Franklin Institute
 Thursday, September 14, 2017 American Philosophical Society
 Friday, September 15, 2017 Free Library of Philadelphia
Saturday, September 16, 2017 PhACT Event See page 6 and website: www.phact.org
 Monday, September 25, 2017 American Revolution Round Table of Philadelphia
 Tuesday, September 26, 2017 Free Library of Philadelphia
 Tuesday, September 26, 2017 College of Physicians of Philadelphia
 Tuesday, September 26, 2017 Penn Science Café
 Thursday, September 28, 2017 Free Library of Philadelphia
 Thursday, September 28, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society
 Saturday, September 30, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society

Tuesday, October 3, 2017 Eastern State Penitentiary
 Tuesday, October 3, 2017 Friends of Valley Forge Park
 Wednesday, October 4, 2017 Philadelphia Nerd Nite
 Wednesday, October 4, 2017 Free Library of Philadelphia
 Friday, October 6, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society
 Sunday, October 8, 2017 Institute for Religion and Science
 Monday, October 9, 2017 Science on Tap

Tuesday, October 10, 2017 College of Physicians of Philadelphia
 Tuesday, October 10, 2017 Free Library of Philadelphia
 Tuesday, October 10, 2017 Penn Science Café
 Wednesday, October 11, 2017 Rittenhouse Astronomical Society
 Thursday, October 12, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society
 Thursday, October 12, 2017 Free Library of Philadelphia
 Thursday, October 12, 2017 Franklin Institute
 Friday, October 13, 2017 Delaware Valley Amateur Astronomers
 Tuesday, October 17, 2017 Free Library of Philadelphia
 Wednesday, October 18, 2017 Free Library of Philadelphia
Saturday, October 21, 2017 PhACT Event . See website for details: www.phact.org
 Tuesday, October 24, 2017 Penn Science Café

off the mark.com

by Mark Parisi



Thursday, October 26, 2017 Free Library of Philadelphia
 Saturday, October 28, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society
 Monday, October 30, 2017 American Revolution Round
 Table of Philadelphia
 Tuesday, October 31, 2017 Penn Science Café

Wednesday, November 1, 2017 Philadelphia Nerd Nite
 Thursday, November 2, 2017 Free Library of Philadelphia
 Thursday, November 2, 2017 Institute for Religion and
 Science
 Friday, November 3, 2017 Free Library of Philadelphia
 Friday, November 3, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society
 November 6, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society
 Tuesday, November 7, 2017 Eastern State Penitentiary
 Tuesday, November 7, 2017 Friends of Valley Forge Park
 Wednesday, November 8, 2017 Rittenhouse Astronomical
 Society
 Thursday, November 9, 2017 Franklin Institute
 Friday, November 10, 2017 Delaware Valley Amateur
 Astronomers
 November 11, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society
 Monday, November 13, 2017 Science on Tap
 Tuesday, November 14, 2017 Penn Science Café
 Thursday, November 16, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society
**Saturday, November 18, 2017 PhACT Event See web-
 site for details www.phact.org**
 Monday, November 27, 2017 American Revolution Round
 Table of Philadelphia

Friday, December 1, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society
 Tuesday, December 5, 2017 Eastern State Penitentiary
 Tuesday, December 5, 2017 Friends of Valley Forge Park
 Tuesday, December 5, 2017 Penn Science Café
 Wednesday, December 6, 2017 Philadelphia Nerd Nite
 Thursday, December 7, 2017 American Philosophical So-
 ciety
 Friday, December 8, 2017 Delaware Valley Amateur As-
 tronomers
 Saturday, December 9, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society
 Wednesday, December 13, 2017 Rittenhouse Astronomi-
 cal Society
 Thursday, December 14, 2017 Franklin Institute
 Saturday, December 30, 2017 Chemical Heritage Society
 Sunday, December 31, 2017 Laurel Hill Cemetery

Tuesday, January 2, 2017 Friends of Valley Forge Park
 Tuesday, February 6, 2017 Friends of Valley Forge Park

Ω Ω Ω

Calling All Astronomers! Rittenhouse Astronomical Society

Monthly Meetings! Bring all of your out-of-this-world questions! Join The Rittenhouse Astronomical Society the second Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the Fels Planetarium at the Franklin Institute. The society offers all persons an opportunity to participate in the activities of an astronomical group at the laymen's level. They aim to spread knowledge, awareness and enjoyment of astronomy and astronomical issues. It is a popular science club that keeps its members up-to-date on the latest developments. No experience is necessary to attend the FREE meetings. Come with your astronomy questions!



www.rittenhouseastronomicalsociety.org/

The Delaware Valley Amateur Astronomers

is a group of enthusiastic hobbyists who live in and around Philadelphia. The DVAA's monthly meetings are free and the public is invited to attend. Meetings always feature a short talk on "what's up" in the sky currently, as well as a talk by a professional astronomer or members of the DVAA or a neighboring club.

Unless otherwise announced, monthly meetings will be held on the third Friday of each month at the Freedom Hall, in the Upper Merion Township Building, 175 W. Valley Forge Road, King of Prussia, PA 19406

Meetings start at 7:00 with time for informal socializing. Announcements and the main talk begin at 7:30 sharp. Refreshments are provided. Upcoming club events are listed on the DVAA website: <http://dvaa.org>

at Eastern State Penitentiary, 2027 Fairmount Avenue Philadelphia, PA 19130
 Phone: (215) 236-3300

The Searchlight Series: Conversations About Crime, Justice, and the American Prison System

Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site partners with nationally recognized penologists and educators to present an ongoing discussion series about crime, justice, and the American prison system. The Searchlight Series discussions take place the first Tuesday of every month, free and open to the public. No reservations required. See website at:

<http://www.easternstate.org/searchlight-series>



Philadelphia Area Lecture Host Websites

This listing is likely incomplete. If there is a site you wish listed or a link is erroneous then please email the Phactum editor at phactpublicity@aol.com

Academy of Natural Sciences

Monday, January 13, 2013 at 6:00 PM-8:00 PM at The Academy of Natural Sciences, 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia 19103
www.ansp.org

American Philosophical Society

, Benjamin Franklin Hall, 427 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia
<http://www.amphilsoc.org/>
Free and Open to the Public

American Revolution Roundtable of Philadelphia (ARRTOP)

at MaGerks Pub and Grill, 582 South Bethlehem Pike, Fort Washington, Pennsylvania
<http://arrtop.com/>
Free and Open to the Public

Chemical Heritage Foundation

315 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106
<http://www.chemheritage.org>

College of Physicians of Philadelphia

19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA
http://www.collphyphil.org/prog_calendar.htm

Delaware County Institute of Science

11 Veterans Square, Media, PA 19063
<http://delcoscience.org>

Delaware Valley Opera Company at the Venice Island Performing Arts Center, located in the Manayunk section of Philadelphia. Turn onto Cotton Street from Main Street and use the Venice Island public parking lot.
www.dvopera.org
2017 Summer Opera Festival

Delaware Valley Amateur Astronomers

in the Radnor Township Municipal Building, 301 Iven Ave, Radnor, Pennsylvania 19087
<https://dvaa9.wildapricot.org>
Free and Open to the Public.

Eastern State Penitentiary

2027 Fairmount Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19130 <http://www.easternstate.org/home>

Franklin Institute -

<http://www.fi.edu>

Free Library of Philadelphia (FLOP)

1901 Vine Street, 19103
<http://libwww.freelibrary.org/authorevents/>

Freethought Society

<https://www.ftociety.org/>



Friends of Valley Forge - first Tuesday of the month

<http://www.friendsofvalleyforge.org/speaker-series.shtml>
Free and Open to the Public.

Humanist Association of Greater Philadelphia (HAGP)

www.HAGP.org

Institute for Science and Religion

<http://www.irands.org>
Free and Open to the Public. A free will donation is requested.

Laboratory for Research on the Structure of Matter - Science Cafe

<http://www.lrsm.upenn.edu/events/sciencecafes/index.html>

Laurel Hill Cemetery

3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia,
<http://www.thelaurelhillemetery.org>

Nerd Nite -

<http://philadelphia.nerdnite.com/>
Email us at: nerdnitephilly@gmail.com

Penn Science Cafe & Lightbulb Cafe

at World Cafe Live, 3025 Walnut Street, Philadelphia
<http://www.upenn.edu/pennnews/science>
Free and Open to the Public.

Pint of Science

<https://pintofscience.us/city/philadelphia>

Rittenhouse Astronomical Society

at the Fels Planetarium, The Franklin Institute, 222 North 20th Street, Philadelphia
Astronomy lecture open to the Public.
www.rittenhouseastronomicalsociety.org/

Science on the Hill at St. Joseph's

at Landmark Americana Tap & Grill at 54th and City Avenue, Philadelphia 19131 at St. Joseph's University
<http://scienceonthehill.weebly.com/>
Free and Open to the Public.

Science on Tap

2nd Monday of each month at 6:00 PM
National Mechanics, 22 S. Third Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106
<http://scienceontapphilly.com/>

University of Pennsylvania Museum

3260 South Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104
<http://www.penn.museum/events-calendar>

Wagner Free Institute of Science

1700 West Montgomery Avenue, Philadelphia,
www.wagnerfreeinstitute.org
Free and Open to the Public



At the Wagner Free Institute of Science

1700 W. Montgomery Ave., Philadelphia, PA 19121 215-763-6529 Tuesday-Friday 9am-4pm

<http://www.wagnerfreeinstitute.org>

Lectures and Other Events at the Wagner

Libations with Leidy – Happy Hour and Open House Friday, September 8, 2017, 5 to 7 pm

Raise a glass to science at this summer happy hour and open house celebrating Philly's favorite hidden-gem museum and 19th-century polymath. Joseph Leidy is known for his varied scientific pursuits in paleontology and biology; he also led the Wagner from 1885 to 1892. Learn more about his accomplishments and the educational programming he championed at the Wagner through hands-on activities, and enjoy snacks and refreshments from Honeygrow and Yards Brewing.

Free to enter; 21+ guests can drink with a wristband for \$10 (\$5 for students and Wagner members).

www.wagnerfreeinstitute.org

New Perspectives on Historic Collections: Research by the Temple-Wagner Humanities & Arts Fellows Thursday, September 28, 2017, 6 to 8 pm

In 2016, the Wagner launched a fellowship program with Temple University to encourage the school's arts and humanities scholars to conduct research in the Wagner's library and collection. So far, the program has inspired 8 exciting research projects that frame the Wagner's collection in creative ways and reveal new historical information. This showcase will include: a reading from a poem inspired by the Wagner's archives; samples of jewelry based on scientific drawings; a talk on the microscopic photographs of the Langenheim Brothers; and more! Presentations start at 6 in the lecture hall and will be followed by a reception where additional Fellow projects will be on display.

Free; registration encouraged: www.wagnerfreeinstitute.org

Lantern Slide Salon

Thursday, October 12, 2017, 6 to 8 pm

Celebrate Archives Month Philly with a showcase of glass lantern slides from the special collections of local institutions. In the spirit of lantern exhibition culture, this salon will present historic images along with intriguing stories, all projected in the Wagner's immersive lecture hall from a his-

toric projector. Don't miss this rare opportunity to see an old technology and experience rarely-displayed slides from some of Philadelphia's most distinguished institutions.

Free; registration encouraged: www.wagnerfreeinstitute.org

Empire of the Living Dead: The Scientific History of Peruvian Mummies

Wednesday, October 25, 2017, 6 to 7:30 pm

Mummification began in the South American Andes millennia earlier than in Egypt, and it reached a heyday under the Incas in Peru. When the Spanish invaded in 1532, fear of these embalmed and sacred bodies led to their confiscation and collection. Hear Penn State history professor Christopher Heaney explore the afterlives of Peruvian mummies in this Weeknights at the Wagner lecture.

Free; registration encouraged: www.wagnerfreeinstitute.org

Evening with an Expert: Fossils

Thursday, November 2, 2017, 5:30 to 7:30 pm

See the Wagner's historic collections as never before—in an intimate, scholar-led tour! This edition will feature Delaware Valley University professor Dr. Jason Downs exploring highlights from the Wagner's vast, significant fossil collection. The tour is limited to 20 people and includes a wine and cheese reception.

Tickets required; \$30 (\$20 for Wagner members). www.wagnerfreeinstitute.org

Adult Education Fall 2017 Course Schedule

The Wagner Free Institute Fall Adult Courses have not been announced by the time of this Phactum printing. They normally begin around mid-September, are free, and always wonderful. Check the website. <http://www.wagnerfreeinstitute.org>

Ω Ω Ω

Wagner lectures and courses are FREE and open to the general public. Contributions are gratefully received. Courses are taught at introductory college level.



LAUREL HILL CEMETERY EVENTS

3822 RIDGE AVENUE, PHILADELPHIA, 19132
WWW.THELAURELHILLCEMETERY.ORG 215-228-8200

Laurel Hill Cemetery was established in 1836 not only established as a permanent, non-sectarian burial place for the dead, but also as a scenic, riverside sanctuary for the living. Today it is open seven days a week with free admission for self-guided strolls, exercise, sightseeing or picnics. A full schedule of diverse programs for all ages and interests are offered throughout the year. For more information on visiting the cemetery see the website

Sunday, August 27 at 10am Titans of Industry

From the early days of the Republic through the Gilded Age, Laurel Hill hosts some of America's most interesting and successful commercial giants. Making fortunes can be messy business though, and this tour will reveal some of the gritty stories behind the beautiful and elaborate monuments of the corporate elite.

Wednesday, August 30 at 6pm South of the Bridge: Explorations of the Cemetery's Southernmost Sod

Laurel Hill's most remote, southern portions – and the many notable stories, intricate stones and beautifully peaceful surroundings that comprise it – often go unexplored by the traditional visitor. As dusk approaches, tour attendees will have the opportunity to explore the many hidden gems and little-known secrets of Laurel Hill's southernmost sod.



Friday, September 8 at 8pm Cinema in the Cemetery

Pack a picnic, gather some friends or a date, and enjoy an evening under the stars. As the sun sets over Laurel Hill's historic tombs the grainy joys of the film experience will be brought to life during the cemetery's annual summertime movie series.



Saturday, September 9 at 10am The Hot Spots and Storied Plots

In life and in death, we all have stories to tell and what better place to hear tales of wonder than Philadelphia's most famous home of the dead? Join Laurel Hill Cemetery for an informative overview.

Sept. 13-16 at 8pm Death is a Cabaret, Ol' Chum: A Graveyard Cabaret

FIVE STAR RATING: BEST OF THE 2016 PHILADELPHIA FRINGE! -DC Metro Theater Arts "A quirky combo of fright-night-meets-kickline-cabaret...gripping vocals...stunning."

Saturday, September 16 at 2pm Yoga in the Cemetery

Find inner tranquility and balance during a one-hour yoga session

in the peaceful backdrop of Laurel Hill Cemetery, overlooking the Schuylkill River. Sessions will be led by experienced yoga instructor.

Friday, September 22 at 10am The Hot Spots and Storied Plots

In life and in death, we all have stories to tell and what better place to hear tales of wonder than Philadelphia's most famous home of the dead? Join Laurel Hill Cemetery for an informative overview.

Saturday, September 23, 8pm-12am Into the Veil (Presented with Atlas Obscura)

"Life is eternal. Death is merely a change in condition..." Join Atlas Obscura and Laurel Hill Cemetery for an immersive evening as we explore the liminal world that exists between the land of the living and the realm of the dead. The souls of Laurel Hill invite you to contemplate the veil between life and the afterlife. An evening of hidden art, music, cocktails and entertainment will await under the cover of night as you

choose your own path of discovery through the Cemetery's enchanting hallowed grounds. Cocktail attire is encouraged, along with sensible footwear.

Tuesday, September 26 at 6pm Spirits and Spiritualists

In the 19th century, thousands of Philadelphians believed that they could communicate with the dead. All that it took was a darkened room, a circle of believers, and a sensitive medium. Other Philadelphians mocked the table-rappers and tried to expose their tricks. Both believers and skeptics are well represented in historic Laurel Hill Cemetery. Hear their stories during this after-work twilight tour – and remember – truth is stranger than fiction. Cocktails and light refreshments will be served following the tour.

Sunday, October 1 at 1pm Pints and Plots: Laurel Hill's Buried Brewers

This autumnal walking tour will focus on the history of beer in Philadelphia, and the permanent residents of Laurel Hill who produced, distributed and enjoyed it. Led by award-winning home-

brewer and certified beer judge, Mike Lewandowski, the tour will conclude with a toast and a sampling of local beers.

Tuesday, October 3 at 6pm Seven Deadly Sins in the Cemetery

The Victorian era is often noted for moral, straitlaced behavior—but Laurel Hill residents had their share of vices. Underneath all of the proper behavior lurked the temptation of the seven deadly sins: greed, lust, wrath, envy, pride, sloth and gluttony. Join us for an after-work twilight tour of the grounds to hear more about the residents who gave into temptation. A sinful spread of desserts and cocktails will follow in the Cemetery's Gatehouse.

Saturday, October 7 at 5pm 9th Annual Rest in Peace 5k Run

Trick or treat...move your feet! Kick off your Halloween season the right way. Organized by the Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery, the Rest in Peace 5K Run is the premier Halloween costume run and after-party in the region!

Sunday, October 8 at 1pm Sinners, Scandals and Suicides

Laurel Hill has its brave military heroes like George Gordon Meade, its uplifting reformers like Sarah Josepha Hale, and selfless philanthropists like Robert Carson. But what about the less than pure spirits? The South Philly gangster who got whacked when he tried to infiltrate the Schuylkill County numbers racket? The Civil War hero, who made his fortune from white lightning and who, because of his many illicit affairs, was referred to by the local press as "a slayer of innocence and a robber of chastity?" The artist who committed suicide during the Depression when his priceless book and art collections were sold at auction for a few thousand dollars? The final resting places of these troubled souls will be among the many stops on our walking tour of Laurel Hill's scandalous, sinful and sordid side.

Saturday, October 14 at 10am The Hot Spots and Storied Plots

In life and in death, we all have stories to tell and what better place to hear tales of wonder than Philadelphia's most famous home of the dead? Join Laurel Hill Cemetery for an informative overview of Laurel Hill's long and colorful history, which will include many of the marble masterpieces, stunning views and legendary stories that afford the cemetery its WOW factor. This is the perfect tour for first-time visitors to Laurel Hill, and anyone else who enjoys beautiful art, scenic nature and fascinating history. "The Hot Spots and Storied Plots" will be presented monthly as part of Laurel Hill Cemetery's Fourth Friday and Second Saturday tour series.

Sunday, October 15 at 1pm The Worlds of Thomas Jefferson at Laurel Hill

Adopted sons, signers of the Declaration, painters, sculptors, men of science, ladies of belle letters, famous physicians, pariahs of free press, purveyors of fine wine and, of course, political provokers both friend and foe: all recognized by Thomas Jefferson as luminaries in our nation's early "Constellation of Worthies." They now rest peacefully at Laurel Hill; but their stories refuse to conform to those tenets, boldly demanding to be told. This walking tour will be led by foremost Jefferson scholar and acclaimed portrayer of America's third President, William David Barker

(www.thethomasjefferson.com), who will be visiting Laurel Hill from his home in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Friday, October 20 & Saturday, October 21 at 7pm Soul Crawl: Haunted Halloween History Tours

Laurel Hill Cemetery's classic Halloween flashlight tours have become a mainstay of the season. Experience the enchanting art and landscape after dark, as an experienced tour guide leads you along winding, dimly-lit pathways. The extended nighttime walking tours will focus on the cemetery's rich history, and of course, some of the liveliest spirits buried within. Tours will last approximately two hours, and will be followed by seasonal refreshments and cocktails aside blazing fire pits.

October 26 - 28, at 7pm Dracula: A Gothic Mystery

1897- When a young man disappears during a business trip to Transylvania, his fiancée back in England clings to the hope that he will soon return safely. But the usually cool and rational Mina Murray cannot escape the feeling that something terrible has happened and that worse is to follow. Her friend, Dr. Jack Seward, laughs these fears off as fanciful. But when a series of ominous and inexplicable events start to befall her and her friends, Mina senses that the danger is far too real... and far closer than any of them can imagine. Adapted from Bram Stoker's classic tale, this suspenseful retelling of Dracula explores the insidious power of evil and the twisted ways in which we welcome it into our lives.

Friday, October 27 at 10am The Hot Spots and Storied Plots

In life and in death, we all have stories to tell and what better place to hear tales of wonder than Philadelphia's most famous home of the dead? Join Laurel Hill Cemetery for an informative overview of Laurel Hill's long and colorful history, which will include many of the marble masterpieces, stunning views and legendary stories that afford the cemetery its WOW factor. This is the perfect tour for first-time visitors to Laurel Hill, and anyone else who enjoys beautiful art, scenic nature and fascinating history. "The Hot Spots and Storied Plots" will be presented

monthly as part of Laurel Hill Cemetery's Fourth Friday and Second Saturday tour series.

Sunday, October 29, 1-3pm Fall Family Day: Halloween Picnic and Parade

Spend an autumn afternoon exploring the many wonders and mysteries of Laurel Hill Cemetery while celebrating Halloween! Fall Fun for the Family at Laurel Hill will thrill and chill both the young and old! The cemetery's primary location overlooking the Schuylkill River will offer visitors majestic views of the colorful fall foliage and vibrant landscape along Kelly Drive. Activities will include arts and crafts, a pumpkin patch and Halloween games and goodies.

Feast on festive snacks, or bring your own picnic. Attendees are advised to wear comfortable clothes and shoes, and children are encouraged to show off their best Halloween costumes! This program is recommended for families with children ages 4-12.



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*.

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E_mail _____

Mail checks to:
PhACT
653 Garden Road
Glenside, PA 19038

or to pay online go to
www.PhACT.org

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 **premier** learning institution and PhACT is pleased to support this goal by having talks on wide ranging, engaging, and educational topics. Students and faculty are invited to be active participants in our activities.

The PhACT Council 2016/17

Bob Glickman, President	David Cattell Ph.D.
David Cragin, Ph.D., Vice-President	Jeffrey Craigin, Teen Member of Council
Doreva Belfiore, Treasurer	Ray Haupt
Becky Strickland, Secretary	David Langdon, M.D.
Eric Krieg, Past President	Tom Napier
Wes Powers, Webmaster	

Phactum is distributed 4 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. Donations are welcome.

Policy For Article Use

Except where otherwise noted all materials originating in *Phactum* may be reprinted by groups recognized in CSI's international network of skeptics organizations as published in *Skeptical Inquirer*. The author and Philadelphia Association for Critical Thinking must be credited. All other publications must obtain permission from PhACT before using any item.

Permission to use articles and illustrations originating from other sources must be granted by the original publisher.

Phactum Editor, Ray Haupt
phactpublicity@aol.com

The PhACT website is: www.phact.org

“Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored.”

~ Aldous Huxley (1894 1963), Complete Essays 2, 1926-29

