



National Capital Area Skeptics presents

Saturday, April 30

APRIL ANTI-FOOLS

The TALKS – 1:00 pm until 5:30 pm (\$5)

Scams, Cons, Fakes and Frauds And How to Avoid Getting Taken

Spotting Bogus Information on the Web

Dr. Eileen Abels, University of Maryland, Professor of Information Studies

Journalism Gone Bad – Fakes and Frauds in the Media

Brian Morton, Baltimore City Paper columnist

Sideshow Humbuggery

James Taylor, author of *Shocked & Amazed On and Off the Midway*

Pros of the Cons – A History of Professional Confidence Games, Swindles and Cheats

Todd Robbins, sword swallower, fire & glass eater, and purveyor of reality in the extreme

Street Scams – Three Card Monte & the Shell Game

Jamy Ian Swiss, magician and author

All are welcome—members and non-members

Tickets available at the door and by advance reservation. Afternoon and evening, separate admission.

Afternoon symposium: \$5

Evening performances: \$20

Special for NCAS members: \$20 for both

Location: NOAA Auditorium

1301 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland

Adjacent to Silver Spring Metro

Public parking is available under the building and nearby at

Silver Spring Metro, and Cameron Street and Ramsey Avenue.

(Do not park in the Giant shopping center lot.)

Call: 301-587-3827 or e-mail: april30@ncas.org

On the Web: www.ncas.org/april30

The SHOW – 7:30 pm (\$20)

The ULTIMATE FAKE

Jamy Ian Swiss Sleight of Mind



An evening of laughs, gasps, and inexplicable mystery!

If there were such a thing as psychic powers, it would have to look like this. Jamy Ian Swiss performs an evening of chilling, inexplicable “mind reading”—accomplished entirely with “sleight of mind.” Come see for yourself how five ordinary senses can convince you that somehow, someway, there must be a sixth!

And the ULTIMATE REAL DEAL



Todd Robbins

One of the last practitioners of a quintessentially American art form—the sideshow—Todd Robbins brings us face to face with an oddly beautiful mixture of real-life human marvels and classic carnival magic.

NCAS is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization which promotes critical thinking and scientific understanding.



Shadow of a Doubt

APRIL 2005

THE MONTHLY CALENDAR OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA SKEPTICS

NCAS Elections—Are You Interested?

NCAS elections are coming up. Eight board positions are up for a two-year term. Ours is an all volunteer organization, so we always need people to do some of our regular tasks (such as lining up speakers, doing this newsletter, organizing our events, etc.)

Anyone interested in running please contact us via e-mail, snail mail, or phone (see information in address box below).

Truth and Fiction in *The Da Vinci Code*

Smithsonian Resident Associates program—All day Seminar, Saturday, April 16, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Dan Brown's best-selling novel, *The Da Vinci Code*, has inspired some fascinating debate. This fast-paced mystery is unusual in that the author states up front that the historical information in the book is factually accurate. But is that really so?

Noted historian Bart D. Ehrman, an authority on the early Church and the life of Jesus, conducts a riveting seminar that examines historical documents that are key to the plot of the book.

He seeks to separate fact from fiction in Brown's "historical backdrop" and the claims made about Jesus, Mary Magdalene, the early Gospels, and the emperor Constantine. For example, did the ancient church engage in a cover-up to portray Jesus as a divine figure? Did the emperor Constantine select just four Gospels to be included in the New Testament

from a group of 80 accounts of the life of Jesus that had been written? Was Jesus married to Mary Magdalene, and if so, did the Church suppress the secret of their union?

Dr. Ehrman reveals how scholars of early Christianity establish "proof" from myriad conflicting sources surrounding the historical Jesus, Mary, the Gospels, and the early Church. He separates historical reality from flights of fantasy in *The Da Vinci Code*, and shows how Dan Brown created his novel.

Bart D. Ehrman is chair of the religious studies department at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. His book, *Truth and Fiction in The Da Vinci Code* (Oxford University Press), is available for signing.

Participants provide their own lunch at midday.

Tickets: General Admission \$125, RAP Members \$85, Senior Members \$76

Location: S. Dillon Ripley Center, Lecture Hall; 1100 Jefferson Drive, S.W., Washington, D.C. http://residentassociates.org/otoapr/da_vinci_code.asp

April Anti-fools Event—A Real Deal

All the information is on the other side of this page, but don't forget, NCAS members get both events for only \$20, and you can get as many tickets as you like. (And non-members can also get both events for \$20 using the coupon found at <http://www.ncas.org/april30/>)



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