

Superstition n

Prof. Robert L. Park



There was a total eclipse of the Sun on May 28, 585 B.C. What distinguished this particular occultation of the Sun by the Moon was that it had been predicted. The discovery of "The

Law of Cause and Effect" by Thales of Melitus is often taken as the birth of science. It should also have marked the death of superstition. Why it did not is the subject of this talk.

Robert L. Park is a professor of physics and former chair of the Department of Physics at the University of Maryland. He divides his time between the University and the Washington, DC office of the American Physical Society, which he opened in 1982. Author of more than a hundred technical papers on the structure and properties of single-crystal surfaces, Professor Park now devotes himself to helping the public distinguish genuine scientific advances from foolish and fraudulent claims. A frequent guest on news programs, he

posts "*What's New*," a provocative and widely-read weekly column on the internet (www.bobpark.org), and is the author of *Voodoo Science: the Road from Foolishness to Fraud*.

NCAS will be honoring Prof. Park with the 2008 Philip J. Klass Award for outstanding contributions in promoting critical thinking and scientific understanding.

**Saturday, March 8, 2008
2 - 4 pm**

National Science Foundation
4201 Wilson Blvd, Room 110
Arlington, VA 22230
(Ballston Metro stop)

Enter NSF from the corner of 9th N & N Stuart Streets, Room 110 is on the left
[Http://www.nsf.gov/about/visit/](http://www.nsf.gov/about/visit/)

FREE admission – Everyone welcome, members and non-members

For more information, call the 24-hour NCAS Skeptic Line recording at 301-587-3827.
E-mail: ncas@ncas.org
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National Capital Area Skeptics Public Lecture Series

20/20 SINCE 1987



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Shadow of A Doubt

THE MONTHLY CALENDAR OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA SKEPTICS

MARCH
2008

Science Debate 2008

A concerned citizens initiative cosponsored by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the Council on Competitiveness, the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the Institute of Medicine, and signed by over 100 leading American universities and other organizations calls for a Presidential Debate on Science and Technology. Senators Clinton, McCain, and Obama and Governor Huckabee have been invited to debate at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia on April 18, 2008. The event will be held even if only one candidate participates. NCAS is one of the many organizations that have registered online as a supporter of the initiative, and our March speaker, **Robert L. Park**, is listed among the "Academic Leaders and Leading Scientists" category of signers. For more information, visit sciencedebate2008.com.

NCAS Board Elections Coming

Are you an NCAS member who wants to take a leadership role in the skeptics movement? The NCAS annual board of directors election is fast approaching. Send a bio sketch by email to ncas@ncas.org for the ballot by March 15.

A Magical Approach to Problem Solving

March 13, 2008, 7:00-9:00 p.m., Smithsonian Resident Associates Lecture series

When it comes to solving problems, magician David Ben says we must first eliminate the word "impossible" from our vocabulary. That's why he takes participants behind the scenes of the world of magic,

revealing tricks of the trade that magicians, card cheats, and psychics use to perform the seemingly impossible.

For more information call: 202-633-3030 <http://residentassociates.org/ticketing/tickets/reserve.aspx?performanceNumber=87074>

A Teller Macbeth at the Folger Library Theater

February 28-April 13, 2008 Folger Shakespeare Theater

Macbeth is a massively entertaining horror show that is designed to take the audience on a roller-coaster of magic, mayhem, violence, passion, and madness, a supernatural adventure story that should be able to still amaze, shock, scare and enliven audiences. This Macbeth is shown through Macbeth's eyes, bloody dagger and all.

Aaron Posner, director; magic designed by Teller <http://www.folger.edu/woSummary.cfm?woid=413>

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