

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
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