

Phactum

"It is well that war is so terrible, else we should grow too fond of it."

~ General Lee to General Longstreet

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

October 2011

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PhACT Meeting - Saturday, October 15, 2011

at Community College of Philadelphia

In Lecture Room C2-28 in the Center for Business and Industry

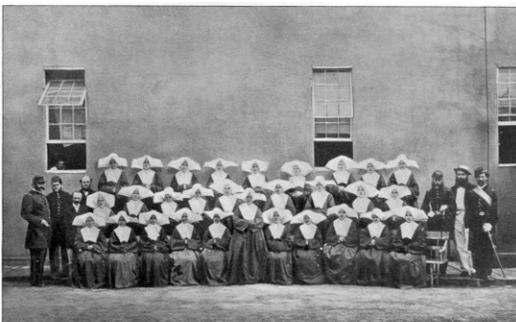
at the corner of 18th and Callowhill Streets. At 2:00 PM.

Dr. David Cattell, Chairman of the Physics Department of Philadelphia Community College, will host Robert D. Hicks, Ph.D., curator of the Mutter Museum at the College of Physicians of Philadelphia who will discuss issues of medicine during the Civil War.

All are Welcome. This event is Free and Open to the Public. Handicap accessible.

"Straight and swift to my wounded I go":

The Reality of Civil War Medicine and its Interpretation



Daughters of Charity Nursed Wounded Civil War Soldiers at Satterlee Hospital, located in West Philadelphia, bounded roughly by 40th to 44th Streets, from Spruce to Pine Streets not far from the current site of the Hospital of University of Pennsylvania.

As we enter the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War, the country will see many commemorations of the event. One key aspect of the war has received comparatively little attention: the medical world. America's "good gray poet," Walt Whitman, who volunteered in hospitals during the war, observed that "the real war will not get in the books." For Whitman, the war's true story was found in the hospital. Most people derive their knowledge of Civil War medicine from popular fiction: soldiers biting the bullet as limbs are amputated by doctors who were little different from butchers. The reality was very different: all the major components of our modern handling of trauma developed during the war. The Civil War claimed almost two percent of the country's population, or in today's terms, millions of citizens. The

(Continued on page 2)

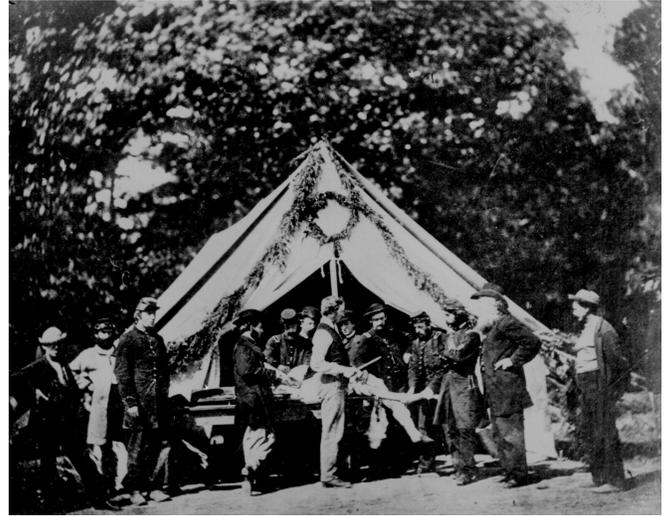
"A ball had passed between my body and the right arm which supported him, cutting through the sleeve and passing through his chest from shoulder to shoulder. There was no more to be done for him and I left him to his rest. I have never mended that hole in my sleeve."

~ Clara Barton (1821 - 1912) was a teacher and a frontline battlefield nurse during the Civil War. She is best known for being an organizer of the American Red Cross.

massive casualties and disease victims made huge demands on medical practice and ideology, stimulating the reorganization of hospital medicine.

This presentation surveys the meaning and impact of Civil War medicine and shifts discussion to an unusual exhibit scheduled to open at the Mütter Museum in 2013, *Broken Bodies, Suffering Spirits: Injury, Death, and Healing in Civil War Philadelphia*, presented through the perspective of Walt Whitman. A vital and largely unknown story of Civil War medicine illuminates the ambition of this exhibit: Turner's Lane Hospital in Philadelphia, one of the most unusual and pioneering temporary hospitals during the last year of the war. The long-term, rehabilitative care afforded to soldiers at Turner's Lane, many of whom had been wounded at Gettysburg, provided an unparalleled opportunity to study diseases and wounds of the nerves. American neurology was born at this hospital. To supplement the presentation, Dr. Hicks will display several medical artifacts and specimens from the Mütter Museum.

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Amputation being performed in a Hospital Tent, Gettysburg, PA, July 1863

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Amputation Kit Used in the Civil War



The Wound Dresser

Walt Whitman (1819 - 1892)

1

AN old man bending I come among new faces,
 Years looking backward resuming in answer to children,
 Come tell us old man, as from young men and maidens that love
 me,
 (Arous'd and angry, I'd thought to beat the alarm, and urge
 relentless war,
 But soon my fingers fail'd me, my face droop'd and I resign'd
 myself,
 To sit by the wounded and soothe them, or silently watch the dead;)
 Years hence of these scenes, of these furious passions, these
 chances,
 Of unsurpass'd heroes (was one side so brave? the other was equally
 brave;)
 Now be witness again, paint the mightiest armies of earth,
 Of those armies so rapid so wondrous what saw you to tell us?
 What stays with you latest and deepest? of curious panics,
 Of hard-fought engagements or sieges tremendous what deepest
 remains?

2

O maidens and young men I love and that love me,
 What you ask of my days those the strangest and sudden your
 talking recalls,
 Soldier alert I arrive after a long march cover'd with sweat and dust,
 In the nick of time I come, plunge in the fight, loudly shout in the
 rush of successful charge,
 Enter the captur'd works—yet lo, like a swift-running river they fade,
 Pass and are gone they fade—I dwell not on soldiers' perils or
 soldiers' joys
 (Both I remember well—many the hardships, few the joys, yet I was
 content).

But in silence, in dreams' projections,
 While the world of gain and appearance and mirth goes on,
 So soon what is over forgotten, and waves wash the imprints off the
 sand,
 With hinged knees returning I enter the doors (while for you up
 there,
 Whoever you are, follow without noise and be of strong heart).

Bearing the bandages, water and sponge,
 Straight and swift to my wounded I go,
 Where they lie on the ground after the battle brought in,
 Where their priceless blood reddens the grass, the ground,
 Or to the rows of the hospital tent, or under the roof'd hospital,
 To the long rows of cots up and down each side I return,
 To each and all one after another I draw near, not one do I miss,
 An attendant follows holding a tray, he carries a refuse pail,
 Soon to be fill'd with clotted rags and blood, emptied, and fill'd
 again.

I onward go, I stop,
 With hinged knees and steady hand to dress wounds,
 I am firm with each, the pangs are sharp yet unavoidable,
 One turns to me his appealing eyes—poor boy! I never knew you,
 Yet I think I could not refuse this moment to die for you, if that
 would save you.

3

On, on I go, (open doors of time! open hospital doors!)
 The crush'd head I dress (poor crazed hand tear not the bandage
 away),
 The neck of the cavalry-man with the bullet through and through I
 examine,
 Hard the breathing rattles, quite glazed already the eye, yet life
 struggles hard
 (Come sweet death! be persuaded O beautiful death!
 In mercy come quickly).

From the stump of the arm, the amputated hand,
 I undo the clotted lint, remove the slough, wash off the matter and
 blood,
 Back on his pillow the soldier bends with curv'd neck and side-
 falling head,
 His eyes are closed, his face is pale, he dares not look on the bloody
 stump,
 And has not yet look'd on it.

I dress a wound in the side, deep, deep,
 But a day or two more, for see the frame all wasted and sinking,
 And the yellow-blue countenance see.
 I dress the perforated shoulder, the foot with the bullet-wound,
 Cleanse the one with a gnawing and putrid gangrene, so sickening,
 so offensive,
 While the attendant stands behind aside me holding the tray and
 pail.

I am faithful, I do not give out,
 The fractur'd thigh, the knee, the wound in the abdomen,
 These and more I dress with impassive hand (yet deep in my breast
 a fire, a burning flame).

4

Thus in silence in dreams' projections,
 Returning, resuming, I thread my way through the hospitals,
 The hurt and wounded I pacify with soothing hand,
 I sit by the restless all the dark night, some are so young,
 Some suffer so much, I recall the experience sweet and sad,
 (Many a soldier's loving arms about this neck have cross'd and
 rested,
 Many a soldier's kiss dwells on these bearded lips).

Letters to the Editor

Editor: Good issue. thanks.

One brief comment. I found it interesting that the woman dealing with jaundice comments (page 13) that "I think 'tis the Jaundice she has taken, John is but lately releiv'd from it, 'tho I don't know that it is infectious". I wonder what "infectious" meant to her at that time period. There was some conception that diseases could be passed from person to person, but this was not established, and certainly there was no germ theory.

Ed Gracely

Sicklersville, NJ

Editor's note: Thanks, Ed. See page 7 for more about "infectious".

Editor: Here's a family reunion I just can't miss: After watching Vice President Dick Chaney gleefully exclaiming that "heads will explode" in Washington when his book hits the stands, I couldn't help digging a little further into just what makes this guy tick. Starting, of all places, with Wikipedia (I know, I know, but for quick and dirty it's not bad), I learned that Chaney is a distant cousin of Harry S. Truman, and that they have a common ancestor in Maren Duvall, a Huguenot who fled from France to England in the 17th century, and later settled in Maryland. But, alas, there's another current resident of Washington also descended from her - one Barack Obama, which, by the by, makes he and Chaney distant cousins. Maybe I can sell this as a reality show.

Tom Medero

Philadelphia

Editor: Re: *"I wake up every morning at nine and grab for the morning paper. Then I look at the obituary page. If my name is not on it, I get up."* (Phactum, July/August 2011) I think you were too wishy-washy about the attribution of this quote. Maybe I was also too wishy-washy about it. Allow me

to give it another try: Anybody who knows anything about Benjamin Franklin and about the 18th century can tell he's not the source of the quote. I don't care how many attributions to Franklin there are. It ain't Franklin. Fuhgeddaboutit. It's obvious why he's been linked to it--every funny thing that anybody has ever said has been attributed to Franklin or Mark Twain or Oscar Wilde or Woody Allen or Kurt Vonnegut. I bet I could spread the word online that Kurt Vonnegut said it and watch it go viral. Would you count those attributions? You could also take a crack at putting it in Yogi Berra's mouth but not succeed as well, because although it's funny, it's not quirky enough.

Although I haven't been able to find exactly where and when he said it or wrote it, I'm saying it was Harry Hershfield and I'm sticking to my story. All the evidence I can find points to Hershfield. Among other things, who the hell is Harry Hershfield? He was famous enough to merit a Wikipedia entry and an obituary in the New York Times, but he's no Kim Kardashian. He's not even a Kato Kaelin. Nobody would attribute a quote to him unless he actually said it!

That's the preponderance of the evidence, though not proof beyond a shadow of a doubt. It would be nice to find the exact attribution in some source generally taken as authoritative. Anybody can start a website with the word "quote" in the URL and put anything they want on it. That doesn't count for much. Better would be an attribution in Bartlett's Familiar Quotations, but I have it and it's not in there. I took an Amazon "look inside!" in the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations but it's not there either. Maybe someone could look it up in The Yale Book of Quotations, which I don't have and which apparently can't be looked into online for free.

Howard J. Wilk

Philadelphia

Editor: A group known as SPR (Society for Paranormal Research) was founded in England in about 1880, and ASPR (if memory serves), an American spin-off, was founded somewhat later. SPR is very well known in the international

Don't be shy about writing!

Articles, poetry, Letters and Rants to the Editor, suggestions to improve Phactum, items for the calendar, and other Monkey Business is wanted for Phactum. Banana recipes are desired. Almost all topics are welcome - no partisan politics or similar rodomontade, please.

Send submissions to phactpublicity@aol.com



paranormal community, and one of its earliest publications was "Phantasms of the Living", a monumental early paranormal work. Vardogrs are only one of such phenomena, which include such things as the Geman "doppelganger" (double goer), and "crisis apparitions" which visually and auditorally announce either the simultaneous death of a loved one, or sometimes a situation involving a non-death, "extreme hazard" of the "sender". There are probably others I've missed. Again, the problem remains "How does it work?". "Mental telepathy" is the best we have right now. It seems to be behind "remote viewing", a proven phenomenon, perhaps used by ancient eastern cultures as well as by the CIA, American military, and the pioneering Russians. One might read "Entangled Minds" by SSE full-member, Dr. Dean Radin (who was formally a electronics/computer geek) for more information on this topic.

Dave Leiter

Willow Grove, PA

Editor's notes: Thanks, Dave. Here are some websites that might be of interest to folks who might have some curiosity on paranormal matters.

Society for Psychical Research founded in the UK in 1882

<http://www.spr.ac.uk/main/>

International Society for Paranormal Research founded 1972

<http://www.ispr.net/home.html>

ASPR - American Society for Psychical Research was founded in 1885. <http://www.aspr.com/>

And not to be forgotten is P.I.R.A (Paranormal Investigators & Research Association) which is located near Philadelphia: <http://home.comcast.net/~parainvestigator/Index/Main.html>

Also, PhACT member George Hanson has a web site and

book about paranormal matters:

<http://paranormaltrickster.blogspot.com/>

Editor: I was staying in Atlantic City from September 18 to 22 doing research on four sea serpent cases from the 1890s and 1900s. In these incidents His Snakeship had reportedly been encountered in the sea off Atlantic City and on Atlantic City and Ventnor beaches. While there I was fortunately able to get incontrovertible photographic evidence of a sea serpent (see figure 1, ignore figure 2)!!!

I walked from the Absecon Inlet to Margate and on the 20th it was raining so I ducked into the Tropicana casino where I hit eight quick hits on a slot machine for a \$3,000 hand payout. Needless to say, I have lost way more than that over the years and I play only occasionally for entertainment. Slots have been redesigned over the years so people now lose way more money (penny machines make you play \$3 to cover all lines) much more quickly (you push buttons rather than pull levers). However, I agree with Howard J. Wilk that gambling that does not involve the paranormal, like using a rabbit's foot, or the pseudoscientific, although a serious social issue, is not part of our mission. PhACT promotes using science, critical thinking and reason in examining paranormal and pseudoscientific claims. There are many important political, economic and social issues where critical thinking should be applied that are not in our domain, nonetheless, I still feel that our mission is worthwhile in and of itself.

Don Nigroni

Glenolden, PA

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**Figure 1. Sea serpent off Atlantic City?
Photograph by Don Nigroni**



Figure 2. Boats and a pipe from a dredging operation off Atlantic City. Photograph by Don Nigroni

Various Ruminations

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

The Rejuvenizer

Get a load of this!!!

The September/October 2011 edition of *Wisdom*, a New Age magazine, has an advertisement for some devices called “rejuvenizers”. The devices which were invented and are sold by Phyllis Light, Ph.D., are claimed the ability to protect people and pets from the constant bombardment of EMF radiation which is an inescapable part of modern life. Dr. Light is described on the home page of her website at:

<http://www.lighth Healing.com>

Phyllis Light is an intuitive, telepathic healer with over thirty five years of experience providing metaphysical help for clients who seek spiritual life changing transformation and growth. This is done through a process we call "telepathic healing." Telepathic Healing is a form of metaphysical, intuitive, higher-dimensional guidance for spiritual healing.

Phyllis and her company, Light Unlimited, provide the tools and services for you to get help in clearing unwanted, negative subconscious beliefs, thoughts, programming, and other destructive energies that create roadblocks to achieving and creating a life of happiness, finding love, sharing loving relationships, and enjoying a sense of well being and reduced stress. This is done at a psychic level.

So what is a Rejuvenizer? Briefly, the Rejuvenizer is a device that intercepts harmful EMF thus causing enhanced “wellness” for those wearing the device. There are many models to chose from including the Personal Rejuvenizer, pictured here, that sells for \$169.00 and comes in 15 colors.

The Personal Rejuvenizer® helps protect you from the harmful effects of electromagnetic fields, repairs subtle damages to your energy field from drugs, surgical procedures, or other people's negativity directed at you, and clears many viruses and bacteria that cause the flu and other illnesses.



Other models include the Picture Rejuvenizer and is described on the website:

Picture Rejuvenizer® \$139.00

We have learned that your photograph contains your life force, and that whatever happens to your photo affects your physical body in a significant way, over time.

To support those of you who want to help your loved ones, we have created "The Picture Rejuvenizer" that you can put on top of a photograph of a loved one, to give

them the benefits of the Rejuvenizer technology.

The Picture Rejuvenizer is a smaller version of the Personal Rejuvenizer, available in random colors only (there is no color selection). We created this in these "challenging economic times" to help people make the Rejuvenizer technology available to their friends and loved ones who may not be open to wearing the Rejuvenizer ring or pendant.

I find myself just a wee bit skeptical about Rejuvenizer technology despite the enthusiastic testimonials that may be found at the well done web site.

Rejuvenizers have an eerie similarity to the Healing Cards that had been peddled by the intensely mean spirited Gentle Wind Project, a New Age mind control cult that had been successfully prosecuted by the Maine Attorney General. Forced to abandon business in Maine they did relocate to Nevada under another name. We had reported on the Gentle Wind Project in the July/August 2007 Phactum on Page 1: <http://phact.org/data/phactums/Phactum%202007-07.pdf>

Faster Than Light

On September 22, 2011 scientists at the CERN Laboratories announced that they had detected particles that moved at slightly more than the speed of light. If this announcement is true then Einstein's Theory of Relativity will at least need some fine tuning. If not true there will be embarrassment in some scientific circles and the world will continue to revolve in the way we know it. It will be interesting to see what does finally emerge as at least a temporary conclusion on the matter. Reproducing the finding will be no trivial task since the Particle Accelerators such as the one at CERN are so rare that none other exists. A definitive confirmation or rejection of the claim by physical experimentation is likely to be some years away.

I find it encouraging that scientists are continually willing to look at and challenge their own ideas. For the most part it seems that Einstein's theories have become highly ingrained in thinking so as to become unquestionable, but as this example shows those ideas have not risen to the level of “holy dogma”.

<http://www.usatoday.com/tech/science/story/2011-09-22/particle-travels-faster-than-speed-of-light/50518790/1>

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/news-by-industry/et-cetera/evidence-of-faster-than-light-neutrinos-puzzles-scientists/articleshow/10112793.cms>

In the Critical Thinking world of science the outcome of this finding will eventually be verified or rejected or set on hold by further experimentation and measurement. But, now that the announcement has been made, I speculate that the New Age community will be most interested since they have for many years been “harnessing” unseen, unknown, and unmeasureable subtle energy fields. Perfect to balance Chakras and harmonize negative force fields.

The story above about “rejuvenizers” is all about subtle

The World's Most Powerful Orgone Zapper - The Ultimate Zapper



From the website: "The Ultimate Zapper was developed in 1996 inspired by Nikola Tesla, Dr. Royal Rife and Dr. Hulda Clark, who are the great inventors in electro-medicine. Unsolicited scientific evidence recently arrived from an electronics expert, who has proven that the Ultimate Zapper's energy wave frequency is unique, making the Ultimate Zapper the most effective of any zapper in the world. There has also been a breakthrough that makes the New Ultimate Zapper Model SE 40% more powerful than the original Ultimate Zapper." Cost: In USA & Canada - \$298.95
More details are at: <http://www.orgoneenergy.org/the-ultimate-zapper>

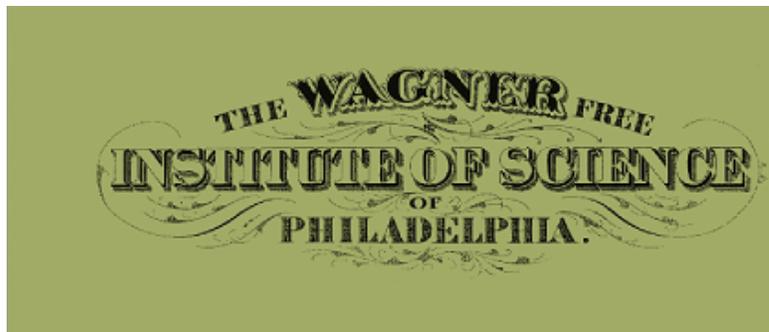
energy and that is generally true of remote healers, seers, shamans, and others with mystical powers and magical healing devices. Quantum Mechanics is often mentioned in New Age circles but rest assured that New Age and scientific concepts of QM are, to put it mildly, dissimilar. Here is one such example:

<http://aromatherapyliving.wordpress.com/2010/08/03/harmony-and-quantum-physics/>

Now, this announcement from the largest and possibly most prestigious of all physics laboratories on Planet Earth lends a certain uncritical credibility to fantastical New Age

claims. Best of all, the New Agers have known all this for years and what more powerful reinforcement of pre-concluded ideas can they wish! Just think of the smorgasbord of preposterous possibilities: turbo-charged pyramids, healing vortexes, and sufficient crystals and charmstones to dazzle P.T. Barnum.

Faster than light neutrinos might also be a fertile concept for Free Energy purveyors to peddle ever more prattle. The energy they claim to produce must come from some place, time, or mystic dimension, so why not from fast neutrinos? Who shall be clever enough to convincingly contradict the



Adult Education Course Schedule Fall 2011 Courses

Courses are Free and Open to the Public

http://www.wagnerfreeinstitute.org/edu_adult

Adventures with our Ancestors: The Relationship of Neandertals to Modern Humans, Professor Janet Monge. 7 Mondays, October 3 - November 14, 2011, 6:30 to 8:00 PM. University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 33rd and Spruce Streets. This course will explore human evolution and the evidence for a relationship between Neandertals and modern humans. The class includes a visit to the newly installed human evolution exhibit at the Penn Museum.

No preregistration required.

Science, Art, and Fashion during the Golden Age of French Natural History, 1790-1830, Professors Sylwester Ratowt and Jane E. Boyd. 7 Wednesdays, October 5 - November 16, 2011, 6:30 to 8:00 PM. American Philosophical Society Museum, 104 S. 5th Street (next to Independence Hall). This course is based on the ideas explored in the exhibit "Of Elephants & Roses: Encounters with French Natural History, 1790-1830," currently on display at the American Philosophical Society Museum. The exhibit will be open for viewing prior to each class.

No preregistration required.

Birds and Birding in the Delaware Valley, Professor Clifford Hence. 6 Wednesdays, October 5 - November 9, 2011, 6:30 to 7:45 PM. Independence Branch of the Free Library, 18 S. 7th Street (between Market and Chestnut). This course will look at the unique anatomy of birds and provide a framework for recognizing bird species through visual identification and by their songs and calls.

No preregistration required.

newly empowered hucksters and effectively persuade True Believers of the fallacies without an army of physicists and multi-billion dollar equipment or even with those legions of experts?

I am writing this note on September 25 and have not yet seen or heard of mystics jumping onto a “scientifically verified and proven” occult energy band wagon. We will be watching and would appreciate updates from Phactum readers who might encounter New Age activity capitalizing on this announcement.

About “Infectious”

PhACT member Ed Gracely raised an interesting question when observing that an 18th century housewife, Elizabeth Drinker, used the word “infectious”. But what did that word mean to her, and in fact, what does that word mean to us?

Elizabeth Drinker in 1794 likely had no idea of Germ Theory. Samuel Johnson in his 1755 Dictionary of the English Language does not use the word “infectious” but he does define “infect” and “infection”. Of “infection” he has this to say:

Infection. Contagion; mischief by communication; taint; poison. Infection is that manner of communicating a disease by some effluvia, or particles which fly off from distempered bodies, and mixing with the juices of others, occasion the same disorders as in the bodies they came from.

Of the word “infectious” Noah Webster in his dictionary of 1828 had this to say:

INFECTIOUS, a. Having qualities that may taint, or communicate disease to; as an infectious fever; infectious clothing; infectious air; infectious miasma.

1. Corrupting; tending to taint by communication; as infectious vices or manners.

2. Contaminating with illegality; exposing to seizure and forfeiture.

Contraband articles are said to be of an infectious nature.

3. Capable of being communicated by near approach.

Grief as well as joy is infectious

Johnson used the words “contagion” and “infection” more or less synonymously, as did Shakespeare, but contagion does not appear in Webster’s dictionary. Johnson states:

Contagion. The emissions from body to body by which diseases are communicated.

*“If we two be one, and thou play false,
I do digest the poison of thy flesh,
being strumpeted by thy contagion.”*

~ Shakespeare, *Comedy of Errors*.

The New York Times, January 16, 1898, reported a statement by Surgeon General George M. Sternberg discussing the nature of Infectious and Contagious diseases which had appeared in Appleton’s Popular Science Monthly.

The terms contagious and infectious are not synonymous. A disease is contagious when it is transmitted from the sick to the well by personal communication or contact, more or less intimate, and all contagious diseases are infectious—i.e., they are due to the introduction into the body of a susceptible individual of a living germ. But all infectious diseases are not contagious. Thus smallpox, scarlet fever, measles, diphtheria, influenza, &c. are infectious diseases which are contagious; while malarial fevers, typhoid fever, yellow fever, cholera, pneumonia, peritonitis, &c., are infectious diseases which are not contagious—at least, they are only contagious under very exceptional conditions, and those in close communication with the sick as nurses, &c., do not contract these diseases as a result of such close association or contact.

I suspect that the modern interpretation of those words is about the same as Dr. Sternberg’s. Other thoughts on the matter are welcome.

Homeopathic "cancer specialist" disciplined.

Dr. Stephen Barrett reported this item in his Consumer Health Digest of September 29, 2011.

Jarir Nakouzi, M.D., who purported to treat cancer with homeopathic products, has signed a consent order under which he agreed to (a) pay \$5,000, (b) stop using devices that measure skin resistance for diagnostic or treatment purposes, (c) stop making unsubstantiated claims that refrain from recommending, prescribing, or administering any alleged cancer treatment that lacks FDA approval or scientific support, and (d), serve probation for two years, during which at least 20 of his patient charts will be subject to random review by a supervisor acceptable to the Connecticut Department of Health.

<http://www.casewatch.org/board/med/nakouzi/order.shtml>

The agreement settled charges related to Nakouzi's treatment of a patient who had received standard treatment for breast cancer but was terminally ill. Nakouzi treated her for twelve weeks beginning in October 2002. The cost totaled more than \$41,000, which included about \$8,500 for diagnosis and treatment with a bogus electrical device. Nakouzi is not board certified but says he took a three-year fellowship in oncology after graduating from medical school in Italy. The complaint, filed last year, had charged that Nakouzi deviated from the standard of care by failing to get

adequate informed consent, failing to maintain adequate documentation, and using a bioresonance device as a diagnostic technique.

<http://www.casewatch.org/board/med/nakouzi/charges.shtml>

Thousands of practitioners (mostly chiropractors) are using bogus electrical devices to diagnose and treat a wide range of diseases and conditions. Although the FDA has issued a few warning letters and a few state agencies have taken regulatory action, no systematic effort has been made to drive them from the marketplace. [Barrett S. Regulatory actions related to EAV devices. Quackwatch, Oct 1, 2011]

<http://www.quackwatch.org/02ConsumerProtection/eav.html>

And speaking of Bio-Medical electronic devices, how interesting that Dr. Barrett has mentioned the **Quantum Pulse (V.I.B.E.) Device** at this internet site:

<http://www.devicewatch.org/reports/vibe/vibe.shtml>

According to Dr. Barrett,

*Vibe Technologies, of Greeley, Colorado claims that its **QuantumPulse Device** can greatly benefit health. Its mission has been to "raise the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual vibrations of each living individual on the planet." Its **QuantumPulse Device**, which until recently was called the **(VIBE) Machine**, is claimed to improve "vibrations" of the body's cells.*

A company brochure states:

*The VIBE Machine consists of technologies based on the theories of Lakhovsky, Tesla, **Rife and Clark**. Using these pioneering techniques, the device increases the cellular frequency amplitude back to its "original" healthy state. There are four general ways imbalance in the body is created. They include toxic substances we eat, pollutions we breathe, exposures to negative energetic environments, and how we process information in our thinking and feeling. Our body has a higher frequency or vibration when it is healthy and a lower vibration when sick. The device has many long-term positive effects on the body, as it automatically eliminates the "unwanted vibrations" inside your body.*

Dr. Royal Rife and Dr. Hulga Clark, developers of the Ultimate Zapper, were also instrumental in developing the **Vibrational Integrated Bio-photonic Energizer (VIBE)**. Dr. Rife died penniless in 1971 after having been hounded for many years by powerful conspiracies against him. Dr. Hulga Clark died in 2009 after many years of legal problems. They are gone but no doubt their memories are alive in aromatherapy salons and chiropractic parlors throughout the world.

I always wanted a **Vibrational Integrated Bio-photonic Energizer**.

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Colonial Beer making Demonstrations

Dr. Dillon will demonstrate the Colonial method of brewing molasses-bran small beer this fall at the Mill at Anselma and at Pottsgrove Mansion. Unfortunately visitors will not be permitted to sample the brew.

Sunday, October 16, 2011 — 1pm-4pm at the Mill at Anselma, 1730 Conestoga Road, PO Box 42, Chester Springs, PA 19425

Harvest Festival: Brewing Beer in Colonial Days

The art of crafting beer has improved a great deal over the years, but nothing beats a colonial brew! Foodways historian **Clarissa Dillon** will discuss the art of colonial brewing. A must-see for any home brewing enthusiast!

<http://www.anselmamill.org/>

Saturday, November 5, 2011— 11:00 to 3:00 PM at Pottsgrove Manor, 100 West King Street, Pottstown, PA 19464
Demonstration—“...the common Family Way of Brewing”

Brewing beers of various strengths was often part of the colonial housewife's responsibilities. Her aim was to produce healthful, palatable drinks to suit the size and needs of her family. In this program, food historian **Dr. Clarissa F. Dillon** will present aspects of brewing for families like the Potts.

<http://historicsites.montcopa.org/pottsgrovesmanor>

"Cherish Deeply the Memories"

**The Dead know no grief,
nor pain, or frustration,
for their emotions have died with them.**

**Life's pains and sadnesses
remain solely for the Living,
whose sufferings and longings persist.**

**Cherish deeply the memories
of those who died loyal to you,
for they cannot now betray you.**

**In death, no one brings you pain,
nor frustrates your goals,
nor aids your opposition.**

**The Dead don't break your trust;
in memory they're steadfast,
improving with time.**

**Cherish deeply the memories
of those worthy who are gone;
we keep what's left of them.**

**Paul Schlueter III
June 28, 2011**

PhACT Meeting Report — September 17, 2011

A Review of Mr Bennett's SETI Presentation

By Thomas M. Medero

I waited with curious anticipation as we watched a technical assistant help set up the microphone and power-point ability for Earl Bennett's presentation on SETI last Saturday, September 17.. "What", I wondered, "was this group all about? What made them tick?" Apart from the cursory research I had previously done on them, many questions remained. How much progress had they made, if any, and how was this being paid for were two of those questions. Surprisingly, those thoughts were echoed by other attendees at the question and-answer period after the presentation. But what I came away with was a greatly-softened opinion on the whole endeavor. I came to view it as more of an interesting hobby of a group of curious scientists rather than a hard-core snow job by a pseudo-scientist and their minions.

Mr. Bennett began, appropriately enough, by giving some background on the history of the search for extraterrestrial intelligence. Beginning in the 1600's with Fontanelli's (forgive me for my misspellings, if any) "Plurality of Worlds" and continuing through Gauss and the 19th century, I found that through time we had not been sitting idly by wondering if we were loners in the cosmos. These thoughts occurred as long as humans had the imagination to dream them; it did not start when the technology seemed to be available. This was not a fanaticism initiated by Orson Wells' radio dramatization of "War of the Worlds", this, like other scientific endeavors, had been built upon over the centuries, tossing out each old theory for a better one upon progress, as science does. So far so good.

He then covered the step by step expansion throughout the 20th century; the different arrays of telescopes used, and the signal sent and received (precious few). Although using some state-of-the-art telescopes and computer programs capable of crunching the massive amounts of data the stars provide, it seemed as though the scientific community treated this as a "fine, just do it on your own time" kind of thing. Which they do, enjoying themselves with all the enthusiasm of one could muster.

They also have informal groups of members who download the voluminous amounts of data to their computers and scan it statistically for any aberrations. Sometimes an interesting aberrant appears, but it's mostly long-term listening although they do occasionally send signals out. But hey, chess games have been known to take years when played by mail, too.

Regarding science, they have a theory (that there is extraterrestrial life) based, I suppose (I didn't get a chance to confirm this with Mr. Bennett) on fact and statistics of the probabilities of life out there based on the Drake equation and the sheer incomprehensible number of possible planets. And so, experiments in sciences such as astronomy, paleontology, geology, and cosmology are quite impossible, (imagine an experiment trying to prove the Big Bang or Alan Guth's cosmic inflation theory?) but that still would not eliminate it from being science. This might have to be where the philosophers of science step in to weigh in on good science from bad science.

I sum, I had a fun time, got a much better understanding of their mindset and mission, and (to Me) appears to be a fun way for scientists interested in this sort of thing to be scientists and really enjoy their work. I won't argue whether it is science or not, as at present lives are not depending on it and if proven will only begin to prove we are not alone. I do see it as more of a harmless hobby, though. Others do not, I'm sure. My wife has contended for years that golf is not a sport: "Adults hitting a little ball into a little hole with bent stick is not a sport!!" she decries. I contend that after walking several thousand yards in the summer heat only to face a par 5 at 18 while near exhausted qualifies it as a bona fide sport. But differences of position on the fundamental questions of truth are the life-blood of philosophical discourse, and keeps our presentations interesting!

I witnessed a great many physics students attending, but I'd sure like to see our membership rank and file out to show support and demonstrate our viability as a serious group of people. No monumental discovery was made by leaving it for the next guy. So, Let's all be there next time, OK?

Thomas M. Medero is originally from Long Island, NY. Tom has lived in and around Philadelphia for the last twenty years. Currently attending Community College of Philadelphia, he has matriculated at Temple University's Psychology department to focus on cognitive neuroscience and moral philosophy. He is primarily concerned with the dangerous effects of a ubiquitous lack of cogent reasoning in today's society, and focusing his efforts on correcting it.

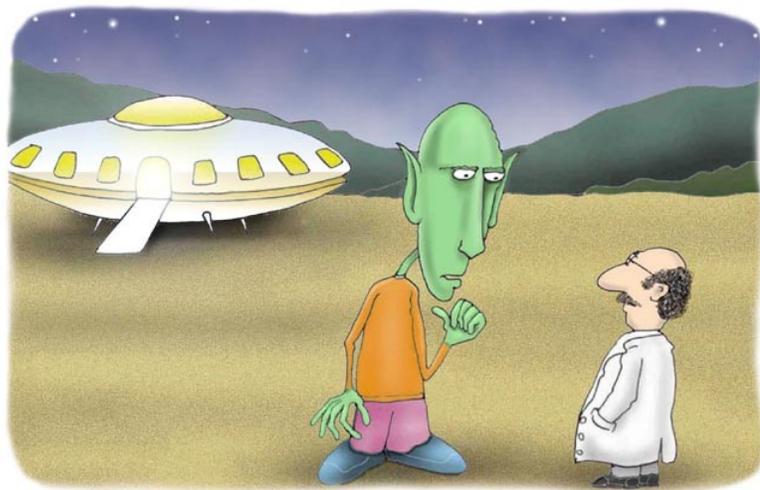
PhACT Meeting Report - September 17, 2011

By Thomas Dixon

Thomas Dixon is a student of Dr. David Cattell at Philadelphia Community College.

On 9/17/11, Earl Bennett, President of the Philadelphia Area Space Alliance, gave a talk on the history of, and current progress stemming from, SETI (The Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence). During the talk, Mr. Bennett had touched on various topics related to the history and aim of SETI. Although the SETI Institute was incorporated as a nonprofit organization just within my lifetime, the history associated with the search for extra terrestrial intelligence has a much longer and storied past.

It was in the 17th century that Bernard Le Bovier de Fontenelle wrote "Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds" a work in the style of the Enlightenment Age in which the possibility of extra terrestrial life is brought up. In the 18th century Karl Frederich Gauss had suggested creating a triangle of fire in the forest for Extra Terrestrials to possibly see. The 19th century brought "The Plurality of Inhabited Worlds" by Nicolas Camille Flammarion. Charles Cros had proposed the building of mirrors to burn giant lines on Mars and Venus, as a method of communication.



*"That? No that's not a U.F.O. It's on the ground now.
And you've identified it. That makes it an I.G.O."*

**Cartoon by Nick D. Kim, <http://www.lab-initio.com>
Used by permission.**

It was in the 20th century that modern efforts were starting to be made, such as the use of radio and satellite dishes. Those curious about other forms of life began to believe that civilizations may be detectable based on their emissions, and had decided to focus their search for such "markers" of existence. Frank Drake, involved in the founding of SETI, had used a telescope to search for extraterrestrial life. He developed the Drake equation, which is used to estimate the number of life forms which may be detectable in the Milky Way galaxy.

In recent history efforts have continued and curious discoveries have been observed. In the 1960s pulsars (a contraction of "pulsating stars") were discovered, and raised new astronomical questions. Developed at the beginning of the 70's "Project Cyclops" was a design for a series of radio telescopes to search for extra terrestrial life many light years away. The Jodrell Bank Observatory in England contains many radio telescopes which could be used for such a purpose, along with the Allen Telescope Array. The Atacama Large Millimeter Array is an astronomical interferometer array which is expected to be fully operational by the end of next year. All of this is not to neglect the work of individuals contributing to the search for extra terrestrial life, such as those contributing through Project Argus, which is a collection of amateur radio telescopes controlled by individual SETI League members. Thus, the search can continue without huge taxpayer expense, as there is enough interest in the community among potential contributors to the effort.

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Natural Childbirth: Under the Skeptical Movement's Radar?

By Martha Knox

People in the skeptic movement are well acquainted with a great deal of common quackery due to articles in publications such as Skeptic Magazine, Skeptical Inquirer, bloggers such as Harriet Hall, the SkepDoc, and speakers at conferences like James Randi's Amazing Meeting. On topics of how irrational, anti-science thought impacts health, these skeptics-at-large regularly touch on homeopathy, anti-vaccine activists, chiropractic nonsense, acupuncture, detoxing, and even repressed memory.

But one rapidly growing and potentially dangerous trend in alternative medicine has largely been ignored by big name advocates of skepticism and skeptic organizations. In general, it is the natural childbirth movement, and specifically, the increasing popularity of homebirths.

Googling "natural childbirth skepticism" produces some re-

vealing results. At the top is an article which is in fact skeptical of natural childbirth, although not published by any organization focused on the promotion of science and skeptical inquiry. It is Skepticism of the Natural Woman by Amanda Marcotte, (<http://scribe.doublex.com/blog/xxfactor/skepticism-about-natural-woman>) published last year in Slate, and is a sassy, feminist counter to the idea that natural childbirth is better for women. The next two links are to articles posted in a blog called The Healthy Skeptic, (<http://chriskresser.com/clinic/about>) which is in fact run by an acupuncturist who promotes a good deal of woo.

A search of Skeptic Magazine's archives for "natural childbirth" produced no relevant articles.

A search on skepdic.com of "natural childbirth" produced no entries on the practice and a search of "homebirth" produced

Childbirth during the 18th Century was almost entirely a home oriented and "natural" situation where the expectant mother was attended by other women and midwives. Late in the 18th century physicians and male midwives began taking over a considerable amount of the duties surrounding birthing. Giving birth was a dangerous proposition in those days, especially when an obstructed delivery occurred. There were no drugs and only crude painful surgery was possible. Outcomes were often poor for mother and child.

Elizabeth Drinker, an 18th Century Philadelphia Quaker housewife and diarist had referred to anxieties about birthing in her journal as reported in The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker, edited by Elaine Forman Crane (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1991).

S.D. and M.R. [her daughters] are both in the Way as some call it--a way, that was always attended with great difficulty to me and mine--should it please kind providence to suffer or permit me to see my dear family around me, the latter end of next 6th. month, I shall have abundant cause of thankfulness--but his will must be done--my anxiety is great on account of my dear Children--they are, and always were, very near my heart, their real good, both sould and body. 875

... to the burial of Rebecca Trotter on third day next--she has left 7 Children, was in the 42 year of her age--probably, had it pleased providence to have spared her, she might never have had another--I have often thought that women who live to get over the time of Child-bareing, if other things are favourable to them, experience more comfort and satisfaction than at any other period of their lives--'tho 'tis sometimes otherwise, want of health, mis-taken conduct, and what is called misfortunes. 893

...I went up to Sally, would not suffer her to talk.--I was thankful, that I happend to be absent at the time, tho' I intended otherwise, Dr. Shippen told me that he thought he should have had occasion for instruments, which said he I have in my pocket, claping his hand on his side, when I heard them rattle, but some time after you went away, I found matters were chang'd for the better, The Child, said he, is a very large one for Salley.--It is a very fine lusty fatt boy.... 1228

For the third quote, the editor had a note about the instruments. She identifies them as forceps, but its also possible they were the "hook and crook", essentially tools for the distasteful, but sometimes unavoidable practice of partial birth abortion to save the mother's life. See box on next page.

only one story about a "homeopathic homebirth" buried under a number of examples of harm done by "occult, paranormal, pseudoscientific, and supernatural beliefs."

Nothing about Natural Childbirth made its way into Dr. Harriet Hall "the SkepDoc"'s 2009 article *Top Ten Things You Should Know About Alternative Medicine* and a search for "natural childbirth" and "homebirth" produces no entries on her blog.

http://www.skeptic.com/downloads/Alternative_Medicine_by_Harriet_Hall.pdf

In eight seasons of Bullshit!, Penn and Teller find room for whole episodes on lawns and cheerleaders, but the closest they ever got to criticizing natural childbirth was when they reached for the low-hanging fruit of dolphin-assisted birth.

I must give credit to Skeptical Inquirer. Searching their archives online, I was able to find one article on this subject: 'Natural' Childbirth by Ben Radford, published in the March/April 2006 issue.

The absence of much attention on the natural childbirth movement and increased advocacy and demand for homebirths in skeptic circles begs the question: is this actually something to be concerned about, or does natural childbirth have a sound basis in science and are homebirths just as safe as hospital births? After all, even the Wikipedia entry on natural childbirth makes no mention of any criticisms. So is there really a problem?

I would answer, skeptics should be concerned.

In 2009 I got pregnant and had a baby. What became an epic journey began at a prestigious but humongous hospital, moved to a small birth center, and ended up back at a large hospital. At the start I had lots of fear and few opinions or knowledge of pregnancy and birth, then decided to attempt a totally natural childbirth (efforts which included 24 hours of active labor with no pain killers), then had an epidural, a pitocin drip, and finally an emergency c-section. Involved were several obstetricians and other doctors, many certified nurse

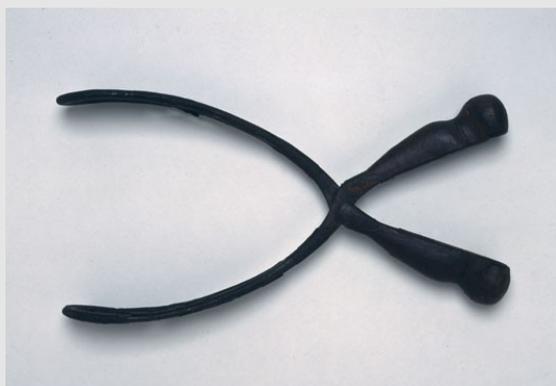
midwives, a couple of doulas, a psychologist, and an army of nurses. The long version of the story isn't necessary. Sufficed to say that I experienced almost every typical aspect of childbirth in America today.

Now I'm pregnant again, and the options are more complicated since I had a previous c-section. This and all that happened in 2009 has motivated me to learn as much as I can about childbirth, and it is during these inquiries that I have become fully aware of what has been dubbed by the media as the birth wars.

The birth wars have often been simplified as doctors verses midwives. In this simplification, obstetricians are painted as scientifically brilliant and competent, but also cold, selfish, and arrogant, and midwives are viewed as experts in transforming one of the most horrible experiences for pregnant women into one of the most wonderful, but also hit-and-miss as far as medical competency goes. Of course the truth is far more complex.

First, many of the criticisms of obstetricians coming from the "other side" of the birth wars are unfounded and incredibly insulting. The contentions include that obstetricians use pitocin to induce labor for the sake of their own convenience, that they discourage or refuse to offer VBAC (vaginal birth after c-section) out of personal fears of being sued and total disregard for what is best for the patient, and generally push for unnecessary c-sections because they like doing surgery and make more money that way. These accusations and more are frequently and casually expressed by advocates on the side of natural childbirth. They were expressed in Ricki Lake's film *The Business of Being Born*, and they come up over and over again in literature and websites advocating natural childbirth.

Midwives come in a several stripes, and can hardly be aligned as a whole group to one side in the birth wars. Many fall somewhere in the middle of a spectrum between the two sides. There are two basic types of midwife in America. Certified Nurse Midwives (CNMs) are trained and certified as both nurses and midwives. They most typically work in hos-



These obstetrical forceps were designed by the English surgeon, William Smellie (1697-1763), in 1751. The forceps blades are designed with two curves: the cephalic curve to fit the child's head, and the pelvic curve to correspond to the curve of the mother's pelvis. The blades fit together in deep notches known as the 'English Lock'. This pair of forceps is made of metal covered in leather and would not have been very easy to clean. The forceps were lubricated with lard.

The Dr. Shippen that Elizabeth Drinker referred in her diary was Dr. William Shippen Jr., of Philadelphia who had been a student of Dr. Smellie, and the instrument he may have used while in attendance of the Drinker women was likely of this type.

pitals. They are part of and have a good reputation within the medical establishment. The other type is direct-entry midwives, who gain their experience through self study, apprenticeships, or midwifery programs. They most frequently work in homebirth settings. Some direct-entry are Certified Professional Midwives (CPMs), certified by the North American Registry of Midwives. Others are merely licensed in a particular state, and still others are lay midwives. As one can imagine, direct-entry midwives level of training, experience, and competency can vary widely. Whenever horror stories of homebirths gone wrong appear in the news, the midwife involved is a Direct-entry midwife.

While most midwives tend to advocate natural childbirth to some degree, CNMs tend to be more knowledgeable and concerned with risk factors that might disqualify a woman from attempting totally natural childbirth.

For example, the Birth Center I went through will not accept clients who are VBAC, over a certain age or weight, pregnant with multiples, and many other risk factors. Women in labor had transfer to the hospital across the street if any complications ensued. Roughly 20% of the Birth Center's clients end up giving birth at the hospital, and 10% end up having a c-section. I was in that 10%.

I never had any doubts about the care I received at the Birth Center. All the midwives were experienced CNMs. I was required to have blood tests for various risks such as parvovirus B19. 24 hours after my water broke we promptly packed up and went to the hospital. After many hours of excruciatingly painful contractions, a midwife was the one to strongly

recommend an epidural so that I could relax, rest, and have enough strength to push. And when it finally became apparent that a c-section was necessary, a midwife stood side by side with the doctor, explaining the process and paperwork I was required to sign. Clearly this was a competent operation where the health of mother and child are paramount. Right?

In the case of my first pregnancy, yes, the Birth Center's approach was competent, totally appropriate, and ultimately successful. Any pregnancy that ends with a healthy baby and mother is a success. So here's the problem. This time around I'm no longer a totally low-risk candidate. When I found out I was pregnant again, I immediately called the Birth Center. I found out I couldn't have my second baby there, so I asked for recommended options. I was given a short list of CNMs who work at or with hospitals, which was great.

But then the person on the phone said, "I can also give you the names of midwives who do homebirths." What!? If it isn't considered safe enough for me to attempt VBAC at a top notch Birth Center across the street from a hospital, why the hell would it be safe for me to try it in my home that is a 20 minute car ride (not accounting for traffic) from the nearest hospital? If the Birth Center is responsible enough to not take on clients with higher risks, why would they be so irresponsible as to recommend alternatives which are even less safe? This is the influence of natural childbirth, a movement that is more motivated by crackpot theories and warm-and-fuzzy feelings than science and evidence.

Dr. Amy, the Skeptical OB, is a one-woman army at war with natural childbirth pseudoscience. In her article *Is Natu-*

In the 18th Century “Childbed Fever” was a major cause of mortality for women post-delivery. Between 1789 and 1792 Alexander Gordon suggested that childbed fever is contagious and transferred by midwives and doctors from one new birth to the next. In publicly naming specific midwives responsible for the transfer of this illness, Gordon provoked the medical community in Aberdeen, Scotland which commenced to slander his name and discredit his theory thus causing the radical idea that contagions are responsible for childbed fever to be abandoned. In 1855, an American physician, Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr., picked up on that idea and pressured doctors to stop delivering children if three or more of their new mother patients consecutively died. Like Gordon, Holmes received hostile response from his medical community as no doctors wanted to be held responsible for the death of their patients. Holmes, unlike Gordon, was not completely alone in the world with his postulation. Previously, during the 1840's, the Europeans had made some headway in the realm of childbed fever and found a way to tie it into the developing Germ Theory. Dr. James Young Simpson of Britain suggested that the minor vaginal abrasions caused by childbirth allowed for germs on doctor's hands to invade the mother's body and invoke the unfortunately familiar childbed fever.

In 1847, Ignaz Semmelweis, a Hungarian physician working in the Vienna General Hospital noticed a difference between the hospital's two maternity wards; one ward had a higher rate of childbed fever than the other. He deduced that the reason for the high rate of childbed fever of one ward was due to the ward being full of medical students who performed both autopsies and deliveries without much care to clean up. The low fever rate in the other ward was due to the fact that only students of midwifery performed deliveries. This theory was accepted when a professor died of what was assumed to be childbed fever after cutting his finger in the midst of an autopsy. Childbed fever death decreased dramatically after the implementation of Semmelweis' suggestion that doctors wash their hands with a mixture of chlorine and water.



Dr. Oliver Wendell
Holmes Sr.
About 1853

ral Childbirth a Form of Quackery? she explains one characteristic of natural childbirth that might partially explain why it has managed to fly under the larger skeptical movement's radar:

"Unlike traditional pseudosciences (homeopathy, creationism) which have always denigrated scientific research, in the last decade, natural childbirth advocates have based the validity of their philosophy on the claim that it is supported by science while modern obstetrics is not."

Dr. Amy points out that the founder of natural childbirth, Grantly Dick-Read, was a white man whose ideas about childbirth are not rooted in any science, and whose writings and work were motivated by his concern that upper class white women were not having enough children to keep up with poor, black women.

Dr. Amy also writes frequently (and harshly) about "the mother of authentic midwifery", Ina May Gaskin. An article in Salon about Gaskin mentions her total lack of formal medical training, and more startling, the story of how one of her own children died during a natural childbirth that could have been prevented had it happened in a traditional medical setting.

<http://entertainment.salon.com/1999/06/01/gaskin/>

Quotes from both Dick-Read and Gaskin, as well as quotes from other major proponents of natural childbirth are fraught with bullshit, identifiable as such to any seasoned skeptic. Consider these:

◆ *"It is important to keep in mind that our bodies must work pretty well, or their wouldn't be so many humans on the planet."* - Ina May Gaskin (Yeah, let's just ignore the fact that childbirth has always been a leading cause of death for women and babies. There's billions of people on earth, therefore childbirth must be inherently safe!)

◆ *"Women's bodies have near-perfect knowledge of childbirth; it's when their brains get involved that things can go wrong."* -Peggy Vincent (Silly brains, always getting in the way.)

◆ *"I have personally come to believe that childbirth is a blessing to women sent straight from God. I mean, in its purest form, birth is the most fantastic orgasm married with a miracle! What more heavenly gift could there be?"* -Laurie Annis Morgan (Yes, those pesky doctors are trying to take away the best organism of your life. And a miracle. Those bastards.)

But, hell, if pregnant women at low-risk for complications want to think of childbirth without painkillers as some kind of earth-shattering, mega-spiritual experience, let 'em. So long as the end result is a healthy mom and baby, it's all good. The problem arises when even women with greater risk factors and their midwives are so moved by the power and importance of having a natural childbirth experience that

they don't take proper precautions and take necessary actions when complications ensue, putting both the woman and child in harm's way.

Let's get to the real meat of the debate. To put it most bluntly, will more babies die during homebirths than would have had they been delivered in hospitals? Many advocates of natural childbirth mention the United States' high cesarean section rate and connect it with the USA's relatively high infant mortality rate. Dr. Amy argues that infant mortality is the wrong statistic:

"It is a measure of pediatric care. That's because infant mortality is deaths from birth to one year of age. It includes accidents, sudden infant death syndrome, and childhood diseases.

The correct statistic for measuring obstetric care (according to the World Health Organization) is perinatal mortality. Perinatal mortality is death from 28 weeks of pregnancy to 28 days of life. Therefore it includes late stillbirths and deaths during labor.

The US has one of the lowest rates of perinatal mortality in the world."

She further points out that the Netherlands, which has the highest percentage of homebirths in the world, also has a higher perinatal mortality rate than any other European country.

Dr. Amy's website is: <http://skepticalob.blogspot.com>

If she's correct, then the rising rate of homebirths in the United States should be as alarming as the anti-vaccine crowd. After all, both put the most vulnerable in our population at risk.

Why is this not an issue regularly raised by skeptics-at-large? Could this be the result of what PZ Myers calls The Woman Problem? Or is it that the natural childbirth movement has managed to convincingly appear "evidence-based"? Whatever the reason, it seems clear to this skeptic that there needs to be more skeptical critics of the pseudoscientific and dangerous aspects of natural childbirth.

Martha Knox is an fine art printmaker and teacher based in Germantown. She is also the president of the Humanist Association of Greater Philadelphia. More about Martha, her artwork and other activities can be viewed at www.marthaknox.com

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A 1903 Report of a Sea Serpent Found on a Ventnor Beach

By Don Nigroni

Below is an excerpt from an article, *While Ocean, Atlantic City Says, Gave Up a Grinning Serpent, a Monster Oyster and a Man-Eating Lobster*, that appeared in the December 20, 1903 issue of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*:

While returning to his home a few evenings ago William Blackman saw a long, dark object being tossed by the restless waves beating on the beach at Ventnor. At last one big comber left it stranded high on the sands.

Blackman approached. Before him lay a sea serpent fifteen feet long and with a head twelve inches from ear to ear. Its mouth was the same size, and it grinned hideously at Blackman. It seemed dead, but the next morning it could not be found.

The strange marine creature which was stranded on a Ventnor beach in 1903 apparently had a snake-like form, was 15 feet in length with a foot long head from ear to ear and had a wide, hideous, grinning mouth.

The June 4, 1900 edition of *The Philadelphia Inquirer* contained an article entitled *BIG SEA MONSTER KILLED AT ATLANTIC* concerning a similar incident that occurred on June 3rd at Atlantic City. The item related that, after “the heavy nor’easter of last week”, a sea serpent was seen in the surf and killed with a club by a coast guard man with the assistance of a policeman but “that they were unable to drag it ashore” and the surf “carried it out of reach.” According to the account, the monster was “about twelve feet in length, was several feet thick and its neck was four or five feet in length, the head being flat and the jaws set with two rows of fangs.” The “body was of greenish hue, but that after it had been dead for a short time it turned a dirty brown.” A “Dr. J. W. Stone”, who was “attending the medical convention, saw the ‘serpent’ and said” it was “a moray, one of the great gigantic eels from the coast of Bermuda or the Azores.” Stone said the “biggest specimens in aquariums or museums do not exceed seven feet”.



The green moray, *Gymnothorax funebris*, is a moray eel of the family Muraenidae, found in the western Atlantic from New Jersey, Bermuda, and the northern Gulf of Mexico to Brazil, at depths down to 40 m. Its length is up to 2.5 meters.

An article in *The New York Times* on June 4, 1900 entitled “*SEA SERPENT*” AT CHELSEA related that on June 3rd a “veritable sea serpent was killed on the beach at Chelsea” by a life guard who hit it on the head with a club and was then assisted by a policeman but it “was swept out to sea by the rising tide.” Today Chelsea is part of Atlantic City but was then a southern suburb. According to this version the monster was “eleven feet six inches in length and nineteen inches in circumference” with a tail that “was broad and flat.” It had “a huge mouth encircled with great, sharp fangs” and was “pale green in color turning to a dirty white below, and had a pair of large flippers or fins near the head.” A “Prof. J. N. Stone of Columbus, Ohio,” “a delegate to the American Medical Association, in convention here,” recognized it “as a giant moray, a species of gigantic eel, from the coast of Bermuda.”

Included in *A Field Guide to Atlantic Coast Fishes: North America* (1986) by C. Richard Robins and G. Carleton Ray is the snake-like green moray. “Adults are *greenish or dark greenish gray overall*” and they are long to “2.5 m (8 ft.); the largest Atlantic moray.” Their range is “N.J. (recorded once from N.S.), Bermuda, and n. Gulf of Mexico to Brazil.” Morays have two

“branchial pores above the gills on each side of body” and their “habit of gaping is not a threat display, but for respiration.” In addition, the “jaws of large species are strong enough to crush bone.”

In *Keeping Moray Eels in Aquariums* (2005), Phil Purser described the green moray and the giant moray. He noted that green morays have “sharp, well-developed dentition: dual rows of teeth



The author with two green morays at the Atlantic City Aquarium. Photograph by Robert J. Nigroni

on the forward upper jaw, a singular row on the lower” which can be compared to “jaws set with two rows of fangs” mentioned in the *Inquirer* article. And the *Times* article’s giant moray “from the coast of Bermuda” was surely a green moray, ‘giant’ merely referring to its size, not the common name of its species. There is a scary moray species called the giant moray that can grow to 11 feet in length but it is not green and its range is the Indo-Pacific. According to Purser, the American eel can be mistaken for a moray. Robins and Ray noted that this species is “Greenish brown, sometimes yellowish below” and that females can grow “to 1.5 m (5 ft.), but rarely more than 90 cm (3ft.); males decidedly smaller.” American eels, like green morays, can appear in Jersey waters and the former, unlike the latter, have prominent pectoral fins. However, the shorter, slimmer American eel lacks the truly frightening appearance of the huge, robust green moray.

As for the Ventnor monster, though morays have no external ears, the green moray’s branchial pores, two tiny



The American eel, *Anguilla rostrata*, is a catadromous fish found on the eastern coast of North America. It has a snake-like body with a small sharp pointed head. It is brown on top and a tan-yellow color on the bottom. It has sharp pointed teeth but no pelvic fins. It is very similar to the European eel, but the two species differ in number of chromosomes and vertebrae.

Catadromous fish live in fresh water and descend to the sea to spawn. The American eel is the only North American fish to display that characteristic. Anadromous fish such as shad and salmon live in salt water and ascend rivers to spawn in fresh water.

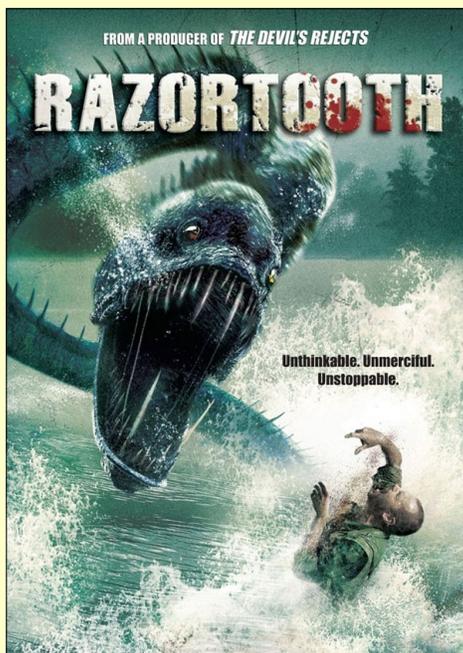
Labor Statistics. He now spends much more time hiking, mountain biking, kayaking and bird watching.

holes on each side of its head behind its eyes, could easily be mistaken for them. And the terrifying gaping mouth of a green moray, revealing its sharp teeth, could be seen as a hideous grin.

The green moray is indeed a fearsome looking, long, serpentine fish and specimens were evidently seen on Atlantic City and Ventnor beaches in 1900 and 1903, respectively. You might even say that when a sea serpent is reported to have washed ashore on a beach in the Atlantic City area, that’s a moray.

Don Nigroni received a BS in economics in 1971 from St. Joseph's University and a MA in philosophy from Notre Dame in 1973. He retired in 2007 after working for 32 years as an economist with the US Bureau of

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Razortooth (US-2006; dir. Patricia Harrington)

A thoroughly generic example of its subgenre, **Razortooth** differs mainly in featuring giant mutated eels instead of giant mutated crocodiles, snakes, lizards, sharks, crustaceans, piranha, Chinese snake-heads, birds, ferrets, rabbits or whatever particular species the filmmakers insert into the template. There is plenty of gore and dismemberment.

The monster was created, naturally, by a dodgy professor whose experiment in genetic modification goes awry. Local dogs are disappearing and soon so are local people. Eventually the Animal Control officer is the hero of this drama.

Razortooth could make for a fun night for those fond of sub-B mutant monsters movies. Speaking of Bad Movies, reserve Thursday night, October 27, 2011 for Mega Bad Movie night at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia.

"Anthropologist Updates the Pre-History of In-Laws"

by Paul Schlueter III

In the March 2011 issue of Phactum, I scribbled at some length on the subject of "Human Sexuality and Evo Devo." That article was primarily a summary of my (admittedly fallible) personal understanding of our modern grasp of such subjects as how individuals moved among tribes, how mates might be chosen from outside of one's own local band, and so on.

As if on command, it now turns out that an actual expert has something to say on the subject, so I thought it appropriate to share. A team of anthropologists from Arizona State University in Tempe, led by Kim Hill, has "analyzed previously collected data on more than 5,000 individuals from 32 modern hunter-gatherer societies worldwide," and her report is summarized by Bruce Bower in the April 9, 2011, Science News, p. 13. (See "In-laws vital to early human society," www.sciencenews.org)

The societies studied consist of two or more bands of people each, and such bands range in size from 5 to 64 people each. According to Bower, SN's behavioral sciences writer, researchers try to infer information about prehistoric groups by studying modern hunter-gatherers. Previously, it appears that the consensus was that women migrated into new groups by marriage, and the cores of those groups were large male families. Joseph Heinrich, an anthropologist at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, asserts that Hill's analysis "shatters that assumption."

Hill's group believes that they have identified three social features, unique to humans, which characterize hunter-gatherer groups:

1. Both men and women are equally likely to stay in their native bands, or to migrate to new bands for monogamous marriage.
2. Adult siblings of both genders often live together in a band, along with their in-laws.

3. A majority of the members of a band are genetically unrelated.

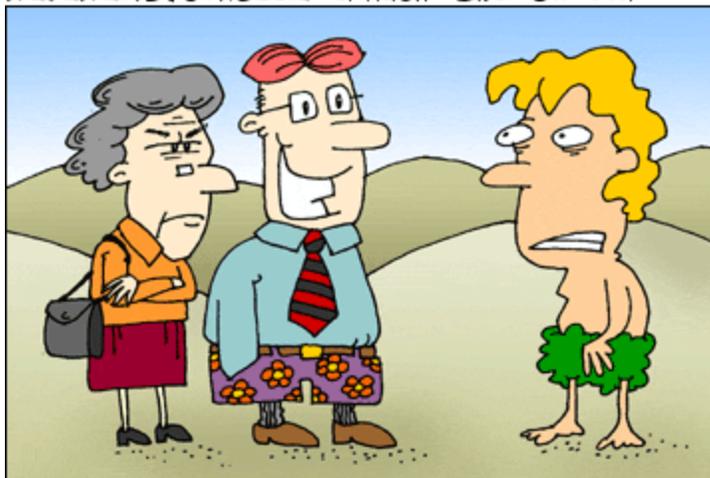
As Hill puts it, "Alliances between foraging groups are facilitated because unrelated males all associate with the same female, who may be their daughter, sister, wife, mother, or daughter-in-law... By friendly association with her, males begin to associate with each other." She believes that associations of this type began among pre-human groups as early as 2 million years ago. Bower cites an earlier SN article (6/11/05, p. 379) to report that scientists believe

monogamy among proto-humans may go back more than 3 million years. For the sake of comparison, the genetic divergence between the ancestors of humans and the ancestors of chimps is thought to have occurred just 6 million years ago.

Hill's report appeared in the March 11, 2011 issue of Science. In the same issue, anthropologist Bernard Chapais, of the University of Montreal, "argues that this monogamy-based social structure encourages males to circulate freely among bands in which they have kin and in-laws. Cultural innovations and traditions thus spread rapidly, and unite bands into larger tribal units." [Quoting Bower, not Chapais.]

As Hill points out, "females would have had an incentive to seek mates willing to stick around and provide food for offspring," though the many factors of human sexual interaction and social cooperation make the issues extremely complex. Males don't particularly want to support the offspring of unrelated males, though studies of several species indicate that individuals might be willing to help support the offspring of their siblings; this would give men an incentive to seek women who they can rely on to be monogamous. For the women, they don't want their children competing for the support of their mates against the stepchildren of other women, so again, monogamy is more appealing. Such considerations might be easily understood by creatures of rudimentary intellectual development, and

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10-17-2003

FIRST BOOTED FROM THE GARDEN, THEN
FORCED TO WORK, AND FINALLY ... IN-LAWS

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their links to emotions such as affection and jealousy only make them clearer. Though the religions later developed by philosophical humans clearly said quite a bit about suitable forms of marital unions, there does not seem to be any need to develop religion before developing practices such as monogamy. Monogamy can be adopted as an emotional mandate, as a philosophical idea, or as a social convenience, without reliance on the guidance of religious authority. It might also be pointed out that variations on "pure" monogamy might also develop, fade out, and re-occur later.

However, I think that it is equally necessary to incorporate recognition of the all-but universal human inclination to at least cast a wandering eye outside of "monogamous" relationships. Men get the bulk of the blame, but no socially experienced adult can seriously deny that there are also many women who are inclined to be less than faithful to their mates. Such inclinations are probably acted upon with greater frequency when the societal group grows larger in size (it's tougher to cheat in a small town than in a big city of relative strangers), and as human societies began to cluster into cities and nations, religion probably served as a supervisory and moralistic counter-influence to restrain infidelity. Arguably, this restraining factor diminishes in a secular society, and particularly so in a society in which "free love" or personal desire-fulfillment become ethically accepted by a significant percentage of persons.

Today, our human society in the U.S. is experiencing dramatic shifts in social mores (let's include the entire last century!) As we marry outside of our cultures and religions, and focus ever more intently on personal freedoms and rights (at some cost, at least, to responsibilities to our social groups), we tend to adapt and develop a different sort of culture. Rather than sharing traditional values with our clans, we have developed competing "conservative" and "liberal" views that constantly vie for dominance. We spread new cultural learning in institutions legally constrained to show no cultural preferences (or, alternatively, within institutions intently focused on propagating and reinforcing just one ideology.) With our

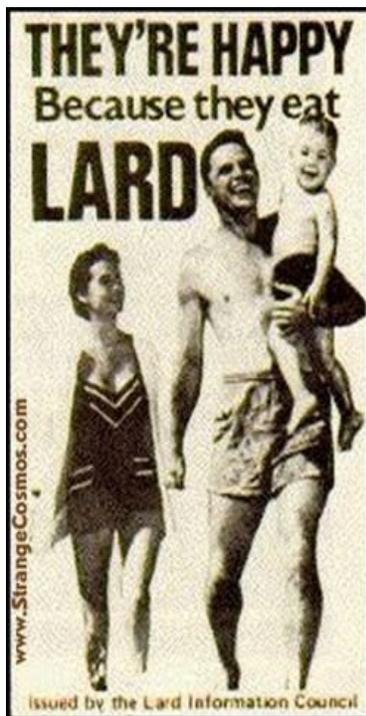
high divorce rates, and re-marriage rates, we have developed a society influenced heavily by step-relatives in addition to the in-laws who come and go with each marriage. How can such tendencies be so widespread among us, if they aren't inherent in our genetic makeup? And if we are inherently "serially-monogamous" and often only as faithful to our spouses as the likelihood of being caught cheating predicts, wouldn't that genetic predisposition come from the very ancestral development we all share?

In a sense, it must be pleasant to have a nice, clean set of data points, describing the relationships and genealogies of just a few thousand "primitive" people, from which to extrapolate conclusions about our human nature. It's as good a reference baseline as any other, and probably better than some that have been used by social scientists over recent generations. If there was anything "simpler" about "the good of days," then it must necessarily have been due to a smaller and more homogenous sample of individuals. Looking at the timeline, we existed in sparse, minuscule social groups for far, far longer than we've had city-states and national cultures within which to evolve. But just as our tendency to gorge on high-fat and sweet foods whenever possible has led us to become an obese and diseased populace in these times of super-sized fast food right around every corner, our recent trend to herd ourselves into extremely dense cities seems to "enable" our inherent tendency to gorge on the sexual opportunities all around us, equally to the detriment of our social health.

The question becomes, What lesson should we take away from what we're now learning about our own natures? And, even if we learn the right lessons, will we be able to apply them to our own individual lives and collective societies in a beneficial manner?

Paul Schlueter III is serving Life in Prison in NE Pennsylvania. His supporters have created a website about him. www.jaylbird.org

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A fews In-law quotes

Behind every successful man is a proud wife and a surprised mother-in-law. ~ Hubert H. Humphrey

Conscience is a mother-in-law whose visit never ends. ~ H. L. Mencken

I told my mother-in-law that my house was her house, and she said, 'Get the hell off my property.' ~ Joan Rivers

Just got back from a pleasure trip: I took my mother-in-law to the airport. ~ Henny Youngman

My mother-in-law had a pain beneath her left breast. Turned out to be a trick knee. ~ Phyllis Diller

PHACT CALENDAR

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 lot on 17th Street which is one way south bound. This meeting site is handicap accessible. **PhACT Meetings are Free and open to the public unless otherwise noted.**



Saturday, October 15, 2011 at 2 PM. PhACT Lecture - “Straight and swift to my wounded I go”: The Reality of Civil War Medicine and its Interpretation. Robert D, Hicks, Ph.D., curator of the Mutter Museum at the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, will discuss issues of medicine during the Civil War. This event will be in Lecture Room C2-28 in the Center for Business and Industry at the corner of 18th and Callowhill Streets. See Page 1 for more details.

Saturday, November 19, 2011 - Saturday, November 19, 2011 - The Fracking Controversy

Dr. David Velinsky, Director of the Environmental Biogeochemistry Section of the Academy of Natural Sciences, will speak about the controversy. This event will be in Lecture Room C2-28 in the Center for Business and Industry at the corner of 18th and Callowhill Streets.

Dr. Velinsky is a marine biogeochemist with over 20 years experience in marine and freshwater studies related to nutrient cycling, isotope biogeochemistry, and wetland nutrient and metal geochemistry. He started as an organic geochemist studying the transport of organic compounds in estuaries and from atmospheric transport, and shifted to studies of sulfur and selenium geochemistry. He has published studies related to many aspects of biogeochemistry and has a broad range in the cycling of bioactive elements.

Saturday, January 21, 2012 - TBA

Saturday, February 18, 2012 - TBA

Monday, October 10, 2011 at National Mechanics, 22 S. Third Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Science on Tap is a monthly gathering that features a brief, informal presentation by a scientist or other expert followed by lively conversation.

Topic TBA

Presented by the Wagner Free Institute of Science

For more information see: <http://www.chemheritage.org/visit/events/public-events/2011-09-12-sot.aspx>

Free and Open to the Public but you must be 21+

Tuesday, October 11, 2011 at 6:30PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

The 17th Annual Thomas Langfitt, Jr. Symposium on Health Care Policy: Comparative Effectiveness Research

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 includes provisions that support the development of **comparative effectiveness research** (CER). CER compares the health outcomes and clinical effectiveness of existing medical interventions, devices, pharmaceuticals, and additional components of health care delivery in an effort to improve patient outcome and cost control. While CER has the potential to achieve

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

its stated goals, it is unclear how such research would be evaluated, incorporated into current clinical practice, and reconciled against conflicting research and clinical experience.

The panelists for this year's Thomas Langfitt, Jr. Symposium will address the issues concerning CER and its feasibility in the current health care environment. Panelists and attendees will receive discussion topics in advance to foster a case-based, interactive symposium.

Panelists:

- **Carolyn M. Clancy, MD**, Director, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, US Department of Health and Human Services

- **Scott E. Harrington, PhD**, Alan B. Miller Professor; Professor of Health Care Management and Insurance and Risk Management at the Wharton School of Business

- **Donald Liss, MD**, Senior Medical Director, Clinical Programs and Policy, Independence Blue Cross

Co-sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania.

Free and Open to the Public. Register at: <http://www.collphyphil.org>

Wednesday, October 12, 2011 at the Franklin Institute.

The Rittenhouse Astronomical Society meets the second Wednesday of the month.

<http://www.rittenhouseastronomicalsociety.org/>

Friday, October 14, 2011 - Sixth Annual Gravediggers Ball to benefit the Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery Historic Preservation Efforts

The Friends of the Laurel Hill Cemetery will again 'resurrect' the Gravediggers' Ball. This black-tie or costumed event will be held at the Crystal Tea Room at Wanamaker's and will include cocktails, dinner, dancing and musical entertainment by a dynamic 11-piece dance band. All proceeds go towards the continued restoration and preservation of historic Laurel Hill Cemetery (burial site of General Meade and many Civil War veterans!).

Cost: \$175 donation per person, At Meade Society Table: \$150 per person!

For info call 215.228.8200, or visit theundergroundmuseum.org

Friday, October 14, 2011 -- Delaware Valley MENSA General Membership is generally on the 2nd Friday of the month. Check the MENSA calendar at: http://dvm.us.mensa.org/calendar.shtml#gm_meeting

Invisible Ink Spycraft of the American Revolution

John A. Nagy is a Scholar in Residence at Saint Francis University, Loretto, Pennsylvania, a consultant for the William L. Clements Library of the University of Michigan on espionage, and an expert in antique documents. He is a founder and current President of the American Revolution Round Table of Philadelphia. He graduated from Saint Francis University, Loretto, Pennsylvania (BA) in 1968 and Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken, New Jersey (MMS) in 1979.

Mr. Nagy has appeared on radio and television such as the History Channel, C-Span, and local educational TV. He was the subject of an one hour interview on the Pennsylvania Cable Network. He was also an extra in the 1976 John Huston film Independence (un-credited).

His first book Rebellion in the Ranks Mutinies of the American Revolution won the American Revolution Round Table of Philadelphia's

Thomas Fleming Book Award for the best book on the American Revolution Era published in 2007.

His talk will be based on his second book released in December 2009 Invisible Ink Spycraft of the American Revolution. The book is based on almost two decades of primary research. It discusses spy technology such as codes, ciphers, invisible writing, and hidden compartments during the American Revolution.

Join us at the Police Administration Building, 750 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA. Please note: During the meeting, parking is allowed behind the building (despite the "Police Officers Only" notice) and IT IS FREE! This meeting is DVM's only activity specifically open to the public. Feel free to extend invitations to friends, neighbors, relatives, colleagues, jarheads, airheads, bubbleheads, and headbangers.

Contact Pete, 215-235-pete, for additional information.

PhACT Event

Saturday, October 15, 2011 at 2 PM. PhACT Lecture - "Straight and swift to my wounded I go": The Reality of Civil War Medicine and its Interpretation. **Robert D. Hicks, Ph.D.**, curator of the Mutter Museum at the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, will discuss issues of medicine during the Civil War. See Page 1.

Sunday, October 16, 2011 at 2pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Sinners, Scandals & 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 chemical heiress who lost her money in an infamous Broadway bomb starring the producer's talentless girlfriend? The noted 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.

\$15.00 general / \$12.00 members / \$10.00 seniors & students

Sunday, October 16, 2011 - 1pm-4pm at the Mill at Anselma, 1730 Conestoga Road, PO Box 42, Chester Springs, PA 19425

Harvest Festival: Brewing Beer in Colonial Days

The art of crafting beer has improved a great deal over the years, but nothing beats a colonial brew! Foodways historian Clarissa Dillon will discuss the art of colonial brewing. A must-see for any home brewing enthusiast!

<http://www.anselmamill.org/>

Tuesday, October 18, 2011 Noon to 1:00 PM - Brown Bag Lunch at the Chemical Heritage Foundation, 315 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Lecture Doogab Yi, "A Medical Vietnam? Critics of the Cancer Establishment and the Demise of the Virus Cancer Program in the 1970s"

Wednesday, October 19, 2011 at 12:00n - 1:00PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

Food & Thought: "Who's Afraid of Big, Bad Pharma?"

SOCRATES CAFE is moderated by: Lewis Mifsud, Ph.D., P.E., a member of PhACT and of The American Academy of Forensic Sciences. At 7:00 PM every Monday evening except holidays (on Tuesdays after a Monday holiday) at the Springfield Township Public Library (215-836-5300) at 1600 Papermill Mill Road, Wyndmoor, PA. 19038. This philosophical discussions group is free and open to the public. Join us and share your critical thinking, questions and opinions.



Through increased institutional and financial strength, the pharmaceutical industry has made remarkable advances in biomedical research. Working in a highly regulated environment, both in the United States and in many countries throughout the world, the industry has developed new medicines, vaccines, and devices that are as innovative as they are safe and effective. In the last ten years the pharmaceutical industry has also responded to increased calls for transparency in its relationships with physicians and other health care professionals. This lecture will discuss the role of industry research in the future of American medicine, while exploring the balance of marketing, education, and communication to ensure that industry products are used appropriately.

Speaker: **Joseph Camardo, MD, FCPP**, Senior Vice President, Forest Research Institute

Cost \$12.50 includes lunch. Open to the Public. Register at: <http://www.collphyphil.org>

Thursday, October 20, 2011 at 6:30PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

The Annual Samuel X. Radbill Lecture: *Measured Breath: Asthma, Diagnosis, and Death in Urban America*

Internist and historian **Carla Keirns, MD, PhD, MSc**, will share some findings and ideas from her forthcoming book on the history of asthma, a disease which has become alarmingly prevalent among both children and adults. Dr. Keirns, Assistant Professor and Director of the Program on the History of Medicine at Stony Brook University in New York, did her medical and historical training at the University of Pennsylvania. A question and answer session with the audience will follow the lecture.

Speaker: **Carla Keirns, MD, PhD, MSc**, Assistant Professor, Director of the Program on the History of Medicine, Stony Brook University
Sponsored by the College's Section on Medical History.

Free and Open to the Public. Register at: <http://www.collphyphil.org>

Thursday, October 20, 2011 at 7:30PM at the Free Library of Philadelphia, 1901 Vine Street, 19103

Steven Pinker | The Better Angels of our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined

Named one of Time magazine's "100 Most Influential People of All Time," Harvard professor Steven Pinker is a cognitive scientist whose thorough studies of language have led him to insights into the way humans form thoughts and engage the world. He has authored seven books, including the New York Times bestseller and Pulitzer Prize finalist *The Blank Slate* and the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Critics Circle Award finalist *How the Mind Works*. His new book, *The Better Angels of our Nature* charts the decline of global violence from Biblical times to the present. Pinker argues that, despite current warfare, our modern cultural institutions prove our progress over the course of history into altogether better people, now living in the most peaceful era humankind has experienced.

Cost: \$15 General Admission, \$7 Students

Tickets: <http://libwww.freelibrary.org/authorevents/tickets.cfm>

Thursday, October 20, 2011 - 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Chemical Heritage Foundation, 315 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

This installment of the Joseph Priestley Society (JPS) lecture series will include a keynote address by **Judith Giordan**, chair, VentureWell, and senior advisor, National Collegiate Inventors and Innovator Alliance.

Schedule:

11:30 a.m. Networking reception

12:15 p.m. Lunch

1:00 p.m. Keynote speaker

2:00 p.m. Meeting adjourns

This event is part of the conference "Frontiers of Discovery: Association for Women in Science at 40."

For more information about this event, please contact Laura Naden, advancement and events administrator, at 215.873.8276 or lnaden@chemheritage.org.

This meeting is Open to the Public but registration is required.

Fee: \$25.00 includes lunch. <http://www.chemheritage.org>

Friday, October 21, 2011 at 6pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Day of Our Dead: Marking the 175th Anniversary of Laurel Hill's First Burial

175 years ago, a Quaker woman of the name Mercy Carlisle learned of the new and promising cemetery then under construction outside of Philadelphia's city limits. Though ailing, she found strength to travel to the site they were calling Laurel Hill, and in touring its emerging landscape had, according to our founder, "expressed her decided wish to be interred under the group of four large pine trees...near the center of the plot (Sec. E, #1)." Not long after, on October 21, 1836, Laurel Hill Cemetery's earth was opened for the very first time to receive Mercy's remains.

Join us, exactly 175 years to the day of our first burial, as we honor the memories of our Dead. Each participant will light a candle in solemn remembrance of their own family members, beloved friends and precious pets whose spirits have passed on. After the ceremony, toast to the lives of our Dead in an informal reception to include the "stuff" of mortality: food, drink and music. Nighttime tours of the cemetery will be offered.

Sunday, October 22, 2011 at 1pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Fall Family Day

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 with behind-the-scenes tours of the site. 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 apple bobbing, scavenger hunts, arts and crafts, storytelling and Halloween games. Feast on an assortment of hotdogs, cookies, popcorn, hot apple cider and other spooky treats.

Attendees are advised to wear comfortable clothes and shoes, and kids are encouraged to show off their Halloween costumes!

\$20/Family

Saturday October 22, 2011, 10 am – 1 pm - (Rain date: October 23). An Academy of Natural Sciences event.

Philly Rocks!

Whether you're an outdoor enthusiast or amateur geologist, you'll enjoy learning basic geologic features and how to identify local rocks. This hike is designed to be non-strenuous and fun, while offering an engaging way to learn about local geology! Pack your lunch and enjoy it while "shooting the schist" at the end of our hike.

\$25 members/ \$35 nonmembers Maximum 15 participants.

Teachers can earn three (3) Act 48 credits.

Details regarding the location, what to bring and wear will be provided at registration

Call 215-299-1060 to register

Monday, October 24, 2011 at 6pm at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Edgar Allan Poe: Master of Macabre

Edgar Allan Poe returns from beyond the grave to present some of his greatest Philadelphia works! Poe spent his most productive years in Philadelphia, and many of his now-classic tales and poems were published in periodicals owned by Louis A. Godey and George Rex Graham – both of whom are now interred at Laurel Hill Cemetery. Poe will read from "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" and "The Cask of Amontillado," as well as other haunting works. Laurel Hill is just one of many stops in Poe's 2011 Cemetery Tour; other visits include New York's Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, and Mount Auburn in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Edgar Allan Poe is portrayed by Rob Vellela, and independent literary



scholar and playwright from just outside Boston. Recently, he served as



guest curator for “Margaret Fuller: Woman of the Nineteenth Century” at Harvard’s Houghton Library, and as research associate for “The Raven in the Frog Pond: Edgar Allan Poe and Boston” for the Boston Public Library. He has dramatically brought to life several literary figures, including the young Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Edgar Allan Poe.

Join us after-work for this one-of-a-kind experience, as Poe’s tales come to life at sunset. Afterwards, toast to the Master of the Macabre, while enjoying wine, hot cider, and Halloween treats!
\$25 per person - **Advanced Registration Required**

Tuesday, October 25, 2011 to 1:00 PM - Brown Bag Lunch at the Chemical Heritage Foundation, 315 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Augustin Cerveaux, “Pure and Impure Paints: The Story of an ‘Ontological Shift’ of Materials in the Progressive Era”

Wednesday, October 26, 2011 - at 7:15 P.M. ARRTOP (American Revolution Roundtable of Philadelphia) at Brittingham’s Irish Pub and Restaurant, 640 East Germantown Pike, Lafayette Hill, Pennsylvania. (610)828-7351. <http://arrtop.com/>

John Fea on his new book to be released February 2011 **Was America Founded as a Christian Nation: A Historical Introduction.**

Wednesday, October 26, 2011 - 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM at American Philosophical Society, Benjamin Franklin Hall, 427 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia

Lecture, reception, and book signing
DAVA SOBEL: A More Perfect Heaven
Reception: 5:30pm Program: 6:00pm

In her elegant, compelling style, Dava Sobel chronicles, as nobody has, the conflicting personalities and extraordinary discoveries that shaped the Copernican Revolution. At the heart of the book is her play, “And the Sun Stood Still,” imagining Copernicus’s hesitation to publish his outlandish idea -- and the struggle that convinced him to let his manuscript see the light of day. As she achieved with her bestsellers *Longitude* and *Galileo’s Daughter*, Sobel expands the bounds of narration, giving us an unforgettable portrait of scientific achievement, and of the ever-present tensions between science and faith.

By 1514, the reclusive cleric Nicolaus Copernicus had written and hand-copied an initial outline of his heliocentric theory—in which he defied common sense and received wisdom to place the Sun, not the Earth, at the center of our universe, and set the Earth spinning among the other planets. Over the next two decades Copernicus expanded his theory through hundreds of observations, while compiling in secret a book-length manuscript that tantalized mathematicians and scientists throughout Europe. For fear of ridicule, he refused to publish. In 1539 a young German mathematician, Georg Joachim Rheticus, drawn by rumors of a revolution to rival the religious upheaval of Martin Luther’s Reformation, traveled to Poland to seek out Copernicus. Two years later, the Protestant youth took leave of his aging Catholic mentor, and arranged to have his manuscript published in 1543 as *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* (On the Revolutions of the Celestial Spheres) —the book that forever changed humankind’s place in the universe.

Dava Sobel is the acclaimed author of the New York Times and international bestsellers *Longitude*, *Galileo’s Daughter*, and *The Planets*,

and the co-author of *The Illustrated Longitude*. Free and Open to the Public but please RSVP at <http://www.amphilsoc.org/node/2806>

Thursday, October 27, 2011 - 4:00 - 7:00 PM Lecture at 5:30 PM at the Wagner Free Institute of Science, 1700 West Montgomery Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19121

ph 215-763-6529 www.wagnerfreeinstitute.org

Under Glass: A Victorian Obsession: An Illustrated Presentation By John Whitenight

In nearly every Victorian parlor, beside the overstuffed furniture and heavy draperies, stood the Parlor shade, a glass jar protecting treasured



French cemetery scene with hair from Sophie Henry, deceased, age 21, (1881). Collection of John Whitenight.

objects - natural history specimens, waxworks, automatons, and tableaux made of human hair, feather, and shells - from dust and curious fingers. Parlor dome collector and scholar John Whitenight will trace the art, history, and allure of these miniature worlds under glass. The lecture will be illustrated by domes from his spectacular private collection, including his "Morticia Collection" of baboon-armed candlesticks and tiny cemetery scenes.

John Whitenight, artist, educator and antique collector, has pursued his obsession with Victorian parlor domes for more than 30 years. His private

collection consists of more than 175 domes and he has become an expert on the domes and the art form they contain. His forthcoming book, *Under Glass: A Victorian Obsession*, will spotlight these wonderfully whimsical, and sometimes eccentric, creations.

Thursday, October 27, 2011 at 5:30pm, 7pm, 8:30pm \$50.00 --- at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19132. 215-228-8200 <http://www.thelaurelhillemetery.org>

Dining with the Dead - Join us for a ghoulish dining experience...

This package will include a buffet-style, catered, candlelit dinner and dessert inside Laurel Hill’s historic Gatehouse, followed by a flashlight walking tour through the National Historic Landmark Cemetery. Along the way, you’ll meet some of our most restless spirits, as portrayed by talented local actors.

Bring your own beer, wine and flashlights!

Thursday, October 27, 2011 - Mega-Bad Movie Night at the Academy of Natural Sciences
<http://www.ansp.org/adult-programs/mega-bad-movie-night.php>
Eight Legged Freaks

It’s Halloween at Mega-Bad Movie Night!

Come as Mega Shark, Crocosaurus, Shelob, an "Oh no!" experiment gone wrong, Dr. Horrible, Master Chief, or even our own beloved pop idol Tiffany!

Mega-bad prizes may be awarded, but you’ll never know unless you come!
7–8 pm: Grab some snacks and a beer, and then check out the many cool things on display at the Academy. We’ll have some amazing insect specimens from our Entomology Collection on display. And keep an eye out for some live bugs and spiders too!

8–10 pm: Sit back, relax, laugh, and cringe as we watch an “awesomely awful” flick.

Cost: \$10 Academy members / \$15 nonmembers

Go to mbmn8leggedfreaks.eventbrite.com/ to buy your ticket today, or register by phone at 215-299-1060.

Friday, October 28 & Saturday, October 29, 2011 at 7:00 PM at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200 <http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Halloween Flashlight Tours

Laurel Hill Cemetery's annual Halloween tours have become a mainstay of the season, but always have something new to offer. Guides will lead you along winding, dimly-lit pathways and through forests of gravestones and sculptures, as you learn about the history of this enchanting site. Along the way, you'll meet some of Laurel Hill's most restless spirits, as portrayed by talented local actors.

Attendees are advised to wear comfortable shoes, and to bring a flashlight. After your tour, feast on an assortment of delicious cookies, hot apple cider and other spooky treats.

Hour-long tours will depart approximately every half-hour beginning at 7:00pm, and continuing until 9:30pm.
\$20.00

Saturday, October 29, 2011 at 10:00AM – 5:00PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

The Mütter Museum's 4th Annual Day of the Dead Festival

Come celebrate this traditional Mexican holiday with an all-day event at the Mütter Museum! Decorate sugar skulls, enjoy traditional food and drink, and visit the Museum!

Sponsored by the Mütter Museum of The College of Physicians of Philadelphia.

(NOTE: Registration is not required for daytime festivities and is free with museum admission.)

Sunday, October 30, 2011 at 2:00 PM at the Penn State University campus, Woodland Building, 1600 Woodland Rd. Abington, PA.

Dr. Lewis Mifsud will present "**WhoDunit**", a talk that will address and explain the fundamentals of fingerprint and DNA analysis. The presentation will demonstrate the odds of a pure chance random encounter of a "match" of a suspect's DNA profile with that of another person from the same/ethnic population, based on genetic markers used by the FBI toward evaluating DNA matches.

This Program is being held in conjunction with Penn State Abington and AAUW, American Association of University Women, Northeastern Montgomery County Branch.

Free and open to the public.

Tuesday, November 1, 2011 to 1:00 PM - Brown Bag Lunch at the Chemical Heritage Foundation, 315 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Park Doing, "Applying Ethnographic Insight to Engineering Ethics: Epistemography, The Space Shuttle Challenger, and the BP Gulf Coast Underwater Oil Gusher"

Thursday, November 3, 2011 at 6pm at 7:00 PM at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200 <http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

The Mayors of Philadelphia: An Election Day Retrospective

The truth of Philadelphia politics is often stranger than fiction. Why did the building of City Hall run nearly 30 years? Who are the men behind the portraits hanging in our Public Buildings? And who was the first person to occupy the building? The answers to these questions may surprise you.

Join Glen Umberger from Philadelphia City Hall's Tours & Visitors Center for a look at the personal and political lives of the forgotten famous mayors of late-Victorian Philadelphia during the time of the design and construction of the new Public Buildings of the City of Philadelphia (City Hall). Consideration will also be given to City Hall's architects and other notable personages who created the world's tallest building (1901-1908) and the largest city hall on the North American Continent. A brief walking tour of selected gravesites will feature the soaring architecture of the Edwin Fitler obelisk, the more modest memorial to Samuel King and a rare opportunity to discover the hidden secrets of the William Stokley

mausoleum.

Bring your flashlights and questions... Admission \$20.00

Friday, November 4, 2011 at 7:00 PM at the **American Philosophical Society**, Benjamin Franklin Hall, 427 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia
Listener Encounter - Join musician Kyle Bartlett for a "Listener Encounter" that considers different views of the natural world and the role that chance plays in natural systems like hurricanes. Bartlett will also discuss her sound installation for the temporary contemporary greenhouse at the APS Museum and give you the chance to create your own mobile sound installation (no musical skills required!). You will move about the garden and exhibition gallery as you compose.

<http://www.apsmuseum.org/listener-encounter/>

Saturday, November 5, 2011 at 9am-3pm at Widener University, Chester, PA

New Sweden History Conference: The Women of New Sweden 1638-1800

Four scholars consider the cultural and political roles played by women of various ethnicities in the Delaware Valley of the 17th and the 18th centuries. Please register early—space is limited! For more information, see the invitation flyer. Online registration here. Registration, continental breakfast and box lunch costs \$40 per person (\$30 for students and teachers), registration deadline is Monday, October 24th. Early bird registration by October 10, \$35 (\$25 for students and teachers). Please call ASHM at 215.389.1776 if you have any questions.

<http://www.americanswedish.org>

Saturday, November 5, 2011— 11:00 to 3:00 PM at Pottsgrove Manor, 100 West King Street, Pottstown, PA 19464

Demonstration—"...the common Family Way of Brewing"

Brewing beers of various strengths was often part of the colonial housewife's responsibilities. Her aim was to produce healthful, palatable drinks to suit the size and needs of her family. In this program, food historian Dr. Clarissa F. Dillon will present aspects of brewing for families like the Potts.

<http://historicsites.montcopa.org/pottsgrovermanor>

Sunday, November 6, 2011 at 2pm at 7:00 PM at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200

<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Cracked Cronies: Philadelphia's Political Bosses

Lincoln Steffens notoriously described 19th century Philadelphia as corrupt and contented. Nineteenth-century Philadelphia had rogues and rascals but it also had reformers. We will visit the grave of the Philadelphia patrician who realized that only a political boss could hold the unruly city together and then set out to become that boss. We will stand at the burial place of the Philadelphia Congressmen who would have had one of the largest monuments in Laurel Hill if the treasurer of his memorial committee hadn't run off with the funds. And we will remember the scholarly historian who organized the predecessor to our modern Committee of Seventy.

And don't despair, if party politics was basically a fight between boys' clubs, Philadelphia women were active on a broad social front. We won't forget the ladies as we visit the graves of the women who opposed segregation on street cars, established model tenements, and fought for a safer food supply.

\$15.00

Monday, November 7, 2011 at 7:00 PM in the Montgomery Auditorium, located in basement of the Free Library of Philadelphia 1901 Vine Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

"**Preachers who are not believers**" is a study published by Dr. Daniel Dennett and Linda LaScola. **The Freethought Society** is pleased to host **Linda LaScola** as our speaker. Her talk will highlight the findings of this small pilot study of five Protestant preachers. LaScola will discuss how the study was conceived and executed. LaScola will include a discussion of a continuing larger study which is currently in progress and information about "The Clergy Project" (a private, confidential website, supported by

The Richard Dawkins Foundation). Dan Barker (Freedom From Religion Foundation Co-President) moderates the forum which provides an online meeting place for current and former nonbelieving clergy.

<http://www.ftsociety.org/>

Free and open to the General Public.

Monday, November 7, and Wednesday, November 9, 2011, 7–9 pm both nights at The Academy of Natural Sciences, 1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway, Philadelphia, PA 19103

www.ansp.org/environmental/

Millipedes, Moths, and Macro Photography

Doug Wechsler, the Academy's Director of VIREO, shows you the basic techniques of macro photography inside our amazing Butterflies! exhibit. This 2-part class features the Academy's live butterflies and invertebrate collection from a different perspective...close-up!

\$45 members/ \$50 nonmembers, Maximum 12 participants

Teachers can earn two (2) Act 48 credits

Call 215-299-1060 to register.



Azalea caterpillar, *Datana major*
Photo by Doug Wechsler/ ANSP

Tuesday, November 8, 2011 to 1:00 PM - Brown Bag Lunch at the Chemical Heritage Foundation, 315 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Brendan Matz, "Wilbur Atwater, Respiration Calorimetry, and the Science of Nutrition in the United States"

Wednesday, November 9, 2011 | 6:30PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

Comparative Responses to the Outbreak of Deadly Epidemics from the Revolutionary Era to Today

Bring Out Your Dead (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993) is a classic study of the 1793 yellow fever epidemic and the massive impact it left on Philadelphia. Join us as the three co-authors of the introduction (**Anne Coxe Toogood, Kenneth R. Foster, PhD, PE, and Mary F. Jenkins**) to *Bring Out Your Dead* compare the response of the medical community to the 1793 yellow fever epidemic to that of contemporary responses to HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis A and B and other viruses. The speakers will set the social, demographic, geographic, and rudimentary medical context for the outbreak of this epidemic in 1793.

Joining the discussion will be College Fellow and Trustee **Patrick J. Brennan, MD, FCPP**, Chief Medical Officer for the Penn Health System, and an expert in the field of health care epidemiology and infection control, who will review contemporary strategies to handle outbreaks of deadly epidemics and other highly infectious diseases.

Speakers:

- **Patrick J. Brennan, MD, FCPP**, Chief Medical Officer for the Penn Health System
- **Anne Coxe Toogood**, Park Historian of Independence National Historic Park
- **Kenneth R. Foster, PhD, PE**, Professor of Bioengineering, University of Pennsylvania
- **Mary F. Jenkins**, Supervisory Park Ranger and Supervisor of the Dolley Todd Madison House and Visitor Center at Independence National Historical Park

Co-sponsored by The College of Physicians of Philadelphia and The American Revolution Center. The lecture is supported by a grant from the Richard Lounsbery Foundation.

Free and Open to the Public.

Register at: <http://www.collphyphil.org>

Wednesday, November 9, 2011 at the Franklin Institute.

The Rittenhouse Astronomical Society meets the second Wednesday of the month.

<http://www.rittenhouseastronomicalsociety.org/>

Thursday, November 10, 2011 at 11am at 7:00 PM at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200
<http://www.thelaurelhillemetery.org>

KIA: Honoring our Heroes Killed in Action - A Veterans' Day Tour

This tour will visit the final resting places of the heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country. Learn about the people who died in battle in the Revolutionary War, the Indian Wars, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, the Civil War, the Spanish American War, World War I, World War II, in Korea, and in Vietnam. Their heroic exploits will be relived and honored.

FREE

Thursday, November 10, 2011 - 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Chemical Heritage Foundation, 315 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

This installment of the Joseph Priestley Society (JPS) lecture series will include a keynote address by **R. P. "Skip" Volante**, vice president and global leader, Process Chemistry, Merck Research Laboratories.

Schedule:

11:30 a.m. Networking reception

12:15 p.m. Lunch

1:00 p.m. Keynote speaker

2:00 p.m. Meeting adjourns

For more information about this event, please contact Laura Naden, advancement and events administrator, at 215.873.8276 or

lnaden@chemheritage.org

This meeting is Open to the Public but registration is required. Fee: \$25.00 includes lunch.

<http://www.chemheritage.org>

Friday, November 11, 2011 -- Delaware Valley MENSA General Membership is generally on the 2nd Friday of the month. Check the MENSAs calendar at:

http://dvm.us.mensa.org/calendar.shtml#gm_meeting

Monday, November 14, 2011 at National Mechanics, 22 S. Third Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Science on Tap is a monthly gathering that features a brief, informal presentation by a scientist or other expert followed by lively conversation.

Topic TBA

Presented by the Academy of Natural Sciences

For more information see: <http://www.chemheritage.org/visit/events/public-events/2011-09-12-sot.aspx>

Free and Open to the Public but you must be 21+

Tuesday, November 15, 2011 Noon to 1:00 PM - Brown Bag Lunch at the Chemical Heritage Foundation, 315 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Sarah Everts, "A History of Sweat Science, Followed by a Detour to Science behind the Berlin Wall"

Tuesday, November 15, 2011 at 7:30PM at Free Library of Philadelphia, 1901 Vine Street, 19103

Claire Tomalin | Charles Dickens: A Life

At his death in 1870, Charles Dickens was a beloved writer and public figure, having achieved much literary and popular success during his lifetime with tales like *The Adventures of Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, and *A Christmas Carol*. Acclaimed biographer Claire Tomalin (*Thomas Hardy and Samuel Pepys: The Unequalled Self*) examines Charles Dickens's extraordinary life in her new book, painting the rich and complex portrait of a man who was seen as the public champion of household harmony as he tore his own family apart.

The Free Library's Rare Book Department is proud to be home to the largest collection of Charles Dickens's manuscripts, letters, and other ephemera outside the United Kingdom. The Free Library will be

celebrating the bicentenary of Dickens's birth throughout 2012 with special events, literary salons, and more!
FREE. No tickets required. For Info: 215-567-4341.

Wednesday, November 16, 2011 | 12:00n – 1:00PM at College of Physicians of Philadelphia, 19 South Twenty-Second Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103, (215) 563-3737 x304

Food & Thought: "The Arts & Government: Should They Be Cohabiting?"

With so much turmoil surrounding government support for the arts, is it wise for arts organizations to depend upon government for any sustainable support in the future? What are the risks of such a strategy and are they outweighed by the potential benefits? **Diane Dalto Woosnam, FCPP** will speak about the history of government support for the arts, the differing experiences of American and European arts organizations and the similar circumstances in which they find themselves, despite their very different relationships with government. Ms. Woosnam will also discuss the current situation of several arts organizations in Philadelphia, and share her thoughts and concerns about the future of support for the arts, whether from government, foundations or individuals.

Speaker: **Diane Dalto Woosnam, FCPP**, former Chairman of The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts

Cost \$12.50 includes lunch. Open to the Public. Register at:

<http://www.collphyphil.org>

Friday, November 18-20, 2011 - Philadelphia Science Fiction Society (PSFS) presents **PHILCON 2011** - Philadelphia's annual conference of Science Fiction. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Cherry Hill NJ. On line registration is available at www.philcon.org.

PhACT Event

Saturday, November 19, 2011 at 2 PM - The Fracking Controversy
Dr. David Velinsky, Director of the Environmental Biogeochemistry Section of the Academy of Natural Sciences, will speak about the controversy.

Saturday, November 19, 2011 at 2pm at 7:00 PM at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200
<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Philanthropic Philadelphians: In the Spirit of Thanks and Giving

Those familiar with the Philadelphia region are likely to recognize the names of Rittenhouse, Clothier, Gratz and Elkins, among many others. What few realize, however, is that each of these places and institutions can be traced to the legacies of real people: individuals and families who made their fortunes in developing and industrializing the city of Philadelphia. Nonetheless, greatness can be—and indeed should be—measured in more ways than one.

While these early Philadelphians may most often be remembered for their keen business sense, unrivaled success and accumulated wealth, it is ultimately how they chose to utilize their influence and share their fortunes that measured their true greatness. They have surely earned their peaceful rest at Laurel Hill. Learn about the benevolent deeds of these do-gooders with big wallets and bigger hearts in Philanthropic Philadelphians, a walking tour.

Saturday, November 19, 2011 Remembrance Day in Gettysburg

Generals Meade & U.S. Regulars Monument Dedication Ceremonies during the Remembrance Day Observance.

Please meet at the US Regulars Monument on Hancock Ave. at 10:00am; then proceed to the Meade Equestrian Monument at 10:30am for traditional honor ceremonies and wreath layings.

To register, call: 215-848-7753 or Jerry McCormick

gedwinmc@msn.com

Sunday, November 20, 2011 at 7:00 AM at Laurel Hill Cemetery, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA19132. 215-228-8200
<http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org>

Laurel Hill Cemetery - Philadelphia Marathon Cheer Zone
Join Laurel Hill Cemetery as they cheer on runners during the Philadelphia Marathon!

Our action-packed Cheer Zone, at the corner of Hunting Park Avenue and Kelly Drive, falls on the 17th and 23rd miles of the Marathon. At this prime location, spectators can experience the full impact of the Marathon atmosphere and demonstrate their support of their favorite runners! Enjoy music and complimentary refreshments as we cheer on the thousands of runners as they race up and back on Kelly Drive. Afterwards, explore the grounds, monuments and architecture of historic Laurel Hill, while enjoying the view from high above the race course.

To access the Cheer Zone, drive or walk through the main entrance of Laurel Hill at 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia. Free Parking is available inside the Cemetery. After parking, exit Laurel Hill's Hunting Park Avenue gate, and turn right onto Kelly Drive.

FREE.

Tuesday, December 6, 2011 Noon to 1:00 PM - Brown Bag Lunch at the Chemical Heritage Foundation, 315 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Helen Curry, "Breeding Resistance: Genetics Research and Efforts to Restore the American Chestnut Tree, 1950-2000"



Tuesday, December 6, 2011 at 7:30PM at the Free Library of Philadelphia, 1901 Vine Street, 19103

Paul Farmer | Haiti After the Earthquake

A recipient of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Genius Award, Dr. Paul Farmer is the U.N. Deputy Special Envoy for Haiti and Chair of the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School. He is also the co-founder of Partners In Health, a nonprofit organization that addresses the healthcare needs of the developing world by pioneering locally driven solutions. In Haiti After the Earthquake, Dr. Farmer—who has worked in Haiti for nearly 30 years—examines the devastating aftermath of the 2010 quake and explores the complex social issues that make the impoverished nation especially vulnerable to natural disaster.

FREE. No tickets required. For Info: 215-567-4341.

Friday, December 9, 2011 -- Delaware Valley MENSA General Membership is generally on the 2nd Friday of the month. Check the MENSA calendar at: http://dvm.us.mensa.org/calendar.shtml#gm_meeting

Monday, December 12, 2011 at National Mechanics, 22 S. Third Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Science on Tap is a monthly gathering that features a brief, informal presentation by a scientist or other expert followed by lively conversation.
Topic TBA

Presented by the Mütter Museum of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia

For more information see: <http://www.chemheritage.org/visit/events/public-events/2011-09-12-sot.aspx>

Free and Open to the Public but you must be 21+

Tuesday, December 13, 2011 Noon to 1:00 PM - Brown Bag Lunch at the Chemical Heritage Foundation, 315 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

J. Emmanuel Raymundo, "When Was Leprosy? The Case of the Culsion Leper Colony in the U.S.-Occupied Philippines, 1902-1941"

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

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

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

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

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E_mail _____

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

PhACT's High School Science Fair Student Prize Funds

Prizes awarded in 2010	= \$ 300.00
Prizes awarded in 2011	= \$ 500.00
Leftover prize from 2011 prizes	= \$ 28.00
New donations	= \$ 28.00
Total 2012 Prize Fund	= \$ 56.00

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

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

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

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

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

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Phactum Editor, Ray Haupt
phactpublicity@aol.com

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