

# Germ Frenzy: Hype & Reality

## Prof. Karl J. Roberts

As a nation, we have become obsessed with germs and cleanliness, sometimes to the point of paranoia.

It seems that every day we are introduced to yet another invisible microbial threat that aims to eradicate us as a species. But how much do we really know about the microbial world around us?

While we can't escape the presence of germs, we all need to understand them and to realize that only the smallest fraction are the agents of disease and decay. In this talk, we will examine many of the roles microbes play in our world and how they influence our health and well being in both negative and positive ways.

We will also discuss the results of a large, comprehensive study on the ubiquity of germs in our environment, both at home and abroad, as well as role the media plays in disseminating information that lends itself more often to fear than understanding.

Dr. Roberts began his career as a high school biology teacher. Currently he is a tenured professor of biology (microbiology) at Prince George's Community College.

He has published research papers in plant ecology in refereed journals and have served as a consulting reviewer on several anatomy and microbiology texts. He has also served on grant review boards for the National Science Foundation, been a Grand Awards Judge for the International Science and Engineering Fair and as a Category Co-Chair for ISEF in 2006.

2:30 - 4:30 pm,  
Saturday, December 9,  
2006

Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library  
7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, VA  
22043-2099

FREE admission – Everyone welcome, members and non-members

For more information, call the 24-hour NCAS Skeptic Line recording at 301-587-3827.  
E-mail: [ncas@ncas.org](mailto:ncas@ncas.org)  
[www.ncas.org](http://www.ncas.org)



**National Capital Area Skeptics Public Lecture Series**

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# Shadow of a Doubt

THE MONTHLY CALENDAR OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA SKEPTICS

DECEMBER  
2006

## NCAS Board Notes

On Oct 24, 2006, several NCAS members took us up on our invitation in the October *Shadow* to attend the talk by evolutionary theorist Richard Dawkins about his latest book at Politics & Prose in D.C. Afterward, we retired next door to Buck's restaurant for snacks, beverages, and skeptical conversation.

After our delightfully provocative Nov 11 lecture about Objectivism there was an enjoyable social followed by an NCAS Board meeting at which NCAS members are always welcome. In addition to planning coming events, the Board further discussed the NCAS Purpose, Goals and Projects that were introduced in the November *Shadow*—more details in the coming *Skeptical Eye*.

On Nov 14 President Gary Stone, former President Chip Denman, and Treasurer Grace Denman represented NCAS at events celebrating the opening of the Center for Inquiry D.C. Office of Public Policy in Washington. Although the full scope of CFI's secular humanist mission is not exactly the same as NCAS's sharp focus on promoting critical thinking and scientific understanding, many good opportunities are anticipated to collaborate with CFI-DC in addressing public policy affecting science, health, and education, etc.

If you were curious if the NCAS monthly lectures would ever come back to Maryland, here again are our lecture dates at the Bethesda Library: January 13, March 10, April 14, and May 12 from 2 to 4:00 pm. Topics to be announced. See <http://ncas.org/coming.html>

On Feb 10, we are back at Tysons-Pimmit Library in Virginia from 2:30 to 4:30 pm.

There will be an NCAS Board meeting at 4:00 pm after each Bethesda lecture and at 4:30 pm after each Tysons-Pimmit lecture.

For those in Maryland who wonder how to get to the Tysons-Pimmit library—it's really quick and easy. It is on Route 7 about 1 mile inside of (east of) the I-495 Beltway. It is also a short bus or cab ride from the West Falls Church Metro station. See <http://tinyurl.com/yhgluj> and <http://tinyurl.com/ynhehw>

Please contact NCAS any time by email at [ncas@ncas.org](mailto:ncas@ncas.org) or at our phone 301-587-3827. ☎

## Time to Renew—at 1987 Anniversary Rates!

Check your mailing label. If the renewal date has passed, please send to the NCAS address below \$20 (for 1 person) or \$30 (for 2-member households) for a 1-year renewal. Only dues-paying members can be sent postal mailings of the *Shadow of a Doubt* and the *Skeptical Eye* newsletter. ☎

