

A Hard Look at the Sniper Investigation

Susan R. Paisner

Susan R. Paisner's article last November in the Washington Post, **"The Sniper Investigation? Hold the Applause"** generated an enormous response from many of the people who lived through those weeks of terror, including numerous police officers. Since writing that article, she has interviewed several people who have given her a bird's-eye view of what actually happened in October 2002 and what did not. She will share much of the information she has gathered, and will also attempt to conduct the "lessons learned" effort that should have, but never, took place.

She is a Maryland criminologist and freelance journalist. She has written extensively about criminal justice issues for such publications as the Washington Post, News Tribune (Tacoma, WA), Stamford (CT) Advocate, National Bulletin on Domestic Violence Prevention, and Police Chief.

Saturday December 13, 2-4pm
B-CC Services Center
4805 Edgemoor Lane
Bethesda, Maryland

The **Bethesda-Chevy Chase Services Center** is located at 4805 Edgemoor Lane in downtown Bethesda, across the street from the Bethesda Metro station. The Center is located in the two-story County office building on the plaza level of the Metropolitan complex, above a County parking garage. Free parking is available in the garage on weekends.



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Shadow of A Doubt

THE MONTHLY CALENDAR OF THE NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA SKEPTICS

DECEMBER 2003

Is December Alternative Medicine Month?

Look for Michael Shermer's SKEPTIC column on alternative medicine, "What's the Harm?" in December's *Scientific American*. Shermer writes a succinct, reasoned response to those who maintain that alternative medicine provides everything to gain and nothing to lose. You can find it on the *Scientific American* website: <http://www.sciam.com>

Discovery Channel's *Second Opinion* medical program with Dr. Oz will be exploring alternative medicine in the first week of December. Don't look for rigorous skepticism (or any skepticism at all) in this series, but it does provide information on what is current and popular in alternative medicine.

Local Resources for Skeptics

The Library of Congress (LOC) website provides access to online information valuable to researchers. Here are just a few references with some information that could be interesting to skeptics:

- **The Science Reference Services/Science Reference Guides:** <http://www.loc.gov/rr/scitech/sci-ref-guides.html> Here you'll find bibliographies on various topics in science. Of particular interest to skeptics are:
 - The Flat Earth and its Advocates: A List of References*
 - Hollow-Earth Theories: A List of References*
- **Everyday Mysteries site:** <http://www.loc.gov/rr/scitech/mysteries/> This site answers everyday questions asked of LOC reference science librarians. The questions are well organized by subject

and the explanations are comprehensive and include excellent supporting graphics and references. The questions are not necessarily skeptical, but they deal with everyday questions that come up, such as:

- What causes a noise when you crack a joint?
- Can you tell the temperature by listening to the chirp of a cricket?
- Why does ultraviolet light cause color pigments to fade?

Check out the answers to these and others.

- **Earth as Art:** There is an exhibit at the Geography and Maps Division of the LOC on the earth as art from Landsat satellite images. These images, distributed by the EROS Data Center in South Dakota, are chosen PURELY on their merit as artistic images and are not given any significance other than aesthetic. In addition to the beauty of the images, the exhibit reminds us that it is human nature to look at images as other than merely literal representations. It is easy to see why people take that extra step and ascribe further meanings to striking images, such as the 'face' on Mars.

This exhibit can also be seen online at: <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/earthasart/>

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National Capital Area Skeptics
P.O. Box 8428
Silver Spring, Maryland 20907

NCAS Information:

Telephone: 301-587-3827

Email: ncas@ncas.org

Skeptical Eye submission:

S_Eye@ncas.org

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