

MEDAILLE

COLLEGE

August 10, 1995.

Sign up?

Professor George Gerbner
234 Golf View Road
Ardmore, PA 19003

Dear Professor Gerbner:

As of our recent phone conversation I want to invite you to participate in our lead panel tentatively entitled "The Mass Media" How Well Does it Inform?" to be held Thursday evening, June 20, 1996 from 7-10 pm at SUNY Buffalo.

As I indicated, Milt Rosenberg will be the moderator with James Bohannon and John Paulos your fellow participants. Professor Paulos especially wants to be on this panel with you because of his work on the way the mass media treats the relative risk issue.

The conference is entitled "The Age of Mis(information)" and will examine how well both the mass media and academia accurately inform their respective audiences.

We would greatly benefit from your participation and hope you will accept our invitation.

CSICOP will of course cover your travel and lodging expenses. You can contact me at my home at (716) 876-1008 or leave a message at the CSICOP office (716) 636-1425 or E Mail AA538 at Free Net. Buffalo. E.D.U.

Sincerely,



Lee Nisbet
Conference Coordinator

[1] From: fgg at post1 8/15/95 9:07AM (524 bytes: 6 ln)
To: AA538@freenet.buffalo.edu at SMTP-po
Subject: Conference

----- Message Contents -----

Dear Prof. Nisbett: Thank you for your letter of invitation of 8/10. May I have some more info about the conference? Do you have a prospectus (or draft)? Purpose, sponsorship (what is CSICOP?), specific focus (issue or issues) and expected audience? I would appreciate receiving this info while I am juggling calendar dates.
Sincerely, George Gerbner.

[1] From: fgg at post1 9/7/95 9:51PM (658 bytes: 8 ln)
To: AA53@FREENET.BUFFALO.EDU at SMTP-po
Subject: csicop meet

----- Message Contents -----

Prof. Nisbet: Thank you for telephone message. I am still juggling dates, and have not yet heard from all concerned, but I will try to participate, so you can mark me "yes" at least tentatively. Is the overnight stay necessary, or could this panel be held during the day so my visit could be done all in one day? Please let me know (you are welcome to respond by e-mail), confirm the arrangement and let me have whatever details are available about the program. George Gerbner.

[75] From: aa538@freenet.Buffalo.EDU at SMTP-po 9/12/95 5:18PM (1030 bytes: 27 1 n)
To: fgg at POST1
Subject: Re: CSICOP MEET

----- Message Contents -----

Text item 1: Text Item

Received: by cmail from freenet.buffalo.edu
From aa538@freenet.Buffalo.EDU
X-Envelope-From: aa538@freenet.Buffalo.EDU
Received: (from aa538@localhost) by freenet.buffalo.edu (8.6.12/8.6.12) id RAA16792; Tue, 12 Sep 1995 17:05:46 -0400
Date: Tue, 12 Sep 1995 17:05:46 -0400
Message-Id: <199509122105.RAA16792@freenet.buffalo.edu>
From: aa538@freenet.Buffalo.EDU (Barry Karr)
To: fgg@asc.upenn.edu
Subject: Re: CSICOP MEET
Reply-To: aa538@freenet.Buffalo.EDU

Dr. Gerbner:

I wish to thank you for your e-mail message to Lee Nisbet, which I will pass along to him. I don't think he has e-mail, but he will either contact you again by phone or I will send along his response.

I look forward to seeing you here in Buffalo for the CSICOP Conference, I am very pleased you can attend.

Sincerely,

Barry Karr
CSICOP Executive Director

Figure 1 (next page) summarizes the treatment of animals in prime time. All of the 19.7 percent of scenes show animals treated well and 11.7 percent show animals treated badly; the rest are mixed or ambiguous. Relative balance of treatment was computed as a ratio of good vs. bad treatment. For every 10 scenes in which animals are treated well, there are 7 scenes in which they are treated badly.

However, different animals receive different treatments for every 10 scenes in which dogs and cats are treated well, in 3 they are treated badly. For other domestic animals, the ratio is 10 for 10 -- an even division of scenes of good and bad treatment. Wild animals suffer ill treatment in

Paul Kurtz, Chairman
Kendrick Frazier, Editor, *The Skeptical Inquirer*
Barry Karr, Executive Director
Lee Nisbet, Special Projects Director

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- David Morrison (space scientist, NASA Ames Research Center)
- Richard A. Muller (professor of physics, Univ. of California, Berkeley)
- H. Narasimhaiah (physicist, President, Bangalore Science Forum)
- Dorothy Nelkin (sociologist, New York Univ.)
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- Lee Nisbet (prof. of philosophy, Medaille College)
- James Oberg (science writer)
- Loren Pankratz (psychologist, Oregon Health Sciences Univ.)
- John Paulos (mathematician, Temple Univ.)
- Mark Plummer (lawyer, Australia)
- W. V. Quine (prof. of philosophy, Harvard Univ.)
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- Glenn Seaborg (University Professor of Chemistry, U.C., Berkeley)
- Thomas A. Sebeok (anthropologist and linguist, Indiana Univ.)
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- Jill Tarter (SETI Institute, Cornell)
- Carol Tavris (psychologist and author, Los Angeles, Calif.)
- Stephen Toulmin (philosopher, Univ. of Southern Calif.)
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2 MOC

January 31, 1996

Professor George Gerbner
234 Golf View Rd.
Ardmore, PA 19003

Dear Dr. Gerbner,

I am enclosing the most recent program for the CSICOP Conference upcoming in June. As you know we have scheduled for you to be a member of the kickoff session, "The Role of the Mass Media in (Mis)Informing the Public, on Thursday, June 20.

I have learned from an over anxious conference assistant that we sent you a letter a couple of months ago regarding hotel and travel arrangements. Forget whatever was said in that letter. We goofed. CSICOP will, of course, pay for all of your travel and hotel expenses. We would also be absolutely thrilled if you could attend the entire conference.

We could book your airline flights, or if you'd prefer you can call our travel agent, Judy Pensack, Creative Destinations at (407) 332-4499 or fax at (407) 830 5530 and book your flights directly. I would like to hear from you soon regarding your plans, arrival dates, departure, etc.

Sincerely,

B → K

Barry Karr
Executive Director

Fax 716 636 1733

Paul Kurtz, Chairman
Kendrick Frazier, Editor, *The Skeptical Inquirer*
Barry Karr, Executive Director
Lee Nisbet, Special Projects Director

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Lin Zixin (former editor of China's *Science and
Technology Daily*)

March 8, 1996

Prof. George Gerbner
234 Golf View Road
Ardmore, Pa. 19003

Dear Prof. Gerbner:

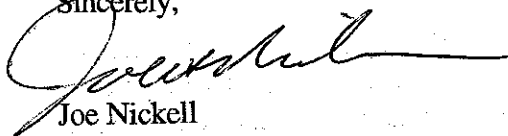
We are grateful for your participation in the forthcoming World Skeptics Congress, June 20-23, 1996, at the State University of New York at Buffalo, Amherst Campus.

In order to insure that segments end on schedule and that there is sufficient time for questions, we are asking participants to strictly limit the length of their talks. In your segment, we ask that talks be kept within 15 minutes.

Prof. Kurtz also asks that lecturers submit a longer version of their talk for possible publication in *Skeptical Inquirer* and/or a volume of conference proceedings. These papers are requested in advance, for possible distribution to the press, no later than June 1.

Thank you. We look forward to seeing you at the World Congress.

Sincerely,



Joe Nickell
Senior Research Fellow

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Lin Zixin (former editor of China's *Science and
Technology Daily*)

March 29, 1996

George Gerbner
234 Golf View Rd.
Ardmore, PA 19003

Dear Dr. Gerbner,

Thank you for your phone call. I understand that you will not be needing a hotel room for Wednesday evening after all. I further understand that you will be arriving at the Buffalo airport at 10:20am Thursday, and will be departing at 6:55pm. We will arrange to have someone pick you up, and take you back to the airport.

Sincerely,



Barry Karr
Executive Director

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Mary Rose Hays, Business Manager
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THE COMMITTEE FOR THE SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION
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Steven Weinberg, physicist, Univ. of Texas, Austin
Marvin Zelen (statistician, Harvard Univ.)
Lin Zixin (former editor of China's *Science and
Technology Daily*)

May 16, 1996

Dear Registrant:

We are pleased that you will be attending the 1996 CSICOP Congress
"Science in the Age of (Mis)Information."

Enclosed you will find tickets for the event(s) for which you have been
registered. Make sure that the tickets are correct. If this is not the case, feel free
to call us at (716) 636-1425 so we can promptly correct it.

Please hold on to the tickets. This is especially important in the case of
the *General Registration* ticket, as you will be required to show it at the
beginning of each conference session.

If you registered for the Niagara Falls tour, and since we will be crossing
the border into Canada, please remember that it is your responsibility to bring a
valid passport or travel documents at the time of border crossing. For U.S.
citizens, proof of citizenship can be a birth certificate, voters registration card, or
a passport. Non-U.S. citizens should bring with them proper identification and a
multiple-entry visa.

The conference desk will be located in Slee Hall, at the university (the
bus will drop you off right in front of the building). Members of our staff will be
there from Thursday morning, June 20th, to provide you with any further
information.

In addition to the tickets, you will also find enclosed a sheet with
directions to the various hotels in the area, as well as a map of the State
University of New York at Buffalo and the Center for Inquiry. The conference
program, a bus schedule, and a restaurant guide are also included.

We hope you enjoy the conference.

Sincerely,

Etienne Rios
Registration Manager

SKEPTICAL INQUIRER

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Mary Rose Hays, Business Manager
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Paul Kurtz, Chairman
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C. E. M. Hansel (psychologist, Univ. of Wales)
Al Hibbs (scientist, Jet Propulsion Laboratory)
Douglas R. Hofstadter (professor of cognitive science, Indiana Univ.)
Gerald Holton (Mallinckrodt Professor of Physics, Harvard)
Ray Hyman (prof. of psychology, Univ. of Oregon)
Leon Jaroff (Sciences Editor, *Time*)
Sergei Kapitza (editor, Russian ed., *Scientific American*)
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Stephen Toulmin (philosopher, Univ. of Southern Calif.)
Steven Weinberg (professor of physics and astronomy, Univ. of Texas at Austin)
Marvin Zelen (statistician, Harvard Univ.)
Lin Zixin (former editor of *China's Science and Technology Daily*)

George Gersner
234 Golf View Road
Ardmore, PA 19203

Dear Mr. Gersner:

The Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal is in the process of establishing a new body. We will call it the Council for Media Integrity on Science and the Paranormal. We hope you will agree to serve on the National Advisory Board.

We plan to announce the Council's formation at the beginning of our World Skeptics Congress, June 20-23. The theme of the Congress will be "Science in the Age of (Mis)Information." The irresponsibility of the media in this area is a worldwide problem. But it especially applies to the United States, where the media have been distorting science, and in particular presenting pseudoscience as genuine science. Indeed, we are appalled by the number of "documentaries," which are really entertainment programs, presenting fringe science as real science. The major networks have been running two or three such specials almost every week. Recently there have been programs on prophecies, astrology, psychic powers, creationism, Noah's Ark, angels, alien abductions, etc. This is in addition to the popular "Unsolved Mysteries," "X-Files," and new programs such as "Sightings," "Paranormal Borderlands," and "Poltergeist."

Most of the major producers consult CSICOP, and they draw upon us constantly to supply guests. They usually devote one or two minutes to the dissenting scientific point of view, however, knowing they have distorted the true facts. Matters are even worse when one examines the talk shows—which are blatant in misrepresentation. There are generally five or six believers to one skeptic, who is often considered to be the evil naysayer. Even reputable hosts pander to the galleries knowingly to get ratings. We realize that the interest of producers is in entertainment, not information, but we think that they have some responsibility not to provide misinformation.

If the United States is to continue to provide leadership, then we need to raise the level of scientific literacy and understanding of the general public. Alas, this seems to be declining. "Nova" and "National Geographic" are virtually the only science programs available, but they generally do not run on commercial TV.

We are not, of course, asking that TV producers not run these shows or make a profit. We surely do not wish to censor the media. We only ask that they provide some balance and provide some appreciation of the scientific approach. With this in mind, we have founded the directors, writers, and the general public to leave room for the public appreciation of scientific methods of inquiry.

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Ranjit Sandhu, Research Coordinator
Richard Seymour, Chief Data Officer

May 28, 1996

I realize that the media are being attacked from all sides (often fairly, sometimes unfairly), but we think that a plea for raising the level of appreciation of science should be heard—particularly since the media have now virtually replaced the schools, colleges, and universities as the main source of information for the general public.

I hope you will join us in this important endeavor. If so, we would be grateful if you would fill out and return the enclosed form of acceptance.

With best personal wishes,

Sincerely,



Paul Kurtz
Chairman

Council for Media Integrity on Science and the Paranormal

I am pleased to accept appointment to the National Advisory Board

Yes

No

Comments: _____

Name (please print)

Signature

Date

Paul Kurtz, Chairman
Kendrick Frazier, Editor, *The Skeptical Inquirer*
Barry Karr, Executive Director
Lee Nisbet, Special Projects Director

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- James E. Alcock (psychologist, York Univ., Toronto)
- Jerry Andrus (magician, Albany, Ore.)
- Robert A. Baker (professor emeritus of psychology, Univ. of Kentucky)
- Stephen Barrett, M.D. (psychiatrist, author, Allentown, Pa.)
- Barry Beyerstein (professor of psychology, Simon Fraser Univ., Vancouver, B.C.)
- Irving Biederman (psychologist, USC)
- Susan Blackmore (psychologist, Univ. of the West of England, Bristol, U.K.)
- Henri Broch (physicist, Univ. of Nice, France)
- Jan Harold Brunvand (folklorist, prof. of English, Univ. of Utah)
- Vern Bullough (Distinguished Professor Emeritus, State Univ. of New York)
- Mario Bunge (prof. of philosophy, McGill Univ.)
- John R. Cole (anthropologist, Inst. for the Study of Human Issues)
- F. H. C. Crick (biophysicist, Salk Inst. for Biological Studies)
- Richard Dawkins (zoologist, Oxford Univ.)
- L. Sprague de Camp (science writer, engineer)
- Cornelis de Jager (astrophysicist, Univ. of Utrecht, Netherlands)
- Bernard Dixon (science writer, U.K.)
- Paul Edwards (Editor, *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*)
- Antony Flew (prof. of philosophy, Reading U., U.K.)
- Andrew Fraknoi (astronomer, Foothill College, Calif.)
- Kendrick Frazier (science writer, Albuquerque, N.M.)
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- Lin Zixin (former editor of China's *Science and Technology Daily*)

SKEPTICAL INQUIRER

Doris Hawley Doyle, Managing Editor
Mary Rose Hays, Business Manager
Richard Seymour, Chief Data Officer

Sent notes to wife 6/21/96

June 7, 1996

George Gerbner
234 Golf View Road
Ardmore PA 19203

Dear George,

Glad that you can join our National Advisory Board for the "Council for Media Integrity on Science." I am glad to learn about the Cultural Environment Movement and to join. Can the two organizations I head also affiliate?

Looking forward to seeing you again.

Cordially,



Paul Kurtz

Add both as Org. Affiliates.

Paul Kurtz, Chairman
Kendrick Frazier, Editor, *The Skeptical Inquirer*
Barry Karr, Executive Director
Lee Nisbet, Special Projects Director

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July 24, 1996

George Gerbner
234 Golf View Rd.
Ardmore, PA 19003

Dear Dr. Gerbner,

Thank you for your note. I have forwarded it on to our editor Ken Frazier, for his consideration. We will be transcribing some of the papers, but I don't know which ones he has decided upon.

I hope to be able to let you know more soon.

Sincerely,



Barry Karr
Executive Director