



skepticalcamp

NYC 2025

share the apple of knowledge

December 6, 2025

151 W. 30th St, New York, NY 10001; 3rd Floor

www.SkepticalCampNYC.org

SkepticalCamp is an Open Conference on science and skepticism, where any of the attendees can also be presenters! It has its historic roots in the “BarCamp” event model that was once popular among technology communities. Today, however, the “camp” suffix doesn’t really mean anything, anymore. It’s just part of the legacy branding now.

We have some rules and things to keep in mind, during the event:

- SkepticalCamp lectures are not to be passively accepted. We encourage the asking of challenging questions! But, always please try to **argue the argument**, without insulting or disrespecting the people, themselves.
- Every speaker is required to endure at least 5 minutes of live Q&A. Some presenters won’t even mind if you interject with a question in the middle of their presentation. *But, be respectful of those who choose to wait until the end for answers.*
- Behavior that is abusive to anyone, or disruptive of the event will get you ejected.
- Everything in front of a camera is going to be **recorded**, unless otherwise specified.
- No unauthorized videotaping or audio recording of your own, please.
- Everyone joining the web conference will be muted while speakers are speaking.
- Always feel free to come and go into and out of the event, as you please. No one is forced to be here. Please do not be disruptive if you do decide to leave in the middle of a session.
- If you make a mess, you will be responsible for cleaning it up.
- ***The opinions of SkepticalCamp presenters do not necessarily reflect those of its organizers.***
- Have fun! And we hope you learn something awesome!

If *you* would like to speak at SkepticalCamp NYC, either next year, or to fill a gap this year, please read the Session Leader’s Guide on our web site: <http://skepticalcampnyc.org/SessionGuide.aspx>

Sponsorship

New York City Skeptics: <http://www.nycskeptics.org>

New York City Skeptics is an all-volunteer, 501(c)3 nonprofit that promotes critical thinking and science education. Consider donating so that we can run fabulous, thought-provoking events!

Mitchell Scott Lampert

Mitchell is just some guy, you know. But, he puts a lot of time and resources into this. So, we think he ought to be listed here, as well.

Organizers

Lead Organizer: Mitchell Scott Lampert: MitchLampert42@gmail.com

Assistant Organizers and Volunteers: Benny Pollak, Julian Ignaczak, Jonathan Nelson

Other Consultants (from previous years): Russ Dobler, Craig Sachs, Michael Feldman and Reed Esau

Zoom Link: <https://us05web.zoom.us/j/87227990800?pwd=nP61meS0HgA6jqPEQNjETXl8OA9Ogn.1>

If you find anything going wrong with the Zoom meeting, please contact: admin@skepticalcampnyc.org



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The Planned Schedule

This schedule, of course, is subject to change throughout the day.

9:00 AM 10:45 AM **Pre-Con Meet and Greet**
Schmooze with your fellow attendees, while we get things ready.

10:45 AM 11:00 AM **Opening Ceremonies and Other Obligatory Stuff**

Category: Skepticism Now

11:00 AM 11:30 AM Chris Everett **Buying Buying the Dip**
When the market dips, investment advisors encourage their clients to "Buy the Dip!" But should they? Is "Buying the Dip" really sound advice, or is it fraught with misconceptions about the nature of the market?

11:30 AM 12:00 PM Massimo Pigliucci **What on Earth is Skepticism, Anyway?**
Skepticism, these days, is a bad word. You say you are a skeptic and people think you don't believe in anything; plus, you may be confused with so-called climate change or vaccine "skeptics." Yet, skepticism has a long and fascinating history, going back to Pyrrho of Elis and the skeptical phase of Plato's Academy in the 4th-1st centuries BCE. In this talk I'd like to make a case for what skepticism actually is and for why we should not follow misguided folks who think we should "rebrand" ourselves. Skeptics of the world, unite!

12:00 PM 2:00 PM **Lunch Break**

2:00 PM 2:30 PM Spiro Condos **Dentistry Under Attack: When Fear Trumps Reason in 2025**
Robert Kennedy Jr. is advocating banning adding fluoride in our water supply, claiming it lowers IQ scores and generally framing it as a poison. Yet fluoride occurs naturally in many water supplies and CDC monitoring often requires lowering fluoride concentrations in community water.

Fluoride has been one of the cornerstones of modern Dentistry for over 70 years. What should we think? I will examine an influential meta-analysis claiming Fluoride lowers IQ and respond to this and other claims.

2:30 PM 3:00 PM Sammy Shuster **Holistic Quantum Art Activation Expo Revisited**
This year's Holistic Quantum Art Activation Expo was bigger and better with additional workshops on the tactics of fraudulent wellness peddlers and the impact of health mis/disinformation. With this year's experience, we ask ourselves is satire a valid form of education?

3:00 PM 3:15 PM Short Break #1

Category: Transforming Society

3:15 PM 3:45 PM Bill Chapman **How the Climate Movement Failed to Persuade Half of the American Public**
We will be discussing the history of the environmental movement since the 1960's, the evolution of the climate movement from it, and how the climate movement inadvertently wound up grossly misleading the public, and losing credibility.

3:45 PM 4:15 PM Olga Ast / ArcheTime Project **Between Worlds: Lived Observations Across Contrasting Social Systems**
I will be presenting the results of a life-long observational study existing under two contrasting social systems: Soviet socialism in the first part of my life and American capitalism in the second. Across history, human civilization has conducted a number of social experiments with varying results. Now, in the age of technological advancements and AI algorithmic governance, we are still trying to understand the direction in which our society is moving -- especially in the wake of last year's presidential election and the recent NYC mayoral race. I'm going to describe my own on-the-ground experience -- not from the position of a judge or apologist, but as a neutral witness focusing on practical terms. My central question is: What are the causes, differences, and similarities when societies go through crises and instability?

4:15 PM 4:30 PM Short Break #2

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Schedule Continued:

4:30 PM 5:00 PM Benny Pollak **Artificial Intelligence "Skepticism"**

I will lead a discussion on why people reject AI. We will cover topics like AI phobia, ad machinem attacks, and how to talk to Alldites.

5:00 PM 5:30 PM Mitchell Lampert **The Critical Thinking Lesson Hidden in K-Pop Demon Hunters That No One is Talking About**
I SEESEEEEEEE... An excuse to put something about Netflix's popular K-Pop Demon Hunters movie into SkeptiCamp, as a desperate attempt to get more people to attend!

But, actually: There really is something worth talking about, in that movie... and its name is Healer Han. (He is NOT a doctor!)

What can his scene tell us about the foibles of holistic "medicine", and more importantly: Will kids actually absorb those lessons?

5:30 PM 5:45 PM Bonus Content?

Depending on how much time we have left over, there might be room to squeeze in one more thing.

5:45 PM 6:00 PM **Closing Ceremonies and Cleaning Up After Ourselves**

6:00 PM Until Whenever **After Party** - We shall pick a nearby place for it

Note: The category names don't really mean anything important.

Biographies

These were mostly self-written, so take them with a few grains of salt.

Olga Ast

I'm an interdisciplinary artist, curator and independent scholar. One of my main goals is to investigate connections between time, space and information. I have exhibited and lectured in the U.S. and abroad, presenting my work at art-science projects, including art shows and multidisciplinary conferences at Rutgers, New York, Gottingen, Moscow, Toronto and other universities; the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; the National Academy of Sciences; the Museum of Natural Sciences of Turin; the Bridges Math Art exhibit and the International Conferences on Time Perspectives. My books include Fleeing from Absence: four cross-disciplinary essays on time, its nature and its interpretations; and Infinite Instances: Studies & Images of Time, a collection of papers and artworks by contributors to the ArcheTime project, which I have been curating since 2009.

Bill Chapman

Bill got a BS in Engineering with emphasis on Computer Science from Caltech in 1983, after which he spent about 20 years writing CAD software for chip design. Outside his major, his education, between high school and college, includes 4 years of physics, 3 of chemistry, and several years of calculus. Most of Bill's education in economics came from working for Wall Street as a computer programmer since 2005, where his firm would hire former traders to teach the programmers finance and economics. Bill ran an economics discussion group from 2013-2016 before running out of things to talk about, and switched his focus to climate change in 2016. In addition to outreach to conservatives, Bill also focuses on trying to promote greater technical sophistication among climate activists.

Spiro Condos

Associate Clinical Professor, NYU College of Dentistry
Private practice, New York City

Chris Everett

Chris Everett is a safety and risk analyst working for NASA.

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Biographies Continued...

Mitchell Lampert

I am the founder of the New York City edition of SkeptiCamp, and have been a regular member of the **New York City Skeptics** for many years. By day I am a software developer for a major financial institution. By night I practice convincing people that they are wrong about stuff.

No, I will NOT be discussing any of my crazy ideas for how the minds works, today.

Massimo Pigliucci

Massimo Pigliucci is an author, blogger, podcaster, as well as the K.D. Irani Professor of Philosophy at the City College of New York. His academic work is in evolutionary biology, philosophy of science, the nature of pseudoscience, and practical philosophy. Massimo publishes a regular column in Philosophy Now entitled “The Art of Living.” His books include How to Be a Stoic: Using Ancient Philosophy to Live a Modern Life (Basic Books) and Nonsense on Stilts: How to Tell Science from Bunk (University of Chicago Press). Massimo’s latest is Beyond Stoicism: A Guide to the Good Life with Stoics, Skeptics, Epicureans, and Other Ancient Philosophers (with Greg Lopez and Meredith Kunz, The Experiment). More by Massimo at <https://figsinwintertime.substack.com> .

Benny Pollak

Software engineer. Cofounder of New York City Skeptics

