

SCEPTICS ARE OPEN MINDED NOT CYNICAL

Scepticism is the application of reason to any and all ideas. It is a method (definitely not an attitude or position) and has a long and honourable tradition dating back to ancient Greece.

Modern scepticism is based on the scientific method that gathers data to formulate and test naturalistic explanations for natural phenomena.

A claim becomes factual when it is confirmed to such an extent that it would be reasonable to offer temporary agreement. Thus scepticism is a method leading to provisional conclusions.

A sceptical person must see compelling evidence before believing a matter to be true. Modern sceptics always apply the methods of science to test the evidence for any claim. Sceptics think critically where there is doubt, are open-minded, seek the evidence and analyse the claims.

Australian Sceptics Inc. publishes a quarterly magazine, The Skeptic. Its articles and findings are sometimes humorous, often sobering and always fascinating.

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A contribution to Science Week in Australia, 14 – 21 August 2011

with sincere thanks to: The Gold Coast Little Theatre, Southport, QLD



A BETTER LIFE FOR AFRICANS

Can science aid the battle against superstition?

Can rational thinking stop children being burnt as witches?



Speaker: Leo Igwe

at

**Gold Coast Little Theatre, 21a Scarborough St., Southport
Tuesday 23 August 2011 at 7.30 pm.**

Leo will ask: Can Africa benefit from the promotion of rational thinking? Can science and reason overcome superstitious beliefs that lead to tragedies such as children being burnt as witches in Nigeria?

Everyone welcome. Donation of \$5 includes supper after the presentation.

Bookings essential – see page 3 for contact details

The Federal Republic of Nigeria comprises 36 states and its Federal Capital Territory, Abuja.

Located in West Africa, it borders Benin in the west, Chad and Cameroon in the east and Niger in the north. Its coast in the south lies on the Gulf of Guinea, on the Atlantic Ocean.



With a population of 155 million, Nigeria is the most populous country of Africa and the seventh most populous in the world. Its economy is one of the fastest growing in the world. It supplies a fifth of America's oil needs.



The three largest and most influential ethnic groups are the Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba.

Even though religious belief is apparently divided almost equally between Islam in the north, and Christianity in the

south, it is evident that across Nigeria there is widespread belief in traditional religious practices.

Nigeria became a British Protectorate in 1901, gained independence in 1960 and is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. The current President is Dr Goodluck Ebele Jonathan.



LEO IGWE – A BRAVE AND RESOLUTE MAN

Leo has been arrested and beaten up by the Nigerian police and local gangs as a result of his campaigns against superstition, injustices and fanaticism. Recently he spent much of his time rescuing alleged witch children in the south of the country. He will talk about the consequences of challenging such beliefs. He will also discuss the role that scientific and critical thinking can play in improving the life of the average African and the future of the continent.

Leo Igwe is the founder of the Nigerian Humanist Movement, the Nigerian Skeptics Society and former director of the Centre for Inquiry/Nigeria. He works for the International Humanist and Ethical Union as its director in West and Southern Africa. He also represents the IHEU at the African Commission on Human and People's Rights in Banjul, Gambia. He has written numerous articles on human rights, humanism, scepticism and free thought in Africa.

On 23 August Leo will visit the Gold Coast during a speaking tour sponsored by Australian Skeptics Inc. The Gold Coast event will be held at Gold Coast Little Theatre, 21a Scarborough Street, Southport starting at 7.30 pm.

After the presentation, supper will be served in the GCLT green room. This will be a great opportunity to ask Leo questions and share ideas with other members of the audience. For catering purposes, bookings are essential.

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