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Physics Colloquium

"The Sun and Solar Eclipses"

Dr. Jay Pasachoff
Professor of Astronomy
Hopkins Observatory Director
Williams College

Friday, April 30, 2010
4:10 PM – SUB Procastinator Theater

Abstract: I will describe the scientific value of observing solar eclipses in this space age, describing scientific work uniquely possible during totality and the advantages of linking eclipse observations with simultaneous observations from spacecraft. Examples will come from the last several total solar eclipses, including those observed from Greece in 2006, Siberia in 2008, and China in 2009, and overlaps with observations from SOHO, TRACE, and Hinode. The eclipse corona shows the characteristics of the diminishing solar-activity cycle. I will discuss hopes for future overlap of eclipse observations, next to be during the July 11, 2010, total eclipse to be visible from Easter Island, and hoped-for simultaneous observations from Solar Dynamics Observatory. I also will discuss radio observations made from the Giant Metre-Wave Radio Telescope in India during the January 15, 2010, annular eclipse and plans under consideration for the May 20, 2012, annular eclipse that will cross the western United States, reaching the VLA. I discussed various aspects of the continued scientific value of eclipse observations in "Solar Eclipse as an Astrophysical Laboratory, which appeared in Nature's issue of June 11, 2009, as part of their coverage of the International Year of Astronomy.

Host: Jiong Qiu

Reception immediately following the colloquium, Leigh Lounge, SUB
Hosted by the College of Letters and Science

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