



SACRAMENTO STATE

Department of Physics & Astronomy Fall 2006

Physics Colloquium Series

"Observations of the "Black Drop Effect" During the 2004 Transit of Venus: A Travel Adventure in Astronomy"

During the 18th and 19th Centuries, rare transits of Venus offered the best opportunity to accurately triangulate the distance between the Earth and the Sun; but the observations were marred by a mysterious optical phenomenon dubbed the "black drop" effect. More than 120 years after the last Venus transit of 1882, this effect remained poorly understood and was still the subject of much historical interest and speculation. I will describe my (mis)adventures traveling to a Bedouin camp in Egypt to observe the black drop effect (successfully!) and what I learned from the experience.

Claia Bryja

City College of San Francisco

Thursday, Sept. 21, 2006

4:00-5:20 PM MND 1015

OPEN & FREE TO ALL STUDENTS, FACULTY & PUBLIC