

Physics Department Seminar

Friday May 5th, 2006

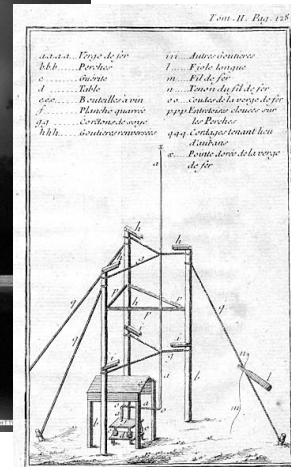
11:00am in PhSc 105

“Electrification of Thunderclouds”

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Abstract:

In 1750 Benjamin Franklin devised an experiment to determine the relationship of the lightning from thunderclouds to the nature of electricity. He determined that clouds were “electrified”, but it wasn’t until the 1920’s that any additional knowledge was discovered about the nature of this ‘electrification.’ Today, we certainly know more than we did, but current theories are still not complete in their modeling of this powerful force of nature. This talk will discuss the physical processes by which these clouds may form and separate electrical charges within. In addition, we will examine several of the theories that try to describe this phenomenon and how they compare to environmental findings.

