



Tuesday, September 20, 2016

5 – 6:30 p.m.

112 Thach Hall

Nikola Tesla: The Rise and Fall of an American Hero

Thanks to Elon Musk choosing to name his electric car company after him, Nikola Tesla's name is again in the news. At the same time, Tesla is also a cult figure appearing in comic books, video games, and sci-fi television shows. Yet who was this tall, dark, and mysterious inventor in real life?

Nikola Tesla was a major contributor to the electrical revolution that transformed daily life at the turn of the twentieth century. His inventions formed the basis of modern AC electricity and contributed to the development of radio and television. Like his rival Thomas Edison, Tesla was one of America's first celebrity scientists, enjoying the company of New York high society and dazzling the likes of Mark Twain with his electrical demonstrations. In this talk, Dr. Carlson will describe Tesla's rapid rise to fame in the 1880s and his equally sudden fall from grace in the 1890s, always with an eye to what Tesla can teach about the role of innovation in American society.

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