

# Cesagen Public Lecture

7pm Wednesday 11th March 2009

## The Mirage of a Space Between Nature and Nurture

Professor Evelyn  
Fox Keller

In

The Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre  
National Museum of Wales, Cardiff

The lecture will be preceded by a wine reception in the  
Origins Exhibition Gallery beginning at 6pm

Free admission is by ticket only – subject to availability and only in  
advance. To obtain your ticket please send your details to:  
[cesagenevents@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:cesagenevents@cardiff.ac.uk) or telephone +44 (0)29 2087 0024



## Further Information

Evelyn Fox Keller is Professor of the History and Philosophy of Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She has been awarded numerous academic and professional honours, including most recently the Blaise Pascal Research Chair by the Préfecture de la Région D'Ile-de-France for 2005–07.

One of her most well known books, *The Century of the Gene* published in 2000, chronicles biology's progress from gene to genome in the 20th century, and argues that a new awareness of the complexity of genetic processes takes us into the century beyond the gene.

Drawing on her forthcoming book *The Mirage of a Space Between Nature and Nurture*, in this lecture Professor Evelyn Fox Keller will focus on the particular and, as she claims, fundamentally incoherent idea that the causes of trait development can be parsed into two categories: nature and nurture.

She will argue that this notion, persisting in both the popular and technical imagination to this very day, was in fact new to Francis Galton (the scientist who was a half-cousin of Charles Darwin and invented the term eugenics in the 19<sup>th</sup> century). She will also argue that this idea was spurred on, in part, by particulate theories of inheritance, and will attempt to show how it is sustained, again in part, by chronic slippages in the language of genetics.

In this year of celebrations around the birth of Charles Darwin and the publication of his most famous book *The Origin of the Species*, detailing his theory of evolution by natural selection, this lecture promises not only a contemporary perspective on important concepts in biology but also to offer insight into the evolution of scientific ideas.

## Venue

Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre  
National Museum Cardiff  
Cathays Park, Cardiff  
CF10 3NP

