



# *The* **BENNINGTON INTERNATIONAL** **CONFERENCE** *on* **MIND** *and* **BRAIN**

## **AN INTEGRATION OF EVOLUTIONARY ORIGINS AND EMERGING DEVELOPMENTAL PRINCIPLES**

**November 8-12, 1999**

Bennington College, Bennington, Vermont

In November 1999, a week long, interdisciplinary conference will convene at Bennington College to discuss the integration of the evolutionary origins of mind and brain with emerging principles of brain and mind development. A group of scholars from biochemistry, psychology, philosophy, developmental biology, and cognitive science will discuss how the interaction of contingency, natural selection, and self-organization might lead to the open-ended biological order on which development depends. A central question will be: *Can an expanded evolutionary synthesis, informed by complex system dynamics and developmental systems theory, bring within its orbit a study of mind as a biological adaptation?* Possible roles of behavior and mind in evolution originally suggested about a century ago by psychologist James Baldwin, and of genetic assimilation suggested about a half century ago by embryologist Conrad Waddington, can now be more fruitfully explored as developmental genetics begins to enrich and combine with evolutionary theory. Such a development is essential if the neurosciences are to converge on a convincing biologically based theory of mind.

### **Conference Director**

**BRUCE WEBER**, Professor of Biochemistry and Liberal Studies at California State University, Fullerton, Visiting Professor, Bennington College, Fall 1999, co-author of *Darwinism Evolving*.

### **Conference Participants**

**ROBERT BERWICK**, Professor of Computer Science at M.I.T. and Co-director of the M.I.T. Center for Biological and Computational Learning.

**SØREN BRIER**, Associate Professor of Information Studies in Science and Humanities at the Royal School of Librarianship, Aalborg Branch, Denmark, editor of *Cybernetics and Human Knowing*.

**TERRENCE DEACON**, Professor of Biological Anthropology at Boston University, and Professor at McLean Hospital at the Harvard Medical School, author of *The Symbolic Species: The Co-evolution of Language and the Brain*.

**DAVID DEPEW**, Professor of Communication Studies and Director of the Project on the Rhetoric of Inquiry at the University of Iowa, co-author of *Darwinism Evolving*.

**STEPHEN M. DOWNES**, Associate Professor, Philosophy, University of Utah, contributor to *Where Biology Meets Psychology*.

**SCOTT GILBERT**, Professor of Biology at Swarthmore College, author of *Developmental Biology*.

**PETER GODFREY-SMITH**, Associate Professor of Philosophy at Stanford University, author of *Complexity and the Function of the Mind in Nature*.

**PAUL GRIFFITHS**, Professor of the History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Sydney, author of *What Emotions Really Are* and co-author of *Sex and Death*.

**JESPER HOFFMEYER**, Institute of Molecular Biology at University of Copenhagen, author of *Signs of Meaning in the Universe*.

**KALEVI KULL**, faculty member, the department of Semiotics, Tartu University, and department of Ecophysiology, Institute of Zoology and Botany, Estonia, author of *Lectures in Theoretical Biology: The Second Stage*.

**CELIA MOORE**, Professor of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, co-author of *Developmental Psychobiology: An Interdisciplinary Science*.

**SUSAN OYAMA**, Professor of Psychology at the City University of New York, author of *The Ontogeny of Information*.

**For information and reservations call: 802.440.4700**





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Bennington College  
Bennington, Vermont 05201

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The Brain is just the weight of God –  
For – Heft them – Pound for Pound –  
And they will differ – if they do –  
As Syllable from Sound –

—Emily Dickinson

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