

# REFIGURING LIFE

*Metaphors of Twentieth-Century Biology*

by

EVELYN FOX KELLER

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# Refiguring Life Metaphors Of Twentieth Century Biology

**Evelyn Fox KELLER**



## **Refiguring Life Metaphors Of Twentieth Century Biology:**

*Refiguring Life* Evelyn Fox Keller, 1995 *Refiguring Life* begins with the history of genetics and embryology showing how discipline based metaphors have directed scientists search for evidence Keller continues with an exploration of the border traffic between biology and physics focusing on the question of life and the law of increasing entropy In a final section she traces the impact of new metaphors born of the computer revolution on the course of biological research Keller shows how these metaphors began as objects of contestation between competing visions of the life sciences how they came to be recast and appropriated by already established research agendas and how in the process they ultimately came to subvert those same agendas *Refiguring Life* explains how the metaphors and machinery of research are not merely the products of scientific discovery but actually work together to map out the territory along which new metaphors and machines can be constructed Through their dynamic interaction Keller points out they define the realm of the possible in science Drawing on a remarkable spectrum of theoretical work ranging from Schroedinger to French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan *Refiguring Life* fuses issues already prominent in the humanities and social sciences with those in the physical and natural sciences transgressing disciplinary boundaries to offer a broad view of the natural sciences as a whole Moving gracefully from genetics to embryology from physics to biology from cyberscience to molecular biology Evelyn Fox Keller demonstrates that scientific inquiry cannot pretend to stand apart from the issues and concerns of the larger society in which it exists

**Refiguring Life** Evelyn Fox Keller, 1999      **Refiguring Life** Evelyn Fox Keller, 1995      Feminism in Twentieth-Century Science, Technology, and Medicine Angela N. H. Creager, Elizabeth Lunbeck, Londa Schiebinger, 2001-11 What useful changes has feminism brought to science Feminists have enjoyed success in their efforts to open many fields to women as participants But the effects of feminism have not been restricted to altering employment and professional opportunities for women The essays in this volume explore how feminist theory has had a direct impact on research in the biological and social sciences in medicine and in technology often providing the impetus for fundamentally changing the theoretical underpinnings and practices of such research In archaeology evidence of women s hunting activities suggested by spears found in women s graves is no longer dismissed computer scientists have used feminist epistemologies for rethinking the human interface problems of our growing reliance on computers Attention to women s movements often tends to reinforce a presumption that feminism changes institutions through critique from without This volume reveals the potent but not always visible transformations feminism has brought to science technology and medicine from within Contributors Ruth Schwartz Cowan Linda Marie Fedigan Scott Gilbert Evelyn M Hammonds Evelyn Fox Keller Pamela E Mack Michael S Mahoney Emily Martin Ruth Oldenziel Nelly Oudshoorn Carroll Pursell Karen Rader Alison Wylie      **Lamarckism and the Emergence of 'Scientific' Social Sciences in Nineteenth-Century Britain and France** Snait B. Gissis, 2024-04-09 The book presents an original synthesizing framework on the relations between the biological and the social Within these relations the late

nineteenth century emergence of social sciences aspiring to be constituted as autonomous as scientific disciplines is described analyzed and explained Through this framework the author points to conceptual and constructive commonalities conjoining significant founding figures Lamarck Spencer Hughlings Jackson Ribot Durkheim Freud who were not grouped nor analyzed in this manner before Thus the book offers a rather unique synthesis of the interactions of the social the mental and the evolutionary biological Spencerian Lamarckism and or Neo Lamarckism crystallizing into novel fields It adds substantially to the understanding of the complexities of evolutionary debates during the last quarter of the nineteenth century It will attract the attention of a wide spectrum of specialists academics and postgraduates in European history of the nineteenth century history and philosophy of science and history of biology and of the social sciences including psychology

*The Architecture of Error* Francesca Hughes, 2014-10-31 Why the rise of redundant precision in architecture and the accompanying fear of error are key to understanding the discipline's needs anxieties and desires When architects draw even brick walls to six decimal places with software designed to cut lenses it is clear that the logic that once organized relations between precision and material error in construction has unraveled Precision already a promiscuous term seems now to have been uncoupled from its contract with truthfulness Meanwhile error and the always political space of its dissent has reconfigured itself In *The Architecture of Error* Francesca Hughes argues that behind the architect's acute fetishization of redundant precision lies a special fear of physical error What if we were to consider the pivotal cultural and technological transformations of modernism to have been driven not so much by the causes its narratives declare she asks as by an unspoken horror of loss of control over error material life and everything that matter stands for Hughes traces the rising intolerance of material vagaries from the removal of ornament to digitalized fabrication that produced the blind rejection of organic materials the proliferation of material testing and the rhetorical obstacles that blighted cybernetics Why is it she asks that the more we cornered physical error the more we feared it Hughes's analysis of redundant precision exposes an architecture of fear whose politics must be called into question Proposing error as a new category for architectural thought Hughes draws on other disciplines and practices that have interrogated precision and failure citing the work of scientists Nancy Cartwright and Evelyn Fox Keller and visual artists Gordon Matta Clark Barbara Hepworth Rachel Whiteread and others These non architect practitioners she argues show that error need not be excluded and precision can be made accountable

Linking Ecology and Ethics for a Changing World Ricardo Rozzi, S.T.A. Pickett, Clare Palmer, Juan J. Armesto, J. Baird Callicott, 2014-02-06 To comprehensively address the complexities of current socio ecological problems involved in global environmental change it is indispensable to achieve an integration of ecological understanding and ethical values Contemporary science proposes an inclusive ecosystem concept that recognizes humans as components Contemporary environmental ethics includes eco social justice and the realization that as important as biodiversity is cultural diversity inter cultural inter institutional and international collaboration requiring a novel approach known as biocultural conservation

Right action in confronting the challenges of the 21st century requires science and ethics to be seamlessly integrated This book resulted from the 14th Cary Conference that brought together leading scholars and practitioners in ecology and environmental philosophy to discuss core terminologies methods questions and practical frameworks for long term socio ecological research education and decision making Representation in Scientific Practice Revisited Catelijne Coopmans, Janet Vertesi, Michael E. Lynch, Steve Woolgar, 2014-01-03 A fresh approach to visualization practices in the sciences that considers novel forms of imaging technology and draws on recent theoretical perspectives on representation Representation in Scientific Practice published by the MIT Press in 1990 helped coalesce a long standing interest in scientific visualization among historians philosophers and sociologists of science and remains a touchstone for current investigations in science and technology studies This volume revisits the topic taking into account both the changing conceptual landscape of STS and the emergence of new imaging technologies in scientific practice It offers cutting edge research on a broad array of fields that study information as well as short reflections on the evolution of the field by leading scholars including some of the contributors to the 1990 volume The essays consider the ways in which viewing experiences are crafted in the digital era the embodied nature of work with digital technologies the constitutive role of materials and technologies from chalkboards to brain scans in the production of new scientific knowledge the metaphors and images mobilized by communities of practice and the status and significance of scientific imagery in professional and popular culture Contributors Morana Ala Michael Barany Anne Beaulieu Annamaria Carusi Catelijne Coopmans Lorraine Daston Sarah de Rijcke Joseph Dumit Emma Frow Yann Giraud Aud Sissel Hoel Martin Kemp Bruno Latour John Law Michael Lynch Donald MacKenzie Cyrus Mody Natasha Myers Rachel Prentice Arie Rip Martin Ruivenkamp Lucy Suchman Janet Vertesi Steve Woolgar **New Mechanism** João L. Cordovil, Gil Santos, Davide Vecchi, 2023-12-12 This open access book addresses the epistemological and ontological significance as well as the scope of new mechanism In particular this book addresses the issues of what is new about new mechanism the epistemological and ontological reasons underlying the adoption of mechanistic instead of other modelling strategies as well as the possibility of mechanistic explanation to accommodate a non trivial notion of emergence Arguably new mechanism has been particularly successful in making sense of scientific practice in the molecular life sciences But what about other sciences This book enlarges the context of analysis addressing the issue of the putative compatibility between the current ways of conceiving new mechanism and actual scientific practices in quantum physics chemistry biochemistry developmental biology and the cognitive sciences The Century of the Gene Evelyn Fox KELLER, 2009-06-30 In a book that promises to change the way we think and talk about genes and genetic determinism Evelyn Fox Keller one of our most gifted historians and philosophers of science provides a powerful profound analysis of the achievements of genetics and molecular biology in the twentieth century the century of the gene Not just a chronicle of biology s progress from gene to genome in one hundred years The Century of the Gene also calls our attention to the surprising ways these advances challenge the

familiar picture of the gene most of us still entertain Keller shows us that the very successes that have stirred our imagination have also radically undermined the primacy of the gene word and object as the core explanatory concept of heredity and development She argues that we need a new vocabulary that includes concepts such as robustness fidelity and evolvability But more than a new vocabulary a new awareness is absolutely crucial that understanding the components of a system be they individual genes proteins or even molecules may tell us little about the interactions among these components With the Human Genome Project nearing its first and most publicized goal biologists are coming to realize that they have reached not the end of biology but the beginning of a new era Indeed Keller predicts that in the new century we will witness another Cambrian era this time in new forms of biological thought rather than in new forms of biological life **The**

**Emergence of Genetic Rationality** Phillip Thurtle,2011-06-01 The emergence of genetic science has profoundly shaped how we think about biology Indeed it is difficult now to consider nearly any facet of human experience without first considering the gene But this mode of understanding life is not of course transhistorical Phillip Thurtle takes us back to the moment just before the emergence of genetic rationality at the turn of the twentieth century to explicate the technological economic cultural and even narrative transformations necessary to make genetic thinking possible The rise of managerial capitalism brought with it an array of homologous practices all of which transformed the social fabric With transformations in political economy and new technologies came new conceptions of biology and it is in the relationships of social class to breeding practices of middle managers to biological information processing and of transportation to experiences of space and time that we can begin to locate the conditions that made genetic thinking possible desirable and seemingly natural In describing this historical moment *The Emergence of Genetic Rationality* is panoramic in scope addressing primary texts that range from horse breeding manuals to eugenics treatises natural history tables to railway surveys and novels to personal diaries It draws on the work of figures as diverse as Thorstein Veblen Jack London Edith Wharton William James and Luther Burbank The central figure David Starr Jordan naturalist poet eugenicist educator provides the book with a touchstone for deciphering the mode of rationality that genetics superseded Building on continental philosophy media studies systems theory and theories of narrative *The Emergence of Genetic Rationality* provides an inter disciplinary contribution to intellectual and scientific history science studies and cultural studies It offers a truly encyclopedic cultural history that challenges our own ways of organizing knowledge even as it explicates those of an earlier era In a time in which genetic rationality has become our own common sense this discussion of its emergence reminds us of the interdependence of the tools we use to process information and the conceptions of life they animate **Barcoding Nature** Claire

Waterton,2017-07-05 DNA Barcoding has been promoted since 2003 as a new fast digital genomics based means of identifying natural species based on the idea that a small standard fragment of any organism s genome a so called micro genome can faithfully identify and help to classify every species on the planet The fear that species are becoming extinct

before they have ever been known fuels barcoders and the speed scope economy and user friendliness claimed for DNA barcoding as part of the larger ferment around the genomics revolution has also encouraged promises that it could inspire humanity to reverse its biodiversity destructive habits This book is based on six years of ethnographic research on changing practices in the identification and classification of natural species Informed both by Science and Technology Studies STS and the anthropology of science the authors analyse DNA barcoding in the context of a sense of crisis concerning global biodiversity loss but also the felt inadequacy of taxonomic science to address such loss The authors chart the specific changes that this innovation is propelling in the collecting organizing analyzing and archiving of biological specimens and biodiversity data As they do so they highlight the many questions ambiguities and contradictions that accompany the quest to create a genomics based environmental technoscience dedicated to biodiversity protection They ask what it might mean to recognise ambiguity contradiction and excess more publicly as a constitutive part of this and other genomic technosciences Barcoding Nature will be of interest to students and scholars of sociology of science science and technology studies politics of the environment genomics and post genomics philosophy and history of biology and the anthropology of science

Literature, Science, and Public Policy Jay Clayton, 2023-08-17 Literature Science and Public Policy shows how literature can influence public policy concerning scientific controversies in genetics and other areas Literature brings unique insights to issues involving cloning GMOs gene editing and more by dramatizing their full human complexity Literature s value for public policy is demonstrated by striking examples that range from the literary response to evolution in the Victorian era through the modern synthesis of evolution and genetics in the mid twentieth century to present day genomics Outlining practical steps for humanists who want to help shape public policy this book offers vivid readings of novels by H G Wells H Rider Haggard Aldous Huxley Robert Heinlein Octavia Butler Samuel R Delany David Mitchell Margaret Atwood Ian McEwan Kazuo Ishiguro Gary Shteyngart and others that illustrate the important insights that literary studies can bring to debates about science and society This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core **Forgotten Clones** Nathan Crowe, 2021-12-07 Long before scientists at the Roslin Institute in Scotland cloned Dolly the sheep in 1996 American embryologist and aspiring cancer researcher Robert Briggs successfully developed the technique of nuclear transplantation using frogs in 1952 Although the history of cloning is often associated with contemporary ethical controversies Forgotten Clones revisits the influential work of scientists like Briggs Thomas King and Marie DiBerardino before the possibility of human cloning and its ethical implications first registered as a concern in public consciousness and when many thought the very idea of cloning was experimentally impossible By focusing instead on new laboratory techniques and practices and their place in Anglo American science and society in the mid twentieth century Nathan Crowe demonstrates how embryos constructed in the lab were only later reconstructed as ethical problems in the 1960s and 1970s with the emergence of what was then referred to as the Biological Revolution His book illuminates the importance of the early history of cloning for the

biosciences and their institutional disciplinary and intellectual contexts as well as providing new insights into the changing cultural perceptions of the biological sciences after Second World War      **Herbert A. Simon** Hunter

Crowther-Heyck,2005-04-27 In this informed and discerning study Crowther Heyck explores Simon s contributions to science and their influences on modern life and thought For historians of science social science technology and twentieth century American intellectual and cultural history this account of Herbert Simon s life and work provides a rich and valuable perspective Rarely does the world see as versatile a figure as Herbert Simon He was a Nobel laureate in economics an accomplished political scientist winner of a lifetime achievement award from the American Psychological Association and founder of the department of computer science at Carnegie Mellon University In all his work in all these fields he pursued a single goal to create a science that could map the bounds of human reason and so enlarge its role in human affairs Hunter Crowther Heyck uses the career of this unique individual to examine the evolution of the social sciences after World War II particularly Simon s creation of a new field systems science which joined together two distinct powerful approaches to human behavior the sciences of choice and control Simon sought to develop methods by which human behavior specifically human problem solving could be modeled and simulated Regarding mind and machine as synonymous Simon applied his models of human behavior to many other areas from public administration and business management to artificial intelligence and the design of complex social and technical systems In this informed and discerning study Crowther Heyck explores Simon s contributions to science and their influences on modern life and thought      **A Cultural-Historical Study of**

**Children Learning Science** Marilyn Flear,Niklas Pramling,2014-10-01 This book moves beyond the traditional constructivist and social constructivist view of learning and development in science It draws upon cultural historical theory in order to theorise early childhood science education in relation to our currently globalised education contexts The book argues that concept development in science for young children can be better theorised by using Vygotsky s concept of Imagination and creativity Vygotsky s theory of play and his work on higher mental functions particularly the concept of inter and intrapsychological functioning Key concepts are extracted from the theoretical section of the book and used as categories for analysis in presenting evidence and new ideas in the second section of the book In this second part of the book the authors examine how science knowledge has been constructed within particular countries around the globe where empirical research in early childhood science education has occurred The third part of the book examines the nature of the encounter between the teacher and the child during science learning and teaching In the final part of the book the authors look closely at the range of models and approaches to the teaching of early childhood science that have been made available to early childhood teachers to guide their planning and teaching They conclude the book with a theoretical discussion of the cultural historical foundation for early childhood science education followed by a model of teaching scientific concepts to young children in play based settings including homes and community contexts      **The Global Genome** Eugene



Thacker,2006-09-08 How global biotechnology is redefining life itself In the age of global biotechnology DNA can exist as biological material in a test tube as a sequence in a computer database and as economically valuable information in a patent In The Global Genome Eugene Thacker asks us to consider the relationship of these three entities and argues that by their existence and their interrelationships they are fundamentally redefining the notion of biological life itself Biological science and the biotech industry are increasingly organized at a global level in large part because of the use of the Internet in exchanging biological data International genome sequencing efforts genomic databases the development of World Intellectual Property policies and the borderless business of biotech are all evidence of the global intersections of biology and informatics of genetic codes and computer codes Thacker points out the internal tension in the very concept of biotechnology the products are more tech than bio but the technology itself is fully biological composed of the biomaterial labor of genes proteins cells and tissues Is biotechnology a technology at all he asks or is it a notion of life itself that is inseparable from its use in the biotech industry The three sections of the book cover the three primary activities of biotechnology today the encoding of biological materials into digital form as in bioinformatics and genomics its recoding in various ways including the biocolonialism of mapping genetically isolated ethnic populations and the newly pervasive concern over biological security and its decoding back into biological materiality as in tissue engineering and regenerative medicine Thacker moves easily from science to philosophy to political economics enlivening his account with ideas from such thinkers as Georges Bataille Georges Canguilhem Michel Foucault Antonio Negri and Paul Virilio The global genome says Thacker makes it impossible to consider biotechnology without the context of globalism

**Growing Explanations** M. Norton Wise,2004-11-24 This collection addresses a post WWII shift in the hierarchy of scientific explanations where the highest goal moves from reductionism towards some understanding of how elementary objects get built up or grown up into complex objects whose

**Morphogenesis** Paul Bourguin,Annick LESNE,2010-10-28 What are the relations between the shape of a system of cities and that of fish school Which events should happen in a cell in order that it participates to one of the finger of our hands How to interpret the shape of a sand dune This collective book written for the non specialist addresses these questions and more generally the fundamental issue of the emergence of forms and patterns in physical and living systems It is a single book gathering the different aspects of morphogenesis and approaches developed in different disciplines on shape and pattern formation Relying on the seminal works of D Arcy Thompson Alan Turing and Ren Thom it confronts major examples like plant growth and shape intra cellular organization evolution of living forms or motifs generated by crystals A book essential to understand universal principles at work in the shapes and patterns surrounding us but also to avoid spurious analogies

**Kierkegaard After the Genome** Ada S. Jaarsma,2017-08-20 This book brings S ren Kierkegaard s nineteenth century existentialist project into our contemporary age applying his understanding of freedom and despair to science and science studies queer decolonial and critical race theory and disability studies The book draws out the materialist dimensions of

belief examining the existential dynamics of phenomena like placebos epigenetics pedagogy and scientific inquiry itself Each chapter dramatizes the ways in which abstractions like race or genes and even belief are sites of contested practices with pressing political significance Focusing on the existential dangers posed by neo liberal and finance capitalist systems the book brings to life the resources for resistance found within science studies and critical approaches to race secularity and disability Throughout the book Kierkegaard becomes an ally with ecological and developmental evolutionary theorists as well as with science studies critical race and crip theorists who foreground the relational and impassioned nature of existence

## Whispering the Secrets of Language: An Mental Quest through **Refiguring Life Metaphors Of Twentieth Century Biology**

In a digitally-driven earth where screens reign supreme and quick conversation drowns out the subtleties of language, the profound secrets and emotional nuances hidden within words often move unheard. Yet, located within the pages of **Refiguring Life Metaphors Of Twentieth Century Biology** a fascinating literary value sporting with raw emotions, lies a fantastic quest waiting to be undertaken. Published by an experienced wordsmith, that wonderful opus invites visitors on an introspective trip, lightly unraveling the veiled truths and profound impact resonating within ab muscles material of each and every word. Within the mental depths of the moving evaluation, we shall embark upon a genuine exploration of the book is core subjects, dissect its interesting publishing fashion, and fail to the strong resonance it evokes strong within the recesses of readers hearts.

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