

## Darwin and the Consequences

KIT Series of Presentations on the Trail of Evolution Theory



*Charles Darwin at the time of publication of his evolution theory in the late 1850s*

**“Exhausted Creation? Charles Darwin and His Impact” – this is the title of the KIT Colloquium Fundamentale in the 2009 summer semester. This new series of presentation organized by ZAK | Center for Applied Cultural Science and Studium Generale will focus on Charles Darwin’s evolution theory that changed our view of the world like no other theory. The series will start on May 7 with Professor Ulrich Kutschera from the University of Kassel talking about “Evolution Is a Fact. What Darwin Did not Know” (18.00 hrs, university campus, Engesser-Hörsaal, building 10.81, Otto-Ammann-Platz 1, 1<sup>st</sup> floor). Admission is free.**

Darwinism, social darwinism, cultural evolution – even social, political, and economic phenomena are often interpreted to be evolutionary. This requires a critical review of the explanation potential and

**Dr. Elisabeth Zuber-Knost  
Press Officer**

Kaiserstraße 12  
76131 Karlsruhe, Germany  
Phone: +49 721 608-7414  
Fax: +49 721 608-3658

**For further information, please  
contact:**

Sigrid Heneka-Peters  
ZAK | Center for Applied Cultural Science and Studium Generale  
Phone: +49 721 608-8027  
E-mail: [S.Heneka-Peters@zak.uni-karlsruhe.de](mailto:S.Heneka-Peters@zak.uni-karlsruhe.de)

terminology of evolution theory. To what an extent is Darwin's doctrine misunderstood or even misused? Does it also cover human moral behavior? Questions like these will be dealt with by the KIT Colloquium Fundamentale on the impacts of evolution theory in natural science, sociology, theology, cultural science, and ethics, which will be held on the occasion of the 200<sup>th</sup> birthday of the great English natural researcher Charles Darwin.

During the first presentation on next Tuesday, May 7, Prof. Dr. Ulrich Kutschera will focus on Darwin's main work "On the Origin of Species" (1859). He will outline which of the five hypotheses of Darwin concerning the change of species has been confirmed empirically and accepted as a fact by today's biology. At the same time, Kutschera will point out the role of change in evolution history, why altruistic behavior is not contradictory to Darwin's selection principle, and why there is no intelligent design in nature. Moreover, Kutschera will present an own evolution theory that goes beyond that of Darwin without contradicting its basic principles.

Ulrich Kutschera has been professor of plant physiology and evolution biology at the University of Kassel since 1993. Moreover, he teaches at the Carnegie Institution for Science of Stanford University. From 2004 to 2007, he was vice-president of the Association of German Biologists. Since 2002, he has been chairman of the Evolution Bio-logy working group.

The Colloquium Fundamentale organized by ZAK | Center for Applied Cultural Science and Studium Generale is one of KIT's central series of presentations. It is organized every semester, with an interdisciplinary topic being covered by presentations, disputes, and podium discussions. The Colloquium Fundamentale addresses students and KIT staff as well as the interested public. Every summer semester, the program concentrates on a research area and its interaction with society. During the winter semester, it is focused on an issue of sociopolitical relevance.

## **Survey of Planned Presentations**

### **May 07 Evolution Is a Fact. What Darwin Did Not Know**

Prof. Dr. Ulrich Kutschera

Chair of Plant Physiology and Evolution Biology, Universität Kassel and Carnegie Institution for Science, Stanford University (USA), chairman of the Evolution Biology working group, Association of German Biologists

### **May 14 Darwinistic Perspectives of Sociocultural Evolution**

Prof. Dr. Dr. Peter Meyer

Professor of Sociology, Universität Augsburg

### **May 28 Charles Darwin's View of Man – Evolution and Enlightenment**

Prof. Dr. Eve-Marie Engels

Chair of Ethics in Biosciences, Faculty of Biology, Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen

### **June 18 Darwinism: With and Against Darwin**

Prof. Dr. Franz Wuketits

Professor of Science Theory (Focus: Biosciences), University of Vienna, Deputy Chairman of the Konrad Lorenz Institute for Evolution and Cognition Research, Altenberg

### **July 02 Dispute: Evolution versus Creationism**

Prof. Dr. Dittmar Graf

Professor of Biology and Didactics of Biology, Universität Dortmund

Prof. Dr. phil. Gereon Wolters

Professor of Philosophy and History of Sciences (in particular of biological sciences), Universität Konstanz

### **July 09 Podium Discussion: Darwin's Impact between Science and Myth**

Dr. Sabine Paul

Molecular and Evolution Biologist, Member of the Darwin Year Committee

Christopher Schrader

Science editor of the Süddeutsche Zeitung, editor-in-chief of the magazine SZ Wissen

Prof. Dr. Eckart Voland

Philosophy of Biosciences, Center for Philosophy and Fundamentals of Sciences, Universität Gießen

**The Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) is the merger of the Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe, member of the Helmholtz Association, and the Universität Karlsruhe. This merger will give rise to an institution of internationally excellent research and teaching in natural and engineering sciences. In total, the KIT has 8000 employees and an annual budget of 700 million Euros. The KIT focuses on the knowledge triangle of research – teaching – innovation.**

**The Karlsruhe institution is a leading European energy research center and plays a visible role in nanosciences worldwide. KIT sets new standards in teaching and promotion of young scientists and attracts top scientists from all over the world. Moreover, KIT is a leading innovation partner of industry.**

This press release is available on the internet under [www.kit.edu](http://www.kit.edu).