

George Washington University Philosophy Department Presents:
10th Annual Thacher Lecture

Peter Godfrey-Smith

Distinguished Professor of Philosophy
The City University of New York

Peter Godfrey-Smith grew up in Sydney, Australia. He has an undergraduate degree from the University of Sydney and a PhD in philosophy from UC San Diego. He has taught at Stanford, Harvard, and the Australian National University, and is now Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the Graduate Center, CUNY. His main interests are in the philosophy of biology and the philosophy of mind, including the evolution of information-using systems and animal cognition. He has written three books, *Complexity and the Function of Mind in Nature* (1996), *Theory and Reality: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Science* (2003), and *Darwinian Populations and Natural Selection* (2009), which won the 2010 Lakatos Award.



FRIDAY, APRIL 20, 2012

4:00 p.m.

SMPA 309

THE EVOLUTION OF MEANING

RECENT MODELS OF "SENDER-RECEIVER" SYSTEMS DEVELOPED IN PHILOSOPHY, BIOLOGY, AND ECONOMICS PROVIDE A NEW WAY OF THINKING ABOUT MEANING, AND THE EVOLUTION OF REPRESENTATION-USING SYSTEMS. I WILL DESCRIBE THIS WORK AND THEN FOCUS ON A DIFFICULT AND INTERESTING CASE: THE APPLICATION OF THESE MODELS TO INTERNAL REPRESENTATION AND THE CONTENT OF THOUGHT. THIS WILL INCLUDE DISCUSSION OF THE SENSES, MEMORY, AND THE RELATION BETWEEN HUMAN AND NON-HUMAN THOUGHT.