

Colorado

CAFÉ SCIENTIFIQUE

Tuesday 8 March 2011

at the Wynkoop Brewing Company

<http://www.wynkoop.com/>

Corner of 18th and Wynkoop in LoDo, Denver

About a block from Light Rail. Thirteen minutes by foot from Auraria.

Genetic Twists of Fate

MARK JOHNSTON, PhD

**Professor and Chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics
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News stories report almost daily that scientists have linked a certain gene to a disease like Alzheimer's or macular degeneration, or to a condition like depression or autism, or to a trait like aggressiveness or anxiety. Accompanying this remarkable progress in unraveling the genetic basis of disease and behavior are new technologies that are rapidly reducing the cost of reading someone's personal DNA (all six billion letters of it). Within the next ten years, hospitals may present parents with their newborn's complete DNA code along with her footprints and APGAR score.

There are many real-life stories that hinge on the inheritance of one tiny change rather than another in an individual's DNA: a mother wrongly accused of poisoning her young son when the true killer was a genetic disorder; the mountain-climbing brothers with a one-in-two chance of succumbing to Huntington's disease; the screen siren flubbing her lines because of Alzheimer's disease. These and more are in Mark Johnston's new book, *Genetic Twists of Fate*, and he'll tell us what they teach us. He'll also discuss the Fundamental Interrelatedness of Things—all genomes are part of the same evolutionary net, so many strange creatures can be studied to learn about ourselves.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME. The discussion starts at 6:30 in the Mercantile Room (no food service there). Come before 6 PM to leave yourself time to get something to eat, or stay and eat afterwards. We end around 8 PM.

There's no charge. The Wynkoop is generously providing the facility; we buy our own drinks. It is first come, first seated, and **seating is limited** so that everyone can take part in the discussion.

The Colorado Café Scientifique is organized by an informal group of faculty from CU and institutions up and down the Front Range, as well as science fans from industry, government and elsewhere. We welcome your input, including ideas for speakers and topics. Bring them with you to the next Café, or e-mail them and any questions to John.Cohen@UCDenver.edu

**Essential information about the topic and the event on our Web site at:
<http://CafeSciColorado.org>**