

The 21st Century: The Century of Biology on Earth and Beyond

Jill Tarter

Abstract:

In a bold 2004 paper, Craig Venter and Daniel Cohen claimed that whereas the 20th century had been the Century of Physics (Special and General Relativity, Quantum Mechanics, Big Bang Cosmology, Dark Matter and Dark Energy, the Standard Model of Particle Physics...) the 21st century would be the century of biology. They outlined the fantastic potential of genomic research to define the current century. Wondrous as these predictions were, and as rapidly as they have played out and over-delivered during this past decade, these predictions were too parochial. This century will permit us the first opportunities to study biology beyond Earth; biology as we don't yet know it, and biology that we have exported off the surface of our planet.

The technologies needed for discovering biology beyond Earth are different depending on whether you are searching for microbes or mathematicians, and depending on whether you are searching in-situ or remotely. In many cases the necessary technologies do not yet exist, but like genomics, they will probably develop more rapidly, and in more ways, than anyone of us can now imagine.

When: February 8, 7pm

Where: Michael's at Shoreline

Also: book sale and signing of "Making Contact - Jill Tarter and the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence"

