



PRODUCTIVE SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE DOES NOT REQUIRE A CONCEPT OF HUMAN NATURE

SPEAKER: Dr. Stephen Downes,
University of Utah

ABSTRACT: I examine some recent attempts to develop non-essentialist notions of human nature. Most proposed non-essentialist notions of human nature are developed in response to David Hull's criticisms of the notion of human nature. For example, both Edouard Machery and Richard Samuels propose notions of human nature that they take not to be susceptible to Hull's criticisms. I argue that these proposals, along with some other related ones, are not successful for various reasons. My alternate proposal is that we abandon appeals to human nature. I argue that human nature should neither be the guide to inquiry into human behavior nor should delineating human nature be the goal of inquiry into human behavior.

Date: Tuesday, February 25, 3:30-4:45 pm

Location: GL 100A