



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Philosophical Perspectives on Biosciences

School of Historical and Philosophical
Studies

Public Event

What is Biological Essentialism?

Paul Griffiths is an ARC Laureate Professor of Philosophy at The University of Sydney.

At The University of Sydney he leads the Theory and Method in Bioscience group within the Charles Perkins Centre and is the centre's Domain Leader for Society and Environment.

Griffiths is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and of the Australian Academy of the Humanities. He was President of the International Society for History, Philosophy and Social Studies of Biology from 2011-13 and from 2006-12 he was a member of the Australian Health Ethics Committee of NHMRC. He is a regular visiting professor at the University of Exeter's Egenis : the Centre for the Study of the Life Sciences.

'Biological essentialism' and 'genetic essentialism' are regarded as false and pernicious doctrines, especially when applied to human beings. But 'essentialism' can mean many things. Ideas proudly paraded as anti-essentialist in some disciplines would count as essentialist in others. This lecture reviews scientific findings about essentialism as a psychological phenomenon. It explores the very different reasons why the biological sciences, the social sciences and the humanities have all come to identify 'essentialism' as a problem.

This event is a joint Philosophy and History of Science event. It is also the inaugural event of the Philosophy of Sciences working group for the PEiPL (Philosophical Engagement in Public Life) network.



Event Details

Date:
Wednesday 14 March 2018

Time:
7.00pm - 8.30pm

Venue:
The Singapore Theatre - B120
Melbourne School of Design
Carlton

Enquiries:
03 8344 1521

Bookings:
Bookings are essential for this free public lecture. Register at <http://alumni.online.unimelb.edu.au/PGriffiths>