

## **Philosophy of the Humanities: the Nature of the Humanities**

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One question for the burgeoning field of 'philosophy of the humanities' is whether there is anything that binds the humanistic disciplines together—whether the humanities 'have a (communal) nature'. In recent years this question has received disparaging answers, for example in the work of Herman Paul. In this presentation I argue, against this disparaging answer. I argue that the humanities do have a (communal) nature, and that they are marked out by the objects they study. These objects have, in the main, three properties that the objects studied in the natural sciences lack, the properties (1) of being intentionality saturated, (2) of having meaning, and (3) of embodying value. I also indicate how the humanities differ from the social sciences.

This presentation is based on my forthcoming book, that will be published by Oxford University Press, *A Philosophy of the Humanities*, written with Stephen Grimm (New York), and Rik Peels (Amsterdam).