

Fall 2014 Heyman Center Friends/Carl Hovde Colloquium

Human Identity and Human Nature

Thursdays, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Robert Pollack

Course Description, updated August 29, 2014

This colloquium will be led by Robert Pollack, Professor of Biological Sciences, Director of University Seminars, and Carl Hovde's successor as Dean of Columbia College, 1982-1989. We will look at the shifting notions of human identity, human nature and the links between these two, through a series of books written between the mid-19th and late-20th centuries. One new book, a collection of drawings by Amy Pollack, will be read in addition, as an attempt to bring together insights from these and other students of the oddity of our place in nature. This colloquium derives from the senior-level course "Human Nature: DNA, Race and Identity" which Professor Pollack co-teaches with Marya Pollack, M.P.H., M.D. Secondary readings will be provided to participants in the colloquium.

- September 11: Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, Norton Critical Edition, Chapters 1, 4 and recapitulation.
- October 2: William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, Penguin, Lectures 1, 20.
- November 6: George Orwell, *1984*, Signet.
- November 20: James Watson, *The Double Helix*, Norton Critical Edition, the text; original papers.
- December 4: Lorenzo Albacete, *Attraction to Infinity-God at the Ritz*, Crossroads.
- December 11: Amy and Robert Pollack, *The Course of Nature*. Amazon (Kindle or print) at [Amazon course of Nature.webloc](#)