

THE MINIMAL THOUGHT LECTURE SERIES PRESENTS

RATIONAL MINIMALISM

DERIVATION & EXPLANATION IN A BEHAVIORIST PARADIGM



The self-esteemed Dr. Epstein has, in his own words, “outdone [himself]” this year with the development of a ground-breaking new area of experimental work for theoretical linguistics: a behavioral implementation of the Minimalist Program. “Highly scientific maze running experiments have revealed startling capabilities once believed to be the sole domain of Yumans.” Rats can be stimulated to **MERGE** small piles of food into larger piles. They can also be made to **MOVE** these piles from one place to

another. Crucially, these behaviors were predictably used to communicate complex meanings, e.g.: “I want both of these piles”, “these are mine”, or “I am going to eat all of this (and you rats over there can not).” Appropriate footwear is particularly recommended for this talk.

“This new ability to predict & control the syntactic behaviors of *Rattus rattus* should finally bring linguistics to its proper place among the legitimate sciences.”

Collaborator: T. Daniel Seely

Dr. Epstein wishes to extend sincere thanks to Dr. T. Daniel Seely whose office provided the population of rats used in this study.

Thursday, April 1, 2010