

## **Before language: foundations of open-ended communication in humans**

The productiveness of human communication is often attributed to language. In this talk, I will argue that both verbal and non-verbal communication are rooted in a basic cognitive system that is functional from early infancy and serves the purpose of interpreting, and learning about, communicative episodes. Presenting an alternative to Griceanism, I discuss how the human-unique ability for open-ended communication may be explained parsimoniously without appealing to mentalistic reasoning.