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**“The Feasibility of Folk Science”**

Monday, December 5, 2011  
4:30–6:00 pm  
A53 Baker Hall/Steinberg Auditorium

Humans of all ages seem to show a strong interest in the workings of both the natural and artificial worlds around them. This interest, plus clear signs of an attention to causal relations, leads to the inference that they should have well articulated intuitive theories and explanations of much that they encounter. Yet, folk scientific understandings are difficult to unpack in detail. Even the vast majority of college educated adults, let alone children, have highly impoverished understandings when assessed as mechanistic knowledge. A series of studies document these gaps but then goes on to illustrate other ways in which even preverbal children have surprisingly sophisticated senses of causal patterns. These developmental results in turn suggest different ways to construe what it means to have folk scientific understanding at any age and what it means for a folk science to be cognitively feasible.

*All lectures are open to the public.  
For more information, call 412-268-3151.*