

Workshop on the Evolution of Syntax

UConn, Storrs

March 28-9 2014

Recent research has seen an explosion of interest in the evolution of natural language. Perhaps the most daunting challenge to progress in this area is understanding the evolution of syntax, which from the perspective of contemporary linguistics must be recursive. Yet it is difficult to conceptualize how an evolutionary process could yield recursion out of a series of gradual innovations. The Evolution of Syntax Workshop will grapple with this and related problems through talks by and intensive discussion among linguists, psychologists, philosophers, and other cognitive scientists. The Workshop is free and open to the public, and is made possible with generous support from the Office of the Dean, College of Letters and Sciences.

Friday March 28

12-1:30: Brady Clark (Northwestern, Linguistics) 'Syntactic Theory and the Evolution of Syntax.'

1:30-3:30: *No Workshop events scheduled* (Chris Barker speaks at Logic Group 1:30-3:30).

4-5:30: Ljiljana Progovac (Wayne State, Linguistics) 'A Program for Evolutionary Syntax.'

5:30-6:15: reception

Saturday March 29

9:00 to 9:30 light breakfast

9:30-10:20: Ann Senghas (Barnard College, Psychology): title tba

10:30-11:20 William Snyder (UConn, Linguistics): "On the Very Idea of a Living Linguistic Fossil."

11:30-12:20 Harry van der Hulst (UConn Linguistics): "How Different are Syntax and Phonology?"

12:20-1:30 lunch

1:30-2:20 Whit Tabor (UConn, Psychology): 'Dynamical Systems Phenomena Possibly Relevant to Language Evolution.'

2:30-3:20 Marie Coppola (UConn, Psychology & Linguistics): 'What Emerging Languages Tell Us about Language Evolution.'

All sessions will take place in the Rowe Center for Undergraduate Education, room 320. Please use this link for exact location: maps.uconn.edu

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