

**Formal Monkey Semantics**  
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This talk will summarize some initial results (based on collaborative work) in an emerging field of ‘primate linguistics’. Focusing on the semantic side, we will argue that linguistic methods have started to clarify four questions: (i) what is the ‘lexical meaning’ of individual monkey calls? (ii) how are the meanings of individual calls combined? (iii) how do calls or call sequences compete with each other when several are appropriate in a given situation? (iv) how did the form and meaning of calls evolve? We will survey two case studies, pertaining to Old World monkeys (Campbell’s monkeys) and New World monkeys (Titi monkeys), arguing that a key question concerns the *division of labor between semantics, pragmatics and the environmental context*. We will also suggest that the remarkable preservation of call form and function over millions of years should make it possible to lay the groundwork for an *evolutionary monkey linguistics*.

Relevant readings and summaries can be found at the following URL:

[https://sites.google.com/site/philippeschlenkerresearch/home/formal\\_monkey\\_linguistics](https://sites.google.com/site/philippeschlenkerresearch/home/formal_monkey_linguistics)