



**University of
Zurich** ^{UZH}

Department of Economics – Neuroeconomics Seminar

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Curious, cooperative, and communicative: How we learn from others and help others learn

Humans are not the only species that learns from others, but only humans learn and communicate in rich, diverse social contexts, and build repertoires of abstract, structured knowledge. What makes human social learning so distinctive, powerful, and smart? In this talk, I argue that social learning is inferential at its core (inferential social learning); rather than copying what others do or trusting what others say, humans learn from others by drawing rich inferences from others' behaviors, and help others learn by generating evidence tailored to others' goals and knowledge states. I will present a series of studies that support this view and describe how they reveal the remarkably curious minds of young children, not only about the physical world but also about others and themselves. The results collectively paint a picture of young children as active social learners who voraciously yet intelligently gather useful information from others to learn about the world, and generously share what they know with those around them.