Abstract:

The ability to re-present past events and experiences is a keystone of mental life. The period of infancy is marked by slow yet significant development of this foundational capacity, eventually culminating in the ability to recall specific past events over long periods of time. Subsequent developmental changes in memory and associated cognitive processes permit embellishment of basic memory re-presentations into autobiographical or personal memories, which serve as the foundation upon which is constructed a continuous sense of self over time. This presentation will chronicle these changes in behavior, link them to changes in basic cognitive and neural processes, and explore their implications for our understanding of the mechanisms of development.