

Decision Processes Colloquia

Monday, March 2, 2020

Where: 270 JMHH

When: 12:00 – 1:20 pm

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The (Perceived) Limits of Deliberation and Evidence

ABSTRACT:

In many cases our decisions would be better if pursued with greater deliberation, and our beliefs would be more accurate if better aligned with the evidence before us. Why, then, do we so often eschew deliberation, and ignore or distort the evidence? In this talk I'll suggest that in addition to some well-known culprits (e.g., miserliness and motivated reasoning), a factor contributing to (poor) decision making and belief formation is people's normative commitments regarding the appropriate roles for deliberation and evidence. In some cases (such as choosing a romantic partner), relying on deliberation (over an intuitive response) could be seen as inauthentic, or send a problematic social signal. When deciding what to believe about a loved one, norms regarding loyalty could dictate giving them the benefit of the doubt, rather than maximizing accuracy. I'll present evidence from two very new projects suggesting that many people do hold normative commitments according to which there are limits on when deliberation is appropriate for making decisions, and on evidential considerations when it comes to forming beliefs.

