

# Decision Processes Colloquia

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Monday, March 30, 2026

Where: JMHH 360

When: 12:00 – 1:20 pm

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## The homogenizing impact of the internet on human thought

### ABSTRACT:

As people browse the web or interact with AI, they are frequently exposed to new information and perspectives that they might not have otherwise encountered. While this can enhance individual reasoning, it also has significant implications for collective cognition. Because most internet users rely on similar tools, many individuals encounter the same information. This convergence in information fosters homogeneity in thinking, which can be detrimental in contexts where cognitive diversity is beneficial. In this talk, I examine this phenomenon, presenting empirical evidence from two domains where heterogeneity of thought is critical: creative brainstorming and the Wisdom of Crowds. I argue that while the internet can enhance individual problem-solving, it paradoxically undermines group performance by reducing diversity of thought, creating a form of collective intelligence failure akin to a tragedy of the commons. I conclude by discussing the broader implications of this dynamic and potential strategies to mitigate its negative effects

