



SAID BUSINESS SCHOOL, University of Oxford

SEMINAR SERIES / MICHAELMAS 2010

Convenors: Felix Reed-Tsochas, Institute for Science, Innovation and Society,
Saïd Business School
Eduardo López, Saïd Business School

For further information please contact the Cabdyn Administrator:

info.cabdyn@sbs.ox.ac.uk

01865 288785

Seminar webpage:
www.cabdyn.ox.ac.uk/complexity_seminars.asp

Please note: although the seminar programme detailed was correct at time of printing, seminar arrangements are subject to change - for the latest information, please check the seminar webpage.

Thursday 30th September
(3.30pm - 5.00pm) James Martin Seminar Room

Prof David Lazer

Associate Professor of Political Science and Computer Science
Northeastern University and Director, Program on Networked Governance,
Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard University

'How we think together'

ABSTRACT

How do we think together? In particular, how do groups of individuals solve problems, and how do our patterns of communication affect collective problem solving? This presentation summarizes a series of laboratory and computational experiments in which communication patterns are manipulated. We find that increased communication reduces the number of solutions a group attempts, and reduces the probability that the group will find the solution. However, increased communication does increase the probability that the group retains the optimal solution and the confidence subjects have that they have found the right answer. We also examine the impact of exogenously imposed diversity in networks. Does segregation of types of actors increase or decrease group performance? We define two different types of diversity: one based on ability, and the other based on solution. We find that segregation improves performance for solution based diversity, and decreases performance for ability based diversity.



Saïd Business School
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD