Formal Democratic Theory Workshop

2-3 June 2025

Day 1: Monday 2 June

Location: Vera Anstey Room

10:30 - 11:00		*Welcome Coffee*
11:00 - 12:00	Suzanne Bloks LSE	Random Electoral Constituencies as Majoritarian Innovation
12:00 - 13:00	Daniel Wodak University of Pennsylvania	Condorcet and Convergence
13:00 - 14:00		*Lunch Break*
14:00 - 15:00	Bele Wollesen Leibniz Universität Hannover	On Equality, Power and Strategic Voting
15:00 - 16:00	Shira Ahissar LSE	Direct or Representative Voting - it depends on the type of truth we track
16:00 - 16:15		*Coffee Break*
16:15 - 17:15	Sean Ingham UCSD	Deliberative Democracy and Arrow's IIA Conditions
18:30 - 20:00	Peter Godfrey-Smith University of Sydney	Sir Karl Popper Memorial Lecture LSE Old Theatre
20:00		*Dinner*

Programme
on Cohesive
Capitalism
at LSE ■

CPNSS
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Natural & Social Science

Day 2: Tuesday 3 June

Location: 1.05, Sir Arthur Lewis Building

9:00 - 9:30		*Welcome Coffee*
9:30 - 10:30	Frederik van de Putte Rotterdam University	Claim Strength Problems, Mixed Rules, and Transfer Axioms
10:30 - 10:45		*Coffee Break*
10:45 - 11:45	Brian Hill CNRS	Confidence, consensus and aggregation
11:45 - 12:45	Davide Grossi Groningen University	Deliberative Consensus
12:45 - 13:45		*Lunch Break*
13:45 - 14:45	Laura Engel Universität Hamburg	Misrepresenting Epistemic Dependence Relations in Group Deliberation
14:45 - 15:45	Richard Bradley LSE	Giving reasons their force: the role of priority in deliberative updates
15:45 - 16.00		*Closing and Coffee*

[If you would like to attend this workshop, please contact Suzanne Bloks s.bloks@lse.ac.uk]

Presenters:

Bele Wollesen is a postdoctoral researcher at Leibniz Universität Hannover. She works broadly in social choice theory and related fields such as social epistemology and philosophy of science. Much of her work is fundamentally about questions of institutional design, particularly at the intersection of individual decision-making and group decision mechanisms.

Brian Hill is a Research Director at the French National Centre for Scientific Research CNRS and CNRS Research Professor in the Economics and Decision Sciences at HEC Paris. One of his recent research programs has focused on what counts as a rational reaction to severe uncertainty or "ambiguity". It attempts to marry theoretical insights and tools from economics and philosophy, with an eye on practical consequences for the handling of uncertainty in concrete decisions, such as those involving environmental policy.

Daniel Wodak is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania, with a secondary appointment from the Penn Law School. He works broadly in moral, legal, social and political philosophy. His main current interests in political philosophy concerns democracy and voting. He won the Marc Saunders Prize for Political Philosophy in 2023 for his paper "One Person, One Vote".

Davide Grossi is a Full Professor of Collective Decision Making and Computation at the University of Groningen, affiliated to the Bernoulli Institute for Mathematics, Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence. His research focusses on reasoning and decision-making in groups: how to model and analyse it, and how to support it algorithmically. He leads the interdisciplinary Multi-Agent Decisions Lab, co-leads the Democratic Innovations Lab at the University of Groningen and co-leads the Deliberation and Argumentation Special interest Group of the Hybrid Intelligence Center.

Frederik van de Putte is an Assistant Professor in Philosophy at the Erasmus School of Philosophy Erasmus University of Rotterdam, Netherlands and Guest Professor research at Ghent University Belgium. One of his most recent lines of research focusses on deliberation, aggregation and democracy. In this research, he aims to develop formal models of deliberation, combining tools from modal logic, deontic logic, and dynamic epistemic logic.

Laura Engel is finalising her PhD in the PPE graduate program 'Collective Decision-Making' at Universität Hamburg. Her work sits at the intersections of philosophy and microeconomics. In particular, she is interested in questions from social epistemology with a focus on collective deliberative decision-making. In her dissertation, she formally analyses the effects of epistemic dependency on the epistemic quality of discursive decisions.

Sean Ingham is an Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of California San Diego. He studies political theory with an emphasis on questions at the intersection of democratic theory and formal political theory. He is the author of the book 'Rule by Multiple Majorities: A New Theory of Popular Control', published by Cambridge University Press in 2019.

Shira Ahissar is finalising her PhD in Philosophy at LSE. Her research interests include political philosophy, ethics, social choice theory and philosophy of language. She is currently focusing on democratic theory, ethics of technology and AI methods that could be used to improve governments' decision-making as well as the understanding of the long-term consequences of such decisions.

Organisation:

The workshop is generously supported by LSE's Cohesive Capitalism Programme. It is organised as part of the 'Cohesion and Deliberative Decision-Making' project, which is based at the Centre for Philosophy of Natural and Social Science CPNSS at LSE. The project team includes:

Alex Voorhoeve is a Professor in the Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method at the LSE. His research covers decision theory, moral psychology, and the theory and practice of fair distribution, with particular application to the allocation of resources for health. He has served on the WHO Consultative Committee on Equity and Universal Health Coverage.

Kai Spiekermann is a Professor of Political Philosophy at LSE's Department of Government. He works on questions in democratic theory and social epistemology. His latest book is called "A Theory of Epistemic Democracy" OUP, with Robert E Goodin.

Richard Bradley is a Professor in the Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method at the LSE. His research is concentrated in decision theory, formal epistemology and the theory of social choice. Recently he has been doing work on policy decision making under scientific uncertainty applied to climate change, natural catastrophes and pandemics.

Suzanne Bloks is a postdoctoral researcher in the 'Cohesion and Deliberative Decision-Making' project at LSE. Her work sits at the intersections of democratic theory, constitutional theory and formal political theory. It has a strong interdisciplinary character, reflecting her training in philosophy, law and mathematics. Her research consists both of foundational inquiries into the values that democracy helps realise, and empirically-rooted inquiries into the design and legal regulation of democratic institutions.

Info Popper Lecture:

Lecture by Peter Godfrey-Smith University of Sydney

"Karl Popper suggested that tolerance in political contexts can be self-defeating. "Unlimited tolerance must lead to the disappearance of tolerance," he said, because it allows intolerance to flourish and take over. He called this the "paradox of tolerance." One important kind of tolerance relates to the expression of controversial ideas. Using a framework for understanding tolerance developed with Ben Kerr, I will discuss problems raised by toleration of the intolerant, especially around questions of speech and expression. The framework itself doesn't dictate policies, but combined with other arguments it can provide support for a "classic liberal" treatment of free expression, where some protection is afforded to the expression of unpopular views. The framework eliminates the appearance of tension or "paradox" in some liberal combinations of attitudes."

Contact information:

For inquiries or if you want to participate, please contact Suzanne Bloks, s.bloks@lse.ac.uk