

## AI and Democracy

### Speaker

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### Abstract

U.S. society is in the throes of deep societal polarization that not only leads to political paralysis, but also threatens the very foundations of democracy. The phrase "The Disunited States of America" is often mentioned. Other countries are displaying similar polarization. How did we get here? What went wrong?

In this talk I argue that the current state of affairs is the results of the confluence of two tsunamis that have unfolded over the past 40 years.

On one hand, there was the tsunami of technology -- from the introduction of the IBM PC in 1981 to the current domination of public discourse by AI-driven social media. On the other hand, there was a tsunami of neoliberal economic policies. I will argue that the combination of these two tsunamis led to both economic polarization and cognitive polarization, and the emergence of Generative AI puts our democracy in an even graver risk.

