Research Synopsis

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I am a Senior Lecturer of Economics at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. My research lies at the intersection of game theory, information economics, and political economy, with a particular focus on the design of strategic environments under informational frictions. Over the past few years, my research agenda has evolved along two interrelated lines: the study of public debate and polarization, and statistical decision-making through screening models. Much of my recent work focuses on strategic environments shaped by contests, conflict, and political competition, with applications ranging from the design of contests to the dynamics of public discourse.

Political Economy, Public Debate, and Polarization

Building on contest-theoretic tools, I have explored political environments where agents compete over influence rather than tangible rewards. A key motivation stems from *The Role of the Second Prize in All-Pay Auctions with Two Heterogeneous Prizes* (Journal of Mathematical Economics, 2023), where we analyze how asymmetric rewards shape equilibrium behavior, and from *Strong Robustness to Incomplete Information and the Uniqueness of a Correlated Equilibrium* (Economic Theory, 2022), where we provide new foundations for equilibrium robustness in games with incomplete information, establishing conditions for the uniqueness of correlated equilibria. These theoretical insights have broader implications for strategic design in uncertain environments, and naturally extend to political arenas where candidates face uneven stakes and asymmetric incentives.

In *Resource Windfalls and Political Sabotage* (American Journal of Agricultural Economics, 2025), we provide theoretical and empirical evidence that resource windfalls significantly increase negative campaigning in U.S. gubernatorial elections. Using over 5 million political ads, we show that higher resource windfalls lead to a substantial rise in campaign negativity, driven primarily by corruption. These findings are supported by a two-player

tournament in which political players can campaign in positive and negative manners, proving that sabotage intensifies in symmetric electoral environments.

In *Resource Windfalls, Connectivity, and Political Polarization* (Journal of Environmental Economics and Management, 2025), we develop a model of public debate in which resource windfalls spark contests over public opinion. We show that in highly connected societies—where political engagement is intense—positive economic shocks (such as resource windfalls) lead to elevated polarization by enabling extremists to dominate the discourse. This research builds on a theoretical framework developed under a four-year grant I received from the Israel Science Foundation (ISF).

More recently, in *Political Rational Inattention: A New Measure With an Application to Political Polarization* (2025), we propose a new measure of rational inattention in political environments. We show how voters' elevated attention, combined with strategic communication by information providers, shapes patterns of polarization.

Finally, in *Do Campaign Contributions Fuel Political Sabotage?* (2025, under review), we examine how campaign financing affects the incentives for political sabotage. We show how higher political contributions increase the stakes of political contests, leading to higher levels of negative campaigning.

Screening and Statistical Decision-Making

My second line of research focuses on screening environments—settings where a decision maker selects elements from a population based on noisy information. I am particularly interested in identifying counter-intuitive features of screening processes and in designing mechanisms that improve the selection quality.

In *A Bias of Screening* (AER: Insights, 2019), we show that stricter screening thresholds may paradoxically reduce the average quality of selected elements. This occurs because unbiased noise interacts with screening thresholds in a way that distorts the selection process. Building on this, in *Transferable Deposits as a Screening Mechanism* (Economic Theory, 2021), we propose a novel market design solution where transferable deposits are used to mitigate screening failures in portfolio management settings.

In *Screening Dominance: A Comparison of Noisy Signals* (AEJ: Microeconomics, 2022), we develop a framework for comparing noisy signals using a contraction mapping in screening problems. Doing so, we show that adding independent noise—effectively introducing a "lucky coin toss"—can improve screening outcomes under threshold strategies. Our recent work, *Dynamic Screening* (R&R in Economic Modelling), studies multi-stage screening processes where elements are repeatedly evaluated. We show that introducing an additional screening

stage may deteriorate selection quality unless the screening is applied extensively across many stages.

This research agenda naturally led us to explore environments in which decision makers interact with AI advisors. In *Working with AI: An Analysis for Rational Integration* (R&R in Games and Economic Behavior), we develop a model of decision making in which both the human decision maker and the AI possess informative private signals. We show that the correctness of the decision process is not monotonic in the participants' expertise levels: a less accurate AI or a less accurate decision maker may, counterintuitively, lead to improved decision-making.

Research Outlook

Looking ahead, my research will continue to develop these two interrelated lines, with an emphasis on information frictions in Bayesian game (*Comparison of Oracles*, with Ehud Lehrer and Tao Wang) and on polarization and sabotage (with Ohad Raveh). I am particularly interested in the emerging challenges posed by the governance of public discourse, and the design of strategic environments under informational frictions.