Aleksandr (Sasha) Levkun

ECONOMICS DEPARTMENT
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Candidate in Economics 2022 (Expected)
University of California, San Diego La Jolla, CA

- Committee: Simone Galperti, Joel Sobel (co-chairs), Renee Bowen, Songzi Du, Isabel Trevino

B.Sc. in Economics (summa cum laude) 2016
National Research University – Higher School of Economics Moscow, Russia

REFERENCES

Simone Galperti	UC San Diego	sgalperti@ucsd.edu
Joel Sobel	UC San Diego	jsobel@ucsd.edu
Renee Bowen	UC San Diego	r0bowen@ucsd.edu

FIELDS OF INTEREST

Microeconomic Theory, Information Economics, Political Economy

RELEVANT POSITIONS HELD

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO La Jolla, CA
Research Assistant for Simone Galperti 2019 – 2020
Research Assistant for Joel Sobel 2020

JOB MARKET PAPER

"Communication with Strategic Fact-checking" November 2021

I examine communication between an informed sender and an uninformed receiver with a presence of a strategic fact-checker. The sender makes a claim about an issue to persuade the receiver to approve the sender's proposition. The fact-checker has its own interests and chooses a stochastic fact-checking policy that initiates checks of sender's claims. The fact-checking technology is subject to a potential failure to produce a fact-check and the usage of this technology is costly. We show that the optimal fact-checking policy is a threshold policy in terms of the usage cost. Full fact-checking is optimal when the cost is below the threshold. Otherwise, no fact-checking is optimal. We characterize the cost threshold as a

function of fact-checker's preferences. The receiver need not prefer a fact-checker with preferences aligned with the receiver to one with opposed preferences. The addition of a fact-checker does not necessarily improve communication even when both fact-checkers are willing to fully check by themselves. For the intermediate cost we find an equilibrium in which there is an underprovision of fact-checking due to free-riding.

WORKING PAPERS

"The Value of Data Records" with Simone Galperti and Jacopo Perego   October 2021

Many online platforms intermediate trade between sellers and buyers relying on individual data records of their personal characteristics. A key question is how much value a platform derives from each record. Is this value higher for one buyer than for another? What are its properties? We answer these questions by combining a modern information-design perspective with classic duality methods. We show that the value of a buyer's record cannot be correctly assessed by focusing only on the payoff that a platform directly earns from the trade between that buyer and a seller. This is because of a novel externality between records, which arises when a platform pools records to withhold information from the sellers. We then characterize how much a platform is willing to pay for more records—e.g., for getting new buyers to join it—and for better records—e.g., for more information about existing buyers. Our analysis establishes basic properties of the demand side of data markets. Our methods apply generally to a large class of principal-agent problems.

"Strategic Mediation of Information in Autocracies"   May 2020

This paper presents the optimal editorial policy for state-owned media manipulating information flow from a strategic informed elite to an uninformed receiver. The receiver attempts to match the state of the ruler's competence with a binary action. If the elite's and audience's preferences are too distant from each other, then the editorial policy is uninformative. Otherwise, the media signal whether the state is higher or lower than a threshold which depends on the elite's preferences. The media benefit from a more lenient elite, as long as the elite is not too lenient. The media are worse off when the receiver is more critical of the ruler, whereas the elite generally is better off when the receiver is more critical. When the receiver has private information about how critical he is, I characterize the lower bound on the media's payoff obtained within the class of restricted editorial policies. I identify a sufficient condition that implies the bound is achieved.

WORK IN PROGRESS

"Subjective Uncertainty and Contract Dissolution"
with Renee Bowen and Malte Lammert   2021

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of California, San Diego   La Jolla, CA
Teaching Assistant   2017 – present

- Econ 1 (Principles of Microeconomics), ECON 3 (Principle of Macroeconomics), Econ 100ABC (Microeconomics), ECON 109 (Game Theory), Econ 142 (Behavioral Economics), Econ 171 (Decisions Under Uncertainty), ECON 210B (Macroeconomics B, graduate)

National Research University – Higher School of Economics   Moscow, Russia
Teaching Assistant   2015 – 2016

- Probability and Statistics, Econometrics

SERVICE

REFEREE

2021   *Games and Economic Behavior*

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

UC San Diego Cindy Vojtech Summer Research Fellowship	2021
UC San Diego Graduate Summer Research Fellowship	2017 – 2019
UC San Diego TA Excellence Award	2018, 2021
UC San Diego Regents Fellowship	2016 – 2017

OTHER INFORMATION

Languages:	English (fluent), Russian (native)
Programming:	proficient in Python, MATLAB, R