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Citizenship: American, Israeli

Fields of Concentration:
Political Economy
Public Finance

Desired Teaching:
Public Finance, Political Economy, Environmental Economics, Microeconomics

Comprehensive Examinations Completed:
2016 (Orals): Political Economy and Public Economics (*with distinction*)
               Environmental Economics
2015 (Written): Microeconomics, Macroeconomics

Dissertation Title: *Essays in Political Economy*

Committee:
Professor Ebonya Washington (Chair)
Professor Joseph S. Shapiro
Professor Dean Karlan

Expected Completion Date: May 2020

Degrees:
Ph.D., Economics, Yale University, 2020 (expected)
M.Phil., Economics, Yale University, 2016
M.A., Economics, Yale University, 2015
M.A., Economics (*with distinction*), Tel Aviv University, 2013
M.A., Political Science (*with highest distinction*), Tel Aviv University, 2008
B.S., Computer Science, Political Science (*both with distinction*), Tel Aviv University, 2007

Fellowships, Honors and Awards:
>Falk Foundation Fellowship Fund, Yale University, 2017-2018
>Overbrook Fellowship Fund, Yale University, 2015-2017
>Graduate Policy Fellow, Yale Institution for Social and Policy Studies, 2016-2017
>Yale University Graduate Fellowship, 2014-2019
>Achievement of Excellence Graduate Student Prize, Tel Aviv University, 2011-2013
>Akirov Scholarship, 2010-2012
>Dean's List, Tel Aviv University, 2005-2007
>Achievement of Excellence Undergraduate Student Prize, 2005-2006

Research Grants:
>Tobin Center for Economic Policy and Yale School of Management Data Funding Grant (with Michael Sullivan), 2019
>Yale Economics Department Research Grant (with Martin Mattson), 2019
>Program in Applied Economics and Policy Research Grant, Yale University, 2016; 2018
>Yale Institution for Social and Policy Studies Field Experiment Initiative Award, 2017
>Yale Economics Department Research Grant, 2017
>The Citizens' Empowerment Center in Israel Research Grant, 2010-2011

Teaching Experience:
>Summer 2019, Teaching Assistant to Prof. Zvika Neeman, Introduction to Game Theory, Yale University Summer Session
>Spring 2017; Spring 2018; Spring 2019, Teaching Assistant to Prof. Robert Mendelsohn, Economics of Environmental and Natural Resource Management, Yale University
>Fall 2017, Teaching Assistant to Prof. Steven Berry, Introductory Microeconomics, Yale College
>Fall 2016, Teaching Assistant to Prof. Larry Samuelson, Intermediate Microeconomics, Yale College

Research and Work Experience:
>Research Assistant, Evidence in Governance and Politics (Berkeley), "Metaketa-III: Natural Resource Governance", 2018-2019
>Advisor to the Deputy Director of the Israel Tax Authority, coordinated the Third Green Taxes Committee focusing on alternative energies in the transportation sector, Mimshak Science and Policy Fellowship Program, 2013-2014
>Economist, The Association of Environmental Justice in Israel, 2011-2013
>Researcher, The Macro Center for Political Economy, Tel Aviv, 2010-2013

Working Papers:
>"Social Media, News Consumption and Polarization: Evidence from a Field Experiment", Job Market Paper
>*Review and Resubmit, American Economic Review*
>
>"The Effects of Social Movements: Evidence from #MeToo", with Martin Mattsson

Work in Progress:

"Segregation of Online News and Social Media"

"Why do Governments Implement Inefficient Environmental Policies? The Roles of Misunderstanding and Equity", with Maximiliano Lauletta, Joseph Shapiro, and Dmitry Taubinsky

Seminar and Conference Presentations:

Psychology and Economics Lunch, U.C. Berkeley, 2019
Managerial Economics & Decision Sciences Seminar, Northwestern University, 2019
Social Media Governance Initiative, Yale University, 2019

Referee Service:

Economic Letters, Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Public Economics

Languages:

English, Hebrew

References

Prof. Ebonya Washington	Prof. Dean Karlan	Prof. Joseph S. Shapiro
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Dissertation Abstract

Social Media, News Consumption and Polarization: Evidence from a Field Experiment [Job Market Paper]

In 2018, two-thirds of American adults consumed news on social media, compared to fewer than one in eight Americans in 2008. In this paper, I ask how social media affects news consumption habits and how news consumed through social media affects political opinions and attitudes.

I conduct a large field experiment randomizing news exposure on Facebook, the dominant social media platform. After completing a baseline survey on political opinions and news consumption habits, participants were randomly assigned to a liberal treatment, a conservative treatment or a

control group. Participants were invited to subscribe to four liberal or conservative news outlets on Facebook by "liking" their Facebook pages, based on their treatment assignment.

I collect data on the chain of media effects. I ask participants to log in to the survey using their Facebook account to observe, with their permission, their subscriptions to outlets on Facebook. I create a browser extension to collect data on news participants were exposed to in their Facebook feed and on news sites they visited. I conduct an endline survey two months after the intervention to measure changes in political opinions and polarization.

The experiment has four findings. First, exogenous variation in the social media feed substantially affects online news consumption. The difference between the treatment-on-the-treated (TOT) effects of the liberal and conservative treatments on the mean slant of news sites visited is similar to the difference between news sites visited in New York and South Carolina.

Second, exposure to counter-attitudinal news decreases negative attitudes toward the opposing political party ("affective polarization"), compared to pro-attitudinal news. The TOT effect decreased the difference between participants' feelings toward their own party and the opposing party by one degree on a 0-100 scale, or a fourth of the increase in this measure over the past two decades. In a back-of-the-envelope calculation, I find that if the share of pro- and counter-attitudinal news on Facebook was equal, this measure of polarization would decrease by almost four degrees, the entire increase over the past two decades. Third, in contrast to the effect on attitudes, I find no evidence that the political leaning of news affects political opinions.

My fourth finding is that Facebook's algorithm limits exposure to counter-attitudinal news (a "filter bubble"). For example, a liberal participant who subscribed to Fox News due to a random offer observed fewer posts in her feed than a liberal participant who subscribed to MSNBC.

Why did the treatments affect attitudes toward political parties but not political opinions? I propose a model where consumers and parties place heterogeneous weights on beliefs and a political opinion is a weighted average of multiple beliefs. An individual's attitude toward a party is a function of the distance between the party's political opinion and the opinion it would form based on the individual's beliefs, weighted by the party's weights. Intuitively, participants may have learned to rationalize the opposing party's opinion, even if they continued to disagree with it.

Together, the results imply that social media's algorithms limit exposure to counter-attitudinal news, and thus may increase polarization. The study also shows, however, that a subtle nudge can substantially increase consumption of counter-attitudinal news and decrease polarization.

The Effects of Social Movements: Evidence from #MeToo, with Martin Mattsson

Social movements are associated with large changes in norms and behavior, but evidence on their causal effects is limited. We study the effect of the MeToo movement on a high-stakes personal decision—reporting a sexual crime to the police. We construct a new dataset of sexual and non-sexual crimes in 24 OECD countries, covering 81 percent of the OECD population. We analyze the effect of the MeToo movement by employing a triple difference strategy over time, across

countries and between crime types. We find that the movement increased reporting of sexual crimes by 14 percent during its first three months. While the effect slightly declines over time, the movement had a strong effect even 15 months after it started. We use more detailed US data to show that despite the increase in crimes reported, the movement did not increase the number of sexual crimes cleared by the police during its first three months. In contrast to a common criticism of the movement, we do not find evidence for large differences in the effect across racial and socioeconomic groups. Our results suggest that social movements can rapidly change high-stakes personal decisions.

Segregation of Online News and Social Media

In this paper, I estimate the segregation of online news using multiple browsing behavior datasets, data on individuals' Facebook feeds and new measures of online segregation. I show that when individuals visit news sites through social media, they tend to visit extreme sites that match their ideology, compared to other news sites visited. Among news sites visited through Facebook, 27% of individuals consume news more conservative than the Wall Street Journal or more liberal than the New York Times, compared to only 11% of individuals among all other news sites visited. I focus on two dimensions of segregation overlooked by existing literature. First, I show that when news slant is measured at the article-level, news consumption is substantially more segregated than existing outlet-level measures. Second, I show that news individuals are exposed to within their social media feed is an important source of news consumption. When current measures exclude this source, online segregation is underestimated. I compare two channels contributing to segregation on social media: news links shared by one's social network and the wide variety of outlets individuals can subscribe to when personalizing their feed. Most of the increase in segregation is driven by the latter channel. The results imply that online news is significantly more segregated than previously thought and that social media is contributing to this segregation.