Here's a detailed briefing document reviewing the main themes and most important ideas from the provided sources on poker strategy, specifically focusing on "unconventional sizes."

Poker Strategy: Exploiting Opponent Tendencies with Unconventional Bet Sizing

**Briefing Document**

**Date:** October 26, 2023 **Source:** Excerpts from "This Poker Disease Is DESTROYING Bankrolls" (Video Transcript)

**I. Executive Summary**

This document summarizes key concepts from a poker strategy discussion emphasizing the exploitation of common opponent leaks, particularly recreational players, through the strategic use of "unconventional" bet sizes. The central thesis is that while solvers might suggest certain equilibrium strategies where "size isn't a thing" in isolation, real-world poker (especially live games) presents opportunities to deviate from equilibrium by leveraging opponents' predictable tendencies to make significant profit. The speaker asserts that ignoring bet sizing is a "disease" that "is DESTROYING bankrolls," and that understanding how to manipulate pot size and perceived hand strength through sizing is crucial for maximizing EV (Expected Value).

**II. Core Philosophy: Exploiting Inelasticity and Capped Ranges**

The overarching theme is to identify spots where opponents are "inelastic" (less likely to fold or adjust to bet sizing) or have "capped" ranges (meaning their strongest hands have likely already taken an aggressive action, limiting their current strong holdings). By understanding these opponent characteristics, players can employ seemingly "unconventional" sizes to:

* **Maximize Value:** Get more money into the pot when holding strong hands against calling stations or players who don't fold enough.
* **Generate Fold Equity:** Induce folds from stronger hands when bluffing, especially against capped ranges or when deep-stacked.
* **Information Gathering:** Encourage opponents to reveal more about their hand strength through their actions.

The speaker directly challenges the notion that "size isn't a thing," stating, "if you hear a poker player in your life utter the phrase that size isn't a thing unfortunately they're already far too gone."

**III. Key Concepts & Strategies by Spot**

The source details five specific scenarios where unconventional sizing can be highly profitable:

**1. The 8x Check-Raise (Out of Position vs. Recreational Player)**

* **Spot:** Opening from cutoff, recreational player calls on button. Flop (e.g., J92) is checked. Opponent stabs for ~half pot.
* **Problem with Equilibrium:** Solvers rarely use an 8x check-raise in this spot at equilibrium because it's easily exploitable (opponent folds too much).
* **Exploitation:** Recreational players, especially live, are "the most inelastic pre-flop and then they are the second most inelastic on the Flop." They have "just never seen someone check raay to 8X to 10x to 12x."
* **Opponent Tendencies:**Fold top pair (e.g., KJ, QJ, AJ) at a much lower frequency than equilibrium (50% vs. 70%).
* Call with flush draws at a higher frequency (75% vs. 50%).
* Do not protect their check-back range with strong hands (tend to over-stab, telegraph hand strength).
* **Strategy:** Use "egregiously large check R sizes against recreational players when we start hands with a super high spr." This "allows us to play for all of the money against players who are going to make calling mistakes."
* **Quote:** "We should be piling in the money against fish when they are the most inelastic post flop and that is on the Flop."

**2. The 1/3 Pot Sized River Bluff (In Position vs. Sticky Opponent)**

* **Spot:** Deep-stacked (300bb effective), 3-bet pot. Flop (Q94) is bet small (1/3 pot). Turn (3) is bet large (opponent capped). River (2) is checked.
* **Opponent Tendencies (Sticky):** Will not fold Queen-X hands (AQ, KQ, QJ, QT) to large river jams at a high enough frequency. "If we jam on this River we just don't think we're getting a ton of folds from the queen X."
* **Strategy:** When bluffing with a weak hand (e.g., 7-high) against a "sticky opponent" who "is just calling way too much with Queen X," a "very small Bluff size" (1/3 pot) becomes the highest EV option. This gets folds from weaker draws (King-high, Ace-high flush draws) and allows the opponent to call with their stubborn Queen-X, which they would have called anyway against a jam.
* **Logic:** The decision between small bluff/large value and large bluff/small value is dictated by opponent's elasticity. "If you don't think he's folding Ace Queen you bet small with your Bluffs and you bet huge with your value." Conversely, "if this guy will fold Ace Queen if I go all in okay well then you also have an easy decision you go all in with your Bluffs and choose a smaller size that Ace Queen will call whenever you have value."

**3. The 1/3 Pot Sized River Bet (With Value vs. Sticky Opponent)**

* **Spot:** Similar setup to the bluff (3-bet pot, Q94, deep). Turn is bet large. River (A) is checked. Now holding a strong value hand (e.g., Ace-high flush, or even just Ace-Queen).
* **Problem with Large Bets:** Going too big on the river "we're just going to be value owning ourselves against hands like Ace Queen all the time and king queen and queen Jack are just going to fold."
* **Exploitation (Live Poker):** In live poker, players "just do not check raise the river as a bluff."
* **Strategy:** Use a "small size to squeak out a ton of value." A 1/3 pot bet on an A-high river will get calls from hands like KQ (90% of the time), QJ (75%), and QT (50/50), which would fold to a large bet. Against sticky opponents, this smaller size maximizes value against their stubborn calling range, while avoiding being check-raised as a bluff.
* **Quote:** "The small size $250 is going to be our highest EV option on this River the big size not so great because when we go big again we just get all the hands that are worse than us to fold."

**4. The 10% Pot Sized C-Bet on Ace-High Board (In 4-Bet Pot)**

* **Spot:** 4-bet pot, Ace-high dry/static flop (e.g., A84 rainbow). Hero holds Pocket Aces. Opponent checks.
* **Problem with Equilibrium:** Solvers tend to check or use quarter-pot bets, and opponents are supposed to be very aggressive (raising Ace King 75%, pocket 9s 100%, turning underpairs/suited connectors into bluffs). This rarely happens in practice.
* **Exploitation:** Live opponents in 4-bet pots on dry Ace-high boards rarely raise bluff, trap with middle sets, or turn weak hands into bluffs. They are also less likely to fold overpairs (JJ, TT, KK, QQ) to small bets.
* **Opponent Tendencies (Adjusted):**Raise Ace-King only 25% of the time (vs. 75%).
* Do not bluff with King-Queen/King-Jack suited.
* Raise 9s only 75% of the time (vs. 100%).
* Do not bluff with 8s, 7s, 87s, 76s.
* Fold Jacks/Tens only 50% of the time (vs. 75%).
* **Strategy (Value):** With Aces, this "tiny tiny seab bet" forces calls from overpairs (Kings, Queens, Jacks, Tens) which are drawing dead, maximizing value over multiple streets. "Don't worry about stacking Ace King worry about getting another Street of value against King's queens and Jacks."
* **Strategy (Bluff):** With a bluff (e.g., King-Jack suited), a small size allows the opponent to continue with hands like QQ or TT, which can then be folded on later streets.

**5. The 1.5x Overbet C-Bet on Ace-High Boards (When Pre-Flop Raiser)**

* **Spot:** Single raised pot (or 3-bet pot with similar characteristics), Hero is pre-flop raiser. Ace-high dry/static board (e.g., A92 rainbow).
* **Problem with Small Bets:** On dry boards, small bets don't entice strong hands (A9s, 99) to raise, allowing opponent to remain uncapped. If opponent is uncapped, big airball bluffs are less profitable. Also, live players "flat pre flop with hands like Ace King and Ace Queen particularly from the big blind," meaning they have many strong Ace-X combos.
* **Solution (Hungry Horse Poker Recommendation):** "Use either an overb or check strategy."
* **Strategy (Value Overbet):** When holding strong value (Ace-King, 99, 22, A9), "overbet because when we overb on this board our opponent is never folding an ace to one bet they're never folding a nine to one bet." This maximizes value against their Ace-X and 9-X holdings. It doesn't entice calls from weaker hands that wouldn't call anyway.
* **Strategy (Bluff - Carefully Selected):** "Generally don't want to start these big boy airball Bluffs on the Flop" if the opponent is uncapped. Instead, choose bluffs that block opponent's strong hands (e.g., 97s, K2s – hands with a 9 or 2), making them slightly more capped. This provides more equity and allows for "overb on the Flop and then the big bet on the turn and the jam on the river," which can finally get Ace-Queen, Ace-Jack, Ace-Ten to fold.
* **Strategy (Checking Back):** For most of the range, especially hands without blocking properties or significant equity, "just be checking back." This allows the opponent to define their range on the turn:
* Big stab: Indicates a strong hand (AK, AQ, two pair, set), giving clarity.
* Small stab/Check: Indicates a weaker range, allowing hero to "start applying a lot more pressure with our Bluffs."
* **Quote:** "When our opponent is capped and when we are super deep we have more fold equity and the more fold equity we have the less actual equity in our hand we need to start running these big boy Bluffs."

**IV. Conclusion: Exploitation over Equilibrium**

The speaker strongly advocates for an exploitative approach over a strict equilibrium strategy, particularly in live poker where opponent leaks are prevalent and predictable. The analogy of the "seesaw" with the "squirrels" highlights that if one side (the opponent) is consistently "showing up with all the hair is plucked off its tail" (i.e., making consistent mistakes), then there is "so much room to just make more money." The ultimate takeaway is that understanding and applying unconventional bet sizes is a powerful tool to profit from opponents who fail to adapt or recognize these strategic plays.

**Quote:** "The next time you hear somebody say that size isn't a thing don't feel bad taking their money because they're going to give it to somebody and it may as well be you."