

ALA AVOYAN

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Department of Economics

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Education

Ph.D. in Economics, New York University (NYU)	2012–present
M.A. in Economics, <i>Summa Cum Laude</i> , International School of Economics at TSU (ISET)	2010–2012
B.Sc. in Mathematics, <i>with Honors</i> , Ivane Javakhishvili Tbilisi State University (TSU)	2006–2010

Teaching Experience

Summer 2016	Undergraduate Microeconomics, NYU, Instructor
Spring 2014–16	MA Microeconomics, NYU, Teaching Assistant
Fall 2014–15	Undergraduate Statistics, NYU, Teaching Assistant
Spring 2012	MA Econometrics, ISET, Teaching Assistant
Fall 2011	MA Macroeconomics, ISET, Teaching Assistant
Summer 2011–12	MA Mathematics, ISET, Teaching Assistant

Research Experience

Summer 2014–16	Center for Experimental Social Science (CESS), Research Assistant
Summer 2011	National Bank of Georgia (NBG), Research Assistant

Languages

Georgian (native), English (fluent), Russian (fluent), Armenian (spoken)

Honors, Awards and Fellowships

2012–2017	Henry M. McCracken Fellowship, NYU
2010–2012	Future Leader Scholarship, ISET
2010–2012	Full scholarship for MA program, TSU
2007–2010	Presidential Scholarship, TSU
2006–2010	Full scholarship for BSc program, TSU

Research Papers

Attention In Games (joint with Andrew Schotter)

Abstract: One common assumption in game theory is that players concentrate on one game at a time. However, in everyday life, we play many games and make many decisions at the same time, and thus have to decide how best to divide our limited attention across these settings. The question posed in this paper is how do people go about solving this attention-allocation problem, and how does this decision affect the way players behave in any given game when taken in isolation. We ask: What characteristics of the games people face attract their attention, and does the level of strategic sophistication exhibited by a player in a game depend on the other games he or she is engaged in? We find there is a great deal of between-game inter dependence which implies that if one wants to fully understand why a player in a game acts in a particular way, one would have to take a broader general-equilibrium view of the problem and include these inter-game effects.

What it Takes to Coordinate: Road to Efficiency Through Communication and Commitment (joint with João Ramos)

Abstract: We examine the effects of an asynchronous revision pre-play phase mechanism in coordination games. Using Calcagno et al. (2014), we derive the theoretical conditions under which the efficient equilibrium is unique and we test our theory in the lab. Our results confirm the positive effect of the treatment on coordination on the common equilibrium and moreover, the Pareto efficient one. The results shed new light on Cheap Talk and reveal that a combination of communication and commitment leads to higher welfare.

Research in Progress

Paying For Inattention (joint with Giorgia Romagnoli)

We extend the model of costly information acquisition to the case where the decision maker is able to affect her own incentives to exert attention via an ex-ante redistribution of payoffs across states. We use this framework to derive a novel method to elicit the costs and the level of attention from observing the choices of payoff redistribution, and we test it in a lab experiment. The paper contributes to the growing literature concerned with the elicitation of attention choices and their costs. Existing work in this literature typically requires enriched datasets (e.g., mouse and eye tracking, response times, stochastic choice data etc.); however, by exploiting the link between attention and payoffs redistribution choices, our method requires only standard choice data.

Know Your Rationally Inattentive Partner

Publications outside of Economics

Avoyan, Ala (2013) “On the Galois Group of some Fuchsian systems,” *Journal of Mathematical Sciences*, Springer, Vol. 193, Issue 3 , pp. 359-363.

Avoyan, Ala and David Tsirekidze (2013) “Decomposition of an integer as a sum of two cubes to a fixed modulus,” *Matematički Vesnik*, Vol. 65, No. 3, pp. 383-386.