

# Dynamic Matching and Bargaining Games: A General Approach

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# Dynamic Matching and Bargaining Games

Dynamic Matching and Bargaining Games:  
Provide Models of decentralized markets

Markets with decentralized features:  
Labour, used cars, housing

Decentralized Market:

- Need to find trading partner
- Need to negotiate

→ *Frictions* of Trade

When *frictions* vanish, are decentralized markets efficient?

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- Diverging Answers:

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Diamond (JET, 1971)                          | No    |
| Gale (JET, 1987)                             | Yes   |
| DeFraja Sakovics (JPE, 2001)                 | Maybe |
| Serrano (JME, 2002)                          | Maybe |
| Moreno Wooders (JET, 2002)                   | Yes   |
| Mortensen Wright (IER, 2002)                 | Yes   |
| Satterthwaite Shneyerov (Econometrica, 2007) | Yes   |
| Shneyerov (Mimeo, 2006)                      | Maybe |
| Atakan (Mimeo, 2006)                         | Maybe |
| ...  | ...   |

"Maybe": Inefficiencies can persist in the limit  
(e.g., depending on parameters)

## Goal

- Provide an axiomatic approach to limit results of dynamic matching and bargaining games
- Use this approach to clarify divergent results in the literature

## Outline

- Setup of Dynamic Matching and Bargaining Games
  - The Economy
  - The Game
- An Example
- Axiomatic approach
  - Introduce four conditions
  - Conditions are necessary and sufficient for Walrasian limit

# The Quasilinear Economy

Unit Mass of Buyers and Sellers:

- Buyers: Valuation  $v \in [0, 1]$ , distributed acc. to  $G^B(\cdot)$
- Sellers: Cost  $c \in [0, 1]$ , distributed acc. to  $G^S(\cdot)$

$G^S(\cdot)$  and  $1 - G^B(\cdot)$  are "supply" and "demand"

"Walrasian" price  $p^w$ :

$$G^S(p^w) = 1 - G^B(p^w)$$

# Setup of a Dynamic Matching and Bargaining Game

Gale (1987), Satterthwaite&Shneyerov (2005)

In every period  $t \in \{-\infty, \infty\}$ :

- ① Pool of buyers and sellers;  
Valuations  $v$  and costs  $c$  distributed acc. to  $\Phi^S(\cdot)$  and  $\Phi^B(\cdot)$
- ② Matching into groups
- ③ Bargaining within groups
- ④ Exit:
  - All agents who traded
  - A share  $\delta \in (0, 1)$  of all other agents
- ⑤ Entry:
  - A mass one of buyers enter;  $v$  distributed acc. to  $G^B(\cdot)$
  - A mass one of sellers enter;  $c$  distributed acc. to  $G^S(\cdot)$

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# Setup of a Dynamic Matching and Bargaining Game

An Example: price setting with asymmetric information

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# Setup of a Dynamic Matching and Bargaining Game

## A Class of Games

In every period  $t \in \{-\infty, \infty\}$ :

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Valuations  $v$  and costs  $c$  distributed acc. to  $\Phi^S(\cdot)$  and  $\Phi^B(\cdot)$
- ② Matching into groups
  - A matching function  $X(\Phi^S, \Phi^B)$
- ③ Bargaining within groups
  - A bargaining game  $\Gamma(X, V) : A \rightarrow [q^S, q^B, t^S, t^B]$
  - Specifics trading probabilities and transfers
- ④ Exit:
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  - A share  $\delta \in (0, 1)$  of all other agents
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# Translate Equilibrium into Outcomes

Idea:

For a given economy  $G^S, G^B$  and friction  $\delta$

- Derive equilibrium  $\sigma^*$  of  $\langle \Gamma, X \rangle$
- Calculate *outcome*  $A$  induced by  $\sigma^*$

Outcome  $A = [V^S, V^B, Q^S, Q^B]$

- $V^S(c)$  and  $V^B(v)$  are equilibrium payoffs
- $Q^S(c)$  and  $Q^B(v)$  are equilibrium *lifetime trading probabilities*.

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Dynamic Matching and Bargaining Game  $\langle \Gamma, X \rangle$ :

- $\langle (G^S, G^B); \delta \rangle \rightarrow A$

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Dynamic Matching and Bargaining Game  $\langle \Gamma, X \rangle$ :

- $\langle (G^S, G^B); \delta \rangle \rightarrow A$
- $\langle (G^S, G^B); \{\delta_k\}_{k=1}^\infty \rangle \rightarrow \{A_k\}_{k=1}^\infty$

## **Monotonicity Condition:**

*Trading probabilities are increasing in valuations and decreasing in costs.*

## **No Rent Extraction**

*Payoff Differences are bounded: If a seller has a cost advantage  $\Delta c$  over another seller, then he gets at least the same payoff and at most  $\Delta c$  more.*

## **Availability**

*If a set of buyers trades with probability less than one, a seller who is just waiting will eventually be matched with them when  $\delta$  becomes zero.*

## **Weak pairwise efficiency**

*If some buyer  $v$  and seller  $c$  know they will eventually be matched with each other (or even better types) their payoffs are at least  $(v - c)$  when  $\delta$  becomes zero.*

# Monotonicity Condition

*Trading probabilities  $Q^B, Q^S$  are increasing in valuations  $v$  and decreasing in costs  $c$*

## Condition

**Monotonicity.** *A sequence of outcomes satisfies Monotonicity if the limits of the trading probabilities are monotone (whenever pointwise limits exist).*

*Payoff differences are bounded:*

## Condition

**No Rent Extraction.** *A sequence of outcomes satisfies No Rent Extraction if the slope of the limit of payoffs  $V_k^B$  is in  $[0, 1]$  (whenever the limit exists). In addition, if  $\lim Q_k^B(v_x) = 1$ , then*

$$\bar{V}^B(v) \geq \bar{V}^B(v_x) + (v - v_x) \text{ for all } v.$$

*and similarly for sellers.*

# No Rent Extraction

*Payoff differences are bounded:*

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$$\bar{V}^B(v) \geq \bar{V}^B(v_x) + (v - v_x) \text{ for all } v.$$

*and similarly for sellers.*

## Lemma

*If the game  $\langle \Gamma, X \rangle$  is a game with asymmetric information, Monotonicity and No Rent Extraction hold*

# Setup of a Dynamic Matching and Bargaining Game

An Example: price setting with asymmetric information

In every period  $t \in \{-\infty, \infty\}$ :

- ① Pool of buyers and sellers;  
Valuations  $v$  and costs  $c$  distributed acc. to  $\Phi^S(\cdot)$  and  $\Phi^B(\cdot)$
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# Failure of the No Rent Extraction Condition:

Price setting with symmetric information

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*If a set of buyers trades with probability less than one, a seller who is just waiting will eventually be matched with them when  $\delta \rightarrow 0$ .*

## Condition

**Availability.** *A sequence  $\{A_k\}_{k=1}^{\infty}$  satisfies Availability relative to some function  $L^B$  if, whenever  $\limsup Q_k^B(v) < 1$ , for all  $v < v_x$  then  $\lim L^B(v, \delta_k, A_k) = 1$  for all  $v < v_x$  (and similarly for seller).*

$L^B(v_x, \delta_k, A_k)$  is the probability that a seller who is just passively waiting in the pool will be matched at least once with a buyer of type  $v \geq v_x$ .

# Availability

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Suppose some set of types makes up a strictly positive share of the pool. A matching function  $X$  is *not vanishing*, if the probability to be matched with a type from this set is strictly positive and if it is continuous in the shares.

## Lemma

*If the matching function  $X$  is not vanishing, then availability holds.*

# Weak Pairwise Efficiency

*If some buyer  $v$  and seller  $c$  know they will eventually be matched with each other (or even better types) then their payoffs are at least  $(v - c)$ .*

## Condition

**Weak pairwise efficiency.** A sequence  $\{A_k\}_{k=1}^{\infty}$  satisfies Weak Pairwise Efficiency if  $\lim L_k^S(c_x) = 1$  and  $\lim L_k^B(v_x) = 1$  implies

$$\liminf \left( V_k^S(c_x) + V_k^B(v_x) \right) \geq v_x - c_x.$$

# Failure of Weak Efficiency

Simultaneous Double Auction (Serrano, JME, 2002)

In every period  $t \in \{-\infty, \infty\}$ :

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- ② Matching into groups
  - All buyers and sellers are matched into pairs
- ③ Bargaining within groups
  - Seller and buyer simultaneously announce bids  $p$  and  $r$
  - Trade happens at  $p$  if  $p \leq r$
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## **Monotonicity Condition:**

*Trading probabilities are increasing in valuations and decreasing in costs.*

## **No Rent Extraction**

*Payoff Differences are bounded: If a seller has a cost advantage  $\Delta c$  over another seller, then he gets at least the same payoff and at most  $\Delta c$  more.*

## **Availability**

*If a set of buyers trades with probability less than one, a seller who is just waiting will eventually be matched with them when  $\delta$  becomes zero.*

## **Weak pairwise efficiency**

*If some buyer  $v$  and seller  $c$  know they will eventually be matched with each other (or even better types) their payoffs are at least  $(v - c)$  when  $\delta$  becomes zero.*

## Theorem

*Suppose some sequence  $\{A_k\}_{k=1}^{\infty}$  satisfies mass balance and has uniformly bounded variation. Then the limiting outcome becomes Walrasian, i.e.,  $\lim A_k = A^W$ , if and only if  $\{A_k\}_{k=1}^{\infty}$  satisfies Monotonicity, No Rent Extraction, Availability, and Weak Pairwise Efficiency.*

## Corollary

*Suppose outcomes  $\{A_k\}$  are generated by a game from the class  $\langle \Gamma, X \rangle$ . Suppose that the bargaining game is a game with asymmetric information and suppose it is not too inefficient. Suppose in addition that the matching technology  $X$  is not vanishing. Then the limiting outcome is Walrasian*

$$\lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} A_k = A^W.$$

# Sufficiency Condition: Pairwise Efficiency

## Lemma

Suppose some sequence  $\{A_k\}_{k=1}^{\infty}$  is of uniformly bounded variation and suppose that for all  $v$  and  $c$ ,

$$\liminf_{k \rightarrow \infty} \left[ V_k^S(c) + V_k^B(v) \right] \geq v - c \quad \text{then} \quad \lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} S(A_k) = S^*.$$

$S(A_k)$ : The realized trading surplus of an outcome  $A_k$

# Summary of the Proof of Efficiency

Monotonicity  $\Rightarrow$  cutoff types  $c_x$  and  $v_x$ ,  $c_x \equiv \inf \{c, 1 | \bar{Q}^S(c) < 1\}$

Availability and Weak efficiency:

$$\bar{V}^S(c_x) + \bar{V}^B(v_x) \geq (v_x - c_x)$$

No Rent Extraction:

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{V}^S(c) &\geq \bar{V}^S(c_x) + (c_x - c) && \text{for all } c, \\ \text{and } \bar{V}^B(v) &\geq \bar{V}^B(v_x) + (v - v_x) && \text{for all } v. \end{aligned}$$

Together:

$$\bar{V}^S(c) + \bar{V}^B(v) \geq v - c$$

Payoffs are pairwise efficient for **all** types  $\Rightarrow$  Efficiency

# Monotonicity: Define Cutoff Types

**Observation 1:** There exists a convergent subsequence  $\{A_{k'}\}$  with pointwise limit  $[\bar{V}^S, \bar{V}^B, \bar{Q}^S, \bar{Q}^B]$ . All component of this limiting outcome are monotone.

*By the monotonicity condition and by the no rent extraction condition*

Define cutoff types

$$c_x \equiv \inf \left\{ c, 1 \mid \bar{Q}^S(c) < 1 \right\} \quad \text{and} \quad v_x \equiv \sup \left\{ v, 0 \mid \bar{Q}^B(v) < 1 \right\}.$$

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$$c_x \equiv \inf \left\{ c, 1 \mid \bar{Q}^S(c) < 1 \right\} \quad \text{and} \quad v_x \equiv \sup \left\{ v, 0 \mid \bar{Q}^B(v) < 1 \right\}.$$

Case:  $0 < c_x \leq v_x < 1$  (*The other cases follow similarly*)

**Observation 2:**  $\bar{V}^S(c_x) + \bar{V}^B(v_x) \geq (v_x - c_x)$

By definition  $\bar{Q}^S(c_x + \varepsilon) < 1$  and  $\bar{Q}^B(v_x - \varepsilon) < 1$  for  $\varepsilon$  small enough

*These types are available:*

$$\bar{L}^S(c_x + \varepsilon) = \bar{L}^B(v_x - \varepsilon) = 1$$

*Their joint payoff is pairwise efficient*

$$\bar{V}^S(c_x + \varepsilon) + \bar{V}^B(v_x - \varepsilon) \geq (v_x - c_x) - 2\varepsilon$$

*From continuity of  $\bar{V}^S(\cdot)$  and  $\bar{V}^B(\cdot)$  (implied by no-rent extraction):*

$$\bar{V}^S(c_x) + \bar{V}^B(v_x) \geq (v_x - c_x)$$

**Observation 3:** Payoffs are bounded from below:

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{V}^S(c) &\geq \bar{V}^S(c_x) + (c_x - c) && \text{for all } c, \\ \text{and } \bar{V}^B(v) &\geq \bar{V}^B(v_x) + (v - v_x) && \text{for all } v. \end{aligned}$$

*From definition:*  $\bar{Q}^S(c_x - \varepsilon) = 1$

*From the no rent extraction condition:*

$$\bar{V}^S(c) \geq \bar{V}^S(c_x - \varepsilon) + (c_x - c) - \varepsilon$$

*and by continuity of  $\bar{V}^S(\cdot)$ :*

$$\bar{V}^S(c) \geq \bar{V}^S(c_x) + (c_x - c)$$

## Putting Things Together:

**Observation 5:**  $\bar{V}^S(c) + \bar{V}^B(v) \geq v - c$  for all  $v$  and  $c$

*By adding up the inequalities of observation 3:*

$$\begin{aligned}\bar{V}^S(c) &\geq \bar{V}^S(c_x) + (c_x - c) & \text{and} & & \bar{V}^B(v) &\geq \bar{V}^B(v_x) + (v - v_x) \\ \Rightarrow \bar{V}^S(c) + \bar{V}^B(v) &\geq v - c + \underbrace{\bar{V}^S(c_x) + \bar{V}^B(v_x) - (v_x - c_x)}\end{aligned}$$

## Putting Things Together:

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*By adding up the inequalities of observation 3:*

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*→ So the limiting outcome is pairwise efficient for all types*

*Taking care of the remaining cases completes the proof.*

# Summary of the Proof

Monotonicity ensures existence of cutoff types  $c_x$  and  $v_x$

Availability and Weak efficiency:

$$\bar{V}^S(c_x) + \bar{V}^B(v_x) \geq (v_x - c_x)$$

No Rent Extraction:

$$\begin{array}{ll} \bar{V}^S(c) \geq \bar{V}^S(c_x) + (c_x - c) & \text{for all } c, \\ \text{and } \bar{V}^B(v) \geq \bar{V}^B(v_x) + (v - v_x) & \text{for all } v. \end{array}$$

Together:

$$\bar{V}^S(c) + \bar{V}^B(v) \geq v - c$$

Payoffs are pairwise efficient for all types

- Axiomatic Approach to Limit Results in Dynamic Matching and Bargaining Games
- Four conditions are necessary and sufficient for efficiency: Monotonicity, No Rent Extraction, Availability, and Weak Efficiency
- Conditions hold in many specifications of DMBG
  - Highlights "Common Cause" across models
- Failure of efficiency relates to failure of specific conditions

## Open Questions

- More complex economies?
- Behavioral Strategies instead of Bayesian Nash?
- Limit results in other classes of games?
  - $\frac{1}{\delta}$  as the number of Bidders in Double Auctions
- Aggregate uncertainty about  $p^w$ ?
  - Wolinsky (1990): Efficiency impossible with common values

# Proof:

Monotonicity: Define Cutoff Types

**Observation 1:** There exists a convergent subsequence  $\{A_{k'}\}$  with pointwise limit  $[\bar{V}^S, \bar{V}^B, \bar{Q}^S, \bar{Q}^B]$   
(By Helly's selection principle)

**Observation 2:** The **monotonicity condition** allows us to define cutoff types

$$c_x \equiv \inf \left\{ c, 1 \mid \bar{Q}^S(c) < 1 \right\} \quad \text{and} \quad v_x \equiv \sup \left\{ v, 0 \mid \bar{Q}^B(v) < 1 \right\}.$$

Continue working with this subsequence and its limit

Assumption:  $0 < c_x \leq v_x < 1$  (The other cases follow similarly)

**Observation 3:**  $\bar{V}^S(c_x) + \bar{V}^B(v_x) \geq (v_x - c_x)$

By definition  $\bar{Q}^S(c_x + \varepsilon) < 1$  and  $\bar{Q}^B(v_x - \varepsilon) < 1$  for  $\varepsilon$  small enough

*These types are available:*

$$\bar{L}^S(c_x + \varepsilon) = \bar{L}^B(v_x - \varepsilon) = 1$$

*Their joint payoff is pairwise efficient*

$$\bar{V}^S(c_x + \varepsilon) + \bar{V}^B(v_x - \varepsilon) \geq (v_x - c_x) - 2\varepsilon$$

*From continuity of  $\bar{V}^S(\cdot)$  and  $\bar{V}^B(\cdot)$  (implied by no-rent extraction):*

$$\bar{V}^S(c_x) + \bar{V}^B(v_x) \geq (v_x - c_x)$$

**Observation 4:** Payoffs are bounded from below:

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{V}^S(c) &\geq \bar{V}^S(c_x) + (c_x - c) && \text{for all } c, \\ \text{and } \bar{V}^B(v) &\geq \bar{V}^B(v_x) + (v - v_x) && \text{for all } v. \end{aligned}$$

*From definition:*  $\bar{Q}^S(c_x - \varepsilon) = 1$

*From the no rent extraction condition:*

$$\bar{V}^S(c) \geq \bar{V}^S(c_x - \varepsilon) + (c_x - c) - \varepsilon$$

*and by continuity of  $\bar{V}^S(\cdot)$ :*

$$\bar{V}^S(c) \geq \bar{V}^S(c_x) + (c_x - c)$$

## Putting Things Together:

**Observation 5:**  $\bar{V}^S(c) + \bar{V}^B(v) \geq v - c$  for all  $v$  and  $c$

*By adding up the inequalities of observation 3:*

$$\begin{aligned}\bar{V}^S(c) &\geq \bar{V}^S(c_x) + (c_x - c) & \text{and} & & \bar{V}^B(v) &\geq \bar{V}^B(v_x) + (v - v_x) \\ \Rightarrow \bar{V}^S(c) + \bar{V}^B(v) &\geq v - c + \underbrace{\bar{V}^S(c_x) + \bar{V}^B(v_x) - (v_x - c_x)}\end{aligned}$$

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$\rightarrow$  *So the limiting outcome is pairwise efficient for all types*

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$\rightarrow$  So the limiting outcome is pairwise efficient for all types

**Observation 6:** For the convergent subsequence  $\{A_{k'}\}$

$$\lim_{k' \rightarrow \infty} S(A_{k'}) = S^*$$

*Taking care of the remaining cases completes the proof of convergence to efficiency.* [Link: Back](#)

# Walrasian Outcome and Necessity

Walrasian Outcome  $A^W$

Trading probabilities  $Q^S, Q^B$  are one if and only if  $c < p^w$  and  $v > p^w$

Payoffs are  $\max\{p^w - c, 0\}$  and  $\max\{v - p^w, 0\}$

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Efficient implies that trading probabilities  $\bar{Q}^S, \bar{Q}^B$  are Walrasian

**No rent extraction** implies payoffs are *at least* Walrasian

$V^S(c) \geq p^w - c$  and  $V^B(v) \geq v - p^w$ .

Payoffs cannot be larger than efficient payoffs, therefore payoffs *are exactly* Walrasian

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If  $A_k \rightarrow A^W$  then

- Trading probabilities are monotone
- Payoffs satisfy no rent extraction
- Availability and Weak Efficiency holds:

$\bar{V}^B(v) + \bar{V}^S(c) \geq (v - p^w) + (p^w - c)$  for all  $v, c$     Link: [Back](#)