

Game Theory

Repeated Games

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 - Only pure strategies.

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- Let $G = (I, (A_i)_{i \in I}, (h_i)_{i \in I})$ be a finite game in normal form. A_i is the set of player i 's *actions* and $A = \prod_{i \in I} A_i$ is the set of action profiles.

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 - That is, $(a^1, \dots, a^t) \in A^t$, where for every $1 \leq s \leq t$, $a^s = (a_1^s, \dots, a_n^s) \in A$.

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- Given the game in normal form $G = (I, (A_i)_{i \in I}, (h_i)_{i \in I})$, define the *super-game form* as the game form $(I, (F_i)_{i \in I})$, where for every $i \in I$,
$$F_i = \{f_i = \{f_i^t\}_{t=1}^{\infty} \mid f_i^1 \in A_i \text{ and } \forall t \geq 1, f_i^{t+1} : A^t \longrightarrow A_i\}.$$

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- $a^1(f) \in A$ is given by $a_i^1(f) = f_i^1$ for all $i \in I$, and
- for all $t \geq 1$, $a^{t+1}(f) \in A$ is given by $a_i^{t+1}(f) = f_i^{t+1}(a^1(f), \dots, a^t(f))$ for all $i \in I$.

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- “Play always C”: $\hat{f}_i^1 = C$ and for all $t \geq 1$ and all $(a^1, \dots, a^t) \in A^t$,
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- “Play C during 5 periods and D thereafter”: $\bar{f}_i^1 = C$, for all $1 \leq t < 5$ and all $(a^1, \dots, a^t) \in A^t$, $\bar{f}_i^{t+1}(a^1, \dots, a^t) = C$ and for all $t \geq 5$ and all $(a^1, \dots, a^t) \in A^t$, $\bar{f}_i^{t+1}(a^1, \dots, a^t) = D$.

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- *Trigger strategy*. “Start playing C and play C as long as the other player has played always C , once the other player has played D play D always”: $\tilde{f}_i^1 = C$ and for all $t \geq 1$ and all $(a^1, \dots, a^t) \in A^t$,

$$\tilde{f}_i^{t+1}(a^1, \dots, a^t) = \begin{cases} C & \text{if for all } 1 \leq s \leq t, a_{3-i}^s = C \\ D & \text{if there exists } 1 \leq s \leq t \text{ such that } a_{3-i}^s = D. \end{cases}$$

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- *Tit-for-tat*. “Start playing C and then play the action taken by the other player last period”: $\dot{f}_i^1 = C$ and for all $t \geq 1$ and all $(a^1, \dots, a^t) \in A^t$, $\dot{f}_i^{t+1}(a^1, \dots, a^t) = a_{3-i}^t$.

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5.3.- Payoffs

- Let $G = (I, (A_i)_{i \in I}, (h_i)_{i \in I})$ be a game in normal form and let $T \in \mathbb{N}$. The *finitely T -times repeated game* is the game in normal form $G_T = (I, (F_i)_{i \in I}, (H_i^T)_{i \in I})$, where $(I, (F_i)_{i \in I})$ is the super-game form and for each $i \in I$, $H_i^T : F \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ is defined as follows: for all $f \in F$,

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 - $T = 10$, $H_1^{10}(\bar{f}_1, \dot{f}_2) = \frac{1}{10}(5 \cdot 3 + 4 + 4 \cdot 1) = \frac{23}{10}$.
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 - For any $T \geq 1$, $H_i^T(\tilde{f}_1, \dot{f}_2) = \frac{1}{T}(3 \cdot T) = 3$.

5.3.- Payoffs

- Let $G = (I, (A_i)_{i \in I}, (h_i)_{i \in I})$ be a game in normal form. We say that G is bounded if

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- Note that if G is finite then G is bounded.
- Let $G = (I, (A_i)_{i \in I}, (h_i)_{i \in I})$ be a bounded game in normal form and let $\lambda \in (0, 1)$. The λ -discounted repeated game is the game in normal form $G_\lambda = (I, (F_i)_{i \in I}, (H_i^\lambda)_{i \in I})$, where $(I, (F_i)_{i \in I})$ is the super-game form and for each $i \in I$, $H_i^\lambda : F \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ is defined as follows: for all $f \in F$,

$$H_i^\lambda(f) = (1 - \lambda) \sum_{t=1}^{\infty} \lambda^{t-1} h_i(a^t(f)).$$

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- Since G_λ is a game in normal form, we can define F_λ^* as the set of Nash equilibria of G_λ .

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- If G is not bounded, the series may be divergent, and therefore H_i^λ would not necessarily be well-defined.
- The payoff $H_i^\lambda(f)$ can be interpreted as player i 's expected payoff of playing f when at t , the probability of playing the game at $t + 1$ is equal to λ .

5.3.- Payoffs

- Let $G = (I, (A_i)_{i \in I}, (h_i)_{i \in I})$ be a bounded game in normal form. The *infinitely repeated game* is the game in normal form $G_\infty = (I, (F_i)_{i \in I}, (H_i^\infty)_{i \in I})$, where $(I, (F_i)_{i \in I})$ is the super-game form and for each $i \in I$, $H_i^\infty : F \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ that will be defined later.

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- The “natural” payoff function would be: for all $f \in F$,

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- Problem: This limit may not exist (its existence depends on the particular strategies used by players).

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- Remark: for all $\{x_n\} \in l_\infty$, $\liminf_{n \rightarrow \infty} \{x_n\} = -\limsup_{n \rightarrow \infty} \{y_n\}$, where for all $n \geq 1$, $y_n = -x_n$.

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 - Note that the later implies the former.
 - Since we will have to check (equilibrium condition) whether $H_i^{\infty}(f) - H_i^{\infty}(g_i, f_{-i}) \geq 0$, we would like that $H_i^{\infty}(f)$ be linear.

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Proposition *There exists a linear function $H : l_\infty \longrightarrow \mathbb{R}$ (called a Banach limit) such that for all $\{x_n\} \in l_\infty$,*

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- Family of results characterizing the set of Nash equilibria or Subgame Perfect equilibria of repeated games (G_T , G_λ and G_∞) and their relationships. For example:

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Proof Let $f \in F_T^*$ and assume otherwise; namely, there exists $1 \leq t \leq T$, $a^t(f) \neq (D, D)$.

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Proposition *Let G be the Prisoners' Dilemma. Then, for every $T \geq 1$ and every $f \in F_T^*$, $a^t(f) = (D, D)$ for all $t \geq 1$.*

Proof Let $f \in F_T^*$ and assume otherwise; namely, there exists $1 \leq t \leq T$, $a^t(f) \neq (D, D)$.

- Let $s = \max\{1 \leq t \leq T \mid a^t(f) \neq (D, D)\}$.

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 - and

$$\begin{aligned}h_1(a^s(g_1, f_2)) &= h_1(D, a_2^s(g_1, f_2)) \\ &> h_1(C, a_2^s(g_1, f_2)) \\ &= h_1(C, a_2^s(f_1, f_2)) \\ &= h_1(a^s(f_1, f_2)).\end{aligned}$$

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

- Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned}H_1^T(g_1, f_2) &= \frac{1}{T} \sum_{t=1}^T h_1(a^t(g_1, f_2)) \\ &> \frac{1}{T} \sum_{t=1}^T h_1(a^t(f_1, f_2)) \\ &= H_1^T(f_1, f_2),\end{aligned}$$

which contradicts that $(f_1, f_2) \in F_T^*$. ■

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- Let $f_1 \in F_1$ be arbitrary (a symmetric argument works for player 2). For every $T \geq 1$,

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{t=1}^T h_1(a^t(f_1, g_2)) &= 3 \cdot \#\{1 \leq t \leq T \mid a^t(f_1, g_2) = (C, C)\} \\ &\quad + 4 \cdot \#\{1 \leq t \leq T \mid a^t(f_1, g_2) = (D, C)\} \\ &\quad + 0 \cdot \#\{1 \leq t \leq T \mid a^t(f_1, g_2) = (C, D)\} \\ &\quad + 1 \cdot \#\{1 \leq t \leq T \mid a^t(f_1, g_2) = (D, D)\}. \end{aligned}$$

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

- By the definition of g_2 (tit-for-tat),

$$\#\{t \leq T \mid a^t(f_1, g_2) = (D, C)\} + \#\{t \leq T \mid a^t(f_1, g_2) = (D, D)\}$$

$$= \#\{t \leq T \mid a_1^t(f_1, g_2) = D\}$$

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- Hence,

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Hence,

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- Thus,

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- Note that this is independent of the particular Banach limit H chosen to evaluate sequences of averages.

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- These collection of results are some times called Aumann-Shapley-Rubinstein Theorems.

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- Warning: with mixed strategies, this minimax may be smaller; *i.e.*, there are games for which

$$\inf_{\sigma_{-i} \in \Sigma_{-i}} \sup_{\sigma_i \in \Sigma_i} H_i(\sigma_i, \sigma_{-i}) < \inf_{a_{-i} \in A_{-i}} \sup_{a_i \in A_i} h_i(a_i, a_{-i}).$$

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- Notation: $C(G) = cl(\text{co}\{h(a) \in \mathbb{R}^{\#I} \mid a \in A\})$.

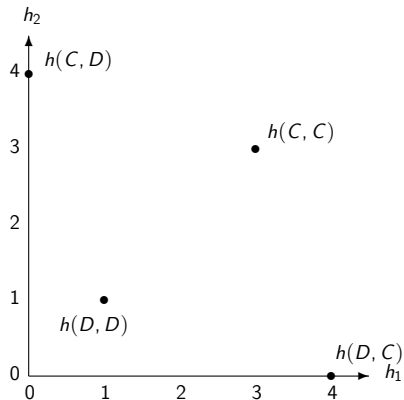
- **Examples:**

- Prisoners' Dilemma: $R_i = \min\{\max\{3, 4\}, \max\{0, 1\}\} = 1$.
- Battle of Sexes: $R_i = \min\{\max\{3, 0\}, \max\{0, 1\}\} = 1$.
- Coordination Game: $R_i = \min\{\max\{1, 0\}, \max\{0, 2\}\} = 1$.
- Matching Pennies: $R_i = \min\{\max\{1, -1\}, \max\{1, -1\}\} = 1$.

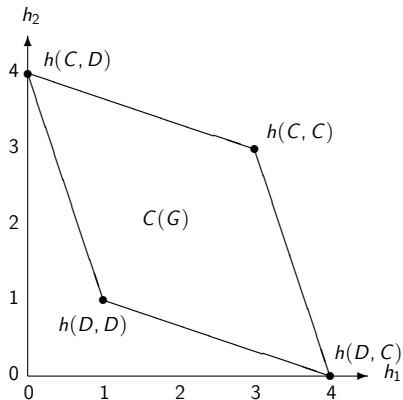
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- If G is finite, $C(G) = \text{co}\{h(a) \in \mathbb{R}^{\#I} \mid a \in A\}$.

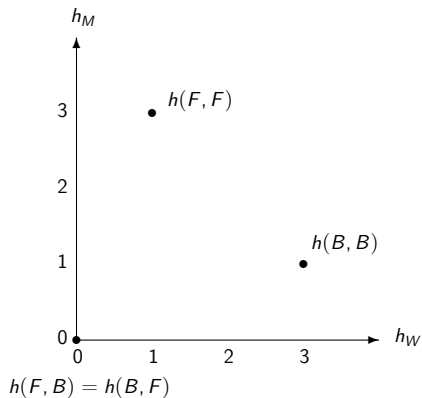
5.4.- “Folk” Theorems



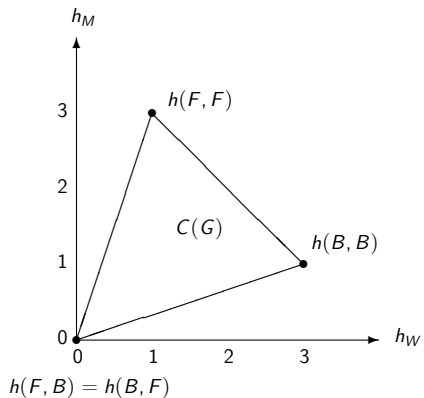
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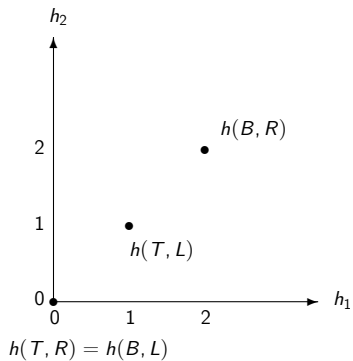
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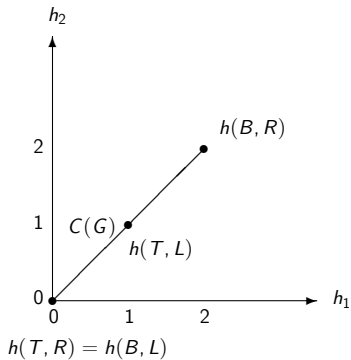
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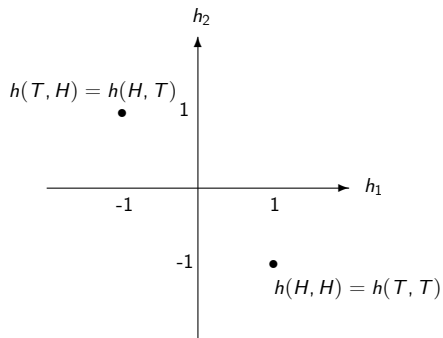
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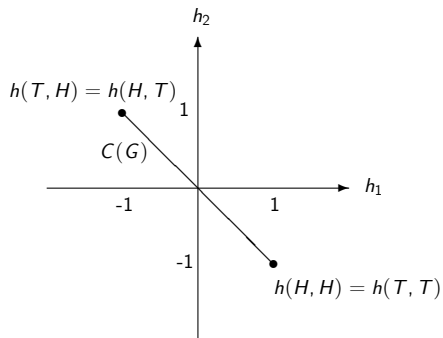
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5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

Infinitely Repeated

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

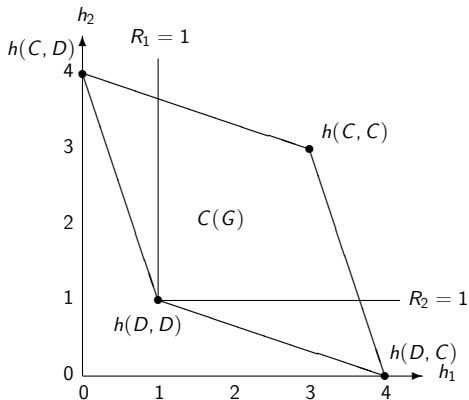
Infinitely Repeated

Theorem

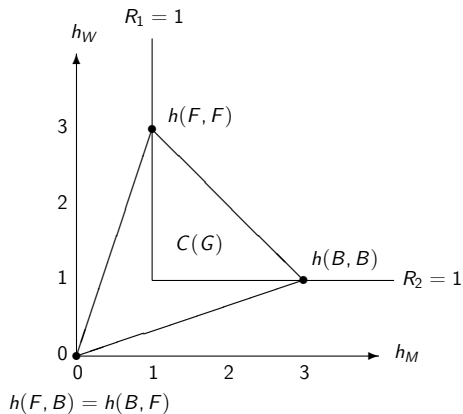
Let G be a bounded game in normal form. Then,

$$\left\{ H^\infty(f) \in \mathbb{R}^{\#I} \mid f \in F_\infty^* \right\} = \{x \in C(G) \mid x_i \geq R_i \text{ for all } i \in I\}.$$

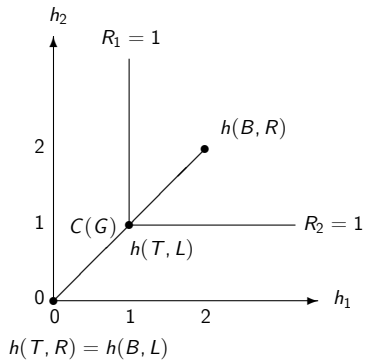
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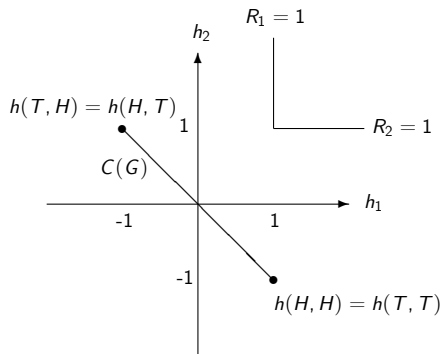
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$\liminf_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{T} \sum_{t=1}^T h_i(a^t) \geq R_i$ for all $i \in I$ then, there exists an $f \in F$ such that

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5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

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Then, set $g_i^1 = b_i^1$.

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Then, set $g_i^1 = b_i^1$.

- Assume g_i has been defined up to t . Let $b_i^{t+1} \in A_i$ be s.t. $h_i(b_i^{t+1}, f_i^{t+1}(a^1(g_i, f_{-i}), \dots, a^t(g_i, f_{-i}))_{-i}) \geq R_i$; as before, it also exists. Then, for all $(a^1, \dots, a^t) \in A^t$, set

$$g_i^{t+1}(a^1, \dots, a^t) = \begin{cases} b_i^{t+1} & \text{if } \forall 1 \leq s \leq t, a^s = a^s(g_i, f_{-i}) \\ f_i^{t+1}(a^1, \dots, a^t) & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

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- Hence, for all $\alpha = T, \lambda, \infty$, $H_i^\alpha(g_i, f_{-i}) \geq R_i$.
- Thus, if for $\alpha = T, \lambda, \infty$, $f \in G_\alpha^*$ then, it must be the case that

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5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

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Proposition 2 Let $\{a^t\}_{t=1}^{\infty}$ be such that $a^t \in A$ for all $t \geq 1$ and

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for all $b_i \in A_i$.

- For every $j \in I$, set $f_j^1 = a_j^1$.
- Take any function $\gamma : 2^I \setminus \{\emptyset\} \longrightarrow I$ with the property that for all $J \in 2^I \setminus \{\emptyset\}$, $\gamma(J) \in J$.

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

Proposition 2: Intuition

- Let $(b^1, \dots, b^t) \in A^t$ be arbitrary. Let $s = \min\{1 \leq r \leq t \mid b^r \neq a^r\}$, $J = \{k \in I \mid b_k^s \neq a_k^s\}$ and $i = \gamma(J)$.

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- For any $g_i \in F_i$ either $a^t(f) = a^t(g_i, f_{-i})$ for all $t \geq 1$, in which case $H_i^\infty(f) = H_i(g_i, f_{-i})$ or else there exists $s = \min\{t \geq 1 \mid a^t(g_i, f_{-i}) \neq a^t(f)\}$. Then, $J = \{i\}$ and $\gamma(\{i\}) = i$. Thus,

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

Proposition 2: Intuition

$$\begin{aligned} H_i^\infty(g_i, f_{-i}) &= H \left(\left\{ \frac{1}{T} \sum_{t=1}^T h_i(a^t(g_i, f_{-i})) \right\}_{T=1}^\infty \right) \\ &\leq \limsup_{T \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{T} \sum_{t=1}^T h_i(a^t(g_i, f_{-i})) \\ &\leq \limsup_{T \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{T} [s \max\{h_i(a) \mid a \in A\} + (T-s)R_i] \\ &\leq \limsup \frac{1}{T} s \max\{h_i(a) \mid a \in A\} + \limsup \frac{1}{T} (T-s)R_i \\ &\leq \limsup_{T \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{T} TR_i \\ &= R_i \\ &\leq \liminf_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{T} \sum_{t=1}^T h_i(a^t) \quad \text{by hypothesis} \\ &\leq \liminf_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{T} \sum_{t=1}^T h_i(a^t(f)) \quad \text{by (ii)} \\ &\leq H_i^\infty(f). \end{aligned}$$

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But since g_i was arbitrary, $f \in F_\infty^*$.

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

Proposition 3: Intuition

Proposition 3 For every $x \in C(G)$ there exists a sequence $\{a^t\}_{t=1}^{\infty}$ such that $a^t \in A$ for all $t \geq 1$ and for all $i \in I$, $\lim_{T \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{T} \sum_{t=1}^T h_i(a^t)$ exists and it is equal to x_i .

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Proposition 3 follows (after some work to deal with convex combinations with non-rational coefficients) from the following result which in turn follows from a more general result (Caratheodory Theorem).

Result Let $X = \text{co}\{x^1, \dots, x^K\} \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$. For every $x \in X$ there exist $y^1, \dots, y^{n+1} \in \{x^1, \dots, x^K\}$ and $p^1, \dots, p^{n+1} \geq 0$ such that $\sum_{j=1}^{n+1} p^j = 1$ with

the property that $x = \sum_{j=1}^{n+1} p^j y^j$.

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

Proposition 4: Intuition

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- For $\alpha = T, \infty$ the statement obviously holds.
- For $\alpha = \lambda$, observe that for every $t \geq 1$, $0 \leq (1 - \lambda)\lambda^{t-1} \leq 1$ and $(1 - \lambda) \sum_{t=1}^{\infty} \lambda^{t-1} = (1 - \lambda) \frac{1}{1 - \lambda} = 1$. Thus, each $(1 - \lambda)\lambda^{t-1}$ can be seen as the coefficient of an (infinite) convex combination: Thus,
$$H^\lambda(f) = (1 - \lambda) \sum_{t=1}^{\infty} \lambda^{t-1} h(a^t(f)) \in C(G).$$

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

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- \supseteq) Let $x \in C(G)$ and assume $x_i \geq R_i$ for all $i \in I$.

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

• Proof of the Theorem

- \subseteq) Let f be an equilibrium of G_α .
 - By Proposition 1, $H_i^\alpha(f) \geq R_i$ for all $i \in I$.
 - By Proposition 4, $H^\alpha(f) \in C(G)$.
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- \supseteq) Let $x \in C(G)$ and assume $x_i \geq R_i$ for all $i \in I$.
 - By Proposition 3, there exists a sequence $\{a^t\}_{t=1}^\infty$ such that $a^t \in A$ for all $t \geq 1$ and for all $i \in I$, $\lim_{T \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{T} \sum_{t=1}^T h_i(a^t) = x_i$.

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- By Proposition 2, there exists $f \in F$ such that (1) f is an equilibrium of G_∞ and (2) $a^t(f) = a^t$ for all $t \geq 1$.
- Hence, for all $i \in I$,

$$H_i^\infty(f) = H \left(\left\{ \frac{1}{T} \sum_{t=1}^T h_i(a^t(f)) \right\}_{T=1}^\infty \right) = \lim_{T \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{T} \sum_{t=1}^T h_i(a^t) = x_i.$$

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- Thus, $x \in \left\{ H^\infty(f) \in \mathbb{R}^{\#I} \mid f \text{ is an equilibrium of } G_\infty \right\}$.

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

Discounted Repeated

Theorem

For every $x \in C(G)$ such that $x_i > R_i$ for all $i \in I$, there exists $\underline{\lambda} \in (0, 1)$ such that for all $\lambda \in (\underline{\lambda}, 1)$ there exists $f \in F_\lambda^$ with the property that $H^\lambda(f) = x$.*

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

Finitely Repeated

Theorem

Benoît and Krishna (1987) Assume that for every $i \in I$ there exists $a^(i) \in A^*$ such that $h_i(a^*(i)) > R_i$. Then, for all $x \in C(G)$ such that $x_i > R_i$ for all $i \in I$ and for every $\varepsilon > 0$ there exists $\hat{T} \in \mathbb{N}$ such that for all $T > \hat{T}$ there exists $f \in F_T^*$ such that $\|H^T(f) - x\| < \varepsilon$.*

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5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

Finitely Repeated: Intuition

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- Terminal phase: for $Q \in \mathbb{N}$,

$$\underbrace{a^*(1), \dots, a^*(n)}_{n \text{ periods}}, \dots, \underbrace{a^*(1), \dots, a^*(n)}_{n \text{ periods}}.$$

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- Observe that for all $i \in N$, $h_i(a^*(i)) > R_i$ and $h_i(a^*(j)) \geq R_i$ for all $j \in N$.
- Average payoffs in the terminal phase: for all $i \in N$,

$$y_i = \frac{1}{Qn} Q \sum_{j=1}^n h_i(a^*(j)) = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{j=1}^n h_i(a^*(j)) > R_i.$$

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- Given $x \in C(G)$ such that $x_i > R_i$ for all $i \in N$, choose Q with the property that for all $i \in N$,

$$x_i + Qy_i > \sup_{a \in A} h_i(a) + QR_i.$$

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- Given $\varepsilon > 0$, choose $T \in \mathbb{N}$ such that there exists a cycle $\{a^t\}$ of length $T - Qn$ such that

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- Define $f \in F_T$: for $i \in N$,
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$$f_i^t(\cdot) = \begin{cases} a^t & \text{if all players follow the cycle } \{a^t\} \\ a(j)_i & \text{if } j \text{ has deviated,} \end{cases}$$

where $a(j)$ is such that $h_j(b_j, a(j)_{-j}) \leq R_j$ for all $b_j \in A_j$.

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- for $T - Qn + 1 \leq t < T$.

$$f_i^t(\cdot) = \text{terminal phase of Nash equilibria.}$$

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems

Finitely Repeated: Intuition

- It is possible to show that for all T sufficiently large, all $i \in N$, and all $g_i \in F_i$,

$$H_i^T(f) \geq H_i^T(g_i, f_{-i});$$

namely, $f \in F_T^*$.

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namely, $f \in F_T^*$.

- Moreover, for sufficiently large T ,

$$\|H^T(f) - x\| < \varepsilon;$$

namely, the weight of the terminal phase vanishes.

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems: SPE

- Let $G = (I, (A_i)_{i \in I}, (h_i)_{i \in I})$ be a game in normal form.

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- For every $t \geq 1$ and $i \in I$ define the mapping

$$s_i : F_i \times A^t \longrightarrow F_i,$$

where, for every $(f_i, (a^1, \dots, a^t)) \in F_i \times A^t$, $s(f_i, (a^1, \dots, a^t))_i \in F_i$ is obtained as follows:

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$$s(f_i, (a^1, \dots, a^t))_i^{r+1}(b^1, \dots, b^r) = f_i^{t+r+1}(a^1, \dots, a^t, b^1, \dots, b^r).$$

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- Notation: for every $(f, (a^1, \dots, a^t)) \in F \times A^t$, set

$$s(f, (a^1, \dots, a^t)) \equiv (s(f_i, (a^1, \dots, a^t)))_{i \in I}.$$

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems: SPE

Definition Let $G = (I, (A_i)_{i \in I}, (h_i)_{i \in I})$ be a game in normal form. An strategy $f \in F$ is a *Subgame Perfect Equilibrium (SPE)* of G_α , for $\alpha = \infty, \lambda$, if for every $t \geq 1$ and every $(a^1, \dots, a^t) \in A^t$, $s(f, (a^1, \dots, a^t))$ is a Nash equilibrium of G_α .

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Theorem

Aumann, Shapley, Rubinstein. Let $G = (I, (A_i)_{i \in I}, (h_i)_{i \in I})$ be a bounded game in normal form. Then,

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Theorem

Friedman (1971) Let $a^* \in A^*$ be such that $h(a^*) = e$. Then, for every $x \in C(G)$ such that $x_i > e_i$ for all $i \in I$, there exists $\underline{\lambda} \in (0, 1)$ such that for all $\lambda \in (\underline{\lambda}, 1)$ there exists a SPE f of G_λ with $H^\lambda(f) = x$.

5.4.- “Folk” Theorems: SPE

Theorem

Fudenberg and Maskin (1986) Let $G = (I, (A_i)_{i \in I}, (h_i)_{i \in I})$ be a bounded game in normal form and assume $\dim(C(G)) = n$. Then, for all $x \in C(G)$ such that $x_i > R_i$ for all $i \in I$, there exists $\underline{\lambda} \in (0, 1)$ such that for all $\lambda \in (\underline{\lambda}, 1)$ there exists a SPE f of G_λ with $H^\lambda(f) = x$.

Theorem

Benoît and Krishna (1985) Let $G = (I, (A_i)_{i \in I}, (h_i)_{i \in I})$ be a bounded game in normal form and assume that for each $i \in I$ there exist $a^*(i), \tilde{a}(i) \in A^*$ such that $h_i(a^*(i)) > h_i(\tilde{a}(i))$ and that $\dim(C(G)) = n$. Then, for every $x \in C(G)$ such that $x_i > R_i$ for all $i \in I$ and every $\varepsilon > 0$ there exists $\hat{T} \in \mathbb{N}$ such that for all $T > \hat{T}$ there exists a SPE $f \in F$ of G_T such that $\|H^T(f) - x\| < \varepsilon$.

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5.5.- Stochastic Games

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 - industry where firms enter and leave (endogenously),
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- Idea: several games may be played, with a transition probability that may depend on the profile of actions.

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 - $G_k = (I, (A_i^k)_{i \in I}, (h_i^k)_{i \in I})$ is a finite game in normal form,
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Theorem

Shapley (1953) Let $\{G_1, \dots, G_K\}$ and p be an stochastic game with the property that $\#I = 2$ and for all $k = 1, \dots, K$, G_k is zero sum. Then, the infinitely repeated game with discounting has a value.

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- Lockwood, B. “The Folk Theorem in Stochastic Games with and without Discounting,” *Birkbeck College Discussion Paper in Economics* 18, 1990.

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