

Theoretical Foundations of Buffer Stock Saving

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Abstract

This paper builds foundations for rigorous and intuitive understanding of ‘buffer stock’ saving models (Bewley (1977)-like models with a wealth target), pairing each theoretical result with quantitative illustrations. After describing conditions under which a consumption function exists, the paper articulates stricter ‘Growth Impatience’ conditions that guarantee alternative forms of stability — either at the population level, or for individual consumers. Together, the numerical tools and analytical results constitute a comprehensive toolkit for understanding buffer stock models.

Keywords Precautionary saving, buffer stock saving, marginal propensity to consume, permanent income hypothesis, income fluctuation problem

JEL codes D81, D91, E21

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The paper's results can be automatically reproduced using the Econ-ARK/HARK toolkit, which can be cited per our references (Carroll, Kaufman, Kazil, Palmer, and White (2018)); for reference to the toolkit itself see Acknowledging Econ-ARK. Thanks to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau for funding the original creation of the Econ-ARK toolkit; and to the Sloan Foundation for funding Econ-ARK's extensive further development that brought it to the point where it could be used for this project. The toolkit can be cited with its digital object identifier, 10.5281/zenodo.1001067, as is done in the paper's own references as Carroll, Kaufman, Kazil, Palmer, and White (2018). Thanks to Will Du, James Feigenbaum, Joseph Kaboski, Miles Kimball, Qingyin Ma, Misuzu Otsuka, Damiano Sandri, John Stachurski, Adam Szeidl, Alexis Akira Toda, Metin Uyanik, Mateo Velásquez-Giraldo, Weifeng Wu, Jiaxiong Yao, and Xudong Zheng for comments on earlier versions of this paper, John Boyd for help in applying his weighted contraction mapping theorem, Ryoji Hiraguchi for extraordinary mathematical insight that improved the paper greatly, David Zervos for early guidance to the literature, and participants in a seminar at the Johns Hopkins University, a presentation at the 2009 meetings of the Society of Economic Dynamics for their insights, and at a presentation at the Australian National University.

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1 Introduction

In the presence of realistic transitory and permanent shocks to income *a la* Friedman (1957) and Muth (1960), only one further ingredient is required to construct a microeconomically testable model of consumption: A description of preferences. Zeldes (1989) was the first to calibrate a quantitatively plausible example; his paper spawned a literature showing that such models' predictions can match household life cycle data reasonably well, whether or not explicit liquidity constraints are imposed.¹

A connected literature in macroeconomic theory, starting with Bewley (1977), has derived limiting properties of related infinite-horizon problems – but only in models more complex than the case with just shocks and preferences, because standard contraction mapping theorems (beginning with Bellman (1957) and including those building on Stokey et al. (1989)) cannot be applied when utility and/or marginal utility are unbounded. Many proof methods also rule out permanent shocks *a la* Friedman (1957) and Muth (1960) (and Zeldes).²

This paper's first contribution is to articulate conditions under which the infinite-horizon Friedman-Muth(-Zeldes) problem (without complications like a consumption floor or liquidity constraints) defines a contraction mapping whose limit is sensible as the horizon approaches infinity. A '**Finite Value of Autarky Condition**' is mostly sufficient (the other requirement, the '**Weak Return Impatience Condition**',³ is unlikely to bind). Because the infinite-horizon solution is the limit of finite-horizon recursions, many intermediate results are also useful for solving finite-horizon problems.

But the main theoretical contribution is to identify, for the infinite-horizon case, conditions under which 'stable' points exist (wealth can be predicted to move toward a 'target'; alternatively, there is a 'balanced growth' equilibrium) either for individual consumers or for the aggregate. The requirement for stability is always that the model's parameters satisfy a 'Growth Impatience Condition' whose details depend on the quantity whose stability is of interest. A model with stable points qualifies as a 'buffer stock' model.⁴

Even without a formal proof of its existence, buffer stock saving has been intuitively understood to underlie central quantitative results in heterogeneous agent macroeconomics; for example, the logic of target saving is central to the claim by Krueger, Mitman, and Perri (2016) in the *Handbook of Macroeconomics* that such models explain why, during the Great Recession, middle-class consumers cut their spending more than the poor or the rich. The theory below provides the rigorous basis for this claim: Learning that the future has become more uncertain does not change the urgent imperatives of

¹See Carroll (1997) or Gourinchas and Parker (2002) for arguments that models with only 'natural' constraints (see below) match a wide variety of facts; for a model with explicit constraints that produces very similar results, see, e.g. Cagetti (2003).

²See the fuller discussion at the end of Section 2.1.

³This is a generalization of a condition in Ma, Stachurski, and Toda (2020).

⁴Buffer stock models are neither a subset nor a superset of Bewley (1977) models. But closed economies in which capital accumulation is limited by declining marginal productivity are always 'buffer stock' economies, because the declining marginal product of capital guarantees that a Growth Impatience Condition will hold in equilibrium (see below). The less obvious applications are to populations (or economies) whose marginal saving behavior does not determine the relevant interest rate, or in which the marginal product of capital does not fall as capital is accumulated (again, see below).

the poor (their high $u'(c)$ means they — optimally — have little room to maneuver). And, increased labor income uncertainty does not much change the behavior of the rich because it poses little risk to their consumption. Only people in the middle have both the motivation and the wiggle-room to respond to uncertainty by reducing their spending.

Analytical derivations required for the proofs also explain many other results familiar from the numerical literature.

The paper begins by describing sufficient conditions for the problem to define a sensible (nondegenerate) limiting consumption function (and explains how the model relates to those previously considered). The conditions are interestingly parallel to those required for the **liquidity constrained perfect foresight model**; that parallel is explored and explained. This analysis establishes limiting properties of the consumption function as resources approach infinity, and as they approach their lower bound; using these limits, the contraction mapping theorem is proven.

The next theoretical contribution demonstrates that a model with an ‘artificial’ liquidity constraint (it prohibits borrowing by consumers who could certainly repay) is a limiting case of the unconstrained model. The analytical appeal of the unconstrained model is that it is both mathematically convenient (e.g., the consumption function is twice continuously differentiable), and arbitrarily close (cf. Section ??) to less tractable models. This congenial environment makes proofs easier (if we define a proposition as holding (in the limit) if it continues to hold as the horizon extends to infinity).

In proving the remaining theorems, the **next section** examines key properties of the model. First, **as cash approaches infinity** the expected growth rate of consumption and the marginal propensity to consume (MPC) converge to their values in the perfect foresight case. Second, **as cash approaches zero** the expected growth rate of consumption approaches infinity, and the MPC approaches a simple analytical limit. Next, the central theorems articulate conditions under which different measures of ‘growth impatience’ imply useful conclusions about points of stability (‘target’ or ‘balanced growth’ points).

The final section elaborates the conditions under which, even with a fixed aggregate interest rate that differs from the time preference rate, a small open economy populated by buffer stock consumers has a balanced growth equilibrium in which growth rates of consumption, income, and wealth match the exogenous growth rate of permanent income (equivalent, here, to productivity growth). In the terms of Schmitt-Grohé and Uribe (2003), buffer stock saving is an appealing method of ‘closing’ a small open economy model, because it requires no ad-hoc assumptions. Not even liquidity constraints.⁵

2 The Problem

2.1 Setup

The infinite horizon solution is the (limiting) first-period solution to a sequence of finite-horizon problems as the horizon (the last period of life) becomes arbitrarily distant.

⁵The paper’s insights are instantiated in the **Econ-ARK** toolkit, whose **buffer stock saving module** flags parametric choices under which a problem is degenerate or under which stable ratios of wealth to income may not exist.

2.1 Setup

That is, for the value function, fixing a terminal date T , we are interested in \mathbf{v}_{T-n} in the sequence of value functions $\{\mathbf{v}_T, \mathbf{v}_{T-1}, \dots, \mathbf{v}_{T-n}\}$. We will say that the problem has a ‘nondegenerate’ infinite horizon solution if, corresponding to that \mathbf{v} , as $n \uparrow \infty$ there is a limiting consumption function $c(m) = \lim_{n \uparrow \infty} c_{T-n}$ which is neither $c(m) = 0$ everywhere (for all m) nor $c(m) = \infty$ everywhere.

Concretely, a consumer born n periods before date T solves the problem

$$\mathbf{v}_{T-n} = \max \mathbb{E}_t \left[\sum_{i=0}^n \beta^i u(\mathbf{c}_{t+i}) \right]$$

where the Constant Relative Risk Aversion (CRRA) utility function

$$u(\bullet) = \bullet^{1-\rho} / (1-\rho)$$

exhibits relative risk aversion $\rho > 1$.⁶ The consumer’s initial condition is defined by market resources \mathbf{m}_t and permanent noncapital income \mathbf{p}_t , which both are positive,

$$\{\mathbf{p}_t, \mathbf{m}_t\} \in (0, \infty), \quad (1)$$

and the consumer cannot die in debt,

$$\mathbf{c}_T \leq \mathbf{m}_T. \quad (2)$$

In the usual treatment, a dynamic budget constraint (DBC) incorporates several elements that jointly determine next period’s \mathbf{m} (given this period’s choices); for the detailed analysis here, it will be useful to disarticulate and describe every separate step:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{a}_t &= \mathbf{m}_t - \mathbf{c}_t \\ \mathbf{k}_{t+1} &= \mathbf{a}_t \\ \mathbf{b}_{t+1} &= \mathbf{k}_{t+1} \mathbf{R} \\ \mathbf{p}_{t+1} &= \mathbf{p}_t \underbrace{\Gamma \psi_{t+1}}_{\equiv \Gamma_{t+1}} \\ \mathbf{m}_{t+1} &= \mathbf{b}_{t+1} + \mathbf{p}_{t+1} \xi_{t+1}, \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

where \mathbf{a}_t indicates the consumer’s assets at the end of period t , which translate one-for-one into capital \mathbf{k}_{t+1} at the beginning of the next period, which (before the consumption choice) grows by a fixed interest factor $\mathbf{R} = (1+r)$, so that \mathbf{b}_{t+1} is the consumer’s financial (‘bank’) balances before next period’s consumption choice;⁷ \mathbf{m}_{t+1} (‘market resources’) is the sum of financial wealth \mathbf{b}_{t+1} and noncapital income $\mathbf{p}_{t+1} \xi_{t+1}$ (permanent noncapital income \mathbf{p}_{t+1} multiplied by a mean-one iid transitory income shock factor ξ_{t+1} ; transitory shocks are assumed to satisfy $\mathbb{E}_t[\xi_{t+n}] = 1 \forall n \geq 1$). Permanent noncapital income in $t+1$ is equal to its previous value, multiplied by a growth factor Γ , modified by a mean-one iid shock ψ_{t+1} , $\mathbb{E}_t[\psi_{t+n}] = 1 \forall n \geq 1$ satisfying $\psi \in [\underline{\psi}, \bar{\psi}]$ for $0 < \underline{\psi} \leq 1 \leq \bar{\psi} < \infty$ (and $\underline{\psi} = \bar{\psi} = 1$ is the degenerate case with no permanent shocks).

⁶The main results also hold for logarithmic utility which is the limit as $\rho \rightarrow 1$ but incorporating the logarithmic special case in the proofs is omitted because it would be cumbersome.

⁷Allowing a stochastic interest factor is straightforward but adds little insight for our purposes; however, see Benhabib, Bisin, and Zhu (2015), Ma and Toda (2020), and Ma, Stachurski, and Toda (2020) for the implications of capital income risk for the distribution of wealth and other interesting questions not considered here.

2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

Following Zeldes (1989), in future periods $t + n \forall n \geq 1$ there is a small probability \wp that income will be zero (a ‘zero-income event’),

$$\xi_{t+n} = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{with probability } \wp > 0 \\ \theta_{t+n}/(1 - \wp) & \text{with probability } (1 - \wp) \end{cases} \quad (4)$$

where θ_{t+n} is an iid mean-one random variable ($\mathbb{E}_t[\theta_{t+n}] = 1 \forall n > 0$) whose distribution satisfies $\theta \in [\underline{\theta}, \bar{\theta}]$ where $0 < \underline{\theta} \leq 1 \leq \bar{\theta} < \infty$.⁸ Call the cumulative distribution functions \mathcal{F}_ψ and \mathcal{F}_θ (where \mathcal{F}_ξ is derived trivially from (4) and \mathcal{F}_θ). For quick identification in tables and graphs, we will call this the ‘Friedman/Muth’ model because it is a specific implementation of Friedman (1957)’s ideas as interpreted by Muth (1960).

The model looks more special than it is. In particular, a positive probability of zero-income events may seem objectionable (despite empirical support).⁹ But a nonzero minimum value of ξ (motivated, say, by the existence of unemployment insurance) could be handled by capitalizing the PDV of minimum income into current market assets,¹⁰ transforming that model back into this one. And no key results would change if the transitory shocks were persistent but mean-reverting, instead of IID. Also, the assumption of a positive point mass for the worst realization of the transitory shock is inessential, but simplifies the proofs and is a powerful aid to intuition.

2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

This model differs from Bewley’s (1977) classic formulation in several ways. The CRRA utility function does not satisfy Bewley’s assumption that $u(0)$ is well-defined, or that $u'(0)$ is well-defined and finite; indeed, neither the value function nor the marginal value function will be bounded. It differs from Schectman and Escudero (1977) in that they impose liquidity constraints and positive minimum income. It differs from both of these in that it permits permanent growth in income, and also permanent shocks to income, which a large empirical literature finds to be of dominant importance in microdata.¹¹ It differs from Deaton (1991) because liquidity constraints are absent; there are separate transitory and permanent shocks (*a la* Muth (1960)); and the transitory shocks here can occasionally cause income to reach zero.

⁸Rabault (2002) and Li and Stachurski (2014) analyze cases where the shock processes have unbounded support.

⁹We calibrate this probability to 0.005 to match data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (Carroll (1992)).

¹⁰So long as unemployment benefits are proportional to \mathbf{p}_t ; see the discussion in Section ??.

¹¹MaCurdy (1982); Abowd and Card (1989); Carroll and Samwick (1997); Jappelli and Pistaferri (2000). Much of the literature instead incorporates highly ‘persistent’ but not completely permanent shocks, but Daly, Hryshko, and Manovskii (2016) show that when measurement problems are handled correctly data yields serial correlation coefficients 0.98 – 1.00; and Hryshko and Manovskii (2020) suggests that survey data support the same conclusion.

Appendices

A Perfect Foresight Liquidity Constrained Solution

Under perfect foresight in the presence of a liquidity constraint requiring $b \geq 0$, this appendix taxonomizes the varieties of the limiting consumption function $\dot{c}(m)$ that arise under various parametric conditions. Results are summarized in table 1.

A.1 If GIC Fails

A consumer is ‘growth patient’ if the perfect foresight growth impatience condition fails (\mathcal{GIC}^* , $1 < \mathbf{D}/\Gamma$). Under \mathcal{GIC}^* the constraint does not bind at the lowest feasible value of $m_t = 1$ because $1 < (\mathbf{R}\beta)^{1/\rho}/\Gamma$ implies that spending everything today (setting $c_t = m_t = 1$) produces lower marginal utility than is obtainable by reallocating a marginal unit of resources to the next period at return \mathbf{R} :¹²

$$\begin{aligned} 1 &< (\mathbf{R}\beta)^{1/\rho}\Gamma^{-1} \\ 1 &< \mathbf{R}\beta\Gamma^{-\rho} \\ u'(1) &< \mathbf{R}\beta u'(\Gamma). \end{aligned}$$

Similar logic shows that under these circumstances the constraint will never bind at $m = 1$ for a constrained consumer with a finite horizon of n periods, so for $m \geq 1$ such a consumer’s consumption function will be the same as for the unconstrained case examined in the main text.

RIC fails, FHW C holds. If the RIC fails ($1 < \mathbf{D}_R$) while the finite human wealth condition holds, the limiting value of this consumption function as $n \uparrow \infty$ is the degenerate function

$$\dot{c}_{T-n}(m) = 0(b_t + h). \quad (5)$$

(that is, consumption is zero for any level of human or nonhuman wealth).

RIC fails, FHW C fails. $\mathcal{FHW C}$ implies that human wealth limits to $h = \infty$ so the consumption function limits to either $\dot{c}_{T-n}(m) = 0$ or $\dot{c}_{T-n}(m) = \infty$ depending on the relative speeds with which the MPC approaches zero and human wealth approaches ∞ .¹³

Thus, the requirement that the consumption function be nondegenerate implies that for a consumer satisfying \mathcal{GIC}^* we must impose the RIC (and the FHW C can be shown to be a consequence of \mathcal{GIC}^* and RIC). In this case, the consumer’s optimal behavior is easy to describe. We can calculate the point at which the unconstrained consumer

¹²The point at which the constraint would bind (if that point could be attained) is the $m = c$ for which $u'(c_\#) = \mathbf{R}\beta u'(\Gamma)$ which is $c_\# = \Gamma/(\mathbf{R}\beta)^{1/\rho}$ and the consumption function will be defined by $\dot{c}(m) = \min[m, c_\# + (m - c_\#)\underline{\kappa}]$.

¹³The knife-edge case is where $\mathbf{D} = \Gamma$, in which case the two quantities counterbalance and the limiting function is $\dot{c}(m) = \min[m, 1]$.

would choose $c = m$ from Equation (??):

$$\begin{aligned} m_{\#} &= (m_{\#} - 1 + h)\underline{\kappa} \\ m_{\#}(1 - \underline{\kappa}) &= (h - 1)\underline{\kappa} \\ m_{\#} &= (h - 1) \left(\frac{\underline{\kappa}}{1 - \underline{\kappa}} \right) \end{aligned} \tag{6}$$

which (under these assumptions) satisfies $0 < m_{\#} < 1$.¹⁴ For $m < m_{\#}$ the unconstrained consumer would choose to consume more than m ; for such m , the constrained consumer is obliged to choose $\bar{c}(m) = m$.¹⁵ For any $m > m_{\#}$ the constraint will never bind and the consumer will choose to spend the same amount as the unconstrained consumer, $\bar{c}(m)$.

(Stachurski and Toda (2019) obtain a similar lower bound on consumption and use it to study the tail behavior of the wealth distribution.)

A.2 If GIC Holds

Imposition of the GIC reverses the inequality in (5), and thus reverses the conclusion: A consumer who starts with $m_t = 1$ will desire to consume more than 1. Such a consumer will be constrained, not only in period t , but perpetually thereafter.

Now define $b_{\#}^n$ as the b_t such that an unconstrained consumer holding $b_t = b_{\#}^n$ would behave so as to arrive in period $t + n$ with $b_{t+n} = 0$ (with $b_{\#}^0$ trivially equal to 0); for example, a consumer with $b_{t-1} = b_{\#}^1$ was on the ‘cusp’ of being constrained in period $t - 1$: Had b_{t-1} been infinitesimally smaller, the constraint would have been binding (because the consumer would have desired, but been unable, to enter period t with negative, not zero, b). Given the GIC, the constraint certainly binds in period t (and thereafter) with resources of $m_t = m_{\#}^0 = 1 + b_{\#}^0 = 1$: The consumer cannot spend more (because constrained), and will not choose to spend less (because impatient), than $c_t = c_{\#}^0 = 1$.

We can construct the entire ‘prehistory’ of this consumer leading up to t as follows. Maintaining the assumption that the constraint has never bound in the past, c must have been growing according to \mathbf{P}_{Γ} , so consumption n periods in the past must have been

$$c_{\#}^n = \mathbf{P}_{\Gamma}^{-n} c_t = \mathbf{P}_{\Gamma}^{-n}. \tag{7}$$

¹⁴Note that $0 < m_{\#}$ is implied by RIC and $m_{\#} < 1$ is implied by GIC.

¹⁵As an illustration, consider a consumer for whom $\mathbf{P} = 1$, $R = 1.01$ and $\Gamma = 0.99$. This consumer will save the amount necessary to ensure that growth in market wealth exactly offsets the decline in human wealth represented by $\Gamma < 1$; total wealth (and therefore total consumption) will remain constant, even as market wealth and human wealth trend in opposite directions.

2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

The PDV of consumption from $t - n$ until t can thus be computed as

$$\begin{aligned}\mathbb{C}_{t-n}^t &= c_{t-n}(1 + \mathbf{P}/R + \cdots + (\mathbf{P}/R)^n) \\ &= c_{\#}^n(1 + \mathbf{P}_R + \cdots + \mathbf{P}_R^n) \\ &= \mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-n} \left(\frac{1 - \mathbf{P}_R^{n+1}}{1 - \mathbf{P}_R} \right) \\ &= \left(\frac{\mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-n} - \mathbf{P}_R}{1 - \mathbf{P}_R} \right)\end{aligned}$$

and note that the consumer's human wealth between $t - n$ and t (the relevant time horizon, because from t onward the consumer will be constrained and unable to access post- t income) is

$$h_{\#}^n = 1 + \cdots + \mathcal{R}^{-n} \quad (8)$$

while the intertemporal budget constraint says

$$\mathbb{C}_{t-n}^t = b_{\#}^n + h_{\#}^n$$

from which we can solve for the $b_{\#}^n$ such that the consumer with $b_{t-n} = b_{\#}^n$ would unconstrainedly plan (in period $t - n$) to arrive in period t with $b_t = 0$:

$$b_{\#}^n = \mathbb{C}_{t-n}^t - \overbrace{\left(\frac{1 - \mathcal{R}^{-(n+1)}}{1 - \mathcal{R}^{-1}} \right)}^{h_{\#}^n}. \quad (9)$$

Defining $m_{\#}^n = b_{\#}^n + 1$, consider the function $\mathring{c}(m)$ defined by linearly connecting the points $\{m_{\#}^n, c_{\#}^n\}$ for integer values of $n \geq 0$ (and setting $\mathring{c}(m) = m$ for $m < 1$). This function will return, for any value of m , the optimal value of c for a liquidity constrained consumer with an infinite horizon. The function is piecewise linear with 'kink points' where the slope discretely changes; for infinitesimal ϵ the MPC of a consumer with assets $m = m_{\#}^n - \epsilon$ is discretely higher than for a consumer with assets $m = m_{\#}^n + \epsilon$ because the latter consumer will spread a marginal dollar over more periods before exhausting it.

In order for a unique consumption function to be defined by this sequence (9) for the entire domain of positive real values of b , we need $b_{\#}^n$ to become arbitrarily large with n . That is, we need

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} b_{\#}^n = \infty. \quad (10)$$

A.2.1 If FHC Holds

The FHC requires $\mathcal{R}^{-1} < 1$, in which case the second term in (9) limits to a constant as $n \uparrow \infty$, and (10) reduces to a requirement that

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left(\frac{\mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-n} - (\mathbf{P}_R/\mathbf{P}_\Gamma)^n \mathbf{P}_R}{1 - \mathbf{P}_R} \right) = \infty$$

$$\begin{aligned}\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left(\frac{\mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-n} - \mathcal{R}^{-n} \mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R}}{1 - \mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R}} \right) &= \infty \\ \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left(\frac{\mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-n}}{1 - \mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R}} \right) &= \infty.\end{aligned}$$

Given the GIC $\mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-1} > 1$, this will hold iff the RIC holds, $\mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R} < 1$. But given that the FHWC $\mathbf{R} > \Gamma$ holds, the GIC is stronger (harder to satisfy) than the RIC; thus, the FHWC and the GIC together imply the RIC, and so a well-defined solution exists. Furthermore, in the limit as n approaches infinity, the difference between the limiting constrained consumption function and the unconstrained consumption function becomes vanishingly small, because the date at which the constraint binds becomes arbitrarily distant, so the effect of that constraint on current behavior shrinks to nothing. That is,

$$\lim_{m \rightarrow \infty} \bar{c}(m) - \bar{c}(m) = 0. \quad (11)$$

A.2.2 If FHWC Fails

If the FHWC fails, matters are a bit more complex.

Given failure of FHWC, (10) requires

$$\begin{aligned}\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left(\frac{\mathcal{R}^{-n} \mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R} - \mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-n}}{\mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R} - 1} \right) + \left(\frac{1 - \mathcal{R}^{-(n+1)}}{\mathcal{R}^{-1} - 1} \right) &= \infty \\ \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left(\frac{\mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R}}{\mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R} - 1} - \frac{\mathcal{R}^{-1}}{\mathcal{R}^{-1} - 1} \right) \mathcal{R}^{-n} - \left(\frac{\mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-n}}{\mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R} - 1} \right) &= \infty\end{aligned}$$

If RIC Holds. When the RIC holds, rearranging (12) gives

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left(\frac{\mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-n}}{1 - \mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R}} \right) - \mathcal{R}^{-n} \left(\frac{\mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R}}{1 - \mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R}} + \frac{\mathcal{R}^{-1}}{\mathcal{R}^{-1} - 1} \right) = \infty$$

and for this to be true we need

$$\begin{aligned}\mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-1} &> \mathcal{R}^{-1} \\ \Gamma/\mathbf{P} &> \Gamma/\mathbf{R} \\ 1 &> \mathbf{P}/\mathbf{R}\end{aligned}$$

which is merely the RIC again. So the problem has a solution if the RIC holds. Indeed, we can even calculate the limiting MPC from

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \kappa_\#^n = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left(\frac{c_\#^n}{b_\#^n} \right) \quad (12)$$

which with a bit of algebra¹⁶ can be shown to asymptote to the MPC in the perfect

¹⁶Calculate the limit of

$$\left(\frac{\mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-n}}{\mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-n}/(1 - \mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R}) - (1 - \mathcal{R}^{-1}\mathcal{R}^{-n})/(1 - \mathcal{R}^{-1})} \right) = \left(\frac{1}{1/(1 - \mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R}) + \mathcal{R}^{-n}\mathcal{R}^{-1}/(1 - \mathcal{R}^{-1})} \right) \quad (13)$$

foresight model:¹⁷

$$\lim_{m \rightarrow \infty} \dot{\kappa}(m) = 1 - \mathbf{P}_R. \quad (14)$$

If RIC Fails. Consider now the \mathbf{RIC}^* case, $\mathbf{P}_R > 1$. We can rearrange (12) as

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \left(\frac{\mathbf{P}_R(\mathcal{R}^{-1} - 1)}{(\mathcal{R}^{-1} - 1)(\mathbf{P}_R - 1)} - \frac{\mathcal{R}^{-1}(\mathbf{P}_R - 1)}{(\mathcal{R}^{-1} - 1)(\mathbf{P}_R - 1)} \right) \mathcal{R}^{-n} - \left(\frac{\mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-n}}{\mathbf{P}_R - 1} \right) = \infty. \quad (15)$$

which makes clear that with $\mathbf{EHWC} \Rightarrow \mathcal{R}^{-1} > 1$ and $\mathbf{RIC}^* \Rightarrow \mathbf{P}_R > 1$ the numerators and denominators of both terms multiplying \mathcal{R}^{-n} can be seen transparently to be positive. So, the terms multiplying \mathcal{R}^{-n} in (12) will be positive if

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{P}_R \mathcal{R}^{-1} - \mathbf{P}_R &> \mathcal{R}^{-1} \mathbf{P}_R - \mathcal{R}^{-1} \\ \mathcal{R}^{-1} &> \mathbf{P}_R \\ \Gamma &> \mathbf{P} \end{aligned}$$

which is merely the GIC which we are maintaining. So the first term's limit is $+\infty$. The combined limit will be $+\infty$ if the term involving \mathcal{R}^{-n} goes to $+\infty$ faster than the term involving $-\mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-n}$ goes to $-\infty$; that is, if

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{R}^{-1} &> \mathbf{P}_\Gamma^{-1} \\ \Gamma/R &> \Gamma/\mathbf{P} \\ \mathbf{P}/R &> 1 \end{aligned}$$

which merely confirms the starting assumption that the RIC fails.

What is happening here is that the $c_\#^n$ term is increasing backward in time at rate dominated in the limit by Γ/\mathbf{P} while the $b_\#$ term is increasing at a rate dominated by Γ/R term and

$$\Gamma/R > \Gamma/\mathbf{P} \quad (16)$$

because $\mathbf{RIC}^* \Rightarrow \mathbf{P} > R$.

Consequently, while $\lim_{n \uparrow \infty} b_\#^n = \infty$, the limit of the *ratio* $c_\#^n/b_\#^n$ in (12) is zero. Thus, surprisingly, the problem has a well defined solution with infinite human wealth if the RIC fails. It remains true that \mathbf{RIC}^* implies a limiting MPC of zero,

$$\lim_{m \rightarrow \infty} \dot{\kappa}(m) = 0, \quad (17)$$

but that limit is approached gradually, starting from a positive value, and consequently the consumption function is *not* the degenerate $\dot{c}(m) = 0$. (Figure 1 presents an example for $\rho = 2$, $R = 0.98$, $\beta = 1.00$, $\Gamma = 0.99$; note that the horizontal axis is bank balances $b = m - 1$; the part of the consumption function below the depicted points is uninteresting — $c = m$ — so not worth plotting).

We can summarize as follows. Given that the GIC holds, the interesting question is whether the FHC holds. If so, the RIC automatically holds, and the solution limits into

¹⁷For an example of this configuration of parameters, see the notebook `doApndxLiqConstr.nb` in the Mathematica software archive.

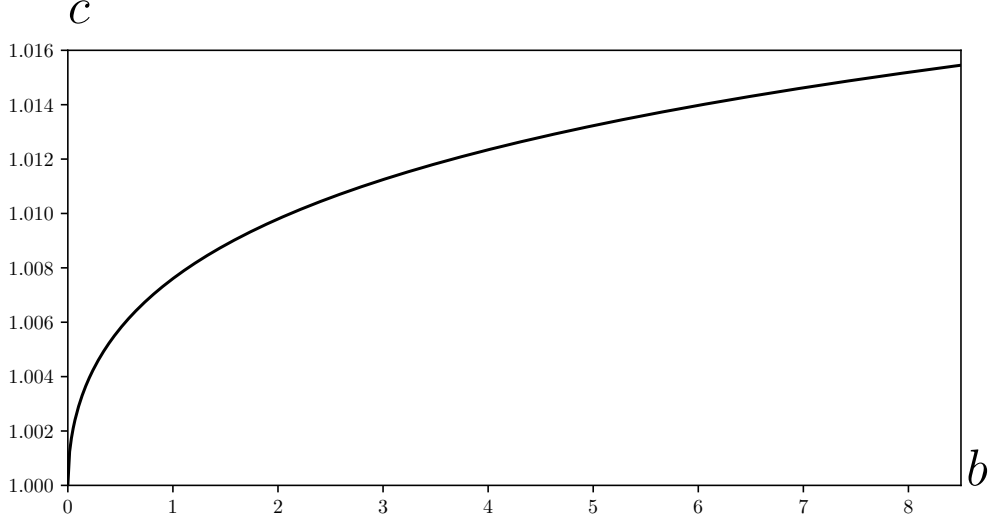


Figure 1 Nondegenerate Consumption Function with ~~FHWC~~ and ~~RIC~~

the solution to the unconstrained problem as $m \uparrow \infty$. But even if the FHWC fails, the problem has a well-defined and nondegenerate solution, whether or not the RIC holds.

Although these results were derived for the perfect foresight case, we know from work elsewhere in this paper and in other places that the perfect foresight case is an upper bound for the case with uncertainty. If the upper bound of the MPC in the perfect foresight case is zero, it is not possible for the upper bound in the model with uncertainty to be greater than zero, because for any $\kappa > 0$ the level of consumption in the model with uncertainty would eventually exceed the level of consumption in the absence of uncertainty.

Ma and Toda (2020) characterize the limits of the MPC in a more general framework that allows for capital and labor income risks in a Markovian setting with liquidity constraints, and find that in that much more general framework the limiting MPC is also zero.

B Existence of a Concave Consumption Function

To show that (??) defines a sequence of continuously differentiable strictly increasing concave functions $\{c_T, c_{T-1}, \dots, c_{T-k}\}$, we start with a definition. We will say that a function $n(z)$ is ‘nice’ if it satisfies

1. $n(z)$ is well-defined iff $z > 0$
2. $n(z)$ is strictly increasing
3. $n(z)$ is strictly concave
4. $n(z)$ is \mathbf{C}^3

2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

5. $n(z) < 0$

6. $\lim_{z \downarrow 0} n(z) = -\infty$.

(Notice that an implication of niceness is that $\lim_{z \downarrow 0} n'(z) = \infty$.)

Assume that some v_{t+1} is nice. Our objective is to show that this implies v_t is also nice; this is sufficient to establish that v_{t-n} is nice by induction for all $n > 0$ because $v_T(m) = u(m)$ and $u(m) = m^{1-\rho}/(1-\rho)$ is nice by inspection.

Now define an end-of-period value function $\mathbf{v}_t(a)$ as

$$\mathbf{v}_t(a) = \beta \mathbb{E}_t [\Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho} v_{t+1}(\mathcal{R}_{t+1}a + \xi_{t+1})]. \quad (18)$$

Since there is a positive probability that ξ_{t+1} will attain its minimum of zero and since $\mathcal{R}_{t+1} > 0$, it is clear that $\lim_{a \downarrow 0} \mathbf{v}_t(a) = -\infty$ and $\lim_{a \downarrow 0} \mathbf{v}'_t(a) = \infty$. So $\mathbf{v}_t(a)$ is well-defined iff $a > 0$; it is similarly straightforward to show the other properties required for $\mathbf{v}_t(a)$ to be nice. (See Hiraguchi (2003).)

Next define $\underline{v}_t(m, c)$ as

$$\underline{v}_t(m, c) = u(c) + \mathbf{v}_t(m - c) \quad (19)$$

which is \mathbf{C}^3 since \mathbf{v}_t and u are both \mathbf{C}^3 , and note that our problem's value function defined in (??) can be written as

$$v_t(m) = \max_c \underline{v}_t(m, c). \quad (20)$$

\underline{v}_t is well-defined if and only if $0 < c < m$. Furthermore, $\lim_{c \downarrow 0} \underline{v}_t(m, c) = \lim_{c \uparrow m} \underline{v}_t(m, c) = -\infty$, $\frac{\partial^2 \underline{v}_t(m, c)}{\partial c^2} < 0$, $\lim_{c \downarrow 0} \frac{\partial \underline{v}_t(m, c)}{\partial c} = +\infty$, and $\lim_{c \uparrow m} \frac{\partial \underline{v}_t(m, c)}{\partial c} = -\infty$. It follows that the $c_t(m)$ defined by

$$c_t(m) = \arg \max_{0 < c < m} \underline{v}_t(m, c) \quad (21)$$

exists and is unique, and (??) has an internal solution that satisfies

$$u'(c_t(m)) = \mathbf{v}'_t(m - c_t(m)). \quad (22)$$

Since both u and \mathbf{v}_t are strictly concave, both $c_t(m)$ and $a_t(m) = m - c_t(m)$ are strictly increasing. Since both u and \mathbf{v}_t are three times continuously differentiable, using (22) we can conclude that $c_t(m)$ is continuously differentiable and

$$c'_t(m) = \frac{\mathbf{v}''_t(a_t(m))}{u''(c_t(m)) + \mathbf{v}''_t(a_t(m))}. \quad (23)$$

Similarly we can easily show that $c_t(m)$ is twice continuously differentiable (as is $a_t(m)$) (See Appendix C.) This implies that $v_t(m)$ is nice, since $v_t(m) = u(c_t(m)) + \mathbf{v}_t(a_t(m))$.

C $c_t(m)$ is Twice Continuously Differentiable

First we show that $c_t(m)$ is \mathbf{C}^1 . Define y as $y \equiv m + dm$. Since $u'(c_t(y)) - u'(c_t(m)) = v'_t(a_t(y)) - v'_t(a_t(m))$ and $\frac{a_t(y) - a_t(m)}{dm} = 1 - \frac{c_t(y) - c_t(m)}{dm}$,

$$\frac{v'_t(a_t(y)) - v'_t(a_t(m))}{a_t(y) - a_t(m)} = \left(\frac{u'(c_t(y)) - u'(c_t(m))}{c_t(y) - c_t(m)} + \frac{v'_t(a_t(y)) - v'_t(a_t(m))}{a_t(y) - a_t(m)} \right) \frac{c_t(y) - c_t(m)}{dm}$$

Since c_t and a_t are continuous and increasing, $\lim_{dm \rightarrow +0} \frac{u'(c_t(y)) - u'(c_t(m))}{c_t(y) - c_t(m)} < 0$ and $\lim_{dm \rightarrow +0} \frac{v'_t(a_t(y)) - v'_t(a_t(m))}{a_t(y) - a_t(m)} < 0$ are satisfied. Then $\frac{u'(c_t(y)) - u'(c_t(m))}{c_t(y) - c_t(m)} + \frac{v'_t(a_t(y)) - v'_t(a_t(m))}{a_t(y) - a_t(m)} < 0$ for sufficiently small dm . Hence we obtain a well-defined equation:

$$\frac{c_t(y) - c_t(m)}{dm} = \frac{\frac{v'_t(a_t(y)) - v'_t(a_t(m))}{a_t(y) - a_t(m)}}{\frac{u'(c_t(y)) - u'(c_t(m))}{c_t(y) - c_t(m)} + \frac{v'_t(a_t(y)) - v'_t(a_t(m))}{a_t(y) - a_t(m)}}.$$

This implies that the right-derivative, $c_t^+(m)$ is well-defined and

$$c_t^+(m) = \frac{v''_t(a_t(m))}{u''(c_t(m)) + v''_t(a_t(m))}.$$

Similarly we can show that $c_t^+(m) = c_t^-(m)$, which means $c'_t(m)$ exists. Since v_t is \mathbf{C}^3 , $c'_t(m)$ exists and is continuous. $c'_t(m)$ is differentiable because v''_t is \mathbf{C}^1 , $c_t(m)$ is \mathbf{C}^1 and $u''(c_t(m)) + v''_t(a_t(m)) < 0$. $c''_t(m)$ is given by

$$c''_t(m) = \frac{a'_t(m)v'''_t(a_t) [u''(c_t) + v''_t(a_t)] - v''_t(a_t) [c'_t u'''(c_t) + a'_t v'''_t(a_t)]}{[u''(c_t) + v''_t(a_t)]^2}. \quad (24)$$

Since $v''_t(a_t(m))$ is continuous, $c''_t(m)$ is also continuous.

D Proof that \mathcal{T} Is a Contraction Mapping

We must show that our operator \mathcal{T} satisfies all of Boyd's conditions.

Boyd's operator \mathcal{T} maps from $\mathcal{C}_F(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B})$ to $\mathcal{C}(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B})$. A preliminary requirement is therefore that $\{\mathcal{T}z\}$ be continuous for any F -bounded z , $\{\mathcal{T}z\} \in \mathcal{C}(\mathbb{R}_{++}, \mathbb{R})$. This is not difficult to show; see Hiraguchi (2003).

Consider condition (1). For this problem,

$$\begin{aligned} \{\mathcal{T}x\}(m_t) &\text{ is } \max_{c_t \in [\underline{\kappa}m_t, \bar{\kappa}m_t]} \{u(c_t) + \beta \mathbb{E}_t [\Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho} x(m_{t+1})]\} \\ \{\mathcal{T}y\}(m_t) &\text{ is } \max_{c_t \in [\underline{\kappa}m_t, \bar{\kappa}m_t]} \{u(c_t) + \beta \mathbb{E}_t [\Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho} y(m_{t+1})]\}, \end{aligned}$$

so $x(\bullet) \leq y(\bullet)$ implies $\{\mathcal{T}x\}(m_t) \leq \{\mathcal{T}y\}(m_t)$ by inspection.¹⁸

¹⁸For a fixed m_t , recall that m_{t+1} is just a function of c_t and the stochastic shocks.

2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

Condition (2) requires that $\{\mathcal{T}\mathbf{0}\} \in \mathcal{C}_F(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B})$. By definition,

$$\{\mathcal{T}\mathbf{0}\}(m_t) = \max_{c_t \in [\underline{\kappa}m_t, \bar{\kappa}m_t]} \left\{ \left(\frac{c_t^{1-\rho}}{1-\rho} \right) + \beta 0 \right\}$$

the solution to which is patently $u(\bar{\kappa}m_t)$. Thus, condition (2) will hold if $(\bar{\kappa}m_t)^{1-\rho}$ is F -bounded. We use the bounding function

$$F(m) = \eta + m^{1-\rho}, \quad (25)$$

for some real scalar $\eta > 0$ whose value will be determined in the course of the proof. Under this definition of F , $\{\mathcal{T}\mathbf{0}\}(m_t) = u(\bar{\kappa}m_t)$ is clearly F -bounded.

Finally, we turn to condition (3), $\{\mathcal{T}(z + \zeta F)\}(m_t) \leq \{\mathcal{T}z\}(m_t) + \zeta \alpha F(m_t)$. The proof will be more compact if we define \check{c} and \check{a} as the consumption and assets functions¹⁹ associated with $\mathcal{T}z$ and \hat{c} and \hat{a} as the functions associated with $\mathcal{T}(z + \zeta F)$; using this notation, condition (3) can be rewritten

$$u(\hat{c}) + \beta \{E(z + \zeta F)\}(\hat{a}) \leq u(\check{c}) + \beta \{Ez\}(\check{a}) + \zeta \alpha F.$$

Now note that if we force the \cup consumer to consume the amount that is optimal for the \wedge consumer, value for the \cup consumer must decline (at least weakly). That is,

$$u(\hat{c}) + \beta \{Ez\}(\hat{a}) \leq u(\check{c}) + \beta \{Ez\}(\check{a}).$$

Thus, condition (3) will certainly hold under the stronger condition

$$\begin{aligned} u(\hat{c}) + \beta \{E(z + \zeta F)\}(\hat{a}) &\leq u(\hat{c}) + \beta \{Ez\}(\hat{a}) + \zeta \alpha F \\ \beta \{E(z + \zeta F)\}(\hat{a}) &\leq \beta \{Ez\}(\hat{a}) + \zeta \alpha F \\ \beta \zeta \{EF\}(\hat{a}) &\leq \zeta \alpha F \\ \beta \{EF\}(\hat{a}) &\leq \alpha F \\ \beta \{EF\}(\hat{a}) &< F. \end{aligned}$$

where the last line follows because $0 < \alpha < 1$ by assumption.²⁰

Using $F(m) = \eta + m^{1-\rho}$ and defining $\hat{a}_t = \hat{a}(m_t)$, this condition is

$$\beta \mathbb{E}_t[\Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho}(\hat{a}_t \mathcal{R}_{t+1} + \xi_{t+1})^{1-\rho}] - m_t^{1-\rho} < \eta(1 - \underbrace{\beta \mathbb{E}_t \Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho}}_{=\beth})$$

which by imposing PF-FVAC (equation (??), which says $\beth < 1$) can be rewritten as:

$$\eta > \frac{\beta \mathbb{E}_t[\Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho}(\hat{a}_t \mathcal{R}_{t+1} + \xi_{t+1})^{1-\rho}] - m_t^{1-\rho}}{1 - \beth}. \quad (26)$$

But since η is an arbitrary constant that we can pick, the proof thus reduces to showing

¹⁹Section ?? proves existence of a continuously differentiable consumption function, which implies the existence of a corresponding continuously differentiable assets function.

²⁰The remainder of the proof could be reformulated using the second-to-last line at a small cost to intuition.

that the numerator of (26) is bounded from above:

$$\begin{aligned}
 & (1 - \wp)\beta \mathbb{E}_t [\Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho}(\hat{a}_t \mathcal{R}_{t+1} + \theta_{t+1}/(1 - \wp))^{1-\rho}] + \wp\beta \mathbb{E}_t [\Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho}(\hat{a}_t \mathcal{R}_{t+1})^{1-\rho}] - m_t^{1-\rho} \\
 & \leq (1 - \wp)\beta \mathbb{E}_t [\Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho}((1 - \bar{\kappa})m_t \mathcal{R}_{t+1} + \theta_{t+1}/(1 - \wp))^{1-\rho}] + \wp\beta \mathbf{R}^{1-\rho}((1 - \bar{\kappa})m_t)^{1-\rho} - m_t^{1-\rho} \\
 & = (1 - \wp)\beta \mathbb{E}_t [\Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho}((1 - \bar{\kappa})m_t \mathcal{R}_{t+1} + \theta_{t+1}/(1 - \wp))^{1-\rho}] + m_t^{1-\rho} \left(\wp\beta \mathbf{R}^{1-\rho} \left(\wp^{1/\rho} \frac{(\mathbf{R}\beta)^{1/\rho}}{\mathbf{R}} \right)^{1-\rho} - 1 \right) \\
 & = (1 - \wp)\beta \mathbb{E}_t [\Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho}((1 - \bar{\kappa})m_t \mathcal{R}_{t+1} + \theta_{t+1}/(1 - \wp))^{1-\rho}] + m_t^{1-\rho} \left(\underbrace{\wp^{1/\rho} \frac{(\mathbf{R}\beta)^{1/\rho}}{\mathbf{R}}}_{<1 \text{ by WRIC}} - 1 \right) \\
 & < (1 - \wp)\beta \mathbb{E}_t [\Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho}(\underline{\theta}/(1 - \wp))^{1-\rho}] = \underline{\mathfrak{J}}(1 - \wp)^\rho \underline{\theta}^{1-\rho}.
 \end{aligned}$$

We can thus conclude that equation (26) will certainly hold for any:

$$\eta > \underline{\eta} = \frac{\underline{\mathfrak{J}}(1 - \wp)^\rho \underline{\theta}^{1-\rho}}{1 - \underline{\mathfrak{J}}} \quad (27)$$

which is a positive finite number under our assumptions.

The proof that \mathcal{T} defines a contraction mapping under the conditions (??) and (??) is now complete.

D.1 \mathcal{T} and v

In defining our operator \mathcal{T} we made the restriction $\underline{\kappa}m_t \leq c_t \leq \bar{\kappa}m_t$. However, in the discussion of the consumption function bounds, we showed only (in (??)) that $\underline{\kappa}_t m_t \leq c_t(m_t) \leq \bar{\kappa}_t m_t$. (The difference is in the presence or absence of time subscripts on the MPC's.) We have therefore not proven (yet) that the sequence of value functions (??) defines a contraction mapping.

Fortunately, the proof of that proposition is identical to the proof above, except that we must replace $\bar{\kappa}$ with $\bar{\kappa}_{T-1}$ and the WRIC must be replaced by a slightly stronger (but still quite weak) condition. The place where these conditions have force is in the step at (27). Consideration of the prior two equations reveals that a sufficient stronger condition is

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \wp\beta(\mathbf{R}(1 - \bar{\kappa}_{T-1}))^{1-\rho} < 1 \\
 & (\wp\beta)^{1/(1-\rho)}(1 - \bar{\kappa}_{T-1}) > 1 \\
 & (\wp\beta)^{1/(1-\rho)}(1 - (1 + \wp^{1/\rho}\mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R})^{-1}) > 1
 \end{aligned}$$

where we have used (??) for $\bar{\kappa}_{T-1}$ (and in the second step the reversal of the inequality occurs because we have assumed $\rho > 1$ so that we are exponentiating both sides by the negative number $1 - \rho$). To see that this is a weak condition, note that for small values of \wp this expression can be further simplified using $(1 + \wp^{1/\rho}\mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R})^{-1} \approx 1 - \wp^{1/\rho}\mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R}$ so that it becomes

$$(\wp\beta)^{1/(1-\rho)}\wp^{1/\rho}\mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R} > 1$$

$$\begin{aligned} (\wp\beta)\wp^{(1-\rho)/\rho}\mathbf{P}_R^{1-\rho} &< 1 \\ \beta\wp^{1/\rho}\mathbf{P}_R^{1-\rho} &< 1. \end{aligned}$$

Calling the weak return patience factor $\mathbf{P}_R^\wp = \wp^{1/\rho}\mathbf{P}_R$ and recalling that the WRIC was $\mathbf{P}_R^\wp < 1$, the expression on the LHS above is $\beta\mathbf{P}_R^{1-\rho}$ times the WRPf. Since we usually assume β not far below 1 and parameter values such that $\mathbf{P}_R \approx 1$, this condition is clearly not very different from the WRIC.

The upshot is that under these slightly stronger conditions the value functions for the original problem define a contraction mapping with a unique $v(m)$. But since $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \underline{\kappa}_{T-n} = \underline{\kappa}$ and $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \bar{\kappa}_{T-n} = \bar{\kappa}$, it must be the case that the $v(m)$ toward which these v_{T-n} 's are converging is the *same* $v(m)$ that was the endpoint of the contraction defined by our operator \mathcal{T} . Thus, under our slightly stronger (but still quite weak) conditions, not only do the value functions defined by (??) converge, they converge to the same unique v defined by \mathcal{T} .²¹

E Convergence in Euclidian Space

E.1 Convergence of v_t

Boyd's theorem shows that \mathcal{T} defines a contraction mapping in a F -bounded space. We now show that \mathcal{T} also defines a contraction mapping in Euclidian space.

Calling v^* the unique fixed point of the operator \mathcal{T} , since $v^*(m) = \mathcal{T}v^*(m)$,

$$\|v_{T-n+1} - v^*\|_F \leq \alpha^{n-1} \|v_T - v^*\|_F. \quad (28)$$

On the other hand, $v_T - v^* \in \mathcal{C}_F(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B})$ and $\kappa = \|v_T - v^*\|_F < \infty$ because v_T and v^* are in $\mathcal{C}_F(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{B})$. It follows that

$$|v_{T-n+1}(m) - v^*(m)| \leq \kappa \alpha^{n-1} |F(m)|. \quad (29)$$

Then we obtain

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} v_{T-n+1}(m) = v^*(m). \quad (30)$$

Since $v_T(m) = \frac{m^{1-\rho}}{1-\rho}$, $v_{T-1}(m) \leq \frac{(\bar{\kappa}m)^{1-\rho}}{1-\rho} < v_T(m)$. On the other hand, $v_{T-1} \leq v_T$ means $\mathcal{T}v_{T-1} \leq \mathcal{T}v_T$, in other words, $v_{T-2}(m) \leq v_{T-1}(m)$. Inductively one gets $v_{T-n}(m) \geq v_{T-n-1}(m)$. This means that $\{v_{T-n+1}(m)\}_{n=1}^\infty$ is a decreasing sequence, bounded below by v^* .

E.2 Convergence of c_t

Given the proof that the value functions converge, we now show the pointwise convergence of consumption functions $\{c_{T-n+1}(m)\}_{n=1}^\infty$.

²¹It seems likely that convergence of the value functions for the original problem could be proven even if only the WRIC were imposed; but that proof is not an essential part of the enterprise of this paper and is therefore left for future work.

2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

Consider any convergent subsequence $\{c_{T-n(i)}(m)\}$ of $\{c_{T-n+1}(m)\}_{n=1}^{\infty}$ converging to c^* . By the definition of $c_{T-n}(m)$, we have

$$u(c_{T-n(i)}(m)) + \beta \mathbb{E}_{T-n(i)}[\Gamma_{T-n(i)+1}^{1-\rho} v_{T-n(i)+1}(m)] \geq u(c_{T-n(i)}) + \beta \mathbb{E}_{T-n(i)}[\Gamma_{T-n(i)+1}^{1-\rho} v_{T-n(i)+1}(m)], \quad (31)$$

for any $c_{T-n(i)} \in [\underline{\kappa}m, \bar{\kappa}m]$. Now letting $n(i)$ go to infinity, it follows that the left hand side converges to $u(c^*) + \beta \mathbb{E}_t[\Gamma_t^{1-\rho} v(m)]$, and the right hand side converges to $u(c_{T-n(i)}) + \beta \mathbb{E}_t[\Gamma_t^{1-\rho} v(m)]$. So the limit of the preceding inequality as $n(i)$ approaches infinity implies

$$u(c^*) + \beta \mathbb{E}_t[\Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho} v(m)] \geq u(c_{T-n(i)}) + \beta \mathbb{E}_t[\Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho} v(m)]. \quad (32)$$

Hence, $c^* \in \arg \max_{c_{T-n(i)} \in [\underline{\kappa}m, \bar{\kappa}m]} \{u(c_{T-n(i)}) + \beta \mathbb{E}_t[\Gamma_{t+1}^{1-\rho} v(m)]\}$. By the uniqueness of $c(m)$, $c^* = c(m)$.

F Equality of Aggregate Consumption Growth and Income Growth with Transitory Shocks

Section ?? asserted that in the absence of permanent shocks it is possible to prove that the growth factor for aggregate consumption approaches that for aggregate permanent income. This section establishes that result.

First define $a(m)$ as the function that yields optimal end-of-period assets as a function of m .

Suppose the population starts in period t with an arbitrary value for $\text{cov}_t(a_{t+1,i}, \mathbf{p}_{t+1,i})$. Then if \check{m} is the invariant mean level of m we can define a ‘mean MPS away from \check{m} ’ function :

$$\bar{a}(\Delta) = \Delta^{-1} \int_{\check{m}}^{\check{m}+\Delta} a'(z) dz$$

where the combination of the bar and the ‘ are meant to signify that this is the average value of the derivative over the interval. Since $\psi_{t+1,i} = 1$, $\mathcal{R}_{t+1,i}$ is a constant at \mathcal{R} , if we define a as the value of a corresponding to $m = \check{m}$, we can write

$$a_{t+1,i} = a + (m_{t+1,i} - \check{m}) \bar{a}(\overbrace{\mathcal{R}a_{t,i} + \xi_{t+1,i} - \check{m}}^{m_{t+1,i}})$$

so

$$\text{cov}_t(a_{t+1,i}, \mathbf{p}_{t+1,i}) = \text{cov}_t(\bar{a}(\mathcal{R}a_{t,i} + \xi_{t+1,i} - \check{m}), \Gamma \mathbf{p}_{t,i}).$$

But since $R^{-1}(\wp R \beta)^{1/\rho} < \bar{a}(m) < \mathbf{P}_R$,

$$|\text{cov}_t((\wp R \beta)^{1/\rho} a_{t+1,i}, \mathbf{p}_{t+1,i})| < |\text{cov}_t(a_{t+1,i}, \mathbf{p}_{t+1,i})| < |\text{cov}_t(\mathbf{P} a_{t+1,i}, \mathbf{p}_{t+1,i})|$$

and for the version of the model with no permanent shocks the GIC-Nrm says that $\mathbf{P} < \Gamma$, while the FHWC says that $\Gamma < R$

$$|\text{cov}_t(a_{t+1,i}, \mathbf{p}_{t+1,i})| < \Gamma |\text{cov}_t(a_{t,i}, \mathbf{p}_{t,i})|.$$

This means that from any arbitrary starting value, the relative size of the covariance term shrinks to zero over time (compared to the $A\Gamma^n$ term which is growing steadily by the factor Γ). Thus, $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \mathbf{A}_{t+n+1}/\mathbf{A}_{t+n} = \Gamma$.

This logic unfortunately does not go through when there are permanent shocks, because the $\mathcal{R}_{t+1,i}$ terms are not independent of the permanent income shocks.

To see the problem clearly, define $\bar{\mathcal{R}} = \mathbb{M}[\mathcal{R}_{t+1,i}]$ and consider a first order Taylor expansion of $\bar{a}(m_{t+1,i})$ around $\hat{m}_{t+1,i} = \bar{\mathcal{R}}a_{t,i} + 1$,

$$\bar{a}_{t+1,i} \approx \bar{a}(\hat{m}_{t+1,i}) + \bar{a}'(\hat{m}_{t+1,i})(m_{t+1,i} - \hat{m}_{t+1,i}).$$

The problem comes from the \bar{a}' term. The concavity of the consumption function implies convexity of the a function, so this term is strictly positive but we have no theory to place bounds on its size as we do for its level \bar{a} . We cannot rule out by theory that a positive shock to permanent income (which has a negative effect on $m_{t+1,i}$) could have a (locally) unboundedly positive effect on \bar{a}' (as for instance if it pushes the consumer arbitrarily close to the self-imposed liquidity constraint).

G The Limiting MPC's

For $m_t > 0$ we can define $e_t(m_t) = c_t(m_t)/m_t$ and $a_t(m_t) = m_t - c_t(m_t)$ and the Euler equation (??) can be rewritten

$$\begin{aligned} e_t(m_t)^{-\rho} &= \beta R \mathbb{E}_t \left[\left(e_{t+1}(m_{t+1}) \left(\frac{\overbrace{Ra_t(m_t) + \Gamma_{t+1}\xi_{t+1}}^{=m_{t+1}\Gamma_{t+1}}}{m_t} \right) \right)^{-\rho} \right] \\ &= (1 - \wp) \beta R m_t^\rho \mathbb{E}_t [(e_{t+1}(m_{t+1}) m_{t+1} \Gamma_{t+1})^{-\rho} | \xi_{t+1} > 0] \\ &\quad + \wp \beta R^{1-\rho} \mathbb{E}_t \left[\left(e_{t+1}(\mathcal{R}_{t+1} a_t(m_t)) \frac{m_t - c_t(m_t)}{m_t} \right)^{-\rho} | \xi_{t+1} = 0 \right]. \end{aligned}$$

Consider the first conditional expectation in (??), recalling that if $\xi_{t+1} > 0$ then $\xi_{t+1} \equiv \theta_{t+1}/(1 - \wp)$. Since $\lim_{m \downarrow 0} a_t(m) = 0$, $\mathbb{E}_t[(e_{t+1}(m_{t+1}) m_{t+1} \Gamma_{t+1})^{-\rho} | \xi_{t+1} > 0]$ is contained within bounds defined by $(e_{t+1}(\underline{\theta}/(1 - \wp)) \Gamma \underline{\psi} \underline{\theta}/(1 - \wp))^{-\rho}$ and $(e_{t+1}(\bar{\theta}/(1 - \wp)) \Gamma \bar{\psi} \bar{\theta}/(1 - \wp))^{-\rho}$ both of which are finite numbers, implying that the whole term multiplied by $(1 - \wp)$ goes to zero as m_t^ρ goes to zero. As $m_t \downarrow 0$ the expectation in the other term goes to $\bar{\kappa}_{t+1}^{-\rho} (1 - \bar{\kappa}_t)^{-\rho}$. (This follows from the strict concavity and differentiability of the consumption function.) It follows that the limiting $\bar{\kappa}_t$ satisfies $\bar{\kappa}_t^{-\rho} = \beta \wp R^{1-\rho} \bar{\kappa}_{t+1}^{-\rho} (1 - \bar{\kappa}_t)^{-\rho}$. Exponentiating by ρ , we can conclude that

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{\kappa}_t &= \wp^{-1/\rho} (\beta R)^{-1/\rho} R (1 - \bar{\kappa}_t) \bar{\kappa}_{t+1} \\ \underbrace{\wp^{1/\rho} R^{-1} (\beta R)^{1/\rho}}_{\equiv \wp^{1/\rho} \mathbf{P}_R} \bar{\kappa}_t &= (1 - \bar{\kappa}_t) \bar{\kappa}_{t+1} \end{aligned}$$

2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

which yields a useful recursive formula for the maximal marginal propensity to consume:

$$\begin{aligned} (\wp^{1/\rho} \mathbf{P}_R \bar{\kappa}_t)^{-1} &= (1 - \bar{\kappa}_t)^{-1} \bar{\kappa}_{t+1}^{-1} \\ \bar{\kappa}_t^{-1} (1 - \bar{\kappa}_t) &= \wp^{1/\rho} \mathbf{P}_R \bar{\kappa}_{t+1}^{-1} \\ \bar{\kappa}_t^{-1} &= 1 + \wp^{1/\rho} \mathbf{P}_R \bar{\kappa}_{t+1}^{-1}. \end{aligned}$$

As noted in the main text, we need the WRIC (??) for this to be a convergent sequence:

$$0 \leq \wp^{1/\rho} \mathbf{P}_R < 1, \quad (33)$$

Since $\bar{\kappa}_T = 1$, iterating (33) backward to infinity (because we are interested in the limiting consumption function) we obtain:

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \bar{\kappa}_{T-n} = \bar{\kappa} \equiv 1 - \wp^{1/\rho} \mathbf{P}_R \quad (34)$$

and we will therefore call $\bar{\kappa}$ the ‘limiting maximal MPC.’

The minimal MPC’s are obtained by considering the case where $m_t \uparrow \infty$. If the FHC holds, then as $m_t \uparrow \infty$ the proportion of current and future consumption that will be financed out of capital approaches 1. Thus, the terms involving ξ_{t+1} in (33) can be neglected, leading to a revised limiting Euler equation

$$(m_t e_t(m_t))^{-\rho} = \beta R \mathbb{E}_t [(e_{t+1}(a_t(m_t) \mathcal{R}_{t+1}) (Ra_t(m_t)))^{-\rho}]$$

and we know from L’Hôpital’s rule that $\lim_{m_t \rightarrow \infty} e_t(m_t) = \underline{\kappa}_t$, and $\lim_{m_t \rightarrow \infty} e_{t+1}(a_t(m_t) \mathcal{R}_{t+1}) = \underline{\kappa}_{t+1}$ so a further limit of the Euler equation is

$$\begin{aligned} (m_t \underline{\kappa}_t)^{-\rho} &= \beta R (\underline{\kappa}_{t+1} R (1 - \underline{\kappa}_t) m_t)^{-\rho} \\ \underbrace{R^{-1} \mathbf{P}}_{\equiv \mathbf{P}_R = (1 - \underline{\kappa})} \underline{\kappa}_t &= (1 - \underline{\kappa}_t) \underline{\kappa}_{t+1} \end{aligned}$$

and the same sequence of derivations used above yields the conclusion that if the RIC $0 \leq \mathbf{P}_R < 1$ holds, then a recursive formula for the minimal marginal propensity to consume is given by

$$\underline{\kappa}_t^{-1} = 1 + \underline{\kappa}_{t+1}^{-1} \mathbf{P}_R \quad (35)$$

so that $(\{\underline{\kappa}_{T-n}^{-1}\}_{n=0}^{\infty})$ is also an increasing convergent sequence, and we define

$$\underline{\kappa}^{-1} \equiv \lim_{n \uparrow \infty} \underline{\kappa}_{T-n}^{-1} \quad (36)$$

as the limiting (inverse) marginal MPC. If the RIC does *not* hold, then $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \underline{\kappa}_{T-n}^{-1} = \infty$ and so the limiting MPC is $\underline{\kappa} = 0$.

For the purpose of constructing the limiting perfect foresight consumption function, it is useful further to note that the PDV of consumption is given by

$$c_t \underbrace{(1 + \mathbf{P}_R + \mathbf{P}_R^2 + \cdots)}_{= 1 + \mathbf{P}_R(1 + \mathbf{P}_R \underline{\kappa}_{t+2}^{-1}) \dots} = c_t \underline{\kappa}_{T-n}^{-1}.$$

which, combined with the intertemporal budget constraint, yields the usual formula for

the perfect foresight consumption function:

$$c_t = (b_t + h_t)\underline{\kappa}_t \quad (37)$$

H The Perfect Foresight Liquidity Constrained Solution as a Limit

Formally, suppose we change the description of the problem by making the following two assumptions:

$$\begin{aligned} \wp &= 0 \\ c_t &\leq m_t, \end{aligned}$$

and we designate the solution to this consumer's problem $\check{c}_t(m)$. We will henceforth refer to this as the problem of the 'restrained' consumer (and, to avoid a common confusion, we will refer to the consumer as 'constrained' only in circumstances when the constraint is actually binding).

Redesignate the consumption function that emerges from our original problem for a given fixed \wp as $c_t(m; \wp)$ where we separate the arguments by a semicolon to distinguish between m , which is a state variable, and \wp , which is not. The proposition we wish to demonstrate is

$$\lim_{\wp \downarrow 0} c_t(m; \wp) = \check{c}_t(m). \quad (38)$$

We will first examine the problem in period $T - 1$, then argue that the desired result propagates to earlier periods. For simplicity, suppose that the interest, growth, and time-preference factors are $\beta = R = \Gamma = 1$, and there are no permanent shocks, $\psi = 1$; the results below are easily generalized to the full-fledged version of the problem.

The solution to the restrained consumer's optimization problem can be obtained as follows. Assuming that the consumer's behavior in period T is given by $c_T(m)$ (in practice, this will be $c_T(m) = m$), consider the unrestrained optimization problem

$$\check{a}_{T-1}^*(m) = \arg \max_a \left\{ u(m - a) + \int_{\underline{\theta}}^{\bar{\theta}} v_T(a + \theta) d\mathcal{F}_{\theta} \right\}. \quad (39)$$

As usual, the envelope theorem tells us that $v'_T(m) = u'(c_T(m))$ so the expected marginal value of ending period $T - 1$ with assets a can be defined as

$$\check{v}'_{T-1}(a) \equiv \int_{\underline{\theta}}^{\bar{\theta}} u'(c_T(a + \theta)) d\mathcal{F}_{\theta},$$

and the solution to (39) will satisfy

$$u'(m - a) = \check{v}'_{T-1}(a). \quad (40)$$

$\check{a}_{T-1}^*(m)$ therefore answers the question "With what level of assets would the restrained consumer like to end period $T - 1$ if the constraint $c_{T-1} \leq m_{T-1}$ did not exist?" (Note that the restrained consumer's income process remains different from the process for

2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

the unrestrained consumer so long as $\wp > 0$.) The restrained consumer's actual asset position will be

$$\dot{a}_{T-1}(m) = \max[0, \dot{a}_{T-1}^*(m)],$$

reflecting the inability of the restrained consumer to spend more than current resources, and note (as pointed out by Deaton (1991)) that

$$m_{\#}^1 = (\dot{v}'_{T-1}(0))^{-1/\rho}$$

is the cusp value of m at which the constraint makes the transition between binding and non-binding in period $T - 1$.

Analogously to (40), defining

$$\mathbf{v}'_{T-1}(a; \wp) \equiv \left[\wp a^{-\rho} + (1 - \wp) \int_{\underline{\theta}}^{\bar{\theta}} (c_T(a + \theta/(1 - \wp)))^{-\rho} d\mathcal{F}_{\theta} \right], \quad (41)$$

the Euler equation for the original consumer's problem implies

$$(m - a)^{-\rho} = \mathbf{v}'_{T-1}(a; \wp) \quad (42)$$

with solution $\dot{a}_{T-1}^*(m; \wp)$. Now note that for any fixed $a > 0$, $\lim_{\wp \downarrow 0} \mathbf{v}'_{T-1}(a; \wp) = \dot{v}'_{T-1}(a)$. Since the LHS of (40) and (42) are identical, this means that $\lim_{\wp \downarrow 0} \dot{a}_{T-1}^*(m; \wp) = \dot{a}_{T-1}^*(m)$. That is, for any fixed value of $m > m_{\#}^1$ such that the consumer subject to the restraint would voluntarily choose to end the period with positive assets, the level of end-of-period assets for the unrestrained consumer approaches the level for the restrained consumer as $\wp \downarrow 0$. With the same a and the same m , the consumers must have the same c , so the consumption functions are identical in the limit.

Now consider values $m \leq m_{\#}^1$ for which the restrained consumer is constrained. It is obvious that the baseline consumer will never choose $a \leq 0$ because the first term in (41) is $\lim_{a \downarrow 0} \wp a^{-\rho} = \infty$, while $\lim_{a \downarrow 0} (m - a)^{-\rho}$ is finite (the marginal value of end-of-period assets approaches infinity as assets approach zero, but the marginal utility of consumption has a finite limit for $m > 0$). The subtler question is whether it is possible to rule out strictly positive a for the unrestrained consumer.

The answer is yes. Suppose, for some $m < m_{\#}^1$, that the unrestrained consumer is considering ending the period with any positive amount of assets $a = \delta > 0$. For any such δ we have that $\lim_{\wp \downarrow 0} \mathbf{v}'_{T-1}(a; \wp) = \dot{v}'_{T-1}(a)$. But by assumption we are considering a set of circumstances in which $\dot{a}_{T-1}^*(m) < 0$, and we showed earlier that $\lim_{\wp \downarrow 0} \dot{a}_{T-1}^*(m; \wp) = \dot{a}_{T-1}^*(m)$. So, having assumed $a = \delta > 0$, we have proven that the consumer would optimally choose $a < 0$, which is a contradiction. A similar argument holds for $m = m_{\#}^1$.

These arguments demonstrate that for any $m > 0$, $\lim_{\wp \downarrow 0} c_{T-1}(m; \wp) = \dot{c}_{T-1}(m)$ which is the period $T - 1$ version of (38). But given equality of the period $T - 1$ consumption functions, backwards recursion of the same arguments demonstrates that the limiting consumption functions in previous periods are also identical to the constrained function.

Note finally that another intuitive confirmation of the equivalence between the two problems is that our formula (34) for the maximal marginal propensity to consume

satisfies

$$\lim_{\varphi \downarrow 0} \bar{\kappa} = 1,$$

which makes sense because the marginal propensity to consume for a constrained restrained consumer is 1 by our definitions of ‘constrained’ and ‘restrained.’

I Endogenous Gridpoints Solution Method

The model is solved using an extension of the method of endogenous gridpoints (Carroll (2006)): A grid of possible values of end-of-period assets \vec{a} is defined, and at these points, marginal end-of-period- t value is computed as the discounted next-period expected marginal utility of consumption (which the Envelope theorem says matches expected marginal value). The results are then used to identify the corresponding levels of consumption at the beginning of the period:²²

$$\begin{aligned} u'(\mathbf{c}_t(\vec{a})) &= R\beta \mathbb{E}_t[u'(\Gamma_{t+1}\mathbf{c}_{t+1}(\mathcal{R}_{t+1}\vec{a} + \xi_{t+1}))] \\ \vec{c}_t \equiv \mathbf{c}_t(\vec{a}) &= (R\beta \mathbb{E}_t[(\Gamma_{t+1}\mathbf{c}_{t+1}(\mathcal{R}_{t+1}\vec{a} + \xi_{t+1}))^{-\rho}])^{-1/\rho}. \end{aligned}$$

The dynamic budget constraint can then be used to generate the corresponding m ’s:

$$\vec{m}_t = \vec{a} + \vec{c}_t.$$

An approximation to the consumption function could be constructed by linear interpolation between the $\{\vec{m}, \vec{c}\}$ points. But a vastly more accurate approximation can be made (for a given number of gridpoints) if the interpolation is constructed so that it also matches the marginal propensity to consume at the gridpoints. Differentiating (43) with respect to a (and dropping policy function arguments for simplicity) yields a marginal propensity to *have consumed* \mathbf{c}^a at each gridpoint:

$$\begin{aligned} u''(\mathbf{c}_t)\mathbf{c}_t^a &= R\beta \mathbb{E}_t[u''(\Gamma_{t+1}\mathbf{c}_{t+1})\Gamma_{t+1}\mathbf{c}_{t+1}^m \mathcal{R}_{t+1}] \\ &= R\beta \mathbb{E}_t[u''(\Gamma_{t+1}\mathbf{c}_{t+1})R\mathbf{c}_{t+1}^m] \\ \mathbf{c}_t^a &= R\beta \mathbb{E}_t[u''(\Gamma_{t+1}\mathbf{c}_{t+1})R\mathbf{c}_{t+1}^m]/u''(\mathbf{c}_t) \end{aligned}$$

and the marginal propensity to consume at the beginning of the period is obtained from the marginal propensity to have consumed by noting that, if we define $\mathbf{m}(a) = \mathbf{c}(a) - a$,

$$\begin{aligned} c &= \mathbf{m} - a \\ \mathbf{c}^a + 1 &= \mathbf{m}^a \end{aligned}$$

which, together with the chain rule $\mathbf{c}^a = \mathbf{c}^m \mathbf{m}^a$, yields the MPC from

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{c}^m(\mathbf{c}^a + 1) &= \mathbf{c}^a \\ \mathbf{c}^m &= \mathbf{c}^a / (1 + \mathbf{c}^a) \end{aligned}$$

²²The software can also solve a version of the model with explicit liquidity constraints, where the Envelope condition does not hold.

and we call the vector of MPC's at the \vec{m}_t gridpoints $\vec{\kappa}_t$.

J The Terminal/Limiting Consumption Function

For any set of parameter values that satisfy the conditions required for convergence, the problem can be solved by setting the terminal consumption function to $c_T(m) = m$ and constructing $\{c_{T-1}, c_{T-2}, \dots\}$ by time iteration (a method that will converge to $c(m)$ by standard theorems). But $c_T(m) = m$ is very far from the final converged consumption rule $c(m)$,²³ and thus many periods of iteration will likely be required to obtain a candidate rule that even remotely resembles the converged function.

A natural alternative choice for the terminal consumption rule is the solution to the perfect foresight liquidity constrained problem, to which the model's solution converges (under specified parametric restrictions) as all forms of uncertainty approach zero (as discussed in the main text). But a difficulty with this idea is that the perfect foresight liquidity constrained solution is 'kinked.' The slope of the consumption function changes discretely at the points $\{m_{\#}^1, m_{\#}^2, \dots\}$. This is a practical problem because it rules out the use of derivatives of the consumption function in the approximate representation of $c(m)$, thereby preventing the enormous increase in efficiency obtainable from a higher-order approximation.

Our solution is simple: The formulae in another appendix that identify kink points on $c(m)$ for integer values of n (e.g., $c_{\#}^n = \mathbf{D}_{\Gamma}^{-n}$) are continuous functions of n ; the conclusion that $c(m)$ is piecewise linear between the kink points does not require that the *terminal consumption rule* (from which time iteration proceeds) also be piecewise linear. Thus, for values $n \geq 0$ we can construct a smooth function $\check{c}(m)$ that matches the true perfect foresight liquidity constrained consumption function at the set of points corresponding to integer periods in the future, but satisfies the (continuous, and greater at non-kink points) consumption rule defined from the appendix's formulas by noninteger values of n at other points.²⁴

This strategy generates a smooth limiting consumption function — except at the remaining kink point defined by $\{m_{\#}^0, c_{\#}^0\}$. Below this point, the solution must match $c(m) = m$ because the constraint is binding. At $m = m_{\#}^0$ the MPC discretely drops (that is, $\lim_{m \uparrow m_{\#}^0} c'(m) = 1$ while $\lim_{m \downarrow m_{\#}^0} c'(m) = \kappa_{\#}^0 < 1$).

Such a kink point causes substantial problems for numerical solution methods (like the one we use, described below) that rely upon the smoothness of the limiting consumption function.

Our solution is to use, as the terminal consumption rule, a function that is identical to the (smooth) continuous consumption rule $\check{c}(m)$ above some $n \geq \underline{n}$, but to replace $\check{c}(m)$ between $m_{\#}^0$ and $m_{\#}^{\underline{n}}$ with the unique polynomial function $\hat{c}(m)$ that satisfies the following criteria:

²³Unless $\beta \approx +0$.

²⁴In practice, we calculate the first and second derivatives of c and use piecewise polynomial approximation methods that match the function at these points.

1. $\hat{c}(m_{\#}^0) = c_{\#}^0$
2. $\hat{c}'(m_{\#}^0) = 1$
3. $\hat{c}'(m_{\#}^{\underline{n}}) = (dc_{\#}^n/dn)(dm_{\#}^n/dn)^{-1}|_{n=\underline{n}}$
4. $\hat{c}''(m_{\#}^{\underline{n}}) = (d^2c_{\#}^n/dn^2)(d^2m_{\#}^n/dn^2)^{-1}|_{n=\underline{n}}$

where \underline{n} is chosen judgmentally in a way calculated to generate a good compromise between smoothness of the limiting consumption function $\check{c}(m)$ and fidelity of that function to the $c(m)$ (see the actual code for details).

We thus define the terminal function as

$$c_T(m) = \begin{cases} 0 < m \leq m_{\#}^0 & m \\ m_{\#}^0 < m < m_{\#}^{\underline{n}} & \check{c}(m) \\ m_{\#}^{\underline{n}} < m & c(m) \end{cases} \quad (43)$$

Since the precautionary motive implies that in the presence of uncertainty the optimal level of consumption is below the level that is optimal without uncertainty, and since $\check{c}(m) \geq c(m)$, implicitly defining $m = e^{\mu}$ (so that $\mu = \log m$), we can construct

$$\chi_t(\mu) = \log(1 - c_t(e^{\mu})/c_T(e^{\mu})) \quad (44)$$

which must be a number between $-\infty$ and $+\infty$ (since $0 < c_t(m) < \check{c}(m)$ for $m > 0$). This function turns out to be much better behaved (as a numerical observation; no formal proof is offered) than the level of the optimal consumption rule $c_t(m)$. In particular, $\chi_t(\mu)$ is well approximated by linear functions both as $m \downarrow 0$ and as $m \uparrow \infty$.

Differentiating with respect to μ and dropping consumption function arguments yields

$$\chi_t'(\mu) = \left(\frac{-\left(\frac{c_t'c_T - c_tc_T'}{c_T^2} e^{\mu}\right)}{1 - c_t/c_T} \right) \quad (45)$$

which can be solved for

$$c_t' = (c_t c_T' / c_T) - ((c_T - c_t)/m) \chi_t'. \quad (46)$$

Similarly, we can solve (44) for

$$c_t(m) = (1 - e^{\chi_t(\log m)}) c_T(m). \quad (47)$$

Thus, having approximated χ_t , we can recover from it the level and derivative(s) of c_t .

K Relational Diagrams for the Inequality Conditions

This appendix explains in detail the paper's ‘inequalities’ diagrams (Figures ??, ??).

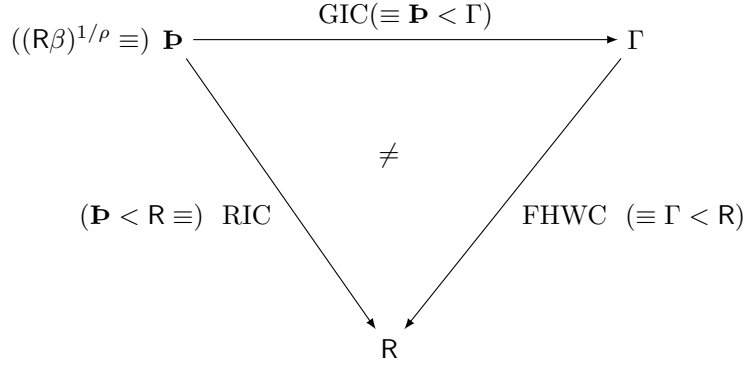


Figure 2 Inequality Conditions for Perfect Foresight Model
(Start at a node and follow arrows)

K.1 The Unconstrained Perfect Foresight Model

A simple illustration is presented in Figure 2, whose three nodes represent values of the absolute patience factor \mathbf{P} , the permanent-income growth factor Γ , and the riskfree interest factor R . The arrows represent imposition of the labeled inequality condition (like, the uppermost arrow, pointing from \mathbf{P} to Γ , reflects imposition of the **PF-GICNrm** condition (clicking **PF-GICNrm** should take you to its definition; definitions of other conditions are also linked below)).²⁵ Annotations inside parenthetical expressions containing \equiv are there to make the diagram readable for someone who may not immediately remember terms and definitions from the main text. (Such a reader might also want to be reminded that R, β , and Γ are all in \mathbb{R}_{++} , and that $\rho > 1$).

Navigation of the diagram is simple: Start at any node, and deduce a chain of inequalities by following any arrow that exits that node, and any arrows that exit from successive nodes. Traversal must stop upon arrival at a node with no exiting arrows. So, for example, we can start at the \mathbf{P} node and impose the **PF-GICNrm** and then the **FWC**, and see that imposition of these conditions allows us to conclude that $\mathbf{P} < R$.

One could also impose $\mathbf{P} < R$ directly (without imposing **PF-GICNrm** and **FWC**) by following the downward-sloping diagonal arrow exiting \mathbf{P} . Although alternate routes from one node to another all justify the same core conclusion ($\mathbf{P} < R$, in this case), \neq symbol in the center is meant to convey that these routes are not identical in other respects. This notational convention is used in **category theory diagrams**,²⁶ to indicate that the diagram is not **commutative**.²⁷

Negation of a condition is indicated by the reversal of the corresponding arrow. For example, negation of the **RIC**, **RIC** $\equiv \mathbf{P} > R$, would be represented by moving the

²⁵For convenience, the equivalent (\equiv) mathematical statement of each condition is expressed nearby in parentheses.

²⁶For a popular introduction to category theory, see Riehl (2017).

²⁷But the rest of our notation does not necessarily abide by the other conventions of category theory diagrams.

arrowhead from the bottom right to the top left of the line segment connecting \mathbf{D} and R .

If we were to start at R and then impose ~~FHWC~~, that would reverse the arrow connecting R and Γ , but the Γ node would then have no exiting arrows so no further deductions could be made. However, if we *also* reversed ~~PF-GICNrm~~ (that is, if we imposed ~~PE-GICNrm~~), that would take us to the \mathbf{D} node, and we could deduce $R > \mathbf{D}$. However, we would have to stop traversing the diagram at this point, because the arrow exiting from the \mathbf{D} node points back to our starting point, which (if valid) would lead us to the conclusion that $R > R$. Thus, the reversal of the two earlier conditions (imposition of ~~FHWC~~ and ~~PE-GICNrm~~) requires us also to reverse the final condition, giving us ~~RIC~~.²⁸

Under these conventions, Figure ?? in the main text presents a modified version of the diagram extended to incorporate the PF-FVAC (reproduced here for convenient reference).

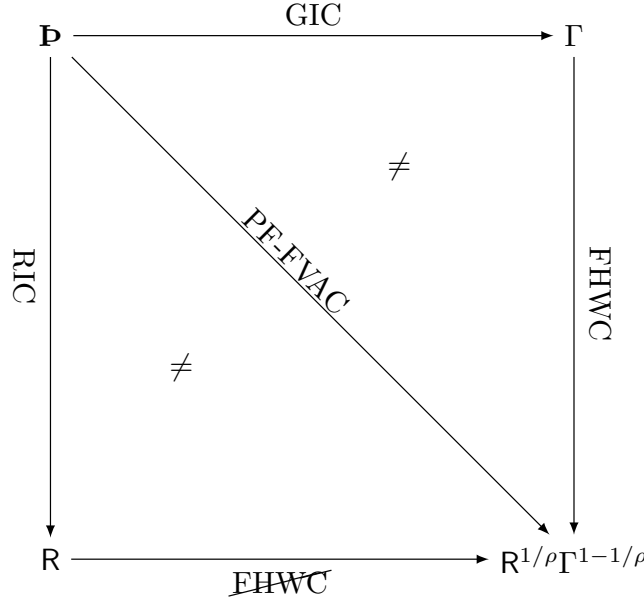


Figure 3 Relation of PF-GICNrm, FHWC, RIC, and PF-FVAC

An arrowhead points to the larger of the two quantities being compared. For example, the diagonal arrow indicates that $\mathbf{D} < R^{1/\rho}\Gamma^{1-1/\rho}$, which is an alternative way of writing the PF-FVAC, (??)

This diagram can be interpreted, for example, as saying that, starting at the \mathbf{D} node, it is possible to derive the PF-FVAC²⁹ by imposing both the PF-GICNrm and the FHWC;

²⁸The corresponding algebra is

$$\begin{aligned} \text{FHWC} &: R < \Gamma \\ \text{PE-GICNrm} &: \Gamma < \mathbf{D} \\ \Rightarrow \text{RIC} &: R < \mathbf{D}, \end{aligned}$$

²⁹in the form $\mathbf{D} < (R/\Gamma)^{1/\rho}\Gamma$

or by imposing **RIC** and **FHWC**. Or, starting at the Γ node, we can follow the imposition of the **FHWC** (twice — reversing the arrow labeled **FHWC**) and then **RIC** to reach the conclusion that $\mathbf{P} < \Gamma$. Algebraically,

$$\begin{aligned} \text{FHWC} : \quad & \Gamma < R \\ \text{RIC} : \quad & R < \mathbf{P} \\ & \Gamma < \mathbf{P} \end{aligned} \tag{48}$$

which leads to the negation of both of the conditions leading into \mathbf{P} . **PE-GICNrm** is obtained directly as the last line in (48) and **PE-FVAC** follows if we start by multiplying the Return Patience Factor (RPF= \mathbf{P}/R) by the FHWF ($=\Gamma/R$) raised to the power $1/\rho - 1$, which is negative since we imposed $\rho > 1$. **FHWC** implies FHWF < 1 so when FHWF is raised to a negative power the result is greater than one. Multiplying the RPF (which exceeds 1 because **RIC**) by another number greater than one yields a product that must be greater than one:

$$\begin{aligned} 1 &< \overbrace{\left(\frac{(R\beta)^{1/\rho}}{R} \right)}^{>1 \text{ from RIC}} \overbrace{(\Gamma/R)^{1/\rho-1}}^{>1 \text{ from FHWC}} \\ 1 &< \left(\frac{(R\beta)^{1/\rho}}{(R/\Gamma)^{1/\rho} R \Gamma / R} \right) \\ R^{1/\rho} \Gamma^{1-1/\rho} &= (R/\Gamma)^{1/\rho} \Gamma < \mathbf{P} \end{aligned}$$

which is one way of writing **PE-FVAC**.

The complexity of this algebraic calculation illustrates the usefulness of the diagram, in which one merely needs to follow arrows to reach the same result.

After the warmup of constructing these conditions for the perfect foresight case, we can represent the relationships between all the conditions in both the perfect foresight case and the case with uncertainty as shown in Figure ?? in the paper (reproduced here).

Finally, the next diagram substitutes the values of the various objects in the diagram under the baseline parameter values and verifies that all of the asserted inequality conditions hold true.

L When Is Consumption Growth Declining in m ?

Figure ?? depicts the expected consumption growth factor as a strictly declining function of the cash-on-hand ratio. To investigate this, define

$$\Upsilon(m_t) \equiv \Gamma_{t+1} c(\mathcal{R}_{t+1} a(m_t) + \xi_{t+1}) / c(m_t) = \mathbf{c}_{t+1} / \mathbf{c}_t$$

and the proposition in which we are interested is

$$(d/dm_t) \mathbb{E}_t \underbrace{[\Upsilon(m_t)]}_{\equiv \Upsilon_{t+1}} < 0$$

2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

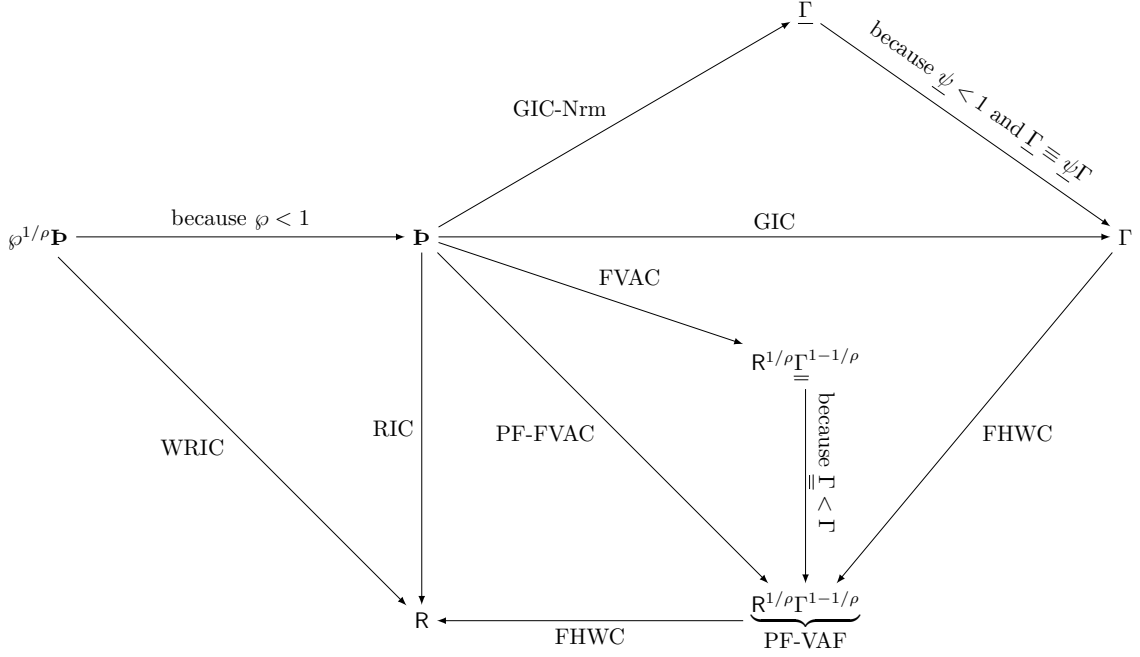


Figure 4 Relation of All Inequality Conditions

or differentiating through the expectations operator, what we want is

$$\mathbb{E}_t \left[\Gamma_{t+1} \left(\frac{c'(m_{t+1}) \mathcal{R}_{t+1} a'(m_t) c(m_t) - c(m_{t+1}) c'(m_t)}{c(m_t)^2} \right) \right] < 0. \quad (49)$$

Henceforth indicating appropriate arguments by the corresponding subscript (e.g. $c'_{t+1} \equiv c'(m_{t+1})$), since $\Gamma_{t+1} \mathcal{R}_{t+1} = \mathbf{R}$, the portion of the LHS of equation (49) in brackets can be manipulated to yield

$$\begin{aligned} c_t \mathbf{\Upsilon}'_{t+1} &= c'_{t+1} a'_t \mathbf{R} - c'_t \Gamma_{t+1} c_{t+1} / c_t \\ &= c'_{t+1} a'_t \mathbf{R} - c'_t \mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1}. \end{aligned}$$

Now differentiate the Euler equation with respect to m_t :

$$\begin{aligned} 1 &= \mathbf{R} \beta \mathbb{E}_t[\mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1}^{-\rho}] \\ 0 &= \mathbb{E}_t[\mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1}^{-\rho-1} \mathbf{\Upsilon}'_{t+1}] \\ &= \mathbb{E}_t[\mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1}^{-\rho-1}] \mathbb{E}_t[\mathbf{\Upsilon}'_{t+1}] + \text{cov}_t(\mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1}^{-\rho-1}, \mathbf{\Upsilon}'_{t+1}) \\ \mathbb{E}_t[\mathbf{\Upsilon}'_{t+1}] &= -\text{cov}_t(\mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1}^{-\rho-1}, \mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1}) / \mathbb{E}_t[\mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1}^{-\rho-1}] \end{aligned} \quad (50)$$

but since $\mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1} > 0$ we can see from (50) that (49) is equivalent to

$$\text{cov}_t(\mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1}^{-\rho-1}, \mathbf{\Upsilon}'_{t+1}) > 0$$

which, using (50), will be true if

$$\text{cov}_t(\mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1}^{-\rho-1}, c'_{t+1} a'_t \mathbf{R} - c'_t \mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1}) > 0$$

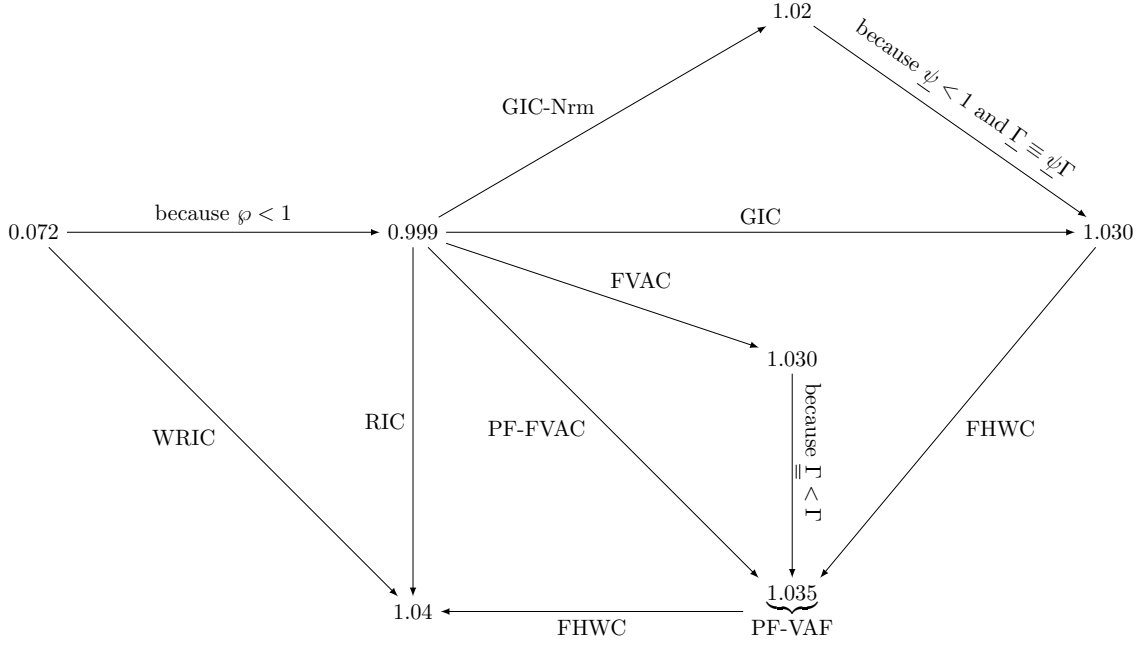


Figure 5 Numerical Relation of All Inequality Conditions

which in turn will be true if both

$$\text{cov}_t(\mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1}^{-\rho-1}, c'_{t+1}) > 0$$

and

$$\text{cov}_t(\mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1}^{-\rho-1}, \mathbf{\Upsilon}_{t+1}) < 0.$$

The latter proposition is obviously true under our assumption $\rho > 1$. The former will be true if

$$\text{cov}_t((\Gamma\psi_{t+1}c(m_{t+1}))^{-\rho-1}, c'(m_{t+1})) > 0.$$

The two shocks cause two kinds of variation in m_{t+1} . Variations due to ξ_{t+1} satisfy the proposition, since a higher draw of ξ both reduces $c_{t+1}^{-\rho-1}$ and reduces the marginal propensity to consume. However, permanent shocks have conflicting effects. On the one hand, a higher draw of ψ_{t+1} will reduce m_{t+1} , thus increasing both $c_{t+1}^{-\rho-1}$ and c'_{t+1} . On the other hand, the $c_{t+1}^{-\rho-1}$ term is multiplied by $\Gamma\psi_{t+1}$, so the effect of a higher ψ_{t+1} could be to decrease the first term in the covariance, leading to a negative covariance with the second term. (Analogously, a lower permanent shock ψ_{t+1} can also lead a negative correlation.)

M Unique And Stable Target and Steady State Points

This appendix proves Theorems ??-?? and:

Lemma 1. *If \check{m} and \hat{m} both exist, then $\check{m} \leq \hat{m}$.*

M.1 Proof of Theorem ??

The elements of the proof of Theorem ?? are:

- Existence and continuity of $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t]$
- Existence of a point where $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t] = 1$
- $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}] - m_t$ is monotonically decreasing

M.2 Existence and Continuity of $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t]$

The consumption function exists because we have imposed sufficient conditions (the WRIC and FVAC; Theorem ??).

Section ?? shows that for all t , $a_{t-1} = m_{t-1} - c_{t-1} > 0$. Since $m_t = a_{t-1}\mathcal{R}_t + \xi_t$, even if ξ_t takes on its minimum value of 0, $a_{t-1}\mathcal{R}_t > 0$, since both a_{t-1} and \mathcal{R}_t are strictly positive. With m_t and m_{t+1} both strictly positive, the ratio $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t]$ inherits continuity (and, for that matter, continuous differentiability) from the consumption function.

M.3 Existence of a point where $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t] = 1$.

This follows from:

1. Existence and continuity of $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t]$ (just proven)
2. Existence a point where $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t] < 1$
3. Existence a point where $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t] > 1$
4. The Intermediate Value Theorem

M.3.1 Existence of a point where $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t] < 1$

If RIC holds. Logic exactly parallel to that of Section ?? leading to equation (??), but dropping the Γ_{t+1} from the RHS, establishes that

$$\begin{aligned}
 \lim_{m_t \uparrow \infty} \mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t] &= \lim_{m_t \uparrow \infty} \mathbb{E}_t \left[\frac{\mathcal{R}_{t+1}(m_t - c(m_t)) + \xi_{t+1}}{m_t} \right] \\
 &= \mathbb{E}_t[(\mathcal{R}/\Gamma_{t+1})\mathbf{P}_R] \\
 &= \mathbb{E}_t[\mathbf{P}/\Gamma_{t+1}] \\
 &< 1
 \end{aligned} \tag{51}$$

where the inequality reflects imposition of the GIC-Nrm (??).

If RIC fails. When the RIC fails, the fact that $\lim_{m \uparrow \infty} c'(m) = 0$ (see equation (??)) means that the limit of the RHS of (51) as $m \uparrow \infty$ is $\bar{\mathcal{R}} = \mathbb{E}_t[\mathcal{R}_{t+1}]$. In the next step of this proof, we will prove that the combination GIC-Nrm and $\bar{\mathcal{R}} < 1$.

So we have $\lim_{m \uparrow \infty} \mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t] < 1$ whether the RIC holds or fails.

2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

M.3.2 Existence of a point where $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t] > 1$

Paralleling the logic for c in Section ?? : the ratio of $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}]$ to m_t is unbounded above as $m_t \downarrow 0$ because $\lim_{m_t \downarrow 0} \mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}] > 0$.

Intermediate Value Theorem. If $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t]$ is continuous, and takes on values above and below 1, there must be at least one point at which it is equal to one.

M.3.3 $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}] - m_t$ is monotonically decreasing.

Now define $\zeta(m_t) \equiv \mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}] - m_t$ and note that

$$\begin{aligned}\zeta(m_t) < 0 &\leftrightarrow \mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t] < 1 \\ \zeta(m_t) = 0 &\leftrightarrow \mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t] = 1 \\ \zeta(m_t) > 0 &\leftrightarrow \mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}/m_t] > 1,\end{aligned}\tag{52}$$

so that $\zeta(\hat{m}) = 0$. Our goal is to prove that $\zeta(\bullet)$ is strictly decreasing on $(0, \infty)$ using the fact that

$$\begin{aligned}\zeta'(m_t) &\equiv \left(\frac{d}{dm_t}\right) \zeta(m_t) = \mathbb{E}_t \left[\left(\frac{d}{dm_t}\right) (\mathcal{R}_{t+1}(m_t - c(m_t)) + \xi_{t+1} - m_t) \right] \\ &= \bar{\mathcal{R}} (1 - c'(m_t)) - 1.\end{aligned}\tag{53}$$

Now, we show that (given our other assumptions) $\zeta'(m)$ is decreasing (but for different reasons) whether the RIC holds or fails.

If RIC holds. Equation (??) indicates that if the RIC holds, then $\underline{\kappa} > 0$. We show at the bottom of Section ?? that if the RIC holds then $0 < \underline{\kappa} < c'(m_t) < 1$ so that

$$\begin{aligned}\bar{\mathcal{R}} (1 - c'(m_t)) - 1 &< \bar{\mathcal{R}} (1 - \underbrace{(1 - \mathbf{p}_R)}_{\underline{\kappa}}) - 1 \\ &= \bar{\mathcal{R}} \mathbf{p}_R - 1 \\ &= \mathbb{E}_t \left[\frac{\mathbf{R}}{\Gamma \psi} \frac{\mathbf{p}}{\mathbf{R}} \right] - 1 \\ &= \underbrace{\mathbb{E}_t \left[\frac{\mathbf{p}}{\Gamma \psi} \right]}_{=\mathbf{p}_\Gamma} - 1\end{aligned}$$

which is negative because the GIC-Nrm says $\mathbf{p}_\Gamma < 1$.

If RIC fails. Under ~~RIC~~, recall that $\lim_{m \uparrow \infty} c'(m) = 0$. Concavity of the consumption function means that c' is a decreasing function, so everywhere

$$\bar{\mathcal{R}} (1 - c'(m_t)) < \bar{\mathcal{R}}$$

which means that $\zeta'(m_t)$ from (53) is guaranteed to be negative if

$$\bar{\mathcal{R}} \equiv \mathbb{E}_t \left[\frac{\mathbf{R}}{\Gamma \psi} \right] < 1.\tag{54}$$

But the combination of the GIC-Nrm holding and the RIC failing can be written:

$$\overbrace{\mathbb{E}_t \left[\frac{\mathbf{P}}{\Gamma\psi} \right]}^{\mathbf{P}_\Gamma} < 1 < \overbrace{\frac{\mathbf{P}}{\mathbf{R}}}^{\mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R}},$$

and multiplying all three elements by \mathbf{R}/\mathbf{P} gives

$$\mathbb{E}_t \left[\frac{\mathbf{R}}{\Gamma\psi} \right] < \mathbf{R}/\mathbf{P} < 1$$

which satisfies our requirement in (54).

M.4 Proof of Theorem ??

The elements of the proof are:

- Existence and continuity of $\mathbb{E}_t[\psi_{t+1}m_{t+1}/m_t]$
- Existence of a point where $\mathbb{E}_t[\psi_{t+1}m_{t+1}/m_t] = 1$
- $\mathbb{E}_t[\psi_{t+1}m_{t+1} - m_t]$ is monotonically decreasing

M.4.1 Existence and Continuity of the Ratio

Since by assumption $0 < \underline{\psi} \leq \psi_{t+1} \leq \bar{\psi} < \infty$, our proof in M.2 that demonstrated existence and continuity of $\mathbb{E}_t[\bar{m}_{t+1}/m_t]$ implies existence and continuity of $\mathbb{E}_t[\psi_{t+1}m_{t+1}/m_t]$.

M.4.2 Existence of a stable point

Since by assumption $0 < \underline{\psi} \leq \psi_{t+1} \leq \bar{\psi} < \infty$, our proof in Subsection M.2 that the ratio of $\mathbb{E}_t[m_{t+1}]$ to m_t is unbounded as $m_t \downarrow 0$ implies that the ratio $\mathbb{E}_t[\psi_{t+1}m_{t+1}]$ to m_t is unbounded as $m_t \downarrow 0$.

The limit of the expected ratio as m_t goes to infinity is most easily calculated by modifying the steps for the prior theorem explicitly:

$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{m_t \uparrow \infty} \mathbb{E}_t[\psi_{t+1}m_{t+1}/m_t] &= \lim_{m_t \uparrow \infty} \mathbb{E}_t \left[\frac{\Gamma_{t+1} ((\mathbf{R}/\Gamma_{t+1})a(m_t) + \xi_{t+1}) / \Gamma}{m_t} \right] \\ &= \lim_{m_t \uparrow \infty} \mathbb{E}_t \left[\frac{(\mathbf{R}/\Gamma)a(m_t) + \psi_{t+1}\xi_{t+1}}{m_t} \right] \\ &= \lim_{m_t \uparrow \infty} \left[\frac{(\mathbf{R}/\Gamma)a(m_t) + 1}{m_t} \right] \\ &= (\mathbf{R}/\Gamma)\mathbf{P}_\mathbf{R} \\ &= \mathbf{P}_\Gamma \\ &< 1 \end{aligned} \tag{55}$$

where the last two lines are merely a restatement of the GIC (??).

2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

The Intermediate Value Theorem says that if $\mathbb{E}_t[\psi_{t+1}m_{t+1}/m_t]$ is continuous, and takes on values above and below 1, there must be at least one point at which it is equal to one.

M.4.3 $\mathbb{E}_t[\psi_{t+1}m_{t+1}] - m_t$ is monotonically decreasing.

Define $\zeta(m_t) \equiv \mathbb{E}_t[\psi_{t+1}m_{t+1}] - m_t$ and note that

$$\begin{aligned}\zeta(m_t) < 0 &\leftrightarrow \mathbb{E}_t[\psi_{t+1}m_{t+1}/m_t] < 1 \\ \zeta(m_t) = 0 &\leftrightarrow \mathbb{E}_t[\psi_{t+1}m_{t+1}/m_t] = 1 \\ \zeta(m_t) > 0 &\leftrightarrow \mathbb{E}_t[\psi_{t+1}m_{t+1}/m_t] > 1,\end{aligned}\tag{56}$$

so that $\zeta(\hat{m}) = 0$. Our goal is to prove that $\zeta(\bullet)$ is strictly decreasing on $(0, \infty)$ using the fact that

$$\begin{aligned}\zeta'(m_t) &\equiv \left(\frac{d}{dm_t}\right) \zeta(m_t) = \mathbb{E}_t \left[\left(\frac{d}{dm_t}\right) (\mathcal{R}(m_t - c(m_t)) + \psi_{t+1}\xi_{t+1} - m_t) \right] \\ &= (\mathcal{R}/\Gamma) (1 - c'(m_t)) - 1.\end{aligned}\tag{57}$$

Now, we show that (given our other assumptions) $\zeta'(m)$ is decreasing (but for different reasons) whether the RIC holds or fails (\mathbf{RIC}).

If RIC holds. Equation (??) indicates that if the RIC holds, then $\underline{\kappa} > 0$. We show at the bottom of Section ?? that if the RIC holds then $0 < \underline{\kappa} < c'(m_t) < 1$ so that

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{R} (1 - c'(m_t)) - 1 &< \mathcal{R} (1 - \underbrace{(1 - \mathbf{P}_R)}_{\underline{\kappa}}) - 1 \\ &= (\mathcal{R}/\Gamma) \mathbf{P}_R - 1\end{aligned}$$

which is negative because the GIC says $\mathbf{P}_R < 1$.

If RIC fails. Under \mathbf{RIC} , recall that $\lim_{m \uparrow \infty} c'(m) = 0$. Concavity of the consumption function means that c' is a decreasing function, so everywhere

$$\mathcal{R} (1 - c'(m_t)) < \mathcal{R}$$

which means that $\zeta'(m_t)$ from (57) is guaranteed to be negative if

$$\mathcal{R} \equiv (\mathcal{R}/\Gamma) < 1.\tag{58}$$

But we showed in Section ?? that the only circumstances under which the problem has a nondegenerate solution while the RIC fails were ones where the FHWC also fails (that is, (58) holds).

M.5 A Third Measure

A footnote in Section ?? mentions the possibility of calculating growth in the expectation of the log of m rather than the expectation of the ratio. Here we show that one way of doing that is to calculate a nonlinear adjustment factor for the expectation of the ratio.

$$\log(\mathbf{m}_{t+1}/\mathbf{m}_t) = \log(\Gamma\psi_{t+1}m_{t+1}) - \log m_t$$

2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

$$\begin{aligned}
&= \log \Gamma(a_t \mathcal{R} + \psi_{t+1} \xi_{t+1}) - \log m_t \\
&= \log \Gamma(a_t \mathcal{R} + 1 + (\psi_{t+1} \xi_{t+1} - 1)) - \log m_t
\end{aligned}$$

Now define $\dot{m}_{t+1} = a_t \mathcal{R} + 1$, and compute the expectation:

$$\begin{aligned}
\mathbb{E}_t[\log(\mathbf{m}_{t+1}/\mathbf{m}_t)] &= \mathbb{E}_t[\log \Gamma(\dot{m}_{t+1} + (\psi_{t+1} \xi_{t+1} - 1))] - \log m_t \\
&= \log \Gamma + \mathbb{E}_t[\log(\dot{m}_{t+1}(1 + \dot{m}_{t+1}^{-1}(\psi_{t+1} \xi_{t+1} - 1)))] - \log m_t \\
&= \underbrace{\log \Gamma + \log \dot{m}_{t+1} - \log m_t}_{\equiv \log \mathbb{E}_t[\mathbf{m}_{t+1}/\mathbf{m}_t]} + \mathbb{E}_t[\log(1 + \dot{m}_{t+1}^{-1}(\psi_{t+1} \xi_{t+1} - 1))]
\end{aligned}$$

and exponentiating tells us that

$$\exp(\mathbb{E}_t[\log \mathbf{m}_{t+1}/\mathbf{m}_t]) = \mathbb{E}_t[\mathbf{m}_{t+1}/\mathbf{m}_t] \exp(\mathbb{E}_t[\log(1 + \dot{m}_{t+1}^{-1}(\psi_{t+1} \xi_{t+1} - 1))]) \quad (59)$$

and this latter factor is a number that approaches 1 from below as m_t rises. Thus the expected growth rate of the log is smaller than the log of the growth rate of the expected ratio.

M.6 Proof of Lemma

M.6.1 Pseudo-Steady-State m Is Smaller than Target m

Designate

$$\begin{aligned}
\check{m}_{t+1}(a) &= 1 + a \mathcal{R} \\
\hat{m}_{t+1}(a) &= 1 + a \underbrace{\mathcal{R}/\psi}_{\bar{\mathcal{R}} > \mathcal{R}}
\end{aligned} \quad (60)$$

so that we can implicitly define the target and pseudo-steady-state points as

$$\begin{aligned}
\hat{m} &= \hat{m}_{t+1}(\hat{m} - c(\hat{m})) \\
\check{m} &= \check{m}_{t+1}(\check{m} - c(\check{m}))
\end{aligned} \quad (61)$$

Then subtract:

$$\begin{aligned}
\hat{m} - \check{m} &= (\hat{a} \underline{\psi}^{-1} - \check{a}) \mathcal{R} \\
&= (a(\hat{m}) \underline{\psi}^{-1} - a(\check{m})) \mathcal{R} \\
&= (a(\hat{m}) \underline{\psi}^{-1} - (a(\hat{m} + \check{m} - \hat{m}))) \mathcal{R} \\
&\approx (a(\hat{m}) \underline{\psi}^{-1} - (a(\hat{m}) + (\check{m} - \hat{m}) a'(\hat{m}))) \mathcal{R} \\
(\hat{m} - \check{m})(1 - \underbrace{a'(\hat{m}) \mathcal{R}}_{< \mathbf{P}_\Gamma < 1}) &= (\underline{\psi}^{-1} - 1) \hat{a} \mathcal{R}
\end{aligned} \quad (62)$$

The RHS of this equation is strictly positive because $\underline{\psi}^{-1} > 1$ and both \hat{a} and \mathcal{R} are positive; while on the LHS, $(1 - \mathcal{R} a') > 0$. So the equation can only hold if $\hat{m} - \check{m} > 0$. That is, the target ratio exceeds the pseudo-steady-state ratio.³⁰

³⁰The use of the first order Taylor approximation could be substituted, clumsily, with the average of a' over the interval to remove the approximation in the derivations above.

M.6.2 The m Achieving Individual Expected-Log-Balanced-Growth Is Smaller than the Individual Pseudo-Steady-State m

Expected log balanced growth occurs when

$$\begin{aligned}\mathbb{E}_t[\log \mathbf{m}_{t+1}] &= \log \Gamma \mathbf{m}_t \\ \mathbb{E}_t[\log \mathbf{p}_{t+1} m_{t+1}] &= \log \Gamma \mathbf{p}_t m_t \\ \mathbb{E}_t[\log \psi_{t+1} m_{t+1}] &= \log \Gamma m_t \\ \mathbb{E}_t[\log (a(m_t) \mathbf{R} + \psi_{t+1} \xi_{t+1} \Gamma)] &= \log \Gamma m_t \\ \mathbb{E}_t[\log (a(m_t) \mathcal{R} + \psi_{t+1} \xi_{t+1})] &= \log m_t\end{aligned}\tag{63}$$

and we call the m that satisfies this equation \acute{m} .

Subtract the definition of \check{m} from that of \acute{m} :

$$\exp(\mathbb{E}_t[\log (a(\acute{m}) \mathcal{R} + \psi_{t+1} \xi_{t+1})]) - (a(\check{m}) \mathcal{R} + 1) = \acute{m} - \check{m}\tag{64}$$

Now we use the fact that the expectation of the log is less than the log of the expectation,

$$\exp(\mathbb{E}_t[\log (a(\acute{m}) \mathcal{R} + \psi_{t+1} \xi_{t+1})]) < (a(\acute{m}) \mathcal{R} + 1)\tag{65}$$

so

$$\begin{aligned}\exp(\mathbb{E}_t[\log (a(\acute{m}) \mathcal{R} + 1)]) - (a(\check{m}) \mathcal{R} + 1) &< \acute{m} - \check{m} \\ (a(\acute{m}) \mathcal{R} + 1) - (a(\check{m}) \mathcal{R} + 1) &< \acute{m} - \check{m} \\ (a(\acute{m}) - a(\check{m})) \mathcal{R} &< \acute{m} - \check{m} \\ (a(\acute{m}) - (a(\acute{m}) + (\check{m} - \acute{m}) \bar{a}')) \mathcal{R} &< \acute{m} - \check{m} \\ (\acute{m} - \check{m}) \bar{a}' \mathcal{R} &< \acute{m} - \check{m} \\ \underbrace{\bar{a}' \mathcal{R}}_{< \mathbf{p}_\Gamma} &< 1\end{aligned}\tag{66}$$

where we are interpreting \bar{a}' as the mean of the value of a' over the interval between \acute{m} and \check{m} .

N Balanced Growth in \mathbf{c} and $\text{cov}(c, \mathbf{p})$

Section ?? demonstrates some propositions under the assumption that, when an economy satisfies the GIC, there will be constant growth factors $\Omega_{\mathbf{c}}$ and Ω_{cov} respectively for \mathbf{c} (the average value of the consumption ratio) and $\text{cov}(c, \mathbf{p})$. In the case of a Szeidl-invariant economy, the main text shows that these are $\Omega_{\mathbf{c}} = 1$ and $\Omega_{\text{cov}} = \Gamma$. If the economy is Harmenberg- but not Szeidl-invariant, no proof is offered that these growth factors will be constant.

Figures 6 and 7 plot the results of simulations of an economy that satisfies Harmenberg- but not Szeidl-invariance with a population of 4 million agents over the last 1000 periods (of a 2000 period simulation). The first figure shows that $\log \mathbf{c}$ increases apparently linearly. The second figure shows that $\log(-\text{cov}(c, \mathbf{p}))$

2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

also increases apparently linearly. (These results are produced by the notebook `ApndxBalancedGrowthcNrmAndCov.ipynb`).

2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

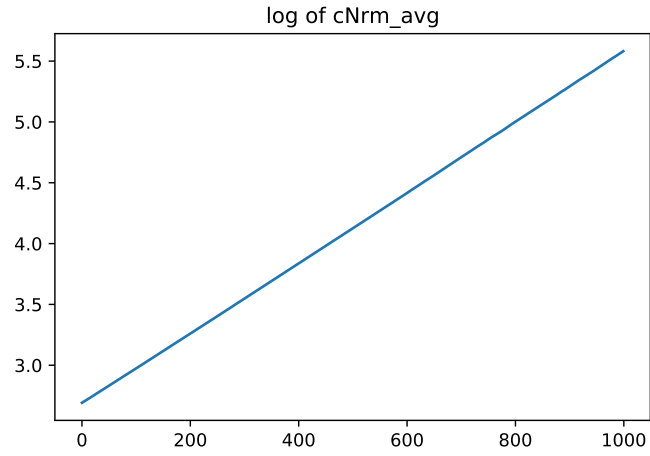


Figure 6 $\log \mathbf{c}$ Appears to Grow Linearly

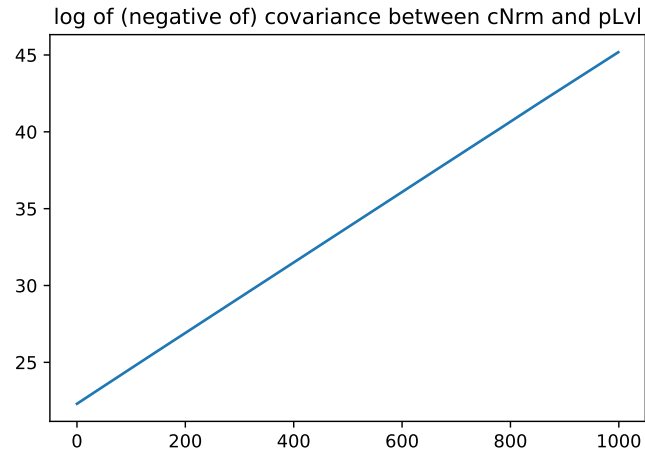


Figure 7 $\log -\text{cov}(\mathbf{c}, \mathbf{p})$ Appears to Grow Linearly

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2.2 Comparison to Existing Literature

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Table 1 Taxonomy of Perfect Foresight Liquidity Constrained Model Outcomes

 For constrained \bar{c} and unconstrained \bar{c} consumption functions

Main Condition Subcondition	Math	Outcome, Comments or Results
GIC	$1 < \mathbf{P}/\Gamma$	Constraint never binds for $m \geq 1$
and RIC	$\mathbf{P}/R < 1$	FHWC holds ($R > \Gamma$); $\dot{c}(m) = \bar{c}(m)$ for $m \geq 1$
and RIC	$1 < \mathbf{P}/R$	$\dot{c}(m)$ is degenerate: $\dot{c}(m) = 0$
GIC	$\mathbf{P}/\Gamma < 1$	Constraint binds in finite time for any m
and RIC	$\mathbf{P}/R < 1$	FHWC may or may not hold
		$\lim_{m \uparrow \infty} \bar{c}(m) - \dot{c}(m) = 0$
		$\lim_{m \uparrow \infty} \dot{\kappa}(m) = \underline{\kappa}$
and RIC	$1 < \mathbf{P}/R$	FHWC
		$\lim_{m \uparrow \infty} \dot{\kappa}(m) = 0$

Conditions are applied from left to right; for example, the second row indicates conclusions in the case where ~~GIC~~ and RIC both hold, while the third row indicates that when the GIC and the RIC both fail, the consumption function is degenerate; the next row indicates that whenever the GIC holds, the constraint will bind in finite time.