# Measuring assortativeness in marriage

Axiomatic and structural approaches

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#### This paper subsumes

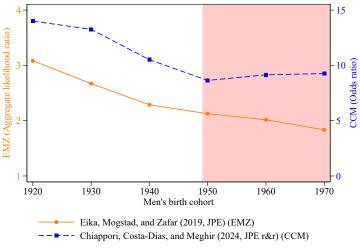
- ▶ "Measuring assortativeness in marriage" (Chiappori, Costa-Dias, and Meghir) and
- ► "Axiomatic measures of assortative matching" (Zhang)

# Assortative matching (on education)

- ► **Assortative matching** refers to the tendency of individuals with similar characteristics to form relationships or partnerships.
- Assortative matching on education contributes to income inequality and social stratification,
- which lead to low intergenerational mobility.

#### 1. Introduction

# A specific empirical debate



IPUMS USA: 40- to 50-year-olds and their heterosexual partners

# (Start with) matching markets with binary types

$$M = (a, b, c, d)$$

	college women $a+c$	noncollege women $b+d$
college men $a+b$	а	b
noncollege men $c+d$	с	d

Each element denotes the # of pairs (also fine to normalize to %).

## A general theoretical question

How do we compare

	$\theta_1$ 600	$\theta_2$			$ heta_1$	$ heta_2$
	600	400			450	550
$\frac{\theta_1}{600}$	500	100	and	$\theta_1$ 500	400	100
$\frac{\theta_2}{400}$	100	300		$\frac{\theta_1}{500}$	50	450

In general, how do we rank any two markets with different distributions of college and noncollege men and women?

**Matching Patterns** 

**Fully Positive Assortative Matching.** 

$$\begin{array}{c|cccc} & \theta_1 & \theta_2 \\ \hline \theta_1 & a & 0 \\ \hline \theta_2 & 0 & d \\ \end{array}$$

Maximally Positive Assortative Matching.

Minimally Positive Assortative Matching.

2. Matching and measures

**Random Matching (RM).**  $(|M| \equiv a + b + c + d)$ 

	$ heta_1$	$\theta_2$			$\theta_1$	$\theta_2$
$\theta_1$	$\frac{a+b}{ M } \frac{a+c}{ M }  M $	$\frac{a+b}{ M } \frac{b+d}{ M }  M $	=	$\theta_1$	$\frac{(a+b)(a+c)}{a+b+c+d}$	$\frac{(a+b)(b+d)}{a+b+c+d}$
$\theta_2$	$\frac{a+c}{ M }\frac{c+d}{ M } M $	$\frac{c+d}{ M } \frac{b+d}{ M }  M $		$\theta_2$	$\frac{(a+c)(c+d)}{a+b+c+d}$	$\frac{(c+d)(b+d)}{a+b+c+d}$

#### Positive Assortative Matching (PAM).

observed  $\#(\theta_1\theta_1) > \text{random baseline}$ 

Negative Assortative Matching (NAM). ad < bc.

# Measures

#### EMZ: Likelihood ratio

Likelihood ratio for each type

$$LR_1(M) = \frac{\text{observed } \#\theta_1\theta_1}{\text{random baseline}} = \frac{a}{\frac{a+b}{|M|}\frac{a+c}{|M|}|M|} = \frac{a(a+b+c+d)}{(a+b)(a+c)}.$$

$$LR_2(M) = \frac{\text{observed } \#\theta_2\theta_2}{\text{random baseline}} = \frac{d}{\frac{d+b}{|M|}\frac{d+c}{|M|}|M|} = \frac{d(a+b+c+d)}{(d+b)(d+c)}.$$

Aggregate likelihood ratio (Eika, Mogstad and Zafar, 2019, JPE) (EMZ)

$$LR(M) = \frac{(a+b)(a+c)LR_1(M) + (d+b)(d+c)LR_2(M)}{(a+b)(a+c) + (d+b)(d+c)}$$

$$= \frac{a+d}{\frac{a+b}{|M|}\frac{a+c}{|M|}|M| + \frac{d+b}{|M|}\frac{d+c}{|M|}|M|} = \frac{\text{observed } \#(\theta_1\theta_1 + \theta_2\theta_2)}{\text{random baseline}}$$

#### CCM: Odds ratio

(OR) odds ratio; cross-ratio (Chiappori, Costa-Dias and Meghir, 2020, 2022)

$$I_O(a,b,c,d) = \frac{a}{b} / \frac{c}{d} = \frac{ad}{bc}.$$

(Q) Yule's Q; Coefficient of association (Yule, 1900)

$$I_Q(a,b,c,d) = rac{ad-bc}{ad+bc} = rac{1-rac{bc}{ad}}{1+rac{bc}{ad}} = rac{rac{ad}{bc}-1}{rac{ad}{bc}+1}.$$

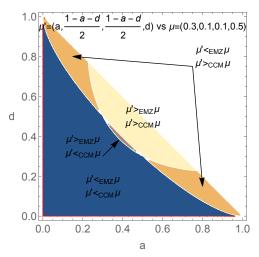
(Y) Yule's Y; Coefficient of colligation (Yule, 1912)

$$I_Y(a,b,c,d) = rac{\sqrt{ad} - \sqrt{bc}}{\sqrt{ad} + \sqrt{bc}} = rac{\sqrt{rac{ad}{bc}} - 1}{\sqrt{rac{ad}{bc}} + 1}.$$

Both return +1 when max PAM and -1 when max NAM.

# Conflicting conclusion: CCM vs EMZ

For illustration, suppose b = c.



### Other measures

(PR) Pure-random normalization (minimum distance) Fernández and Rogerson (2001, QJE), Liu and Lu (2006, EL), Greenwood,

Guner, Kocharkov and Santos (2014, AER), Shen (2020, PhD thesis):

$$I_{PR}(a,b,c,d) = \frac{ad - bc}{(\max\{b,c\} + d)(a + \max\{b,c\})}.$$

(Corr) Correlation

$$I_{Corr}(a,b,c,d) = \frac{ad - bc}{\sqrt{(a+b)(c+d)(a+c)(b+d)}}.$$

(Chi) Spearman's rank correlation (degree away from random matching)

$$I_{\chi}(a,b,c,d) = [I_{Corr}(a,b,c,d)]^2 = \frac{(ad-bc)^2}{(a+b)(c+d)(a+c)(b+d)}.$$

Hou et al. (2022, PNAS) use all aforementioned measures for robustness checks.

# **Existing Approach**

Measure  $\Longrightarrow$  properties

# **Axiomatic Approach**

 $Measure(s) \iff properties (i.e., axioms)$ 

**[ScInv] Scale Invariance.** The market exhibits the same assortativity when all entries scale by the same constant. For all  $\lambda > 0$ ,

**[TInv] Type Invariance**. The market exhibits the same assortativity when types are relabeled.

[SiInv] Side Invariance. The market exhibits the same assortativity when sides are relabeled.

# Do the measures satisfy the axioms?

	invariance						
	conditions						
	ScInv	TInv	SiInv				
$\overline{LR_i \text{ (EMZ)}}$	<b>√</b>	X	$\overline{\hspace{1cm}}$				
LR (EMZ)	✓	$\checkmark$	$\checkmark$				
OR (CCM)	✓	$\checkmark$	$\checkmark$				

[DMon] Diagonal Monotonicity. For all  $\epsilon > 0$ ,

and

where the equalities hold if and only if bc = 0.

[ODMon] Off-Diagonal Monotonicity. For all  $\epsilon > 0$ ,

		$\theta_1$				$\theta_1$	$\theta_2$
	$\theta_1$	а	b	$\succeq_A$	$\theta_1$	а	$b + \epsilon$
Ī	$\theta_2$	С	d	-	$\theta_2$	С	d

and

where the equalities hold if and only if ad = 0.

**[MMon] Marginal Monotonicity.** Suppose  $M=(a,b,c,d)\gg 0$  and  $M'=(a',b',c',d')\gg 0$  have the same marginals: a+b=a'+b', a+c=a'+c', b+d=b'+d', c+d=c'+d'.

$$M \succ_A M' \Leftrightarrow a > a' \Leftrightarrow b < b' \Leftrightarrow c < c' \Leftrightarrow d > d'$$

Equivalently, for all  $M = (a, b, c, d) \gg 0$  and  $\epsilon \in (0, \min\{a, d\})$ ,

	$\theta_1$	$\theta_2$		$\theta_1$	$\theta_2$
				$a - \epsilon$	
$\theta_2$	С	d	$\theta_2$	$c + \epsilon$	$d - \epsilon$

► DMon and ODMon imply MMon. Proof:

# Do the measures satisfy the axioms?

	invariance			monotonicity		
	cc	onditior	ıs		conditior	ıs
	ScInv	TInv	SiInv	MMon	DMon	ODMon
$LR_i$ (EMZ)	✓	X	<b>√</b>	✓	<b>√</b>	✓
LR (EMZ)	✓	$\checkmark$	$\checkmark$	✓	X	X
OR (CCM)	✓	$\checkmark$	$\checkmark$	✓	$\checkmark$	$\checkmark$

[MI] Marginal Independence (Edwards, 1963, JRSSA). For all  $\lambda > 0$ ,

- ► MI implies INV (ScInv, TInv, SiInv).
- MMon and MI together imply DMon and ODMon.

# Odds ratio: unique total order

#### Proposition

The unique total order that satisfies MI (which implies INV) and MMon (which together with MI implies DMon and ODMon) is the order induced by the odds ratio (ad)/(bc).

In other words, the unique index, up to monotonic transformation, that satisfies MI and MMon is the odds ratio.

## Structural interpretation of the odds ratio

- Consider an underlying transferable-utility matching model of men  $X \ni x$  and women  $Y \ni y$ .
- Suppose the surplus generated by a match between man x of type  $\theta_i$  and woman y of type  $\theta_i$  takes the separable form

$$s_{xy} = Z^{\theta_i \theta_j} + \epsilon_x^{\theta_j} + \epsilon_y^{\theta_i},$$

where  $Z^{\theta_i\theta_j}$  is a deterministic component depending on types and  $\epsilon$ 's are random shocks reflecting unobserved heterogeneity among individuals.

▶ If  $\epsilon$ 's follow T1EV (Choo and Siow, 2006), then the supermodular core equals twice the odds ratio:

$$Z^{\theta_i\theta_i} + Z^{\theta_j\theta_j} - Z^{\theta_i\theta_j} - Z^{\theta_j\theta_i} = 2\frac{ad}{bc}.$$

► The odds ratio directly reflects changes in surplus (irrespective of changes in marginal distribution).

Call  $M=(a,b,c,d)\gg 0$  a full-support market. Call M and M' a full-support decomposition of a full-support market M+M' if  $M\gg 0$  and  $M'\gg 0$ .

**[Dec] Decomposability.** For any full-support decomposition of any full-support market, the assortativity of the market is the population-weighted average of the assortativity of the two markets decomposed from the market. For  $M = (a, b, c, d) \gg 0$  and  $M' = (a', b', c', d') \gg 0$ ,

$$I(M+M') = \frac{|M|}{|M+M'|}I(M) + \frac{|M'|}{|M+M'|}I(M'),$$

where 
$$|M| = a + b + c + d$$
 and  $|M'| = a' + b' + c' + d'$ .

- ▶ Dec implies ScInv.
- ▶ Dec, ScInv, TInv, and MMon imply DMon and ODMon.

# Normalized trace: unique cardinal measure

#### Proposition

The unique index, up to linear transformation, that satisfies INV, DMon, ODMon, and Dec is **normalized trace** (proportion of like pairs) with boundary adjustment

$$I_{tr}(a,b,c,d) = egin{cases} 1 & ext{if } bc = 0 \ rac{a+d}{a+b+c+d} \in (0,1) & ext{if } abcd 
eq 0 \ 0 & ext{if } ad = 0 \end{cases}$$

# Normalized trace: unique cardinal measure

#### Proposition

The unique index, up to linear transformation, that satisfies INV, MMon, and Dec is **normalized trace (proportion of like pairs) with boundary adjustment** 

$$I_{tr}(a,b,c,d) = egin{cases} 1 & ext{if } bc = 0 \ rac{a+d}{a+b+c+d} \in (0,1) & ext{if } abcd 
eq 0 \ 0 & ext{if } ad = 0 \end{cases}$$

Call  $M = (a, b, c, d) \gg 0$  a full-support market. Call M and M' a full-support decomposition of a full-support market M + M' if  $M \gg 0$  and  $M' \gg 0$ .

**[RDec] Random Decomposability.** For any full-support decomposition of any full-support market, the assortativity of the market is a weighted average of the assortativity of the two markets decomposed from the market, where the weight is the expected number of assortative pairs:

$$r(M) \equiv \frac{a+b}{|M|} \frac{a+c}{|M|} |M| + \frac{d+b}{|M|} \frac{d+c}{|M|} |M|.$$

For  $M = (a, b, c, d) \gg 0$  and  $M' = (a', b', c', d') \gg 0$ ,

$$I(M+M') = \frac{r(M)}{r(M+M')}I(M) + \frac{r(M')}{r(M+M')}I(M'),$$

where |M| = a + b + c + d and |M'| = a' + b' + c' + d'.

#### EMZ's likelihood ratio

#### Proposition

An index satisfies INV, MMon, and RDec if and only if it is proportional to likelihood ratio

$$\begin{array}{ll} \mathit{LR}(\mathit{M}) & = & \frac{(a+b)(a+c)\mathit{LR}_1(\mathit{M}) + (d+b)(d+c)\mathit{LR}_2(\mathit{M})}{(a+b)(a+c) + (d+b)(d+c)} \\ & = & \frac{a+d}{\frac{a+b}{|\mathit{M}|}\frac{a+c}{|\mathit{M}|}|\mathit{M}| + \frac{d+b}{|\mathit{M}|}\frac{d+c}{|\mathit{M}|}|\mathit{M}|} = \frac{\text{observed } \#(\theta_1\theta_1 + \theta_2\theta_2)}{\text{random baseline}} \end{array}$$

# Axioms for binary types

	invariance conditions			m			
	ScInv	TInv	SiInv	MMon	DMon	ODMon	unique
$LR_i$ (EMZ)	<b>√</b>	X	<b>√</b>	✓	<b>√</b>	✓	
LR (EMZ)	✓	$\checkmark$	$\checkmark$	✓	X	X	RDec
OR (CCM)	✓	$\checkmark$	$\checkmark$	✓	$\checkmark$	$\checkmark$	MI
trace	<b>/</b>	✓	✓	<b>/</b>	✓	✓	Dec

# Singles and same-sex couples

# Singles

Consider the markets with singles. Expand the table without singles by adding a row and a column to indicate the singles.

$$\widetilde{M} = \begin{array}{ccccc} m \backslash w & \theta_1 & \theta_2 & \emptyset \\ \theta_1 & M_{11} & M_{12} & M_{10} \\ \theta_2 & M_{21} & M_{22} & M_{20} \\ \emptyset & M_{01} & M_{02} \end{array}$$

# Singles examples

If we do not consider singles, the following three tables give us the same assortativity: (p=pairs)

	$\widetilde{M}_1$				$\widetilde{M}_2$				$\widetilde{M}_3$		
$m \backslash w$	$ heta_1$	$ heta_2$	Ø	$m \setminus w$	$ heta_1$	$ heta_2$	Ø	$m \backslash w$	$\theta_1$	$\theta_2$	Ø
$ heta_1$	50p	0	25	$\theta_1$	50p	0	0	$\theta_1$	75p	0	0 .
$ heta_2$	0	50p	0	$\theta_2$	0	50p	0	$\theta_2$	0	50p	0
Ø	25	0		Ø	0	0		Ø	0	0	

If we consider singles, arguably,

- $ightharpoonup \widetilde{M}_2$  is more assortative than  $\widetilde{M}_1$  because there are no singles who could have matched with each other;
- ▶  $\widetilde{M}_3$  is more assortative than  $\widetilde{M}_1$  because unmatched individuals in  $\widetilde{M}_1$  are assortatively matched in  $\widetilde{M}_3$ .

# Normalized trace with singles

#### [SMon] Singles Monotonicity.

Consider  $\widetilde{M} = (M_{ij})_{i,j \in \{0,1,2\}}$  and  $\widetilde{M}' = (M'_{ij})_{i,j \in \{0,1,2\}}$ . When  $M_{i0} > M'_{i0}$  for an i and  $M_{jk} = M'_{jk}$  for any other combination of j and k,  $\widetilde{M} \succ_A \widetilde{M}'$ .

#### Proposition

Normalized trace with singles is the unique index (up to linear transformation) that satisfies INV, DMon0, ODMon0, Dec0, and SMon.

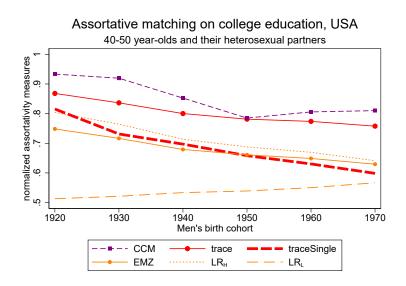
$$\widetilde{I}_{tr}(\widetilde{M}) = rac{\operatorname{tr}(\widetilde{M})}{|\widetilde{M}|}.$$

In this case,  $\widetilde{I}_{tr}(\widetilde{M}_1)=200/250=4/5$  and  $\widetilde{I}_{tr}(\widetilde{M}_2)=\widetilde{I}_{tr}(\widetilde{M}_3)=1$ .

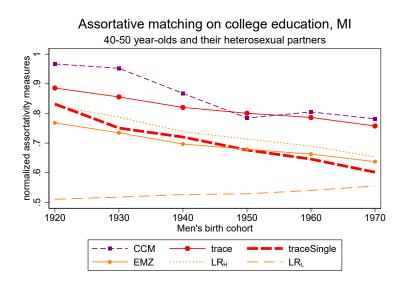
# Axioms beyond binary types

	invariance conditions	monotonicity conditions	singles	same-sex	multiple types
LR <sub>i</sub> (EMZ)	X	✓	<b>√</b>	✓	<b>√</b>
LR (EMZ)	✓	X	✓	✓	<b> </b>
OR (CCM)	✓	✓	X	X	X
trace	✓	✓	✓	✓	<b> </b>

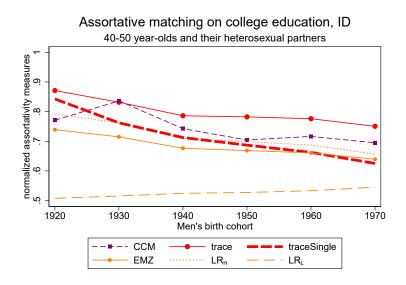
## Evidence from US



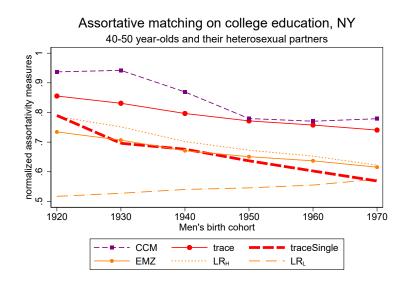
## Evidence from MI



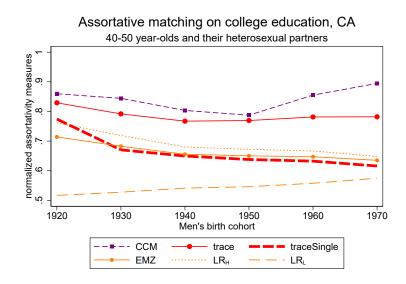
### Evidence from ID



#### Evidence from NY



## Evidence from CA



# What is a marriage market in practice?

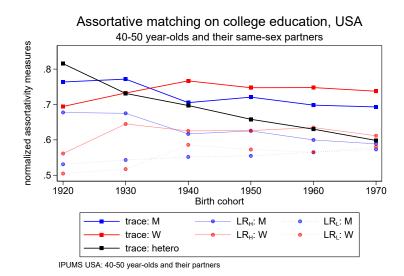
- ► 40-50 year-olds and their spouses
- ► 40-50 year-old men and their wives
- ▶ 40-50 year-old women and their husbands
- all those of various birth cohorts who marry in the same year/decade
- cohabitation versus marriage

## Normalized trace for same-sex couples

#### Proposition

Consider same-sex matching of binary types. The unique index that satisfies ScInv, TInv, SiInv, DMon, ODMon, and Dec is the normalized trace, up to linear transformation.

# Evidence for same-sex couples



# Multiple discrete types

# Multiple discrete types

educd		
00	N/A or no schooling	
01	Nursery school to grade 4	
02	Grade 5, 6, 7, or 8	
03	Grade 9	
04	Grade 10	
05	Grade 11	
06	Grade 12	
07	1 year of college	
08	2 years of college	
09	3 years of college	
10	4 years of college	
11	5+ years of college	

## Normalized trace in multiple types

## Proposition

Suppose there are N types:  $\theta_1, \theta_2, \dots, \theta_N$ . The unique index that satisfies ScInv, TInv, SiInv, DMon, ODMon, and Dec is the normalized trace, up to linear transformation.

	$\theta_1$	$\theta_2$	$\theta_3$
$\theta_1$	$M_{11}$	$M_{12}$	$M_{13}$
$\theta_2$	$M_{21}$	$M_{22}$	$M_{23}$
$\theta_3$	$M_{31}$	$M_{32}$	$M_{33}$

## Robustness to categorization

#### [RC] Robustness to Categorization.

Let  $M|_C$  denote the market given categorization C.  $M \succeq_A M'$  if and only if  $M|_C \succeq_A M'|_C$  for any categorization C, and  $M \succ_A M'$  if and only if  $M|_C \succ_A M'|_C$  for any categorization C.

	$\theta_1$	$\theta_2$	$\theta_3$
$\theta_1$	$M_{11}$	$M_{12}$	$M_{13}$
$\theta_2$	$M_{21}$	$M_{22}$	$M_{23}$
$\theta_3$	$M_{31}$	$M_{32}$	$M_{33}$

	$\theta_1$	$\theta_2$	$\theta_3$
$\theta_1$	$M_{11}$	$M_{12}$	$M_{13}$
$\theta_2$	$M_{21}$	$M_{22}$	$M_{23}$
$\theta_3$	$M_{31}$	$M_{32}$	$M_{33}$

## No complete assortativity order on multi-type *M*

#### **Proposition**

No total order satisfies MMon and RC.

#### Proof by counterexample. Consider markets

$$M = \frac{\begin{array}{c|c|c} 1/9 & 1/9 & 1/9 \\ \hline 1/9 & 1/9 & 1/9 \\ \hline 1/9 & 1/9 & 1/9 \end{array} \text{ and } M' = \frac{\begin{array}{c|c} 1/9 - \epsilon & 1/9 + \epsilon & 1/9 \\ \hline 1/9 + \epsilon & 1/9 & 1/9 - \epsilon \\ \hline 1/9 & 1/9 - \epsilon & 1/9 + \epsilon \end{array}$$

When we group  $\theta_1$  and  $\theta_2$ ,

$$M|_{(\{1,2\}\{3\})} = \frac{4/9 \mid 2/9}{2/9 \mid 1/9} \prec_A M'|_{(\{1,2\}\{3\})} = \frac{4/9 + \epsilon \mid 2/9 - \epsilon}{2/9 - \epsilon \mid 1/9 + \epsilon}$$

When we group  $\theta_2$  and  $\theta_3$ ,

$$M|_{(\{1\}\{2,3\})} = \frac{1/9 \mid 2/9}{2/9 \mid 4/9} \succ_A M'|_{(\{1\}\{2,3\})} = \frac{1/9 - \epsilon \mid 2/9 + \epsilon}{2/9 + \epsilon \mid 4/9 - \epsilon}$$

# No complete assortativity order on multi-type *M*

#### **Proposition**

No total order satisfies DMon+ODMon and RC.

#### Proof by counterexample. Consider markets

$$M = \frac{\begin{array}{c|c|c} 1/9 & 1/9 & 1/9 \\ \hline 1/9 & 1/9 & 1/9 \\ \hline 1/9 & 1/9 & 1/9 \end{array} \text{ and } M' = \frac{\begin{array}{c|c} 1/9 - \epsilon & 1/9 + \epsilon & 1/9 \\ \hline 1/9 + \epsilon & 1/9 & 1/9 - \epsilon \\ \hline 1/9 & 1/9 - \epsilon & 1/9 + \epsilon \end{array}$$

When we group  $\theta_1$  and  $\theta_2$ ,

$$M|_{(\{1,2\}\{3\})} = \frac{4/9 \mid 2/9}{2/9 \mid 1/9} \prec_A M'|_{(\{1,2\}\{3\})} = \frac{4/9 + \epsilon \mid 2/9 - \epsilon}{2/9 - \epsilon \mid 1/9 + \epsilon}$$

When we group  $\theta_2$  and  $\theta_3$ ,

$$M|_{(\{1\}\{2,3\})} = \frac{1/9 \mid 2/9}{2/9 \mid 4/9} \succ_A M'|_{(\{1\}\{2,3\})} = \frac{1/9 - \epsilon \mid 2/9 + \epsilon}{2/9 + \epsilon \mid 4/9 - \epsilon}$$

# Summary

- Likelihood ratio is the unique index (up to linear transformation) that satisfies ScIny, TIny, SiIny, MMon and Random Decomposability.
  - ► fails DMon and ODMon
- ► Odds ratio is the unique total order on binary-types markets that satisfies MMon and Marginal Independence (implies ScInv, TInv, SiInv).
  - no analogous measure on multi-type markets; a local measure of assortativity
- Normalized trace is the unique index (up to linear transformation) that satisfies ScIny, TIny, SiIny, MMon, and Decomposability.
  - naturally extends to multi-type markets, markets with singles, and one-sided markets.
- ▶ No total order satisfies MMon and Robustness to Categorization.



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