

Two tales in tractable robust portfolio optimisation

New perspective on fractional Kelly strategies

Jan Obłój

University of Oxford

based on joint works with

Constantinos Kardaras and Eckhard Platen, and with Sigrid Källblad and Thaleia Zariphopoulou

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Motivating questions

- How to develop a **robust** approach to **optimal investment**?
- A long run investor will see **one path**... can we make sense of optimal investment questions **pathwise**?
- Can we justify fractional Kelly strategies used by large diversified funds?
- The usual criterion $\sup \mathbb{E}[U(X_T)]$ involves (at least) two arbitrary choices: **model \mathbb{P}** and **utility U** . The resulting optimal investment strategy is an entangled result of these two choices. Can we disentangle their influence?

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Outline

- 1 Long-run investment, risk attitudes via drawdown constraints
 - Kelly's long-run investor and the numéraire property
 - Numéraire under drawdown – finite horizon
 - Numéraire under drawdown – asymptotics
- 2 Robust forward performance criteria
 - Model uncertainty, variational preferences and time homogeneity
 - Logarithmic preferences and fractional Kelly
 - Duality and (S)PDEs
- 3 Conclusions

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Setup

Consider

- a general *continuous* semimartingale market (S_t^1, \dots, S_t^d) denominated **in units of a baseline asset**
- (i) which admits no opportunity for arbitrage of the first kind;
- (ii) and there exists $X \in \mathcal{A}$ such that $X_t \rightarrow \infty$ a.s.

where $\mathcal{A} = \left\{ X : X = 1 + \int_0^\cdot \left(\sum_{i=1}^d H_t^i dS_t^i \right) \geq 0 \right\}$.

Theorem

(i) is equivalent to existence of $\hat{X} \in \mathcal{A}$ such that X/\hat{X} is a supermartingale $\forall X \in \mathcal{A}$.

Then (ii) is equivalent to $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} \hat{X}_t = \infty$ a.s.

Note that \hat{X} solves the log-utility problem on $[0, T]$:

$$\mathbb{E} \left[\log \left(\frac{X_T}{\hat{X}_T} \right) \right] \leq \mathbb{E} \left[\frac{X_T}{\hat{X}_T} - 1 \right] \leq 0.$$

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Background: Kelly's strategy

- Kelly argued that a long-run investor should chose \hat{X} – the growth optimal portoflio (numéraire, benchmark). It has a very attractive **pathwise** property that

$$\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} \frac{X_t}{\hat{X}_t} \leq 1 \quad \text{a.s., for any investment } X, X_0 = \hat{X}_0.$$

Many, including Markowitz, found this appealing.

- Samuelson argued (in words of one syllable) that \hat{X} does not take into account risk preferences and one should look at general utility maximisation instead. But this requires **arbitrary choices of model and preferences**.
- Practically both are troublesome: estimating drift is hard and utility elucidation often yields different and contradictory outcomes.

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Background: drawdown constraints

Consider an increasing function $w : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ with $w(x)/x \leq \alpha < 1$.
 Let $\mathcal{A}^w := \{X \in \mathcal{A} : X_t \geq w(\sup_{u \leq t} X_u), t \geq 0\}$.

Theorem (Cherny & O. (2013))

Let $\tilde{\log}(-x) = -\log(x)$, $x > 0$. Under *v* mild assumptions on U :

$$\sup_{X \in \mathcal{A}^w} \mathcal{R}_U(X) = \sup_{X \in \mathcal{A}} \mathcal{R}_{U \circ F_w}(X),$$

$$\text{where } \mathcal{R}_U(X) := \limsup_{T \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{T} \tilde{\log} \mathbb{E}[U(X_T)],$$

and F_w depends only on w . Further if Y solves the RHS then $V = M^{F_w}(Y)$, the Azéma–Yor transform of Y

$$dV_t = \left(V_t - w\left(\sup_{u \leq t} V_u\right) \right) \frac{dY_t}{Y_t} = F'_w \left(\sup_{u \leq t} Y_u \right) dY_t,$$

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Resulting ideas

- Kelly's pathwise outperformance is an attractive investment criteria.
 - Drawdown constraint are an effective way of encoding preferences, and are used in practice.
- ⇒ Seek **pathwise outperformance** and encode preferences via **pathwise constraints**.

Specifically, we consider linear drawdown: $w(x) = \alpha x$, $\alpha \in (0, 1)$ and $\mathcal{A}^\alpha = \{X \in \mathcal{A} : X_t \geq \alpha \sup_{u \leq t} X_u, t \geq 0\}$.

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However such process in general **fails to exist** within the class \mathcal{A}^α .

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The Numéraire (benchmark) property

For a stopping time T and $X, X' \in \mathcal{A}$, define

$$rr_T(X|X') := \limsup_{t \rightarrow \infty} \left(\frac{X_{T \wedge t} - X'_{T \wedge t}}{X'_{T \wedge t}} \right) = \limsup_{t \rightarrow \infty} \left(\frac{X_{T \wedge t}}{X'_{T \wedge t}} \right) - 1,$$

the *return of X relative to X' over the period $[0, T]$.*

Note that we may have $\mathbb{E}rr_T(X|X') \geq 0$ and $\mathbb{E}rr_T(X'|X) \geq 0$

however $\mathbb{E}rr_T(X|X') \leq 0$ implies $\mathbb{E}rr_T(X'|X) \geq 0$.

Definition

We say that X' has the *numéraire property* in a certain class of wealth processes for investment over the period $[0, T]$ if and only if $\mathbb{E}rr_T(X|X') \leq 0$ holds for all other X in the same class.

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Finite horizon – existence and uniqueness

Theorem

Let T be a finite stopping time. There exists a unique $\tilde{Z} \in \mathcal{A}^\alpha$ such that $\mathbb{E}r_T(Z|\tilde{Z}) \leq 0$ holds for all $Z \in \mathcal{A}^\alpha$.

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Proof:

Existence via Optional Decomposition + Convexity and boundedness in proba of \mathcal{A}^α + Kardaras (2010) + limiting passages + drawdown specific.

Uniqueness via strategy switching at times of maximum.

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Rk: \tilde{Z} solves the log-utility problem on $[0, T]$:

$$\mathbb{E} \left[\log \left(\frac{Z_T}{\tilde{Z}_T} \right) \right] \leq \mathbb{E} \left[\frac{Z_T}{\tilde{Z}_T} - 1 \right] = \mathbb{E} \text{Err}_T(Z|\tilde{Z}) \leq 0.$$

Rk2: However, in general \tilde{Z} depends on T . In particular, the global numeraire \hat{X} solves the problem up to the first time it violates the α -DD constraint.

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Recall that \widehat{X} is the global numéraire (growth optimal) portfolio. From Cherny & O. ('13) we know that

- ${}^\alpha \widehat{X} := M_t^{F_\alpha}(\widehat{X})$ solves the long-run log-utility maximisation in \mathcal{A}^α ,
- the mapping $X \rightarrow {}^\alpha X := M_t^{F_\alpha}(X)$ is a bijection between \mathcal{A} and \mathcal{A}^α .

Theorem

For any $\alpha \in [0, 1)$ and $X \in \mathcal{A}$, we have:

- 1 $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} ({}^\alpha X_t / {}^\alpha \widehat{X}_t)$ exists in \mathbb{R}_+ a.s. Moreover,

$$rr_\infty({}^\alpha X | {}^\alpha \widehat{X}) = \left(\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} \left(\frac{X_t}{\widehat{X}_t} \right) \right)^{1-\alpha} - 1 = \left(1 + rr_\infty(X | \widehat{X}) \right)^{1-\alpha} - 1.$$

- 2 for σ and τ two times of maximum of \widehat{X} with $\sigma \leq \tau$ we have

$$\mathbb{E} \left[rr_\tau({}^\alpha X | {}^\alpha \widehat{X}) \mid \mathcal{F}_\sigma \right] \leq rr_\sigma({}^\alpha X | {}^\alpha \widehat{X}) \quad a.s.$$

for any $X \in \mathcal{A}$ and $\sigma = \tau = \infty$, $rr_\sigma({}^\alpha X | {}^\alpha \widehat{X}) \leq 0$ with equality if and only if $X \in \mathcal{A}^\alpha$.

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More on asymptotic optimality

- The previous result allows to show easily that $\alpha^{\widehat{X}}$ maximises the growth rate in \mathcal{A}^α , extending Cvitanic and Karatzas '94.
- We also show that $\alpha^{\widehat{X}}$ is the **only** process with the numéraire property along a sequence $T_n \rightarrow \infty$ a.s.
- Further, when T is large the numéraire over $[0, T]$ will be close (initially in time) to $\alpha^{\widehat{X}}$:

Theorem

Consider a sequence of stopping times $T_n \rightarrow \infty$ a.s. and let $\alpha^{\widetilde{X}^n} \in \mathcal{A}^\alpha$ have the numéraire property in \mathcal{A}^α over $[0, T_n]$. Then $\alpha^{\widetilde{X}^n} \rightarrow \alpha^{\widehat{X}}$ (locally) in Emery's topology.

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The End: Moral

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We would like to advance a framework where

- time horizon is arbitrary (neither fixed nor $+\infty$)
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We now combine the idea of forward performance/horizon unbiased with variational preferences under model uncertainty (Musielà & Zariphopoulou '09; Henderson & Hobson '07; Gilboa & Schmeidler '89; Maccheroni, Marinacci & Rustichini '06; Schied '07).

Definition (Protagonists:)

A **utility random field** $U : \Omega \times [0, \infty) \times \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ is (\mathcal{F}_t) -prog. measurable and

- $\forall (\omega, t) \in \Omega \times [0, \infty)$, $U(\omega, \cdot, t)$ is a (nice) utility function
- $U(\omega, x, \cdot)$ is càdlàg and $U(\cdot, x, t) \in L^1(\mathcal{F}_t)$.

A **family of penalty functions**

$$\gamma_{t,T} : \{\mathbb{Q} : \mathbb{Q} \ll \mathbb{P} \text{ on } \mathcal{F}_T\} \rightarrow [0, \infty]$$

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convex, l.s.c., finite on a weakly compact set.

Definition (Dynamic consistency:)

The pair U and $\gamma_{t,T}$ is a **robust forward performance** (or is **time consistent**) if

- $\mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}}[U(T, x)]$ is well defined in $(-\infty, \infty]$ for all T, x for \mathbb{Q} with $\gamma_{t,T}(\mathbb{Q}) < \infty$,
-

$$U(\xi, t) = u(\xi; t, T) \text{ a.s. } \forall 0 \leq t \leq T < \infty, \xi \in L^\infty(\mathcal{F}_t),$$

where u is the value function

$$u(\xi; t, T) := \operatorname{ess\,sup}_{\pi \in \mathcal{A}_{bd}} \operatorname{ess\,inf}_{\mathbb{Q} \in \mathcal{Q}_T} \left\{ \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}} \left[U \left(\xi + \int_t^T \pi_u dS_u, T \right) \mid \mathcal{F}_t \right] + \gamma_{t,T}(\mathbb{Q}) \right\}.$$

Consider $(\Omega, \mathcal{F}, (\mathcal{F}_t), \mathbb{P})$ with (\mathcal{F}_t) generated by a (1 or d -dim) Brownian motion W , prog. measurable λ, σ and

$$dS_t = S_t \sigma_t (\lambda_t dt + dW_t), \quad t \geq 0.$$

This is “true” model, unknown. Instead agent builds her “best prediction” or most likely model described by $\hat{\lambda}$ with $\hat{\mathbb{P}} \sim \mathbb{P}$ on \mathcal{F}_T , for all $T > 0$, where

$$\frac{d\hat{\mathbb{P}}}{d\mathbb{P}} \Big|_{\mathcal{F}_T} = \mathcal{E} \left(\int_0^{\cdot} (\hat{\lambda}_s - \lambda_s) dW_s \right)_T.$$

Observe that

$$dS_t = S_t \sigma_t (\hat{\lambda}_t dt + d\hat{W}_t), \quad \text{for a } \hat{\mathbb{P}} \text{ Brownian motion } \hat{W}.$$

$\hat{\mathbb{P}}$ is “reasonable” in that $\hat{\mathbb{E}}[\int_0^T \hat{\lambda}_s^2 ds] < \infty$, $T > 0$.

Given $\mathbb{Q} \ll \hat{\mathbb{P}}$ on \mathcal{F}_T we write $\mathbb{Q} = \mathbb{Q}^{\hat{\eta}}$ where

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Logarithmic preferences

Proposition

Let $\hat{\lambda}$ as above and $\delta \geq 0$ prog. measurable. The *utility field*

$$U(x, t) := \ln x - \frac{1}{2} \frac{\delta_t}{1 + \delta_t} \int_0^t \hat{\lambda}_s^2 ds$$

and the *penalty function*

$$\gamma_{t,T}(\mathbb{Q}) := \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}} \left[\int_t^T \frac{\delta_s}{2} \hat{\eta}_s^2 ds \middle| \mathcal{F}_t \right] \quad \text{if } \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}} \left[\int_t^T \frac{\delta_s}{1 + \delta_s} \hat{\lambda}_s^2 ds \right] < \infty$$

and $+\infty$ elsewhere, form a *robust forward criteria*.

Investor's optimal wealth process evolves as

$$dX_t^{\bar{\pi}} = \frac{\delta_t}{1 + \delta_t} \frac{\hat{\lambda}_t}{\sigma_t} X_t^{\bar{\pi}} \frac{dS_t}{S_t}$$

Remarks

- The choice of learning and investor's confidence, i.e. choice of $\hat{\lambda}$ and δ , arbitrary!
- Under $\hat{\mathbb{P}}$ the Kelly/growth optimal portfolio is

$$d\hat{X}_t = \frac{\hat{\lambda}_t}{\sigma_t} \hat{X}_t \frac{dS_t}{S_t}$$

- The investor follows a **fractional Kelly strategy**, investing a fraction $\frac{\delta_t}{1+\delta_t}$ of her wealth

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which is the Kelly strategy under $\bar{\mathbb{P}} := \mathbb{Q}^{\bar{\eta}}$ for $\bar{\eta}_t := \frac{\hat{\lambda}_t}{1+\delta_t}$.

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First Proof (direct)

W.l.o.g. $t = 0$. Given π and $\mathbb{Q} = \mathbb{Q}^{\hat{\eta}}$ define

$$N_t^{\pi, \hat{\eta}} := U(X_t^\pi, t) + \int_0^t \frac{\delta_u}{2} \hat{\eta}_u^2 du = \ln X_t^\pi - \int_0^t \hat{\lambda}_u du + \int_0^t \frac{\delta_u}{2} \hat{\eta}_u^2 du$$

Then

$$u(x_0; t, T) = \operatorname{ess\,sup}_{\pi \in \mathcal{A}} \operatorname{ess\,inf}_{\mathbb{Q} \in \mathcal{Q}_T} \left\{ \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}} [U(X_T^\pi, T)] + \gamma_{0, T}(\mathbb{Q}) \right\}$$

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A direct computation gives $\forall \pi \in \mathcal{A}$, $N_t^{\pi, \bar{\eta}}$ is a supermartingale

$$u(x_0; 0, T) \leq \operatorname{ess\,sup}_{\pi \in \mathcal{A}} \mathbb{E}^{\bar{\mathbb{P}}} \left[N_T^{\pi, \bar{\eta}} \right] \leq N_0^{\pi, \bar{\eta}} = U(x_0, 0).$$

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A direct computation gives $\forall \mathbb{Q} \in \mathcal{Q}_T$, $N_t^{\bar{\pi}, \hat{\eta}}$ is a submartingale

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Dual field

Consider now a general semimartingale setup, U on \mathbb{R} and $\mathcal{A} = \mathcal{A}_{bd}$.

Let V be the Fenchel transform of U : $V(t, y) = \sup_{x \in \mathbb{R}} (U(t, x) - xy)$.

Definition (3rd protagonist: the Dual field)

Given a utility field U and a penalty function γ , the **dual field** v is

$$v(\eta; t, T) := \operatorname{ess\,inf}_{\mathbb{Q} \in \mathcal{Q}_T} \operatorname{ess\,inf}_{\mathbb{M} \in \mathcal{M}_T^{\mathbb{Q}}} \left\{ \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}} \left[V \left(\eta Z_{t,T}^{\mathbb{M}\mathbb{Q}}, T \right) \mid \mathcal{F}_t \right] + \gamma_{t,T}(\mathbb{Q}) \right\},$$

for $\eta \in L_+^0(\mathcal{F}_t)$ and where $Z_{t,T}^{\mathbb{M}\mathbb{Q}} = \frac{d\mathbb{M}}{d\mathbb{Q}} \Big|_{\mathcal{F}_T} \cdot \frac{d\mathbb{Q}}{d\mathbb{M}} \Big|_{\mathcal{F}_t}$ and $\mathcal{M}_T^{\mathbb{Q}}$ are \mathbb{Q} -abs. cont. local martingale measures.

The pair of dual field V and the family of penalty functions $\gamma_{t,T}$ is **time-homogeneous** if

$$V(\eta, t) = v(\eta; t, T) \text{ a.s.}$$

for all $0 \leq t \leq T$ and $\eta \in L_+^0(\mathcal{F}_t)$.

Rk: **Global inf instead of a saddle point!**

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Duality theorem

Theorem

(under some integrability and compactness assumptions) The primal and dual value functions satisfy

$$\begin{aligned}u(\xi; t, T) &= \operatorname{ess\,inf}_{\eta \in L_+^0(\mathcal{F}_t)} (v(\eta; t, T) + \xi\eta) \quad \text{a.s.} \\v(\eta; t, T) &= \operatorname{ess\,sup}_{\xi \in L^\infty(\mathcal{F}_t)} (u(\xi; t, T) - \xi\eta) \quad \text{a.s.}\end{aligned}\tag{1}$$

for all $0 \leq t \leq T$, $\xi \in L^\infty(\mathcal{F}_t)$ and $\eta \in L_+^0(\mathcal{F}_t)$.

Proof: Follows the ideas in Schied '07 but using duality in Zitkovic '09 instead of Kramkov & Schachermayer '99.

Corollary

U and γ are time-consistent if and only if V and γ are.

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To model uncertainty and back

Consider again a Brownian filtration, estimated model $\hat{\mathbb{P}}$, and

$$\gamma_{t,T}(\mathbb{Q}) := \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{Q}} \left[\int_t^T g_u(\hat{\eta}_u) du \middle| \mathcal{F}_t \right],$$

g_t convex, l.s.c., $g_t(\eta) \geq -a + b|\eta|^2$. If U, γ are time-consistent and a saddle point $(\bar{\pi}, \bar{\eta})$ exists we have

$$U(x, t) + \int_0^t g_u(\bar{\eta}_u) du = \sup_{\pi \in \mathcal{A}} \mathbb{E}^{\bar{\mathbb{Q}}} \left[U \left(x + \int_t^T \pi_u dS_u \right) + \int_0^T g_u(\bar{\eta}_u) du \middle| \mathcal{F}_t \right]$$

and hence, in the spirit of Skiadas '03, the problem is equivalent to non-robust forward performance criteria $\bar{U}(x, t) = U(x, t) + \int_0^t g_u(\bar{\eta}_u) du$ under $\bar{\mathbb{Q}}$. Or yet, to the (non-robust) forward problem under \mathbb{P} with

$$\tilde{U}(x, t) := \frac{d\bar{\mathbb{Q}}}{d\mathbb{P}} \Big|_{\mathcal{F}_t} \cdot \bar{U}(x, t) = \frac{d\bar{\mathbb{Q}}}{d\mathbb{P}} \Big|_{\mathcal{F}_t} \left(U(x, t) + \int_0^t g_u(\bar{\eta}_u) du \right).$$

Note that \tilde{U} necessarily has non-trivial volatility.

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and hence, in the spirit of Skiadas '03, the problem is equivalent to non-robust forward performance criteria $\bar{U}(x, t) = U(x, t) + \int_0^t g_u(\bar{\eta}_u) du$ under $\bar{\mathbb{Q}}$. Or yet, to the **(non-robust) forward problem under \mathbb{P}** with

$$\tilde{U}(x, t) := \frac{d\bar{\mathbb{Q}}}{d\mathbb{P}} \Big|_{\mathcal{F}_t} \cdot \bar{U}(x, t) = \frac{d\bar{\mathbb{Q}}}{d\mathbb{P}} \Big|_{\mathcal{F}_t} \left(U(x, t) + \int_0^t g_u(\bar{\eta}_u) du \right).$$

Note that \tilde{U} necessarily has **non-trivial volatility**.

Non-volatile criteria

Time consistency of the dual field boils down to

$$V(yZ_t^{\bar{M}\bar{Q}}, t) \leq \mathbb{E}^{\bar{Q}} \left[V \left(yZ_T^{\bar{M}\bar{Q}}, T \right) \middle| \mathcal{F}_t \right] + \gamma_{t,T}(\bar{Q})$$

with equality for some \bar{M} , \bar{Q} .

We expect V to follow

$$dV(y, t) = b(y, t)dt + a(y, t)dW_t$$

which should lead to SPDE for V (or U).

In the non-robust setting ($g \equiv 0$) we recover

$$dU(x, t) = \frac{1}{2} \frac{|\lambda_t U_x(x, t) + \sigma_t \sigma_t' \tilde{a}_x(x, t)|^2}{U_{xx}(x, t)} dt + \tilde{a}(x, t) dW_t$$

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Non-volatile criteria (cont.)

Now, if $a \equiv 0$ the submartingale property \Rightarrow a **random PDE**

$$V_t(y, t) + \inf_{\eta} \left\{ g(\eta) + \frac{y^2 V_{yy}(y, t)}{2} (\eta + \lambda)^2 \right\} = 0, \quad a.s., t \geq 0.$$

Existence? Two difficulties:

- non-linearity: optimal $\bar{\eta}$ in function of V_{yy}
- solving for all $t \geq 0$: even if $g \equiv 0$, changing variables $V_y(y, t) = -h(\ln y + \frac{1}{2} \int_0^t \lambda_u^2 du, \int_0^t \lambda_u^2 du)$, we obtain

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the backward heat equation. Solutions characterised by Widder's thm.

Taking $V(y, t) = -\ln y + \int_0^t b_u du$ and g quadratic leads to the logarithmic example.

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- ① Long-run investment, risk attitudes via drawdown constraints
 - Kelly's long-run investor and the numéraire property
 - Numéraire under drawdown – finite horizon
 - Numéraire under drawdown – asymptotics

- ② Robust forward performance criteria
 - Model uncertainty, variational preferences and time homogeneity
 - Logarithmic preferences and fractional Kelly
 - Duality and (S)PDEs

- ③ Conclusions

Conclusions

- We present two portfolio choice problems which avoid the classical pitfalls and produce practically relevant strategies.
 - Long run investor can both use pathwise outperformance and encode risk preferences by setting drawdown constraints. This **decouples the ambiguity in specification of model** (finding growth optimal portfolio) **and preferences** (setting drawdown level α).
 - We consider variational preferences in the setting of model uncertainty and focus on time-consistent (forward) criteria. In particular, we show that fractional Kelly strategies which use a (dynamic) estimate of the true model are optimal.
- ⇒ It would be interesting to find another instances where preferences are effectively encoded via restrictions on the set of trading strategies.
- ⇒ Is it true that complexity of decision criteria (e.g. stochastic utilities) can be understood as simpler criteria but under model uncertainty? Can analyse the (S)PDEs which arise?

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THANK YOU!

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