

q -counting and invariant theory

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Summer School in
Algebraic Combinatorics
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Lecture

1:
Monday

Invitation to q -counts
& representation theory
- quotients of Boolean algebras

2:
Tuesday

Representation theory review
& reflection groups

3:
Thursday

Molien's Theorem
& coinvariant algebras

4:
Thursday

Cyclic Sieving Phenomena (CSP)
& Springer's Theorem

see ECCO 2018 lecture notes

5:
Friday

More CSP's
& the deformation idea

↑ TODAY

GOAL: Discuss three counts

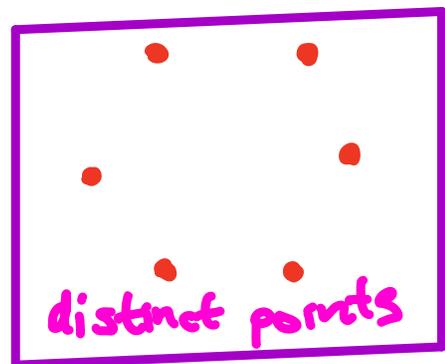
$$\binom{n}{k}, n^{n-2}, \frac{1}{n+1} \binom{2n}{n}$$

having ...

- q -counts via Hilbert series
- reflection group generalizations
- cyclic actions with CSP's
- a common proof idea:



many
deformation



1. Three counts

We know $\binom{n}{k} = \frac{n!}{k!(n-k)!}$ counts

$X = \binom{[n]}{k} = k\text{-element subsets of } [n]$



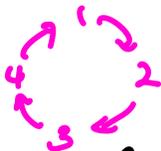
$C = \langle (1\ 2\ \dots\ n) \rangle \cong \mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}$
n-cycle

EXAMPLE $n=4$ $k=2$

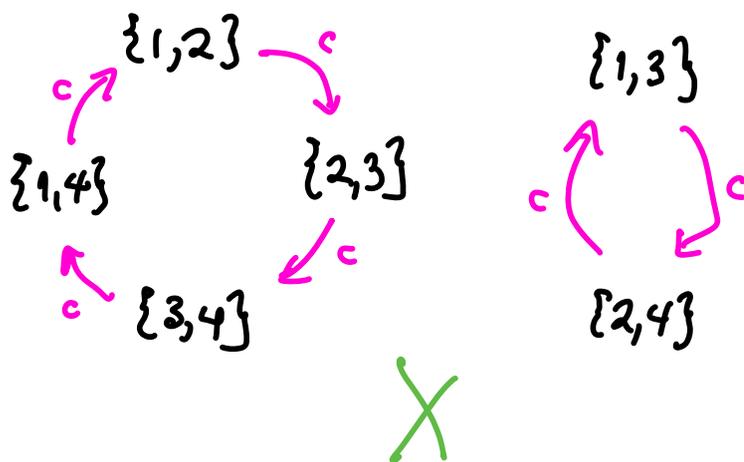
$$X = \binom{[4]}{2}$$



$$C = \langle (1\ 2\ 3\ 4) \rangle$$



$$= \{e, c, c^2, c^3\}$$



THEOREM

Hurwitz 1891

n^{n-2} counts

$$X = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{factorizations } c = (1, 2, \dots, n) = t_1 t_2 \cdots t_{n-1} \\ \text{of the } n\text{-cycle into} \\ n-1 \text{ transpositions } t_k = (i, j) \end{array} \right\}$$

X carries a natural action of
a cyclic group $C = \langle \psi \rangle \cong \mathbb{Z}/n(n-1)\mathbb{Z}$:

$$t_1 t_2 \cdots t_{n-2} t_{n-1} \xrightarrow{\psi} c t_{n-1} c^{-1} \cdot t_1 t_2 \cdots t_{n-2}$$

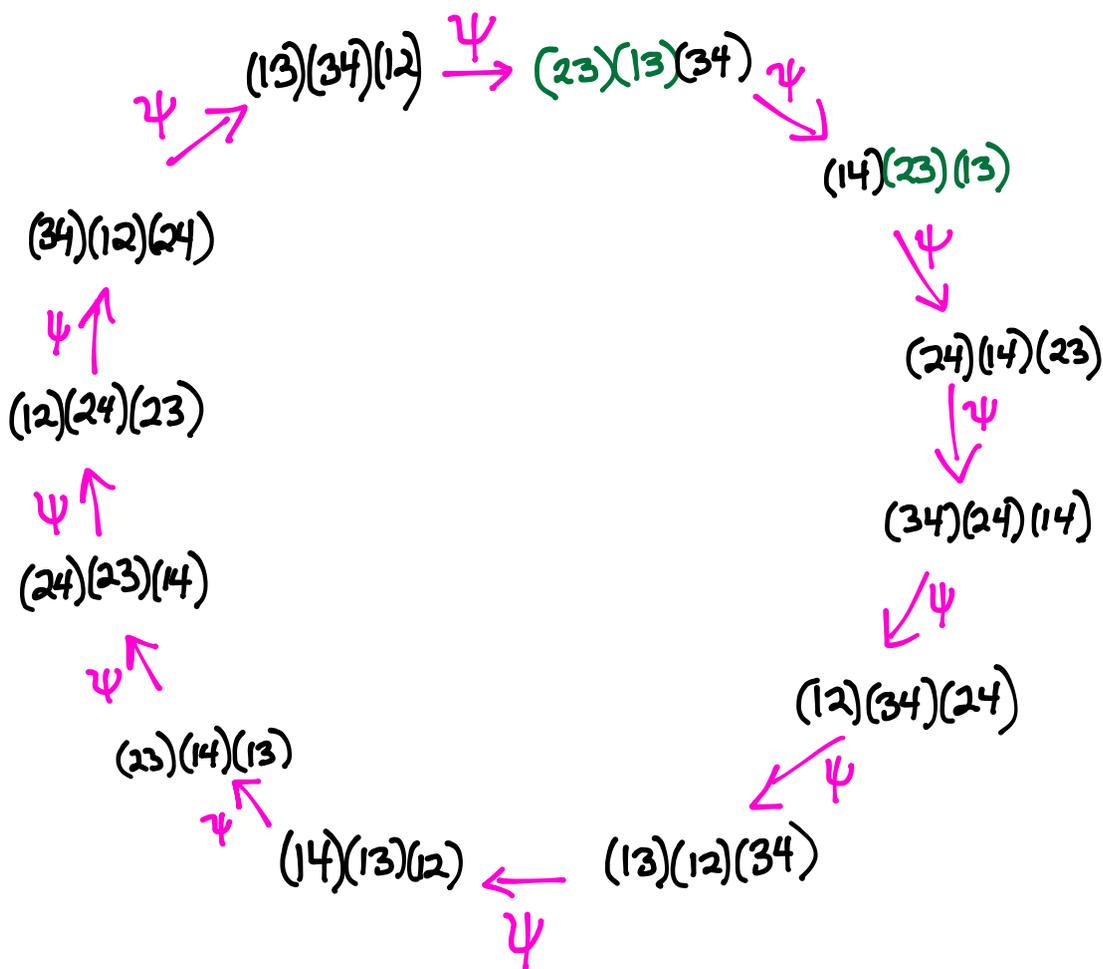
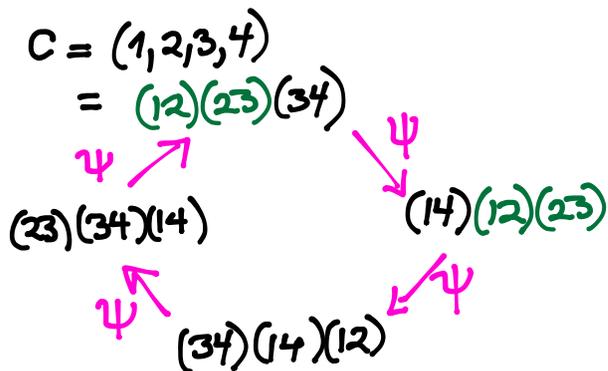
$$\xrightarrow{\psi^{n-1}} c t_1 c^{-1} \cdot c t_2 c^{-1} \cdots c t_{n-1} c^{-1}$$

EXAMPLE

$n=4$

$n^{n-2} = 4^2 = 16$ factorizations in X

$C = \langle \psi \rangle \cong \mathbb{Z}/3 \cdot 4\mathbb{Z}$
 $= \mathbb{Z}/12\mathbb{Z}$
 has 2 orbits on X

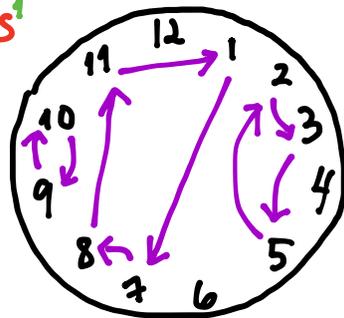


THEOREM (Kreweras 1972 Biane 1997)

The Catalan number $\frac{1}{n+1} \binom{2n}{n}$ counts

$X = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{permutations } w \text{ that can be factored} \\ w = t_1 t_2 \cdots t_k \text{ as a prefix of} \\ \text{a factorization } c = t_1 t_2 \cdots t_k t_{k+1} \cdots t_{n-1} \\ \text{of } c = (1, 2, \dots, n) \text{ into } n-1 \text{ transpositions.} \end{array} \right\}$

(equivalently, non-crossing set partitions¹
of $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$)



X has a natural cyclic group

$C = \langle \varphi \rangle \cong \mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}$ acting via $w \xrightarrow{\varphi} cwc^{-1}$

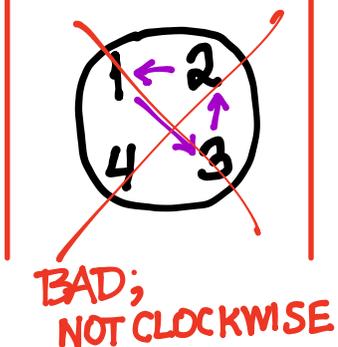
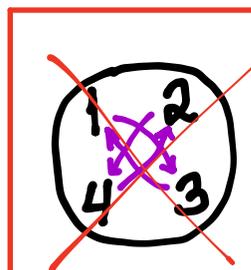
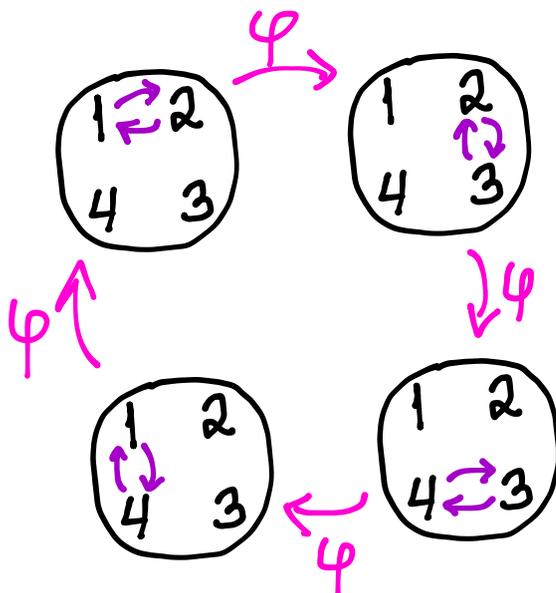
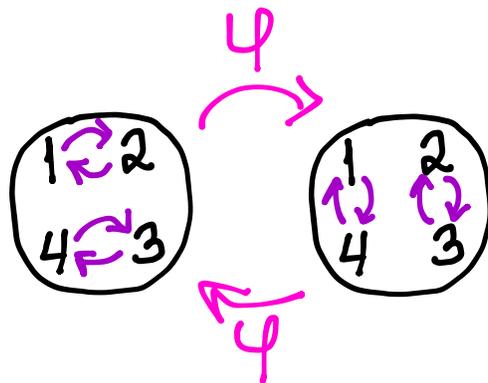
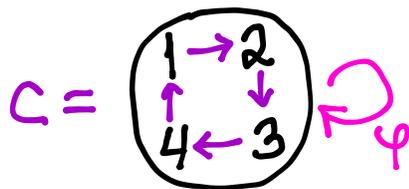
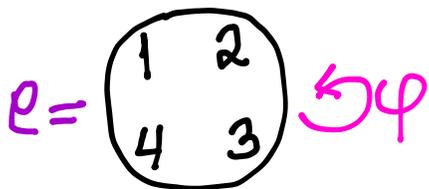
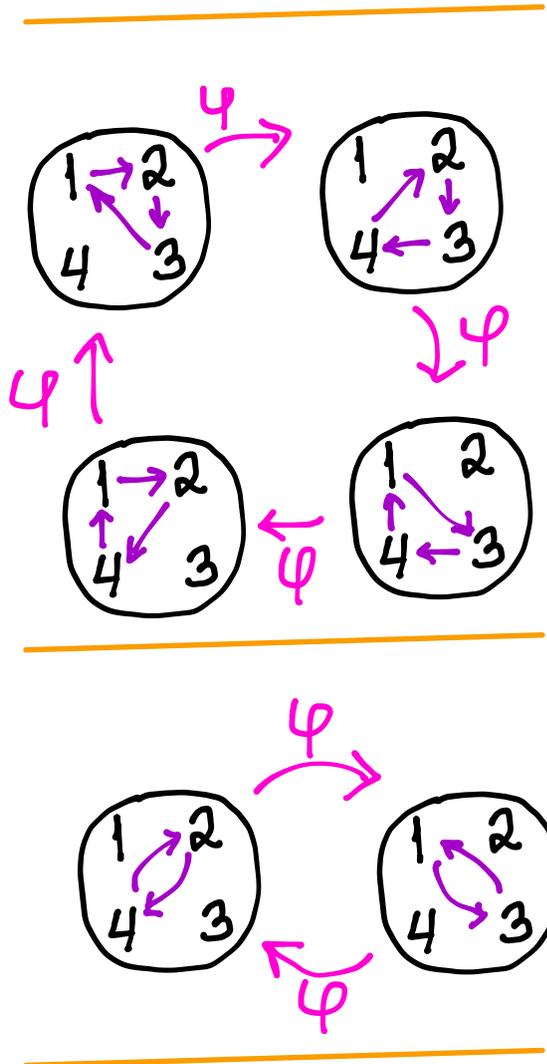
(= rotation of noncrossing partitions)

¹See Stanley, "Catalan Numbers" #159

$n=4$

$$\frac{1}{n+1} \binom{2n}{n} = \frac{1}{5} \binom{8}{4} = 14$$

$C = \langle \varphi \rangle \cong \mathbb{Z}/4\mathbb{Z}$ has 6 orbits



$$6 = \binom{4}{2}$$

$q=1$
←

$$\begin{aligned} \begin{bmatrix} 4 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}_q &= \frac{[4]_q [3]_q \cancel{[2]_q} \cancel{[1]_q}}{[2]_q [1]_q \cdot \cancel{[2]_q} \cancel{[1]_q}} \\ &= \frac{(1+q+q^2+q^3)(1+q+q^2)}{(1+q)(1)} \\ &= (1+q^2)(1+q+q^2) \end{aligned}$$

$$16 = 4^2$$

$q=1$
←

$$\begin{aligned} [4]_{q^2} [4]_{q^3} \\ = (1+q^2+q^4+q^6)(1+q^3+q^6+q^9) \end{aligned}$$

$$14 = \frac{1}{5} \binom{8}{4}$$

$q=1$
←

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1}{[5]_q} \begin{bmatrix} 8 \\ 4 \end{bmatrix}_q \\ = \frac{1}{\cancel{[5]_q} [4]_q [3]_q [2]_q \cancel{[1]_q}} \frac{[8]_q [7]_q [6]_q \cancel{[5]_q}}{\cancel{[5]_q} [4]_q [3]_q [2]_q \cancel{[1]_q}} \\ = (1-q+q^2)(1+q^4)(1+q+q^2+q^3+q^4+q^5+q^6) \end{aligned}$$

Each of these g -counts $X(g)$
gives a CSP for the appropriate

set X and

cyclic group $C \cong \mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z}$,

meaning for all $c^d \in C$ one has

$$\#\{x \in X : c^d(x) = x\} = [X(g)]_{g = \zeta^d}$$

where $\zeta = e^{2\pi i/m}$ = primitive
 m^{th} root of 1
in \mathbb{C}^x

We saw...

THEOREM

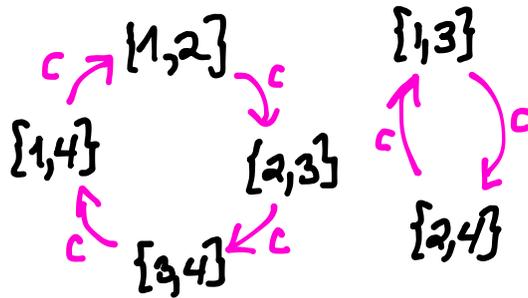
RSW
2004

- $X = k$ -element subsets of $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$
- $C = \langle (1, 2, \dots, n) \rangle \cong \mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}$
- $X(q) = \begin{bmatrix} n \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q$

exhibit a CSP.

$n=4$
 $k=2$

$\xi = e^{\frac{2\pi i}{4}} = i$



$$X(q) = \begin{bmatrix} 4 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}_q = (1+q^2)(1+q+q^2)$$

$\xi = \xi^0 = 1$
6

$\xi = \xi^2 = -1$
2

$\xi = \xi^1 = i$
0

THEOREM

Dourlopoulos
2017

Conj. by N. Williams
2013

- $X =$ factorizations $c = t_1 t_2 \dots t_{n-1}$ of n -cycle c into $n-1$ transpositions

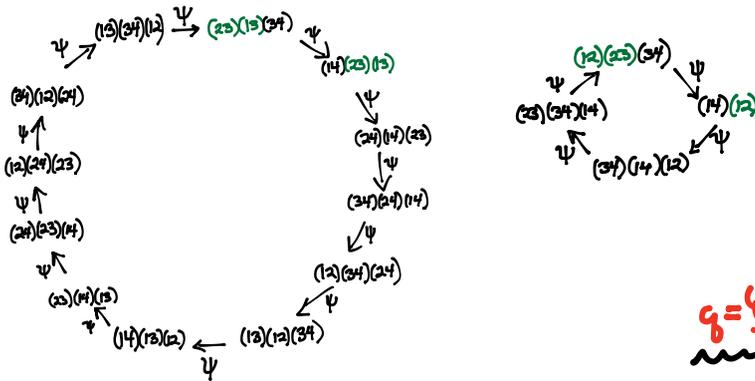


- $C = \langle \psi \rangle \cong \mathbb{Z}/(n-1)\mathbb{Z}$

- $X(q) = [n]_q [n]_q \dots [n]_q$

exhibit a CSP.

$n=4$
 $\xi = e^{\frac{2\pi i}{12}}$



$$X(q) = [4]_q [4]_q = (1+q^2+q^4+q^6)(1+q^3+q^6+q^9)$$

$q = \xi^0 = 1$
16

$q = \xi^4 = e^{\frac{2\pi i}{3}}$
4

$q = \xi^1 = e^{\frac{2\pi i}{12}}$
0

$q = \xi^2 = e^{\frac{2\pi i}{6}}$
0

$q = \xi^3 = e^{\frac{2\pi i}{4}} = i$
0

$q = \xi^6 = e^{\frac{2\pi i}{2}} = -1$
0

THEOREM

RSW
2004

- $X =$ permutations w factored $w = t_1 t_2 \dots t_k$ as prefixes of factorizations $c = t_1 t_2 \dots t_k \dots t_{n-1}$ (non crossing partitions)

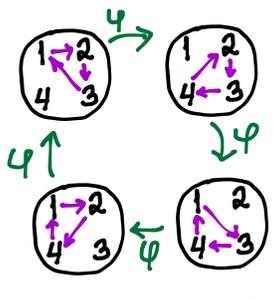


- $C = \langle \varphi \rangle \cong \mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}$

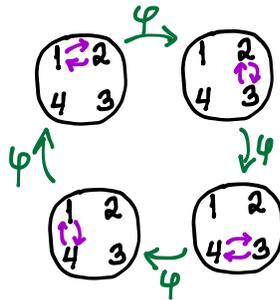
- $X(q) = \frac{1}{[n+1]_q} [2n]_q$

exhibit a CSP.

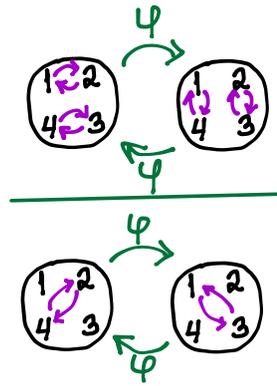
$n=4$
 $q = e^{\frac{2\pi i}{4}} = i$



$e = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 \\ 4 & 3 \end{pmatrix} \xrightarrow{\varphi}$



$c = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \rightarrow 2 \\ 4 \leftarrow 3 \end{pmatrix} \xrightarrow{\varphi}$



$$X(q) = \frac{1}{[5]_q} [8]_q = (1 - q + q^2)(1 + q^4)(1 + q + q^2 + q^3 + q^4 + q^5 + q^6)$$

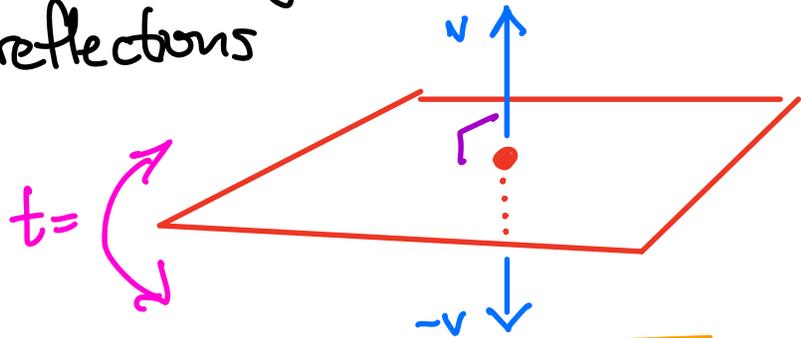
$q = q^0 = 1$
14

$q = q^2 = -1$
6

$q = q^1 = i$
2

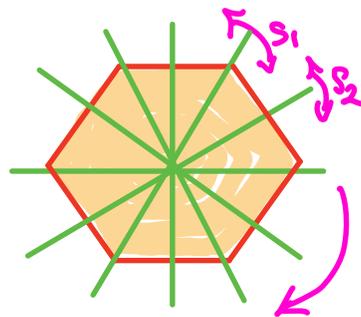
How to generalize to real reflection groups G ?

Recall this means a finite group $G \subset GL_n(\mathbb{R})$ generated by reflections



EXAMPLES: symmetry groups of regular polytopes

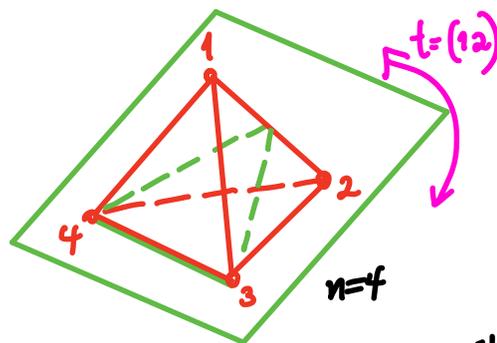
$G =$ dihedral group
= symmetries of regular m -gon



$m=6$

$s_2 =$ rotation

$G = \mathfrak{S}_n$
= symmetries of regular $(n-1)$ -simplex



$n=4$

reflections = transpositions (i, j)

Much numerology and q -counting comes from the (fundamental) degrees d_1, d_2, \dots, d_n of basic homogeneous G -invariant polynomials that already appeared in...

THEOREM

Shephard-Todd 1955
Chevalley 1955

A reflection group G acting on

$$\text{Sym}(V) \cong \mathbb{C}[x_1, \dots, x_n] = \mathbb{C}[x]$$

basis for V

has its G -invariant subalgebra again a polynomial algebra $\mathbb{C}[x]^G = \mathbb{C}[f_1, f_2, \dots, f_n]$

for some homogeneous f_1, f_2, \dots, f_n

of degrees d_1, d_2, \dots, d_n

What was so special about the n -cycles
 $c = (1\ 2\ \dots\ n)$ in $G = \mathfrak{S}_n$?

We've seen that they are **regular elements**
in the sense of **Springer**: they have an eigenvector v
lying on none of the reflecting hyperplanes for $G = \mathfrak{S}_n$

But they are even more special ...

THEOREM Real reflection groups G contain a
Coxeter 1948

special conjugacy class of regular elements,
with multiplicative order $h := \max\{d_1, \dots, d_n\}$
represented by $c = s_1 s_2 \dots s_n$,

called
Coxeter
elements

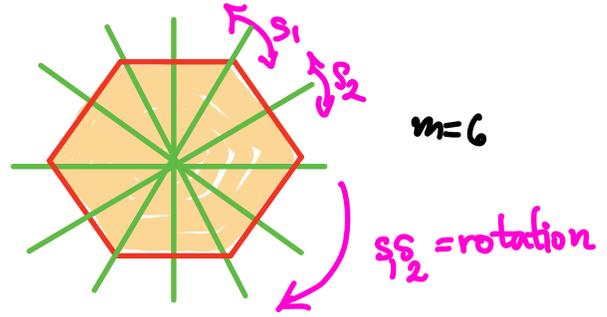
called the
Coxeter
number of G

where $G \cong \langle s_1, s_2, \dots, s_n \mid s_i^2 = e = (s_i s_j)^{m_{ij}} \rangle$
with $m_{ij} \in \{2, 3, \dots\}$

called the
Coxeter presentation for G

EXAMPLES

$G =$ dihedral group = symmetries of regular m -gon

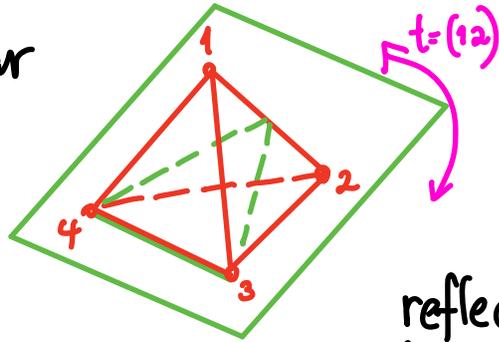


$$\cong \langle s_1, s_2 \mid s_1^2 = s_2^2 = (s_1 s_2)^m = 1 \rangle$$

Coxeter presentation

- fundamental degrees $(d_1, d_2) = (2, m) \Rightarrow h = m$ Coxeter number
- and Coxeter element $c = s_1 s_2 =$ rotation

$G = \mathfrak{S}_n$ = symmetries of regular $(n-1)$ -simplex

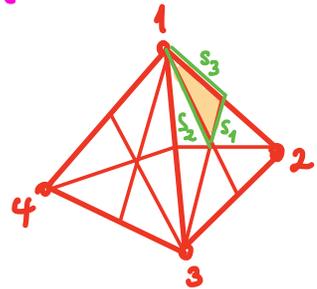


$$\cong \langle s_1, s_2, \dots, s_{n-1} \mid s_i^2 = (s_i s_j)^2 = (s_i s_{i+1})^3 = 1 \text{ if } |i-j| \geq 2 \rangle$$

Coxeter presentation

reflections = transpositions (i, j)

- fundamental degrees $(d_1, d_2, \dots, d_n) = (1, 2, \dots, n) \Rightarrow h = n$ Coxeter number



- and Coxeter element

$$c = s_1 s_2 \dots s_{n-1} = (12)(23) \dots (n-1, n) = (12 \dots n) = n\text{-cycle}$$

Q: Why are these q -counts polynomials, in $\mathbb{Z}[q]$?

A: All are Hilbert series $\text{Hilb}(A, q) := \sum_{d=0}^{\infty} \dim_{\mathbb{C}}(A_d) \cdot q^d$
 for various graded rings $A = \bigoplus_{d=0}^{\infty} A_d$

EXAMPLE

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \begin{bmatrix} n \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q & G = \mathfrak{S}_n & \prod_{i=1}^n \frac{[d_i^G]_q}{[d_i^H]_q} \\ & \leftarrow \text{wavy arrow} & \\ & H = \mathfrak{S}_k \times \mathfrak{S}_{n-k} & \end{array}$$

$$\prod_{i=1}^n \frac{[d_i^G]_q}{[d_i^H]_q} = \text{Hilb} \left(\frac{\mathbb{C}[f_1^H, \dots, f_n^H]}{(\mathbb{C}[f_1^G, \dots, f_n^G])^H}, q \right)$$

where $\mathbb{C}[x]^G = \mathbb{C}[f_1^G, \dots, f_n^G]$

$$\cap$$

$$\mathbb{C}[x]^H = \mathbb{C}[f_1^H, \dots, f_n^H]$$

for a reflection subgroup $H \subset G$

$$[n]_q^2 [n]_q^3 \cdots [n]_q^{n-1} \xleftarrow{G = \mathfrak{S}_n} \prod_{i=1}^n \frac{[ih]_q}{[d_i]_q}$$

$$\prod_{i=1}^n \frac{[ih]_q}{[d_i]_q} = \text{Hilb} \left(\frac{\mathbb{C}[f_1, \dots, f_{n-1}]}{(\alpha_2(\underline{f}), \dots, \alpha_n(\underline{f}))}, q \right)$$

where the G -discriminant in $\mathbb{C}[x]^G = \mathbb{C}[f_1, \dots, f_n]$

is expressed $\Delta_G^2 = f_n^n + \alpha_2(\underline{f}) f_n^{n-2} + \alpha_3(\underline{f}) f_n^{n-3} + \dots + \alpha_n(\underline{f})$

with $\Delta_G := \prod_{\substack{\text{reflection} \\ \text{hyperplanes} \\ H \text{ for } G}} l_H(x_1, \dots, x_n)$ (if $G = \mathfrak{S}_n$ $\prod_{1 \leq i < j \leq n} (x_i - x_j)$)

(a bit technical ; uses work of Bessis and others!)

$$\frac{1}{[n+1]_q} \begin{bmatrix} 2n \\ n \end{bmatrix}_q \xleftarrow{G = \mathfrak{S}_n} \prod_{i=1}^n \frac{[h+d_i]_q}{[d_i]_q}$$

$$\prod_{i=1}^n \frac{[h+d_i]_q}{[d_i]_q} = \text{Hilb} \left(\left(\mathbb{C}[x] / (\mathcal{O}_1, \dots, \mathcal{O}_n) \right)^G, q \right)$$

where $\mathcal{O}_1, \dots, \mathcal{O}_n$ in $\mathbb{C}[x]$

- each have same degree $h+1$
- form a system of parameters for $\mathbb{C}[x]$
- have the map $\chi_i \mapsto \mathcal{O}_i$ G -equivariant

Existence of such magical $\mathcal{O}_1, \dots, \mathcal{O}_n$ provided by rep'n theory of rational Cherednik algebras (Gordon, Berest-Etingof-Ginzburg 2002)

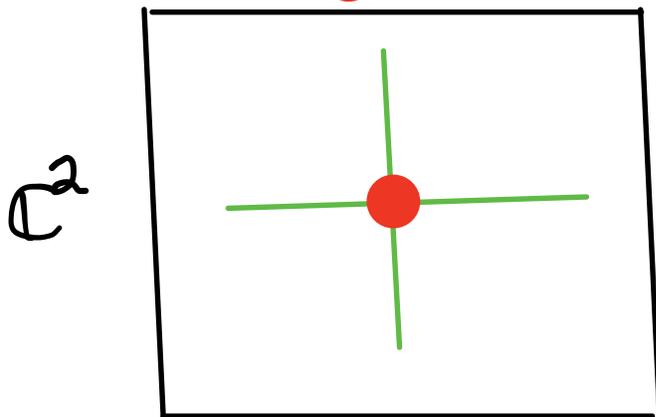
Deformation proof idea

(for some CSP's with $X \hookrightarrow \mathbb{C}$ and $X(g)$)

Let $X(g) = \text{Hilb}(A, g)$ for **graded** ring

$$A = \mathbb{C}[x_1, \dots, x_n] / \underbrace{(h_1, \dots, h_n)}_{\text{homogeneous ideal } I}$$

= coordinate ring for the
fat point $h_1(x) = \dots = h_n(x) = 0$
at the origin in \mathbb{C}^n



We now ask for a lot ...

$$I = (h_1, \dots, h_n)$$

homogeneous

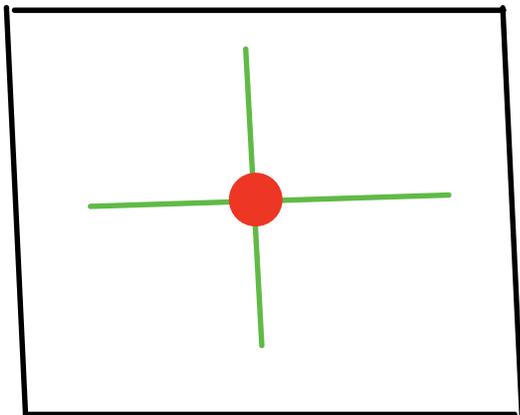
Deform
 \rightsquigarrow

$$J = (h'_1, \dots, h'_n)$$

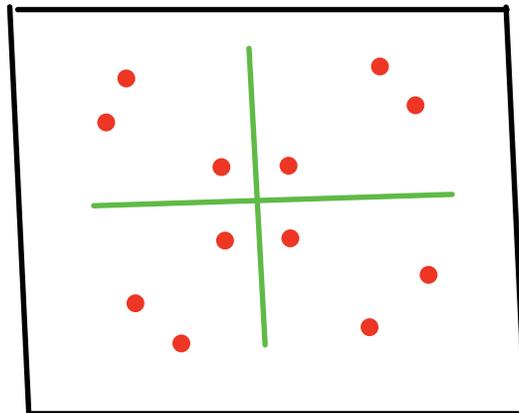
inhomogeneous

$$h_1(x) = \dots = h_n(x) = 0$$

$$h'_1(x) = \dots = h'_n(x) = 0$$



\rightsquigarrow



fat point of multiplicity $X(1) = \#X$,
 with coordinate ring
 $A = \mathbb{C}[x]/I$

$$\curvearrowright g(x_i) = \{x_i\}$$

$$C = \mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z}$$

$\cong \langle g \rangle$

$\#X$ reduced points
 with coordinate ring
 $\mathbb{C}[x]/J$

$$\curvearrowright g(x_i) = \{x_i\}$$

$$C = \mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z}$$

permuting as in
 $C \subset X$

This would **prove the CSP** :

$$\#\{x \in X : g^d(x) = x\} \stackrel{?}{=} [X(g)]_{g=f^d} \\ \parallel \\ \sum_i \dim(A_i) \cdot (f^d)^i \\ \parallel$$

Trace of g^d
acting on $\mathbb{R}[x]/J$

Trace of g^d
acting on $\underbrace{\mathbb{R}[x]/I}_A$

assuming $\mathbb{R}[x]/I$ and $\mathbb{R}[x]/J$
agree up to a G -stable filtration

How does this go in our examples?

THEOREM Given a Coxeter element c in G ,
 and reflection subgroup $H < G$,

RSW
2004

- $X = G/H$
- $\mathbb{C} = \langle c \rangle \cong \mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}$ via $c^d(gH) = c^d gH$
- $X(\mathbb{C}) = \prod_{i=1}^n \frac{[d_i^G]_g}{[d_i^H]_g}$

exhibits a CSP.

Proof sketch:

Deform

$$\mathbb{C}[f_1^H, \dots, f_n^H] / (f_1^G, \dots, f_n^G) \xleftarrow{I}$$

$$\rightsquigarrow \mathbb{C}[f_1^H, \dots, f_n^H] / (f_1^G - f_1^G(v), \dots, f_n^G - f_n^G(v)) \xleftarrow{J}$$

where $v \in V = \mathbb{C}^n$ is an eigenvector for c
 avoiding all the reflecting hyperplanes for G . \square

THEOREM

Dowropoulos
2017

(Conj. by
N. Williams
2013)

- $X =$ factorizations $c = t_1 t_2 \cdots t_n$ of a Coxeter element c into n reflections



- $C = \langle \psi \rangle \cong \mathbb{Z}/nh\mathbb{Z}$

- $X(q) = \prod_{i=1}^n \frac{[ih]_q}{[d_i]_q}$

exhibit a CSP.

Proof
sketch

Deform

$$\mathbb{C}[f_1, f_2, \dots, f_{n-1}] / (\alpha_2(\underline{f}), \dots, \alpha_n(\underline{f}))$$

$$\rightsquigarrow \mathbb{C}[f_1, f_2, \dots, f_{n-1}] / (\alpha_2(\underline{f}) - c_2, \dots, \alpha_n(\underline{f}) - c_n)$$

for particular choices of c_2, \dots, c_n , making heavy use of **Bessis's** 2007 results on **Lyashko-Looijenga** morphism. 

"Parking Space"
CONJECTURE

Armsbrong
-R.-Rhoades
2012

One can explain a known
CSP for

- $X =$ $g \in G$ factored $g = t_1 t_2 \dots t_k$ as prefixes of factorizations $c = t_1 t_2 \dots t_n$ of a Coxeter element c



$$w \mapsto cw\bar{c}^{-1}$$

- $C = \langle \varphi \rangle \cong \mathbb{Z}/h\mathbb{Z}$

W-noncrossing partitions

- $X(g) = \prod_{i=1}^n \frac{[h+d_i]_g}{[d_i]_g}$

via this deformation:

$$\left(\mathbb{C}[x] / (\theta_1, \dots, \theta_n) \right)^G$$

$\swarrow \sim I$

$$\rightsquigarrow \left(\mathbb{C}[x] / (\theta_1 - x_1, \dots, \theta_n - x_n) \right)^G$$

$\swarrow \sim J$

2. Another beautiful, less understood thread:

symmetric group S_n $\xleftarrow{\text{"q=1"}}$ finite general linear group $GL_n(\mathbb{F}_q)$

$\mathbb{Q}[x]^{S_n} = \mathbb{Q}[e_1, \dots, e_n]$ $\xleftarrow{\text{}}$ $\mathbb{F}_q[x_1, \dots, x_n]^{GL_n(\mathbb{F}_q)} = \mathbb{F}_q[D_0, D_1, \dots, D_{n-1}]$
 Dickson's invariants

$c = (1\ 2\ \dots\ n)$ n -cycle $\xleftarrow{\text{}}$ $c_\delta = \text{Singer cycle}$
 $c_\delta := \text{cyclic generator of } \mathbb{F}_q^\times \hookrightarrow GL_{\mathbb{F}_q}(\mathbb{F}_q^n) \cong GL_n(\mathbb{F}_q)$
 $\langle c_\delta \rangle \cong \mathbb{F}_q^\times$

There are lots of results & conjectures!

Thanks for
your attention
and

thank you,

SSACK

Organizers!

Extra References

(beyond those in the ECCO chapter):

On cyclic sieving:

Bruce Sagan "The cyclic sieving phenomenon: a survey"
In 'Surveys in Combinatorics 2011' London Math. Soc.
Lec. Notes Series Vol 392, 183 - 233

R.-Stanton-White "What is ... cyclic sieving?"
Notices of the AMS 61 (2): 169-171

On the analogy between S_n and $GL_n(\mathbb{F}_q)$:

Lewis-R.-Stanton "Reflection factorizations of
Singer cycles", J. Algeb. Combin. (2014) 40, 663-6

R.-Stanton-Webb "Springer's regular elements over
arbitrary fields", Math. Proc. Camb. Phil. Soc. 141 (2006),
209-229 ^{91.}