

THE LAURENT PHENOMENON

$$a_{n-1}a_{n+1} = a_n^2 - (-1)^n, \quad n \geq 1$$

$$a_0 = 1, \quad a_1 = 1$$

A priori $a_n \in \mathbb{Q}$ but actually

$$a_n = F_n \in \mathbb{Z}$$

(Fibonacci number), “explained” by

$$F_n = \alpha a^n + \beta b^n$$

and the addition law for e^x or $\sin x$.

M. Somos, c. 1982: Is there something similar involving addition law for elliptic functions?

First came **Somos-6**. **Somos-4** through **Somos-7**:

$$a_n a_{n-4} = a_{n-1} a_{n-3} + a_{n-2}^2, \quad n \geq 4$$
$$a_i = 1 \text{ for } 0 \leq i \leq 3$$

$$a_n a_{n-5} = a_{n-1} a_{n-4} + a_{n-2} a_{n-3}, \quad n \geq 5$$
$$a_i = 1 \text{ for } 0 \leq i \leq 4$$

$$a_n a_{n-6} = a_{n-1} a_{n-5} + a_{n-2} a_{n-4} + a_{n-3}^2,$$
$$n \geq 6$$
$$a_i = 1 \text{ for } 0 \leq i \leq 5$$

$$a_n a_{n-7} = a_{n-1} a_{n-6} + a_{n-2} a_{n-5} + a_{n-3} a_{n-4},$$
$$n \geq 7$$
$$a_i = 1 \text{ for } 0 \leq i \leq 6.$$

Somos-4 through Somos-7 were conjectured to be integral (now proved), but for Somos-8,

$$a_{17} = 420514/7.$$

Many similar conjectures, e.g., if

$$1 \leq p \leq q \leq r, \quad k = p + q + r,$$

and

$$a_n a_{n-k} = a_{n-p} a_{n-k+p} + a_{n-q} a_{n-k+q} \\ + a_{n-r} a_{n-k+r},$$

$$a_i = 1, \quad 0 \leq i \leq k - 1,$$

then $a_n \in \mathbb{Z}$ (R. Robinson).

Parameters.

E.g., **generic Somos-4**:

$$a_n a_{n-4} = x a_{n-1} a_{n-3} + y a_{n-2}^2$$

$$a_0 = a, \quad a_1 = b, \quad a_2 = c, \quad a_3 = d.$$

Then

$$a_n \in \mathbb{Z}[a^{\pm 1}, b^{\pm 1}, c^{\pm 1}, d^{\pm 1}, x^{\pm 1}, y^{\pm 1}],$$

an example of the **Laurent phenomenon**.

Note. Coefficients are ≥ 0 (D. Speyer).
Also for Somos-5, but open for Somos-6
and Somos-7.

Cluster algebras (Fomin-Zelevinsky).

- Commutative algebras generated by unions of certain subsets called **clusters** (subject to axioms).
- If $C = \{x_1, \dots, x_n\}$ and C' are clusters and $y \in C'$ then $y = F(x_1, \dots, x_n)$ for some rational function F .
- In fact, F is a **Laurent polynomial** in x_1, \dots, x_n .
- Developed to create an algebraic framework for dual-canonical bases and total positivity in algebraic groups.
- Techniques could be modified to apply to combinatorial situations such as Somos sequences.

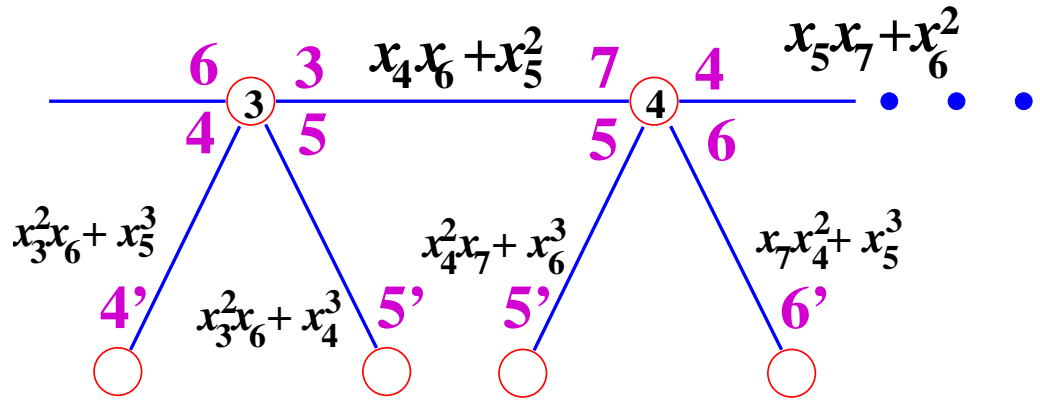
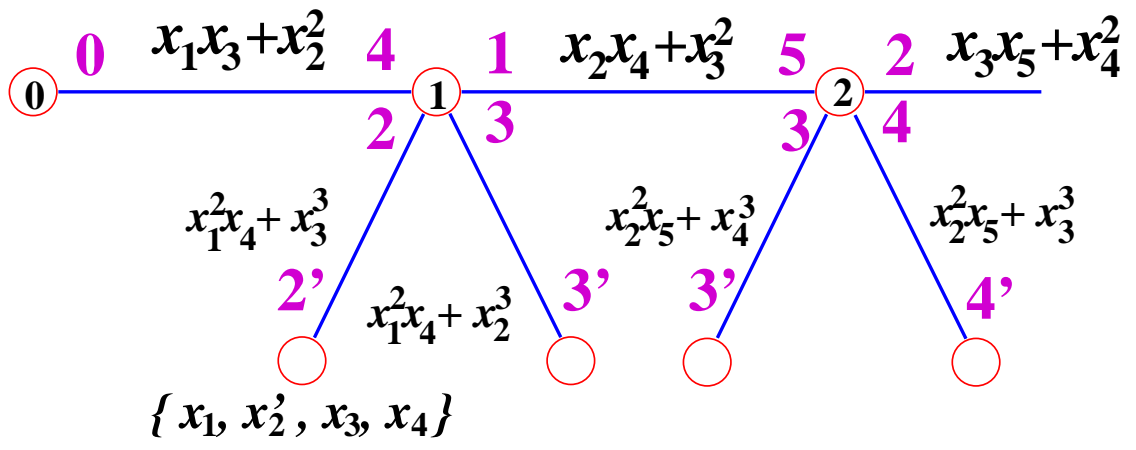
Example. $A = \mathbb{C}[\mathrm{SL}_3/N]$, where N is the subgroup of unipotent upper-triangular matrices. Let

$$x_1, x_2, x_3, x_{12}, x_{13}, x_{23}$$

be Plücker coordinates on SL_3/N . Let $\{x_2\}$ and $\{x_{13}\}$ be the clusters. Then A is the algebra over $\mathbb{C}[x_1, x_3, x_{12}, x_{13}]$ generated by x_2 and x_{13} subject to the exchange relation

$$x_2x_{13} = x_1x_{23} + x_3x_{12}.$$

Example (Somos-4).



spine: infinite path at top

two legs at each spine vertex (except the first)

spine vertices v_0, v_1, \dots

corresponding **cluster**:

$$C_i = \{x_i, x_{i+1}, x_{i+2}, x_{i+3}\}$$

spine edge e has numerical labels a_e, b_e and polynomial label P_e

leg edge e has numerical label a_e , polynomial label P_e and a label $b_e = a'_e$ at bottom

If e connects spine vertex v and leg vertex w , then

$$\mathbf{C}_w = (C_v \cup \{x_{a'_e}\}) - \{x_{a_e}\}$$

For any edge $e = vw$ with labels a_e and b_e ,

$$C_w = (C_v \cup \{x_{b_e}\}) - \{x_{a_e}\}.$$

If e has labels a, b, P , then regard

$$x_a x_b = P.$$

E.g., leftmost edge of $T \Rightarrow$

$$x_0 x_4 = x_1 x_3 + x_2^2.$$

Thus all x_i, x'_i are rational functions of $C_0 = \{x_0, x_1, x_2, x_3\}$.

What makes these rational functions Laurent polynomials?

- Every internal vertex v_i , $i \geq 1$, has the same degree, namely four, and the four edge labels “next to” v_i are $i, i + 1, i + 2, i + 3$, the indices of the cluster variables associated to v_i .
- The polynomial P_e does not depend on x_{a_e} and x_{b_e} , and is not divisible by any variable x_i or x'_i .

- Write \bar{P}_e for P_e with each variable x_j and x'_j replaced with $x_{\bar{j}}$, where \bar{j} is the least positive residue of j modulo 4. If e and f are consecutive edges of T then the polynomials \bar{P}_e and $\bar{P}_{f,0} := \bar{P}_f|_{x_{\bar{a}_e}=0}$ are relatively prime elements of $\mathbb{Z}[x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4]$.

Example. The leftmost two top edges of T yield that $x_1x_4 + x_2^2$ and

$$(x_2x_4 + x_3^2)|_{x_4=0} = x_3^2$$

are coprime.

- If e, f, g are three consecutive edges of T such that $\bar{a}_e = \bar{a}_g$, then

$$L \cdot \bar{P}_{f,0}^b \cdot \bar{P}_e = \bar{P}_g \Big|_{x_{\bar{a}_f} \leftarrow \frac{\bar{P}_{f,0}}{x_{\bar{a}_f}}} \quad (1)$$

where L is a Laurent monomial and $x_{\bar{a}_f} \leftarrow \frac{\bar{P}_{f,0}}{x_{\bar{a}_f}}$ denotes the substitution of $\frac{\bar{P}_{f,0}}{x_{\bar{a}_f}}$ for $x_{\bar{a}_f}$.

Example. Let e be the leftmost leg edge and f, g the second and third spine edges. Thus $\bar{a}_e = \bar{a}_g = 2$ and $\bar{a}_f = 1$. Equation (1) becomes

$$L \cdot (x_2x_4 + x_3^2)_{x_2=0}^b \cdot (x_1x_3 + x_2^2) = (x_1x_2^2 + x_3^3) \Big|_{x_1 \leftarrow \frac{x_3^2}{x_1}},$$

which holds for $b = 1$ and $L = 1/x_1$, as desired.

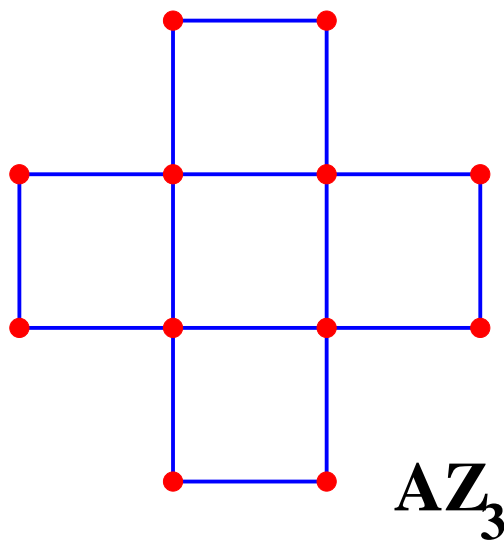
By “periodicity,” only finitely many need be checked.

Since $x_i x_{i+4} = x_{i+1} x_{i+3} + x_{i+2}^2$, x_n is just the n th term of Somos-4 with generic initial conditions x_0, x_1, x_2, x_3 . Hence **Somos-4 satisfies the Laurent phenomenon.**

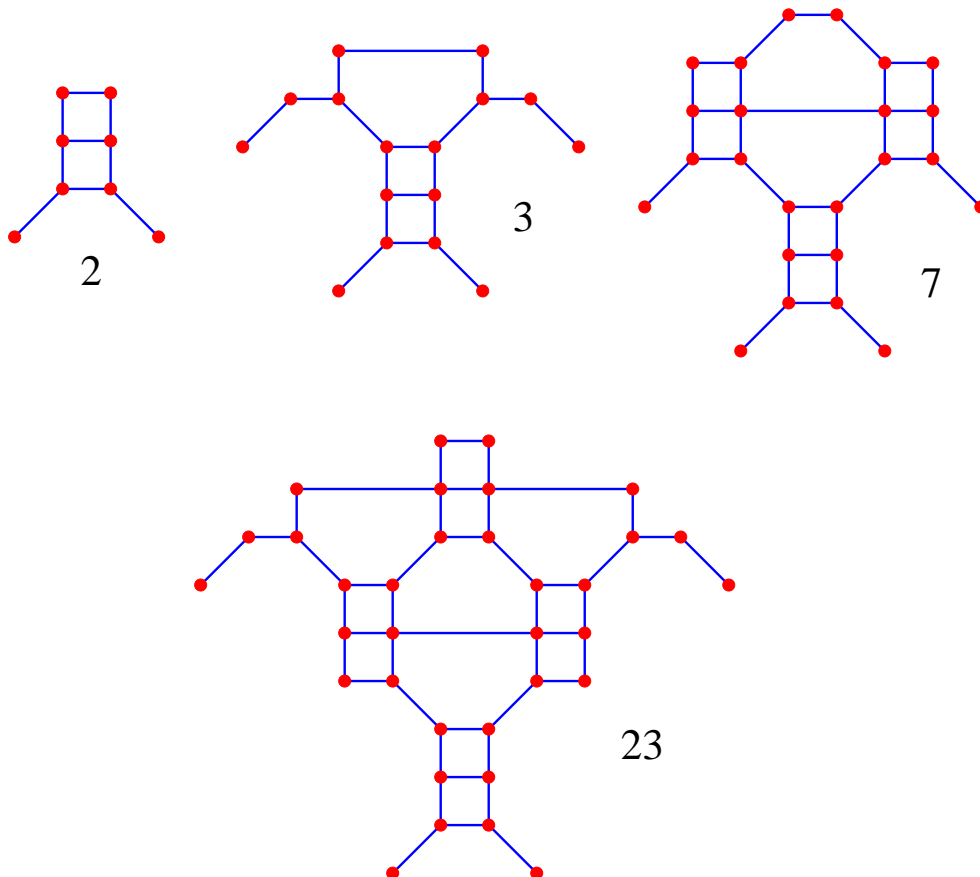
Combinatorial proofs. Let e.g. a_0, a_1, \dots be the Somos-4 sequence. Can we interpret a_n combinatorially and prove combinatorially that

$$a_n a_{n-4} = a_{n-1} a_{n-3} + a_{n-2}^2?$$

Clue. a_n grows quadratically exponentially, as does the number $2^{\binom{n}{2}}$ of complete matchings in the Aztec diamond graph AZ_n .



Project REACH (Propp) and Bousquet-Mélou-Propp-West: a_n is the number of matchings in the **Somos-4 graph** S_n .



TORIC SCHUR FUNCTIONS

\mathbf{Gr}_{kn} : **Grassmann variety** of k -subspaces of \mathbb{C}^n

$$\dim_{\mathbb{C}} \mathbf{Gr}_{kn} = k(n - k)$$

$H^*(\mathbf{Gr}_{kn}) = H^*(\mathbf{Gr}_{kn}; \mathbb{Z})$: cohomology ring (fundamental object for **Schubert calculus**)

basis for $H^*(\mathbf{Gr}_{kn})$: **Schubert classes** σ_{λ} , where $\lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_k)$ and

$$\lambda \subseteq \mathbf{k} \times (\mathbf{n} - \mathbf{k}),$$

i.e.,

$$n - k \geq \lambda_1 \geq \dots \geq \lambda_k \geq 0.$$

Let \mathbf{P}_{kn} be the set of all such partitions λ , so

$$\#\mathbf{P}_{kn} = \text{rank } H^*(\mathbf{Gr}_{kn}) = \binom{n}{k}.$$

$\Omega_\lambda \subset \text{Gr}_{kn}$: **Schubert variety**,
 defined by bounds on $\dim X \cap V_i$, for
 $X \in \text{Gr}_{kn}$, where

$$\{0\} = V_0 \subset V_1 \subset \cdots \subset V_n = \mathbb{C}^n$$

is a fixed flag.

Multiplication in $H^*(\text{Gr}_{kn})$:

$$\sigma_\mu \sigma_\nu = \sum_{\lambda \in P_{kn}} c_{\mu\nu}^\lambda \sigma_\lambda,$$

where $c_{\mu\nu}^\lambda$ is a **Littlewood-Richardson coefficient**.

$$\Rightarrow c_{\mu\nu}^\lambda = \# (\tilde{\Omega}_\mu \cap \tilde{\Omega}_\nu \cap \tilde{\Omega}_{\lambda^\vee}),$$

where $\tilde{\Omega}_\nu$ is a generic translate of Ω_ν
 and λ^\vee is the **complementary partition**

$$\lambda^\vee = (n - k - \lambda_k, \dots, n - k - \lambda_1).$$

$\mathbf{QH}^*(\mathbf{Gr}_{kn})$: **quantum deformation** of $H^*(\mathbf{Gr}_{kn})$

Λ_k : ring of symmetric polynomials over \mathbb{Z} in x_1, \dots, x_k .

$$\Lambda_k = \mathbb{Z}[e_1, \dots, e_k],$$

where e_i is the i th **elementary symmetric function** in x_1, \dots, x_k .

h_i : sum of all monomials of degree i (**complete symmetric function**)

$$H^*(\mathbf{Gr}_{kn}) \cong \Lambda_k / (h_{n-k+1}, \dots, h_n)$$

$$\mathbf{QH}^*(\mathbf{Gr}_{kn}) \cong$$

$$\Lambda_k \otimes \mathbb{Z}[q] / (h_{n-k+1}, \dots, h_{n-1}, h_n + (-1)^k q)$$

classical case: $q = 0$

$$H^*(\text{Gr}_{kn}) \cong \Lambda_k / (h_{n-k+1}, \dots, h_n)$$

Basis B_{kn} for $\Lambda_k / (h_{n-k+1}, \dots, h_n)$:

Let λ be a partition.

semistandard Young tableau (SSYT)
of shape λ :

1	1	3	4
2	4	4	6
4	6	9	
6			

$$\lambda/\mu = (4, 4, 3, 1)$$

$$x^T = x_1^2 x_2 x_3 x_4^4 x_6^3 x_9$$

Schur function s_λ of shape λ :

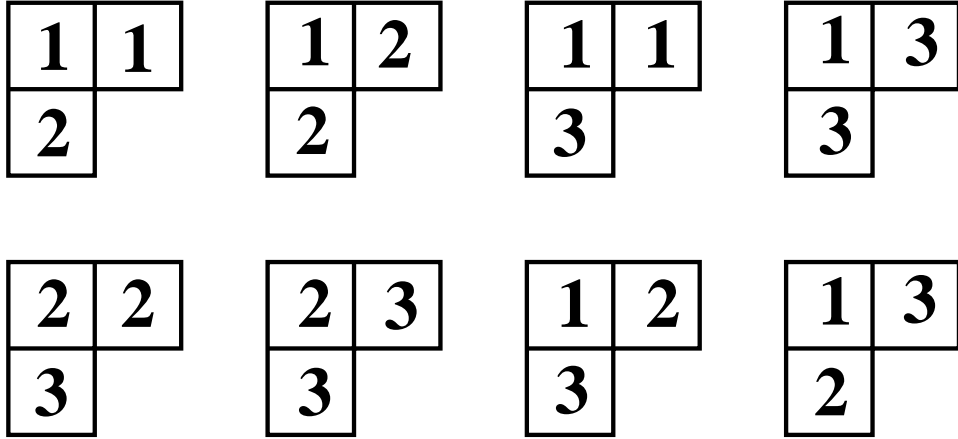
$$s_\lambda = \sum_T x^T,$$

summed over all SSYT T of shape λ .

$$B_{kn} = \{s_\lambda : \lambda \subseteq k \times (n - k)\},$$

$$\begin{aligned} H^*(\text{Gr}_{kn}) &\xrightarrow{\cong} \Lambda_k / (h_{n-k+1}, \dots, h_n) \\ \sigma_\lambda &\mapsto s_\lambda \end{aligned}$$

$$s_\mu s_\nu = \sum_\lambda c_{\mu\nu}^\lambda s_\lambda$$



$$s_{21}(a, b, c) = a^2b + ab^2 + a^2c + ac^2 + b^2c + bc^2 + 2abc$$

$$s_{21} = \sum_{i \neq j} x_i^2 x_j + 2 \sum_{i < j < k} x_i x_j x_k$$

$$s_{21}^2 = s_{42} + s_{33} + s_{411} + 2s_{321} + s_{222} + s_{3111} + s_{2211}$$

$$\rightarrow s_{42} + s_{33} \text{ in } H^*(\text{Gr}_{26}).$$

basis for $\mathrm{QH}^*(\mathrm{Gr}_{kn})$ remains

$$\{\sigma_\lambda : \lambda \subseteq k \times (n - k)\}$$

quantum multiplication:

$$\sigma_\mu * \sigma_\nu = \sum_{d \geq 0} \sum_{\substack{\lambda \vdash |\mu| + |\nu| - dn \\ \lambda \in P_{kn}}} q^d C_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda,d} \sigma_\lambda,$$

where $C_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda,d} \in \mathbb{Z}$.

$C_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda,d}$: number of rational curves of degree d in Gr_{kn} meeting $\tilde{\Omega}_\mu \cap \tilde{\Omega}_\nu \cap \tilde{\Omega}_{\lambda^\vee}$, a **3-point Gromov-Witten invariant**

Naively, a **rational curve of degree r in Gr_{kn}** is a set

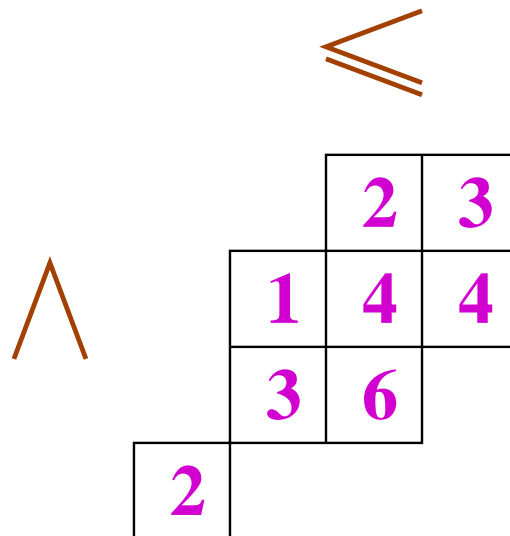
$$C = \left\{ (f_1(s, t), f_2(s, t), \dots, f_{\binom{n}{k}}(s, t)) \right. \\ \left. \in P^{\binom{n}{k}-1}(\mathbb{C}) : s, t \in \mathbb{C} \right\},$$

where $f_1(x, y), \dots, f_{\binom{n}{k}}(x, y)$ are homogeneous polynomials of degree d such that $C \subset \text{Gr}_{kn}$.

Rational curve of degree $d = 0$ is a point.

Let λ/μ be a **skew partition**, i.e.,
 $\mu \subseteq \lambda$.

semistandard Young tableau (SSYT)
of shape λ/μ :



$$\lambda/\mu = (4, 4, 3, 1)/(2, 1, 1)$$

$$x^T = x_1 x_2^2 x_3^2 x_4^2 x_6$$

skew Schur function $s_{\lambda/\mu}$ of shape λ/μ :

$$s_{\lambda/\mu} = \sum_T x^T,$$

summed over all SSYT T of shape λ/μ .

$$s_{\lambda} = s_{\lambda/\emptyset}$$

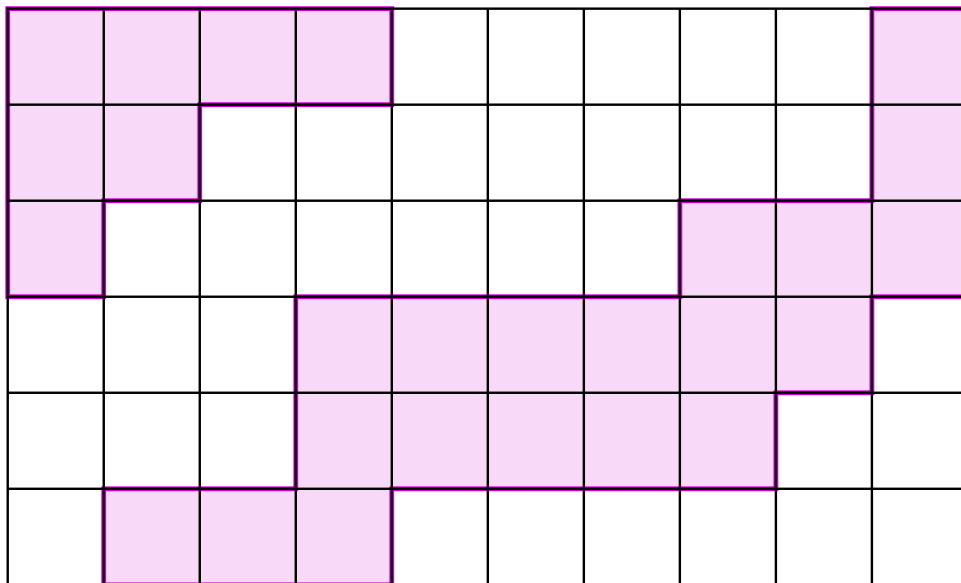
$$s_{\lambda/\mu} = \sum_{\nu} c_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda} s_{\nu}, \quad (2)$$

where $c_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda}$ is a Littlewood-Richardson coefficient, i.e.,

$$s_{\mu} s_{\nu} = \sum_{\lambda} c_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda} s_{\lambda}.$$

Want to generalize (2) to $C_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda,d}$.

toric shape τ in a 6×10 rectangle:

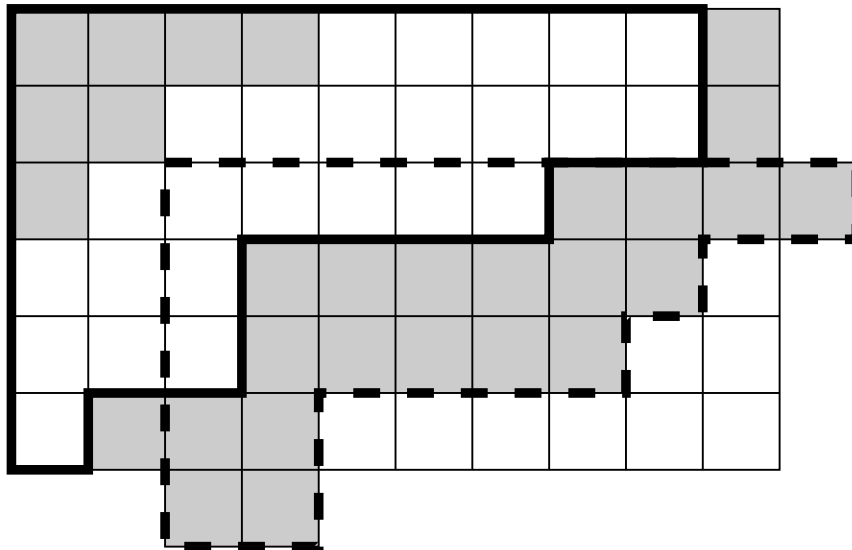


semistandard toric tableau (SSTT):

2	2	4	6						
3	5								
4							1	2	4
			1	2	2	2	2	5	
			3	3	4	4	4		
	1	2	4						

the toric shape

$$\begin{aligned}\tau &= \lambda/d/\mu \\ &= (9, 7, 6, 2, 2, 0)/2/(9, 9, 7, 3, 3, 1) :\end{aligned}$$



toric Schur function:

$$s_{\lambda/d/\mu} = \sum_T x^T,$$

summed over all SSTT of shape $\lambda/d/\mu$

Theorem. *Let $\lambda/d/\mu$ be a toric shape contained in a $k \times (n-k)$ torus. Then*

$$s_{\lambda/d/\mu}(x_1, \dots, x_k) = \sum_{\nu \in P_{kn}} C_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda,d} s_{\nu}(x_1, \dots, x_k).$$

Compare the case $d = 0$: If

$$\lambda/\mu \subseteq k \times (n-k),$$

then

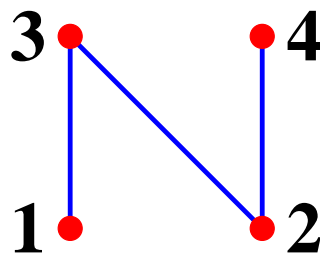
$$s_{\lambda/\mu}(x_1, \dots, x_k) = \sum_{\nu \in P_{kn}} c_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda} s_{\nu}(x_1, \dots, x_k).$$

SIGN IMBALANCE

P : partial ordering of $1, 2, \dots, n$

\mathcal{L}_P : set of **linear extensions** of P ,
regarded as permutations

$$a_1 \cdots a_n \in \mathfrak{S}_n$$



$$\mathcal{L}_P = \{1243, 1234, 2134, 2143, 2413\}$$

F. Ruskey (1989): does \exists linear ordering of \mathcal{L}_P such that any two consecutive terms differ by an (adjacent) transposition?

Let

$$\epsilon_w = \begin{cases} 1, & \text{if } w \text{ is even} \\ -1, & \text{if } w \text{ is odd.} \end{cases}$$

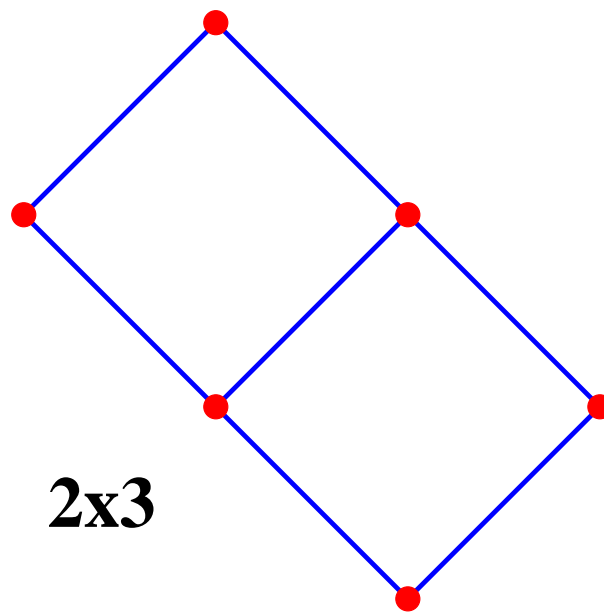
Define the **imbalance** I_P by

$$I_P = \sum_{w \in \mathcal{L}_P} \epsilon_w.$$

Note. $|I_P|$ depends only on P **up to isomorphism.**

Note. If \exists a Ruskey ordering of \mathcal{L}_P , then $I_P = 0, \pm 1$ (P is **sign-balanced**).

r : r -element chain



Ruskey conjectured (1992):

$$I_{\mathbf{r} \times \mathbf{s}} = 0 \Leftrightarrow r, s > 1, r \equiv s \pmod{2}.$$

Easy for r, s even (Ruskey). Proof in general by D. White (2002). In fact:

Theorem. *Let $r \not\equiv s \pmod{2}$. Then*

$$I_{\mathbf{r} \times \mathbf{s}} = g^\nu,$$

where g^ν is the number of **standard shifted Young tableaux (SShYT)** of shape

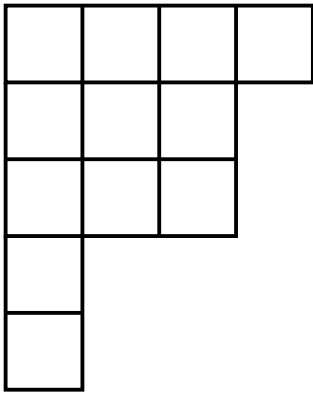
$$\nu = \left(\frac{r+s-1}{2}, \frac{r+s-3}{2}, \dots, \frac{|r-s|+3}{2}, \frac{|r-s|+1}{2} \right).$$

E.g., $P = \mathbf{8} \times \mathbf{3}$, $\nu = (5, 4, 3)$.

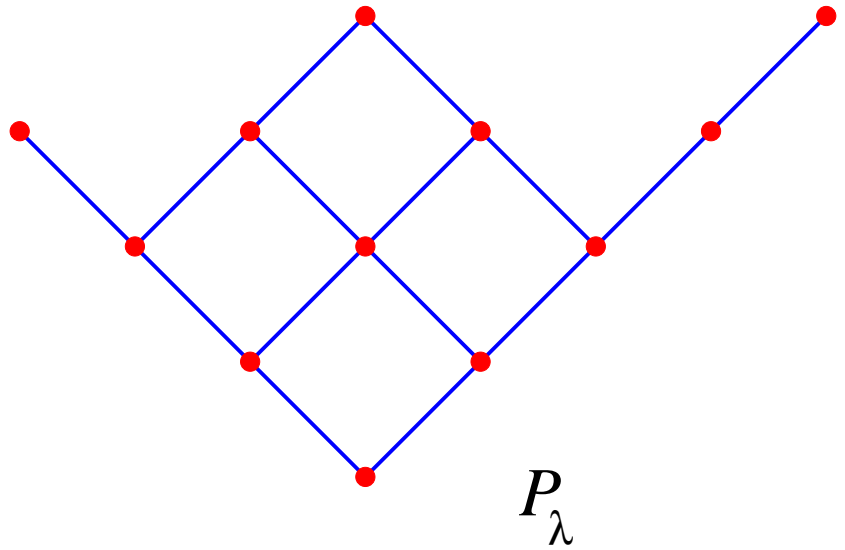
1	2	3	5	7
	4	6	9	11
		8	10	12

$$\begin{aligned} I_P = g^{5,4,3} &= \frac{12!}{9 \cdot 8 \cdot 7 \cdot 5 \cdot 4^2 \cdot 3^3 \cdot 2^2 \cdot 1} \\ &= 110 \end{aligned}$$

Generalize to partitions λ :



$$\lambda = (4, 3, 3, 1, 1)$$



$$P_\lambda$$

Write $I_\lambda = I_{P_\lambda}$.

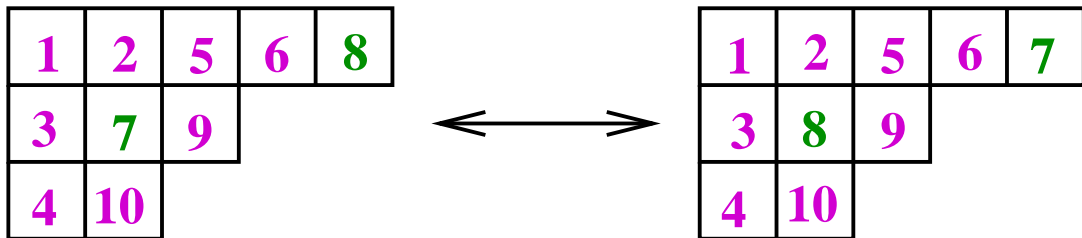
standard Young tableau (SYT)

of shape λ :

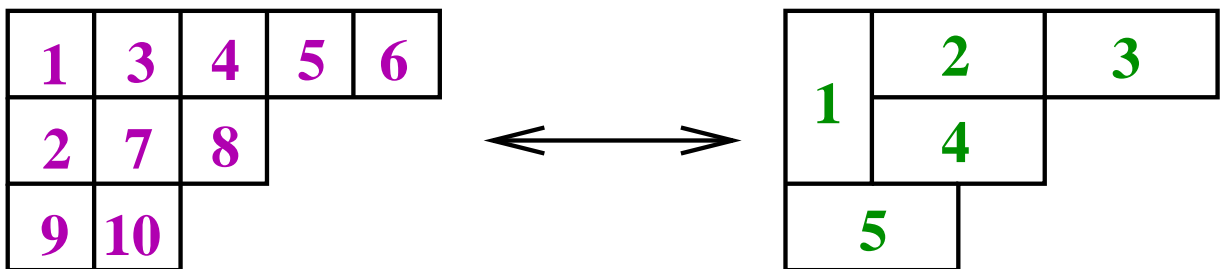
1	3	4	12
2	6	8	
5	9	11	
7			
10			

$$\lambda = (4, 3, 3, 1, 1)$$

Involution on SYT's T of shape λ :
interchange smallest $2i - 1, 2i$ possible;
otherwise T is fixed.

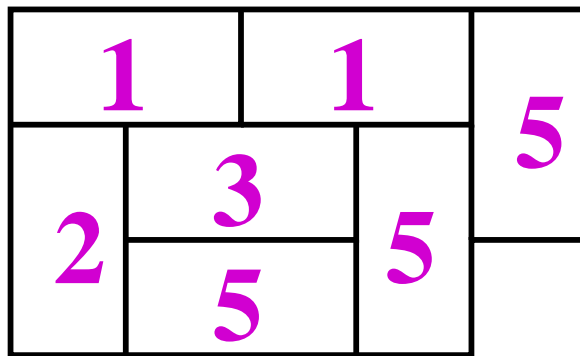


survivors are **standard domino tableaux**
of shape λ :



Domino Schur functions (Carré,
Leclerc, Lascoux, Thibon, Kirillov, T.
Lam, . . .)

semistandard domino tableau
(SSDT) D of shape $(5, 5, 4)$:



$$x^D = x_1^2 x_2 x_3 x_5^3$$

$$\text{spin}(D) = \frac{1}{2}(v(\lambda) - v(D)) = \frac{1}{2}(5 - 3) = 1,$$

where

$$v(D) = \# \text{ vertical dominos in } D$$

$$v(\lambda) = \max \# \text{ of vertical dominos in a domino tiling of shape } \lambda$$

Let $\lambda \vdash 2m$. Define

$$G_\lambda(x; q) = \sum_D q^{\text{spin}(D)} x^D,$$

summed over all SSDT D of shape λ .
(Analogous definition for $\lambda \vdash 2m + 1$,
with momino in upper-left corner.)

Related to Hall-Littlewood symmetric functions, quantum affine algebras, unipotent varieties, real Schubert varieties, ...

Proposition. *Let $\lambda \vdash n$. Then*

$$[x_1 \cdots x_n] G_\lambda(x; -1) = \pm I_\lambda.$$

Connection with real Schubert varieties (Eremenko-Gabrielov). Let $\lambda \subseteq \mathbf{k} \times (\mathbf{n} - \mathbf{k})$. Let $\Omega_\lambda(\mathbb{C})$ be the corresponding Schubert variety for $\text{Gr}_{kn}(\mathbb{C})$.

The **Wronski map**

$$\mathbf{W}(f_1, \dots, f_{n-k}) = \begin{vmatrix} f_1 & \cdots & f_{n-k} \\ f'_1 & \cdots & f'_{n-k} \\ \cdots & \cdots & \cdots \\ f_1^{(n-k-1)} & \cdots & f_{n-k}^{(n-k-1)} \end{vmatrix},$$

where $\deg f_i < n$, may be regarded as a map

$$\phi : \text{Gr}_{kn}(\mathbb{C}) \rightarrow \mathbb{C}P^{k(n-k)}.$$

Restrict to Ω_λ .

Schubert (1886): $\deg \phi|_{\Omega_\lambda} = f^\lambda$,
the number of SYT of shape λ (elegant
hook-length formula).

What about $\Omega_\lambda(\mathbb{R})$? Milnor (1965)
defined $\deg \phi$ for maps $\phi : X \rightarrow Y$ of
real spaces satisfying certain orientabil-
ity conditions.

Let

$$\phi_{\mathbb{R}} : \text{Gr}_{kn}(\mathbb{R}) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}P^{k(n-k)}.$$

Restrict to Ω_λ . When orientability con-
ditions are satisfied (e.g., $\lambda = \mathbf{k} \times (\mathbf{n} - \mathbf{k})$),

$$\deg \phi_{\mathbb{R}}|_{\Omega_\lambda} = I^\lambda.$$

Sample application (conjectured by RS, proved by T. Lam and J. Sjöstrand, independently):

Theorem. $\sum_{\lambda \vdash n} I_\lambda = 2^{\lfloor n/2 \rfloor}$

(special case of weighted version)

$$\begin{array}{cccc} 1 & 2 & 3 & 1 \\ & & 3 & 2 \\ & & & 2 \\ & & & 3 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{cccc} 123 & 123 & 132 & 123 \\ 1 & 1 & -1 & 1 \end{array}$$

$$1 + 1 - 1 + 1 = 2 = 2^{\lfloor 3/2 \rfloor}$$

Connection with shifted tableaux.

Recall that if $r \not\equiv s \pmod{2}$ then

$$I_{\mathbf{r} \times \mathbf{s}} = g^\nu$$

for a certain SShYT ν . What about other λ ?

Conjecture (Eremenko-Gabrielov). For fixed $\ell(\lambda)$ and parity of each λ_i , there is a “nice” formula for I_λ in terms of g^ν 's.

Example. Let $g^{r,s,t} = 0$ unless

$$r > s > t \geq 0,$$

etc. Then

$$I_{2a,2b,2c} = g^{a,b,c} - g^{a+1,b,c-1}$$

$$I_{2a,2b+1,2c+1} = g^{a+1,b,c} + g^{a,b+1,c}$$

$$I_{2a,2b+1,2c} = 0 \text{ (easy)}$$

$$\begin{aligned} I_{2a,2b,2c,2d} = & g^{a,b,c,d} - g^{a+1,b,c-1,d} \\ & - g^{a,b+1,c,d-1} \\ & - g^{a+1,b+1,c-1,d-1} \\ & - 2g^{a+1,b,c,d-1}. \end{aligned}$$

(Can be proved by induction.)

Explicit formulas not known.

Refinement of previous conjecture. If f is a symmetric function, let

$$\begin{aligned} f(x/x) &= f(p_{2i-1} \rightarrow 2p_{2i-1}, p_{2i} \rightarrow 0) \\ &= f(X - X). \end{aligned}$$

$Q_\lambda(x)$: Schur's shifted Q -function

$$[x_1 \cdots x_n] Q_\lambda(x) = 2^n g^\lambda$$

Example.

$$I_{2a,2b,2c} = g^{a,b,c} - g^{a+1,b,c-1}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \pm G_{2a,2b,2c}(x/x; -1) &= Q_{a,b,c}(x) \\ &\quad - Q_{a+1,b,c-1}(x) \end{aligned}$$