

# Polynomial ideals associated to combinatorial objects

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## Thanks

To you for inviting me,  
to the organizers for such a nice conference,  
to Dr. Shoichi Tsuchiya for so much personal help,  
to my friends here at Tohoku for making math so interesting!



Date Masamune

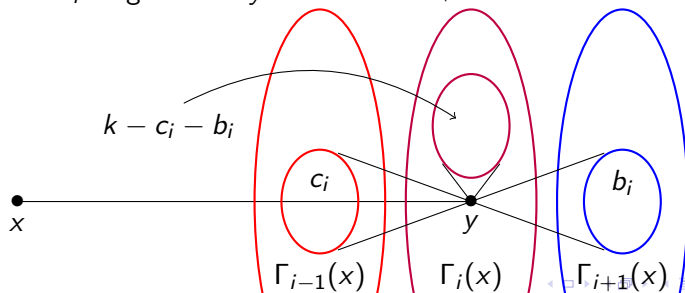
## Distance-Regular Graphs (DRGs)

A graph  $\Gamma = (X, R)$  of diameter  $d$  is *distance-regular* (DRG) if there exist constants

$b_0, b_1, \dots, b_{d-1}; c_1, c_2, \dots, c_d$

such that, whenever  $x$  and  $y$  are vertices at distance  $i$ , there are exactly

- ▶  $c_i$  neighbors of  $y$  at distance  $i - 1$  from  $x$ , and
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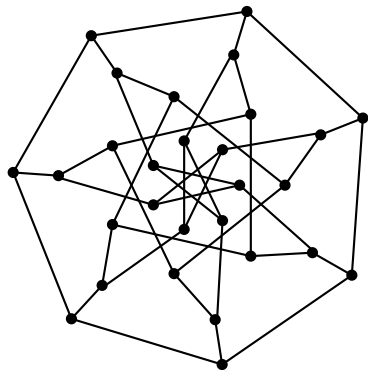


## Distance-Regular Graphs (DRGs)

Examples:

- ▶ all five Platonic solids
- ▶ regular graphs with just three eigenvalues (“strongly regular”)
- ▶  $n$ -cubes and Hamming graphs
- ▶ incidence graphs of symmetric designs
- ▶ Moore graphs and generalized polygons
- ▶ ... many other connections!

## Coxeter Graph



The Coxeter graph is a cubic distance-regular graph (DRG) of diameter 4 on 28 vertices having girth 7.

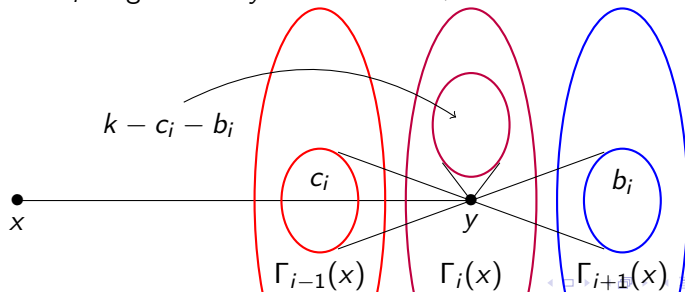
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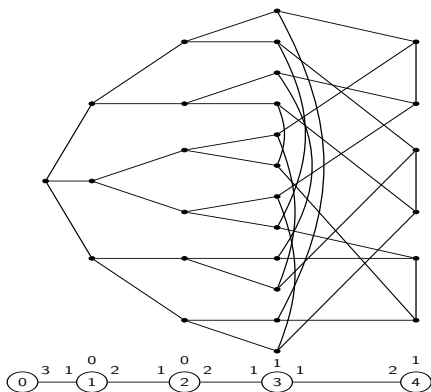
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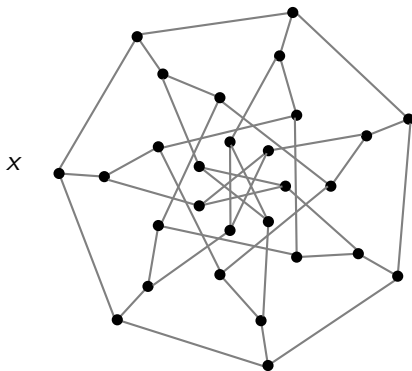
## Distance Distribution in the Coxeter Graph



The Coxeter graph is distance-regular:

$$b_0 = 3, b_1 = b_2 = 2, b_3 = 1; c_1 = c_2 = c_3 = 1, c_4 = 2.$$

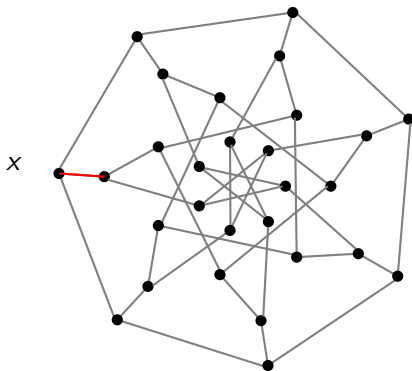
## A Closed Walk in the Coxeter Graph



Starting at vertex  $x$ , we build a closed walk representing an element of our homotopy group.

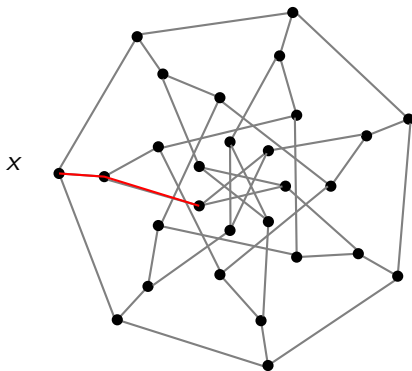


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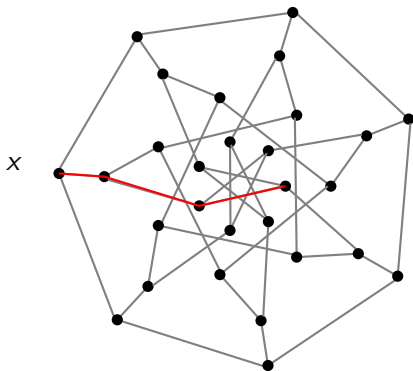
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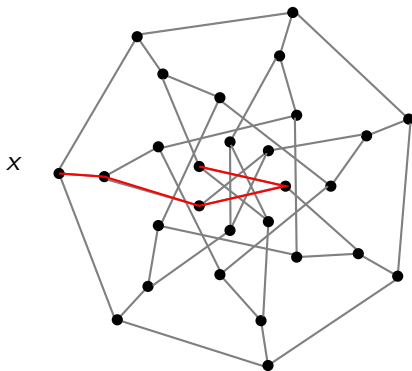
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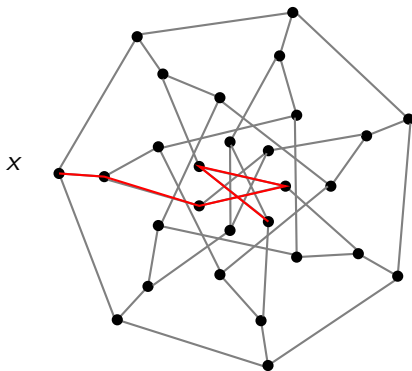
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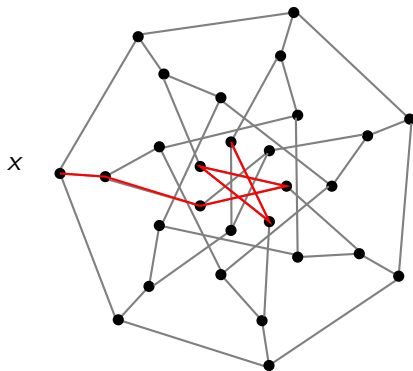
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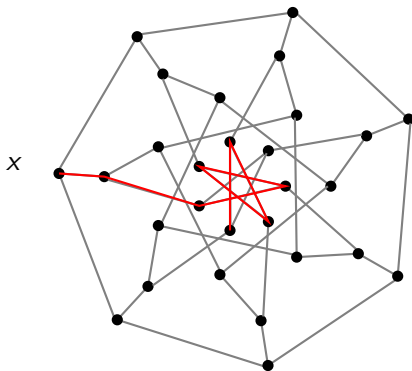
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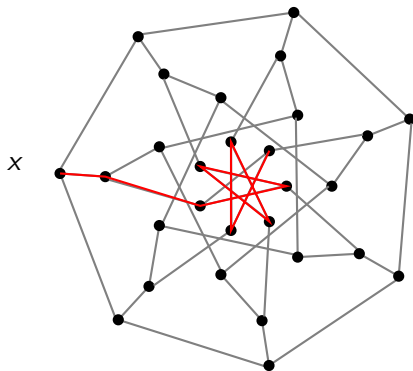
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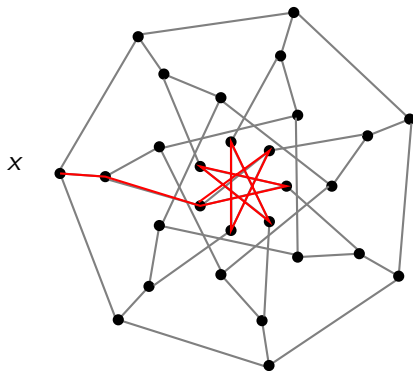
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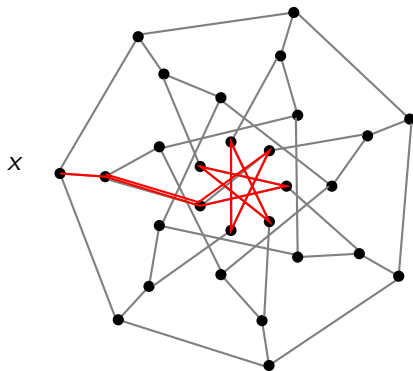


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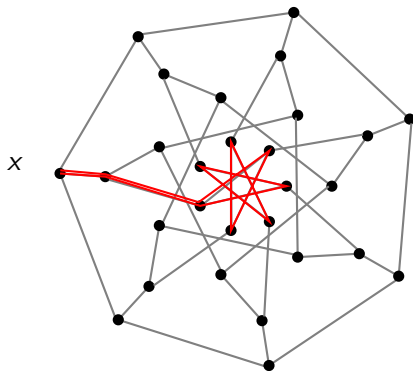
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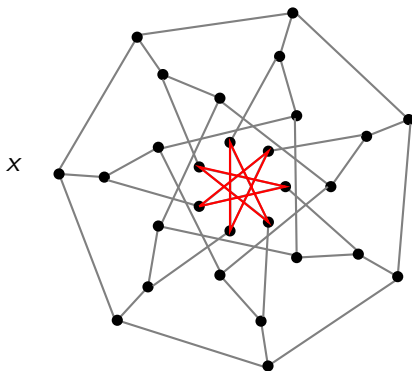
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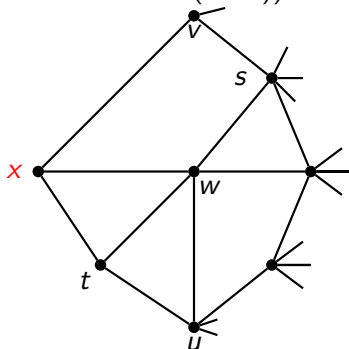
## A Closed Walk in the Coxeter Graph



We say this walk (of length 11) has essential length 7.

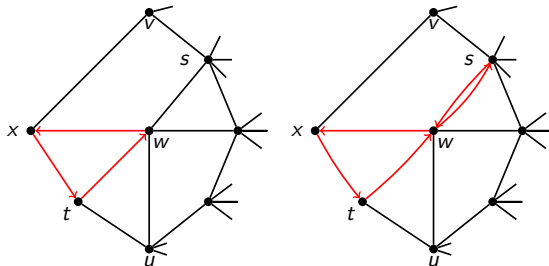
## An Excursion into Homotopy

The following idea appears in the thesis work of Heather Lewis (*Discrete Math.* (2000)) under the supervision of Paul Terwilliger.



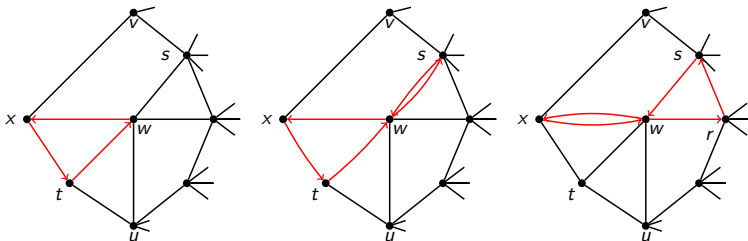
Consider equivalence classes of closed walks in  $\Gamma$  starting and ending at basepoint  $x$ .

## Discrete Homotopy on a Graph



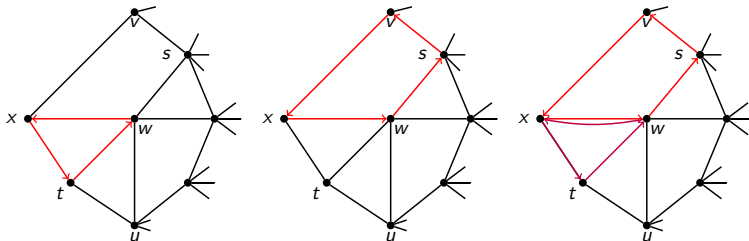
Closed walk  $xtwx$  is in the same equivalence class as  $xtswx$ .  
 In general, walk  $q' = q_1 p p^{-1} q_2$  is equivalent to walk  $q = q_1 q_2$ :  
 $q' \sim q$

## Discrete Homotopy on a Graph



These three walks all have “essential length” 3.

## Discrete Homotopy on a Graph

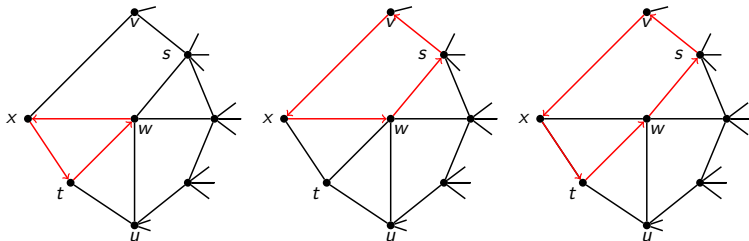


Our group operation is concatenation of walks. Of course, the concatenation of these two walks is represented by another cycle:

$$xtwx \star xwsvx = xtwxwsvx \sim xtwsvx$$



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## Subgroups of the Fundamental Group

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For example, if  $\Gamma$  is a simple graph,  $\pi_k(\Gamma, x) = 1$  for  $k = 0, 1, 2$ .

## Some results of Heather Lewis

- ▶  $\pi_0(\Gamma, x) = \pi_1(\Gamma, x) = \pi_2(\Gamma, x) \subseteq \pi_{2d+1}(\Gamma, x) = \pi(\Gamma, x)$
- ▶ a distance-regular graph which is also “DRG dual” has girth at most 6
- ▶ For any distance-regular graph which is also “DRG dual”,  $\pi_6(\Gamma, x) \neq \{e\}$
- ▶ and either  $\pi_6(\Gamma, x) = \pi(\Gamma, x)$  or
  - ▶  $\Gamma$  is a “pseudoquotient” with  $D \in \{2d, 2d + 1\}$  and
  - ▶  $\pi_6(\Gamma, x) = \pi_{D-1}(\Gamma, x) \neq \pi_D(\Gamma, x) = \pi(\Gamma, x)$

## Two Girth Parameters

For a distance-regular graph (DRG)  $\Gamma$  of diameter  $d$ , let  $g_1(\Gamma)$  denote the **girth** of  $\Gamma$  and let  $g_2(\Gamma)$  denote smallest integer  $\ell$  such that

$$\pi_\ell(\Gamma, x) = \pi(\Gamma, x)$$

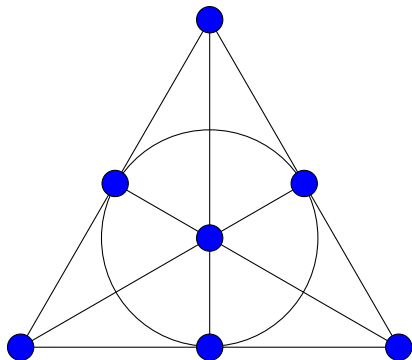
for all vertices  $x$  of  $\Gamma$ .

We have

$$3 \leq g_1 \leq g_2 \leq 2d + 1$$

## Polynomial functions on the Fano plane

This part is based on joint work with Doug Stinson (Waterloo).

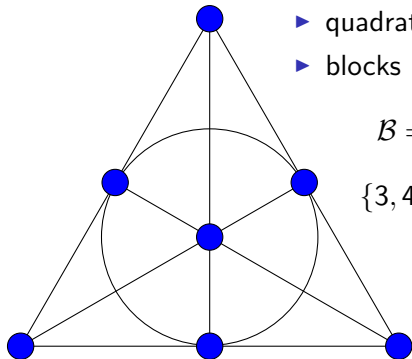


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- ▶ Point set  $X = \mathbb{Z}_7$
- ▶ quadratic residues 1, 2, 4
- ▶ blocks

$$\mathcal{B} = \{\{0, 1, 3\}, \{1, 2, 4\}, \{2, 3, 5\}, \\ \{3, 4, 6\}, \{4, 5, 0\}, \{5, 6, 1\}, \{6, 0, 2\}\}$$





## Ideal of the Fano plane

$$\mathcal{B} = \{\{0, 1, 3\}, \{1, 2, 4\}, \{2, 3, 5\}, \{3, 4, 6\}, \{4, 5, 0\}, \{5, 6, 1\}, \{6, 0, 2\}\}$$

with corresponding incidence vectors

$$\mathbf{c} = [1, 1, 0, 1, 0, 0, 0] \quad \text{etc.}$$

The unique triple in  $\mathcal{B}$  containing both 0 and 1 also contains 3. Including the quadratic polynomial  $x_0x_1 - x_0x_3$  in a generating set  $\mathcal{G}$  for our ideal also guarantees that any vector  $\mathbf{c} \in \mathcal{Z}(\langle\mathcal{G}\rangle)$  with  $c_0 = 1$  and  $c_1 = 1$  must have  $c_3 = 1$  as well.

Up to sign, there are  $\binom{7}{2}$  quadratic generators of this form. If we also include generators to ensure every zero is a 01-vector with entries summing to three, these generate the full ideal.

## View design as set of 01-vectors and study ideal

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- ▶  $\mathbb{C}[\mathbf{x}] = \mathbb{C}[x_1, \dots, x_v]$ , ring of polynomials in  $v$  variables with complex coefficients
- ▶ identify each block  $B \in \mathcal{B}$  with a 01-vector  $\mathbf{c}_B$ , with entries indexed by the elements of  $X$ , whose  $i^{\text{th}}$  entry is equal to one if  $i \in B$  and equal to zero otherwise

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- ▶ **GOAL:** Study  $I = \mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B})$ , the ideal of all polynomials that vanish at every point  $\mathbf{c}_B$ .

## Ideal-variety correspondence

For  $\mathcal{S} \subseteq \mathbb{C}^v$ , we let

$$\mathcal{I}(\mathcal{S}) := \{F \in \mathbb{C}[\mathbf{x}] \mid F(\mathbf{c}) = 0 \forall \mathbf{c} \in \mathcal{S}\}.$$

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**Nullstellensatz:** For any ideal  $J$  of polynomials,

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where  $\text{Rad}(J)$  denotes the *radical* of ideal  $J$ , the ideal of all polynomials  $g$  such that  $g^n \in J$  for some positive integer  $n$ .

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*Radical ideal:* already closed under this process:  $\text{Rad}(J) = J$ .

## The trivial ideal of the complete uniform hypergraph

First example: *complete uniform hypergraph*  $(X, \mathcal{K}_k^v)$ .

**Lemma A:** Let  $X$  be a finite set of size  $v \geq k$  and let  $\mathcal{K}_k^v = \binom{X}{k}$  consist of all  $k$ -subsets of  $X$ . Let

$$\mathcal{G}_0 = \{x_1 + \cdots + x_v - k\} \cup \{x_i^2 - x_i \mid 1 \leq i \leq v\}. \quad (1)$$

Then  $\mathcal{I}(\mathcal{K}_k^v) = \langle \mathcal{G}_0 \rangle$  and  $\mathcal{Z}(\langle \mathcal{G}_0 \rangle) = \{\mathbf{c}_B \mid B \in \mathcal{K}_k^v\}$ .

*Trivial ideal:*  $\mathcal{T} = \langle x_1 + \cdots + x_v - k, x_1^2 - x_1, \dots, x_v^2 - x_v \rangle$

All of our generating sets will contain  $\mathcal{G}_0$ .

[There is also a natural notion of “trivial ideal” for spherical codes, binary codes, etc.]

## Monomials and $t$ -designs

To each  $C \subseteq \{1, 2, \dots, v\}$  associate the monomial

$$x^C = \prod_{j \in C} x_j$$

For block  $B \in \mathcal{B}$ , the value of  $x^C$  at point  $\mathbf{c}_B$  is one if  $C \subseteq B$  and zero otherwise.

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A  $k$ -uniform hypergraph  $(X, \mathcal{B})$  is a  $t$ - $(v, k, \lambda)$  *design* (or a block design of *strength*  $t$ ) if, for every  $t$ -element subset  $T \subseteq X$  of points, there are exactly  $\lambda$  blocks  $B \in \mathcal{B}$  with  $T \subseteq B$

Every  $t$ - $(v, k, \lambda)$  design is an  $s$ - $(v, k, \lambda_s)$  design for each  $s \leq t$  where  $\lambda_s \binom{k-s}{t-s} = \lambda \binom{v-s}{t-s}$ .

## Designs approximate a space w.r.t. polynomial test functions

The following characterization of  $t$ -designs is well-known.

**Lemma B:** (Delsarte) Let  $X$  be a set of size  $v$  and let  $(X, \mathcal{B})$  be a  $k$ -uniform hypergraph defined on  $X$  with corresponding vectors  $\mathbf{c}_B$  ( $B \in \mathcal{B}$ ) as defined above. Then  $(X, \mathcal{B})$  is a  $t$ -design on  $X$  if and only if the average over  $\mathcal{B}$  of any polynomial  $f(\mathbf{x})$  in  $v$  variables of total degree at most  $t$  is equal to the average of  $f(\mathbf{x})$  over the complete uniform hypergraph  $\mathcal{K}_k^v$  defined on  $X$ .

## Two fundamental parameters

**Definitions:** Let  $(X, \mathcal{B})$  be a non-empty, non-complete  $k$ -uniform hypergraph on vertex set  $X = \{1, \dots, v\}$  with corresponding ring of polynomials  $\mathbb{C}[\mathbf{x}]$ . Let  $\mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B})$  and  $\mathcal{T}$  be defined as above. Define

$$\gamma_1(\mathcal{B}) = \min \{ \deg f \mid f \in \mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B}), f \notin \mathcal{T} \}$$

and

$$\gamma_2(\mathcal{B}) = \min \{ \max \{ \deg f : f \in \mathcal{G} \} \mid \mathcal{G} \subseteq \mathbb{C}[\mathbf{x}], \langle \mathcal{G} \rangle = \mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B}) \}.$$

## Two fundamental parameters

So  $\gamma_1(\mathcal{B})$  is the smallest possible degree of a non-trivial polynomial that vanishes on each block and  $\gamma_2(\mathcal{B})$  is the smallest integer  $s$  such that  $\mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B})$  admits a generating set all polynomials of which have degree at most  $s$ .

Obviously,  $\gamma_1(\mathcal{B}) \leq \gamma_2(\mathcal{B})$ ; designs satisfying equality here are particularly interesting.



## Large $t$ implies all low-degree polynomials are trivial

**Theorem C:** If  $(X, \mathcal{B})$  is a  $t$ -design ( $t \geq 2$ ) and  $f \in \mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B})$  is non-trivial, then  $\deg f > t/2$ . So, for any non-trivial  $t$ -design  $(X, \mathcal{B})$ ,  $\gamma_1(\mathcal{B}) \geq (t + 1)/2$ .

**Theorem:** For any  $k$ -uniform hypergraph  $(X, \mathcal{B})$ ,  $\gamma_2(\mathcal{B}) \leq k$ .

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Then  $f^2 \in \mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B})$  is a non-negative polynomial of degree at most  $t$ .

By Lemma B, its average over  $\mathcal{B}$  is zero hence its average over  $\mathcal{K}_k^V$  is also zero.

## Proof of Theorem C

Suppose  $F \in \mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B})$  has degree at most  $t/2$ .

Write  $F(\mathbf{x}) = f(\mathbf{x}) + ig(\mathbf{x})$  where  $f, g \in \mathbb{R}[\mathbf{x}]$  each have degree at most  $t/2$ .

Since the entries of each  $\mathbf{c}_B$  are real, it's clear that  $f, g \in \mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B})$ .

Then  $f^2 \in \mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B})$  is a non-negative polynomial of degree at most  $t$ .

By Lemma B, its average over  $\mathcal{B}$  is zero hence its average over  $\mathcal{K}_k^{\vee}$  is also zero.

Since  $f^2$  is everywhere non-negative, it must evaluate to zero on the incidence vector  $\mathbf{c}_B$  of every  $k$ -set  $B$ . So it belongs to the ideal  $\mathcal{I}(\mathcal{K}_k^{\vee})$ . Since this ideal is radical and contains  $f^2$ , it also contains  $f$ . By Lemma A,  $f$  must be trivial. The same argument applies to  $g$  and, hence, to  $F$ .

For Steiner systems,  $t/2 < \gamma_1 \leq \gamma_2 \leq t$

A *Steiner system* is a  $t$ -( $v, k, \lambda$ ) design with  $\lambda = 1$ . The question of existence of non-trivial Steiner systems with  $t > 5$  has been recently resolved in spectacular fashion by Keevash.

**Theorem:** Let  $(X, \mathcal{B})$  be any  $t$ -( $v, k, 1$ ) design. For a block  $B \in \mathcal{B}$  and any two  $t$ -element subsets  $T, T'$  contained in  $B$ , define

$$g_{T, T'}(\mathbf{x}) = x^T - x^{T'}.$$

where  $x^T = \prod_{i \in T} x_i$ . Then

- (i)  $\mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B})$  is generated by  $\mathcal{G}_0 \cup \{g_{T, T'}(\mathbf{x}) : B \in \mathcal{B}, T, T' \subseteq B, |T| = |T'| = t\}$ ;
- (ii)  $\gamma_2(\mathcal{B}) \leq t$ .

## Upper Bounds

**Theorem:** For any partial  $t$ -( $v, k, 1$ )-design  $(X, \mathcal{B})$ ,  $\gamma_2(\mathcal{B}) \leq t$ .

**Corollary:** Let  $(X, \mathcal{B})$  be a  $t$ -( $v, k, \lambda$ ) design with  $|B \cap B'| < s$  for every pair  $B, B'$  of distinct blocks. Then  $\gamma_2(\mathcal{B}) \leq s$ .  $\square$



## For symmetric 2-designs, all functions are linear

**Theorem:** Let  $(X, \mathcal{B})$  be any non-trivial symmetric 2- $(v, k, \lambda)$  design. For each pair  $i, j$  of distinct points from  $X$  define

$$f_{i,j}(\mathbf{x}) = (k - \lambda)x_i x_j - \sum_{i,j \in B \in \mathcal{B}} x^{B,1} + \lambda^2.$$

where  $x^{B,1} = \sum_{i \in B} x_i$ . Then

- (i)  $\mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B})$  is generated by  $\mathcal{G}_0 \cup \{f_{i,j} \mid i, j \in X\}$ ;
- (ii)  $\gamma_1(\mathcal{B}) = \gamma_2(\mathcal{B}) = 2$ ;
- (iii) the coordinate ring  $\mathbb{C}[\mathbf{x}]/\mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B})$  admits a basis consisting of cosets  $\{x_i + \mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B}) \mid 1 \leq i \leq v\}$ .

We have a similar result when  $(X, \mathcal{B})$  consists of the points and  $e$ -dimensional subspaces of  $\text{PG}(d, q)$

## Parameter values for Witt designs

Certain orbits of the Mathieu groups provide elegant examples of  $t$ -designs.

$t$ -( $v, k, \lambda$ )	$\gamma_1(\mathcal{B})$	$\gamma_2(\mathcal{B})$
5-(24, 8, 1)	3	3
4-(23, 7, 1)	3	3
3-(22, 6, 1)	2	2
2-(21, 5, 1)	2	2
5-(12, 6, 1)	3	3
4-(11, 5, 1)	3	3
3-(10, 4, 1)	2	2
2-(9, 3, 1)	2	2

## The unique 5-(24, 8, 1) design

**Theorem:** Let  $(X, \mathcal{B})$  be the 5-(24, 8, 1) design. For a block  $B \in \mathcal{B}$  and points  $i, j \in B$ , define

$$f_{B,i,j}(\mathbf{x}) = (x_i - x_j)(\mathbf{c}_B \cdot \mathbf{x} - 2)(\mathbf{c}_B \cdot \mathbf{x} - 4).$$

Then

- (i)  $\mathcal{I}(\mathcal{B})$  is generated by  $\mathcal{G}_0 \cup \{f_{B,i,j} \mid i, j \in B \in \mathcal{B}\}$ ;
- (ii)  $\gamma_1(\mathcal{B}) = \gamma_2(\mathcal{B}) = 3$ .

## The Icosahedron

A *spherical code* is a finite subset of the unit sphere  $S^{m-1}$  in  $\mathbb{R}^m$ .

**Q:** Which polynomials vanish on the 12 vertices of the icosahedron?

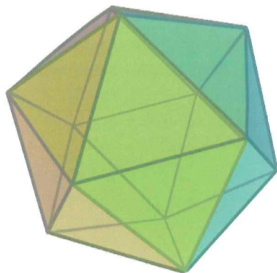


Image Credit:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regular\\_icosahedron](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regular_icosahedron)

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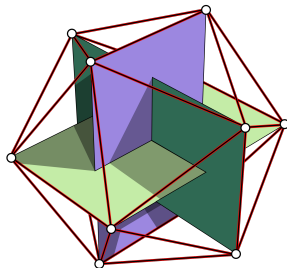


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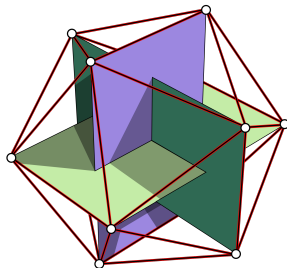


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$F(x_1, x_2, x_3) = x_1 x_2 x_3$  vanishes on all

$$(\pm 1, \pm \phi, 0), \quad (0, \pm 1, \pm \phi), \quad (\pm \phi, 0, \pm 1)$$

## Ideals for Spherical Designs

Here, the *trivial ideal* is  $\mathcal{T} = \langle x_1^2 + \cdots + x_m^2 - 1 \rangle$   
and we define  $\gamma_1(X)$  and  $\gamma_2(X)$  similarly.

For a spherical  $t$ -design, we have  $\gamma_1(X) \geq t/2$ .

If  $X$  is the set of vertices of the icosahedron, then  $\mathcal{I}(X)$ , the ideal of all polynomials that vanish on  $X$ , is generated by the equation of the sphere together with five cubics of the above form.

## The Icosahedron and Famous Lattices

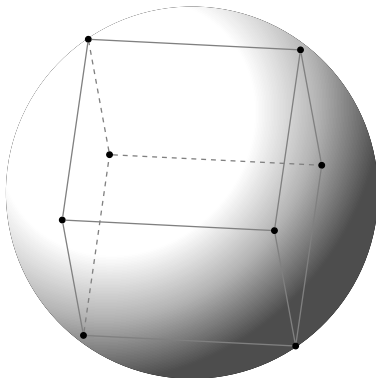
We can use "sliced zonal polynomials" to generate  $\mathcal{I}(X)$  in these cases:

Name	$ X $	Dim	strength	$\gamma_1(X)$	$\gamma_2(X)$
icos.	12	3	5	3	3
$E_6$	72	6	5	3	3
$E_7$	126	7	5	3	3
$E_8$	240	8	7	4	4
Leech	196560	24	11	6	6

(joint with Corre Love Steele arXiv:1310.6626)



## Example - the cube



## Gram Matrix

These eight vectors

$$\left( \pm \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}}, \pm \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}}, \pm \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} \right)$$

have Gram matrix (pairwise inner products)

$$G = \frac{1}{3} \left[ \begin{array}{cccc|cccc} 3 & 1 & 1 & -1 & 1 & -1 & -1 & -3 \\ 1 & 3 & -1 & 1 & -1 & 1 & -3 & -1 \\ 1 & -1 & 3 & 1 & -1 & -3 & 1 & -1 \\ -1 & 1 & 1 & 3 & -3 & -1 & -1 & 1 \\ \hline 1 & -1 & -1 & -3 & 3 & 1 & 1 & -1 \\ -1 & 1 & -3 & -1 & 1 & 3 & -1 & 1 \\ -1 & -3 & 1 & -1 & 1 & -1 & 3 & 1 \\ -3 & -1 & -1 & 1 & -1 & 1 & 1 & 3 \end{array} \right]$$

## Gram Matrix

The entrywise square of  $G$

$$G^{\circ 2} = G \circ G = \frac{1}{9} \left[ \begin{array}{cccc|cccc} 9 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 9 \\ 1 & 9 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 9 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 9 & 1 & 1 & 9 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 & 9 & 9 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ \hline 1 & 1 & 1 & 9 & 9 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 9 & 1 & 1 & 9 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 9 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 9 & 1 \\ 9 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 9 \end{array} \right]$$

is also a Gram matrix (tetrahedron in  $\mathbb{R}^4$ ). And  $G(G \circ G) = 0$ .

## Multiplying Entrywise Powers

For the 3-cube, we have

$$GG = \frac{8}{3}G, \quad G(G \circ G) = 0, \quad G(G \circ G \circ G) = \frac{56}{27}G,$$

$$(G \circ G)(G \circ G) = \frac{8}{27}J + \frac{16}{9}G \circ G, \quad (G \circ G)(G \circ G \circ G) = 0,$$

$$(G \circ G \circ G)(G \circ G \circ G) = \frac{56}{243}G + \frac{16}{9}G \circ G \circ G$$

So the vector space spanned by  $J$ ,  $G$ ,  $G \circ G$ ,  $G \circ G \circ G$  is closed under matrix multiplication!

This is special:

## DRG Duals

Let  $X \subset S^{m-1}$  be a spherical code in  $\mathbb{R}^m$  with Gram matrix  
 $G = [\mathbf{x} \cdot \mathbf{y}]_{\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y} \in X}$ .

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Since  $G$  is positive semidefinite,  $G \circ G \succeq 0$  as well, and  
 $G \circ G \circ G \succeq 0$ , etc.

Suppose only  $s$  angles occur between pairs of distinct vectors in  $X$ .  
 We say  $X$  is a "**DRG dual**" if the vector space

$$\text{span} \left( J, G, G \circ G, \dots, \underbrace{G \circ \dots \circ G}_{s \text{ times}} \right)$$

is closed under matrix multiplication.

## Association Schemes

- ▶ all DRGs are association schemes ( $P$ -polynomial a.s.)
- ▶ all “DRG duals” are association schemes ( $Q$ -polynomial a.s.)

A symmetric association scheme can be thought of as a highly regular coloring of the edges of the complete graph . . .

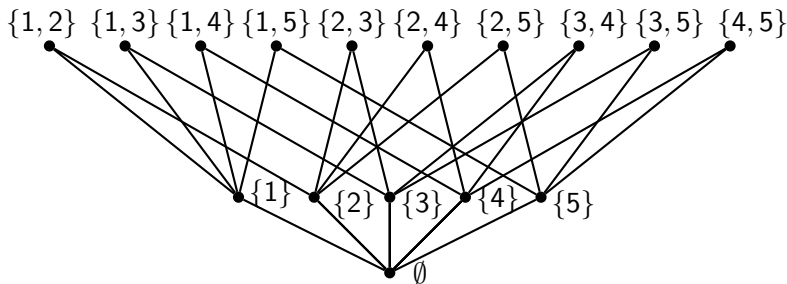


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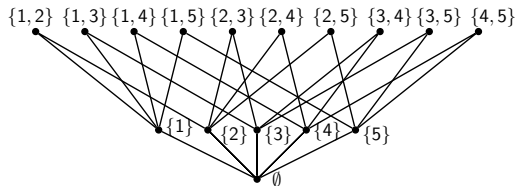
A symmetric association scheme can be thought of as a highly regular coloring of the edges of the complete graph . . .  
or as a vector space of symmetric matrices closed under both ordinary and entrywise multiplication, and containing the identities,  $I$  and  $J$ , for both.

## Truncated Boolean Lattice (partially ordered set)



For  $n = 5$ ,  $\Omega = \{1, 2, 3, 4, 5\}$  and  $k = 2$ , we take all subsets of  $\Omega$  of size at most  $k$ , ordered by inclusion.

## Truncated Boolean Lattice (poset)

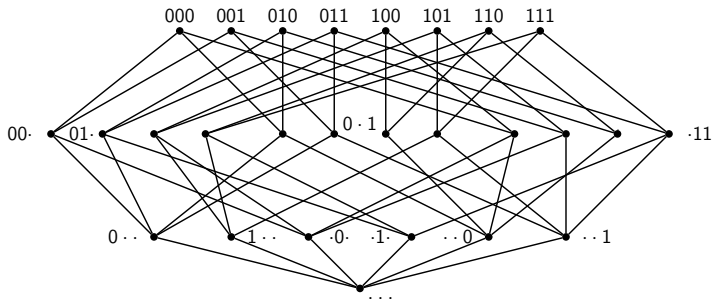


Incidence matrix:

$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

$X$  consists of 10 points in  $\mathbb{R}^5$  and  $\mathcal{I}(X)$  is generated by the obvious quadratics (trivial polynomials for designs).

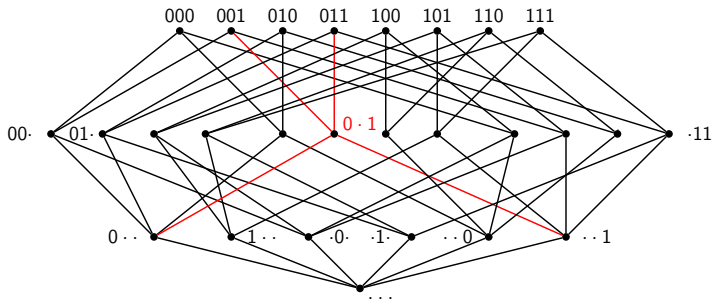
## Hamming Lattice (poset)



For  $n = 3$  and  $q = 2$ , we consider all “partial”  $n$ -tuples over  $\mathbb{Z}_q$ , marking unspecified entries with ‘.’. Partial order relation is:

$$a \preceq b \text{ if } a_i = b_i \text{ whenever } a_i \neq \cdot$$

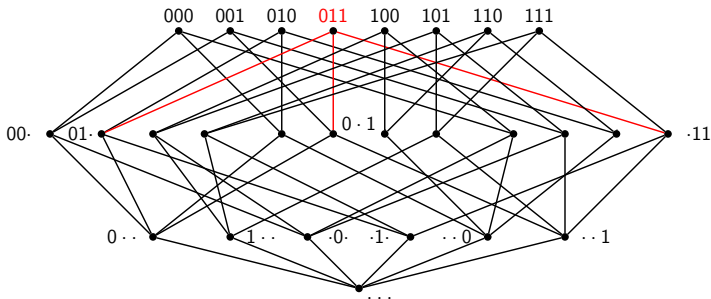
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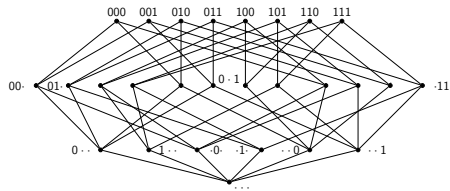
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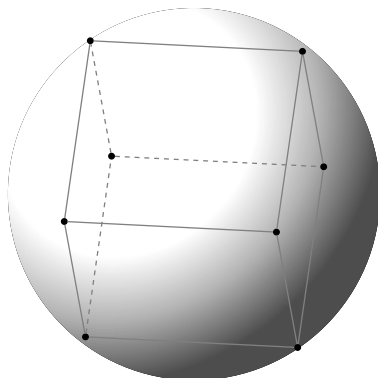
$$\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

$X$  consists of 8 points in  $\mathbb{R}^6$  and  $\mathcal{I}(X)$  is generated by trivial polynomials together with

$$Y_1 + Y_6 - 1, \quad Y_2 + Y_5 - 1, \quad Y_3 + Y_4 - 1.$$

Similar ideas work for the Grassmann scheme and the bilinear forms scheme.

## The Ideal of the Cube



If, instead of looking at the poset, we go back to the Euclidean cube,  $\{(\pm 1, \pm 1, \pm 1)\}$ , we immediately see that

$$\mathcal{I}(X) = \langle x_1^2 - 1, x_2^2 - 1, x_3^2 - 1 \rangle$$



# Conjectures

## Dual DRGs

**Thm 1** (Williford & WJM): For fixed  $m > 2$ ,  $\gamma_2(E_1)$  is bounded above by a function of  $m$ .

**Conj 1** (WJM): For  $m > 2$ ,  $\gamma_1(E_1) \leq 6$ .

**Conj 2** (WJM): For  $m > 2$ ,  $\gamma_2(E_1) \leq 6$ .

**Thm 2:** If  $(X, \mathcal{R})$  is also  $P$ -polynomial with  $m > 2$ , then  $\gamma_1(E_1) \leq 3$ .

**Conj 3:** If  $(X, \mathcal{R})$  is also  $P$ -polynomial with  $m > 2$ , then  $\gamma_2(E_1) \leq 3$ , with known exceptions.

## distance-regular graphs

**Thm 3** (Bang, et al.): For fixed  $k > 2$ ,  $g_2(\Gamma)$  is bounded above by a function of  $k$ .

**Conj 4** (Suzuki): For  $k > 2$ ,  $g_1(\Gamma) \leq 12$ .

**Question:** For  $k > 2$ , is  $g_2(\Gamma) \leq 12$ ?

**Thm** (Lewis): If  $\Gamma$  is  $Q$ -polynomial with  $k > 2$ , then  $g_1(\Gamma) \leq 6$ .

**Thm** (Lewis): If  $\Gamma$  is  $Q$ -polynomial with  $k > 2$ , is  $g_2(\Gamma) \leq 6$  or  $\Gamma$  is a pseudoquotient.

# Duality

If  $\Gamma$  is a distance-regular graph defined on an abelian group  $X$  such that

$$a \sim b \Rightarrow a + x \sim b + x$$

for all  $a, b, x \in X$ , then the characters of  $G$  give us a DRG dual.

## Duality

If  $\Gamma$  is a distance-regular graph defined on an abelian group  $X$  such that

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for all  $a, b, x \in X$ , then the characters of  $G$  give us a DRG dual. And, in this case, closed walks of length  $k$  map to polynomials of degree  $\lceil \frac{k}{2} \rceil$  in the ideal of the dual DRG.

Girth  $g_1(\Gamma) > 4$  iff  $a_1 = 0, c_2 = 1$

WHILE

$\gamma_1(X) > 2$  iff  $a_1^* = 0, c_2^* = 2m_1/(m_1 + 2)$ , etc.

## The End

Thank you all!



Sparrow Dance, Sendai-shi Festival, Sunday, 20th May, Sun Mall