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Basic character theory

### Frobenius scalar product

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$$\langle \phi, \psi \rangle := rac{1}{|\mathcal{G}|} \sum_{oldsymbol{g} \in \mathcal{G}} \phi(oldsymbol{g}) \overline{\psi(oldsymbol{g})} \in \mathbb{C}$$

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 $\exists$ ! orthonormal basis s.t. every basis element  $\chi$  has  $\chi(1) \in \mathbb{N}_+$ .

Call such elements *irreducible characters* and the basis Irr(G).

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### The Plancherel measure

$$\sum_{\chi \in Irr(G)} \chi(1)^2 = |G|$$

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#### Measure on Irr(G)

$$\mathsf{Pl}_{\mathcal{G}}(\chi) = \frac{\chi(1)^2}{|\mathcal{G}|}$$



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### The upper unitriangular group

 $\mathbb{F}_q$  the finite field with q elements, q a prime power

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#### $\mathbb{F}_q$ the finite field with q elements, q a prime power

$$U_n(\mathbb{F}_q) := \begin{bmatrix} 1 & * & * & \cdots & * \\ & 1 & * & \cdots & * \\ & & \ddots & & \vdots \\ & & & \ddots & \vdots \\ & & & & & 1 \end{bmatrix}, \quad * \in \mathbb{F}_q$$

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Classifying the irreducible representations of  $U_n(\mathbb{F}_q)$  is a "wild" problem

$$\begin{cases} G = \bigsqcup_{g \in G/\sim} [g], \ G \text{ is an union of conjugacy classes} \\ Irr(G) = \{\chi \colon G/\sim \to \mathbb{C} \text{ orthonormal w.r.t. } \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle \} \end{cases}$$

└─ supercharacter theory

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$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \mathcal{G} = \bigsqcup_{\mathcal{K} \in \mathcal{K}} \mathcal{K}, \\ \\ \mathcal{H} = \{ \psi \colon \mathcal{K} \to \mathbb{C} \text{ orthogonal w.r.t. } \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle \} \end{array} \right.$$

\_\_\_\_\_supercharacter theory

### OK, no irreducible characters. Now what?

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- thus,  $\psi$  are class functions (constant on conjugacy classes);
- *Irr*(G) is a basis for the algebra of class functions, so each \u03c6 must be a linear combination of irreducible characters;

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### Supercharacter theory (Diaconis and Isaacs)

A supercharacter theory is a pair  $(\mathcal{K}, \mathcal{H})$  where  $\mathcal{K}$  is a set partition of G and  $\mathcal{H}$  is an orthogonal set of characters such that

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- **2** if  $\psi \in \mathcal{H}$  then  $\psi$  constant on K,  $\forall K \in \mathcal{K}$ ;

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- **3** if  $\chi \in Irr(G)$  then  $\exists ! \psi$  such that  $\langle \chi, \psi \rangle \neq 0$ .

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Given a suitable  $\mathcal{K}$  then  $\mathcal{H}$  is fixed (and viceversa).



└─ supercharacter theory

### (Bergeron and Thiem) A supercharacter theory for $U_n(\mathbb{F}_q)$

$$h = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 4 & 0 & 3 \\ 1 & 5 & 2 & 0 & 3 & 6 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 4 & 3 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & 3 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & 3 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 4 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix},$$

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### Why this supercharacter theory?

 Superclasses (and supercharacters) are indexed by nice combinatorial objects;

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- 2 the supercharacters have an explicit formula;
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- the algebra of superclass functions is isomorphic to the algebra of symmetric functions in noncommutative variables;
- 5 Nice decomposition of the supercharacter table (Bergeron and Thiem).

supercharacter theory

$$\pi = \begin{array}{c} & & \\ & & \\ 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7 & 8 \end{array}$$

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$$Arcs(\pi) = \{(1,5), (2,3), (3,8), (5,7)\};$$

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• 
$$crs(\pi) = \sharp crossings \text{ of } \pi = 1;$$

#### └─ supercharacter theory

The dimension of a supercharacter is

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## The superplancherel measure

$$\mathsf{SPI}_{G}(\chi) = \frac{1}{|G|} \frac{\chi(1)^2}{\langle \chi, \chi \rangle} = \frac{1}{q^{\frac{n(n-1)}{2}}} \frac{(q-1)^{\mathsf{a}(\pi)} \cdot q^{2\dim(\pi)-2\mathsf{a}(\pi)}}{q^{\mathsf{crs}(\pi)}}$$

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## Plan

## **1** See set partitions as objects of the same space

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- 3 let  $n \to \infty$ ;

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## Theorem (DDS)

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$${\sf SPI}_n(\chi^\pi) = rac{1}{q^{rac{n(n-1)}{2}}} rac{q^{2\dim(\pi)-2a(\pi)}}{(q-1)^{a(\pi)}q^{crs(\pi)}} =$$

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$$crs(\pi) \rightarrow \int_{\Delta^2} \mathbb{1}[x_1 < x_2 < y_1 < y_2] \, d\mu_{\pi}(x_1, y_1) \, d\mu_{\pi}(x_2, y_2)$$

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$$\mathcal{H}(\mu) := \frac{1}{2} - 2I_{\mathsf{dim}}(\mu) + I_{\mathsf{crs}}(\mu)$$

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# Playing with $I_{\dim}(\mu) = \int_{\Delta} (y - x) \, d\mu$



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## Playing with crossings

$$I_{crs}(\mu_{\pi}) = \int_{\Delta^2} \mathbb{1}[x_1 < x_2 < y_1 < y_2] \, d\mu_{\pi}(x_1, y_1) \, d\mu_{\pi}(x_2, y_2)$$

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## Proposition

If 
$$\mu$$
 has mass in  $\mu$  and  $\mu$  has uniform marginals then  
 $I_{crs}(\mu) = 0 \Leftrightarrow \mu = \mu = \mu$ 

# Summary

## $\mu$ has uniform marginals

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 $\mu \text{ has uniform marginals} \\ \mathcal{H}(\mu) = \mathbf{0} \Leftrightarrow \ \mu \text{ inside the top left square}$ 

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The last step (technical) is to prove that  $\mu_{\pi^{(n)}} \to \Omega$  iff  $\mathcal{H}(\mu_{\pi^{(n)}}) \to \mathcal{H}(\Omega) = 0.$
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## SUPERTHANK YOU

