

# Statistics of the multiplicative group

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joint work with Ben Chang, Jenna Downey, and Lee Troupe (in parallel)

UNSW–Sydney Number Theory Seminar  
November 21, 2018

*these slides can be found on my web page*

**`www.math.ubc.ca/~gerg/index.shtml?slides`**

# Outline

- 1 Introducing the multiplicative group  $M_n$
- 2 Counting the number of subgroups of  $M_n$ 
  - The distribution of the number of subgroups of  $M_n$
  - Outline of the proofs
- 3 The frequency of prescribed  $q$ -Sylow subgroups of  $M_n$
- 4 The least invariant factor of  $M_n$

# What is the multiplicative group?

The finite ring  $\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z}$  has:

- a cyclic additive group  $C_n = (\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^+$  with  $n$  elements;
- an abelian multiplicative group  $M_n = (\mathbb{Z}/n\mathbb{Z})^\times$  with  $\phi(n)$  elements.

## Overarching question

Which abelian group of  $\phi(n)$  elements is  $M_n$ ?

For example,  $M_n$  being cyclic is equivalent to  $n$  having a primitive root.

## Two forms that answers to the question can take

- primary decomposition:  $G \cong C_{p_1^{r_1}} \oplus \cdots \oplus C_{p_k^{r_k}}$ , where the  $p_j^{r_j}$  are prime powers (unique up to reordering)
- invariant factors:  $G \cong C_{m_1} \oplus \cdots \oplus C_{m_\ell}$ , where  $m_1 \mid m_2 \mid \cdots \mid m_\ell$  (unique)

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# Number theory within a computation of $M_n$

**Example:  $M_n$  when  $n = 11! = 2^8 \cdot 3^4 \cdot 5^2 \cdot 7 \cdot 11$**

$$\begin{aligned}
 M_{11!} &\cong M_{2^8} \times M_{3^4} \times M_{5^2} \times M_7 \times M_{11} \\
 &\cong (C_2 \oplus C_{64}) \oplus C_{54} \oplus C_{20} \oplus C_6 \oplus C_{10} \\
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 &\cong C_2 \oplus C_2 \oplus C_2 \oplus C_2 \oplus C_{60} \oplus C_{8,640}
 \end{aligned}$$

Largest invariant factor

$8,640 = \lambda(11!)$  (Carmichael lambda-function)

Number of invariant factors

- When  $n$  odd: exactly  $\omega(n) = \#\{p \mid n\}$
- When  $n$  even:  $\omega(n) - 1$  or  $\omega(n)$  or  $\omega(n) + 1$

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# What's known about $\lambda(n)$

## For purposes of comparison

$\phi(n)$  is never smaller than  $(e^{-\gamma} + o(1))n / \log \log n$ .

Theorem (Erdős/Pomerance/Schmutz, 1991)

*For almost all integers  $n$ ,*

$$\lambda(n) = n / \exp((1 + o(1)) \log n \log \log n).$$

*In other words, the normal order of  $\log(n/\lambda(n))$  is  $\log n \log \log n$ .*

## Drive-by question

What about the second-largest invariant factor,  $\lambda_2(n)$ ?

- $\lambda(n) = \min \{k \geq 1 : a^k \in \langle 1 \rangle \pmod{n} \text{ for all } (a, n) = 1\}$ .
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## Distribution results: different strengths

By way of analogy: some historical results about the distribution of  $\omega(n)$ , the number of distinct prime factors of  $n$ .

- The average value of  $\omega(n)$  is  $\log \log n$ .
  - requires an asymptotic formula for  $\sum_{n \leq x} \omega(n)$
- The normal order (typical size) of  $\omega(n)$  is  $\log \log n$ .
  - requires estimate for variance  $\sum_{n \leq x} (\omega(n) - \log \log n)^2$
- Erdős–Kac theorem:  $\omega(n)$  is asymptotically distributed like a normal random variable with mean  $\log \log n$  and variance  $\log \log n$ . (More precise statement on next slide.)
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# Erdős–Kac laws

## Definition

A function  $f(n)$  satisfies an **Erdős–Kac law with mean  $\mu(n)$  and variance  $\sigma^2(n)$**  if

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{x} \# \left\{ n \leq x : \frac{f(n) - \mu(n)}{\sigma(n)} < u \right\} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}} \int_{-\infty}^u e^{-t^2/2} dt$$

for every real number  $u$ .

## Standard notation

$\omega(n)$  is the number of distinct prime factors of  $n$ .

$\Omega(n)$  is the number of prime factors of  $n$  counted with multiplicity.

## Theorem (Erdős–Kac, 1940)

*Both  $\omega(n)$  and  $\Omega(n)$  satisfy Erdős–Kac laws with mean  $\log \log n$  and variance  $\log \log n$ .*

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for every real number  $u$ .

## Standard notation

$\omega(n)$  is the number of distinct prime factors of  $n$ .

$\Omega(n)$  is the number of prime factors of  $n$  counted with multiplicity.

## Theorem (Erdős–Kac, 1940)

*Both  $\omega(n)$  and  $\Omega(n)$  satisfy Erdős–Kac laws with mean  $\log \log n$  and variance  $\log \log n$ .*

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# Other functions with Erdős–Kac laws

The paper of Erdős–Kac establishes these normal-distribution laws for a large class of **additive functions**: if  $n = p_1^{r_1} \cdots p_k^{r_k}$ , then  $f(n) = f(p_1^{r_1}) + \cdots + f(p_k^{r_k})$ . Examples of non-additive functions:

Liu (2007)

On GRH,  $\omega(\#E(\mathbb{F}_p))$  satisfies an Erdős–Kac law with mean  $\log \log p$  and variance  $\log \log p$ .

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## Notation reminder

$M_n = \mathbb{Z}_n^\times$ , an abelian group with  $\phi(n)$  elements.

Question (Vukoslavcevic and Shparlinski, 2010)

How many subgroups does  $M_n$  have?

Notation (used throughout this section of the talk)

- $I(n)$  is the number of isomorphism classes of subgroups of  $M_n$ .
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If  $G_p(n)$  denotes the number of subgroups of the  $p$ -Sylow subgroup of  $M_n$ , then  $G(n) = \prod_{p|\#M_n} G_p(n) = \prod_{p|\phi(n)} G_p(n)$ .

And similarly for  $I(n)$ .

In particular, both  $I(n)$  and  $G(n)$  are “ $\phi$ -multiplicative” functions; so we might hope to get strong distributional information for the  $\phi$ -additive functions  $\log I(n)$  and  $\log G(n)$ .

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# Erdős–Kac laws for the number of subgroups

Theorem (M.–Troupe, to appear in the Journal of the Australian Mathematical Society)

$\log I(n)$  satisfies an Erdős–Kac law with mean  $\frac{\log 2}{2} (\log \log n)^2$  and variance  $\frac{\log 2}{3} (\log \log n)^3$ .

How did we prove this?

We showed that  $\omega(\phi(n)) \log 2 \leq \log I(n) \leq \Omega(\phi(n)) \log 2$ , and then quoted Erdős–Pomerance. □

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$\log G(n)$  satisfies an Erdős–Kac law with mean  $A(\log \log n)^2$  and variance  $C(\log \log n)^3$ , for certain constants  $A$  and  $C$ .

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# We had to look at these constants, so you do too

## Definition

$$A_0 = \frac{1}{4} \sum_p \frac{p^2 \log p}{(p-1)^3(p+1)}$$

$$A = \frac{\log 2}{2} + A_0 \approx 0.72109$$

$$B = \frac{1}{4} \sum_p \frac{p^3(p^4 - p^3 - p^3 - p - 1)(\log p)^2}{(p-1)^6(p+1)^2(p^2 + p + 1)}$$

$$C = \frac{(\log 2)^2}{3} + 2A_0 \log 2 + 4A_0^2 + B \approx 3.924$$

(The two sums are convergent sums over all primes  $p$ .)



# How many subgroups can there be?

## Theorem (M.–Troupe)

The order of magnitude of the **maximal order of  $\log I(n)$**  is  **$\log n / \log \log n$** . More precisely,

$$\frac{\log 2}{5} \frac{\log x}{\log \log x} \lesssim \max_{n \leq x} (\log I(n)) \lesssim \pi \sqrt{\frac{2}{3}} \frac{\log x}{\log \log x}.$$

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# Finite abelian groups and partitions

## Facts about finite abelian $p$ -groups

- Every finite abelian group of size  $p^m$  can be written uniquely as  $C_{p^\alpha} = C_{p^{\alpha_1}} \oplus C_{p^{\alpha_2}} \oplus \cdots \oplus C_{p^{\alpha_\ell}}$  for some **partition**  $\alpha = (\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \dots, \alpha_\ell)$  of  $m$  (so  $\alpha_1 \geq \alpha_2 \geq \cdots \geq \alpha_\ell$ ).
- So the number of isomorphism classes of subgroups of  $C_{p^\alpha}$  is exactly the number of subpartitions  $\beta \preceq \alpha \dots$

$\dots$  which is somewhere between 2 and  $2^m$  inclusive.

In other words:

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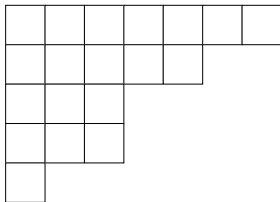
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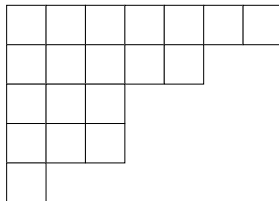
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# Application to distribution of $I(n)$

$I(n)$  is the number of isomorphism classes of subgroups of  $M_n$

## More notation

Let  $\phi(n) = \prod_{p|\phi(n)} p^{m(p)}$ , so that  $M_n \cong \bigoplus_{p|\phi(n)} C_{p^{\alpha(p)}}$  for some partitions  $\alpha(p)$  of  $m(p)$ .

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Upper bound seems very wasteful, yet still good enough!

“Anatomy of integers” techniques show: most primes dividing  $\phi(n)$  do so only once.

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$I(n)$  is the number of isomorphism classes of subgroups of  $M_n$

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# How many subgroups of each shape?

Notation:  $\alpha = (\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_\ell)$ ,  $C_p^\alpha = C_{p^{\alpha_1}} \oplus \dots \oplus C_{p^{\alpha_\ell}}$

## Definition

Given a subpartition  $\beta$  of  $\alpha$  and a prime  $p$ , define  $N_p(\alpha, \beta)$  to be the number of subgroups inside  $C_p^\alpha$  that are isomorphic to  $C_p^\beta$ .

Some classical exact formula (don't read it)

Let  $\mathbf{a} = (a_1, a_2, \dots, a_{\alpha_1})$  and  $\mathbf{b} = (b_1, b_2, \dots, b_{\beta_1})$  be the conjugate partitions to  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ , respectively. Then

$$N_p(\alpha, \beta) = \prod_{j=1}^{\alpha_1} p^{(a_j - b_j)b_{j+1}} \begin{bmatrix} a_j - b_{j+1} \\ b_j - b_{j+1} \end{bmatrix}_p,$$

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# The difference between algebra and analysis

$$N_p(\alpha, \beta) = \prod_{j=1}^{\alpha_1} p^{(a_j - b_j)b_{j+1}} \left[ \begin{matrix} a_j - b_{j+1} \\ b_j - b_{j+1} \end{matrix} \right]_p$$

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It turns out that each factor is about  $p^{(a_j - b_j)b_j}$ , which is maximally  $p^{a_j^2/4}$  when  $b_j = a_j/2$ , and is way smaller for noncentral values of  $b_j$ . So the total number of subgroups inside  $C_{p^\alpha}$  is dominated by this special  $\beta = \frac{1}{2}\alpha$ .

## Lemma

For any prime  $p$  and any partition  $\alpha$ ,

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Let  $\omega_q(n)$  denote the number of distinct prime factors of  $n$  that are congruent to 1 (mod  $q$ ).

Answer (exact for odd squarefree  $n$ , up to  $O(1)$  in general)

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$$\log G_p(n) \approx \frac{\log p}{4} \sum_{j=1}^{\infty} \omega_{p^j}(n)^2 \text{ for any prime } p \text{ dividing } \phi(n).$$

Moreover, if  $p \mid \phi(n)$  and  $p^2 \nmid \phi(n)$ , then  $\log G_p(n) = \log 2$ .

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# Sum the previous lemma over all primes

$$\log G(n) = \sum_{p|\phi(n)} \log G_p(n) \approx \sum_{\substack{p|\phi(n) \\ p^2 \nmid \phi(n)}} \log 2 + \sum_{p^2|\phi(n)} \frac{\log p}{4} \sum_{j=1}^{\infty} \omega_{p^j}(n)^2.$$

For most integers  $n$ , it's acceptable to extend both sums over all primes dividing  $\phi(n)$  (the last sum should be suitably truncated):

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Each function here has a known normal order; plugging in gives

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for almost all integers  $n$ . And the right-hand side is  $A(\log \log n)^2$ .



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# Final sketch

Getting beyond the normal order to an Erdős–Kac law requires computing all of the central moments of this approximation to  $\log G(n)$ . The correlations among the additive functions  $\omega_q(n)$ , and their correlations with  $\omega(\phi(n))$ , become important.

## “Sieving and the Erdős–Kac theorem” (2007)

To compute the moments, we rely on a technique of Granville and Soundararajan to reduce the complexity of identifying the main terms of these moments.

## Generalizing our method

Part of  $\log G(n)$  is well approximated by a sum of squares of additive functions. Troupe and I (just submitted!) can obtain an Erdős–Kac law for any fixed nonnegative polynomial evaluated at values of appropriate additive functions—for example, Erdős–Kac laws for products of additive functions.

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# Prohibited prime factors: related problems

Let  $q$  be a fixed odd prime.

## Definition

The  **$q$ -Sylow subgroup** of a finite abelian group  $G$  is the largest subgroup of  $G$  whose cardinality is a power of  $q$ .

## Question (Colin Weir, 2017)

If we fix our favorite prime  $q$  and our favorite group  $G$ , how often will we get  $G$  as the exact  $q$ -Sylow subgroup of  $M_n$ ?

## Definition

$$S_{q,G}(x) = \#\{n \leq x: \text{the } q\text{-Sylow subgroup of } M_n \text{ equals } G\}$$



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# The trivial example

## Another translation of algebra to number theory

$\{n: \text{the } q\text{-Sylow subgroup of } M_n \text{ is trivial}\}$

$$= \{n: q \text{ does not divide } \#M_n = \phi(n)\}$$

$$= \{n: (p \mid n \implies p \not\equiv 1 \pmod{q}) \text{ and } q^2 \nmid n\}.$$

Example (when  $G = \{1\}$  is trivial)

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we prohibit prime factors from a set of relative density  $1/(q-1)$ .

## General philosophy

Prohibiting prime divisors from a set of primes of relative density  $\delta$  divides the counting function by a factor of  $(\log x)^\delta$ .

Correspondingly, we expect  $S_{q, \{1\}}(x) \asymp x/(\log x)^{1/(q-1)}$ .

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Theorems of this type go back to Landau; today it would be deemed a standard application of the Selberg–Delange method; this particular application (other than the extra  $q^2 \nmid n$ ) was carried out by Ford/Luca/Moree (Math Comp., 2014).

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Suppose now that  $G = C_{q^\alpha}$ :

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If  $G = C_{q^{\alpha_1}} \oplus \cdots \oplus C_{q^{\alpha_\ell}}$ , then

$$S_{q,G} \sim \frac{C_q}{\Gamma(1 - \frac{1}{q-1})} \left( \prod_{j=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n_j!} \right) \left( \frac{q^2 - 1}{q^{2+\alpha_1+\cdots+\alpha_\ell}} \right) \frac{x(\log \log x)^\ell}{(\log x)^{1/(q-1)}},$$

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# An $M_n$ with a larger least invariant factor

Recall:  $M_{11!} \cong C_2 \oplus C_2 \oplus C_2 \oplus C_2 \oplus C_{60} \oplus C_{8,640}$

Example:  $M_n$  when  $n = 3^3 \cdot 7^2 \cdot 13 \cdot 19 \cdot 31$

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 M_n &\cong M_{3^3} \times M_{7^2} \times M_{13} \times M_{19} \times M_{31} \\
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# Counting “unusually large” smallest invariant factors

The least invariant factor of  $M_n$  equals 2 for almost all integers  $n$ . But we can be more precise:

Theorem (Chang–M., 2016+)

*The number of integers  $n \leq x$  for which the least invariant factor of  $M_n$  does not equal 2 is*

$$C \frac{x}{\sqrt{\log x}} + O\left(\frac{x}{(\log x)^{3/4-\varepsilon}}\right)$$

*for a particular positive constant  $C$  (not the same one as before).*

We also obtain the same result (with a different value of  $C$ ) for integers for which the least primary-decomposition factor of  $M_n$  does not equal 2.

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We also obtain the same result (with a different value of  $C$ ) for integers for which **the least primary-decomposition factor of  $M_n$  does not equal 2.**

# From group theory to analytic number theory

## Lemma

Fix an even number  $k \geq 4$ . *The least invariant factor of  $M_n$  is a multiple of  $k$  if and only if all of the following conditions hold:*

- 1 for primes  $p \nmid k$ : if  $p \mid n$  then we must have  $p \equiv 1 \pmod{k}$ ;
- 2  $4 \nmid n$ ;
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$$D_k(x) = \#\{n \leq x: k \text{ divides the least invariant factor of } M_n\}$$

By the lemma,  $D_k(x)$  is very similar to

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Trivially,

$$\begin{aligned} \#\{n \leq x : \text{the least invariant factor of } M_n \text{ does not equal } 2\} \\ \leq D_4(x) + D_6(x) + D_8(x) + D_{10}(x) + D_{12}(x) + \cdots \end{aligned}$$

## General philosophy again

Prohibiting prime divisors from a set of primes of relative density  $\delta$  divides the counting function by a factor of  $(\log x)^\delta$ . Correspondingly, we expect  $D_k(x) \asymp x/(\log x)^{1-1/\phi(k)}$ .

So we expect

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# Selberg–Delange with more uniformity

$$D_k(x) \text{ is similar to } \#\{n \leq x: p \mid n \implies p \equiv 1 \pmod{k}\}$$

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A straightforward application of the Selberg–Delange method (for example from Tenenbaum’s book) gives

$$D_k(x) \sim C_k \frac{x}{(\log x)^{1-1/\phi(k)}} + O_k\left(\frac{x}{(\log x)^{2-1/\phi(k)}}\right)$$

(not the same  $C_k$  as before) ... for any fixed  $k$ .

We have a sum over  $k$  in our error term; hence we need a version of Selberg–Delange with uniformity in  $k$ .

- uniformity of  $C_k$ : medium annoying
- uniformity of the  $O$ -constant: very annoying

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# That's a weird constant

## Theorem (Chang–M., 2016+)

The number of integers  $n \leq x$  for which *the least invariant factor of  $M_n$  does not equal 2* is

$$C \frac{x}{\sqrt{\log x}} + O\left(\frac{x}{(\log x)^{3/4-\varepsilon}}\right)$$

where  $C \approx 1.59747$  is given by

$$C = \frac{3}{2^{5/2}} \prod_{p \equiv 3 \pmod{4}} \left(1 - \frac{1}{p^2}\right)^{1/2} + \frac{7}{4 \cdot 3^{5/4}} \prod_{p \equiv 5 \pmod{6}} \left(1 - \frac{1}{p^2}\right)^{1/2}.$$

## Theorem (Chang–M., 2016+)

Let  $m \geq 4$  be even. The number of integers  $n \leq x$  for which the least invariant factor of  $M_n$  equals  $m$  is (for some explicit  $C_m$ )

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# The end

These slides

[www.math.ubc.ca/~gerg/index.shtml?slides](http://www.math.ubc.ca/~gerg/index.shtml?slides)

“The distribution of the number of subgroups of the multiplicative group”, with Lee Troupe

[www.math.ubc.ca/~gerg/index.shtml?abstract=DNSMG](http://www.math.ubc.ca/~gerg/index.shtml?abstract=DNSMG)

“The distribution of sums and products of additive functions”, with Lee Troupe

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work in progress with Ben Chang and with Jenna Downey

Keep your eyes peeled on arXiv or my web page!