

# Monstrous Moonshine: The Monster and the Elliptic Modular $J$ -function

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# Introduction

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- Two components:
  - Representation and character theory related to the Monster
  - Klein's  $J$ -function
- How do these connect?

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A sporadic group is a simple group (which means it cannot be “factored”) that does not fit nicely into a larger family of simple groups.



# The Monster

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$$\begin{aligned} |\mathbb{M}| &= 2^{46} \cdot 3^{20} \cdot 5^9 \cdot 7^6 \cdot 11^2 \cdot 13^3 \cdot 17 \cdot 19 \cdot 23 \cdot 29 \cdot 31 \cdot 41 \cdot 47 \cdot 59 \cdot 71 \\ &= 808,017,424,794,512,875,886,459,904,961,710,757,005,754,368,000,000,000 \end{aligned}$$

# Representations of Groups

## Definition

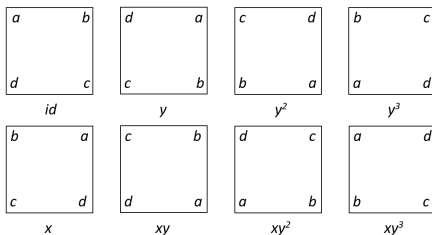
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Let us consider  $D_4$ , the “square group” (the group of symmetries of a square):



# Homomorphism of the Square Group

$g$	$\rho(g)$	$g$	$\rho(g)$
$id$	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$	$x$	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$
$y$	$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$	$xy$	$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$
$y^2$	$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$	$xy^2$	$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$
$y^3$	$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$	$xy^3$	$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$

# Conjugate Representation

“Another” representation:

$g$	$\sigma(g)$	$g$	$\sigma(g)$
$id$	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$	$x$	$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$
$y$	$\begin{pmatrix} i & 0 \\ 0 & -i \end{pmatrix}$	$xy$	$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix}$
$y^2$	$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$	$xy^2$	$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$
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Two representations  $\rho$  and  $\sigma$  are conjugate representations if there is an element  $T$  in  $GL(n, \mathbb{C})$  such that  $T^{-1}\rho(h)T = \sigma(h)$  for all  $h$  in  $G$  [3].



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# Trace and Character

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For the square group we were looking at earlier:

# The Characters of the Square Group

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$id$	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$	2
$y$	$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} i & 0 \\ 0 & -i \end{pmatrix}$	0
$y^2$	$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$	-2
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# Irreducible Representations

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Since we are thinking of representations as homomorphisms, this means we can break a representation down into a combination (or direct sum) of irreducible ones.

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Starting with the trivial representation, the dimensions of the first few irreducible representations are

$$(r_n)_{n=1, \dots, 194} = (1, 196\,883, 21\,296\,876, 842\,609\,326, 18\,538\,750\,076, \dots).$$

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- The coefficients of the Fourier expansion

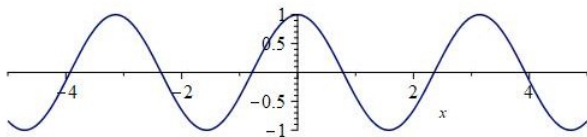
# Periodic Functions

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A function is periodic if there is some period  $\omega$  such that  $f(z + \omega) = f(z)$ , for  $z$  and  $z + \omega$  in the domain of  $f$ . An example of a periodic function is  $\cos 2x$ , which has a period of  $\pi$ .



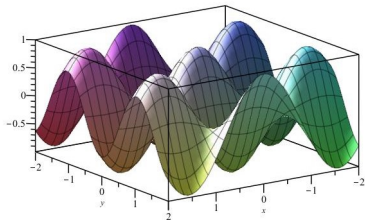
Graph of  $y = \cos 2x$

# Doubly Periodic Functions

For a function to be doubly periodic it must have two periods,  $\omega_1$  and  $\omega_2$ , with ratio  $\omega_2/\omega_1$ , where this ratio is not real. Hence, the periods will go in two different directions.

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Graph of  $f(x, y) = \cos 2x \cdot \cos 3y$

# Fundamental Pair of Periods

A pair of periods  $(\omega_1, \omega_2)$  for a function  $f$  is a fundamental pair if all the periods of  $f$  can be written in the form  $m\omega_1 + n\omega_2$  for  $m, n \in \mathbb{Z}$ .



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We can create a parallelogram by considering  $0, \omega_1, \omega_2,$  and  $\omega_1 + \omega_2$ :

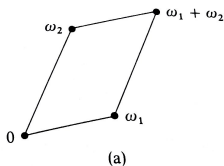
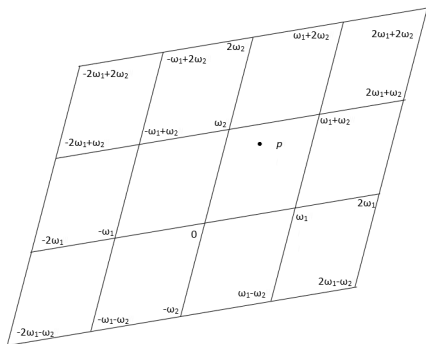


Figure 1.2.a from [1]

# Lattice of Periods

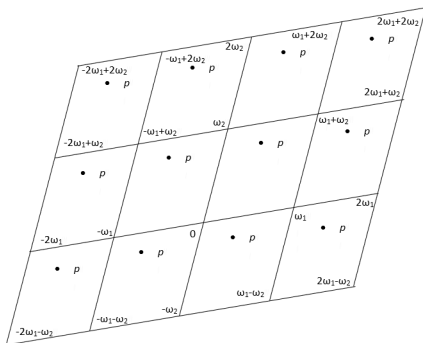
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## Some Notation

- In the discussion that follows, we are going to use the lattice

$\Omega = \{\omega = m\omega_1 + n\omega_2 \mid m, n \in \mathbb{Z}\}$  to define the series

$G_n = \sum_{\omega \in \Omega, \omega \neq 0} \frac{1}{\omega^n}$ , which is called the Eisenstein series of order  $n$ .

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- The discriminant is a function defined by  $\Delta = g_2^3 - 27g_3^2$ . There are more natural ways to define  $\Delta$  (using the Euler function  $\phi(q)$  to lead us to  $\eta(q)$ ), but this more artificial construction is helpful for our context.

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- All these functions are homogeneous, which means that for some constant  $\lambda$ ,

$$f(\lambda\omega_1, \lambda\omega_2) = \lambda^k f(\omega_1, \omega_2).$$

# Klein's $J$ -Function

The  $J$ -function is a function of the periods  $\omega_1$  and  $\omega_2$ . We define it as

$$J(\omega_1, \omega_2) = \frac{g_2^3(\omega_1, \omega_2)}{\Delta(\omega_1, \omega_2)} = \frac{\lambda^{-12} g_2^3(\omega_1, \omega_2)}{\lambda^{-12} \Delta(\omega_1, \omega_2)} = \frac{g_2^3(\lambda\omega_1, \lambda\omega_2)}{\Delta(\lambda\omega_1, \lambda\omega_2)} = J(\lambda\omega_1, \lambda\omega_2)$$

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For  $\tau \in \mathbb{H}$  (where  $\tau = \frac{\omega_2}{\omega_1}$  and  $\mathbb{H} = \{\tau \in \mathbb{C} \mid \text{Im}(\tau) > 0\}$ ),  
 $J(1, \tau) = J(\omega_1, \omega_2)$  since

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We will denote this function simply as  $J(\tau)$  [1].

# The Fourier Expansion of $J(\tau)$

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For  $\tau \in \mathbb{H}$  we have the Fourier expansion

$$12^3 J(\tau) = e^{-2\pi i\tau} + 744 + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} c(n)e^{2\pi in\tau},$$

where the  $c(n)$  are integers.

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In some versions of this formula the 744 is subtracted from both sides, and the result is called  $J(\tau)$ . For  $q = e^{2\pi i\tau}$ , that gives us

$$12^3 J(\tau) - 744 = q^{-1} + 196\,884q + 21\,493\,760q^2 + 864\,299\,970q^3 + \dots$$

From now on we will refer to this version of the formula as  $J(\tau)$ .

# The Monster and the $J$ -Function

Recall that the first few dimensions of irreducible representations of the Monster are

$$(r_n)_{n=1, \dots, 194} = (1, 196\,883, 21\,296\,876, 842\,609\,326, 18\,538\,750\,076, \dots).$$

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$$(r_n)_{n=1, \dots, 194} = (1, 196\,883, 21\,296\,876, 842\,609\,326, 18\,538\,750\,076, \dots).$$

We now notice that

$$196\,884 = 1 + 196\,883,$$

$$21\,493\,760 = 1 + 196\,883 + 21\,296\,876, \text{ and}$$

$$864\,299\,970 = 2 \cdot 1 + 2 \cdot 196\,883 + 21\,296\,876 + 842\,609\,326,$$

where the numbers on the left hand side of the equation are coefficients from  $J(\tau)$  and the numbers on the right are from the dimensions of the irreducible representations of the Monster.

# Conway-Norton's Monstrous Moonshine Conjecture

In 1979 this connection led to the conjecture that there is an infinite-dimensional representation of the Monster with homomorphism  $\rho_{\mathbb{M}}$  and vector space  $V^{\mathfrak{h}} = \bigoplus_{i \in \mathbb{Z}, i \geq -1} V_i^{\mathfrak{h}}$ , where if we look at the series

$$T_{[e]} = \sum_{i \geq -1} \text{Tr}(\rho_{\mathbb{M}}(e)|_{V_i^{\mathfrak{h}}}) q^i,$$

(where  $e$  is the identity element of  $\mathbb{M}$ ) we get the  $J$  function [4].

# Brief Historical Overview of Solution

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- Finally, in 1992 Borcherds used Frenkel, Lepowsky, and Meurman's vertex operator algebra and a result from string theory to construct a Lie algebra with infinite dimensions, which he called the monster Lie algebra. He was able to show the proof of Conway and Norton's conjecture could be done using only a finite number of verifications. Hence, Borcherds proved the monstrous moonshine correspondence [4].



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# Conclusion

- The Monster can be represented using irreducible representations of certain dimensions.
- The  $J$ -function has a Fourier expansion with integer coefficients.
- These numbers are closely related.
- The monstrous moonshine conjecture suggested a way this “coincidence” could be explained.
- This conjecture and its proof showed that two different areas of mathematics were surprisingly related.

# References

- [1] Tom M. Apostol. *Modular Functions and Dirichlet Series in Number Theory*. Graduate Texts in Mathematics. Springer-Verlag New York, 1990. ISBN: 978-0-387-97127-8.
- [2] I. B. Frenkel, J. Lepowsky, and A. Meurman. "A natural representation of the Fischer-Griess Monster with the modular function  $J$  as character". In: *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 81.10 (1984), pp. 3256–3260. ISSN: 0027-8424. DOI: 10.1073/pnas.81.10.3256. eprint: <https://www.pnas.org/content/81/10/3256.full.pdf>. URL: <https://www.pnas.org/content/81/10/3256>.
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- [4] Valdo Tatitscheff. *A short introduction to Monstrous Moonshine*. 2019. arXiv: 1902.03118 [math.NT].

*Thank you to Dr. Darrin Frey for his advice and expertise on this project.*

# Thank You!

Any Questions?

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*For any additional questions feel free to email me at [catherineriley@cedarville.edu](mailto:catherineriley@cedarville.edu)*