



10243

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Source: *The American Mathematical Monthly*, Vol. 101, No. 10, (Dec., 1994), pp. 1017-1018

Published by: Mathematical Association of America

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2975175>

Accessed: 05/05/2008 10:22

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we finally obtain

$$S_N(x) = N \frac{U_{2N-2}(x) - 2N + 1}{T_{2N}(x) - 1}. \quad (12)$$

A straightforward calculation shows that (*) is true for $a = 0$. Since $\cos(\pi - x) = -\cos x$, it is easily seen that the value of S_N does not change if a is replaced by $-a$. Hence, it suffices to prove (*) for $0 < a < 1$. In (12) we take $x = (1 + a^2)/(2a)$. Then we have $S_N(x) = 4a^2 S_N$. From (1) and (2) it follows that

$$T_{2N}(x) = \frac{1}{2}(a^{-2N} + a^{2N}) \quad \text{and} \quad U_{2N-2}(x) = \frac{a}{1-a^2}(a^{-(2N-1)} - a^{2N-1}).$$

Now, (*) easily follows from (12).

It should be noted that, except for $x \in \{\cos(k\pi/N) : k = 1, \dots, N-1\}$, (12) is valid for all complex numbers. Taking $x = \cos \phi$ in (12), using (3) and $T_{2N}(\cos \phi) = \cos(2N\phi)$, a simple calculation yields

$$\sum_{k=1}^{N-1} \frac{\sin^2\left(\frac{k\pi}{N}\right)}{\left(\cos \phi - \cos\left(\frac{k\pi}{N}\right)\right)^2} = N \left(N \csc^2(N\phi) - \cot(N\phi) \cot \phi - 1 \right),$$

valid for all ϕ with $\cos \phi \notin \{\cos(k\pi/N) : k = 1, \dots, N-1\}$. In particular, if N is odd, we may take $\phi = \pi/2$ to get

$$\sum_{k=1}^{N-1} \tan^2\left(\frac{k\pi}{N}\right) = N(N-1) \quad (N = 3, 5, 7, \dots).$$

There is no record of any other solution being received.

Everywhere Unimodal

10243 [1992, 675]. Proposed by Michel Balazard, Université Bordeaux I, Talence, France.

Define a sequence of functions $f_k(t)$ for $t > k$ recursively by

$$f_1(t) = 1$$

$$f_{k+1}(t) = \int_k^{t-1} f_k(u) \frac{du}{u}$$

Prove that, for every real number $t > 1$, the sequence $\langle f_k(t) : 1 \leq k < t \rangle$ is unimodal.

Solution by Robin J. Chapman, University of Exeter, U. K. It is clear that $f_k(t) > 0$ for all $t > k$. We claim that for each $k \geq 1$ there exists t_k in $(k+1, \infty]$ such that $f_k(t) > f_{k+1}(t)$ if $k+1 < t < t_k$ and $f_k(t) < f_{k+1}(t)$ if $t > t_k$. To establish this by induction on k , first observe that $f_2(t) = \log(t-1)$, so $t_1 = 1+e$. Then assume that $k > 1$ and that the inductive hypothesis holds for $k-1$. Consider the function g_k defined by $g_k(t) = f_k(t) - f_{k+1}(t)$. We have

$$g_k(t) = \int_{k-1}^k f_{k-1}(u) \frac{du}{u} + \int_k^{t-1} [f_{k-1}(u) - f_k(u)] \frac{du}{u}.$$

The function $g_k(t)$ is increasing for $k+1 < t < t_{k-1}+1$ and decreasing when $t > t_{k-1}+1$. Since it is positive for $k+1 < t < t_{k-1}+1$, it has at most one zero, at a value $t_k > t_{k-1}+1$. (If g_k has no zero, then we put $t_k = \infty$ and $t_\ell = \infty$ for all $\ell \geq k$.) This proves the claim and also that $t_{k+1} \geq t_k + 1$ for all k .

To show unimodality it suffices to show "once a decrease always a decrease." Consider a fixed t . If $f_k(t) \geq f_{k+1}(t)$, then $t \leq t_k$, and hence $t < t_{k+1}$. Thus $f_{k+1}(t) > f_{k+2}(t)$, and the result follows.

Editorial comment. The proposer's solution worked with the function r_k defined by $r_k(t) = f_{k+1}(t)/f_k(t)$, and showed that $r_k(t)$ is strictly increasing in t for $t > k + 1$. This led to $f_{k+1}^2(t) > f_k(t)f_{k+2}(t)$ for $t > k + 2$, hence the sequence $f_k(t)$ is logarithmically concave for $1 \leq k < t$.

The proposer introduced these functions to study the unimodality of the distribution of the number of prime divisors of an integer. In fact, let $F(x)$ be the number of positive integers n not exceeding x that have exactly k prime divisors and such that each of these exceeds $x^{1/t}$. Then

$$f_k(t) = \lim_{x \rightarrow \infty} F(x) / (x / \log x).$$

For $k = 1$ and $t > 1$ this is the prime number theorem.

He also remarks that if $k_0(t)$ is any function such that $r_k(t) > 1$ for $k < k_0(t)$ and $r_k(t) < 1$ for $k > k_0(t)$, then there is an elementary proof that $k_0(t) \leq \log t + 1$. The theory outlined here leads to a lower bound on $k_0(t)$ that is also of the form $\log t + O(1)$ but he claims that, "the proof is no longer elementary".

Solved also by the proposer.

An Odd Square

10263 [1992, 873]. *Proposed by J. G. Mauldon, Amherst College, Amherst, MA.*

Let m and n be odd integers, and suppose that $n^2 - 1$ is a multiple of $|m^2 + 1 - n^2|$. Prove or disprove that this requires that $|m^2 + 1 - n^2|$ be the square of an integer.

Solution by the proposer. The implication holds, and it also holds if m, n are nonzero even integers. Furthermore, $m^2 \geq n^2$, so that $m^2 + 1 - n^2$ itself is a square.

By hypothesis, we have $n^2 - 1 = t(m^2 + 1 - n^2)$ for some integer t , which we rewrite as $m^2 = (t + 1)(m^2 + 1 - n^2)$. Let $k = t + 1$; this integer is nonzero. It suffices to show that k is a square, since that will show that the integer $m^2 + 1 - n^2$ is a rational square. However, the only integers that are squares of rationals are squares of integers.

Let S_k be the set of integer ordered pairs (x, y) such that $(x + y)^2 = k(1 + 4xy)$. Because $((m+n)/2, (m-n)/2) \in S_k$, the set is nonempty. Let $a = \min\{|x| : (x, y) \in S_k\}$. It suffices to show that $a = 0$.

The set S_k is invariant under negation and under interchange of coordinates. Hence a belongs to a pair in S_k . The other member of such a pair must solve the quadratic equation $(x + a)^2 = k(1 + 4ax)$. Hence the two roots b_1, b_2 must both be integers and have absolute value at least a . From the quadratic equation, we have $b_1 + b_2 = 4ak - 2a$ and $b_1 b_2 = a^2 - k$. By direct computation, these yield $(a + b_1)(a + b_2) = (4a^2 - 1)k$.

If $k < 0$, then the equations above yield $b_1 b_2 > 0$ and $b_1 + b_2 \leq 0$. Hence each of b_1, b_2 is negative. Since $a < |b_i|$, this implies $a + b_i < 0$, and hence $(4a^2 - 1)k > 0$. With $k < 0$, this requires $a = 0$, but we have noted that $a = 0$ implies k is a square. Hence we may assume $k > 0$.

If $k > 0$ and $a > 0$, the equations yield $b_1 + b_2 > 0$ and $(a + b_1)(a + b_2) > 0$, so each of b_1, b_2 is positive. By the choice of a , we have $a^2 \leq b_1 b_2$, but also $k > 0$ implies $b_1 b_2 = a^2 - k < a^2$. The contradiction implies $a = 0$, and hence k is a square.

Editorial comment. The other correct solutions reduced the problem to solving a Pell equation (i. e., a Diophantine equation of the form $u^2 - Dv^2 = 1$ for some non-square positive integer D). In this case, D is the *squarefree part* of $k(k - 1)$, and the special form of D is exploited in the solution. The incorrect solution claimed that the conditions hold only when $m = \pm n$ or $n = \pm 1$, which omits the solution $(m, n) = (105, 99)$.

Solved also by J. C. Binz (Switzerland), R. J. Chapman (U. K.), I. Kastanas, J. P. Robertson, and the GCHQ Problem Solving Group (U. K.). One incorrect solution was received.