Bijective counting of one-face maps on surfaces.

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Orientable surfaces
Map of genus $g$

$=$ graph drawn (without edge-crossings) on a surface of genus $g$, such that each face is homeomorphic to a disk.

not a map!

(map is considered up to oriented homeomorphisms)
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**Euler’s formula** gives the genus combinatorially:

$$v + f = e + 2 - 2g$$
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1 vertex, genus 1

3 vertices, genus 0

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Counting

The number of one-face maps with $n$ edges is equal to the number of distinct matchings of the edges: $(2n - 1)!! = \frac{(2n)!}{2^n n!}$. 

Aim: count one-face maps of fixed genus.
Counting

The number of one-face maps with $n$ edges is equal to the number of distinct matchings of the edges: $(2n - 1)!! = \frac{(2n)!}{2^n n!}$.

Aim: count one-face maps of fixed genus.

For instance, in the planar case...

One-face maps are exactly plane trees.

Therefore the number of $n$-edge one-face maps of genus 0 is:

$$\epsilon_0(n) = \text{Cat}(n) = \frac{1}{n + 1} \binom{2n}{n}$$
Higher genus surfaces?

For each $g$ the number of $n$-edge one-face maps of genus $g$ has the (beautiful) form:

$$\epsilon_g(n) = \text{(some polynomial)} \times \text{Cat}(n)$$

For instance:

$$\epsilon_1(n) = \frac{(n+1)n(n-1)}{12} \text{Cat}(n)$$

$$\epsilon_2(n) = \frac{(n+1)n(n-1)(n-2)(n-3)(5n-2)}{1440} \text{Cat}(n)$$

References: Lehman and Walsh 72 (formal power series), Harer and Zagier 86 (matrix integrals).
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No combinatorial interpretation!

For years people have tried to give an interpretation of the Harer-Zagier formula:

$$(n+1)\epsilon_g(n) = 2(2n-1)\epsilon_g(n-1) + (2n-1)(n-1)(2n-3)\epsilon_{g-1}(n-2)$$

Aim of the talk: discover and prove, with bijections, other kind of identities.
Trisections, and a bijection.
Numbering the corners.

We follow the border of the map starting from the root, and we number the corners from 1 to $2n$. 
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Higher genus

Around each vertex, a decrease in the diagram is called a trisection.
The trisection lemma

A one-face map of genus $g$ always has exactly $2g$ trisections.

Proof:
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Proof:

• each non-root edge contains exactly one descent and one ascent.
• the root-edge contains two descents
• hence there are $(n - 1) + 2 = n + 1$ descents in total.
• but each vertex contains one descent which is not a trisection:

$$\# \text{ trisections} = (\# \text{ descents}) - (\# \text{ vertices})$$

$$= (n + 1) - (n + 1 - 2g) \quad \text{QED.}$$
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\# \text{ trisections} = (\# \text{ descents}) - (\# \text{ vertices})
= (n + 1) - (n + 1 - 2g)
\]

QED.

→ It is an equivalent problem to count one-face maps with a distinguished trisection.
How to build a trisection: first method.

- Start with a map of genus \((g - 1)\) with three marked vertices.
- Let \(a_1 < a_2 < a_3\) be the labels of their minimal corners.
- Glue these three corners together as follows:
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\[
\begin{align*}
& a_1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow \ldots \rightarrow a_1 \\
& \quad \rightarrow \ldots \rightarrow a_2 \rightarrow \ldots \\
& \quad \rightarrow \ldots \rightarrow a_3 \rightarrow \ldots \rightarrow 2n
\end{align*}
\]

- The resulting map has only one border:
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\[
\begin{array}{ccccccc}
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\downarrow & & \rightarrow & & \rightarrow & & \rightarrow \\
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- By Euler’s formula, it has genus \(g\).
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- The resulting map has only one border:

- By Euler’s formula, it has genus \(g\).
- Moreover we have built a trisection.
Therefore we have a mapping:

$\alpha_1 \quad \alpha_2 \quad \alpha_3$

Genus $g - 1$, three marked vertices

Genus $g$, one marked trisection
Therefore we have a mapping:

\[ a_1 \quad a_2 \quad a_3 \]

genus \( g - 1 \), three marked vertices

\[ \text{genus } g, \text{ one marked trisection} \]

The mapping is \textit{injective} because we can retrieve the three corners, and \textit{cut} the vertex back.
Therefore we have a mapping:

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\text{genus } g &- \text{ one marked trisection}
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The mapping is injective because we can retrieve the three corners, and cut the vertex back.
Therefore we have a mapping:

- \( a_1 \): minimum corner
- \( a_2 \): corner following the marked trisection
- \( a_3 \): one marked trisection

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- $a_1$: minimum corner
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Hence:

\[2g \cdot \epsilon_g(n) = \binom{n + 3 - 2g}{3} \epsilon_{g-1}(n) + \ldots\]
Therefore we have a mapping:

\[ a_1 \to \text{genus } g - 1, \text{ three marked vertices} \]
\[ a_2 \to \text{genus } g, \text{ one marked trisection} \]
\[ a_3 \to \text{2: corner following the marked trisection} \]
\[ \quad \text{3: smallest corner between 2 and 1 which is greater than 2} \]
\[ \quad \text{1: minimum corner} \]

The mapping is injective because we can retrieve the three corners, and cut the vertex back.

Hence:
\[ 2g \cdot \epsilon_g(n) = \binom{n + 3 - 2g}{3} \epsilon_{g-1}(n) + \ldots \]
Let’s try the reverse mapping...

genus $g$
marked trisection
Let’s try the reverse mapping...

1: minimum corner

Genus $g$

Marked trisection
Let’s try the reverse mapping...

1: minimum corner

2: corner following the marked trisection

genus $g$

marked trisection
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2: corner following the marked trisection
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- This is not always the case for $a_3$:
  - If $a_3$ is the minimum of its vertex: we are in the image of the previous construction.
  - Else $a_3$ is incident to a trisection of the map of genus $(g - 1)$.
Therefore:

- **good case**
  - genus $g$, one marked trisection
  - genus $(g - 1)$, 3 marked vertices

- **bad case**
  - genus $(g - 1)$, 2 vertices and 1 trisection
Therefore:

- **genus** $g$, one marked trisection
  - good case
    - genus $(g - 1)$, 3 marked vertices
  - bad case
    - genus $(g - 1)$, 2 vertices and 1 trisection
- genus $(g - 2)$, $2 + 3 = 5$ marked vertices
  - good case
  - bad case
    - genus $(g - 2)$, $2 + 2 = 4$ vertices and 1 trisection
distinguished
  - good case
  - bad case
    - and so on...
Hence we have a bijection:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{genus } g, \\
\text{one marked trisection} & \quad \overset{\text{bij.}}{=} \quad \bigcup_{i > 0} \left( \text{genus } g-i \text{ and } 2i+1 \text{ marked vertices.} \right)
\end{align*}
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And a new formula:

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And a new formula:

\[ 2g \cdot \epsilon_g(n) = \binom{n+3-2g}{3} \epsilon_{g-1}(n) + \binom{n+5-2g}{5} \epsilon_{g-2}(n) + \]
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\]

Everything boils down to plane trees:
\[
\epsilon_g(n) = (\text{some polynomial}) \times \text{Cat}(n)
\]

= "number" of possibilities for the successive choices of vertices.
\[
= \sum_{0=g_0<g_1<\ldots<g_r=g} \prod_{i=1}^{r} \frac{1}{2g_i} \binom{n + 1 - 2g_{i-1}}{2(g_i - g_{i-1}) + 1}
\]
A special case:

A map is precubic if all its vertices have degree 1 or 3.
(always rooted at a vertex of degree one).

In the planar case, precubic maps are planted binary trees, and the number of precubic maps with \( n = 2m + 1 \) edges is given by the Catalan number \( \text{Cat}(m) \).

Here:

The number of precubic maps of genus \( g \) with \( n = 2m + 1 \) edges is:

\[
\xi_g(m) = \frac{1}{2^g g!} \binom{m + 1}{3, 3, \ldots, 3, m + 1 - 3g} \text{Cat}(m)
\]

\[
= \frac{(2m)!}{12^g g! m!(m + 1 - 3g)!}
\]
Non-orientable case.

...work in progress with Olivier Bernardi (MIT).
Projective plane

\[ = \text{upper hemisphere with antipodal points identified on the equator.} \]

Non-orientable surface \( \mathbb{N}_h \)

\[ = \text{connected sum of the sphere and } h \text{ projective planes.} \]

What about maps on \( \mathbb{N}_h \)?
Maps become more complicated combinatorial objects...

Maps $\neq$ graph + rotation system

In order to define the rotation system at each vertex, one must first choose arbitrarily the clockwise orientation around each vertex.
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In order to define the rotation system at each vertex, one must first choose arbitrarily the clockwise orientation around each vertex.

When the two orientations disagree along an edge, this edge is called a twist:
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In order to define the rotation system at each vertex, one must first choose arbitrarily the clockwise orientation around each vertex.

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Drawing maps on the plane

Once an orientation convention is fixed, one can draw the map on the plane as before. But now one has to remember the position of the twists.
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Once an orientation convention is fixed, one can draw the map on the plane as before. But now one has to remember the position of the twists.

This representation is not unique: it is defined up to flips of the vertices.

Hence: \( \text{map} = (\text{graph} + \text{rotation system} + \text{set of twists}) \), considered up to flips of the vertices.

Euler's formula: \( s + f = e + 2 - h \)
Hard to count with such a definition.

We need to define a canonical orientation.

For the moment, we only know how to do that (well) in the case of precubic maps (all vertices have degree 1 or 3).

During the tour of the map, certain corners are visited on the left of the tour, and others on the right.

The canonical orientation of a precubic one-face map is the only one such that around each vertex, there are more left-corners than right corners.
Good news

In the canonical orientation, the notion of trisection still makes sense.

We have a mapping

Precubic maps of type $h$ with a distinguished trisection

\[ \xrightarrow{\text{Mapping}} \]

Precubic maps of type $(h - 2)$ with 3 distinguished leaves

This mapping is one to four:
Bad news
The trisection lemma does not work!

For example
These two maps have type $h = 2$ (Klein bottle):

What to do then? ...the trisection lemma is the key of our approach.
A very strange, global, and still mysterious involution

Cut all the twists...
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Cut all the twists...

Make a rotation of the matching system of the twists.

Believe me

The involution exchanges maps with $h + k$ trisections and maps with $h - 2 - k$ trisections. (here $k \geq 0$)
The averaged trisection lemma

For each $h \geq 0$ the average number of trisections among non-orientable precubic one-face maps of type $h$ with $n$ edges is $(h - 1)$.

In other words, the average excess of trisections is:
- $0$ for orientable maps
- $-1$ for non-orientable maps.
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For each \( h \geq 0 \) the average number of trisections among non-orientable precubic one-face maps of type \( h \) with \( n \) edges is \((h - 1)\).

In other words, the average excess of trisections is:
- 0 for orientable maps
- \(-1\) for non-orientable maps.

Therefore we can count!

\[
h \cdot \eta_h(m) = 4 \binom{m + 1 - 2h}{3} \eta_{h-2}(m) + \eta_h(m) - \xi_h(m)
\]

from which closed formulas follow...
Thank you!