

Hypergraphs with infinitely many extremal constructions

Yixiao Zhang

(Joint with Jianfeng Hou, Heng Li, Xizhi Liu and Dhruv Mubayi)

Center for Discrete Mathematics and Theoretical Computer Science, Fuzhou University

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Definition

For an integer $r \geq 2$, an r -uniform hypergraph (henceforth r -graph) \mathcal{H} is a collection of r -subsets of some finite set V .

- Given a family \mathcal{F} of r -graphs we say \mathcal{H} is **\mathcal{F} -free** if it does not contain any member of \mathcal{F} as a subgraph.
- **Turán number** : The *Turán number* $\text{ex}(n, \mathcal{F})$ of \mathcal{F} is the maximum number of edges in an \mathcal{F} -free r -graph on n vertices.
- **Turán density** : The *Turán density* $\pi(\mathcal{F})$ of \mathcal{F} is defined as

$$\pi(\mathcal{F}) := \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{ex}(n, \mathcal{F})}{\binom{n}{r}}.$$

- **nondegenerate hypergraph** : A family \mathcal{F} is called nondegenerate if $\pi(\mathcal{F}) > 0$.

Theorem 1 (Mantel 1907)

$$\text{ex}(n, K_3) = \left\lfloor \frac{n^2}{4} \right\rfloor.$$

Theorem 2 (Turán 1941)

$$\text{ex}(n, K_{\ell+1}) = |T(n, \ell)|,$$

where $T(n, \ell)$ is the balanced complete ℓ -partite graph on n vertices, i.e., Turán graph.



W. Mantel, Solution to problem 28, by h. Gouwentak, W. Mantel, J. Teixeira de Mattes, F. Schuh, and WA Wythoff, *Wiskundige Opgaven* **10** (1907) 60–61.



P. Turán, On an external problem in graph theory, *Mat. Fiz. Lapok* **48** (1941) 436–452.

The **chromatic number** of a graph G , denoted by $\chi(G)$, is the smallest number of colors needed to color the vertices of G so that no two adjacent vertices share the same color.

Theorem 3 (Erdős-Stone-Simonovits 1966)

Let H be a graph and $\chi(H) \geq 2$, then

$$\text{ex}(n, H) = \left(1 - \frac{1}{\chi(H) - 1}\right) \binom{n}{2} + o(n^2).$$



P. Erdős and A. H. Stone, On the structure of linear graphs, *Bull. Amer. Math. Soc.* **52** (1946) 1087–1091.



P. Erdős and M. Simonovits, A limit theorem in graph theory, *Studia Sci. Math. Hungar* **1** (1966) 51–57.

Corollary 4

Let H be a graph and $\chi(H) \geq 2$, then

$$\pi(H) = \frac{\chi(H) - 2}{\chi(H) - 1}.$$

For $r \geq 3$ determining $\pi(\mathcal{F})$ for a family \mathcal{F} of r -graphs is known to be notoriously hard in general.

Conjecture 5 (Turán 1941)

For every integer $\ell \geq 3$ we have $\pi(K_{\ell+1}^3) = 1 - 4/\ell^2$.

Erdős offered **\$500** for the determination of any $\pi(K_\ell^r)$ with $\ell > r \geq 3$ and **\$1000** for all $\pi(K_\ell^r)$ with $\ell > r \geq 3$.



P. Turán, On an external problem in graph theory, *Mat. Fiz. Lapok* **48** (1941) 436–452.

Why Turán problem for hypergraph is so challenging ?

Theorem 6 (Kostochka 1982)

Assuming Turán's Tetrahedron conjecture is true, there are at least 2^{n-2} non-isomorphic extremal K_4^3 -free constructions on $3n$ vertices.

Theorem 7 (Razborov 2010)

$$5/9 \leq \pi(K_4^3) \leq 0.561666.$$



A. V. Kostochka, A class of constructions for Turán's $(3,4)$ -problem, *Combinatorica* **2** (1982) 187–192.



A. Razborov, On 3-hypergraphs with forbidden 4-vertex configurations, *SIAM Journal on Discrete Mathematics* **24** (2010) 946–963.

For a family \mathcal{F} of r -graphs, it is natural to ask for the “continuity” of the discrete \mathcal{F} -free r -graphs whose size is close to $\text{ex}(n, \mathcal{F})$.

- *stability* : Many families \mathcal{F} have the property that there is a unique \mathcal{F} -free hypergraph \mathcal{G} on n vertices achieving $\text{ex}(n, \mathcal{F})$, and moreover, any \mathcal{F} -free hypergraph \mathcal{H} of size close to $\text{ex}(n, \mathcal{F})$ can be transformed to \mathcal{G} by deleting and adding very few edges.

Theorem 8 (Erdős-Simonovits 1968)

Fix $\ell \geq 2$. For every $\delta > 0$, there exists ε and $N_0 = N_0(\varepsilon)$ such that the following holds for every $n > N_0$ if G is an n -vertex graph containing no copy of $K_{\ell+1}$ with at least $(1 - \varepsilon)|T(n, \ell)|$ edges, then G can be transformed to $T(n, \ell)$ by adding and deleting at most δn^2 edges.



M. Simonovits, A method for solving extremal problems in graph theory, stability problems, *Theory of Graphs (Proc. Colloq., Tihany, 1966)* (1968) 279–319

There are many Turán problems for hypergraphs that (perhaps) do not have the stability property.

- *non-stable* : For many families of r -uniform hypergraphs \mathcal{M} , there are perhaps many near-extremal \mathcal{M} -free configurations that are far from each other in edit-distance. Such a property is called non-stable.

Two famous examples:

- K_4^3
- Erdős-Sós Conjecture

Conjecture 9 (Erdős-Sós Conjecture)

Let \mathcal{H} be a 3-graph with n vertices. If $L(v)$ is bipartite for all $v \in V(\mathcal{H})$, then $|\mathcal{H}| \leq (1/4 + o(1)) \binom{n}{3}$.

If Erdős-Sós Conjecture is true, then it also does not have the stability property as there are several different near-extremal constructions.

- *t-stable* : Let $r \geq 2$ and $t \geq 1$ be integers. A family \mathcal{F} of r -graphs is t -stable if there exist m_0 and r -graphs $\mathcal{G}_1(m), \dots, \mathcal{G}_t(m)$ on m vertices for every $m \geq m_0$ such that the following holds. For every $\delta > 0$ there exist $\varepsilon > 0$ and N_0 such that for all $n \geq N_0$ if \mathcal{H} is an \mathcal{F} -free r -graph on n vertices with $|\mathcal{H}| > (1 - \varepsilon)\text{ex}(n, \mathcal{F})$ then \mathcal{H} can be transformed to some $\mathcal{G}_i(n)$ by adding and removing at most δn^r edges.
- *stability number* : Denote by $\xi(\mathcal{F})$ the minimum integer t such that \mathcal{F} is t -stable, and set $\xi(\mathcal{F}) = \infty$ if there is no such t . Call $\xi(\mathcal{F})$ the *stability number* of \mathcal{F} .

Theorem 10 (Liu and Mubayi 2022)

If Conjecture 5 is true i.e., $\pi(K_4^3) = 5/9$, then $\xi(K_4^3) = \infty$.

Theorem 11 (Liu and Mubayi 2022)

There exists a finite family \mathcal{M} of 3-graphs such that $\xi(\mathcal{M}) = 2$.

This is the first finite 2-stable family of hypergraphs.



X. Liu and D. Mubayi, A hypergraph Turán problem with no stability, *Combinatorica* **42** (2022) 433–462.

Theorem 12 (Liu, Mubayi and Reiher 2023+)

For every positive integer t there exists a finite family \mathcal{M} of 3-graphs such that $\xi(\mathcal{M}) = t$.

Problem 13 (Liu and Mubayi 2022)

Determine $ex(n, \mathcal{F})$ for some family \mathcal{F} with $\xi(\mathcal{F}) = \infty$.

Problem 14 (Liu, Mubayi and Reiher 2023+)

Does there exist a family \mathcal{F} of triple systems with $\pi(\mathcal{F}) = 2/9$ but $\xi(\mathcal{F}) \neq 1$?



X. Liu and D. Mubayi, A hypergraph Turán problem with no stability, *Combinatorica* **42** (2022) 433–462.



X. Liu, D. Mubayi, and C. Reiher. Hypergraphs with many extremal configurations, *Israel. J. Math.* to appear.

- *blowup* : An r -graph \mathcal{H} is a *blowup* of an r -graph \mathcal{G} if there exists a map $\psi: V(\mathcal{H}) \rightarrow V(\mathcal{G})$ so that $\psi(E) \in \mathcal{G}$ iff $E \in \mathcal{H}$.
- *\mathcal{G} -colorable* : \mathcal{H} is *\mathcal{G} -colorable* if there exists a map $\phi: V(\mathcal{H}) \rightarrow V(\mathcal{G})$ so that $\phi(E) \in \mathcal{G}$ for all $E \in \mathcal{H}$.

Theorem 15 (Hou, Li, Liu, Mubayi and Zhang 2023+)

For every integer $t \geq 3$ there exists a finite family \mathcal{F}_t of 3-graphs such that the following statements hold.

- (1) We have $\text{ex}(n, \mathcal{F}_t) \leq \frac{(t-2)(t-1)}{6t^2} n^3$ for all $n \in \mathbb{N}$, and equality holds whenever $t \mid n$.
- (2) If $t \mid n$, then the number of nonisomorphic maximum \mathcal{F}_t -free 3-graphs on n vertices is at least $n/2t$.
- (3) We have $\xi(\mathcal{F}_t) = \infty$.
- (4) For every integer $t \geq 4$ there exist constants $\varepsilon = \varepsilon(t) > 0$ and $N_0 = N_0(t)$ such that the following holds for every integer $n \geq N_0$. Every n -vertex \mathcal{F}_t -free 3-graph with minimum degree at least $\left(\frac{(t-2)(t-1)}{2t^2} - \varepsilon\right) n^2$ is Γ_t -colorable, where Γ_t is some fixed 3-graph on $t+2$ vertices.

Multilinear polynomials

Denote by Δ_{m-1} the standard $(m-1)$ -dimensional simplex, i.e.

$$\Delta_{m-1} = \{(x_1, \dots, x_m) \in [0, 1]^m : x_1 + \dots + x_m = 1\}.$$

Given an m -variable continuous function f we define

$$\lambda(f) = \max \{f(x_1, \dots, x_m) : (x_1, \dots, x_m) \in \Delta_{m-1}\},$$

and

$$Z(f) = \{(x_1, \dots, x_m) \in \Delta_{m-1} : f(x_1, \dots, x_m) - \lambda(f) = 0\}.$$

Multilinear polynomials

We say p is *multilinear* if each term of p is of the form $\prod_{i \in S} x_i$ for some S .

We say p is *nonnegative* (or *nonpositive*) if $p(x_1, \dots, x_m) \geq 0$ (or $p(x_1, \dots, x_m) \leq 0$) for all $(x_1, \dots, x_m) \in \Delta_{m-1}$. For a pair $\{i, j\} \subset [m]$ we say p is symmetric with respect to X_i and X_j if

$$p(X_1, \dots, X_i, \dots, X_j, \dots, X_m) = p(X_1, \dots, X_j, \dots, X_i, \dots, X_m).$$

Given two vectors $\vec{x}, \vec{y} \in \mathbb{R}^m$ define the line segment $L(\vec{x}, \vec{y})$ with endpoints \vec{x} and \vec{y} as

$$L(\vec{x}, \vec{y}) = \{\alpha \cdot \vec{x} + (1 - \alpha) \cdot \vec{y} : \alpha \in [0, 1]\}.$$

Proposition 16

Let $p(X_1, \dots, X_m) = p_1 + p_2(X_i + X_j) + p_3X_iX_j$ be an m -variable multilinear polynomial that is symmetric with respect to X_i and X_j . Suppose that p_3 is nonnegative, and p_4, p_5 are nonnegative polynomials satisfying $p_4 + p_5 = p_3$. Then the $(m+2)$ -variable polynomial

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{p}(X_1, \dots, X_i, X'_i, \dots, X_j, X'_j, \dots, X_m) \\ = p_1 + p_2(X_i + X'_i + X_j + X'_j) + p_4(X_i + X'_i)(X_j + X'_j) + p_5(X_i + X_j)(X'_i + X'_j) \end{aligned}$$

satisfies $\lambda(\hat{p}) = \lambda(p)$, and moreover, for every $(x_1, \dots, x_m) \in Z(p)$ we have $L(\vec{y}, \vec{z}) \subset Z(\hat{p})$, where $\vec{y}, \vec{z} \in \Delta_{m+1}$ are defined by

$$\begin{aligned} \vec{y} &= (x_1, \dots, x_{i-1}, (x_i + x_j)/2, 0, x_{i+1}, \dots, x_{j-1}, 0, (x_i + x_j)/2, x_{j+1}, \dots, x_m), \\ \vec{z} &= (x_1, \dots, x_{i-1}, 0, (x_i + x_j)/2, x_{i+1}, \dots, x_{j-1}, (x_i + x_j)/2, 0, x_{j+1}, \dots, x_m). \end{aligned}$$

For an r -graph \mathcal{G} on m vertices, the multilinear polynomial $p_{\mathcal{G}}$ is defined by

$$p_{\mathcal{G}}(X_1, \dots, X_m) = \sum_{E \in \mathcal{G}} \prod_{i \in E} X_i.$$

The *Lagrangian* of \mathcal{G} is defined by $\lambda(\mathcal{G}) = \lambda(p_{\mathcal{G}})$. Define

$$Z(\mathcal{G}) = Z(p_{\mathcal{G}}) = \{(x_1, \dots, x_m) \in \Delta_{m-1} : p_{\mathcal{G}}(x_1, \dots, x_m) = \lambda(\mathcal{G})\}.$$

Definition 17 (Crossed blowup)

Let \mathcal{G} be a 3-graph and $\{v_1, v_2\} \subset \mathcal{G}$ be a pair of vertices with $d(v_1, v_2) = k \geq 2$. Fix an ordering of the vertices in $N_{\mathcal{G}}(v_1, v_2)$, say $N_{\mathcal{G}}(v_1, v_2) = \{u_1, \dots, u_k\}$. The crossed blowup $\mathcal{G} \boxplus \{v_1, v_2\}$ of \mathcal{G} on $\{v_1, v_2\}$ is defined as follows.

- (1) Remove all edges containing the pair $\{v_1, v_2\}$ from \mathcal{G} ,
- (2) add two new vertices v'_1 and v'_2 , make v'_1 a clone of v_1 and v'_2 a clone of v_2 ,
- (3) for every $i \in [k-1]$ add the edge set $\{u_i v_1 v'_1, u_i v_1 v'_2, u_i v_2 v'_1, u_i v_2 v'_2\}$, and for $i = k$ add the edge set $\{u_k v_1 v_2, u_k v_1 v'_2, u_k v'_1 v_2, u_k v'_1 v'_2\}$.

Crossed blowup

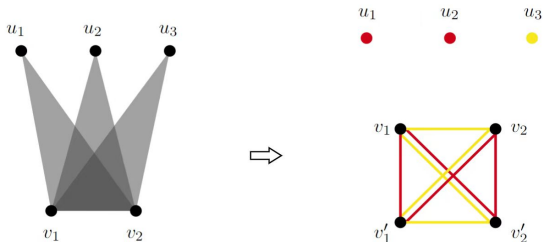


Figure 1: $\{u_1v_1v_2, u_2v_1v_2, u_3v_1v_2\}$ and $\{u_1v_1v_2, u_2v_1v_2, u_3v_1v_2\} \boxplus \{v_1, v_2\}$. The link of red vertices is the red $K_{2,2}$, the link of the yellow vertex is the yellow $K_{2,2}$.

Crossed blowup

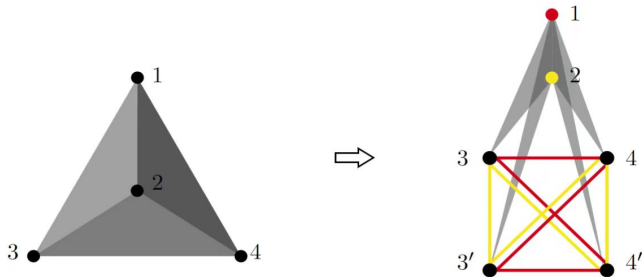


Figure 2: K_4^3 and $K_4^3 \boxplus \{3, 4\}$.

Crossed blowup

Let \mathcal{G} be a 3-graph. A pair $\{v_1, v_2\} \subset V(\mathcal{G})$ is symmetric in \mathcal{G} if

$$L_{\mathcal{G}}(v_1) - v_2 = L_{\mathcal{G}}(v_2) - v_1.$$

The crossed blowup of a 3-graph has the following properties.

Proposition 18

Suppose that \mathcal{G} is an m -vertex 3-graph and $\{v_1, v_2\} \subset V(\mathcal{G})$ is a pair of vertices with $d(v_1, v_2) \geq 2$. Then the following statements hold.

- (1) The 3-graph \mathcal{G} is contained in $\mathcal{G} \boxplus \{v_1, v_2\}$ as an induced subgraph. In particular, $\lambda(\mathcal{G}) \leq \lambda(\mathcal{G} \boxplus \{v_1, v_2\})$.*
- (2) The 3-graph $\mathcal{G} \boxplus \{v_1, v_2\}$ is 2-covered iff \mathcal{G} is 2-covered.*
- (3) If $\{v_1, v_2\}$ is symmetric in \mathcal{G} , then $\lambda(\mathcal{G} \boxplus \{v_1, v_2\}) = \lambda(\mathcal{G})$. If, in addition, there exists $(x_1, \dots, x_m) \in Z(\mathcal{G})$ with $x_1 + x_2 > 0$, then the set $Z(\mathcal{G} \boxplus \{v_1, v_2\})$ contains a one-dimensional simplex (i.e. a nontrivial line segment).*

Definition 19

Let $t \geq 1$ be an integer.

(1) Let

$$\Gamma_{t+2} = \begin{cases} \{134, 234\} \boxplus \{3, 4\} & \text{if } t = 1, \\ K_{t+2}^3 \boxplus \{t+1, t+2\} & \text{if } t \geq 2. \end{cases}$$

(2) Let \mathfrak{d}_{t+2} be the collection of all Γ_{t+2} -colorable 3-graphs.

(3) Let $\gamma_{t+2}(n) = \max\{|\mathcal{H}| : v(\mathcal{H}) = n \text{ and } \mathcal{H} \in \mathfrak{d}_{t+2}\}$.

(4) Let $\mathcal{F}_{t+2} = \{F : v(F) \leq 4(t+4)^2 \text{ and } F \notin \mathfrak{d}_{t+2}\}$.

Blowup-invariance

Given an r -graph F we say \mathcal{H} is F -hom-free if there is no homomorphism from F to \mathcal{H} . This is equivalent to say that every blowup of \mathcal{H} is F -free. For a family \mathcal{F} of r -graphs we say \mathcal{H} is \mathcal{F} -hom-free if it is F -hom-free for all $F \in \mathcal{F}$. An easy observation is that if an r -graph F is 2-covered, then \mathcal{H} is F -free iff it is F -hom-free.

Definition 20 (Blowup-invariance)

A family \mathcal{F} of r -graphs is blowup-invariant if every \mathcal{F} -free r -graph is also \mathcal{F} -hom-free.

For every r -graph \mathcal{G} let $\mathcal{F}_\infty(\mathcal{G})$ be the (infinite) family of all r -graphs that are not \mathcal{G} -colorable, i.e.

$$\mathcal{F}_\infty(\mathcal{G}) = \{r\text{-graph } F : \text{and } F \text{ is not } \mathcal{G}\text{-colorable}\}.$$

For every positive integer M define the family $\mathcal{F}_M(\mathcal{G})$ of r -graphs as

$$\mathcal{F}_M(\mathcal{G}) = \{F \in \mathcal{F}_\infty(\mathcal{G}) : v(F) \leq M\}.$$

Lemma 21

For every r -graph \mathcal{G} and every positive integer M the family $\mathcal{F}_M(\mathcal{G})$ is blowup-invariant.

Let \mathcal{H} be an r -graph and $\{u, v\} \subset V(\mathcal{H})$ be two non-adjacent vertices (i.e., no edge contains both u and v). We say u and v are *equivalent* if $L_{\mathcal{H}}(u) = L_{\mathcal{H}}(v)$ (in particular, two equivalent vertices are non-adjacent). Otherwise we say they are *non-equivalent*. An equivalence class of \mathcal{H} is a maximal vertex set in which every pair of vertices are equivalent. We say \mathcal{H} is *symmetrized* if it does not contain non-equivalent pairs of vertices.

Theorem 22

Suppose that \mathcal{F} is a blowup-invariant family of r -graphs. If \mathfrak{S} denotes the class of all symmetrized \mathcal{F} -free r -graphs, then $ex(n, \mathfrak{S}) = \mathfrak{h}(n)$ holds for every $n \in \mathbb{N}^+$, where $\mathfrak{h}(n) = \max\{|\mathcal{H}| : \mathcal{H} \in \mathfrak{S} \text{ and } v(\mathcal{H}) = n\}$.

Definition 23 (Vertex-extendibility)

Let \mathcal{F} be a family of r -graphs and let \mathfrak{H} be a class of \mathcal{F} -free r -graphs. We say that \mathcal{F} is vertex-extendible with respect to \mathfrak{H} if there exist $\zeta > 0$ and $N_0 \in \mathbb{N}$ such that for every \mathcal{F} -free r -graph \mathcal{H} on $n \geq N_0$ vertices satisfying $\delta(\mathcal{H}) \geq (\pi(\mathcal{F})/(r-1)! - \zeta)n^{r-1}$ the following holds: if $\mathcal{H} - v$ is a subgraph of a member of \mathfrak{H} for some vertex $v \in V(\mathcal{H})$, then \mathcal{H} is a subgraph of a member of \mathfrak{H} as well.

Theorem 24 (Liu, Mubayi and Reiher 2023)

Suppose that \mathcal{F} is a blowup-invariant nondegenerate family of r -graphs and that \mathfrak{H} is a hereditary class of \mathcal{F} -free r -graphs. If \mathfrak{H} contains all symmetrized \mathcal{F} -free r -graphs and \mathcal{F} is vertex-extendable with respect to \mathfrak{H} , then the following statement holds. There exist $\varepsilon > 0$ and N_0 such that every \mathcal{F} -free r -graph on $n \geq N_0$ vertices with minimum degree at least $(\pi(\mathcal{F})/(r-1)! - \varepsilon)n^{r-1}$ is contained in \mathfrak{H} .



X. Liu, D. Mubayi, and C. Reiher. A unified approach to hypergraph stability, *J. Combin. Theory Ser. B*, 158:36C62, 2023

- *shadow* : The *shadow* of \mathcal{H} is defined as

$$\partial \mathcal{H} = \left\{ A \in \binom{V(\mathcal{H})}{r-1} : \text{there is } B \in \mathcal{H} \text{ such that } A \subset B \right\}.$$

- *density* : The *edge density* of \mathcal{H} is defined as $\rho(\mathcal{H}) = |\mathcal{H}| / \binom{v(\mathcal{H})}{r}$, and the *shadow density* of \mathcal{H} is defined as $\rho(\partial \mathcal{H}) = |\partial \mathcal{H}| / \binom{v(\mathcal{H})}{r-1}$.
- *feasible region* : For a family \mathcal{F} the *feasible region* $\Omega(\mathcal{F})$ of \mathcal{F} is the set of points $(x, y) \in [0, 1]^2$ such that there exists a sequence of \mathcal{F} -free r -graphs $(\mathcal{H}_k)_{k=1}^{\infty}$ with

$$\lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} v(\mathcal{H}_k) = \infty, \quad \lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} \rho(\partial \mathcal{H}_k) = x, \quad \text{and} \quad \lim_{k \rightarrow \infty} \rho(\mathcal{H}_k) = y.$$

Feasible region

- $\text{proj}\Omega(\mathcal{F}) := \{x: \text{there is } y \in [0, 1] \text{ such that } (x, y) \in \Omega(\mathcal{F})\}$.
- *feasible region function* : The function $g(\mathcal{F}) : \text{proj}\Omega(\mathcal{F}) \rightarrow [0, 1]$ such that

$$\Omega(\mathcal{F}) = \{(x, y) \in [0, c(\mathcal{F})] \times [0, 1] : 0 \leq y \leq g(\mathcal{F})(x)\}.$$

Theorem 25 (Liu and Mubayi 2021)

The feasible region function $g(\mathcal{F})$ is not necessarily continuous. But $g(\mathcal{F})$ is a left-continuous almost everywhere differentiable function.



X. Liu and D. Mubayi, The feasible region of hypergraphs, *Journal of Combinatorial Theory, Series B* **148** (2021) 23–59.

Problem 26 (Liu, Mubayi and Reiher 2023+)

For $r \geq 3$ does there exist a non-degenerate family \mathcal{F} of r -graphs so that $g(\mathcal{F})$ has infinitely many global maxima? If so, can the set $M(\mathcal{F})$ be uncountable? Can it even contain a non-trivial interval?

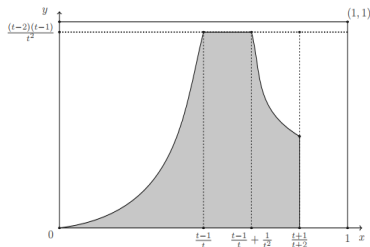


Figure 4: The function $g(\mathcal{F}_t)$ attains its maximum on the interval $[\frac{t-1}{t}, \frac{t-1}{t} + \frac{1}{t^2}]$.

Thank You for Your Attention!