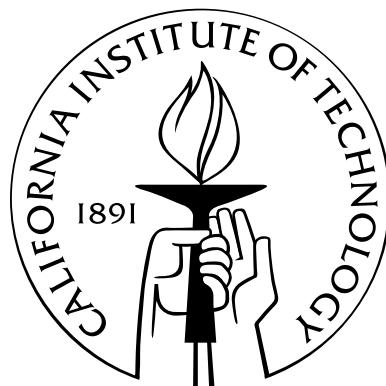


# **Generalized Foulkes' Conjecture and Tableaux Construction**

Thesis by  
Rebecca Vessenes

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy



California Institute of Technology  
Pasadena, California

2004  
(Submitted May 28, 2004)

© 2004  
Rebecca Vessenés  
All Rights Reserved

To God  
through whom all things, even this, are possible

# Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my advisor, David Wales, for his guidance and support. I also want to thank Cherie Galvez for her help and advice, and the math department staff in general for fostering a friendly environment. In addition, I appreciate the assistance of Rowan Killip in dealing with the intricacies of L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X and creating specific macros for my use. I enjoyed my time here at Caltech, especially the many long and varied discussions during tea; my thanks to all those who participated. Finally, I am grateful for the love and support of my husband, Ted.

I also want to recognize my undergraduate alma mater, the University of Chicago, for providing me with a strong background in mathematics. I particularly wish to thank Diane Herrmann for her support and advice during those years. In addition, I wish to recognize the University of Minnesota Talented Youth Mathematics Program (UMTYMP) for giving me a strong start in mathematics during my adolescent years.

# Abstract

Foulkes conjectured that for  $n = ab$  and  $a \leq b$ , every irreducible module occurring as a constituent in  $1_{\mathcal{S}_b \wr \mathcal{S}_a}^{\mathcal{S}_n}$  occurs with greater or equal multiplicity in  $1_{\mathcal{S}_a \wr \mathcal{S}_b}^{\mathcal{S}_n}$ . We generalize part of this to say those irreducibles also occur in  $1_{\mathcal{S}_d \wr \mathcal{S}_c}^{\mathcal{S}_n}$ , where  $cd = n$  and  $c, d \geq a$ . We prove the generalized conjecture for  $a = 2$  and  $a = 3$ , by explicitly constructing the corresponding tableaux. We also prove the multiplicity constraint for certain cases. For these proofs we develop a theory of construction conditions for tableaux giving rise to  $\mathcal{S}_b \wr \mathcal{S}_a$  modules and in doing so, completely classify all such tableaux for  $a = 2$  and  $a = 3$ .

# Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>1 Introduction and Statement of Main Results</b>	<b>1</b>
Theorem 1 . . . . .	2
Theorem 2 . . . . .	2
Theorem 3 . . . . .	2
<b>2 Background</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1 Tableaux . . . . .	4
2.2 Combinatorial Structures . . . . .	5
<b>3 Theory of Tableaux Construction</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1 Filling Tableaux . . . . .	9
3.2 Showing Tableaux are Non-Zero . . . . .	12
Example: Weight-set Counting . . . . .	17
3.3 Joining Tableaux . . . . .	21
3.4 Maximal Weights . . . . .	24
<b>4 The Tableaux of <math>1_{\mathcal{S}_b \wr \mathcal{S}_3}^{\mathcal{S}_{3b}}</math></b>	<b>31</b>
4.1 Classification of $\mathbf{q}_T \neq 0$ , for $T$ filled with 1, 2, 3 . . . . .	31
4.2 The Irreducibles Partitions of $1_{\mathcal{S}_b \wr \mathcal{S}_3}^{\mathcal{S}_{3b}}$ . . . . .	41
4.2.1 Non-Zero Partitions from Theorem 9 . . . . .	41
4.2.2 Partition Multiplicities according to Thrall . . . . .	44

4.3	Construction of Basis Tableaux for $c = 3$	45
<b>5</b>	<b>Proof of Theorem 1</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Proof of Theorem 2</b>	<b>58</b>
6.1	Case: $d$ even	59
	Example: Tableau Reduction	61
6.2	Case: $d$ odd	63
<b>7</b>	<b>Tableaux Construction</b>	<b>71</b>
7.1	Maximality of Tableaux	71
	Example: Maximizing a Tableau	72
7.2	Tableaux for Two Row Partitions	75
7.3	Tableaux for $c = 3$	80
7.4	Tableaux for $c = 4$	83
7.5	Tableaux for $c = 5$	89
7.6	Tableaux for $c = 6$	102
7.7	Tableaux for $c = 7$ and $c = 8$	110
<b>8</b>	<b>Tableau Sufficiency</b>	<b>111</b>
8.1	Sufficiency when $c = 3$	111
8.2	Sufficiency when $c = 4$	114
8.3	Sufficiency for $c = 5$	122
8.4	Sufficiency for $c = 6$	126
8.5	Sufficiency for $c > 6$ , $d$ even	137
8.6	Sufficiency for $c > 6$ , $d$ odd	138
8.7	Tableaux Disjointness	140
<b>9</b>	<b>Proof of Theorem 3</b>	<b>142</b>
9.1	Case: $s \leq r$	142
9.1.1	Basis Tableaux for $c = 4$ , $s \leq r$	143
9.1.2	Basis Tableaux for $c = 5$ , $s \leq r$	145

9.1.3	Basis Tableaux for $c = 6, s \leq r$	146
9.1.4	Basis Tableaux for $c > 6, s \leq r$	152
9.2	Case: $r < s$	170
9.2.1	Basis Tableaux for $c = 4, r < s$	170
9.2.2	Basis Tableaux for $c = 5, r < s$	172
9.2.3	Basis Tableaux for $c = 6, r < s$	174
9.2.4	Basis Tableaux for $c > 6, r < s$	175
<b>10</b>	<b>Two Row Partitions and the Gaussian Polynomial</b>	<b>186</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>The Alternating Character</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Discussion of General Results</b>	<b>192</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Association between Tableaux Spaces and Irreducibles</b>	<b>195</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>		<b>197</b>

# List of Tables

8.1	Exceptional $r$ cases for $c = 3$ . . . . .	112
8.2	Exceptional $s$ cases for $c = 3$ . . . . .	113
8.3	General $c = 3$ cases. . . . .	114
8.4	Exceptional $r = 0$ and $r = 2$ cases for $c = 4$ . . . . .	116
8.5	Exceptional $r = 3$ cases for $c = 4$ . . . . .	117
8.6	Exceptional $r = 4$ cases for $c = 4$ . . . . .	118
8.7	Exceptional $s$ cases for $c = 4$ . . . . .	120
8.8	General $c = 4$ cases. . . . .	121
8.9	Exceptional $r = 0$ and $r = 2$ cases for $c = 5$ . . . . .	123
8.10	Exceptional $r = 3$ and $r = 4$ cases for $c = 5$ . . . . .	129
8.11	Exceptional $s$ cases for $c = 5$ . . . . .	130
8.12	General $c = 5$ cases for $t > 2$ . . . . .	131
8.13	General $c = 5$ cases for $t = 0, 1$ , and $2$ . . . . .	132
8.14	Exceptional $r = 0$ and $r = 2$ cases for $c = 6$ . . . . .	133
8.15	Exceptional $r = 3$ and $r = 4$ cases for $c = 6$ . . . . .	134
8.16	Exceptional $s$ cases for $c = 6$ . . . . .	134
8.17	General $c = 6$ cases for odd $t$ . . . . .	135
8.18	General $c = 6$ cases for $d \leq 5$ . . . . .	135
8.19	General $c = 6$ cases for even $t$ . . . . .	136
8.20	Exceptional $r$ and $s$ cases for $c = 8$ . . . . .	139
9.1	Weights of 0 or $d$ . . . . .	161
9.2	Weights of 0 and 4. . . . .	168
9.3	Tableaux Forms. . . . .	177

9.4 Tableaux Forms . . . . . 180

## Bibliography

- [1] George E. Andrews, *The theory of partitions*, Cambridge Mathematical Library, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1998, Reprint of the 1976 original. MR 99c:11126
- [2] S. C. Black and R. J. List, *A note on plethysm*, European J. Combin. **10** (1989), no. 1, 111–112. MR 89m:20011
- [3] Emmanuel Briand, *Polynômes multisymétriques*, Ph. D. dissertation, University Rennes I, Rennes, France, October 2002.
- [4] Michel Brion, *Stable properties of plethysm: on two conjectures of Foulkes*, Manuscripta Math. **80** (1993), no. 4, 347–371. MR 95c:20056
- [5] C. Coker, *A problem related to Foulkes’s conjecture*, Graphs Combin. **9** (1993), no. 2, 117–134. MR 94g:20019
- [6] Suzie C. Dent and Johannes Siemons, *On a conjecture of Foulkes*, J. Algebra **226** (2000), no. 1, 236–249. MR 2001f:20026
- [7] William F. Doran, IV, *On Foulkes’ conjecture*, J. Pure Appl. Algebra **130** (1998), no. 1, 85–98. MR 99h:20014
- [8] H. O. Foulkes, *Concomitants of the quintic and sextic up to degree four in the coefficients of the ground form*, J. London Math. Soc. **25** (1950), 205–209. MR 12,236e
- [9] The GAP Group, *GAP – Groups, Algorithms, and Programming, Version 4.3*, 2002, (<http://www.gap-system.org>).

- [10] David A. Gay, *Characters of the Weyl group of  $SU(n)$  on zero weight spaces and centralizers of permutation representations*, Rocky Mountain J. Math. **6** (1976), no. 3, 449–455. MR 54 #2886
- [11] Larry C. Grove, *Groups and characters*, Pure and Applied Mathematics, John Wiley & Sons Inc., New York, 1997, A Wiley-Interscience Publication. MR 98e:20012
- [12] Roger Howe,  $(\mathrm{GL}_n, \mathrm{GL}_m)$ -duality and symmetric plethysm, Proc. Indian Acad. Sci. Math. Sci. **97** (1987), no. 1-3, 85–109 (1988). MR 90b:22020
- [13] N. F. J. Inglis, R. W. Richardson, and J. Saxl, An explicit model for the complex representations of  $S_n$ , Arch. Math. (Basel) **54** (1990), no. 3, 258–259. MR 91d:20017
- [14] G. James and A. Kerber, *Representation theory of the symmetric group*, Encyclopedia of Mathematics and its Applications, vol. 16, Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA, 1981.
- [15] G. D. James, *The representation theory of the symmetric group*, Lecture Notes in Mathematics, vol. 682, Springer, Berlin, 1978.
- [16] Serge Lang, *Algebra*, 3 ed., Addison Wesley, Reading Massachusetts, 1999.
- [17] I. G. Macdonald, *Symmetric functions and Hall polynomials*, second ed., Oxford Mathematical Monographs, The Clarendon Press Oxford University Press, New York, 1995, With contributions by A. Zelevinsky, Oxford Science Publications. MR 96h:05207
- [18] Bruce E. Sagan, *The symmetric group*, The Wadsworth & Brooks/Cole Mathematics Series, Wadsworth & Brooks/Cole Advanced Books & Software, Pacific Grove, CA, 1991, Representations, combinatorial algorithms, and symmetric functions. MR 93f:05102

- [19] Richard P. Stanley, *Positivity problems and conjectures in algebraic combinatorics*, Mathematics: Frontiers and Perspectives (V. Arnold, M. Atiyah, P. Lax, and B. Mazur, eds.), American Mathematical Society, Providence, RI, 2000, pp. 295–319.
- [20] R. M. Thrall, *On symmetrized Kronecker powers and the structure of the free Lie ring*, Amer. J. Math. **64** (1942), 371–388. MR 3,262d
- [21] Rebecca Vessenes, *Foulkes' conjecture and tableaux construction*, J. Albegra (2004), forthcoming.
- [22] David Wales, personal communication.
- [23] Jie Wu, *Foulkes conjecture in representation theory and its relations in rational homotopy theory*, <http://www.math.nus.edu.sg/~matwujie/Foulkes.pdf>.