

**TOPIC. Expectations, continued.** This lecture continues our study of expectations. We first consider some extremal problems whose statement and/or solution involves expectations, then study the notion of a “ $g$ -mean”, and end with a development of Jensen’s inequality.

**An extremal characterization of  $E(X)$ .** The following theorem has implications for the game in Example 7.5.

**Theorem 1.** *Let  $X$  be a random variable and let  $f$  be the function from  $\mathbb{R}$  to  $[0, \infty]$  defined by*

$$f(c) = E((X - c)^2). \quad (1)$$

(a) *If  $E(X^2) = \infty$ , then  $f(c) = \infty$  for all  $c$ .* (b) *If  $E(X^2) < \infty$ , then  $f(c) < \infty$  for all  $c$ ,  $f$  is uniquely minimized by*

$$c = \mu := E(X) \quad (2)$$

*which exists and is finite, and*

$$f(\mu) = E((X - \mu)^2) = E(X^2) - \mu^2 = \text{Var}(X). \quad (3)$$

**Proof •** Suppose  $f(b) < \infty$  for some  $b \in \mathbb{R}$ . Since

$$(u + v)^2 \leq 2(u^2 + v^2)$$

for all real numbers  $u$  and  $v$ , we have

$$(X - c)^2 = ((X - b) + (b - c))^2 \leq 2[(X - b)^2 + (b - c)^2]$$

By properties  $E_{\leq}$  and  $E_{+}$  of expectation

$$\begin{aligned} f(c) &= E((X - c)^2) \leq 2[E((X - b)^2) + E((b - c)^2)] \\ &= 2f(b) + 2(b - c)^2 < \infty \end{aligned}$$

for all  $c \in \mathbb{R}$ , and in particular,  $f(0) = E(X^2) < \infty$ . This argument also shows that if  $f(b) = \infty$  for some  $b$ , then  $f(c) = \infty$  for all  $c$ , and in particular  $E(X^2) = \infty$ .

• Suppose  $E(X^2) < \infty$ . Since  $|X| \leq 1 + X^2$ , we have

$$E(|X|) \leq 1 + E(X^2) < \infty,$$

i.e.,  $\mu := E(X)$  exists and is finite. We need to show that  $c = \mu$  uniquely minimizes

$$f(c) = E[(X - c)^2] = E[X^2 - 2cX + c^2]$$

Since the three summands  $X^2$ ,  $-2cX$ , and  $c^2$  are each integrable, we may continue with

$$\begin{aligned} f(c) &= E(X^2) + E(-2cX) + E(c^2) && \text{(by } E_{+}\text{)} \\ &= E(X^2) - 2c\mu + c^2 = [E(X^2) - \mu^2] + (c - \mu)^2. \end{aligned}$$

This expression is obviously uniquely minimized by  $c = \mu$ ; moreover the minimum is

$$E(X^2) - \mu^2 = f(\mu) = E[(X - \mu)^2]. \quad \blacksquare$$

**Example 1.** Recall that in the game in Example 7.5, you pay me

$$(F - c)^2 - w$$

where  $c$  is your guess,  $w$  is my wager, and  $F$  is a random number chosen from the  $F$ -distribution with 3 and 4 degrees of freedom. To minimize your expected loss  $E((F - c)^2 - w)$ , at first sight Theorem 1 seems to suggest that you should guess

$$c = E(F) = 4/(4 - 2) = 2.$$

However, since  $E(F^2) = \infty$  (verify that!), Theorem 1 actually says that your expected loss will be infinite, no matter what you guess, or what I wager. The SLLN guarantees that if we play the game repeatedly using independent draws  $F_1, F_2, \dots$ , my average fortune

$$\frac{1}{n} \sum_{k=1}^n ((F_k - c)^2 - w)$$

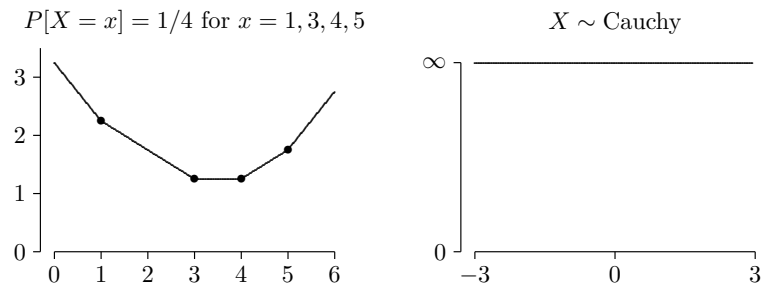
for the first  $n$  plays will tend to  $E(F - c)^2 - w = \infty$  as  $n \rightarrow \infty$ . I like this game! •

**Another extremal theorem.** Let  $X$  be a random variable with distribution function  $F$  and left-continuous representing (or quantile) function  $R$ . Consider minimizing

$$f(c) = E(|X - c|)$$

for  $c \in \mathbb{R}$ . To get some feeling for this, look at these two cases:

Graphs of  $f(c)$  versus  $c$



In the left panel,  $f(c)$  is finite for all  $c$ . Every number  $c$  in the range from 3 to 4 is a minimizer; these  $c$ 's are the medians of  $X$ . In the right panel,  $f$  is infinite for all  $c$ , so every  $c$  minimizes  $f$ . We are going to show that in general these are the only two possibilities. Recall that  $m$  is a median of  $X$  if and only if

$$\begin{aligned} P[X \leq m] \geq 1/2 \text{ and } P[X \geq m] \geq 1/2 \\ \iff R(1/2) \leq m \leq R(1/2+). \end{aligned} \tag{4}$$

**Theorem 2.** Let  $X$  be a random variable and set

$$f(c) = E(|X - c|) \tag{5}$$

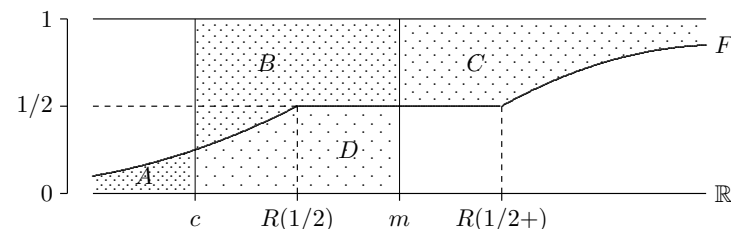
for  $-\infty < c < \infty$ . (a) If  $X$  is not integrable, then  $f(c) = \infty$  for all  $c$ . (b) If  $X$  is integrable, then  $f(c) < \infty$  for all  $c$ , and  $c$  minimizes  $f(c)$  if and only if  $c$  is a median of  $X$ .

**Proof** The fact that either  $f(c) = \infty$  for all  $c$  (and in particular  $E(|X|) = \infty$ ), or  $f(c) < \infty$  for all  $c$  (and in particular  $E(|X|) < \infty$ ) is easy, and is left to you. For the rest of the argument, suppose  $X$

is integrable. We need to determine the  $c$ 's that minimize  $f(c) := E(|X - c|)$ . We can't use the usual calculus technique of solving the equation  $f'(c) = 0$  for  $c$  because  $f$  may not be differentiable. Let  $m$  be a median for  $X$ . For the time being, suppose  $c < m$ . Let  $U \sim \text{Uniform}(0, 1)$ , so  $X \sim R(U)$ . Then

$$f(c) = E(|R(U) - c|) = \int_0^1 |R(u) - c| du = |A| + |B| + |C| \tag{6}$$

where  $A$ ,  $B$ , and  $C$  are the regions indicated below:



Similarly,

$$f(m) = E(|R(U) - m|) = |A| + |D| + |C|, \tag{7}$$

with  $D$  as indicated above. Since  $|A|$  and  $|C|$  are finite by (7.13), we may subtract (7) from (6) to get

$$f(c) - f(m) = |B| - |D| \geq 0;$$

the picture shows that equality holds if and only if  $R(1/2) \leq c$ . Similarly, one can show (do it!) that for  $c > m$ ,

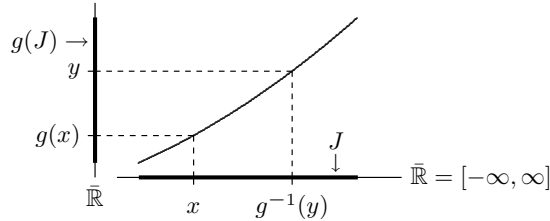
$$f(c) - f(m) \geq 0,$$

with equality if and only if  $c \leq R(1/2+)$ . Consequently  $c$  minimizes  $f$  if and only

$$R(1/2) \leq c \leq R(1/2+)$$

i.e., if and only if  $c$  is a median of  $X$ . ■

**$g$ -means.** Let  $J$  be a closed subinterval of the extended real-line  $[-\infty, \infty]$  and let  $g$  be a continuous, strictly monotone mapping from  $J$  into  $[-\infty, \infty]$ . The range  $g(J)$  of  $g$  is a closed subinterval of  $[-\infty, \infty]$ .  $g$  has an inverse  $g^{-1}$  on  $g(J)$ ;  $g^{-1}$  is continuous and strictly monotone. This situation is illustrated below:



Now suppose  $X$  is a random variable taking values in  $J$ . The  **$g$ -mean of  $X$**  is defined to be

$$E_g(X) = g^{-1}(E(g(X))); \quad (8)$$

this quantity exists if and only if  $g(X)$  has an expectation.

Why are  $g$ -means of interest? One answer is that they facilitate making comparisons of the effects of various transformations  $g_1, g_2, \dots$  on  $X$ . The point is that the  $E(g_i(X))$ 's can be on different scales, whereas the  $E_{g_i}(X)$ 's are all on the same scale as  $X$ .

Another reason  $g$ -means are of interest is several common quantities are  $g$ -means. From here through (13) below suppose that

$$X \text{ takes values in } J := [0, \infty]; \quad (9)$$

we allow the possibility that  $X = \infty$  with positive probability.

- Suppose  $g(x) = 1/x$ ; use the conventions that  $1/0 = \infty$  and  $1/\infty = 0$ . This  $g$  is a continuous, strictly decreasing map of  $J$  onto itself; moreover  $g^{-1} = g$ . Hence

$$E_g(X) = \frac{1}{E(1/X)}. \quad (10)$$

This is called the **harmonic mean** of  $X$ ; it always exists.

$X$  takes values in  $J = [0, \infty]$ .

$$E_g(X) := g^{-1}(E(g(X))).$$


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- Suppose  $g(x) = \log(x)$ ; use the conventions that  $\log(0) = -\infty$  and  $\log(\infty) = \infty$ . This  $g$  is a continuous, strictly increasing map of  $J$  onto  $[-\infty, \infty]$ ; its inverse is  $g^{-1}(y) = e^y$ , with the conventions that  $e^{-\infty} = 0$  and  $e^{\infty} = \infty$ . Then

$$E_g(X) = \exp(E(\log(X))). \quad (11)$$

This is called the **geometric mean** of  $X$ ; it exists if and only if  $\log(X)$  has an expectation. For example, suppose  $P[X = x_1] = 1/2 = P[X = x_2]$ , with  $0 \leq x_1 < x_2 \leq \infty$ . If  $x_1$  and  $x_2$  are finite, then  $\log(X)$  has an expectation (possibly  $-\infty$ ) and

$$E_g(X) = \exp(\log(x_1)/2 + \log(x_2)/2) = \sqrt{x_1 x_2}.$$

But if  $x_1 = 0$  and  $x_2 = \infty$ , then  $Y = \log(X)$  does not have an expectation since  $P[Y = -\infty] = 1/2 = P[Y = \infty]$ ; in this case the  $g$ -mean of  $X$  doesn't exist.

- Suppose  $g(x) = x$ . This is a continuous, strictly increasing map of  $J$  onto itself, and  $g^{-1} = g$ . Here

$$E_g(X) = E(X). \quad (12)$$

This is the **arithmetic mean** of  $X$ ; it always exists.

- Suppose  $g(x) = x^2$ , with the convention that  $\infty^2 = \infty$ . This  $g$  is a continuous, strictly increasing map of  $J$  onto itself; the inverse is  $g^{-1}(y) = \sqrt{y}$ , with the convention  $\sqrt{\infty} = \infty$ . Thus

$$E_g(X) = \sqrt{E(X^2)} = \|X\|_2. \quad (13)$$

This is the **root mean square**, or  **$L_2$ -norm**, of  $X$ ; it always exists.

**Example 2.** Consider the power transformations defined on  $J = [0, \infty]$  by

$$g_p(x) := \begin{cases} x^p, & \text{if } p \neq 0, \\ \log(x), & \text{if } p = 0, \end{cases} \quad (14)$$

for  $-\infty < p < \infty$ . We will compute the  $g_p$  means of  $X$  for a couple of random variables  $X$ .

(a) Suppose  $X = U$  is standard uniform. Then for nonzero  $p$ ,

$$E(U^p) = \int_0^1 u^p du = \begin{cases} \frac{u^{p+1}}{1+p} \Big|_0^1 = \frac{1}{1+p}, & \text{if } p > -1, \\ \infty, & \text{if } p \leq -1, \end{cases}$$

so

$$E_{g_p}(U) = (E(U^p))^{1/p} = \begin{cases} 1/(1+p)^{1/p}, & \text{if } p > -1, \\ 0, & \text{if } p \leq -1. \end{cases} \quad (15_1)$$

For  $p = 0$  we have

$$E(\log(U)) = \int_0^1 \log(u) du = -1 \implies E_{g_0}(U) = e^{-1}. \quad (15_2)$$

(b) Suppose  $X = F \sim UF(2, 2)$ ;  $F$  can be written as the ratio  $A/B$  of two independent standard exponential random variables  $A$  and  $B$ . For  $p \neq 0$ , we have

$$\begin{aligned} E_{g_p}(F) &= (E(A^p)E(1/B^p))^{1/p} \\ &= \begin{cases} 0, & \text{if } p \leq -1, \\ (\Gamma(1+p)\Gamma(1-p))^{1/p}, & \text{if } |p| < 1, \\ \infty, & \text{if } p \geq 1, \end{cases} \end{aligned} \quad (16_1)$$

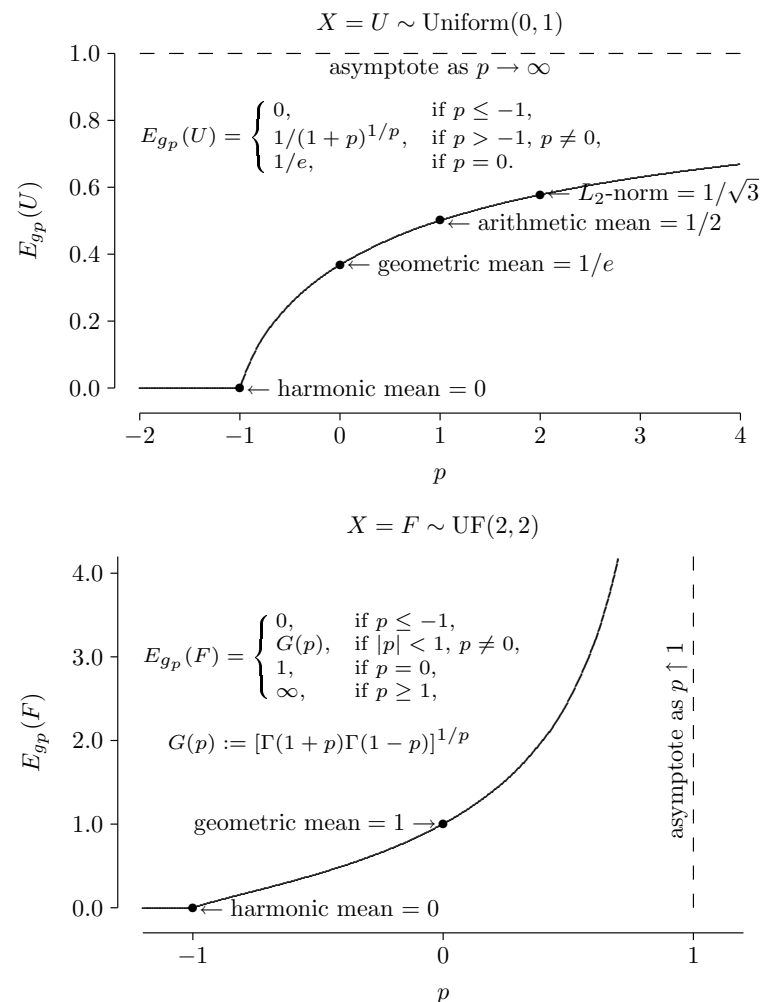
whereas for  $p = 0$  we have

$$E_{g_0}(F) = \exp(E(\log(A)) - E(\log(B))) = e^0 = 1. \quad (16_2)$$

These results are illustrated on the following page. •

Figure 2:  $g_p$ -means of  $X$ , for the power transformations

$$g_p(x) := \begin{cases} x^p, & \text{if } p \neq 0, \\ \log(x), & \text{if } p = 0. \end{cases}$$



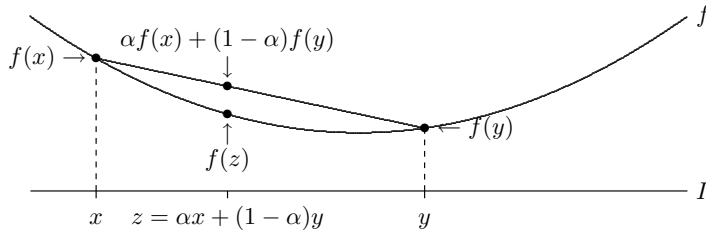
Extrapolating from these two examples, how would you expect the  $E_{g_p}(X)$ 's to behave for an arbitrary nonnegative random variable  $X$ ?

**Jensen's inequality.** Let  $I$  be a subinterval of  $(-\infty, \infty)$  and let  $f$  be a mapping from  $I$  to  $(-\infty, \infty)$ .  $f$  is said to be **convex** if

$$f(\alpha x + (1 - \alpha)y) \leq \alpha f(x) + (1 - \alpha)f(y) \quad (17)$$

for all points  $x$  and  $y$  in  $I$  and all  $0 \leq \alpha \leq 1$ .

(17) says that for  $x$  and  $y$  in  $I$ , the chord from  $(x, f(x))$  to  $(y, f(y))$  sits above the graph of  $f$  over  $[x, y]$ , as illustrated below:



There is another interpretation of (17). Let  $X$  be a random variable taking the values  $x$  and  $y$  with probabilities  $\alpha$  and  $1 - \alpha$  respectively. Then the LHS of the inequality in (17) is  $f(E(X))$ , while the RHS is  $E(f(X))$ . Thus (17) says

$$f(E(X)) \leq E(f(X)) \quad (18)$$

for all random variables taking (at most) two values in  $I$ . Jensen's inequality asserts that this relationship holds for every integrable random variable taking values in  $I$ :

**Theorem 3 (Jensen's inequality).** Let  $f$  be a convex function defined on an interval  $I$  of  $\mathbb{R}$ , and let  $X$  be an integrable random taking values in  $I$ . Then

- (J1)  $E(X) \in I$ .
- (J2)  $E(f^-(X)) < \infty$  (in particular,  $f(X)$  has an expectation).
- (J3)  $f(E(X)) \leq E(f(X))$ .

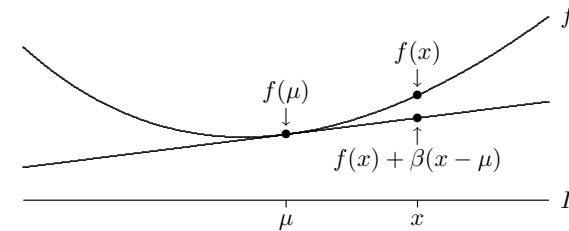
$$(J1) E(X) \in I. \quad (J2) E(f^-(X)) < \infty. \quad (J3) f(E(X)) \leq E(f(X)).$$

**Proof** • (J1) holds. There is nothing to prove if both endpoints of  $I$  are infinite. Suppose the left endpoint  $a$  of  $I$  is finite. If  $a \in I$ , then we have  $a \leq X$ , and so  $a \leq E(X)$ . But if  $a \notin I$ , then we have  $a < X$ , and so  $a < E(X)$ . Similar remarks apply if the right endpoint of  $I$  is finite. Consequently  $E(X) \in I$  in all cases.

• (J2) and (J3) hold. Put  $\mu = E(X)$ . Suppose first that  $\mu$  lies in the interior of  $I$ . According to Exercise 13 there exists a finite number  $\beta$  such that

$$f(x) \geq f(\mu) + \beta(x - \mu) \quad \text{for all } x \in I, \quad (19)$$

as illustrated below:



Since  $X$  takes all its values in  $I$ , we have

$$f(X) \geq f(\mu) + \beta(X - \mu) := Y. \quad (20)$$

Taking negative parts in (20) gives

$$f^-(X) \leq Y^- \implies E(f^-(X)) \leq E(Y^-) < \infty$$

since  $Y$  is integrable; thus (J2) holds and  $f(X)$  has an expectation. Taking expectations in (20) gives

$$E(f(X)) \geq E(Y) = f(\mu) + \beta E(X - \mu) = f(\mu),$$

so (J3) holds.

(J1)  $E(X) \in I$ . (J2)  $E(f^-(X)) < \infty$ . (J3)  $f(E(X)) \leq E(f(X))$ .

(17):  $f(\alpha x + (1 - \alpha)y) \leq \alpha f(x) + (1 - \alpha)f(y)$ .

(19):  $f(x) \geq f(\mu) + \beta(x - \mu)$  for all  $x \in I$

There is one other possibility, namely, that  $\mu$  is an endpoint of  $I$ . For definiteness, suppose that  $\mu$  is the left endpoint, say  $a$ . Then there might not exist a  $\beta$  such that (19) holds (give an example!). However, in this case we have  $X - a \geq 0$  and  $E(X - a) = a - a = 0$ , so  $X = a$  with probability one. Hence  $f(X) = f(a)$  with probability one, and (J2) and (J3) hold trivially. ■

Some addenda: (1) A function  $f: I \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  is said to be **strictly convex** if strict inequality holds in (17) whenever  $x \neq y$  and  $0 < \alpha < 1$ . If  $f$  is strictly convex, one can show that strict inequality holds in (19) for all  $x \neq \mu$ , and hence that strict inequality holds in (J3) except when  $X$  is **degenerate**, in the sense that there exists a number  $c$  (necessarily  $= \mu$ ) such that  $X = c$  with probability one.

(2) A function  $f: I \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  is said to be **concave** if  $-f$  is convex, and **strictly concave** if  $-f$  is strictly convex.



Jensen's inequality has an obvious formulation for concave functions. Simply stated, if  $f$  is concave on  $I$  and  $X$  is an integrable random variable taking values in  $I$ , then

$$f(E(X)) \geq E(f(X)); \tag{21}$$

moreover, if  $f$  is strictly concave, then equality holds in (21) if and only if  $X$  is degenerate.

**Example 3.** The function  $f: x \rightsquigarrow x^2$  is strictly convex on  $I = \mathbb{R}$ . For an integrable  $X$ , Jensen's inequality implies the familiar inequality

$$(E(X))^2 \leq E(X^2),$$

with equality iff  $X$  is constant with probability one. Replacing  $X$  by  $|X|$  we get

$$E(|X|) \leq \sqrt{E(|X|^2)},$$

i.e., the arithmetic mean of  $|X|$  is no greater than its root mean square. •

**Exercise 1.** This exercise deals with another way to prove the interesting part of Theorem 2. Suppose that  $X$  is an integrable random variable and put  $f(c) = E(|X - c|)$  for  $c \in \mathbb{R}$ . Let  $m$  be a median of  $X$  and suppose that  $c < m$ . Define functions  $\Delta$  and  $\ell$  on  $\mathbb{R}$  by

$$\Delta(x) = |x - c| - |x - m|, \quad \ell(x) = \begin{cases} -(m - c), & \text{if } x < m, \\ m - c, & \text{if } x \geq m. \end{cases}$$

Show that  $\Delta(x) \geq \ell(x)$  for all  $x$ . Use that inequality and properties of expectation to show that  $f(c) - f(m) \geq 0$ , with equality if and only if  $c$  is itself a median of  $X$ . ◊

**Exercise 2.** Let  $X$  be a real random variable and let  $q$  be a number lying strictly between 0 and 1. Set  $p = 1 - q$ . For  $-\infty < c < \infty$  put

$$f(c) := E(L_c(X))$$

where

$$L_c(x) := q(x - c)^+ + p(x - c)^- = \begin{cases} q|x - c|, & \text{if } x \geq c, \\ p|x - c|, & \text{if } x \leq c. \end{cases}$$

(a) Show that if  $X$  is not integrable, then  $f(c) = \infty$  for all  $c$ . (b) Show that if  $X$  is integrable, then  $f(c)$  is finite for all  $c$ , and  $c$  minimizes  $f(c)$  if and only if  $c$  is a  $q^{\text{th}}$ -quantile for  $X$ . (c) Suppose that  $X \sim N(0, 1)$ . Find a simple expression for  $\alpha := \inf\{f(c) : c \in \mathbb{R}\} = f(\Phi^{-1}(q))$  in terms of the normal density  $\phi$ . For what  $q$  is  $\alpha$  the largest? ◊

**Exercise 3.** Suppose  $F$  has an unnormalized  $F$ -distribution with 3 and 5 degrees of freedom. Let  $g_p$  be the power transformations defined by (14). Plot the  $g_p$  means of  $F$  for  $-1 \leq p \leq 1$ . Choose an appropriate vertical scale.  $\diamond$

**Exercise 4.** (a) Suppose  $J$  is a closed subinterval of  $[-\infty, \infty]$  and  $g$  is a continuous, strictly monotone function from  $J$  to  $[-\infty, \infty]$ . Let  $a$  and  $b$  be finite numbers, with  $b \neq 0$ , and let  $h$  be the mapping from  $J$  to  $[-\infty, \infty]$  defined by  $h(x) = a + bg(x)$  for each  $x \in J$ ; note that  $h$  is continuous and strictly monotone. Let  $X$  be a random variable taking values in  $J$ . Show that the  $h$ -mean of  $X$  exists if and only if the  $g$ -mean does, in which case the two are equal:  $E_h(X) = E_g(X)$ . (b) Suppose  $J = [0, \infty]$  and  $h_p(x) = (x^p - 1)/p$  for  $p \neq 0$ . Find  $\lim h_p(x)$  as  $p \rightarrow 0$ .  $\diamond$

A real-valued random variable  $X$  is said to have **mode**  $x_m$  if  $X$  has a probability mass function, or a density function, say  $f$ , and

$$f(x_m) \geq f(x) \quad (22)$$

for all possible values  $x$  of  $X$ . Note that not all random variables have modes, and that modes may not be unique.

**Exercise 5.** Find the modes of the following random variables: (i)  $X \sim \text{Binomial}(n, p)$ ; (ii)  $X \sim F$  with  $m > 2$  and  $n$  degrees of freedom.  $\diamond$

**Exercise 6.** Suppose  $g$  is a real-valued, continuous, strictly increasing function on an interval  $J \subset \mathbb{R}$  and  $X$  is a random variable taking values in  $J$ . Is there any general relationship between the median of  $g(X)$  and  $g$ (the median of  $X$ )? Ditto, for the mode (assuming  $X$  and  $g(X)$  have modes)?  $\diamond$

Let  $J$  be a subinterval of  $\mathbb{R}$  and let  $g$  be a real-valued, continuous, strictly-increasing function on  $J$ . Let  $X$  be a random variable taking values in  $J$ . The  **$g$ -median of  $X$**  is defined to be

$$\text{Median}_g(X) := g^{-1}(\text{Median of } g(X)). \quad (23)$$

Similarly, the  **$g$ -mode of  $X$**  is

$$\text{Mode}_g(X) := g^{-1}(\text{Mode of } g(X)). \quad (24)$$

$g$ -medians always exist; the  $g$ -mode of  $X$  exists if  $g(X)$  has a mode.

**Exercise 7.** Let  $J$  and  $g$  be as above. Let  $a$  and  $b > 0$  be constants put  $h(x) = a + bg(x)$  for all  $x \in J$ . Show that the  $g$ - and  $h$ -medians of  $X$  are the same. Show that the  $g$ - and  $h$ -modes are the same, provided they exist.  $\diamond$

**Exercise 8.** Let  $r > 0$  and let  $X_r$  be a Gamma random variable with density  $f_r(x) = I_{(0, \infty)}(x) x^{r-1} \exp(-x)/\Gamma(r)$ .

(a) Find the  $g_p$ -means and  $g_p$ -modes of  $X_r$  for the power transformations  $g_p$  in (14).

(b) For  $r = 1, 4$ , and  $16$ , numerically evaluate and plot the  $g_p$ -mean,  $g_p$ -mode, and the  $g_p$ -median against  $p$  in the interval  $[-1/6, 1]$ , including at least the integral multiples of  $1/6$  in the range  $[0, 1/2]$ . Make a separate plot for each  $r$ , but include the mean, median, and mode on the same plot.

(c) For what value of  $p$  do you think the distribution of  $g_p(X_r)$  is the most nearly symmetric? Why? What bearing does this have on the problem studied in Homework 2?

[Remark: The formula for the  $g$ -means when  $p = 0$  involves the derivative of the log of the gamma function:

$$\psi(r) = \frac{d}{dr} \log \Gamma(r) = \frac{\Gamma'(r)}{\Gamma(r)} = \int_0^\infty \log(x) f_r(x) dx, \quad (25)$$

which is known as the **digamma** function. A good reference the properties of  $\psi$ , and many other analytic and numerical facts, is the *Handbook of Mathematical Functions with Formulas, Graphs, and Mathematical Tables*, edited by M. Abramowitz and I. A. Stegun. The name for  $\psi$  in MAPLE is **Psi**. SPLUS has a **gamma** function that computes  $\Gamma$ . However, it doesn't have a function to compute  $\psi$ ; hence the need for the previous reference.  $\diamond$

Exercises 9–15 develop some properties of convex functions. In all of them,  $J$  is a subinterval of  $\mathbb{R}$  ( $J = \mathbb{R}$  is allowed) and  $f$  is real-valued function on  $J$ . Let  $I$  be the interior of  $J$ .

**Exercise 9.** Show that if  $f$  is convex, then

$$\frac{f(y) - f(x)}{y - x} \leq \frac{f(z) - f(x)}{z - x} \leq \frac{f(z) - f(y)}{z - y} \quad (26)$$

for all points  $x, y$ , and  $z$  in  $J$  with  $x < y < z$ . A “proof by picture” is acceptable, provided you draw the right picture and explain how it implies (26).  $\diamond$

**Exercise 10.** Conversely, show that  $f$  is convex if

$$\frac{f(y) - f(x)}{y - x} \leq \frac{f(z) - f(y)}{z - y} \quad (27)$$

for all points  $x, y$ , and  $z$  in  $J$  with  $x < y < z$ .  $\diamond$

**Exercise 11.** Show that if  $f$  is convex, then

$$(D_+f)(x) := \lim_{y \downarrow x, y > x} \frac{f(y) - f(x)}{y - x} \quad (28)$$

exists and is finite for each point  $x \in I$ . [ $(D_+f)(x)$  is called the **right-hand derivative of  $f$  at  $x$** .]  $\diamond$

**Exercise 12.** Similarly, show that a convex  $f$  has a left-hand derivative  $(D_-f)(x)$  at each  $x \in I$ . Show further that

$$(D_-f)(x) \leq (D_+f)(x) \leq (D_-f)(y) \leq (D_+f)(y) \quad (29)$$

for all points  $x$  and  $y$  in  $I$  with  $x < y$ . Deduce that set of points  $x \in I$  at which  $f$  is not differentiable is at most countable.  $\diamond$

**Exercise 13.** Show that if  $f$  is convex, then for each  $x \in I$

$$f(y) \geq f(x) + ((D_+f)(x))(y - x) \quad (30)$$

for all  $y \in J$ . Show further that if  $f$  is strictly convex, then strict inequality holds in (30) unless  $y = x$ .  $\diamond$

**Exercise 14.** Suppose that  $f$  is continuous on  $J$  and differentiable on  $I$ , and  $f'$  is nondecreasing on  $I$ . Show that  $f$  is convex. [Hint: use the mean value theorem to verify (27).] What condition on  $f'$  guarantees that  $f$  is strictly convex?  $\diamond$

**Exercise 15.** Suppose that  $f$  is continuous on  $J$  and twice differentiable on  $I$ , and  $f'' \geq 0$  on  $I$ . Show that  $f$  is convex. What condition on  $f''$  guarantees that  $f$  is strictly convex?  $\diamond$

**Exercise 16.** Show that the function

$$f(x) := \begin{cases} x \log(x), & \text{if } 0 < x, \\ 0, & \text{if } x = 0, \end{cases} \quad (31)$$

is strictly convex on  $[0, \infty)$ . Show that for any nonnegative numbers  $x_1, x_2, \dots, x_k$  and strictly positive weights  $w_1, w_2, \dots, w_k$  summing to 1, one has

$$f(w_1x_1 + \dots + w_kx_k) \leq \sum_{j=1}^k w_j f(x_j), \quad (32)$$

with equality if and only if the  $x_i$ 's are all equal.  $\diamond$