JENSEN POLYNOMIALS ARE NOT A VIEABLE ROUTE TO PROVING THE RIEMANN HYPOTHESIS

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Abstract. Recent work on the Jensen polynomials of the Riemann xi-function and its derivatives found a connection to the Hermite polynomials. Those results have been suggested to give evidence for the Riemann Hypothesis, and furthermore it has been suggested that those results shed light on the random matrix statistics for zeros of the zeta-function. We place that work in the context of prior results, and explain why the appearance of Hermite polynomials is interesting and surprising, and may represent a new type of universal law which refines M. Berry’s “cosine as a universal attractor” principle. However, we find there is no justification for the suggested connection to the Riemann Hypothesis, nor for the suggested connection to the conjectured random matrix statistics for zeros of L-functions. These considerations indicate that Jensen polynomials, as well as a large class of related polynomials, are not useful for attacking the Riemann Hypothesis.

1. Introduction

Two recent papers [10, 2] revisit the classical result of Jensen [12, 17] that the Riemann Hypothesis is true if and only if all of the associated Jensen polynomials, defined in (2.2) below, have only real zeros. The two recent papers actually concern another version of the Jensen polynomials, which we call the “even” Jensen polynomials, defined in (3.2).

In this paper we examine the recent work on Jensen polynomials in the context of prior work on repeated differentiation of entire functions [1, 9, 13, 14], and on differentiation-like operations [8, 19]. That perspective explains why the new result on Hermite polynomials is interesting, but it also indicates why there is no connection to the Riemann Hypothesis nor to the random matrix statistics of zeros of the zeta function. These considerations further suggest that the Jensen polynomials, as well as a large class of related polynomials, are not a useful tool for approaching the Riemann Hypothesis.

2. The classical Jensen polynomials

Suppose

$$f(z) = \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} \frac{\alpha(j)}{j!} z^j$$

(2.1)

Key words and phrases. Jensen polynomial, Riemann Hypothesis, zeta function, GUE, Hermite polynomial, cosine universality, L-function.

This research was supported by the National Science Foundation.
is an entire function of order less than two. One can associate the $d$th classical Jensen polynomial for the $n$th derivative of $f$, given by

$$J_{f,cl}^{d,n}(z) := \sum_{j=0}^{d} \binom{d}{j} \alpha(j+n)z^j. \quad (2.2)$$

The “cl” in the subscript refers to these polynomials being “classical” in the sense that (2.2) is the standard definition of the Jensen polynomials. An alternate notation for those polynomials is $J_{\alpha,cl}^{d,n}$, where the first subscript refers to the Taylor series coefficients instead of to the function.

One reason for interest in the classical Jensen polynomials is:

1. $\lim_{d \to \infty} J_{f,cl}^{d,n}(z/d) = f^{(n)}(z)$, with uniform convergence for $z$ in a compact set, and
2. $f$ has only real zeros if and only if $J_{f,cl}^{d,0}$ has only real zeros for all $d$.

Note that item (1) directly gives one of the implications in item (2). For real entire functions of order less than two, the property of having only real zeros is preserved under differentiation, so an equivalent reformulation of item (2) is that $f$ has only real zeros if and only if $J_{f,cl}^{d,n}$ has only real zeros for all $d$ and all $n$.

We will describe results in the literature as they apply to the classical Jensen polynomials $J_{f,cl}^{d,n}$ as $n \to \infty$, and then consider the corresponding problem for the even Jensen polynomials considered in [10, 2].

For the functions under consideration here, differentiation preserves real zeros. Much more is true. A beautiful result of Kim [14] asserts that if $f$ is an entire function of order less than 2, which is real on the real axis, and which has all zeros in a strip $|\Re(z)| < A$, then for any fixed $R > 0$, if $n$ is sufficiently large then $f^{(n)}$ has only real zeros in $|z| < R$. In other words, in any compact region, if you differentiate such functions enough times, all zeros are real. A corollary is that for any $d$, if $n$ is large enough then the classical Jensen polynomial $J_{f,cl}^{d,n}$ has only real zeros.

For a large subset of the functions for which Kim’s theorem applies, even more is conjectured: not only do the zeros move to the real axis, they also approach equal spacing. Since (up to a simple change of variables) the only even, real, entire function of order less than 2 with equal spaced real zeros is the cosine function, it is conjectured that for a large class of functions, repeated differentiation leads to the cosine function, up to a simple rescaling. A precise form of this conjecture was made by Berry [1], who phrased it as

$$\cos(\omega_n t + \delta_n) \text{ is a universal attractor of the derivative map}$$

and by Farmer and Rhoades [9] from a slightly different perspective based on the density of zeros of the function.

A relevant instance of that conjecture was proven by Ki [13]. Let

$$\Xi(z) = \xi(\frac{1}{2} + iz)$$

be the Riemann $\Xi$-function, where

$$\xi(s) = \frac{1}{2}s(1-s)\pi^{-s/2}\Gamma\left(\frac{s}{2}\right)\zeta(s).$$
The function $\Xi$ is even and is real on the real axis, and has all zeros in the strip $-\frac{1}{2} < \Im(z) < \frac{1}{2}$. Thus, it is a theorem that all zeros of $\Xi^{(n)}(z)$ for $|z| < T$ are real if $n$ is sufficiently large, and so for each $d$, the classical Jensen polynomial $J_{f,cl}^{d,n}$ has only real zeros. It was further conjectured [9] that, suitably rescaled, $\Xi^{(n)}(z)$ approaches $\cos(z)$. That conjecture was proven by Ki [13]:

**Theorem 2.1** (Ki, [13]). There exist sequences $A_n$ and $C_n$ such that

$$\lim_{n \to \infty} A_n \Xi^{(2n)}(C_n z) = \cos(z),$$

uniformly on compact subsets of $\mathbb{C}$.

That theorem also follows from a proposition of Coffey [5]. The analogous result holds for functions in the extended Selberg class [11]. Functions in that class have a functional equation but not necessarily an Euler product, and so it includes many examples that do not satisfy the analogue of the Riemann Hypothesis. The same result holds for random functions [18], which by construction satisfy the analogue of the Riemann Hypothesis but have Poisson statistics for their zeros. Conrey’s result [6] that $\Xi^{(n)}$ has $(100 - O(1/n^2))$ percent of its zeros on the real axis is a quantitative version of Kim’s theorem, and can be seen as a foreshadowing of Ki’s result.

Theorem 2.1 implies that the rescaled Taylor series coefficients of $\Xi^{(n)}$ converge to those of cosine. Since the Taylor coefficients of cosine have a simple form, the Jensen polynomial of cosine can be written explicitly: $J_{\cos,cl}^{d,0}(z) = \frac{1}{2} ((1 + iz)^d + (1 - iz)^d)$. Thus we have

**Corollary 2.2.** There exist sequences $A_n$ and $C_n$ such that

$$\lim_{n \to \infty} A_n J_{\Xi,cl}^{d,n}(C_n z) = \frac{(1 + iz)^d + (1 - iz)^d}{2}$$

as $n \to \infty$. In particular, for each $d$, if $n$ is sufficiently large then $J_{\Xi,cl}^{d,n}$ has only real zeros.

We see that the classical Jensen polynomials $J_{f,cl}^{d,n}$ having real zeros for large $n$ is a general phenomenon, following from the fact that, for a large class of entire functions, repeated differentiation leads to the cosine function. In particular, differentiation causes a loss of information about the zeros of the functions considered here, and so in terms of the Riemann Hypothesis there is little revealed by the derivatives of the function. In Section 4 we elaborate with an illustrative example. But first we consider a different form of the Jensen polynomials.

3. THE EVEN JENSEN POLYNOMIALS

If $f$ is an even function, it is natural to write

$$f(z) = \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} \gamma(j) z^{2j}.$$  (3.1)

From this we define the even Jensen polynomials, which are the subject of [10, 2]:

$$J_{f,\text{ev}}^{d,n}(x) := \sum_{j=0}^{d} \binom{d}{j} \gamma(j + n) x^j.$$  (3.2)
As in the classical case, the first subscript could be the Taylor coefficients instead of the function.

Note that the even Jensen polynomial of $f(z)$ is the classical Jensen polynomial of $f(\sqrt{z})$. In the case of the Riemann $\xi$-function, the Riemann hypothesis is equivalent to the assertion that $\xi(\frac{1}{2} + \sqrt{z})$ has zeros only on the negative real axis, or equivalently, $\Xi(\sqrt{z})$ has zeros only on the positive real axis.

The terminology of “classical” and “even” Jensen polynomials is not standard, but we felt the terminology was necessary in order to avoid confusion. We write $J_{d,n}$ when we wish to make a statement that applies to either case.

The main results of [10] are precise asymptotics for $\xi^{(2n)}(\frac{1}{2})$ and a new phenomenon relating asymptotic properties of certain sequences to the Hermite polynomials. Those results combine to produce:

**Theorem 3.1** (Griffin, Ono, Rolen, and Zagier [10]). There exist sequences $A_n$, $B_n$, and $C_n$ such that

$$\lim_{n \to \infty} A_n J_{\xi,ev}^{d,n}(C_n z + B_n) = H_d(z),$$

uniformly for $z$ in a compact subset of $\mathbb{C}$, where $H_d$ is the $d$th Hermite polynomial and the subscript $\xi$ refers to $\xi(\frac{1}{2} + z)$.

We compare this to Ki’s theorem quoted above, which implies the following:

**Corollary 3.2.** There exist sequences $A_n$ and $C_n$ such that

$$\lim_{n \to \infty} A_n J_{\xi,ev}^{d,n}(C_n z) = (1 + z)^d,$$

uniformly for $z$ in a compact subset of $\mathbb{C}$.

How can we reconcile the fact that the $d$th even Jensen polynomials simultaneously converge both to $(1+z)^d$ and to $H_d(z)$? This apparent conundrum is easily resolved by examining a plot of the polynomial. In Figure 3.1 we show graphs of $A_n J_{\xi,ev}^{d,n}(C_n x)$ for $d = 6$, $n = 10000$. That is, the 6th even Jensen polynomial of the 10000th derivative of $\xi(\frac{1}{2} + z)$. The plot on the left covers the range $-2 \leq x \leq 0$, and the plot on the right covers $-1.012 \leq x \leq -0.988$.

**Figure 3.1.** The even Jensen polynomial $J_{\xi,ev}^{6,10000}(x)$, rescaled as described in the text, for $-2 \leq x \leq 0$ on the left, and $-1.012 \leq x \leq -0.988$ on the right.
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Each plot in Figure 3.1 actually contains a superposition with a second graph: $(1 + x)^6$ on the left, and $H_6(x)$, shifted and scaled, on the right. In both cases the plots are so close that the two graphs are indistinguishable to the eye.

We see that the main result of [10] contains more information than the theorem of Ki [13] because $H_d(x)$, suitable shifted and scaled, looks just like $(1 + x)^d$, but the converse is not true.

We suggest that the results in [10] can be interpreted as a refinement of the general “cosine universality” of Berry and Farmer-Rhoades. That is:

**Principle 3.3 (“Hermite Universality”).** For a large class of functions, not only does repeated differentiation lead to the (rescaled) cosine function, but the convergence occurs in a particularly regular and uniform way, characterized by the appearance of the Hermite polynomials within the shifted and rescaled even Jensen polynomials.

We can be more specific about what this principle predicts. Suppose $f(z)$ is an even real entire function for which Cosine Universality should hold. Interpreting Cosine Universality as a statement about Taylor coefficients, we see that (suitably scaled but not shifted), the $n$th derivative of $f(\sqrt{z})$ approaches $e^{-z}$, and so $J_{f, ev}^{d,n}(z)$ (suitably scaled but not shifted) approaches $(1 - z)^d$ as $n \to \infty$. Taken at face value, that limit does not directly imply that $J_{f, ev}^{d,n}(z)$ has only real zeros for sufficiently large $n$ (although one might conclude that from other considerations). Hermite Universality does imply that $J_{f, ev}^{d,n}(z)$ has only real zeros for sufficiently large $n$, and it further implies that those zeros are arranged like the zeros of a Hermite polynomial, independent of the original function $f(z)$.

Griffin, Ono, Rolen, and Zagier [10] verify this principle in many cases, and also consider it as applied to sequences that are not being viewed as the derivatives of an entire function.

Note that the principle is not restricted to even functions. However the concept of “even” Jensen polynomial has yet to be defined for functions which are not even, but which when repeatedly differentiated and slightly shifted, converge to the cosine function. Presumably there are functions for which Cosine Universality applies but Hermite Universality does not – perhaps functions without sufficient regularity in the spacings of their zeros.

There are a couple of facts that point to this interpretation of the results in [10]. First is that the work of Ki [13], its generalization to the extended Selberg class [11], the proof of Newman’s conjecture and its generalization [8, 19], and the work under discussion [10], all rely on the fact that functions under consideration can be written in a form similar to

$$\Xi(z) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \varphi(u)e^{izu} \, du$$ (3.3)

where $\varphi$ decreases rapidly. Such an expression is amenable to analyzing derivatives of $\Xi$, and [10] carries the analysis farther than previous efforts.

The second reason comes from considering some simple examples, which we describe after initial preparations in the next section.

4. JENSEN POLYNOMIALS AND PARTIAL VERIFICATION OF RH

We have seen that the Jensen polynomials of derivatives, $J_{f, ev}^{d,n}$ for $n \geq 1$, do not shed any light on the Riemann Hypothesis, because each increase in the differentiation index loses
information about the location of the zeros. We give another example in this section to further illustrate that point, but our main purpose now is to complete the claim in the title of this paper, describing why $J^{d,0}$, with differentiation index 0, is also not a useful tool for exploring the Riemann Hypothesis.

There is evidence in the literature that $J^{d,0}$ is not good at detecting violations of the Riemann Hypothesis. Namely, Chasse [4] proved that if all the zeros $\rho = \beta + i\gamma$ of the zeta-function are on the critical line for $|\gamma| < T$, then $J^{d,0}$ has only real zeros for $d < T^2$. In other words, the Jensen polynomials are not efficient at encoding information about zeros. We illustrate this idea with a simple example.

Consider a function which is entire of order 1, even, real on the real axis, and has all its zeros in a strip $-A < \Im(z) < A$. The analogue of the Riemann Hypothesis is that all of the zeros are real. An example, which presumably has only real zeros, is the Riemann $\Xi$-function. An example which does not have only real zeros is

$$X_{10}(z) = \cos(z)(z^2 - (10 + i)^2)(z^2 - (10 - i)^2)(z^2 - (\frac{5\pi}{2})^2)(z^2 - (\frac{7\pi}{2})^2).$$

In words, $X_j(z)$ is the function obtained when the pairs of zeros of $\cos(z)$ closest to $\pm j$ are moved to $\pm j \pm i$. Figure 4.1 shows a graph of $X_{10}(x)$.

![Figure 4.1. A graph of the function obtained by moving the zeros at $x = \pm \frac{5\pi}{2}$ and $\pm \frac{7\pi}{2}$ of $\cos(x)$ to $\pm 10 \pm i$.](image)

Examineing the graph of $X_{10}$, it can be seen that all zeros of the first derivative, $X'_{10}$, are real, therefore the same is true of all higher derivatives. Thus, the classical Jensen polynomial $J_{X_{10},cl}^{d,n}$ has only real zeros for all $n \geq 1$, as does the even Jensen polynomial $J_{X_{10},ev}^{d,n}$ for all even $n \geq 2$.

But what about $J_{X_{10},cl}^{d,0}$? We know that this will have non-real zeros if $d$ is large enough, but how large is large enough? The first two zeros (in magnitude) of $X_{10}$ are real, and then a pair of complex conjugate zeros. Since the “Riemann Hypothesis” fails for $X_{10}$ almost immediately, one might guess that $J_{X_{10},cl}^{d,0}$ should have a non-real zero for $d$ quite small. This is not the case. By a direct calculation (we used Mathematica), $J_{X_{10},cl}^{d,0}$ has only real zeros for $d \leq 118$, and for all larger $d$ it has non-real zeros.

Table 4.1 shows, for various $j$, the maximal $d$ such that $J_{X_j,cl}^{d,0}$ has only real zeros. The data in that table confirm the impression from Chasse’s theorem, that Jensen polynomials
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| n   | 10  | 20  | 40  | 60  |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| # first zeros of $X_n$ are real | 2   | 4   | 12  | 18  |
| $J_{X_n,cl}^{d,0}$ has only real zeros for $d \leq$ | 118 | 749 | 1897 | 4242 |
| $d$th Taylor polynomial detects non-real zero for $d \geq$ | 20  | 60  | 118 | 175 |

Table 4.1. Tabulating the relative effectiveness of the Jensen polynomials and the Taylor polynomials for detecting violations of the Riemann Hypothesis, using the function $X_n$ as a model.

are inefficient at detecting non-real zeros. Furthermore, the Jensen polynomials, which are defined in terms of the Taylor series coefficients, are not efficient at extracting information from those coefficients. The $d$th order Taylor polynomial of $X_j$ also detects the non-real zero if $d$ is large enough: this is shown in the bottom row of Table 4.1. We see that the Jensen polynomials require significantly more terms than the Taylor polynomials to detect the non-real zeros.

If Jensen polynomials are to be a useful tool to study zeros, then they would need to be more efficient, not less efficient, than other methods of detecting zeros off the critical line. But that is not the case. The Jensen polynomial properties (1) and (2) listed in Section 2 are elegant, but it is the distracting beauty of a scenic route through a lovely countryside, diverting the traveler from the intended destination.

4.1. Other Jensen-like polynomials. There are other polynomials generated from the Taylor coefficients which only have real zeros if and only if the original function has only real zeros. For example, a recent paper of O’Sullivan [16] considers the polynomials

$$P^{d,n}(z) := \sum_{j=0}^{d} \binom{d}{j} \gamma(j+n)H_{d-j}(z). \quad (4.1)$$

In other words, the Jensen polynomial with $z^j$ replaced by the Hermite polynomial $H_{d-j}(z)$.

O’Sullivan shows that these polynomials have the same property that make the Jensen polynomials interesting: $\Xi(z)$ has only real zeros if and only if $P^{d,n}$ has only real zeros for all $d, n$. That result is a special case of a more general result whereby any element of the Laguerre-Polya class produces a sequence of polynomials which can be put in place of the Hermite polynomials in (4.1). Thus, there is a wealth of seemingly different sequences of polynomials, any one of which can detect a violation of the Riemann Hypothesis.

We have argued that the Jensen polynomials are not a useful tool for attacking the Riemann Hypothesis. Might one of those other sequences of polynomials turn out to be more useful? Sadly, no. O’Sullivan goes on to show that if the even Jensen polynomial $J_{\Xi,ev}^{d,n}$ has only real zeros, then so does $P^{d,n}$. In other words, $P^{d,n}$ is less useful at detecting violations of the Riemann Hypothesis. The proof in [16] is in the context of $P^{d,n}$, but presumably the analysis extends to all the other sequences of polynomials.
4.2. Other differentiation-like operations. de Bruijn [7] and Newman [15] considered the following operation, which uses the notation of (3.3),

$$
\Xi_t(z) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} e^{t u^2} \varphi(u) e^{i z u} \, du.
$$

(4.2)

The de Bruijn-Newman constant is defined by

$$
\Lambda = \inf \{ t : \Xi_t \text{ has only real zeros} \}.
$$

The de Bruijn-Newman operation $$\Xi \rightarrow \Xi_t$$ has several properties in common with differentiation $$\Xi \rightarrow \Xi^{(j)}$$. For example, if $$\Xi_{t_0}$$ has only real zeros then $$\Xi_t$$ has only real zeros for all $$t > t_0$$. Also, if $$t > 0$$ then as $$x \rightarrow \infty$$ the zeros of $$\Xi_t(x)$$ approach equal spacing. Thus, the de Bruijn-Newman operation is even more efficient than differentiation at losing information and causing the zeros to approach equal spacing.

In some sense, de Bruijn-Newman operation is like repeated differentiation $$\Xi^{(j)}(z)$$ where $$j$$ is an increasing function of $$z$$. It is possible to somewhat precise about that remark. As shown in [8], Section 3, if $$z$$ is real then the main contribution in (4.2) is concentrated near $$u \approx z$$. If $$n$$ is the integer closest to $$t z^2$$, then the largest term in the Taylor series for $$e^{t u^2}$$ is approximately

$$
\frac{t^n}{n!} u^{2 n} \approx \frac{t^n}{n!} u^{2 t z^2}.
$$

(4.3)

In other words, as $$z \rightarrow \infty$$ the zeros of $$\Xi_t(z)$$ are approaching equal spacing are a rate comparable to the $$2t z^2$$rd derivative $$\Xi(2t z^2)(z)$$. That analysis may not withstand close scrutiny, but it does make it clear that the de Bruijn-Newman operation is extremely effective at causing zeros to approach equally spaced.

The above discussion was intended to emphasize the point that functions with a representation similar to (3.3) have a nice distribution to their zeros, which becomes nicer under operations similar to differentiation. But those seemingly magical properties are from the realm of analysis, not number theory.

5. Hermite polynomials and the function $$X_{10}$$

The function $$X_{10}$$ in the previous section approaches cosine under repeated differentiation. We now view that function through the lens of the results in [10]. Let $$X_{10}(x) = \sum \alpha(n) x^n / n!$$. Using Cauchy’s theorem, as described in [3], we computed the $$\alpha(n)$$ for a few $$n$$ near 100000, shown in Table 5.1. In the notation of (3.1), $$\gamma(n) = \alpha(2n) n! / (2n)!$$, so Table 5.1 is sufficient to approximate $$J_{X_{10, \text{ev}}}^{d, 50000}$$ for $$d \leq 6$$.

Let

$$
A = 6.288077476637003007403984783011648580 \times 10^{516790}
$$

$$
B = 1.600352019320098623551973272940701704 \times 10^{21}
$$

$$
C = 7.155862655552087639602840363255312494 \times 10^{8}.
$$

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| \( n \)     | \( a(n) \)                      |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| 100000       | 1.00000000001541185621398026602829 |
| 100002       | -1.00000000015411239767472129801496 |
| 100004       | 1.00000000015410623357948380052808 |
| 100006       | -1.00000000015410006985406058281322 |
| 100008       | 1.00000000015408774351253866151245 |
| 100010       | -1.00000000015408158089638080272719 |

Table 5.1. The nonvanishing Taylor coefficients of \( X_{10} \) for \( 100000 \leq n \leq 100012 \)

Then we find that

\[
AJ_{X_{10, ev}}^{6,50000}(Cx + B) = -120 + 5.368x + 180.045x^2 - 0.894x^3 - 30.0058x^4 + 0x^5 + x^6. \tag{5.2}
\]

For comparison, \( H_6(x/2) = -120 + 180x^2 - 30x^4 + x^6 \), so we see that the coefficients are close.

As another example, consider sinc\((x) = \sin(x)/x\). The Taylor coefficients of that function are easy to compute analytically, making it easier to explore high derivatives. For the 10-millionth derivative, with \( A, B, \) and \( C \) chosen appropriately, we find

\[
AJ_{\text{sinc, ev}}^{6,500000}(Cx + B) = -120 - 0.536x + 180.00045x^2 + 0.089x^3 - 30.000058x^4 + 0x^5 + x^6, \tag{5.3}
\]

which is even closer to \( H_6(x/2) \), and also suggests that the rate of convergence is on the scale of \( 1/\sqrt{n} \). These examples help support the suggestion that the appearance of the Hermite polynomials in the even Jensen polynomials is a universal phenomenon.

6. ON THE RANDOM MATRIX CONJECTURES FOR (DERIVATIVES OF) L-FUNCTIONS

We end by addressing the claims that the appearance of the Hermite polynomials in the even Jensen polynomials has implications for the random matrix statistics of L-functions.

The first issue is that the Hermite polynomials appear in the even Jensen polynomials for \( \xi^{(n)}(1/2 + z) \), in other words, in the classical Jensen polynomials for \( \xi^{(n)}(1/2 + \sqrt{x}) \). Since the zeros of \( \xi^{(n)}(1/2 + \sqrt{x}) \) lie in the left half-plane, close to the negative real axis, as \( n \) increases those zeros move onto the negative real axis and shift to the left. In the limit, the zeros fall off the negative real edge of the complex plane, and suitably rescaled (but not shifted), the limiting function is \( e^z \). In the scaled but unshifted classical Jensen polynomials, all the zeros accumulate at \( z = -1 \). Since it is \( J_{d,n}^{(\xi^{(n)}(1/2 + \sqrt{z}) \text{cl}}(z/d) \) which converges to \( \xi^{(n)}(1/2 + \sqrt{z}) \) as \( d \to \infty \), those zeros do not reveal anything about the limiting function at \( z \) in a compact subset.

The second issue is the density of zeros. The main claim for a connection to random matrix statistics is that both the zeros of Hermite polynomials and the eigenvalues of matrices in the Gaussian Unitary Ensemble (GUE) have a density given by the semicircular law. That is true, but for using the GUE to model zeros of L-functions, the semicircle density is a defect, not a feature. One must artificially rescale the eigenvalues of GUE matrices to achieve the flat density of zeros of L-functions. It is the statistics of the spacings, not the density of zeros, which are modeled by random matrices. For \( x \) in a bounded interval, the zeros of
the Hermite polynomial $H_d(x)$ approach equal spacing as $d \to \infty$. If those were modeling zeros of derivatives, it would merely be a reflection of the limiting cosine function, where all information about the original distribution of zeros has been lost.

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