

**Topic: Nonlinear restrictions, dummy variables, and nonlinear least squares**

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- This problem set covers three distinct topics: testing nonlinear hypotheses on parameters estimated from a linear model, inclusion and interpretation of dummy variables within a regression model, and nonlinear least squares (NLS) estimation.
- We use data on annual U.S. aggregate income ( $Y_t$ ) and consumption ( $C_t$ ) over the period 1950 – 1985 ( $t = 1, 2, \dots, T = 36$ ), available as `income_consumption.txt` on the website. Import the data into a **dated** workfile as `year`, `inc` and `cons`.
- Refer to Figures 1 – 4, and answer the following questions:<sup>1</sup>
  1. Perform a brief descriptive analysis of the dataset. Consider the rates of change of  $C_t$  and  $Y_t$  over time. Then estimate the following dynamic consumption function (this is an example of a ‘distributed lag model’, in which lagged values of the dependent variable appear as explanatory variables):

$$C_t = \alpha + \beta Y_t + \gamma C_{t-1} + u_t.$$

Carefully interpret the regression output. The estimated short-run marginal propensity to consume (SRMPC) is defined as:

$$\widehat{\text{SRMPC}} = \frac{\partial \widehat{C}_t}{\partial Y_t} = \widehat{\beta}.$$

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<sup>1</sup>Note that not all of the necessary steps are shown in the figures.

Now imagine that the dynamic system has settled into an equilibrium given the estimated parameters:  $C_t = C_{t-1} := C^*$  and  $Y_t = Y_{t-1} := Y^*$  and  $u_t = u_{t-1} = 0$  (where  $C^*$  and  $Y^*$  are respectively the ‘long-run’ values of consumption and income). The estimated long-run marginal propensity to consume (LRMPC) is then defined as:

$$\widehat{\text{LRMPC}} = \frac{\widehat{\partial C^*}}{\partial Y^*} = \frac{\widehat{\beta}}{1 - \widehat{\gamma}} := \widehat{\delta}.$$

Check that you can derive this. Then test whether the LRMPC is equal to 1, against the two-sided alternative, using both a linear hypothesis:

$$H_0 : \delta = 1 \quad \Longrightarrow \quad H_0 : \beta = 1 - \gamma.$$

and a **nonlinear hypothesis**:

$$H_0 : \delta = 1 \quad \Longrightarrow \quad H_0 : \frac{\beta}{1 - \gamma} = 1,$$

What do you notice about the results?<sup>2</sup>

2. Was there a structural break in income growth between 1962 and 1963? (i.e., is the mean growth rate from 1963 onwards different to the mean growth rate up until 1962?) Hint: estimate the following model:

$$Y_t = (\alpha + \beta D_{\text{year}_t \geq 1963}) + (\gamma + \lambda D_{\text{year}_t \geq 1963}) \text{year}_t + u_t,$$

where  $D_{\mathcal{A}}$  is a **dummy variable** that takes value 1 when condition  $\mathcal{A}$  is satisfied, and 0 otherwise. Think carefully about the null hypothesis. Hint: consider the implication of each of  $(\beta = 0, \lambda = 0)$ ,  $(\beta \neq 0, \lambda = 0)$ ,  $(\beta = 0, \lambda \neq 0)$  and

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<sup>2</sup>We do not assume any knowledge of the difficulties that can arise in modelling (these) time series.

( $\beta \neq 0, \lambda \neq 0$ ). Perform and interpret any relevant tests, and plot the fitted model. Can you suggest any limitations of using dummy variables to test for structural breaks in this way?

3. Estimate the nonlinear regression:

$$C_t = \alpha + \beta Y_t^\gamma + u_t, \quad (1)$$

with parameters  $\theta = (\alpha, \beta, \gamma)'$ , using **nonlinear least squares** (NLS)  $\hat{\theta}_N = \arg \min_{\theta} u'u$ . This is a numerical procedure, since in general  $\hat{\theta}_N$  will not have a closed-form solution. It can be difficult to find starting values  $\theta^\dagger$  for the parameters in a numerical optimization. There is no good rule, but here we can use the linear model, which is a special case of (1):

$$C_t = \alpha + \beta Y_t + u_t, \quad (2)$$

to provide ‘natural’ starting values. Run the linear regression (2) first, and then set the parameters  $\alpha^\dagger$  and  $\beta^\dagger$  equal to the OLS estimates. You can set  $\gamma^\dagger = 1$ . Then estimate (1).

Test the null hypothesis  $H_0 : \gamma = 1$  in (1), at the 95% level of significance. Then test whether the SRMPC is (a) constant (but not necessarily equal to 0), and (b) equal to 1, at the 95% level of significance. Explain your results.

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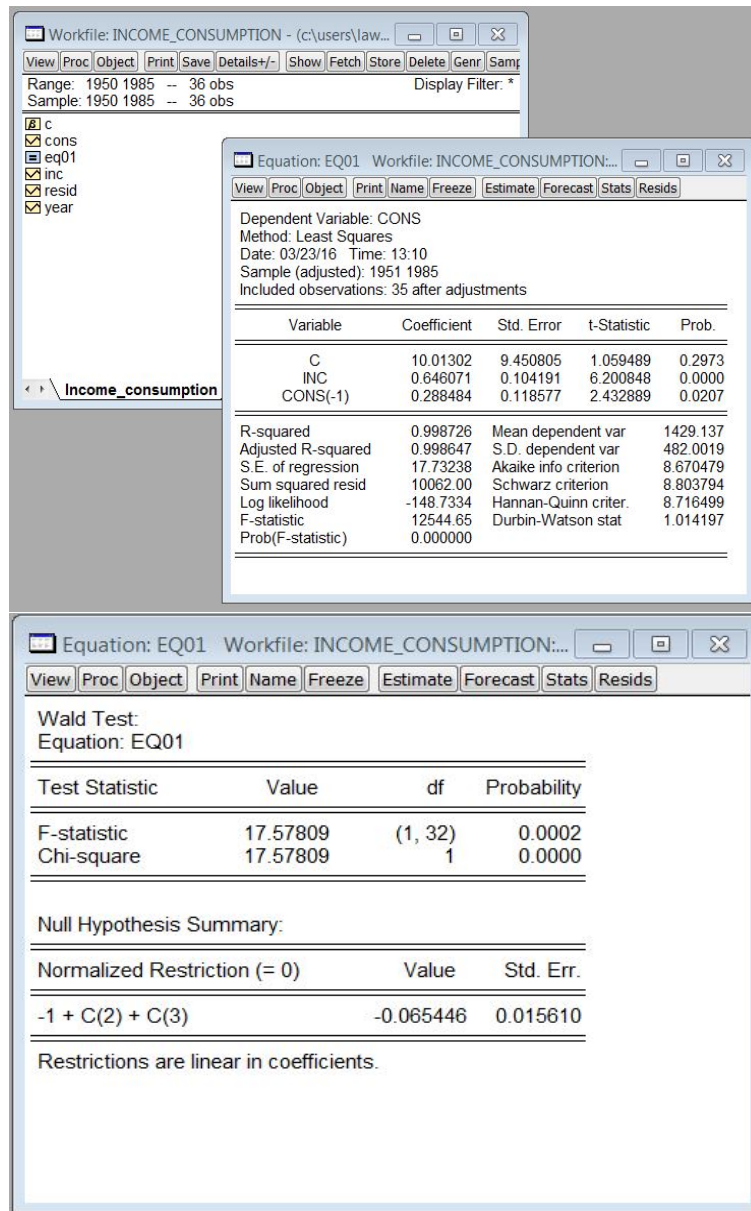


Figure 1: Ordinary least squares regression of consumption on a constant, income, and consumption lagged one period. Wald test of the null hypothesis  $H_0 : \beta = 1 - \gamma$ .

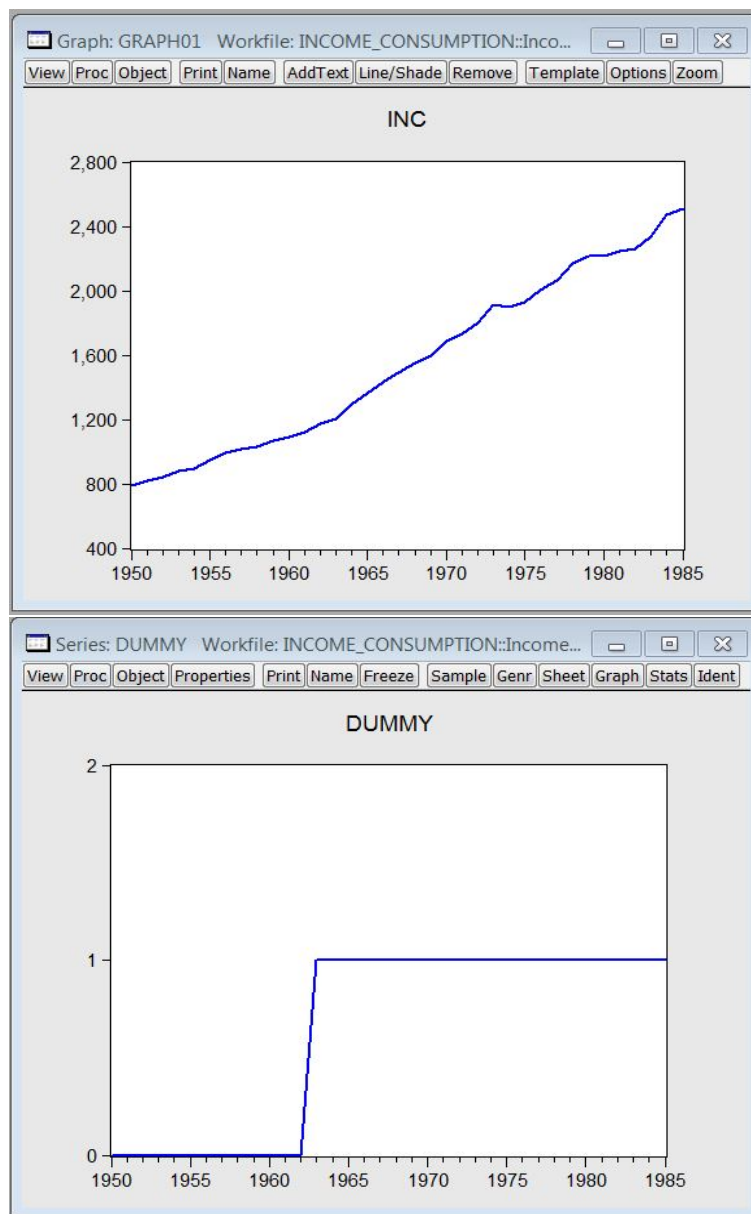


Figure 2: Plots of income and the time dummy variable against year.

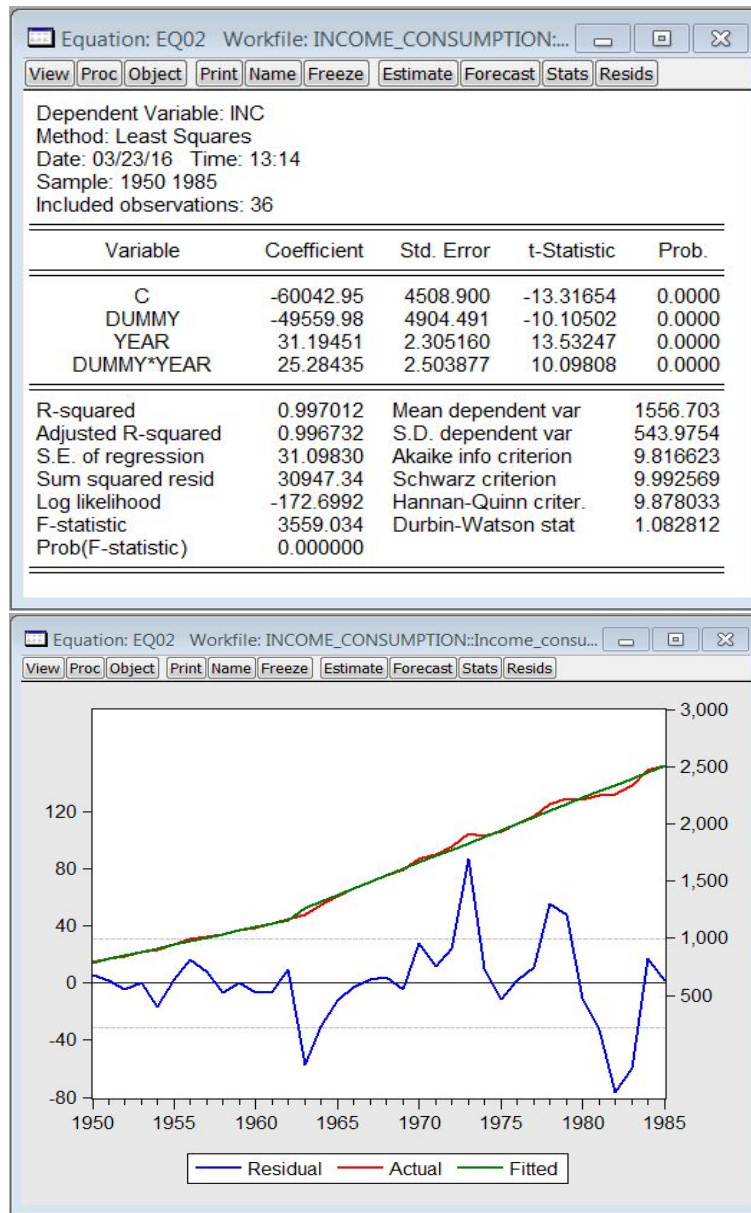


Figure 3: Ordinary least squares regression of income on a constant and year, and interactions with a dummy variable  $D_{\text{year}_t \geq 1963}$ . Plot of the fitted model and residuals, and observed income, against year.

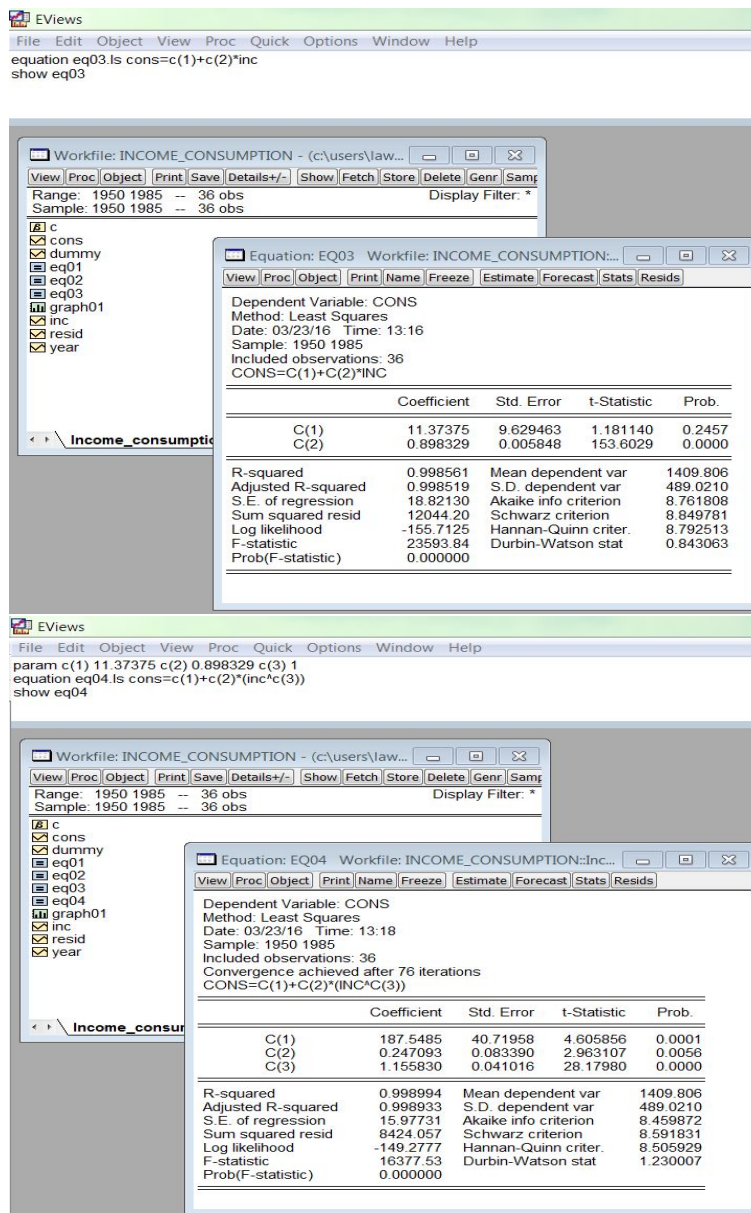


Figure 4: Ordinary least squares regression of consumption on a constant and income. Use the starting values  $\alpha^\dagger = 11.37375$  and  $\beta^\dagger = 0.898329$  and  $\gamma^\dagger = 1$  to find the *nonlinear* least squares estimates  $\hat{\theta}_N = (\hat{\alpha}_N, \hat{\beta}_N, \hat{\gamma}_N)'$  from a model of consumption on a constant and a coefficient multiplied by income raised to a power. Note that we must specify the coefficients explicitly in a nonlinear model.

Areas Under the Normal Curve

Z	Cum p	Tail p	Z	Cum p	Tail p	Z	Cum p	Tail p	Z	Cum p	Tail p	Z	Cum p	Tail p
0.00	0.5000	0.5000	0.40	0.6554	0.3446	0.80	0.7881	0.2119	1.20	0.8849	0.1151	1.60	0.9452	0.0548
0.01	0.5040	0.4960	0.41	0.6591	0.3409	0.81	0.7910	0.2090	1.21	0.8869	0.1131	1.61	0.9463	0.0537
0.02	0.5080	0.4920	0.42	0.6628	0.3372	0.82	0.7939	0.2061	1.22	0.8888	0.1112	1.62	0.9474	0.0526
0.03	0.5120	0.4880	0.43	0.6664	0.3336	0.83	0.7967	0.2033	1.23	0.8907	0.1093	1.63	0.9484	0.0516
0.04	0.5160	0.4840	0.44	0.6700	0.3300	0.84	0.7995	0.2005	1.24	0.8925	0.1075	1.64	0.9495	0.0505
0.05	0.5199	0.4801	0.45	0.6736	0.3264	0.85	0.8023	0.1977	1.25	0.8944	0.1056	1.65	<b>0.9505</b>	<b>0.0495</b>
0.06	0.5239	0.4761	0.46	0.6772	0.3228	0.86	0.8051	0.1949	1.26	0.8962	0.1038	1.66	0.9515	0.0485
0.07	0.5279	0.4721	0.47	0.6808	0.3192	0.87	0.8078	0.1922	1.27	0.8980	0.1020	1.67	0.9525	0.0475
0.08	0.5319	0.4681	0.48	0.6844	0.3156	0.88	0.8106	0.1894	1.28	0.8997	0.1003	1.68	0.9535	0.0465
0.09	0.5359	0.4641	0.49	0.6879	0.3121	0.89	0.8133	0.1867	1.29	0.9015	0.0985	1.69	0.9545	0.0455
0.10	0.5398	0.4602	0.50	0.6915	0.3085	0.90	0.8159	0.1841	1.30	0.9032	0.0968	1.70	0.9554	0.0446
0.11	0.5438	0.4562	0.51	0.6950	0.3050	0.91	0.8186	0.1814	1.31	0.9049	0.0951	1.71	0.9564	0.0436
0.12	0.5478	0.4522	0.52	0.6985	0.3015	0.92	0.8212	0.1788	1.32	0.9066	0.0934	1.72	0.9573	0.0427
0.13	0.5517	0.4483	0.53	0.7019	0.2981	0.93	0.8238	0.1762	1.33	0.9082	0.0918	1.73	0.9582	0.0418
0.14	0.5557	0.4443	0.54	0.7054	0.2946	0.94	0.8264	0.1736	1.34	0.9099	0.0901	1.74	0.9591	0.0409
0.15	0.5596	0.4404	0.55	0.7088	0.2912	0.95	0.8289	0.1711	1.35	0.9115	0.0885	1.75	0.9599	0.0401
0.16	0.5636	0.4364	0.56	0.7123	0.2877	0.96	0.8315	0.1685	1.36	0.9131	0.0869	1.76	0.9608	0.0392
0.17	0.5675	0.4325	0.57	0.7157	0.2843	0.97	0.8340	0.1660	1.37	0.9147	0.0853	1.77	0.9616	0.0384
0.18	0.5714	0.4286	0.58	0.7190	0.2810	0.98	0.8365	0.1635	1.38	0.9162	0.0838	1.78	0.9625	0.0375
0.19	0.5753	0.4247	0.59	0.7224	0.2776	0.99	0.8389	0.1611	1.39	0.9177	0.0823	1.79	0.9633	0.0367
0.20	0.5793	0.4207	0.60	0.7257	0.2743	1.00	0.8413	0.1587	1.40	0.9192	0.0808	1.80	0.9641	0.0359
0.21	0.5832	0.4168	0.61	0.7291	0.2709	1.01	0.8438	0.1562	1.41	0.9207	0.0793	1.81	0.9649	0.0351
0.22	0.5871	0.4129	0.62	0.7324	0.2676	1.02	0.8461	0.1539	1.42	0.9222	0.0778	1.82	0.9656	0.0344
0.23	0.5910	0.4090	0.63	0.7357	0.2643	1.03	0.8485	0.1515	1.43	0.9236	0.0764	1.83	0.9664	0.0336
0.24	0.5948	0.4052	0.64	0.7389	0.2611	1.04	0.8508	0.1492	1.44	0.9251	0.0749	1.84	0.9671	0.0329
0.25	0.5987	0.4013	0.65	0.7422	0.2578	1.05	0.8531	0.1469	1.45	0.9265	0.0735	1.85	0.9678	0.0322
0.26	0.6026	0.3974	0.66	0.7454	0.2546	1.06	0.8554	0.1446	1.46	0.9279	0.0721	1.86	0.9686	0.0314
0.27	0.6064	0.3936	0.67	0.7486	0.2514	1.07	0.8577	0.1423	1.47	0.9292	0.0708	1.87	0.9693	0.0307
0.28	0.6103	0.3897	0.68	0.7517	0.2483	1.08	0.8599	0.1401	1.48	0.9306	0.0694	1.88	0.9699	0.0301
0.29	0.6141	0.3859	0.69	0.7549	0.2451	1.09	0.8621	0.1379	1.49	0.9319	0.0681	1.89	0.9706	0.0294
0.30	0.6179	0.3821	0.70	0.7580	0.2420	1.10	0.8643	0.1357	1.50	0.9332	0.0668	1.90	0.9713	0.0287
0.31	0.6217	0.3783	0.71	0.7611	0.2389	1.11	0.8665	0.1335	1.51	0.9345	0.0655	1.91	0.9719	0.0281
0.32	0.6255	0.3745	0.72	0.7642	0.2358	1.12	0.8686	0.1314	1.52	0.9357	0.0643	1.92	0.9726	0.0274
0.33	0.6293	0.3707	0.73	0.7673	0.2327	1.13	0.8708	0.1292	1.53	0.9370	0.0630	1.93	0.9732	0.0268
0.34	0.6331	0.3669	0.74	0.7704	0.2296	1.14	0.8729	0.1271	1.54	0.9382	0.0618	1.94	0.9738	0.0262
0.35	0.6368	0.3632	0.75	0.7734	0.2266	1.15	0.8749	0.1251	1.55	0.9394	0.0606	1.95	0.9744	0.0256
0.36	0.6406	0.3594	0.76	0.7764	0.2236	1.16	0.8770	0.1230	1.56	0.9406	0.0594	1.96	<b>0.9750</b>	<b>0.0250</b>
0.37	0.6443	0.3557	0.77	0.7794	0.2206	1.17	0.8790	0.1210	1.57	0.9418	0.0582	1.97	0.9756	0.0244
0.38	0.6480	0.3520	0.78	0.7823	0.2177	1.18	0.8810	0.1190	1.58	0.9429	0.0571	1.98	0.9761	0.0239
0.39	0.6517	0.3483	0.79	0.7852	0.2148	1.19	0.8830	0.1170	1.59	0.9441	0.0559	1.99	0.9767	0.0233

Figure 5: Statistical table for  $N(0, 1)$ .



**Critical Values of the  $t$  Distribution**

df	2-tailed testing			1-tailed testing		
	**			**		
	0.1	0.05	0.01	0.1	0.05	0.01
5	2.015	2.571	4.032	1.476	2.015	3.365
6	1.943	2.447	3.707	1.440	1.943	3.143
7	1.895	2.365	3.499	1.415	1.895	2.998
8	1.860	2.306	3.355	1.397	1.860	2.896
9	1.833	2.262	3.250	1.383	1.833	2.821
10	1.812	2.228	3.169	1.372	1.812	2.764
11	1.796	2.201	3.106	1.363	1.796	2.718
12	1.782	2.179	3.055	1.356	1.782	2.681
13	1.771	2.160	3.012	1.350	1.771	2.650
14	1.761	2.145	2.977	1.345	1.761	2.624
15	1.753	2.131	2.947	1.341	1.753	2.602
16	1.746	2.120	2.921	1.337	1.746	2.583
17	1.740	2.110	2.898	1.333	1.740	2.567
18	1.734	2.101	2.878	1.330	1.734	2.552
19	1.729	2.093	2.861	1.328	1.729	2.539
20	1.725	2.086	2.845	1.325	1.725	2.528
21	1.721	2.080	2.831	1.323	1.721	2.518
22	1.717	2.074	2.819	1.321	1.717	2.508
23	1.714	2.069	2.807	1.319	1.714	2.500
24	1.711	2.064	2.797	1.318	1.711	2.492
25	1.708	2.060	2.787	1.316	1.708	2.485
26	1.706	2.056	2.779	1.315	1.706	2.479
27	1.703	2.052	2.771	1.314	1.703	2.473
28	1.701	2.048	2.763	1.313	1.701	2.467
29	1.699	2.045	2.756	1.311	1.699	2.462
30	1.697	2.042	2.750	1.310	1.697	2.457
40	1.684	2.021	2.704	1.303	1.684	2.423
50	1.676	2.009	2.678	1.299	1.676	2.403
60	1.671	2.000	2.660	1.296	1.671	2.390
80	1.664	1.990	2.639	1.292	1.664	2.374
100	1.660	1.984	2.626	1.290	1.660	2.364
120	1.658	1.980	2.617	1.289	1.658	2.358
**	1.645	1.960	2.576	1.282	1.645	2.327

Figure 6: Statistical table for Student's  $t(r)$ .

**Critical Values of the  $F$  Distribution**  
( $\alpha = .05$ )

df within	df between										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	12	24	$\infty$
5	6.61	5.79	5.41	5.19	5.05	4.95	4.88	4.82	4.68	4.53	4.37
6	5.99	5.14	4.76	4.53	4.39	4.28	4.21	4.15	4.00	3.84	3.67
7	5.59	4.74	4.35	4.12	3.97	3.87	3.79	3.73	3.57	3.41	3.23
8	5.32	4.46	4.07	3.84	3.69	3.58	3.50	3.44	3.28	3.12	2.93
9	5.12	4.26	3.86	3.63	3.48	3.37	3.29	3.23	3.07	2.90	2.71
10	4.96	4.10	3.71	3.48	3.33	3.22	3.14	3.07	2.91	2.74	2.54
11	4.84	3.98	3.59	3.36	3.20	3.09	3.01	2.95	2.79	2.61	2.41
12	4.75	3.89	3.49	3.26	3.11	3.00	2.91	2.85	2.69	2.51	2.30
13	4.67	3.81	3.41	3.18	3.03	2.92	2.83	2.77	2.60	2.42	2.21
14	4.60	3.74	3.34	3.11	2.96	2.85	2.76	2.70	2.53	2.35	2.13
15	4.54	3.68	3.29	3.06	2.90	2.79	2.71	2.64	2.48	2.29	2.07
16	4.49	3.63	3.24	3.01	2.85	2.74	2.66	2.59	2.42	2.24	2.01
17	4.45	3.59	3.20	2.96	2.81	2.70	2.61	2.55	2.38	2.19	1.96
18	4.41	3.55	3.16	2.93	2.77	2.66	2.58	2.51	2.34	2.15	1.92
19	4.38	3.52	3.13	2.90	2.74	2.63	2.54	2.48	2.31	2.11	1.88
20	4.35	3.49	3.10	2.87	2.71	2.60	2.51	2.45	2.28	2.08	1.84
21	4.32	3.47	3.07	2.84	2.68	2.57	2.49	2.42	2.25	2.05	1.81
22	4.30	3.44	3.05	2.82	2.66	2.55	2.46	2.40	2.23	2.03	1.78
23	4.28	3.42	3.03	2.80	2.64	2.53	2.44	2.37	2.20	2.01	1.76
24	4.26	3.40	3.01	2.78	2.62	2.51	2.42	2.36	2.18	1.98	1.73
25	4.24	3.39	2.99	2.76	2.60	2.49	2.40	2.34	2.16	1.96	1.71
26	4.23	3.37	2.98	2.74	2.59	2.47	2.39	2.32	2.15	1.95	1.69
27	4.21	3.35	2.96	2.73	2.57	2.46	2.37	2.31	2.13	1.93	1.67
28	4.20	3.34	2.95	2.71	2.56	2.45	2.36	2.29	2.12	1.91	1.66
29	4.18	3.33	2.93	2.70	2.55	2.43	2.35	2.28	2.10	1.90	1.64
30	4.17	3.32	2.92	2.69	2.53	2.42	2.33	2.27	2.09	1.89	1.62
40	4.08	3.23	2.84	2.61	2.45	2.34	2.25	2.18	2.00	1.79	1.51
60	4.00	3.15	2.76	2.53	2.37	2.25	2.17	2.10	1.92	1.70	1.39
80	3.96	3.11	2.72	2.49	2.33	2.21	2.13	2.06	1.88	1.65	1.33
100	3.94	3.09	2.70	2.46	2.31	2.19	2.10	2.03	1.85	1.63	1.28
120	3.92	3.07	2.68	2.45	2.29	2.18	2.09	2.02	1.83	1.61	1.26
$\infty$	3.84	3.00	2.61	2.37	2.22	2.10	2.01	1.94	1.75	1.52	1.00

Figure 7: Statistical table for  $F(m, n)$  at the 5% level.

**Critical Values of the  $F$  Distribution**  
( $\alpha = .01$ )

df within	df between										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	12	24	$\infty$
5	16.26	13.27	12.06	11.39	10.97	10.67	10.46	10.29	9.89	9.47	9.02
6	13.75	10.92	9.78	9.15	8.75	8.47	8.26	8.10	7.72	7.31	6.88
7	12.25	9.55	8.45	7.85	7.46	7.19	6.99	6.84	6.47	6.07	5.65
8	11.26	8.65	7.59	7.01	6.63	6.37	6.18	6.03	5.67	5.28	4.86
9	10.56	8.02	6.99	6.42	6.06	5.80	5.61	5.47	5.11	4.73	4.31
10	10.04	7.56	6.55	5.99	5.64	5.39	5.20	5.06	4.71	4.33	3.91
11	9.65	7.21	6.22	5.67	5.32	5.07	4.89	4.74	4.40	4.02	3.60
12	9.33	6.93	5.95	5.41	5.06	4.82	4.64	4.50	4.16	3.78	3.36
13	9.07	6.70	5.74	5.21	4.86	4.62	4.44	4.30	3.96	3.59	3.17
14	8.86	6.51	5.56	5.04	4.69	4.46	4.28	4.14	3.80	3.43	3.01
15	8.68	6.36	5.42	4.89	4.56	4.32	4.14	4.00	3.67	3.29	2.87
16	8.53	6.23	5.29	4.77	4.44	4.20	4.03	3.89	3.55	3.18	2.75
17	8.40	6.11	5.18	4.67	4.34	4.10	3.93	3.79	3.46	3.08	2.65
18	8.29	6.01	5.09	4.58	4.25	4.01	3.84	3.71	3.37	3.00	2.57
19	8.18	5.93	5.01	4.50	4.17	3.94	3.77	3.63	3.30	2.92	2.49
20	8.10	5.85	4.94	4.43	4.10	3.87	3.70	3.56	3.23	2.86	2.42
21	8.02	5.78	4.87	4.37	4.04	3.81	3.64	3.51	3.17	2.80	2.36
22	7.95	5.72	4.82	4.31	3.99	3.76	3.59	3.45	3.12	2.75	2.31
23	7.88	5.66	4.76	4.26	3.94	3.71	3.54	3.41	3.07	2.70	2.26
24	7.82	5.61	4.72	4.22	3.90	3.67	3.50	3.36	3.03	2.66	2.21
25	7.77	5.57	4.68	4.18	3.85	3.63	3.46	3.32	2.99	2.62	2.17
26	7.72	5.53	4.64	4.14	3.82	3.59	3.42	3.29	2.96	2.58	2.13
27	7.68	5.49	4.60	4.11	3.78	3.56	3.39	3.26	2.93	2.55	2.10
28	7.64	5.45	4.57	4.07	3.75	3.53	3.36	3.23	2.90	2.52	2.07
29	7.60	5.42	4.54	4.04	3.73	3.50	3.33	3.20	2.87	2.49	2.04
30	7.56	5.39	4.51	4.02	3.70	3.47	3.30	3.17	2.84	2.47	2.01
40	7.31	5.18	4.31	3.83	3.51	3.29	3.12	2.99	2.66	2.29	1.81
60	7.08	4.98	4.13	3.65	3.34	3.12	2.95	2.82	2.50	2.12	1.60
80	6.96	4.88	4.04	3.56	3.26	3.04	2.87	2.74	2.42	2.03	1.50
100	6.90	4.82	3.98	3.51	3.21	2.99	2.82	2.69	2.37	1.98	1.43
120	6.85	4.79	3.95	3.48	3.17	2.96	2.79	2.66	2.34	1.95	1.38
$\infty$	6.64	4.61	3.78	3.32	3.02	2.80	2.64	2.51	2.19	1.79	1.00

Figure 8: Statistical table for  $F(m, n)$  at the 1% level.

**Critical Values of the  $\chi^2$  Distribution**

df	Area in the Upper Tail					
	0.99	0.95	0.9	0.1	0.05	0.01
1	0.000	0.004	0.016	2.706	3.841	6.635
2	0.020	0.103	0.211	4.605	5.991	9.210
3	0.115	0.352	0.584	6.251	7.815	11.345
4	0.297	0.711	1.064	7.779	9.488	13.277
5	0.554	1.145	1.610	9.236	11.070	15.086
6	0.872	1.635	2.204	10.645	12.592	16.812
7	1.239	2.167	2.833	12.017	14.067	18.475
8	1.646	2.733	3.490	13.362	15.507	20.090
9	2.088	3.325	4.168	14.684	16.919	21.666
10	2.558	3.940	4.865	15.987	18.307	23.209
11	3.053	4.575	5.578	17.275	19.675	24.725
12	3.571	5.226	6.304	18.549	21.026	26.217
13	4.107	5.892	7.042	19.812	22.362	27.688
14	4.660	6.571	7.790	21.064	23.685	29.141
15	5.229	7.261	8.547	22.307	24.996	30.578
16	5.812	7.962	9.312	23.542	26.296	32.000
17	6.408	8.672	10.085	24.769	27.587	33.409
18	7.015	9.390	10.865	25.989	28.869	34.805
19	7.633	10.117	11.651	27.204	30.144	36.191
20	8.260	10.851	12.443	28.412	31.410	37.566
21	8.897	11.591	13.240	29.615	32.671	38.932
22	9.542	12.338	14.041	30.813	33.924	40.289
23	10.196	13.091	14.848	32.007	35.172	41.638
24	10.856	13.848	15.659	33.196	36.415	42.980
25	11.524	14.611	16.473	34.382	37.652	44.314

Figure 9: Statistical table for  $\chi^2(q)$ .