

# Functions and Determinism in Property-based Testing

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**stripe**

# who am i?

- **typelevel** member  $\lambda$
- maintain **spire**, **cats**, and other scala libraries<sup>1</sup>
- interested in expressiveness **and** performance ☯
- support machine learning at **stripe**

code at: <http://github.com/non>

<sup>1</sup> ScalaCheck co-maintainer as of Monday!

# what will this talk cover?

1. property-based testing **overview** ♖
2. scalacheck **case studies** ☎
3. **dive** into generators ☞
4. **deterministic** function generation  $\lambda$
5. some **take-aways** about laws and generators ⚙
6. **enthusiasm** for testing! ☀

# overview

## origin story

The paper that launched a thousand implementations:

"QuickCheck: A Lightweight Tool for Random Testing of Haskell Programs" (ICFP 2000)

by Koen Claessen and John Hughes

Introduces **properties** and **generators**, with a mention of **shrinking** as well.

## in all languages <sup>2</sup>

- **Haskell**: QuickCheck, SmallCheck, LeanCheck, Hedgehog
- **Scala**: ScalaCheck, Scalaprops, Sonic
- **Python**: Hypothesis
- **Clojure**: test.check
- **Java**: junit-quickcheck
- **C**: Theft
- **Javascript**: qc.js
- **Rust**: QuickCheck for Rust
- **Go**: Gopter

<sup>2</sup> Most languages have more than one library, this is a semi-curated subset.



# the basic idea

The basic unit is a **property**:

- Essentially a function that returns **Boolean**
- Properties must be true for all valid inputs:  $\forall x.P(x)$
- Thus, one false result disproves the property
- In most cases we can't exhaustively test a property

Property-based tests search for **counter-examples**.

# false positives

Most properties are possibly true or definitely false.

$\forall x P(x)$	$= \neg \exists x \neg P(x)$	-- predicate is true
$\neg \forall x P(x)$	$= \exists x \neg P(x)$	-- predicate is false

"Program testing can be used to show the presence of bugs, but never to show their absence!"

Dijkstra (1970) "Notes On Structured Programming"



## in practice

To test a property we:

- choose how many passing cases we want
- generate that many test cases<sup>3</sup>
- evaluate our property for each case

The property is falsified (test fails) if any test case fails.

<sup>3</sup> Hopefully the tests cases we generate are mostly distinct.

## in practice

We can base our confidence on the number of passing test cases.

- Run fewer interactively to keep things **snappy**
- Run many more in CI (e.g. **Travis**) for peace of mind

**100** test cases give us a bit of confidence...

...but with **10k** we have (up to) 100x as much confidence.

# case studies

A dark, atmospheric photograph of an industrial waterfront at dusk or dawn. The sky is a deep, dark blue-grey. In the background, the silhouettes of industrial buildings, power lines, and a tall tower are visible against the horizon. The foreground is dominated by a body of water, which reflects the faint lights from the buildings and the sky, creating a shimmering effect. The overall mood is somber and industrial.

## case 1: archery

Archery is an immutable 2D R-Tree implementation.

<http://github.com/meetup/archery>

R-Trees were first proposed in:

"R-Trees: A Dynamic Index Structure for  
Spatial Searching"

Antonin Guttman (SIGMOD 1984)

We'll look at how Archery tests its core algorithm.

```

property("rtree.nearestK works") {
  forAll { (es: List[Entry[Int]], p: Point, k0: Int) =>
    val k = (k0 % 1000).abs // ensure k is 0-999
    val rt = build(es)      // build an RTree[Int]

    // map each geometry in `es` to its distance from `p`.
    // then sort and find the closest `k` geometries.
    val expected = es.map(_.geom.distance(p))
      .sorted.take(k).toVector

    // find the closest `k` geometries using the RTree
    val got = rt.nearestK(p, k).map(_.geom.distance(p))

    got shouldBe expected // these results should agree
  }
}

```

## case 1: archery

Bugs this has caught, or could catch:

- Broken R-Tree generation (**build**)
- Broken searching (**nearestK**)
- Duplicate entries at same point ignored
- Searching for nearest **0** points could crash

## case 2: jawn

Jawn is a pluggable JSON parser.

Used by other JSON libraries, such as Circe.

<https://github.com/non/jawn>

We'll look at how Jawn tests its parser/renderer.



```
property("idempotent parsing/rendering") {  
  forAll { value1: JValue =>  
    val json1 = CanonicalRenderer.render(value1)  
    val value2 = JParser.parseFromString(json1).get  
    val json2 = CanonicalRenderer.render(value2)  
  
    json2 shouldBe json1  
    json2.## shouldBe json1.##  
  
    value1 shouldBe value2  
    value1.## shouldBe value2.##  
  
    parser.Util.withTemp(json1) { t =>  
      JParser.parseFromFile(t).get shouldBe value2  
    }  
  }  
}
```

## case 2: jawn

Bugs this has caught, or could catch:

- assorted parser bugs
- assorted rendering bugs
- parse → render changes data (e.g. 9 vs 9.0)
- broken equality on JValue
- broken hashCode on JValue
- parsing from files and strings differs

## case 3: spire

Spire is a numeric library for Scala which is intended to be generic, fast, and precise.

<http://github.com/non/spire>

In this example we'll look at Spire's **Interval** type.

```
def testUnop(
  f: Interval[Rational] => Interval[Rational],
  g: Rational => Rational): Unit = {
  forAll { (orig: Interval[Rational]) =>
    val modified = f(a)
    sample(orig, 100).forall { x =>
      modified.contains(g(x)) shouldBe True
    }
  }
}
```

```
property("sampled unop pow(2)")(testUnop(_.pow(2), _.pow(2)))
property("sampled unop pow(3)")(testUnop(_.pow(3), _.pow(3)))
```

## case 4: CountVectorizer

Converts a text feature into counts, including N-grams.

We are testing code that identifies all N-grams in a text.

```
val iter = "abcde".iterator.map(_.toString)
val it = new NGramIterator(it, 2, 3, None)
it.toList // List(ab, bc, abc, cd, bcd, de, cde)
```

(This test is taken from a project at Stripe.)

```
"work with any sequence" in {  
  forAll { (data: NGramIteratorData) =>  
    val NGramIteratorData(str, minN, maxN) = data  
  
    val expected = (minN to maxN).flatMap { n =>  
      iter(str).sliding(n).map(_.mkString(""))  
    }  
  
    val it = new NGramIterator(iter(str), minN, maxN, _ + _)  
    val actual = it.toList.sortBy(_.length)  
    assert(actual == expected)  
  }  
}
```

# case study summary

Types of tests we saw:

- Laws (e.g. **idempotence**, **associativity**, etc.)
- **Parallel** evaluation (e.g. fast vs slow-but-correct)
- **Spot** checking (e.g. sampling inside the interval)
- Just **exercising** the code
- Forcing us to **think** a bit about how we test



# what are we missing?

Consider:

```
property("idempotent parsing/rendering") {  
  forAll { value1: JValue =>  
    ...  
  }  
}
```

The big question: how did we get a **JValue** to begin with?



# generators

## ⚠️ WARNING ⚠️

What follows is a **simplified** view of ScalaCheck.

The simplification ellides:

- efficiency concerns
- crufty, legacy API details
- important features which we don't need
- the larger ScalaCheck framework

Later we'll compare ScalaCheck's **Gen** with this one.

# anatomy of a generator

The core idea: generate random values.

```
// given a source of randomness,  
// produce an A value.  
case class Gen[A](run: Rng => A)  
  
object Gen {  
  def const[A](a: A): Gen[A] = Gen(_ => a)  
}
```

# anatomy of a generator

The core idea: generate random values **reproducibly**.

```
// given a source of randomness,  
// produce an A value and an updated source.  
case class Gen[A](run: Rng => (A, Rng))  
  
object Gen {  
  def const[A](a: A): Gen[A] = Gen(r => (a, r))  
}
```

# anatomy of a generator

The core idea: generate random values **reproducibly**.

```
// given a source of randomness,  
// produce an A value and an updated source.  
case class Gen[A](run: Rng => (A, Rng))  
  
object Gen {  
  def const[A](a: A): Gen[A] = Gen(r => (a, r))  
}
```

(pay no attention to the **state monad** behind the curtain.)

## why determinism?

- easier to **reason** about what is happening
- ensure test code is **independent** of test
- **reproducible** tests and test cases
- **concurrent/parallel** test evaluation
- can break rules if needed (e.g. in the **REPL**)

what do you think?



# anatomy of a random-number generator

Here's an RNG sufficient for demo purposes:

```
// donald knuth's 64-bit MMIX rng
case class Rng(seed: Long) {
  def next: Rng = Rng(
    seed *
    6364136223846793005L +
    1442695040888963407L)
}
```

# anatomy of a random-number generator

**Rng** represents a position in an immutable sequence:

```
object Rng {  
  def random: Rng = {  
    val seed: Long = scala.util.Random.nextLong  
    Rng(seed)  
  }  
}
```

```
val rng0 = Rng.random    // Rng(312107151824040236)  
val rng1 = rng0.next     // Rng(2643567112438381067)  
val rng2 = rng1.next     // Rng(3536375599844977214)  
val rng3 = rng2.next     // Rng(-8652326046818176971)  
// and so on...
```

# anatomy of a random-number generator

It's a relatively small step to a stream of bytes:

```
val rng0 = Rng.random
val stream = Stream.iterate(rng0, 6)(r => r.next)
// Stream(Rng(1344895957756080708), ?)
```

```
val bytes = stream.map(r => r.seed.toByte)
bytes.toList
// List(4, 3, -42, -19, -8, -25)
```

# simple generators

Simple generators can extract values from seeds:

```
val long: Gen[Long] =  
  Gen(r => (r.seed, r.next))
```

```
val bool: Gen[Boolean] =  
  Gen(r => (r.seed >= 0, r.next))
```

```
val char: Gen[Char] =  
  Gen(r => (r.seed.toChar, r.next))
```

Notice we return **r.next** to move along the RNG sequence!

# simple generators

Even some "simple" generators are a bit fancy:

```
// doubles in the range [0, 1).  
// e.g. (-1L >>> 11) * const = 0.999999999999999999999999  
val double: Gen[Double] =  
  Gen { r =>  
    val shifted = r.seed >>> 11          // upper 53-bits  
    val const = 1.1102230246251565e-16    // magic number  
    val x = shifted * const               // 0.0 <= x < 1.0  
    (x, r.next)  
  }
```

# simple generators

Boilerplate alert!

We're always returning `r.next` in addition to our value:

```
val bool: Gen[Boolean] =  
  Gen(r => (r.seed >= 0, r.next))
```

```
val char: Gen[Char] =  
  Gen(r => (r.seed.toChar, r.next))
```

Seems like we could be a bit more expressive, right?

# introducing map

We can use a **map** method to remove this kind of boilerplate!

```
case class Gen[A](run: Rng => (A, Rng)) { self =>
  def map[B](f: A => B): Gen[B] =
    Gen { rng0 =>
      val (a, rng1) = self.run(rng0)
      (f(a), rng1)
    }
}
```



## simple generators (revisited)

```
val bool: Gen[Boolean] =  
  long.map(_ >= 0) // using the original long generator
```

```
val double: Gen[Double] =  
  long.map(x => (x >>> 11) * 1.1102230246251565e-16)
```

```
def upTo(limit: Int): Gen[Int] =  
  double.map(x => (x * limit).toInt) // 0 <= _ < n
```

```
def oneIn(chance: Int): Gen[Boolean] =  
  upTo(chance).map(_ == 0) // true 1-in-chance times
```

## testing it out!

```
case class Gen[A](apply: Rng => (A, Rng)) {  
  
  ...  
  
  // impure! only do these from a REPL!  
  
  def sample: A =  
    run(Rng.random)._1  
  
  def take(n: Int): List[A] =  
    (1 to n).map(_ => sample).toList  
}
```

## testing it out!

```
val d6 = upto(6).map(_ + 1) // uniform values 1-6
val samples = d6.take(10000) // 10k random samples

val histogram = samples.groupBy(x => x).mapValues(_.size)
histogram.toList.sorted.foreach(println)
// (1,1656)
// (2,1646)
// (3,1629)
// (4,1699)
// (5,1706)
// (6,1664)
```

# simple generators (summary)

What did we learn so far?

- **it works!** (at least in the REPL)
- **map** and **long** are enough for **simple** generators
- our RNG is mostly **implicit** (usually a good thing!)
- we should be **explicit** about **distribution** and **range**
- requires relatively small **kernel** of functionality

# simple generators (summary)

What have we left out so far?

- generators with **type parameters**
- generators that need more than **64-bits** of **entropy**
- **lists** and other **collections**
- correctly **threading** RNG state
- **functions** and other **exotic types**

# fancy generators

Let's start with a generator we need: `Gen[List[A]]`.

(We need this to write a better `take` method on `Gen`.)

Our gameplan:

- use generators `recursively`
- thread `RNG state` through `appropriately`
- `profit!`

# fancy generators

If we're careful, we can generate lists:

```
// generate a list of n random values
def fixedList[A](gen: Gen[A], n: Int): Gen[List[A]] =
  if (n <= 0) Gen.const(Nil)
  else Gen { rng0 =>
    val (head, rng1) = gen.run(rng0)
    val (tail, rng2) = fixedList(gen, n - 1).run(rng1)
    (head :: tail, rng2)
  }
```

## fancy generators

And we can use these to get even fancier:

```
// generate a randomly-sized list of random values
def list[A](gen: Gen[A], sized: Gen[Int]): Gen[List[A]] =
  Gen { rng0 =>
    val (n, rng1) = sized.run(rng0)
    fixedList(gen, n).run(rng1)
  }
```

As before, it seems like we should be able to simplify.



# introducing flatMap

Did you see this coming?

```
case class Gen[A](run: Rng => (A, Rng)) { self =>
```

```
...
```

```
def flatMap[B](f: A => Gen[B]): Gen[B] =  
  Gen { rng0 =>  
    val (a, rng1) = self.run(rng0)  
    val gb: Gen[B] = f(a)  
    gb.run(rng1)  
  }  
}
```

## fancy generators (revisited)

```
// generate a list of n random values
def fixedList[A](gen: Gen[A], n: Int): Gen[List[A]] =
  if (n <= 0) Gen.const(Nil)
  else gen.flatMap { a =>
    fixedList(gen, n - 1).map(as => a :: as)
  }

// i.e.
// for {
//   a <- gen
//   as <- fixedList(gen, n - 1)
// } yield a :: as
```

## fancy generators (revisited)

This one gets even nicer:

```
def list[A](gen: Gen[A], sized: Gen[Int]): Gen[List[A]] =  
  sized.flatMap(n => fixedList(gen, n))
```

**flatMap** unlocks the power of  $A \Rightarrow \text{Gen}[B]$  methods:

```
def upTo(n: Int): Gen[Int]
```

```
def oneIn(n: Int): Gen[Boolean]
```

## even more generators

```
def option[A](g: Gen[A]): Gen[Option[A]] =  
  oneIn(10).flatMap { isNone =>           // 10/90% none/some  
    if (isNone) Gen.const(None) else g.map(a => Some(a))  
  }
```

```
def either[A, B](ga: Gen[A], gb: Gen[B]): Gen[Either[A, B]] =  
  oneIn(2).flatMap {                       // 50/50% left/right  
    case true => gb.map(b => Right(b))  
    case false => ga.map(a => Left(a))  
  }
```

```
def pair[A, B](ga: Gen[A], gb: Gen[B]): Gen[(A, B)] =  
  ga.flatMap(a => gb.map(b => (a, b)))
```

## so many generators!

```
def set[A](g: Gen[A]): Gen[Set[A]] =  
  list(g, upto(64)).map(_._2.toSet)
```

```
def vector[A](g: Gen[A]): Gen[Vector[A]] =  
  list(g, upto(64)).map(_._2.toVector)
```

```
val string: Gen[String] =  
  list(char, upto(32)).map(_._2.mkString)
```

```
def map[A](g: Gen[A]): Gen[Map[String, A]] =  
  list(pair(string, g), upto(64)).map(pairs => pairs.toMap)
```

# fancy generator (summary)

What did we learn this time?

- **flatMap** is amazingly powerful! ✱
- we built **product types** (e.g. tuples, case classes)
- we built **sum types** (e.g. either, option)
- we built **collections** (e.g. set, vector, map)
- **is there anything we can't do?** 🎵

**a challenger appears!**

What about `Gen[A => B]`?

Can we write a generator for function values?

**a challenger appears!**

What about `Gen[A => B]`?

Can we write a generator for function values?

What do you think?



## putting the lazy in fp

Here's one that is technically "correct":

```
def constFunction[A, B](gb: Gen[B]): Gen[A => B] =  
  gb.map { b =>  
    (a: A) => b  
  }
```

(But we only generate constant functions!)

## putting the lazy in fp

```
val function: Int => Double =  
  constFunction(double).sample
```

```
val values = (1 to 100).map(function)  
values.toSet // Set(0.6081705385711283)
```

Unfortunately, these aren't very useful.

Let's try again.

# principles are for other people

```
def wildFunction[A, B](gb: Gen[B]): Gen[A => B] = {  
  // HACK: sample uses a random Rng value  
  def wild(a: A): B = gb.sample  
  
  Gen.const(wild)  
}
```

At least they aren't constant functions!

# principles are for other people

Let's see:

```
val function: Int => Boolean =  
  wildFunction(bool).sample
```

```
val values = (1 to 5).map(_ => function(0))  
// Vector(true, true, false, true, false)
```

They aren't constant functions,  
because they aren't functions at all! 💀

**hmmmm.**

Are we stuck?

## taking a step back

In both cases, we required a `Gen[B]`.

But we don't have anything mentioning `A`.  
(We don't need `Gen[A]`; we won't generate `A` values.)

What gives?

## taking a step back

Recall, that `Gen[B]` is basically:

```
Rng => (B, Rng) // consume rng state to generate B
```

## taking a step back

Recall, that `Gen[B]` is basically:

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We sort of want the opposite, right?

```
???????????????? // ?????????????????????????????????????????
```



## taking a step back

Recall, that `Gen[B]` is basically:

```
Rng => (B, Rng) // consume rng state to generate B
```

We sort of want the opposite, right?

```
???????????????? // ?????????????????????????????????
```

When in doubt, reverse things!

## taking a step back

Recall, that `Gen[B]` is basically:

```
Rng => (B, Rng) // consume rng state to generate B
```

We sort of want the opposite, right?

```
???????????????? // consume A to generate rng state
```

When in doubt, reverse things!

## taking a step back

Recall, that `Gen[B]` is basically:

```
Rng => (B, Rng) // consume rng state to generate B
```

We sort of want the opposite, right?

```
(A, Rng) => Rng // consume A to generate rng state
```

When in doubt, reverse things!

# leap of faith

It's not totally clear yet, but let's go with it!

```
case class Cogen[A](rewind: (A, Rng) => Rng)

val clong: Cogen[Long] =
  Cogen { (n, rng0) =>
    val rng1 = Rng(rng0.seed ^ n) // xor n with the seed
    rng1.next                      // get the next value in the sequence
  }
```

So now what?

## explore the space

Can we plug these things together?

```
val cogen: Cogen[Long] = clong
val gen: Gen[Bool] = bool

def combined(rng0: Rng, n: Long): Bool = {
  val rng1 = cogen.rewind(n, rng0)
  gen.run(rng1)._1
}
```

Interesting... let's keep going!

# explore the space

```
// (Rng, Long) => Bool
def combined(rng0: Rng, n: Long): Boolean = {
  val rng1 = cogen.rewind(n, rng0)
  gen.run(rng1)._1
}
```

# explore the space

```
// (Rng, Long) => Bool
def combined(rng0: Rng, n: Long): Boolean = {
  val rng1 = cogen.rewind(n, rng0)
  gen.run(rng1)._1
}
```

```
// curry it into Rng => (Long => Boolean)
def recombined(rng0: Rng): Long => Boolean =
  { (n: Long) =>
    val rng1 = cogen.rewind(n, rng0)
    gen.run(rng1)._1
  }
```

# let's try it!

```
val inputs = (1L to 5L)

// make sure f is deterministic
val f = recombined(Rng.random) // generate a function
inputs.map(f) // Vector(false, false, true, false, true)
inputs.map(f) // Vector(false, false, true, false, true)

// see if g is distinct and deterministic
val g = recombined(Rng.random) // generate another one
inputs.map(g) // Vector(false, true, false, true, false)
inputs.map(g) // Vector(false, true, false, true, false)
```

It appears to work!



## polishing it up

So, our working `Gen[A => B]` looks like this:

```
def function[A, B](ca: Cogen[A], gb: Gen[B]): Gen[A => B] =  
  Gen { rng0 =>  
    def f(a: A): B = {  
      val rng1 = ca.rewind(a, rng0)  
      gb.run(rng1)._1  
    }  
    (f, rng0.next)  
  }
```

# tying up loose ends

We have `Cogen[Long]`, but how do we make others?

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We have `Cogen[Long]`, but how do we make others?

```
case class Cogen[A](rewind: (A, Rng) => Rng) {  
  def contramap[Z](f: Z => A): Cogen[Z] =  
    Cogen((z, rng) => rewind(f(z), rng))  
}
```

## tying up loose ends

We have `Cogen[Long]`, but how do we make others?

```
case class Cogen[A](rewind: (A, Rng) => Rng) {  
  def contramap[Z](f: Z => A): Cogen[Z] =  
    Cogen((z, rng) => rewind(f(z), rng))  
}
```

```
val cbool: Cogen[Boolean] =  
  clong.contramap(b => if (b) 1L else 0L)
```

## tying up loose ends

```
val cint: Cogen[Int] =  
  clong.contramap(x => x.toLong)
```

```
val cdouble: Cogen[Double] =  
  clong.contramap(java.lang.Double.doubleToLongBits)
```

```
def clist[A](ca: Cogen[A]): Cogen[List[A]] =  
  Cogen { (as, r0) =>  
    as.foldLeft(r0)((r, a) => ca.rewind(a, r))  
  }
```

## turn it up to 11

```
val cogen: Cogen[List[Int]] = clist(cint)
val gen: Gen[List[Double]] = fixedList(double, 2)

val f: List[Int] => List[Double] =
  function(cogen, gen).sample

f(List(1, 2, 3))    // List(0.5494955859425557, 0.2120041015556522)
f(List(4, 5, 6))   // List(0.28665305811674324, 0.4006829927716514)
f(List())          // List(0.711467620936595, 0.24249997986473848)
```

# Back to the Real World™

# jawn, revisited

```
val jnull      = Gen.const(JNull)
val jboolean   = Gen.oneOf(JTrue, JFalse)
val jlong      = arbitrary[Long].map(LongNum(_))
val jdouble    = arbitrary[Double].filter(isFinite).map(DoubleNum(_))
val jstring    = arbitrary[String].map(JString(_))
```

// Totally unscientific atom frequencies.

```
val jatom: Gen[JAtom] =
  Gen.frequency(
    (1, jnull),
    (8, jboolean),
    (8, jlong),
    (8, jdouble),
    (16, jstring))
```



# jawn, revisited

```
def jarray(lvl: Int): Gen[JArray] =  
  Gen.containerOf[Array, JValue](jvalue(lvl + 1)).map(JArray(_))  
  
def jitem(lvl: Int): Gen[(String, JValue)] =  
  for { s <- arbitrary[String]; j <- jvalue(lvl) } yield (s, j)  
  
def jobject(lvl: Int): Gen[JObject] =  
  Gen.containerOf[Vector, (String, JValue)](jitem(lvl + 1))  
    .map(JObject.fromSeq)  
  
def jvalue(lvl: Int = 0): Gen[JValue] =  
  if (lvl >= MaxLevel) jatom  
  else Gen.frequency((16, jatom), (1, jarray(lvl)), (2, jobject(lvl)))
```

## how does Gen really work?

ScalaCheck's **Gen** is a bit more complicated:

```
type Gen[A] = (Params, Rng) => R[A]
```

```
type Params = ... // currently just a "size" parameter
```

```
type R[A] = (Option[A], Rng, ...)
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```
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```

```
type R[A] = (Option[A], Rng, ...)
```

Wait, **Option[A]**?? What!??

## the other shoe

**ScalaCheck** allows generators to fail.

This is used to support things like filtering:

```
val positiveInt: Gen[Int] =  
  arbitrary[Int].filter(_ > 0)
```

This looks useful, right?

## **a terrible price**

There is a downside:

"Gave up after only 32 passed tests. 162 tests were discarded."

## a terrible price

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When a generator returns **None**, ScalaCheck discards that case and starts over.

After enough discarded cases, ScalaCheck gives up on the property. 🙄

## a terrible price

Additionally, partial generators totally break `Gen[A => B]`.

We relied on `gen.run(r)` always producing a `B` value.

So what does ScalaCheck do?

so...?

As of 1.13.x, ScalaCheck's **Gen** instances avoid filter.

At times we will **"spin"** to try to get a value:

```
def doPureApply(p: P, seed: Seed, retries: Int = 100): Gen.R[T] = {  
  @tailrec def loop(r: Gen.R[T], i: Int): Gen.R[T] =  
    if (r.retrieve.isDefined) r  
    else if (i > 0) loop(doApply(p, r.seed), i - 1)  
    else throw new Gen.RetrievalError()  
  loop(doApply(p, seed), retries)  
}
```

Worst-case: we have to fail (or throw). ☂



## recommendations

Since `filter` leads to the most annoying ScalaCheck error (probably), and also breaks function generation<sup>4</sup>:

- Use existing combinators, e.g. `Gen.choose(1, x)`
- Avoid `filter` when possible.
- If necessary, considering `mapping` to valid values.
- Minimize the % of discarded values.

<sup>4</sup> It also makes collection generators much more likely to fail.

# conclusions



## what we saw

1. **Generators** aren't that complicated (in theory)
2. (Including **function** generators!)
3. **Determinism** is important
4. Pure **functional programming** can make things easier
5. You could **roll your own** property-based tests

## what we heard

1. Writing properties is just writing tests, **abstracted**
2. Try to maximize the **coverage/energy** ratio
3. Pay attention to generator **distribution** and **range**
4. Avoid **filter** when possible
5. Don't be afraid to **build** custom generators ✂

## what we did not cover

1. Shrinking (in any form)
2. Cases where we can be exhaustive
3. Managing recursive generation depth
4. "Approximate" laws (as seen in Algebird)
5. Type-level combinators (e.g. scalacheck-shapeless)
6. Detailed ScalaCheck walkthrough

## special thanks

ScalaCheck would not exist without Rickard Nilsson.

ScalaCheck would not have working function generators without the assistance of Kenji Yoshida.

ScalaCheck could not progress without the time and energy of its users and contributors.

☀ **Thank You!** ☀

# the end

Questions?