BU CS 332 – Theory of Computation

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Lecture 22:

- NP-completeness

Reading:

Sipser Ch 7.4-7.5

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Last time: Two equivalent definitions of NP

1) NP is the class of languages decidable in polynomial time on a nondeterministic TM

$$\mathrm{NP} = \bigcup_{k=1}^{\infty} \mathrm{NTIME}(n^k)$$

2) A polynomial-time verifier for a language L is a deterministic $\mathrm{poly}(|w|)$-time algorithm V such that

$w \in L \iff$ there exists a certificate c
such that $V(\langle w, c \rangle)$ accepts

Theorem: A language $L \in \mathrm{NP}$ iff there is a polynomial-time verifier for L

Examples of NP languages

- Hamiltonian path

  Given a graph G and vertices s, t, does G contain a Hamiltonian path from s to t?

- Clique

  Given a graph G and natural number k, does G contain a clique of size k?

- Subset Sum

  Given a list of natural numbers $x_1, \dots, x_k, t$ is there a subset of the numbers $x_1, \dots, x_k$ that sum up to exactly t?

- Boolean satisfiability (SAT)

  Given a Boolean formula, is there a satisfying assignment?

- Vertex Cover

  Given a graph G and natural number k, does G contain a vertex cover of size k?

- Traveling Salesperson

Examples of $\mathbf{NP}$ languages: Traveling Salesperson

"Given a list of cities and distances between them, is there a 'short' tour of all of the cities?"

More precisely: Given

- A number of cities m
- A function $D: \{1, \ldots, m\}^2 \to \mathbb{N}$ giving the distance between each pair of cities
- A distance bound B

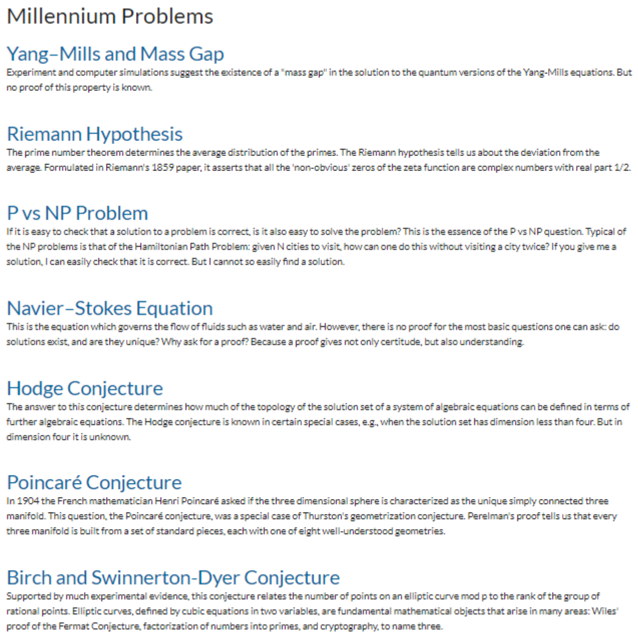
$$TSP = \{\langle m, D, B \rangle \mid \exists \text{ a tour visiting every city with length} \leq B\}$$

P vs. NP

Question: Does $\mathrm{P} = \mathrm{NP}$?

Philosophically: Can every problem with an efficiently verifiable solution also be solved efficiently?

A central problem in mathematics and computer science



Millennium Problems

Yang–Mills and Mass Gap

Experiment and computer simulations suggest the existence of a "mass gap" in the solution to the quantum versions of the Yang-Mills equations. But no proof of this property is known.

Riemann Hypothesis

The prime number theorem determines the average distribution of the primes. The Riemann hypothesis tells us about the deviation from the average. Formulated in Riemann's 1859 paper, it asserts that all the 'non-obvious' zeros of the zeta function are complex numbers with real part 1/2.

P vs NP Problem

If it is easy to check that a solution to a problem is correct, is it also easy to solve the problem? This is the essence of the P vs NP question. Typical of the NP problems is that of the Hamiltonian Path Problem: given N cities to visit, how can one do this without visiting a city twice? If you give me a solution, I can easily check that it is correct. But I cannot so easily find a solution.

Navier–Stokes Equation

This is the equation which governs the flow of fluids such as water and air. However, there is no proof for the most basic questions one can ask: do solutions exist, and are they unique? Why ask for a proof? Because a proof gives not only certitude, but also understanding.

Hodge Conjecture

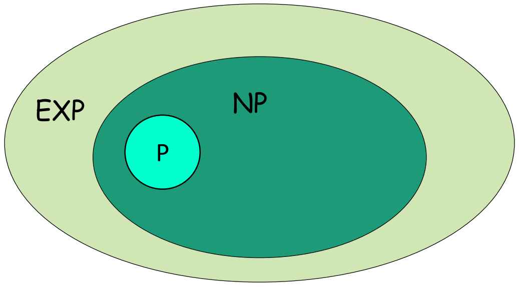
The answer to this conjecture determines how much of the topology of the solution set of a system of algebraic equations can be defined in terms of further algebraic equations. The Hodge conjecture is known in certain special cases, e.g., when the solution set has dimension less than four. But in dimension four it is unknown.

Poincaré Conjecture

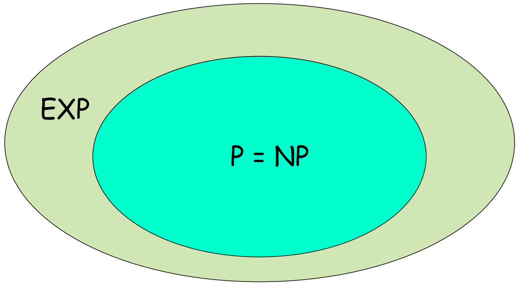
In 1904 the French mathematician Henri Poincaré asked if the three dimensional sphere is characterized as the unique simply connected three manifold. This question, the Poincaré conjecture, was a special case of Thurston's geometrization conjecture. Perelman's proof tells us that every three manifold is built from a set of standard pieces, each with one of eight well-understood geometries.

Birch and Swinnerton-Dyer Conjecture

Supported by much experimental evidence, this conjecture relates the number of points on an elliptic curve mod p to the rank of the group of rational points. Elliptic curves, defined by cubic equations in two variables, are fundamental mathematical objects that arise in many areas: Wiles' proof of the Fermat Conjecture, factorization of numbers into primes, and cryptography, to name three.



If $\mathrm{P} \neq \mathrm{NP}$



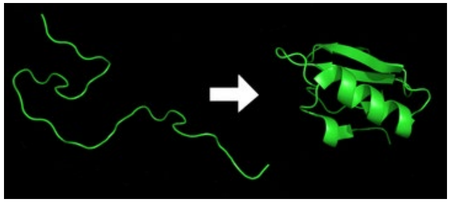
If $\mathrm{P} = \mathrm{NP}$

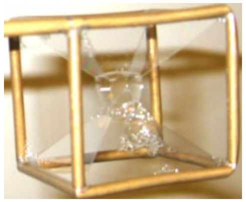
A world where $\mathrm{P} = \mathrm{NP}$

- Many important decision problems can be solved in polynomial time ($HAMPATH$, SAT, TSP, etc.)

- Many search problems can be solved in polynomial time (e.g., given a natural number, ***find*** a prime factorization)

- Many optimization problems can be solved in polynomial time (e.g., find the lowest energy conformation of a protein)





A world where $\mathrm{P} = \mathrm{NP}$

- Secure cryptography becomes impossible

  An NP search problem: Given a ciphertext c, find a plaintext m and encryption key k that would encrypt to c

- AI / machine learning become easy: Identifying a consistent classification rule is an NP search problem

- Finding mathematical proofs becomes easy: NP search problem: Given a mathematical statement S and length bound k, is there a proof of S with length at most k?

General consensus: $\mathrm{P} \neq \mathrm{NP}$

NP-Completeness

Understanding the $\mathbf{P}$ vs. $\mathbf{NP}$ question

Most believe $\mathrm{P} \neq \mathrm{NP}$, but we are very far from proving it

Question 1: How can studying specific computational problems help us get a handle on resolving P vs. NP?

Question 2: What would $\mathrm{P} \neq \mathrm{NP}$ allow us to conclude about specific problems we care about?

Idea: Identify the "hardest" problems in NP

Languages $L \in \mathrm{NP}$ such that $L \in \mathrm{P}$ iff $\mathrm{P} = \mathrm{NP}$

Recall: Mapping reducibility

Definition:

A function $f: \Sigma^* \to \Sigma^*$ is computable if there is a TM M which, given as input any $w \in \Sigma^*$, halts with only $f(w)$ on its tape.

Definition:

Language A is mapping reducible to language B, written

$$A \leq_{\mathrm{m}} B$$

if there is a computable function $f: \Sigma^* \to \Sigma^*$ such that for all strings $w \in \Sigma^*$, we have $w \in A \Leftrightarrow f(w) \in B$

Polynomial-time reducibility

Definition:

A function $f : \Sigma^* \to \Sigma^*$ is polynomial-time computable if there is a polynomial-time TM M which, given as input any $w \in \Sigma^*$, halts with only $f(w)$ on its tape.

Definition:

Language A is polynomial-time reducible to language B, written

$$A \leq_{\mathrm{p}} B$$

if there is a polynomial-time computable function $f : \Sigma^* \to \Sigma^*$ such that for all strings $w \in \Sigma^*$, we have $w \in A \Leftrightarrow f(w) \in B$

Implications of poly-time reducibility

Theorem: If $A \leq_{\mathrm{p}} B$ and $B \in \mathrm{P}$, then $A \in \mathrm{P}$

Proof: Let M decide B in poly time, and let f be a poly-time reduction from A to B. The following TM decides A in poly time:

Is NP closed under poly-time reductions?

If $A \leq_{\mathrm{p}} B$ and B is in NP, does that mean A is also in NP?

a) Yes, the same proof works using NTMs instead of TMs

b) No, because the new machine is an NTM instead of a deterministic TM

c) No, because the new NTM may not run in polynomial time

d) No, because the new NTM may accept some inputs it should reject

e) No, because the new NTM may reject some inputs it should accept

NP-completeness

Definition: A language B is NP-complete if

1) $B \in \mathrm{NP}$, and

2) B is NP-hard: Every language $A \in \mathrm{NP}$ is poly-time reducible to B, i.e., $A \leq_{\mathrm{p}} B$

Implications of NP-completeness

Theorem: Suppose B is NP-complete.

Then $B \in \mathrm{P}$ iff $\mathrm{P} = \mathrm{NP}$

Proof:

Implications of NP-completeness

Theorem: Suppose B is NP-complete.

Then $B \in \mathrm{P}$ iff $\mathrm{P} = \mathrm{NP}$

Consequences of B being NP-complete:

1) If you want to prove $\mathrm{P} = \mathrm{NP}$, you just have to prove $B \in \mathrm{P}$
2) If you want to prove $\mathrm{P} \neq \mathrm{NP}$, you just have to prove $B \notin \mathrm{P}$
3) If you believe $\mathrm{P} \neq \mathrm{NP}$, then you also believe $B \notin \mathrm{P}$

Cook-Levin Theorem and NP-Complete Problems

Do NP-complete problems exist?

Theorem: $TMSAT = \{\langle N, w, 1^t \rangle \mid$ NTM N accepts input w within t steps$\}$ is NP-complete

Proof sketch: 1) $TMSAT \in \mathrm{NP}$: Certificate = t nondeterministic guesses made by N, verifier checks that N accepts w within t steps under those guesses.

2) $TMSAT$ is NP-hard: Let $L \in \mathrm{NP}$ be decided by NTM N running in time $T(n)$. The following poly-time TM shows $L \leq_{\mathrm{p}} TMSAT$:

"On input w (an instance of L):

Output $\langle N, w, 1^{T(|w|)} \rangle$."

Cook-Levin Theorem

Theorem: SAT (Boolean satisfiability) is NP-complete

"Proof": Already know $SAT \in \mathrm{NP}$. (Much) harder direction: Need to show every problem in NP reduces to SAT

Stephen A. Cook (1971)

Leonid Levin (1973)

New NP-complete problems from old

Lemma: If $A \leq_{\mathrm{p}} B$ and $B \leq_{\mathrm{p}} C$, then $A \leq_{\mathrm{p}} C$

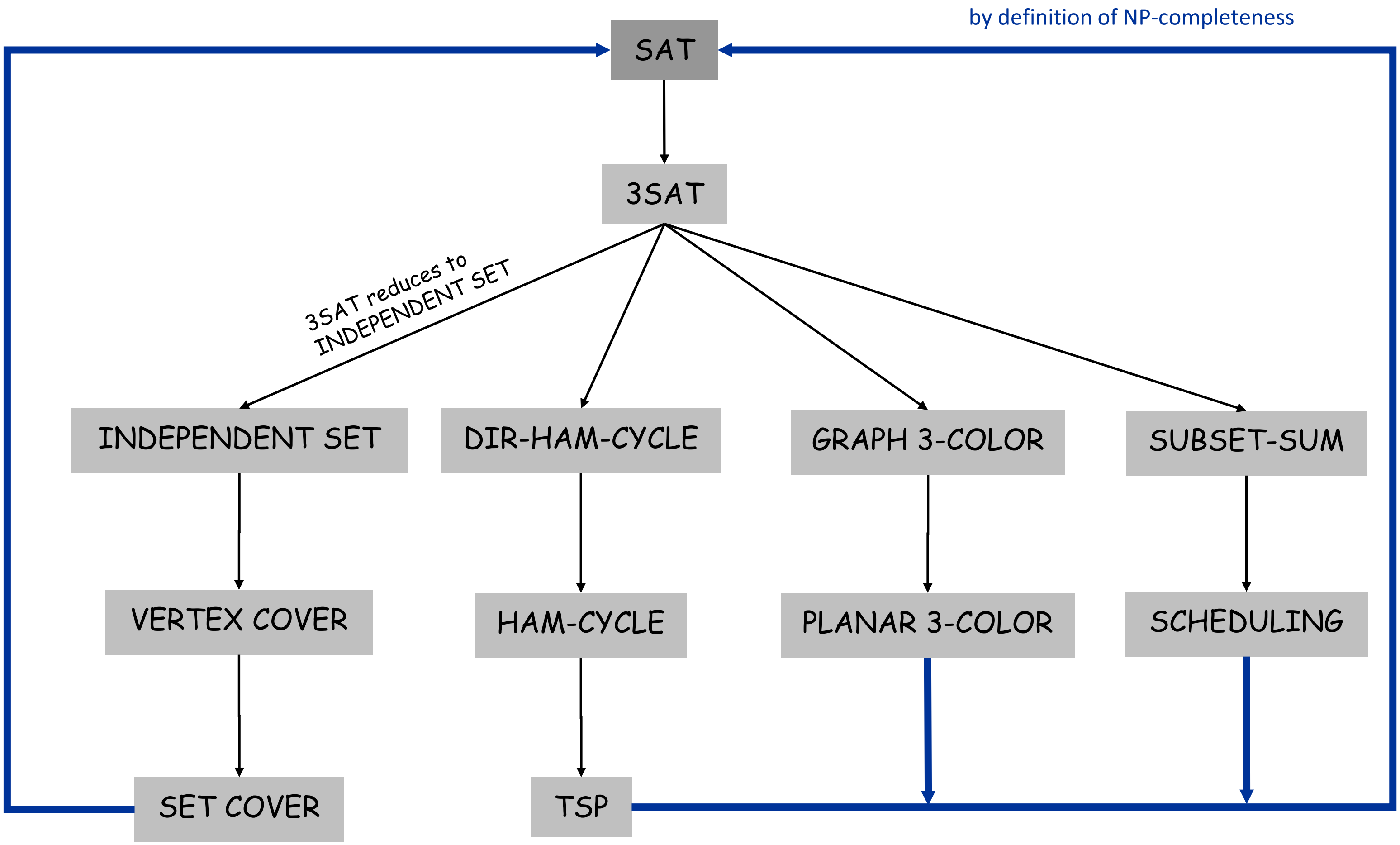
(poly-time reducibility is transitive)

Theorem: If $B \leq_{\mathrm{p}} C$ for some NP-hard language B, then C is also NP-hard

Corollary: If $C \in \mathrm{NP}$ and $B \leq_{\mathrm{p}} C$ for some NP-complete language B, then C is also NP-complete

New NP-complete problems from old

All problems below are NP-complete and hence poly-time reduce to one another!



$3SAT$ (3-CNF Satisfiability)

Definitions:

- A literal either a variable of its negation x_5 , $\overline{x_7}$
- A clause is a disjunction (OR) of literals Ex. $x_5 \vee \overline{x_7} \vee x_2$
- A 3-CNF is a conjunction (AND) of clauses where each clause contains exactly 3 literals

Ex. $C_1 \wedge C_2 \wedge \ldots \wedge C_m =$

$$(x_5 \vee \overline{x_7} \vee x_2) \wedge (\overline{x_3} \vee x_4 \vee x_1) \wedge \cdots \wedge (x_1 \vee x_1 \vee x_1)$$

$$3SAT = \{\langle\varphi\rangle | \varphi \text{ is a satisfiable } 3 - \text{CNF}\}$$

$3SAT$ is NP-complete

Theorem: $3SAT$ is NP-complete

Proof idea: 1) $3SAT$ is in NP (why?)

2) Show that $SAT \leq_{\mathrm{p}} 3SAT$

Your classmate suggests the following reduction from SAT to $3SAT$: “On input φ, a 3-CNF formula (an instance of $3SAT$), output φ, which is already an instance of SAT.” Is this reduction correct?

a) Yes, this is a poly-time reduction from SAT to $3SAT$

b) No, because φ is not an instance of the SAT problem

c) No, the reduction does not run in poly time

d) No, this is a reduction from $3SAT$ to SAT; it goes in the wrong direction

$3SAT$ is NP-complete

Theorem: $3SAT$ is NP-complete

Proof idea: 1) $3SAT$ is in NP (why?)

2) Show that $SAT \leq_{\mathrm{p}} 3SAT$

Idea of reduction: Give a poly-time algorithm converting an arbitrary formula φ into a 3CNF ψ such that φ is satisfiable iff ψ is satisfiable

Illustration of conversion from φ to ψ

Independent Set

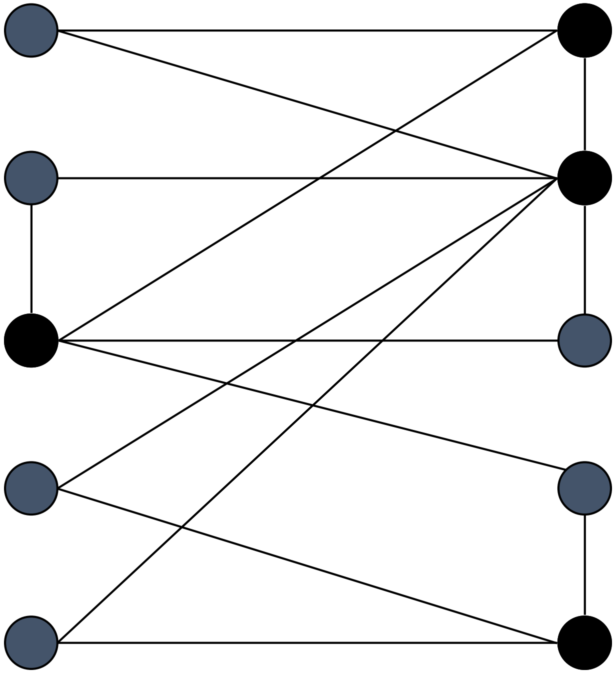
An **independent set** in an undirected graph G is a set of vertices that includes at most one endpoint of every edge.

$$INDEPENDENT - SET$$
$$= \{\langle G, k\rangle | G \text{ is an undirected graph containing an independent set with} \geq k \text{ vertices}\}$$

- Is there an independent set of size ≥ 6?
  - Yes.

● independent set

- Is there an independent set of size ≥ 7?
  - No.



Independent Set is NP-complete

1) $INDEPENDENT - SET \in \mathrm{NP}$

2) Reduce $3SAT \leq_{\mathrm{p}} INDEPENDENT - SET$

Proof of 1) The following gives a poly-time verifier for $INDEPENDENT - SET$

Certificate: Vertices $v_1, \ldots, v_k$

Verifier:

"On input $\langle G, k; v_1, \ldots, v_k \rangle$, where G is a graph, k is a natural number,

1. Check that $v_1, \ldots v_k$ are distinct vertices in G
2. Check that there are no edges between the v_i's."

Independent Set is NP-complete

1) $INDEPENDENT - SET \in \mathrm{NP}$

2) Reduce $3SAT \leq_{\mathrm{p}} INDEPENDENT - SET$

Proof of 2) The following TM computes a poly-time reduction.

"On input $\langle \varphi \rangle$, where φ is a 3CNF formula,

1. Construct graph G from φ
   - G contains 3 vertices for each clause, one for each literal.
   - Connect 3 literals in a clause in a triangle.
   - Connect every literal to each of its negations.
2. Output $\langle G, k \rangle$, where k is the number of clauses in φ."

Example of the reduction

$$\varphi = (\overline{x_1} \vee x_2 \vee x_3) \wedge (x_1 \vee \overline{x_2} \vee x_3) \wedge (\overline{x_1} \vee x_2 \vee x_3)$$

Proof of correctness for reduction

Let k = # clauses and l = # literals in φ

Correctness: φ is satisfiable iff G has an independent set of size k

$\Longrightarrow$ Given a satisfying assignment, select one true literal from each triangle. This is an independent set of size k

$\Longleftarrow$ Let S be an independent set in G of size k

- S must contain exactly one vertex in each triangle
- Set these literals to true, and set all other variables in an arbitrary way
- Truth assignment is consistent and all clauses are satisfied

Runtime: $O(k + l^2)$ which is polynomial in input size