

NP Completeness and Cook-Levin Theorem

Lecture 22

April 19, 2011

P and NP and Turing Machines

- **P**: set of decision problems that have polynomial time algorithms
- **NP**: set of decision problems that have polynomial time non-deterministic algorithms

Question: What is an algorithm? Depends on the model of computation!

What is our model of computation?

Formally speaking our model of computation is Turing Machines.

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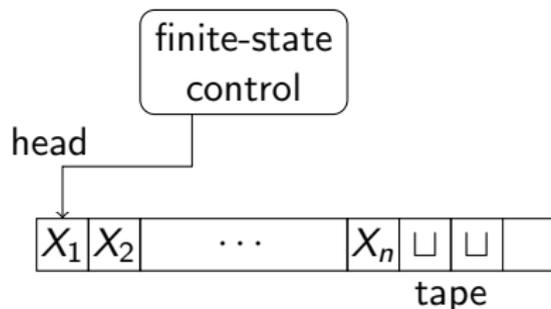
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Turing Machines: Recap



- Infinite tape
- Finite state control
- Input at beginning of tape
- Special tape letter "blank" \square
- Head can move only one cell to left or right

Turing Machines: Formally

A **TM** $M = (Q, \Sigma, \Gamma, \delta, q_0, q_{\text{accept}}, q_{\text{reject}})$:

- Q is set of states in finite control
- q_0 start state, q_{accept} is accept state, q_{reject} is reject state
- Σ is input alphabet, Γ is tape alphabet (includes \sqcup)
- $\delta : Q \times \Gamma \rightarrow \{L, R\} \times \Gamma \times Q$ is transition function
 - $\delta(q, a) = (q', b, L)$ means that M in state q and head seeing a on tape will move to state q' while replacing a on tape with b and head moves left.

$L(M)$: language accepted by M is set of all input strings s on which M accepts; that is:

- **TM** is started in state q_0 .
- Initially, the tape head is located at the first cell.
- The tape contain s on the tape followed by blanks.
- The **TM** halts in the state q_{accept} .

Definition

M is a polynomial time **TM** if there is some polynomial $p(\cdot)$ such that on all inputs w , **M** halts in $p(|w|)$ steps.

Definition

L is a language in **P** iff there is a polynomial time **TM** **M** such that $L = L(M)$.

Definition

L is an **NP** language iff there is a *non-deterministic* polynomial time **TM** M such that $L = L(M)$.

Non-deterministic **TM**: each step has a choice of moves

- $\delta : Q \times \Gamma \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(Q \times \Gamma \times \{L, R\})$.
 - Example: $\delta(q, a) = \{(q_1, b, L), (q_2, c, R), (q_3, a, R)\}$ means that M can non-deterministically choose one of the three possible moves from (q, a) .
- $L(M)$: set of all strings s on which there *exists* some sequence of valid choices at each step that lead from q_0 to q_{accept}

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Non-deterministic TMs vs certifiers

Two definition of **NP**:

- **L** is in **NP** iff **L** has a polynomial time certifier **C**(\cdot, \cdot).
- **L** is in **NP** iff **L** is decided by a non-deterministic polynomial time **TM M**.

Claim: Two definitions are equivalent. Why?

Informal proof idea: the certificate **t** for **C** corresponds to non-deterministic choices of **M** and vice-versa.

In other words **L** is in **NP** iff **L** is accepted by a **NTM** which first guesses a proof **t** of length poly in input $|s|$ and then acts as a *deterministic* **TM**.

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Non-determinism, guessing and verification

- A non-deterministic machine has choices at each step and accepts a string if there *exists* a set of choices which lead to a final state.
- Equivalently the choices can be thought of as *guessing* a solution and then *verifying* that solution. In this view all the choices are made a priori and hence the verification can be deterministic. The “guess” is the “proof” and the “verifier” is the “certifier” .
- We reemphasize the asymmetry inherent in the definition of non-determinism. Strings in the language can be easily verified. No easy way to verify that a string is not in the language.

Algorithms: TMs vs RAM Model

Why do we use TMs some times and RAM Model other times?

- TMs are very simple: no complicated instruction set, no jumps/pointers, no explicit loops etc.
 - Simplicity is useful in proofs.
 - The “right” formal bare-bones model when dealing with subtleties.
- RAM model is a closer approximation to the running time/space usage of realistic computers for reasonable problem sizes
 - Not appropriate for certain kinds of formal proofs when algorithms can take super-polynomial time and space

“Hardest” Problems

Question

What is the hardest problem in **NP**? How do we define it?

Towards a definition

- Hardest problem must be in **NP**
- Hardest problem must be at least as “difficult” as every other problem in **NP**

NP-Complete Problems

Definition

A problem X is said to be **NP-Complete** if

- $X \in \text{NP}$
- (**Hardness**) For any $Y \in \text{NP}$, $Y \leq_P X$

Solving **NP-Complete** Problems

Proposition

Suppose **X** is **NP-Complete**. Then **X** can be solved in polynomial time iff **P = NP**

Proof.

⇒ Suppose **X** can be solved in polynomial time

- Let **Y** ∈ **NP**. We know **Y** ≤_P **X**
- We showed that if **Y** ≤_P **X** and **X** can be solved in polynomial time, then **Y** can be solved in polynomial time
- Thus, every problem **Y** ∈ **NP** is such that **Y** ∈ **P**; **NP** ⊆ **P**
- Since **P** ⊆ **NP**, we have **P = NP**

⇐ Since **P = NP**, and **X** ∈ **NP**, we have a polynomial time algorithm for **X** □

NP-Hard Problems

Definition

A problem X is said to be **NP-Hard** if

- (**Hardness**) For any $Y \in \text{NP}$, $Y \leq_P X$

An **NP-Hard** problem need not be in **NP**!

Example: Halting problem is **NP-Hard** (why?) but not **NP-Complete**.

Consequences of proving **NP-Completeness**

If **X** is **NP-Complete**

- Since we believe $P \neq NP$,
- and solving **X** implies $P = NP$.

X is **unlikely** to be efficiently solvable.

At the very least, many smart people before you have failed to find an efficient algorithm for **X**.

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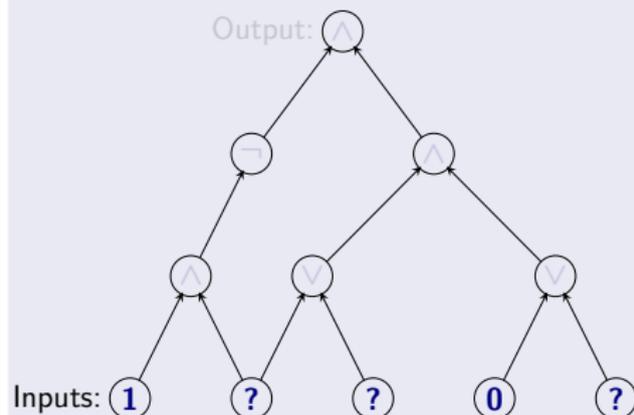
Are there any problems that are **NP-Complete**?

Answer

Yes! Many, many problems are **NP-Complete**.

Definition

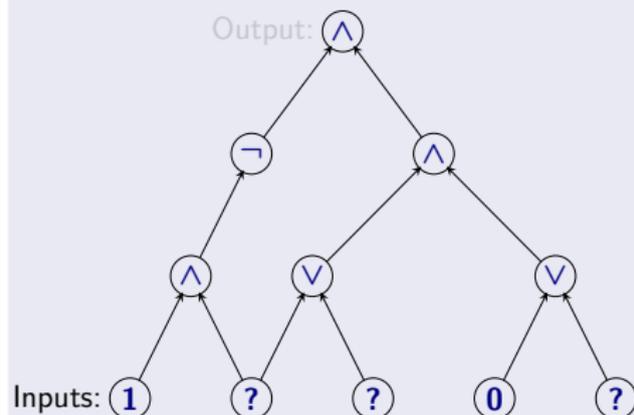
A circuit is a directed *acyclic* graph with



- **Input** vertices (without incoming edges) labelled with **0**, **1** or a distinct variable
- Every other vertex is labelled \vee , \wedge or \neg
- Single node **output** vertex with no outgoing edges

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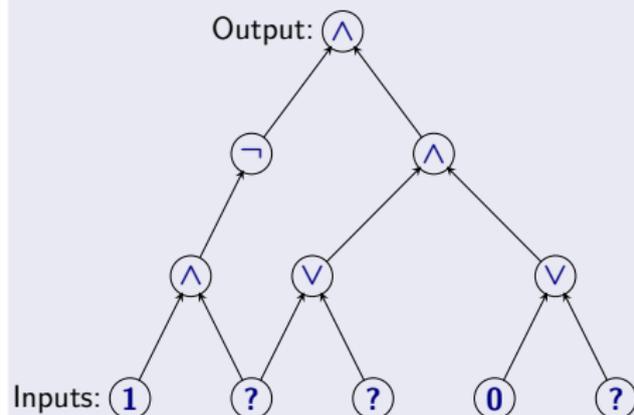
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Cook-Levin Theorem

Definition (Circuit Satisfaction (**CSAT**)).

Given a circuit as input, is there an assignment to the input variables that causes the output to get value **1**?

Theorem (Cook-Levin)

CSAT is **NP-Complete**.

Need to show

- **CSAT** is in **NP**
- every **NP** problem **X** reduces to **CSAT**.

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Claim

CSAT is in **NP**.

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CSAT is NP-hard: Idea

Need to show that every NP problem X reduces to CSAT.

What does it mean that $X \in \text{NP}$?

$X \in \text{NP}$ implies that there are polynomials $p()$ and $q()$ and certifier/verifier program C such that for every string s the following is true:

- If s is a YES instance ($s \in X$) then there is a *proof* t of length $p(|s|)$ such that $C(s, t)$ says YES.
- If s is a NO instance ($s \notin X$) then for every string t of length at $p(|s|)$, $C(s, t)$ says NO.
- $C(s, t)$ runs in time $q(|s| + |t|)$ time (hence polynomial time)

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Reducing **X** to **CSAT**

X is in **NP** means we have access to $\mathbf{p()}, \mathbf{q()}, \mathbf{C(., .)}$.

What is $\mathbf{C(., .)}$? It is a program or equivalently a Turing Machine!

How are $\mathbf{p()}$ and $\mathbf{q()}$ given? As numbers.

Example: if **3** is given then $\mathbf{p(n) = n^3}$.

Thus an **NP** problem is essentially a three tuple $\langle \mathbf{p}, \mathbf{q}, \mathbf{C} \rangle$ where \mathbf{C} is either a program or a **TM**.

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Same as the following: is there a proof **t** of length $\mathbf{p}(|\mathbf{s}|)$ such that $\mathbf{C}(\mathbf{s}, \mathbf{t})$ says YES.

How do we reduce **X** to **CSAT**? Need an algorithm **A** that

- takes **s** (and $\langle \mathbf{p}, \mathbf{q}, \mathbf{C} \rangle$) and creates a circuit **G** in polynomial time in $|\mathbf{s}|$ (note that $\langle \mathbf{p}, \mathbf{q}, \mathbf{C} \rangle$ are fixed).
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Simple but Big Idea: Programs are essentially the same as Circuits!

- Convert $\mathbf{C}(\mathbf{s}, \mathbf{t})$ into a circuit \mathbf{G} with \mathbf{t} as unknown inputs (rest is known including \mathbf{s})
- We know that $|\mathbf{t}| = \mathbf{p}(|\mathbf{s}|)$ so express boolean string \mathbf{t} as $\mathbf{p}(|\mathbf{s}|)$ variables $\mathbf{t}_1, \mathbf{t}_2, \dots, \mathbf{t}_k$ where $k = \mathbf{p}(|\mathbf{s}|)$.
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- **Problem:** Does $G = (V, E)$ have an **Independent Set** of size $\geq k$?
 - **Certificate:** Set $S \subseteq V$
 - **Certifier:** Check $|S| \geq k$ and no pair of vertices in S is connected by an edge

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Example: Independent Set

Formally why is **Independent Set** in **NP**?

- Input:

$\langle n, y_{1,1}, y_{1,2}, \dots, y_{1,n}, y_{2,1}, \dots, y_{2,n}, \dots, y_{n,1}, \dots, y_{n,n}, k \rangle$
encodes $\langle G, k \rangle$.

- n is number of vertices in G
- $y_{i,j}$ is a bit which is 1 if edge (i, j) is in G and 0 otherwise (adjacency matrix representation)
- k is size of independent set

- Certificate: $t = t_1 t_2 \dots t_n$. Interpretation is that t_i is 1 if vertex i is in the independent set, 0 otherwise.

Certifier for **Independent Set**

Certifier **C(s, t)** for **Independent Set**:

```
if ( $t_1 + t_2 + \dots + t_n < k$ ) then
    return NO
else
    for each (i, j) do
        if ( $t_i \wedge t_j \wedge y_{i,j}$ ) then
            return NO

return YES
```

Example: Independent Set

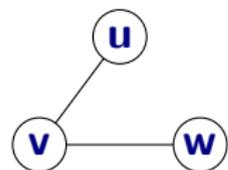
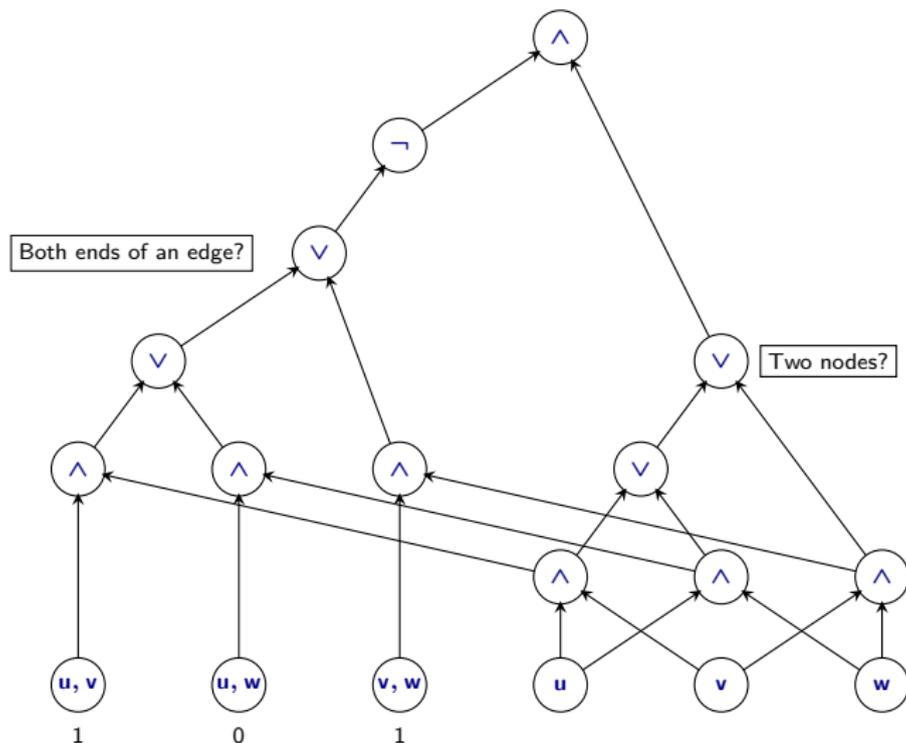


Figure: Graph **G** with $k = 2$



Circuit from Certifier

Programs, Turing Machines and Circuits

Consider “program” **A** that takes $f(|s|)$ steps on input string **s**.

Question: What computer is the program running on and what does *step* mean?

Real computers difficult to reason with mathematically because

- instruction set is too rich
- pointers and control flow jumps in one step
- assumption that pointer to code fits in one word

Turing Machines

- simpler model of computation to reason with
- can simulate real computers with *polynomial* slow down
- all moves are *local* (head moves only one cell)

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Certifiers that at TMs

Assume $C(\cdot, \cdot)$ is a (deterministic) Turing Machine M

Problem: Given M , input s , p , q decide if there is a proof t of length $p(|s|)$ such that M on s, t will halt in $q(|s|)$ time and say YES.

There is an algorithm A that can reduce above problem to **CSAT** mechanically as follows.

- A first computes $p(|s|)$ and $q(|s|)$.
- Knows that M can use at most $q(|s|)$ memory/tape cells
- Knows that M can run for at most $q(|s|)$ time
- Simulates the evolution of the state of M and memory over time using a big circuit.

Simulation of Computation via Circuit

- Think of M 's state at time ℓ as a string $x^\ell = x_1x_2 \dots x_k$ where each $x_i \in \{0, 1, B\} \times Q \cup \{q_{-1}\}$.
- At time 0 the state of M consists of input string s a guess t (unknown variables) of length $p(|s|)$ and rest $q(|s|)$ blank symbols.
- At time $q(|s|)$ we wish to know if M stops in q_{accept} with say all blanks on the tape.
- We write a circuit C_ℓ which captures the transition of M from time ℓ to time $\ell + 1$.
- Composition of the circuits for all times 0 to $q(|s|)$ gives a big (still poly) sized circuit C
- The final output of C should be true if and only if the entire state of M at the end leads to an accept state.

NP-Hardness of Circuit Satisfaction

Key Ideas in reduction:

- Use **TM**s as the code for certifier for simplicity
- Since **p()** and **q()** are known to \mathcal{A} , it can set up all required memory and time steps in advance
- Simulate computation of the **TM** from one time to the next as a circuit that only looks at three adjacent cells at a time

Note: Above reduction can be done to **SAT** as well. Reduction to **SAT** was the original proof of Steve Cook.

NP-Hardness of Circuit Satisfaction

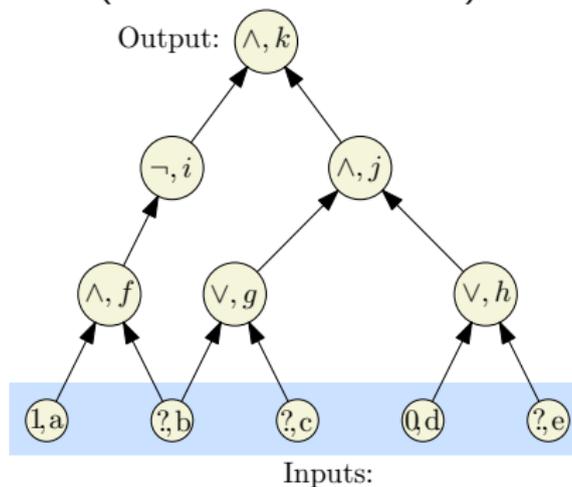
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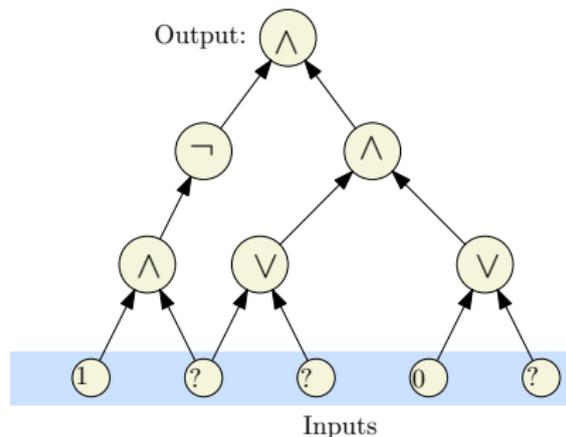
SAT is NP-Complete

- We have seen that **SAT** \in **NP**
 - To show **NP-Hardness**, we will reduce Circuit Satisfiability (**CSAT**) to **SAT**
- Instance of **CSAT** (we label each node):

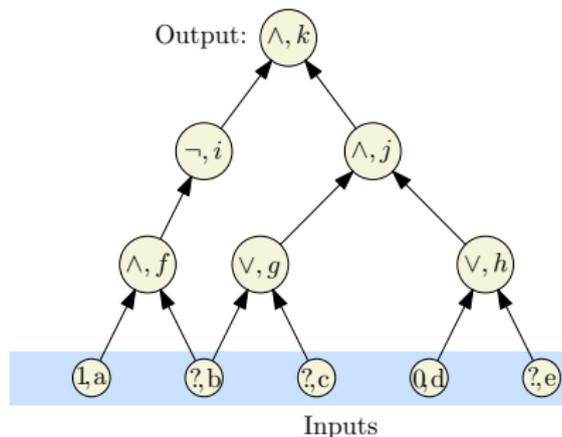


Converting a circuit into a CNF formula

Label the nodes



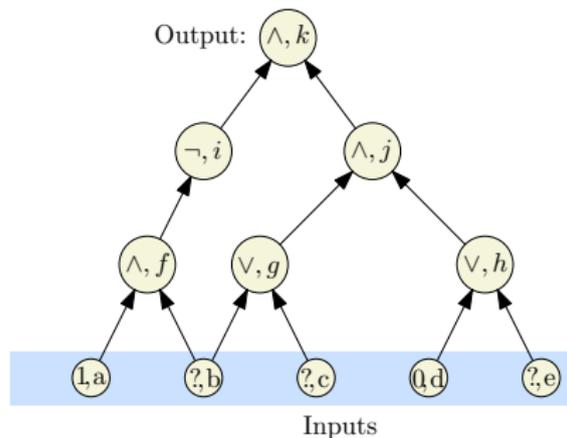
(A) Input circuit



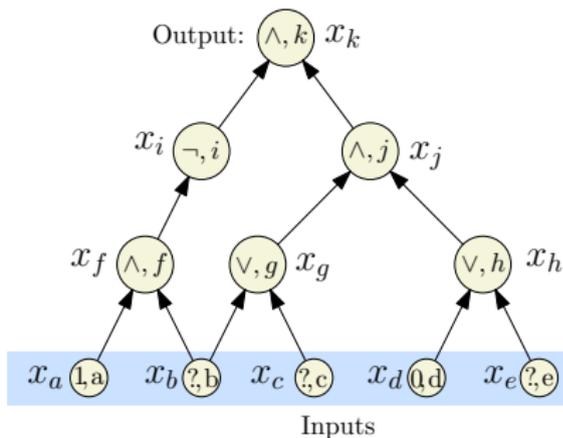
(B) Label the nodes.

Converting a circuit into a CNF formula

Introduce a variable for each node



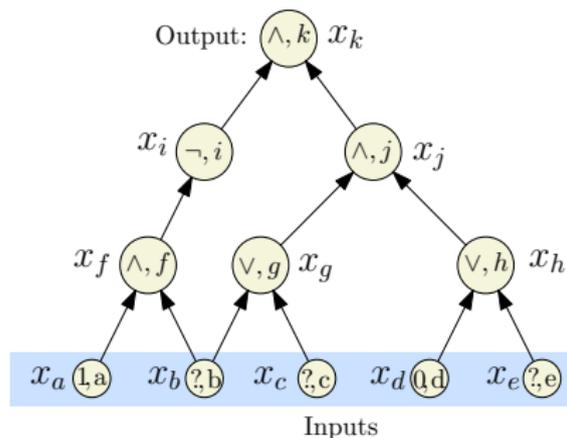
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Converting a circuit into a CNF formula

Write a sub-formula for each variable that is true if the var is computed correctly.



(C) Introduce var for each node.

x_k (Demand a sat' assignment!)

$$x_k = x_i \wedge x_j$$

$$x_j = x_g \wedge x_h$$

$$x_i = \neg x_f$$

$$x_h = x_d \vee x_e$$

$$x_g = x_b \vee x_c$$

$$x_f = x_a \wedge x_b$$

$$x_d = 0$$

$$x_a = 1$$

(D) Write a sub-formula for each variable that is true if the var is computed correctly.

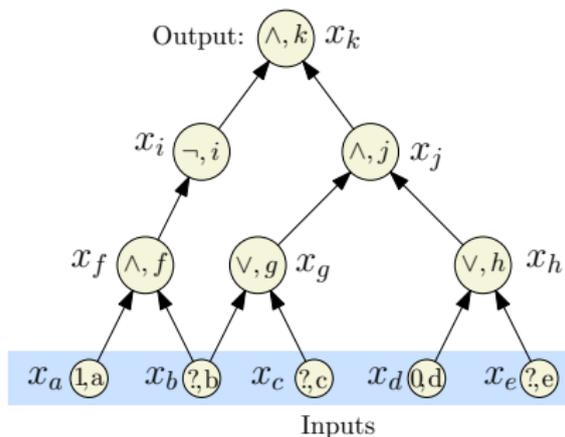
Converting a circuit into a CNF formula

Convert each sub-formula to an equivalent CNF formula

x_k	x_k
$x_k = x_i \wedge x_j$	$(\neg x_k \vee x_i) \wedge (\neg x_k \vee x_j) \wedge (x_k \vee \neg x_i \vee \neg x_j)$
$x_j = x_g \wedge x_h$	$(\neg x_j \vee x_g) \wedge (\neg x_j \vee x_h) \wedge (x_j \vee \neg x_g \vee \neg x_h) \wedge$
$x_i = \neg x_f$	$(x_i \vee x_f) \wedge (\neg x_i \vee \neg x_f) \wedge$
$x_h = x_d \vee x_e$	$(x_h \vee \neg x_d) \wedge (x_h \vee \neg x_e) \wedge (\neg x_h \vee x_d \vee x_e)$
$x_g = x_b \vee x_c$	$(x_g \vee \neg x_b) \wedge (x_g \vee \neg x_c) \wedge (\neg x_g \vee x_b \vee x_c)$
$x_f = x_a \wedge x_b$	$(\neg x_f \vee x_a) \wedge (\neg x_f \vee x_b) \wedge (x_f \vee \neg x_a \vee \neg x_b)$
$x_d = 0$	$\neg x_d$
$x_a = 1$	x_a

Converting a circuit into a CNF formula

Take the conjunction of all the CNF sub-formulas



$$\begin{aligned} & x_k \wedge (\neg x_k \vee x_i) \wedge (\neg x_k \vee x_j) \\ & \wedge (x_k \vee \neg x_i \vee \neg x_j) \wedge (\neg x_j \vee x_g) \\ & \wedge (\neg x_j \vee x_h) \wedge (x_j \vee \neg x_g \vee \neg x_h) \\ & \wedge (x_i \vee x_f) \wedge (\neg x_i \vee x_f) \\ & \wedge (x_h \vee \neg x_d) \wedge (x_h \vee \neg x_e) \\ & \wedge (\neg x_h \vee x_d \vee x_e) \wedge (x_g \vee \neg x_b) \\ & \wedge (x_g \vee \neg x_c) \wedge (\neg x_g \vee x_b \vee x_c) \\ & \wedge (\neg x_f \vee x_a) \wedge (\neg x_f \vee x_b) \\ & \wedge (x_f \vee \neg x_a \vee \neg x_b) \wedge (\neg x_d) \wedge x_a \end{aligned}$$

We got a **CNF** formula that is satisfiable if and only if the original circuit is satisfiable.

Reduction: $\text{CSAT} \leq_P \text{SAT}$

- For each gate (vertex) v in the circuit, create a variable x_v
- **Case** \neg : v is labeled \neg and has one incoming edge from u (so $x_v = \neg x_u$). In **SAT** formula generate, add clauses $(x_u \vee x_v)$, $(\neg x_u \vee \neg x_v)$. Observe that

$$x_v = \neg x_u \text{ is true} \iff \begin{array}{l} (x_u \vee x_v) \\ (\neg x_u \vee \neg x_v) \end{array} \text{ both true.}$$

Reduction: $\text{CSAT} \leq_P \text{SAT}$

Continued...

- **Case \vee :** So $x_v = x_u \vee x_w$. In **SAT** formula generated, add clauses $(x_v \vee \neg x_u)$, $(x_v \vee \neg x_w)$, and $(\neg x_v \vee x_u \vee x_w)$. Again, observe that

$$x_v = x_u \vee x_w \text{ is true} \iff \begin{array}{l} (x_v \vee \neg x_u), \\ (x_v \vee \neg x_w), \\ (\neg x_v \vee x_u \vee x_w) \end{array} \text{ all true.}$$

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$$x_v = x_u \wedge x_w \text{ is true} \iff \begin{array}{l} (\neg x_v \vee x_u), \\ (\neg x_v \vee x_w), \\ (x_v \vee \neg x_u \vee \neg x_w) \end{array} \text{ all true.}$$

Reduction: $\text{CSAT} \leq_P \text{SAT}$

Continued...

- If v is an input gate with a fixed value then we do the following.
If $x_v = 1$ add clause x_v . If $x_v = 0$ add clause $\neg x_v$
- Add the clause x_v where v is the variable for the output gate

Correctness of Reduction

Need to show circuit C is satisfiable iff φ_C is satisfiable

\Rightarrow Consider a satisfying assignment \mathbf{a} for C

- Find values of all gates in C under \mathbf{a}
- Give value of gate v to variable x_v ; call this assignment \mathbf{a}'
- \mathbf{a}' satisfies φ_C (exercise)

\Leftarrow Consider a satisfying assignment \mathbf{a} for φ_C

- Let \mathbf{a}' be the restriction of \mathbf{a} to only the input variables
- Value of gate v under \mathbf{a}' is the same as value of x_v in \mathbf{a}
- Thus, \mathbf{a}' satisfies C

Theorem

SAT is **NP-Complete**.

Proving that a problem **X** is **NP-Complete**

To prove **X** is **NP-Complete**, show

- Show **X** is in **NP**.
 - certificate/proof of polynomial size in input
 - polynomial time certifier **C(s, t)**
- Reduction from a known **NP-Complete** problem such as **CSAT** or **SAT** to **X**

$SAT \leq_P X$ implies that every **NP** problem $Y \leq_P X$. Why?

Transitivity of reductions:

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NP-Completeness via Reductions

- **CSAT** is **NP-Complete**
- **CSAT** \leq_P **SAT** and **SAT** is in **NP** and hence SAT is **NP-Complete**
- **SAT** \leq_P **3-SAT** and hence 3-SAT is **NP-Complete**
- **3-SAT** \leq_P Independent Set (which is in **NP**) and hence Independent Set is **NP-Complete**
- Vertex Cover is **NP-Complete**
- Clique is **NP-Complete**

Hundreds and thousands of different problems from many areas of science and engineering have been shown to be **NP-Complete**.

A surprisingly frequent phenomenon!

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