

# Polynomial Time Reductions

Lecture 20

April 15, 2014

# Part I

## Introduction to Reductions

# Reductions

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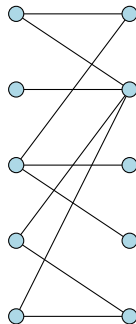
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Also, the right reductions might win you a million dollars!

# Example 1: Bipartite Matching and Flows

How do we solve the  
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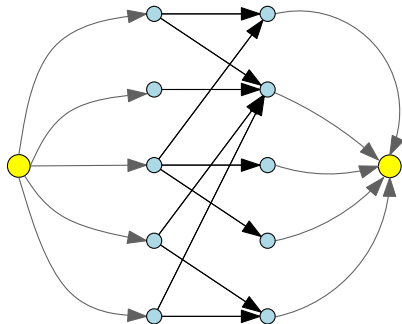
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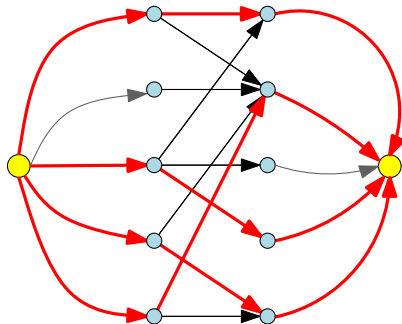




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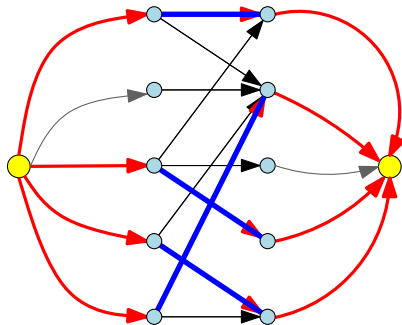
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## Solution

Reduce it to **Max-Flow**.  $G$  has a matching of size  $\geq k$  iff there is a flow from  $s$  to  $t$  of value  $\geq k$ .

# Types of Problems

## Decision, Search, and Optimization

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- 2 **Search problem.** Example: given  $n$ , find a factor of  $n$  if it exists.
- 3 **Optimization problem.** Example: find the smallest prime factor of  $n$ .

# Optimization and Decision problems

For max flow...

Problem (**Max-Flow** optimization version)

*Given an instance  $G$  of network flow, find the maximum flow between  $s$  and  $t$ .*

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While using reductions and comparing problems, we typically work with the decision versions. Decision problems have **Yes/No** answers. This makes them easy to work with.



# Problems vs Instances

- 1 A **problem**  $\Pi$  consists of an **infinite** collection of inputs  $\{I_1, I_2, \dots, \}$ . Each input is referred to as an **instance**.
- 2 The **size** of an instance  $I$  is the number of bits in its representation.
- 3 For an instance  $I$ ,  $\text{sol}(I)$  is a set of **feasible solutions** to  $I$ .
- 4 For optimization problems each solution  $s \in \text{sol}(I)$  has an associated **value**.

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What is an algorithm for a decision Problem **X**?

It takes as input an instance of **X**, and outputs either “YES” or “NO”.

# Encoding an instance into a string

- 1 **I**; Instance of some problem.
- 2 **I** can be fully and precisely described (say in a text file).
- 3 Resulting text file is a binary string.
- 4  $\implies$  Any input can be interpreted as a binary string **S**.
- 5 ... Running time of algorithm: Function of length of **S** (i.e., **n**).

# Decision Problems and Languages

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- 1 Given  $L$ ,  $\Pi_L$  is the following decision problem: Given  $x \in \Sigma^*$ , is  $x \in L$ ? Each string in  $\Sigma^*$  is an instance of  $\Pi_L$  and  $L$  is the set of instances for which the answer is YES.
- 2 Given  $\Pi$  the associated language is

$$L_\Pi = \{ I \mid I \text{ is an instance of } \Pi \text{ for which answer is YES} \}.$$

Thus, decision problems and languages are used interchangeably.

# Example

- 1 The decision problem **Primality**, and the language

$$L = \{ \#p \mid p \text{ is a prime number} \}.$$

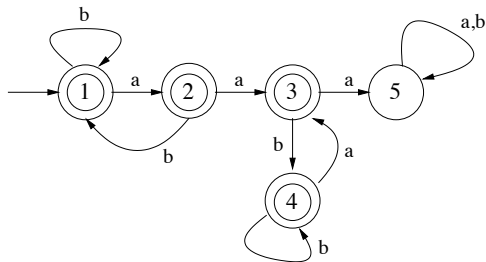
Here  $\#p$  is the string in base **10** representing  $p$ .

- 2 **Bipartite** (is given graph bipartite?). The language is

$$L = \{ \mathcal{S}(G) \mid G \text{ is a bipartite graph} \}.$$

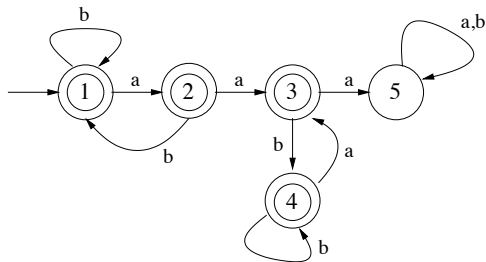
Here  $\mathcal{S}(G)$  is the string encoding the graph  $G$ .

# DFAs and Regular Languages



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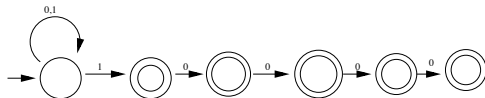
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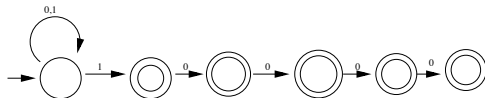
$L = \{s \in \{a, b\}^* \mid s \text{ contains at most one pair of consecutive } a\text{'s}\}$

# NFAs and Regular Languages



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# NFAs and Regular Languages



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$L = \{s \in \{0, 1\}^* \mid \text{there is a } \mathbf{1} \text{ in the last 5 positions of } \mathbf{s}\}$

# Are regular languages good?

Let  $L$  be a regular language. Then the decision problem associated with  $L$  can be solved in

- (A) Constant time.
- (B) Linear time.
- (C) Quadratic time.
- (D) Exponential time.
- (E) Doubly exponential time (i.e.,  $2^{2^n}$ ).
- (F) Octly exponential time (i.e.,  $2^{2^{2^{2^{2^{2^{2^n}}}}}}$ ).

# Reductions, revised.

For decision problems  $X, Y$ , a **reduction from  $X$  to  $Y$**  is:

- 1 An algorithm ...
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- 4 Such that:

$I_Y$  is YES instance of  $Y$   $\iff$   $I_X$  is YES instance of  $X$



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There are other kinds of reductions.

# Using reductions to solve problems

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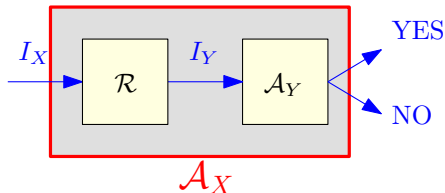
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If  $\mathcal{R}$  and  $\mathcal{A}_Y$  polynomial-time  $\implies \mathcal{A}_X$  polynomial-time.

# Comparing Problems

- ① “Problem **X** is no harder to solve than Problem **Y**”.
- ② If Problem **X** reduces to Problem **Y** (we write  $X \leq Y$ ), then **X** cannot be harder to solve than **Y**.
- ③ **Bipartite Matching**  $\leq$  **Max-Flow**.  
**Bipartite Matching** cannot be harder than **Max-Flow**.
- ④ Equivalently,  
**Max-Flow** is at least as hard as **Bipartite Matching**.
- ⑤  $X \leq Y$ :
  - ① **X** is no harder than **Y**, or
  - ② **Y** is at least as hard as **X**.

# Part II

## Examples of Reductions

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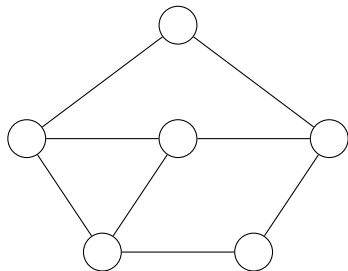
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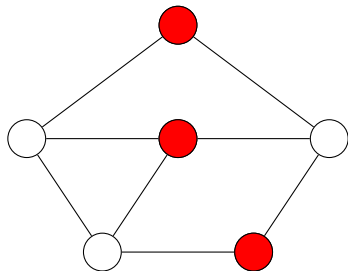
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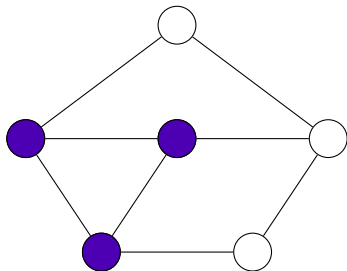
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**Instance:** A graph  $G$  and an integer  $k$ .

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## Problem: **Clique**

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# Recall

For decision problems  $X, Y$ , a reduction from  $X$  to  $Y$  is:

- 1 An algorithm ...
- 2 that takes  $I_X$ , an instance of  $X$  as input ...
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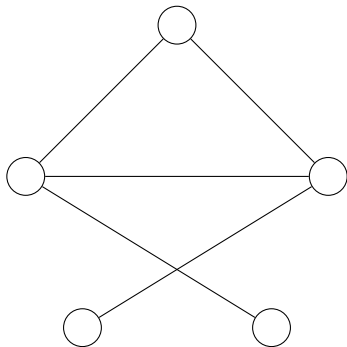
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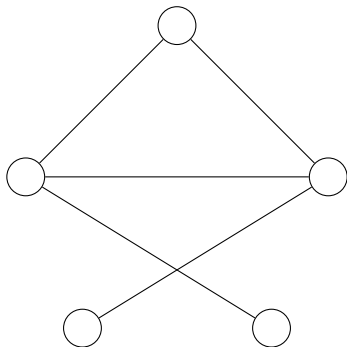


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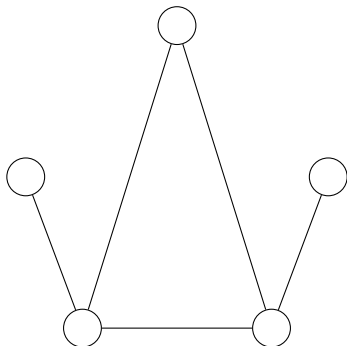


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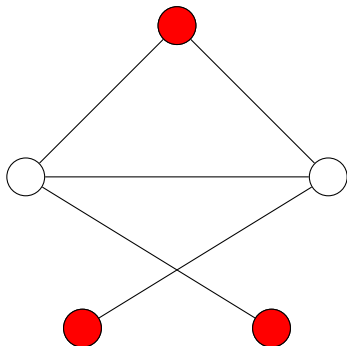


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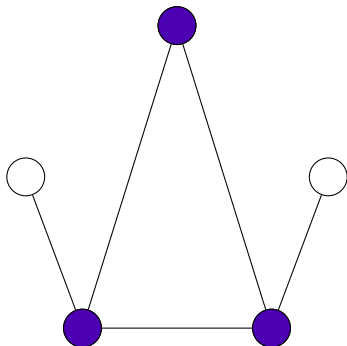


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- 3 **Clique** is *at least as hard as* **Independent Set**.
- 4 Also... **Independent Set** is *at least as hard as* **Clique**.

# Independent Set and Clique

Assume you can solve the **Clique** problem in  $T(n)$  time. Then you can solve the **Independent Set** problem in

- (A)  $O(T(n))$  time.
- (B)  $O(n \log n + T(n))$  time.
- (C)  $O(n^2 T(n^2))$  time.
- (D)  $O(n^4 T(n^4))$  time.
- (E)  $O(n^2 + T(n^2))$  time.
- (F) Does not matter - all these are polynomial if  $T(n)$  is polynomial, which is good enough for our purposes.

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(How long does this take?)

The smallest **DFA** equivalent to an **NFA** with  $n$  states may have  $\approx 2^n$  states.

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How do we solve **DFA Universality**?

We check if  $M$  has *any* reachable non-final state.

Alternatively, minimize  $M$  to obtain  $M'$  and see if  $M'$  has a single state which is an accepting state.

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Given an **NFA** **N**, convert it to an equivalent **DFA** **M**, and use the **DFA Universality** Algorithm.

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The reduction takes **exponential time**! Problem is known to be PSPACE-Complete and we do not expect a polynomial-time algorithm.

# Polynomial-time reductions

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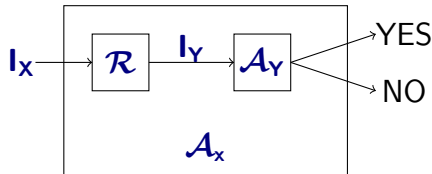


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- 3 Answer to  $I_X$  YES *iff* answer to  $I_Y$  is YES.

## Proposition

If  $X \leq_P Y$  then a polynomial time algorithm for  $Y$  implies a polynomial time algorithm for  $X$ .

Such a reduction is called a **Karp reduction**. Most reductions we will need are Karp reductions.

# Reductions again...

Let **X** and **Y** be two decision problems, such that **X** can be solved in polynomial time, and  $\mathbf{X} \leq_P \mathbf{Y}$ . Then

- (A) **Y** can be solved in polynomial time.
- (B) **Y** can NOT be solved in polynomial time.
- (C) If **Y** is hard then **X** is also hard.
- (D) None of the above.
- (E) All of the above.

# Polynomial-time reductions and hardness

For decision problems  $X$  and  $Y$ , if  $X \leq_P Y$ , and  $Y$  has an efficient algorithm,  $X$  has an efficient algorithm.

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If  $X \leq_P Y$  and  $X$  does not have an efficient algorithm,  $Y$  cannot have an efficient algorithm!

# Polynomial-time reductions and instance sizes

## Proposition

Let  $\mathcal{R}$  be a polynomial-time reduction from  $\mathbf{X}$  to  $\mathbf{Y}$ . Then for any instance  $\mathbf{l}_X$  of  $\mathbf{X}$ , the size of the instance  $\mathbf{l}_Y$  of  $\mathbf{Y}$  produced from  $\mathbf{l}_X$  by  $\mathcal{R}$  is polynomial in the size of  $\mathbf{l}_X$ .



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## Proof.

$\mathcal{R}$  is a polynomial-time algorithm and hence on input  $\mathbf{l}_X$  of size  $|\mathbf{l}_X|$  it runs in time  $\mathbf{p}(|\mathbf{l}_X|)$  for some polynomial  $\mathbf{p}()$ .

$\mathbf{l}_Y$  is the output of  $\mathcal{R}$  on input  $\mathbf{l}_X$ .

$\mathcal{R}$  can write at most  $\mathbf{p}(|\mathbf{l}_X|)$  bits and hence  $|\mathbf{l}_Y| \leq \mathbf{p}(|\mathbf{l}_X|)$ . □

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**Note:** Converse is not true. A reduction need not be polynomial-time even if output of reduction is of size polynomial in its input.

# Polynomial-time Reduction

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# Transitivity of Reductions

## Proposition

$X \leq_P Y$  and  $Y \leq_P Z$  implies that  $X \leq_P Z$ .

**Note:**  $X \leq_P Y$  does not imply that  $Y \leq_P X$  and hence it is very important to know the FROM and TO in a reduction.

To prove  $X \leq_P Y$  you need to show a reduction FROM  $X$  TO  $Y$   
In other words show that an algorithm for  $Y$  implies an algorithm for  $X$ .

# Vertex Cover

Given a graph  $G = (V, E)$ , a set of vertices  $S$  is:

# Vertex Cover

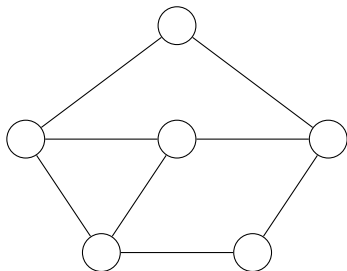
Given a graph  $G = (V, E)$ , a set of vertices  $S$  is:

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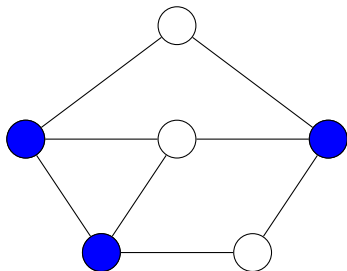
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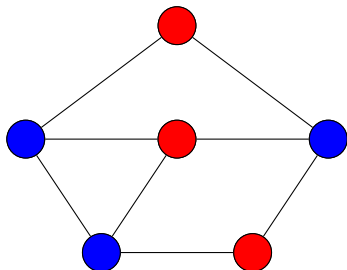




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# The **Vertex Cover** Problem

## Problem (**Vertex Cover**)

**Input:** *A graph  $G$  and integer  $k$ .*

**Goal:** *Is there a vertex cover of size  $\leq k$  in  $G$ ?*

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Can we relate **Independent Set** and **Vertex Cover**?

# Relationship between...

## Vertex Cover and Independent Set

### Proposition

Let  $G = (V, E)$  be a graph.  $S$  is an independent set if and only if  $V \setminus S$  is a vertex cover.

### Proof.

( $\Rightarrow$ ) Let  $S$  be an independent set

- 1 Consider any edge  $uv \in E$ .
- 2 Since  $S$  is an independent set, either  $u \notin S$  or  $v \notin S$ .
- 3 Thus, either  $u \in V \setminus S$  or  $v \in V \setminus S$ .
- 4  $V \setminus S$  is a vertex cover.

( $\Leftarrow$ ) Let  $V \setminus S$  be some vertex cover:

- 1 Consider  $u, v \in S$
- 2  $uv$  is not an edge of  $G$ , as otherwise  $V \setminus S$  does not cover  $uv$ .
- 3  $\implies S$  is thus an independent set. □

# Independent Set $\leq_P$ Vertex Cover

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- 3 **(G, k)** is an instance of **Independent Set** , and **(G, n - k)** is an instance of **Vertex Cover** with the same answer.

# Independent Set $\leq_P$ Vertex Cover

- 1 **G**: graph with **n** vertices, and an integer **k** be an instance of the **Independent Set** problem.
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- 3 **(G, k)** is an instance of **Independent Set**, and **(G, n - k)** is an instance of **Vertex Cover** with the same answer.
- 4 Therefore, **Independent Set**  $\leq_P$  **Vertex Cover**. Also **Vertex Cover**  $\leq_P$  **Independent Set**.



# What about edge cover?

## Problem: **Edge Cover**

**Instance:** A graph  $G$  and integer  $k$ .

**Question:** Is there a subset of  $k$  edges such that all the vertices of  $G$  are adjacent to one of these edges.

We have that:

- (A) **Edge Cover** is polynomially equivalent to **Independent Set**.
- (B) **Edge Cover** is polynomially equivalent to **Vertex Cover**.
- (C) **Edge Cover** is polynomially equivalent to **Clique**.
- (D) **Edge Cover** is polynomially equivalent to **3 COLORING**.
- (E) None of the above.

# Can you reduce between these problems

## Problem: 2SAT

**Instance:**  $F$ : a 2CNF formula.

**Question:** Is there a satisfying assignment to  $F$ ?

## Problem: Max Flow

**Instance:**  $G, s, t, k$ : Instance of network flow.

**Question:** Is there a valid flow in  $G$  from  $s$  to  $t$  of value larger than  $k$ ?

- (A)  $2SAT \leq_P \text{Max Flow}$ .
- (B)  $\text{Max Flow} \leq_P 2SAT$ .
- (C)  $2SAT \leq_P \text{Max Flow}$  and  $\text{Max Flow} \leq_P 2SAT$ .
- (D) There is NO polynomial time reduction from  $2SAT$  to  $\text{Max Flow}$ , or vice versa.
- (E) All your reduction belong to us.

# A problem of Languages

Suppose you work for the United Nations. Let  $U$  be the set of all **languages** spoken by people across the world. The United Nations also has a set of **translators**, all of whom speak English, and some other languages from  $U$ .

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More General problem: Find/Hire a small group of people who can accomplish a large number of tasks.

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## Problem (**Set Cover**)

**Input:** Given a set  $U$  of  $n$  elements, a collection  $S_1, S_2, \dots, S_m$  of subsets of  $U$ , and an integer  $k$ .

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## Example

Let  $U = \{1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7\}$ ,  $k = 2$  with

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$\{S_2, S_6\}$  is a set cover



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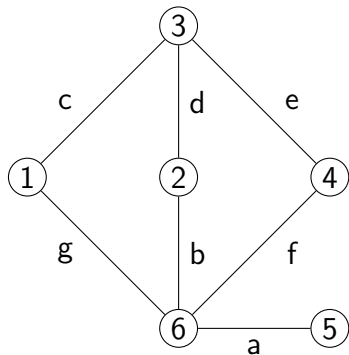
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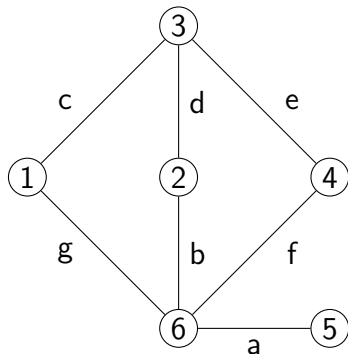
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Observe that  $G$  has vertex cover of size  $k$  if and only if  $U, \{S_v\}_{v \in V}$  has a set cover of size  $k$ . (Exercise: Prove this.)

# Vertex Cover $\leq_P$ Set Cover: Example



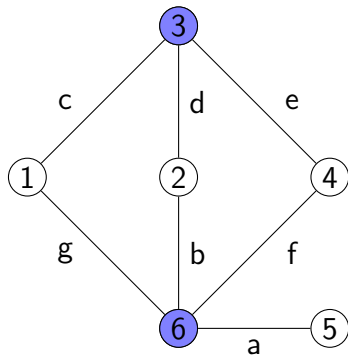
# Vertex Cover $\leq_P$ Set Cover: Example



Let  $U = \{a, b, c, d, e, f, g\}$ ,  $k = 2$  with

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$\{S_3, S_6\}$  is a set cover



# Proving Reductions

To prove that  $X \leq_P Y$  you need to give an algorithm  $\mathcal{A}$  that:

- 1 Transforms an instance  $I_X$  of  $X$  into an instance  $I_Y$  of  $Y$ .
- 2 Satisfies the property that answer to  $I_X$  is YES iff  $I_Y$  is YES.
  - 1 typical easy direction to prove: answer to  $I_Y$  is YES if answer to  $I_X$  is YES
  - 2 **typical difficult direction to prove**: answer to  $I_X$  is YES if answer to  $I_Y$  is YES (equivalently answer to  $I_X$  is NO if answer to  $I_Y$  is NO).
- 3 Runs in **polynomial** time.

# Vertex cover and Set cover?

## Clicker question

Consider the statement: **Set Cover**  $\leq_P$  **Vertex Cover**.

This statement is

- (A) correct.
- (B) correct (although the reduction seen is in the other direction - so not clear why this is correct).
- (C) incorrect.
- (D) incorrect (the reduction seen is in the other direction!)

# Example of incorrect reduction proof

Try proving **Matching**  $\leq_P$  **Bipartite Matching** via following reduction:

- 1 Given graph  $\mathbf{G} = (\mathbf{V}, \mathbf{E})$  obtain a bipartite graph  $\mathbf{G}' = (\mathbf{V}', \mathbf{E}')$  as follows.
  - 1 Let  $\mathbf{V}_1 = \{\mathbf{u}_1 \mid \mathbf{u} \in \mathbf{V}\}$  and  $\mathbf{V}_2 = \{\mathbf{u}_2 \mid \mathbf{u} \in \mathbf{V}\}$ . We set  $\mathbf{V}' = \mathbf{V}_1 \cup \mathbf{V}_2$  (that is, we make two copies of  $\mathbf{V}$ )
  - 2  $\mathbf{E}' = \{\mathbf{u}_1\mathbf{v}_2 \mid \mathbf{u} \neq \mathbf{v} \text{ and } \mathbf{uv} \in \mathbf{E}\}$
- 2 Given  $\mathbf{G}$  and integer  $\mathbf{k}$  the reduction outputs  $\mathbf{G}'$  and  $\mathbf{k}$ .

# Example

# “Proof”

## Claim

*Reduction is a poly-time algorithm. If  $G$  has a matching of size  $k$  then  $G'$  has a matching of size  $k$ .*

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**Incorrect!** Why? Vertex  $u \in V$  has two copies  $u_1$  and  $u_2$  in  $G'$ . A matching in  $G'$  may use both copies!

# Subset sum and Partition?

## Problem: Subset Sum

**Instance:**  $S$  - set of positive integers,  $t$ : - an integer number (target).

**Question:** Is there a subset  $X \subseteq S$  such that  $\sum_{x \in X} x = t$ ?

## Problem: Partition

**Instance:** A set  $S$  of  $n$  numbers.

**Question:** Is there a subset  $T \subseteq S$  s.t.  $\sum_{t \in T} t = \sum_{s \in S \setminus T} s$ ?

Assume that we can solve **Subset Sum** in polynomial time, then we can solve **Partition** in polynomial time. This statement is

- (A) True.
- (B) Mostly true.
- (C) False.
- (D) Mostly false.

## II: Partition and subset sum?

### Problem: **Partition**

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### Problem: **Subset Sum**

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Assume that we can solve **Partition** in polynomial time, then we can solve **Subset Sum** in polynomial time. This statement is

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# III: Partition and Halting?

## Problem: Halting

**Instance:**  $P$ : Program,  $I$ : Input.

**Question:** Does  $P$  stop on the input  $I$ ?

## Problem: Partition

**Instance:** A set  $S$  of  $n$  numbers.

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Assume that we can solve **Halting** in polynomial time, then we can solve **Partition** in polynomial time. This statement is

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# IV: Halting and Partition?

## Problem: **Partition**

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## Problem: **Halting**

**Instance:** **P**: Program, **I**: Input.

**Question:** Does **P** stop on the input **I**?

Assume that we can solve **Partition** in polynomial time, then we can solve **Halting** in polynomial time. This statement is

- (A) True.
- (B) Mostly true.
- (C) False.
- (D) Mostly false.

# What we know...

① **Partition**  $\approx_P$  **Subset sum**.

② **Halting** is way way way way way way **harder**.

# Summary

We looked at **polynomial-time reductions**.

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## Using polynomial-time reductions

- 1 If  $X \leq_P Y$ , and there is no efficient algorithm for  $X$ , there is no efficient algorithm for  $Y$ .



# Summary

We looked at **polynomial-time reductions**.

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We looked at some examples of reductions between **Independent Set**, **Clique**, **Vertex Cover**, and **Set Cover**.

# Notes





