

# Lecture 15: Boolean Circuits II

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# Outline

- 1 NP and P/poly
- 2 Circuit Lower Bounds
- 3 NC, AC and P-complete

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## NP and P/poly: Basic Definitions again

## Certificate definition of NP

A language  $L \subseteq \{0, 1\}^*$  is in NP if  $\exists$  a polynomial  $p : \mathbb{N} \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$  and a poly-time TM  $M$  s.t.  $\forall x \in \{0, 1\}^*$ ,

$$x \in L \iff \exists u \in \{0, 1\}^{p(|x|)} \text{ such that } M(x, u) = 1$$

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$$x \in L \iff M(x, a_n) = 1$$

- These two classes are different. We already know  $P \subset P/poly$ . If we can show  $NP \not\subseteq P/poly$ , then we are done!

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- So, it is sufficient to show that  $\Sigma_3^P \subseteq \Sigma_2^P$  as that would imply  $\Sigma_2^P = \Sigma_3^P$ .
- So, we want to show  
 $(\text{NP} \subseteq \text{P}/\text{poly}) \Rightarrow (\Sigma_3^P \subseteq \Sigma_2^P) \Rightarrow (\text{PH} = \Sigma_2^P)$ .

# The Proof

- Fix a language  $L \in \Sigma_3^P$ . So,  $\exists$  a poly-time TM  $M$  and a polynomial  $q$  s.t.

$$x \in L \iff \exists u_1 \in \{0, 1\}^{q(|x|)} \forall u_2 \in \{0, 1\}^{q(|x|)} \\ \exists u_3 \in \{0, 1\}^{q(|x|)} M(x, u_1, u_2, u_3) = 1$$

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- Focus on the highlighted part and define a new language  $L'$  s.t.

$$\langle x, u_1, u_2 \rangle \in L' \iff \exists u_3 \in \{0, 1\}^{q(|x|)} M(x, u_1, u_2, u_3) = 1$$

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- $L' \in \text{NP}$  and as 3SAT is NP-complete,  $L' \leq_P \text{3SAT}$ .
- So, every input of the form  $\langle x, u_1, u_2 \rangle$  can be polynomially (Cook) reduced to a 3CNF expression  $\varphi(x, u_1, u_2)$  and

$$\langle x, u_1, u_2 \rangle \in L' \iff \varphi(x, u_1, u_2) \in \text{3SAT}$$

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to get

$$x \in L \iff \exists u_1 \in \{0, 1\}^{q(|x|)} \forall u_2 \in \{0, 1\}^{q(|x|)} \\ M'(x, u_1, u_2) = 1$$

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- Now,  $3SAT \in NP$  and as  $NP \subseteq P/poly$ ,  $\exists$  a polynomial-sized circuit  $C$  for 3SAT, i.e. a poly-sized circuit  $C$  that decides  $\varphi(x, u_1, u_2) \in 3SAT$ .

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- How to find the circuit  $C$ ?

# Finding the Circuit

## Lemma

$\exists$  a poly-time TM  $M_C$  that takes a 3-CNF formula  $\varphi$ ,  $|\varphi| = n$  and a circuit  $C$  with  $n$  inputs such that

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- If  $C$  recognizes 3SAT for inputs of length  $n$  and  $\varphi$  is satisfiable, then  $M_C$  accepts.
- If  $\varphi$  is not satisfiable, then  $M_C$  rejects.

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- Repeatedly use  $C$  and extract a satisfying assignment for  $\varphi$ .  
The input to  $M_C$  is  $C$  and  $\varphi$ .

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- Do this in a loop for  $i = 1$  to  $m$ .
- If  $\varphi[x_i = a_i, \forall i = 1(1)m] = 1$ , then ACCEPT; else REJECT.

# Going Back to the Original Proof

- Existentially check the circuit. So, the earlier condition

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becomes

$$x \in L \iff \exists C \text{ of poly-size } \exists u_1 \in \{0, 1\}^{q(|x|)} \forall u_2 \in \{0, 1\}^{q(|x|)} \\ M_C(C, \langle x, u_1, u_2 \rangle) = 1$$

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- So,  $L \in \Sigma_2^P$ .

$P_{/poly}$  and EXP

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## Theorem

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## Proof

Left as an exercise. Use the concept of snapshots of oblivious TM.

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- Circuits have their advantages over TMs structurally.
- One can show that some functions do require large circuits to compute.

# A Theorem on Circuits

## Theorem

For every  $n > 1$ ,  $\exists$  a function  $f : \{0, 1\}^n \rightarrow \{0, 1\}$  that cannot be computed by a circuit  $C$  of size  $\frac{2^n}{cn}$  where  $c$  is a suitable constant.

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- This implies  $\exists$  a function that is not computed by that sized circuit.

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For every  $d$ , a language  $L \in NC^d$  if  $L$  can be decided by a family of circuits  $\{C_n\}$  where  $C_n$  has size polynomial in  $n$  and depth  $O(\log^d n)$ . The class  $NC = \bigcup_{i \geq 1} NC^i$ .

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## Theorem

A language has efficient parallel algorithms iff it is in NC.

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$$NC^i \subseteq AC^i \subseteq NC^{i+1}$$

## Examples

- What about the language PARITY  
=  $\{x \mid x \text{ has an odd number of 1s}\}$ ?
- One can show using logarithmic depth recursion that PARITY  $\in NC^1$ .

## Theorem

A language has efficient parallel algorithms iff it is in NC.

## Proof

Left as an exercise.

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## Proof

Proof omitted.