Satisifiability and SAT Solvers

Marcelo Finger

Department of Computer Science
Instituto de Matemática e Estatística
Universidade de São Paulo

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Topics

1. SAT
2. Empirical Properties
3. The DPLL Algorithm
4. Improvements to DPLL
5. Conclusion

Next Issue

The Setting: the language

- Atoms: $\mathcal{P} = \{p_1, \ldots, p_n\}$
- Literals: p_i and $\neg p_j$
- $\bar{p} = \neg p$, $\overline{\neg p} = p$
- A clause is a set of literals. Ex: $\{p, \bar{q}, r\}$ or $p \vee \neg q \vee r$
- A formula C is a set of clauses

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- A formula C is satisfied ($v(C) = 1$) if all clauses in C are satisfied

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- SAT has small witnesses

An NP Algorithm for SAT

NP-SAT(C)

INPUT: C, a formula in clausal form

OUTPUT: v, if $v(C) = 1$; no, otherwise.

```
Guess a v
Show, in polynomial time, that v(C) = 1
return v
if no such v is guessable then
   return no
end if
```

A Naïve SAT Solver

NaiveSAT(C)

Input: C, a formula in clausal form

Output: v, if $v(C) = 1$; no, otherwise.

```
for every valuation v over p_1, ..., p_n do
    if v(C) = 1 then
        return v
    end if
end for
return no
```

Next Issue

A Brief History of SAT Solvers

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- [Cook 1971] SAT is NP-complete

Incomplete SAT methods

Incomplete methods compute valuation if C is SAT; if C is unSAT, no answer.

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- [Gent & Walsh, 1994] SAT phase transition

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- Applications to planning, microprocessor test and verification, software design and verification, AI search, games, etc.
- Some non-DPLL SAT solvers incorporate all those techniques: [Dixon 2004]

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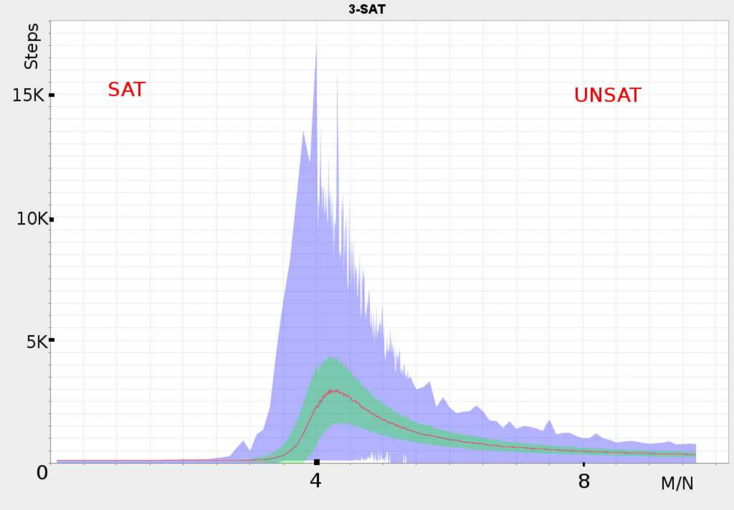
The SAT Phase Transition



The Phase Transition Diagram

- 3-SAT, N is fixed
- Higher N, more abrupt transition
- M/N: low (SAT); high (UNSAT)
- Phase transition point: $M/N \approx 4.3$, 50%SAT [Toby & Walsh 1994]
- Invariant with N
- Invariant with algorithm!

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- Phase transition point: $M/N \approx 4.3$, 50%SAT [Toby & Walsh 1994]
- Invariant with N
- Invariant with algorithm!
- No theoretical explanation
- There is another phase-transition for SAT based on "Impurity" [Lozinskii 2006]

Deolalikar's $P = NP$ Proof Stratgy

- Prove theoretically the existence of phase transition
  - Uses Statistical Phisics
- Model P using Immerman-Vardi LFP-Logic
  - Show that for every p^k, some problem exists in a phase transition above p^k.

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  - Critics found a problem here.
  - Uses a 2-variable fragment of LFP.

Next Issue

DPLL Through Examples

$$p \lor q$$
$$p \lor \neg q$$
$$\neg p \lor t \lor s$$
$$\neg p \lor \neg t \lor s$$
$$\neg p \lor \neg s$$
$$\neg p \lor s \lor \neg a$$

Initial Simplifications

Delete all clauses that contain λ, if $\bar{\lambda}$ does not occur.

$$p \vee q$$
$$p \vee \neg q$$
$$\neg p \vee t \vee s$$
$$\neg p \vee \neg t \vee s$$
$$\neg p \vee \neg s$$
$$\cancel{\neg p \vee s \vee \neg a}$$

Construction of a Partial Valuation

Choose a literal: s. $V = \{\mathbf{s}\}$
Propagate choice: Delete clauses containing s. Delete $\bar{s}$ from other clauses.

$$p \vee q$$
$$p \vee \neg q$$
$$\cancel{\neg p \vee t \vee s}$$
$$\cancel{\neg p \vee \neg t \vee s}$$
$$\neg p \cancel{\vee \neg s}$$

Unit Propagation

Enlarge the partial valuation with unit clauses.

$V = \{\mathbf{s}, \bar{p}\}$

Propagate unit clauses as before.

$$\cancel{p \vee} q$$

$$\cancel{p \vee} \neg q$$

$$\cancel{\neg p}$$

Another propagation step leads to $V = \{\mathbf{s}, \bar{p}, q, \bar{q}\}$

Backtracking

Unit propagation may lead to contradictory valuation:
$V = \{\mathbf{s}, \bar{p}, q, \bar{q}\}$
Backtrack to the previous choice, and propagate: $V = \{\bar{s}\}$

$$
\begin{array}{l}
p \lor q \\
p \lor \neg q \\
\neg p \lor t \cancel{\lor s} \\
\neg p \lor \neg t \cancel{\lor s} \\
\cancel{\neg p \lor \neg s}
\end{array}
$$

New Choice

When propagation finishes, a new choice is made: p.
$V = \{\bar{s}, \mathbf{p}\}$.
This leads to an inconsistent valuation: $V = \{\bar{s}, \mathbf{p}, t, \bar{t}\}$
Backtrack to last choice: $V = \{\bar{s}, \bar{p}\}$

$$\cancel{p \vee}\ q$$

$$\cancel{p \vee}\ \neg q$$

$$\cancel{\neg p \vee t}$$

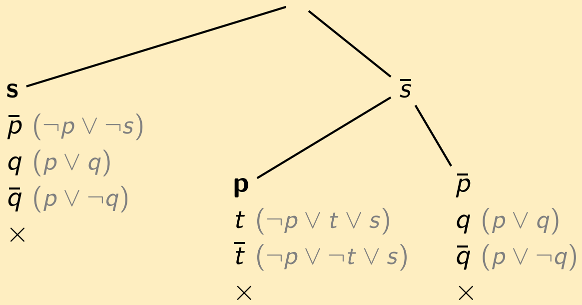
$$\cancel{\neg p \vee \neg t}$$

Propagation leads to another contradiction: $V = \{\bar{s}, \bar{p}, q, \bar{q}\}$

The Formula is UnSAT

There is nowhere to backtrack to now!

The formula is unsatisfiable, with a proof sketched below.



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The Resolution Inference For Clauses

Usual Resolution

$$\frac{C \vee \lambda \quad \bar{\lambda} \vee D}{C \vee D}$$

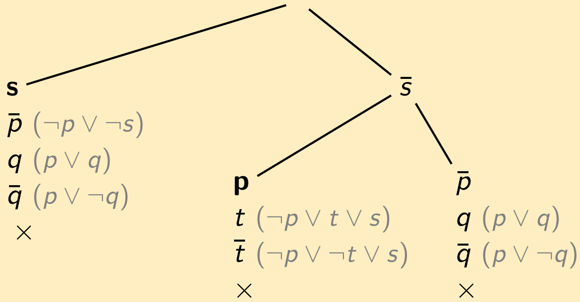
Clauses as Sets

$$\frac{\Gamma \cup \{\lambda\} \quad \{\bar{\lambda}\} \cup \Delta}{\Gamma \cup \Delta}$$

Note that, as clauses are sets

$$\frac{\Gamma \cup \{\mu, \lambda\} \quad \{\bar{\lambda}, \mu\} \cup \Delta}{\Gamma \cup \Delta \cup \{\mu\}}$$

DPLL Proofs and Resolution



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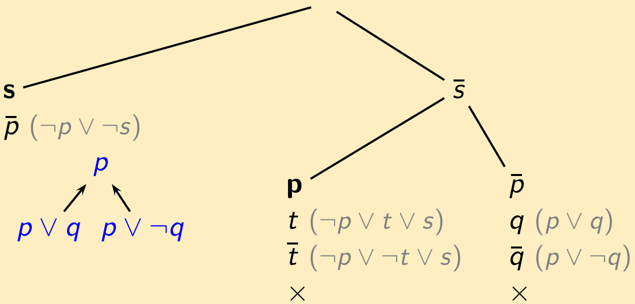

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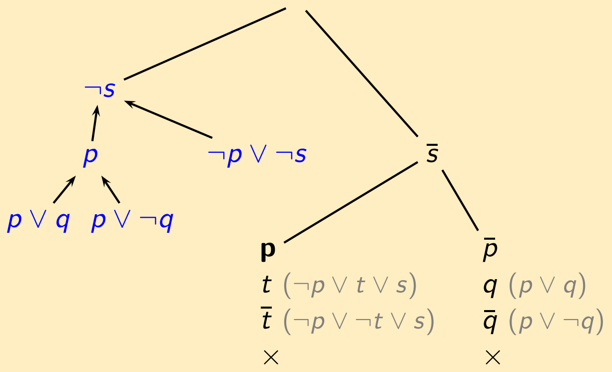

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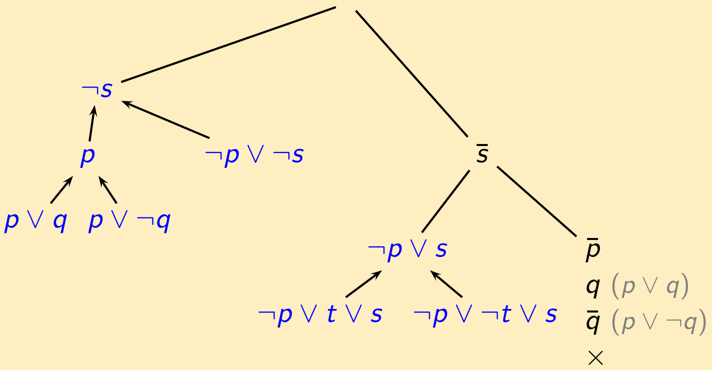

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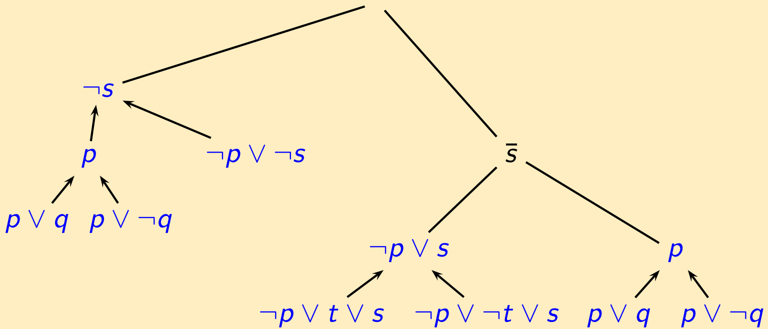

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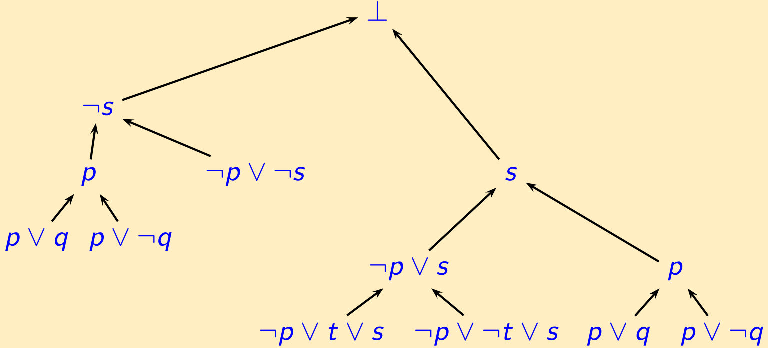

Conclusion

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- DPLL inherits all properties of this (restricted form of resolution
- In particular, DPLL inherits the exponential lower bounds

Enhancing DPLL

For the reasons discussed, DPLL needs to be improved to achieve better efficiency. Several techniques have been applied:

- Learning
- Unlearning
- Backjumping
- Watched literals
- Heuristics for choosing literals

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- **Watched literals**
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Watched Literals

The Cost of Unit Propagation

- Empirical measures show that **80% of time** DPLL is doing Unit Propagation
- Propagation is the main target for optimization
- Chaff introduced the technique of **Watched Literals**
  - Unit Propagation speed up
  - No need to delete literals or clauses
  - No need to watch all literals in a clause
  - Constant time backtracking (very fast)

DPLL and 3-valued Logic

- DPLL underlying logic is 3-valued
- Given a partial valuation

$$V = \{\lambda_1, \ldots, \lambda_k\}$$

- Let λ be any literal.

$$V(\lambda) = \begin{cases} 1(\text{true}) & \text{if } \lambda \in V \\ 0(\text{false}) & \text{if } \bar{\lambda} \in V \\ *(\text{undefined}) & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

The Watched Literal Data Structure

- Every clause c has two selected literals: $\lambda_{c1}, \lambda_{c2}$
- For each c, $\lambda_{c1}, \lambda_{c2}$ are dynamically chosen and varies with time
- $\lambda_{c1}, \lambda_{c2}$ are **properly watched** under partial valuation V if:
  - they are both undefined; or
  - at least one of them is true

Dynamics of Watched Literals

- Initially, $V = \emptyset$
- A pair of watched literals is chosen for each clause. It is proper.
- Literal choice and unit propagation expand V
- One or both watched literals may be falsified
- If $\lambda_{c1}, \lambda_{c2}$ become improper then
  - The falsified watched literal is changed
- if no proper pair of watched literals can be found, two things may occur to alter V
  - Unit propagation (V is expanded)
  - Backtracking (V is reduced)

Example

clause	λ_{c1}	λ_{c2}
$p \vee q \vee r$	$p = *$	$q = *$
$p \vee \neg q \vee s$	$p = *$	$\bar{q} = *$
$p \vee r \vee \neg s$	$p = *$	$r = *$

Initially $V = \emptyset$

A pair of literals was elected for each clause

All are undefined, all pairs are proper

$\bar{p}$ IS CHOSEN

$V = \{\bar{\mathbf{p}}\}$

All watched literals become $(0, *)$, improper

New literals are chosen to be watched

clause	λ_{c1}	λ_{c2}
$p \vee q \vee r$	$r = *$	$q = *$
$p \vee \neg q \vee s$	$s = *$	$\bar{q} = *$
$p \vee \neg r \vee \neg s$	$\bar{s} = *$	$r = *$

$\bar{r}$ IS CHOSEN

$V = \{\bar{\mathbf{p}}, \bar{\mathbf{r}}\}$
WL in clauses 1,3 become improper
No other *- or 1-literal to be chosen
Unit propagation: $q, \bar{s}$ become true

clause	λ_{c1}	λ_{c2}
$p \vee q \vee r$	$r = 0$	$q = \cancel{*}\ 1$
$p \vee \neg q \vee s$	$s = *$	$\bar{q} = *$
$p \vee \neg r \vee \neg s$	$\bar{s} = \cancel{*}\ 1$	$r = 0$

Unit propagation leads to backtracking

$V = \{\bar{\mathbf{p}}, \bar{\mathbf{r}}, q, \bar{s}\}$
WL in clause 2 becomes improper
No other *- or 1-literal to be chosen
No unit propagation is possible: clause 2 is false

clause	λ_{c1}	λ_{c2}
$p \vee q \vee r$	$r = 0$	$q = 1$
$p \vee \neg q \vee s$	$s = 0$	$\bar{q} = 0$
$p \vee r \vee \neg s$	$\bar{s} = 1$	$r = 0$

FAST BACKTRACKING

V is contracted to last choice point

$V = \cancel{\{\bar{\mathbf{p}}, \bar{\mathbf{r}}, q, \bar{s}\}}\ \{\bar{\mathbf{p}}, r\}$

clause	λ_{c1}	λ_{c2}
$p \vee q \vee r$	$r = 1$	$q = *$
$p \vee \neg q \vee s$	$s = *$	$\bar{q} = *$
$p \vee r \vee \neg s$	$\bar{s} = *$	$r = 1$

Only affected WLs had to be recomputed

No need to reestablish previous context from a stack of contexts

Very quick backtracking

Next Issue

Improvements Techniques from Chaff

- Learning new clauses
- VSDIS Heuristics
- Random restarts
- Backjumping

Learning

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- We can added learned information to the problem
- **Learning means adding new clauses**, without adding new variables

Learning 1: Bad Choices

Suppose we had choices

$$V = \{\bar{\mathbf{p}}, \bar{\mathbf{r}}\}$$

which after propagation led to

$$V = \{\bar{\mathbf{p}}, \bar{\mathbf{r}}, q, \bar{s}, s\}$$

That is, in that context we learned that we cannot have both $\bar{\mathbf{p}}$ and $\bar{\mathbf{r}}$.

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Add the new clause:

$$p \vee r$$

Learning 1: Properties

- From a closed branch with choices $\lambda_1, \ldots, \lambda_k$, learn

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- Useful in the presence of *forgetting* (random restarts)
- Other learning techniques may be applied

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  - For each unit clause, its "original" clause
  - Choice literals are associated to $\top$

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- This form of learning has better effects to proof efficiency

Learning 2: An Example

- In the previous example, the choices are represented as:

$$V = \{(\bar{\mathbf{p}}, \top), (\bar{\mathbf{r}}, \top)\}$$

- After linear propagation, the contradiction

$$V = \{(\bar{\mathbf{p}}, \top), (\bar{\mathbf{r}}, \top), (q, p \vee q \vee r), (\bar{s}, p \vee r \vee \neg s), (s, p \vee \neg q \vee s)\}$$

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- Theorem: proofs with DPLL + Learning2 can polynomially simulate full resolution proofs

Heuristics for Choosing Literals

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- Several **heuristics** can be used to choose that literal
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- Some heuristics are clearly more efficient than others

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  - **SATO Heuristics** is a variation of MOM. Let $f(p)$ be 1 plus the number of clauses of smallest size which contain p. Choose p that maximizes $f(p) * f(\neg p)$. Choose p if $f(p) > f(\neg p)$; $\neg p$ otherwise.

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- Low overheads: counters updated only during learning

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- Idea: restart periodically the search for a valuation
- Problem: if the formula is UNSAT, this may lead to great inefficiency
- This problem is avoided if learned formulas are kept

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- Empirically checked: this brings efficiency gains

Backjumping

Backjumping via Examples

- Suppose we have the partial valuation
$\{(\bar{\mathbf{p}}, \top), (\bar{\mathbf{r}}, \top), (\mathbf{a}, \top), (q, p \lor q \lor r), (\bar{s}, p \lor r \lor \neg s), (s, p \lor \neg q \lor s)\}$

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BACKJUMPING VIA EXAMPLES

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- Backjumping always brings efficiency gains

Next Issue

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- SAT can also be enhanced: **SAT Modulo Theories**

SAT is not a Panacea

- Reduction to SAT may be ok for some NPc problems, but ...
  - ... some NPc problems with **no known** polynomial SAT-reduction.

    E.g. Answer Set Programming
  - ... some NPc problems with **no efficient** polynomial SAT-reduction.

    E.g. Probabilistic SAT