The Complexity Class Co-NP

Def. For a problem X, the problem $\overline{X}$ is the problem such that $\overline{X}(s) = 1$ if and only if $X(s) = 0$.

Def. Co-NP is the set of decision problems X such that $\overline{X} \in$ NP.

Def. A tautology is a boolean formula that always evaluates to 1.

Tautology Problem

Input: a boolean formula

Output: whether the formula is a tautology

- e.g. $(\neg x_1 \wedge x_2) \vee (\neg x_1 \wedge \neg x_3) \vee x_1 \vee (\neg x_2 \wedge x_3)$ is a tautology

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- Thus Tautology $\in$ Co-NP

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- Similarly, P $\subseteq$ Co-NP, thus P $\subseteq$ NP $\cap$ Co-NP

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- We said it is unlikely that Hamiltonian Cycle can be solved in polynomial time:
  - if P $\neq$ NP, then HC $\notin$ P
  - HC $\notin$ P, unless P $=$ NP

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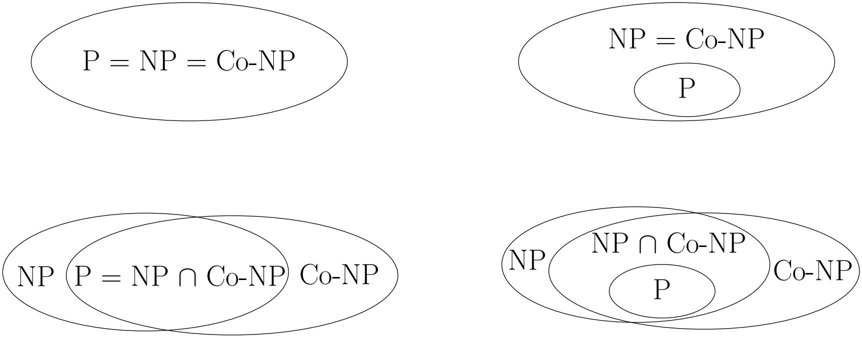
4 Possibilities of Relationships

Notice that $X \in \text{NP} \iff \overline{X} \in \text{Co-NP}$ and $\text{P} \subseteq \text{NP} \cap \text{Co-NP}$



- People commonly believe we are in the 4th scenario

Outline

Polynomial-Time Reductions

Def. Given a black box algorithm A that solves a problem X, if any instance of a problem Y can be solved using a polynomial number of standard computational steps, plus a polynomial number of calls to A, then we say Y is polynomial-time reducible to X, denoted as $Y \leq_P X$.

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To prove negative results:

Suppose $Y \leq_P X$. If Y cannot be solved in polynomial time, then X cannot be solved in polynomial time.

Polynomial-Time Reduction: Example

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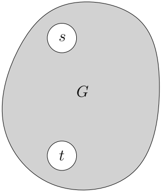

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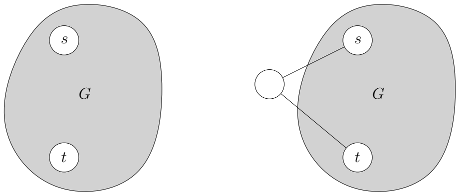

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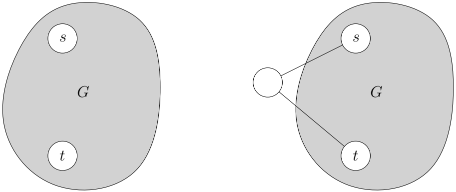

Obs. G has a HP from s to t if and only if graph on right side has a HC.

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- No! There is indeed a large family of natural NP-complete problems