

# PPP-Completeness and Extremal Combinatorics

Romain Bourneuf

Joint work with Lukáš Folwarczný, Pavel Hubáček,  
Alon Rosen and Nikolaj I. Schwartzbach

CoA 2023

# Total search problems

## Definition (Total search problem, TFNP)

- A search problem is *total* if all instances have a solution.

## Definition (Total search problem, TFNP)

- A search problem is *total* if all instances have a solution.
- TFNP is the class of total search problems for which we can check in polytime if an answer is indeed a solution.

## Definition (Total search problem, TFNP)

- A search problem is *total* if all instances have a solution.
- TFNP is the class of total search problems for which we can check in polytime if an answer is indeed a solution.

## Example: Factoring

Input: Integer  $n \geq 2$ .

Solution : A prime factor of  $n$ .

## Definition (Total search problem, TFNP)

- A search problem is *total* if all instances have a solution.
- TFNP is the class of total search problems for which we can check in polytime if an answer is indeed a solution.

## Example: Factoring

Input: Integer  $n \geq 2$ .

Solution : A prime factor of  $n$ .

Many interesting problems in cryptography lie in TFNP.

# Subclasses of TFNP

# Subclasses of TFNP

TFNP subclasses are defined based on the mathematical argument used to prove the totality of a problem.



# Subclasses of TFNP

TFNP subclasses are defined based on the mathematical argument used to prove the totality of a problem.

## Classical Theorem (Weak Pigeonhole Principle)

If  $f : [2n] \rightarrow [n]$  then there exist  $x \neq y \in [2n]$  s.t.  $f(x) = f(y)$ .

# Subclasses of TFNP

TFNP subclasses are defined based on the mathematical argument used to prove the totality of a problem.

## Classical Theorem (Weak Pigeonhole Principle)

If  $f : [2n] \rightarrow [n]$  then there exist  $x \neq y \in [2n]$  s.t.  $f(x) = f(y)$ .

## Definition (WeakPigeon [Jeřábek '15])

Input: Poly-sized circuit  $H : \{0, 1\}^n \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{n-1}$ .

Solution :  $x \neq y \in \{0, 1\}^n$  s.t.  $H(x) = H(y)$ .

# Subclasses of TFNP

TFNP subclasses are defined based on the mathematical argument used to prove the totality of a problem.

## Classical Theorem (Weak Pigeonhole Principle)

If  $f : [2n] \rightarrow [n]$  then there exist  $x \neq y \in [2n]$  s.t.  $f(x) = f(y)$ .

## Definition (WeakPigeon [Jeřábek '15])

Input: Poly-sized circuit  $H : \{0, 1\}^n \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{n-1}$ .

Solution :  $x \neq y \in \{0, 1\}^n$  s.t.  $H(x) = H(y)$ .

PWPP is the class whose complete problem is WeakPigeon.

# Subclasses of TFNP

TFNP subclasses are defined based on the mathematical argument used to prove the totality of a problem.

## Classical Theorem (Weak Pigeonhole Principle)

If  $f : [2n] \rightarrow [n]$  then there exist  $x \neq y \in [2n]$  s.t.  $f(x) = f(y)$ .

## Definition (WeakPigeon [Jeřábek '15])

Input: Poly-sized circuit  $H : \{0, 1\}^n \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{n-1}$ .

Solution :  $x \neq y \in \{0, 1\}^n$  s.t.  $H(x) = H(y)$ .

PWPP is the class whose complete problem is WeakPigeon.

- Characterize PWPP: new complete problems from extremal combinatorics.

## Definition (Extremal Combinatorics)

If the size of some object is large enough then some structure must appear.

## Definition (Extremal Combinatorics)

If the size of some object is large enough then some structure must appear.

## Classical Theorem (Ramsey's Theorem)

If  $G$  is a graph on  $2^{2n}$  vertices, then  $G$  has a clique or an independent set of size  $n$ .

## Definition (Extremal Combinatorics)

If the size of some object is large enough then some structure must appear.

## Classical Theorem (Ramsey's Theorem)

If  $G$  is a graph on  $2^{2n}$  vertices, then  $G$  has a clique or an independent set of size  $n$ .

## Definition (Ramsey [Krajíček '05])

Input: Poly-sized circuit  $C : \{0, 1\}^{2n} \times \{0, 1\}^{2n} \rightarrow \{0, 1\}$ .

Solution : •  $x, y \in \{0, 1\}^{2n}$  such that  $C(x, y) \neq C(y, x)$ .

- $x_1, \dots, x_n$  that form a clique or an independent set.

# Ramsey is PWPP-hard

Theorem [Komargodski, Naor, Yogev '19]

Ramsey is PWPP-hard.



# Ramsey is PWPP-hard

Theorem [Komargodski, Naor, Yogev '19]

Ramsey is PWPP-hard.

Input:  $H : \{0, 1\}^{2n} \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{n/8}$ , want to find a collision.

# Ramsey is PWPP-hard

Theorem [Komargodski, Naor, Yogev '19]

Ramsey is PWPP-hard.

Input:  $H : \{0, 1\}^{2^n} \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{n/8}$ , want to find a collision.

Let  $G$  be a graph on  $2^{n/8}$  vertices that has no clique or independent set of size  $n$ .

# Ramsey is PWPP-hard

**Theorem [Komargodski, Naor, Yogev '19]**

Ramsey is PWPP-hard.

Input:  $H : \{0, 1\}^{2n} \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{n/8}$ , want to find a collision.

Let  $G$  be a graph on  $2^{n/8}$  vertices that has no clique or independent set of size  $n$ .

We consider the graph  $G'$  on vertex set  $\{0, 1\}^{2n}$  with an edge  $xy$  if and only if there is an edge  $H(x)H(y)$  in  $G$ .

# Ramsey is PWPP-hard

**Theorem [Komargodski, Naor, Yogev '19]**

Ramsey is PWPP-hard.

Input:  $H : \{0, 1\}^{2n} \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{n/8}$ , want to find a collision.

Let  $G$  be a graph on  $2^{n/8}$  vertices that has no clique or independent set of size  $n$ .

We consider the graph  $G'$  on vertex set  $\{0, 1\}^{2n}$  with an edge  $xy$  if and only if there is an edge  $H(x)H(y)$  in  $G$ .

If we have a clique or independent set of size  $n$  in  $G'$ , two of its vertices must form a collision.

# Sperner Antichain Problem

## Classical Theorem (Sperner, 1928)

If we have  $> \binom{2n}{n}$  subsets of  $[2n]$ , then one of them is contained in another.

# Sperner Antichain Problem

## Classical Theorem (Sperner, 1928)

If we have  $> \binom{2n}{n}$  subsets of  $[2n]$ , then one of them is contained in another.

## Definition (Weak Sperner Antichain Problem)

Input: Poly-sized circuit  $C : \{0, 1\}^{\alpha+1} \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{2n}$ , with  $\alpha = \log \binom{2n}{n}$ .

Solution:  $x \neq y \in \{0, 1\}^{\alpha+1}$ , s.t.  $C(x) \subseteq C(y)$ .

# Sperner Antichain Problem

## Classical Theorem (Sperner, 1928)

If we have  $> \binom{2n}{n}$  subsets of  $[2n]$ , then one of them is contained in another.

## Definition (Weak Sperner Antichain Problem)

Input: Poly-sized circuit  $C : \{0, 1\}^{\alpha+1} \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{2n}$ , with  $\alpha = \log \binom{2n}{n}$ .

Solution:  $x \neq y \in \{0, 1\}^{\alpha+1}$ , s.t.  $C(x) \subseteq C(y)$ .

## Theorem

Weak Sperner Antichain is PWPP-complete.

Hardness: Variant of the graph-hash product.



Hardness: Variant of the graph-hash product.  
Take a large antichain and “blow it up”.

# Proof sketch

Hardness: Variant of the graph-hash product.  
Take a large antichain and “blow it up”.

Inclusion: Let  $N = \binom{2n}{n}$ .

Hardness: Variant of the graph-hash product.  
Take a large antichain and “blow it up”.

Inclusion: Let  $N = \binom{2n}{n}$ .  
We have a “list” of  $2N$  sets  $S_1, \dots, S_{2N}$ .

Hardness: Variant of the graph-hash product.

Take a large antichain and “blow it up”.

Inclusion: Let  $N = \binom{2n}{n}$ .

We have a “list” of  $2N$  sets  $S_1, \dots, S_{2N}$ .

By Dilworth, partition  $(2^{[2n]}, \subseteq)$  into  $N$  chains  $C_1, \dots, C_N$ .

Hardness: Variant of the graph-hash product.

Take a large antichain and “blow it up”.

Inclusion: Let  $N = \binom{2n}{n}$ .

We have a “list” of  $2N$  sets  $S_1, \dots, S_{2N}$ .

By Dilworth, partition  $(2^{[2n]}, \subseteq)$  into  $N$  chains  $C_1, \dots, C_N$ .

Consider the circuit  $H$  which maps  $i$  to the unique  $j$  such that  $S_i \in C_j$ .

Hardness: Variant of the graph-hash product.

Take a large antichain and “blow it up”.

Inclusion: Let  $N = \binom{2^n}{n}$ .

We have a “list” of  $2N$  sets  $S_1, \dots, S_{2N}$ .

By Dilworth, partition  $(2^{[2^n]}, \subseteq)$  into  $N$  chains  $C_1, \dots, C_N$ .

Consider the circuit  $H$  which maps  $i$  to the unique  $j$  such that  $S_i \in C_j$ .

Collisions in  $H$  correspond to sets in the same chain.

## Classical Theorem (Weak Pigeonhole Principle)

If  $f : [2n] \rightarrow [n]$ ,  $\exists x \neq y, f(x) = f(y)$ .

## Classical Theorem (Weak Pigeonhole Principle)

If  $f : [2n] \rightarrow [n]$ ,  $\exists x \neq y, f(x) = f(y)$ .

## Classical Theorem (Strong Pigeonhole Principle)

If  $f : [n] \rightarrow [n]$ , either  $\exists x \neq y, f(x) = f(y)$ , or  $f$  is a permutation.



## Classical Theorem (Weak Pigeonhole Principle)

If  $f : [2n] \rightarrow [n]$ ,  $\exists x \neq y, f(x) = f(y)$ .

## Classical Theorem (Strong Pigeonhole Principle)

If  $f : [n] \rightarrow [n]$ , either  $\exists x \neq y, f(x) = f(y)$ , or  $f$  is a permutation.

## Definition (Pigeon/PPP [Papadimitriou '94])

Input : Poly-sized circuit  $C : \{0, 1\}^n \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^n$ .

Solution : •  $x \neq y \in \{0, 1\}^n$ , s.t.  $C(x) = C(y)$ .

•  $x \in \{0, 1\}^n$ , s.t.  $C(x) = 0^n$ .

# Strong version of Sperner

## Classical Theorem (Weak Sperner Theorem)

If we have  $> \binom{2n}{n}$  subsets of  $[2n]$ , then one of them is contained in another.

# Strong version of Sperner

## Classical Theorem (Weak Sperner Theorem)

If we have  $> \binom{2n}{n}$  subsets of  $[2n]$ , then one of them is contained in another.

## Classical Theorem (Strong Sperner Theorem)

If we have exactly  $\binom{2n}{n}$  subsets of  $[2n]$ , then either one of them is contained in another, or we have all  $n$ -subsets of  $[2n]$ .

# Strong version of Sperner

## Classical Theorem (Weak Sperner Theorem)

If we have  $> \binom{2n}{n}$  subsets of  $[2n]$ , then one of them is contained in another.

## Classical Theorem (Strong Sperner Theorem)

If we have exactly  $\binom{2n}{n}$  subsets of  $[2n]$ , then either one of them is contained in another, or we have all  $n$ -subsets of  $[2n]$ .

## Definition (Strong Sperner Antichain Problem)

Input: Poly-sized circuit  $C : \{0, 1\}^\alpha \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{2n}$ , with  $\alpha = \log \binom{2n}{n}$ .

Solution: •  $x \neq y$ , s.t.  $C(x) \subseteq C(y)$ .  
•  $x$ , s.t.  $C(x) = [n]$ .

# Strong version of Sperner

## Classical Theorem (Weak Sperner Theorem)

If we have  $> \binom{2n}{n}$  subsets of  $[2n]$ , then one of them is contained in another.

## Classical Theorem (Strong Sperner Theorem)

If we have exactly  $\binom{2n}{n}$  subsets of  $[2n]$ , then either one of them is contained in another, or we have all  $n$ -subsets of  $[2n]$ .

## Definition (Strong Sperner Antichain Problem)

Input: Poly-sized circuit  $C : \{0, 1\}^\alpha \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{2n}$ , with  $\alpha = \log \binom{2n}{n}$ .

Solution: 

- $x \neq y$ , s.t.  $C(x) \subseteq C(y)$ .
- $x$ , s.t.  $C(x) = [n]$ .

## Theorem

The problem Strong Sperner Antichain is PPP-complete.

## Classical Theorem (Weak Erdős-Ko-Rado Theorem)

If  $\mathcal{F}$  is a family of pairwise intersecting  $n$ -subsets of  $[kn]$  then  
 $|\mathcal{F}| \leq \binom{kn-1}{n-1}$ .

## Classical Theorem (Weak Erdős-Ko-Rado Theorem)

If  $\mathcal{F}$  is a family of pairwise intersecting  $n$ -subsets of  $[kn]$  then  $|\mathcal{F}| \leq \binom{kn-1}{n-1}$ .

## Theorem

The problems associated to the Erdős-Ko-Rado Theorem are respectively PWPP-complete and PPP-complete.

### Classical Theorem (Weak Erdős-Ko-Rado Theorem)

If  $\mathcal{F}$  is a family of pairwise intersecting  $n$ -subsets of  $[kn]$  then  
 $|\mathcal{F}| \leq \binom{kn-1}{n-1}$ .

### Theorem

The problems associated to the Erdős-Ko-Rado Theorem are respectively PWPP-complete and PPP-complete.

- Similar results for Cayley's theorem on trees.



## Overview:

- We characterize the classes PWPP and PPP via problems from extremal combinatorics.

## Overview:

- We characterize the classes PWPP and PPP via problems from extremal combinatorics.
- We highlight a correspondence between the strong and weak versions of several classical theorems.

## Overview:

- We characterize the classes PWPP and PPP via problems from extremal combinatorics.
- We highlight a correspondence between the strong and weak versions of several classical theorems.
- From a proof theory viewpoint, the theorems are equivalent in some sense to the pigeonhole principle.

## Overview:

- We characterize the classes PWPP and PPP via problems from extremal combinatorics.
- We highlight a correspondence between the strong and weak versions of several classical theorems.
- From a proof theory viewpoint, the theorems are equivalent in some sense to the pigeonhole principle.

## Open problems:

- What about other classical theorems (Turán,...)?

## Overview:

- We characterize the classes PWPP and PPP via problems from extremal combinatorics.
- We highlight a correspondence between the strong and weak versions of several classical theorems.
- From a proof theory viewpoint, the theorems are equivalent in some sense to the pigeonhole principle.

## Open problems:

- What about other classical theorems (Turán,...)?
- Do we have Ramsey  $\in$  PWPP?