

Vertex-minors and quantum computing

Rose McCarty

Schools of Math and CS



October 27, 2025, Bertinoro Workshop on Algorithms and Graphs
With **Jim Geelen** and **Paul Wollan**.

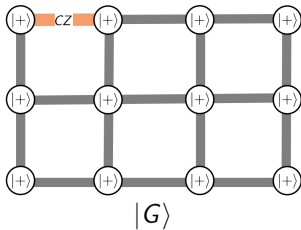
Quantum Graph States: Bridging Classical Theory and Quantum Innovation—Workshop Summary

Eric Chitambar¹, Kenneth Goodenough², Otfried Gühne³, Rose McCarty⁴, Simon Perdrix⁵, Vito Scarola^{*,6}, Shuo Sun⁷, and Quntao Zhang^{8,9}



$$|G'\rangle = \left(-e^{i\frac{\pi}{2} \frac{X_1 - Z_1}{\sqrt{2}}} \otimes Z_2 \otimes Z_3 \otimes e^{i\frac{\pi}{2} \frac{X_4 - Z_4}{\sqrt{2}}} \right) |G\rangle.$$

What is the **quantum state** $|G\rangle$
associated with a graph G ?

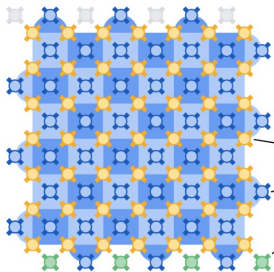


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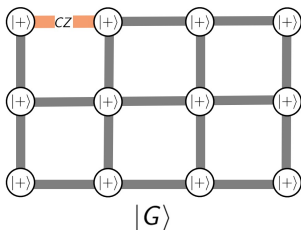
Quantum error correction below the surface code threshold

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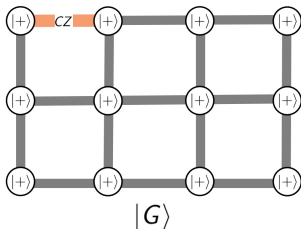


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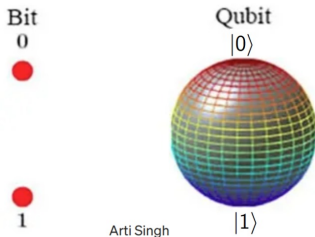
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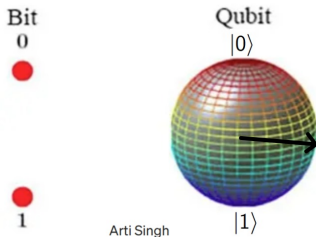
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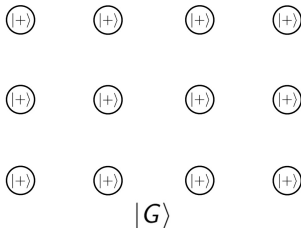


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$$\begin{bmatrix} \alpha \\ \beta \end{bmatrix} \otimes \begin{bmatrix} \gamma \\ \delta \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \alpha\gamma \\ \alpha\delta \\ \beta\gamma \\ \beta\delta \end{bmatrix}$$

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$$|01\rangle = |0\rangle \otimes |1\rangle = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} \otimes \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

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So $|000\rangle, |001\rangle, |010\rangle, |011\rangle, \dots, |111\rangle$
form a basis for $\mathbb{C}^2 \otimes \mathbb{C}^2 \otimes \mathbb{C}^2$
called the **computational basis**.

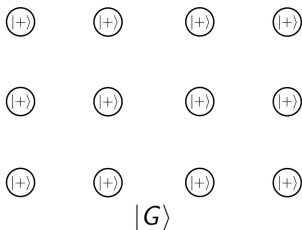
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$$|+\rangle \otimes \dots \otimes |+\rangle$$

$$=$$

$$\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}^n} \sum_{s \in \{0,1\}^n} |s\rangle$$

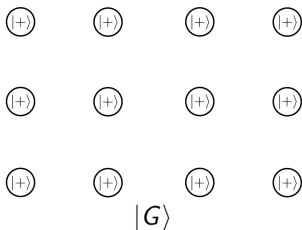
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$$|+\rangle^{\otimes V}$$

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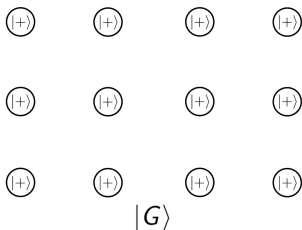
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$|G\rangle$

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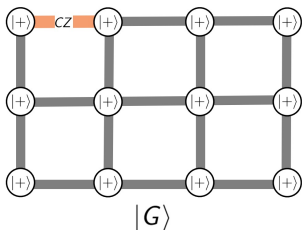
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The **controlled- Z** gate CZ_{uv} negates $|s\rangle$ if $s_u = s_v = 1$.

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$$\left(\prod_{uv \in E} CZ_{uv} \right) |+\rangle^{\otimes V}$$

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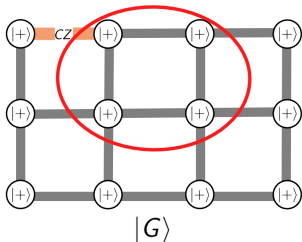
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$$= \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}^n} \sum_{s \in \{0,1\}^V} (-1)^{|E(supp_s)|} |s\rangle$$

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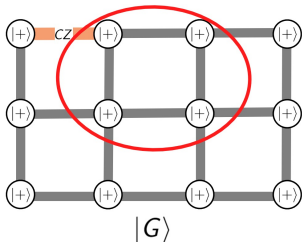
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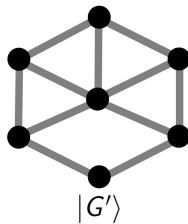
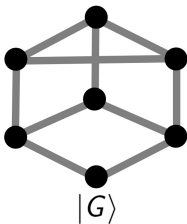
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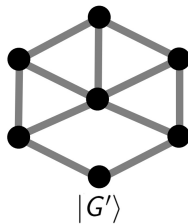
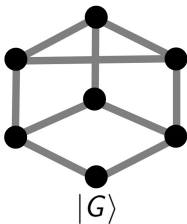
The **controlled- Z** gate CZ_{uv} negates $|s\rangle$ if $s_u = s_v = 1$.

A state is **entangled** if it *cannot* be written as $\bigotimes_{v \in V} |\phi_v\rangle$.

When are two graph states
 $|G\rangle$ and $|G'\rangle$ **equivalent**?

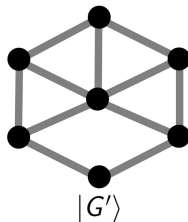
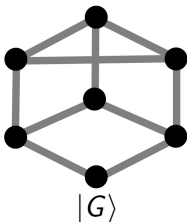


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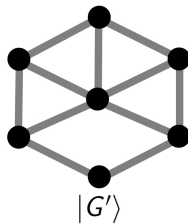
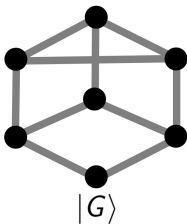
Example: We can switch 0s and 1s on the first qubit:

$$|000\rangle + |001\rangle + |111\rangle$$

$$\simeq_{LU}$$

$$|100\rangle + |101\rangle + |011\rangle$$

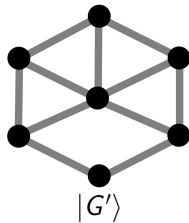
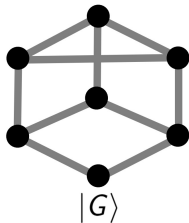
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Example: We can switch 0s and 1s on the first qubit; apply the gate $X = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$ to the first qubit.

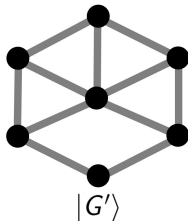
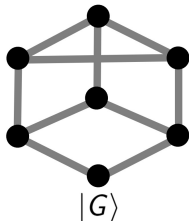
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Equivalent states have the same “level of entanglement” since
 $U_1(|\phi_1\rangle \otimes |\phi_2\rangle \otimes \dots \otimes |\phi_n\rangle) = (U_1|\phi_1\rangle) \otimes |\phi_2\rangle \otimes \dots \otimes |\phi_n\rangle.$

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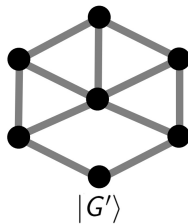
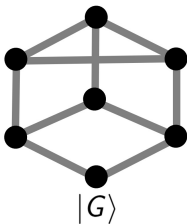
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Theorem (Schlingemann 2002)

Every **stabilizer** state is LU-equivalent to a graph state.

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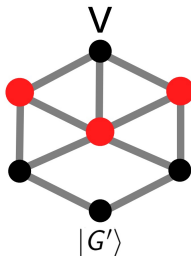
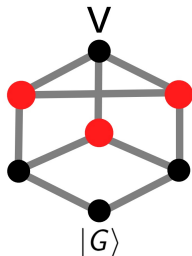


Two states on the same set of qubits are **local Clifford equivalent** if they only differ up to 1-qubit gates generated by H and S .

$$H = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 1 & -1 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$S = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & i \end{bmatrix}$$

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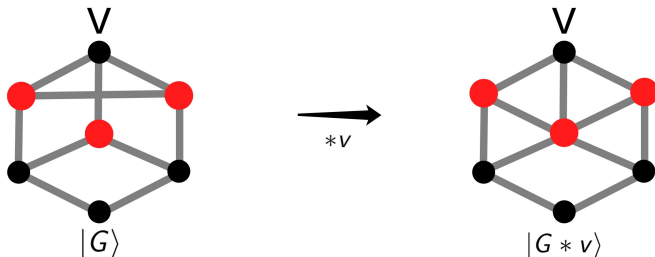
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Given $v \in V$, perform HSH at v and S^\dagger at each **neighbor** of v .

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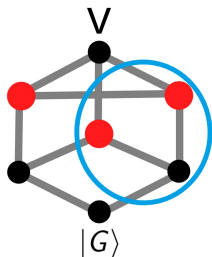
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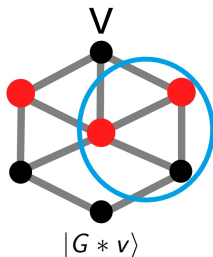
Given $v \in V$, perform HSH at v and S^\dagger at each **neighbor** of v . The resulting graph $G * v$ is obtained from G by **locally complementing** at v : switching adjacencies within $N(v)$.

When are two graph states $|G\rangle$ and $|G'\rangle$ **equivalent**?



$$(-1)^{|E(\text{supp}_s)|} |s\rangle$$

changes sign
iff
 $|N(v) \cap \text{supp}_s| \equiv 2, 3 \pmod{4}$



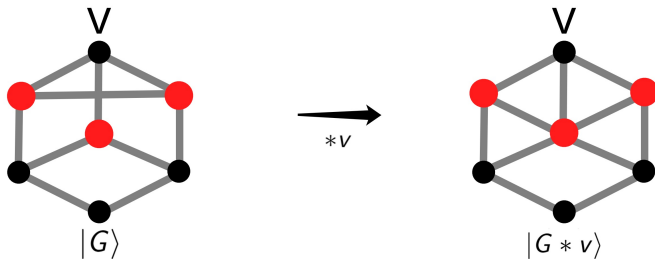
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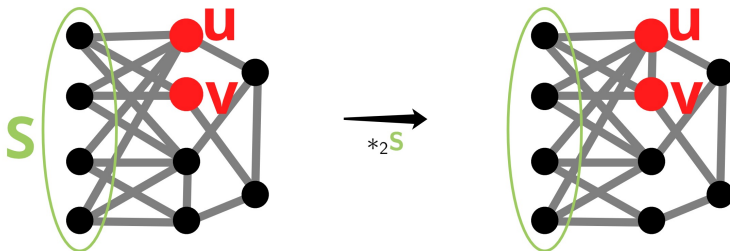
Theorem (Van den Nest, Dehaene, De Moor 2004)

Two graph states $|G\rangle$ and $|G'\rangle$ are **local Clifford equivalent** iff there is a sequence of vertices so that $|G'\rangle = |G * v_1 * \dots * v_k\rangle$.

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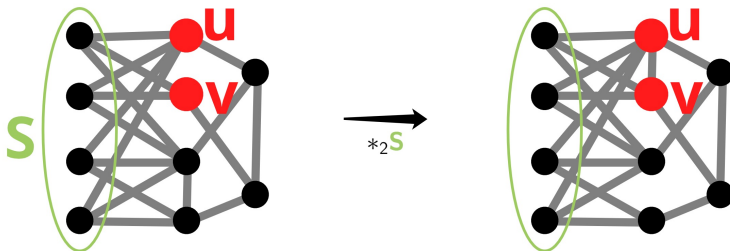


Theorem (Claudet and Perdrix 2025)

Two graph states $|G\rangle$ and $|G'\rangle$ are **local unitary equivalent** iff G' can be obtained from G by **r -local complementation**, for $r \in \mathbb{Z}^+$.

$$H = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 1 & -1 \end{bmatrix} \quad T = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & e^{i\pi/4} \end{bmatrix} \quad S = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & i \end{bmatrix} \quad \dots$$

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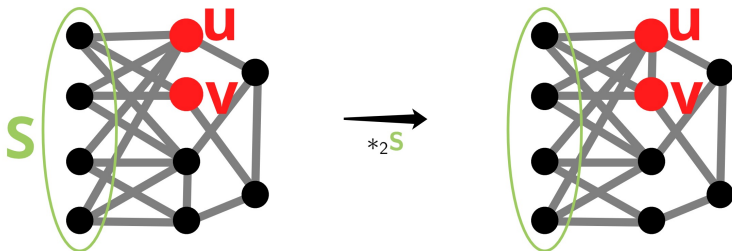


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If S is an independent set and $G * S = G$, i.e., every pair u, v have $|N(u) \cap N(v) \cap S| \equiv 0 \pmod{2}$, then we may instead switch adjacencies between u and v if $|N(u) \cap N(v) \cap S| \equiv 2 \pmod{4}$.

When are two graph states $|G\rangle$ and $|G'\rangle$ **equivalent**?



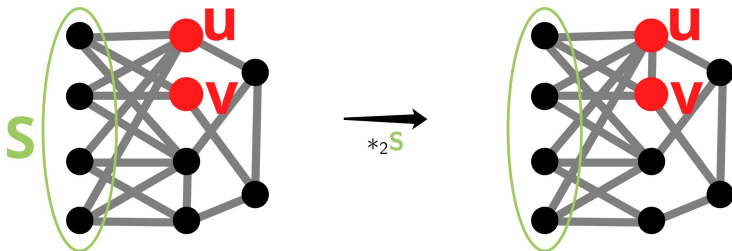
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Meta Conjecture (originally Schlingemann; see Krueger & Werner 05)

In general, r -local complementation is “not much more powerful” than local complementation.

When are two graph states $|G\rangle$ and $|G'\rangle$ **equivalent**?



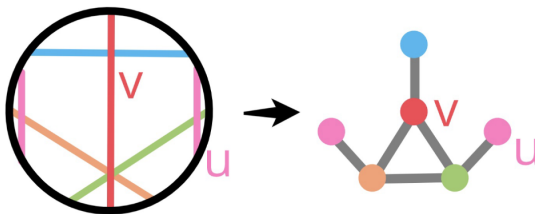
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Theorem (Ji, Chen, Wei, and Ying 2010)

There exists a pair of graph states which are LU-equivalent but **not** LC-equivalent.

When are two graph states $|G\rangle$ and $|G'\rangle$ **equivalent**?



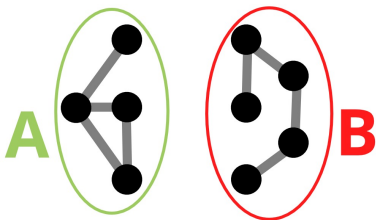
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Theorem (Claudet, Geelen, Hahn, McCarty, Poulsen 2025+)

For **circle graphs**, LU-equivalence \leftrightarrow LC-equivalence.

When are two graph states $|G\rangle$ and $|G'\rangle$ **equivalent**?



$$|G\rangle = |\phi^A\rangle \otimes |\phi^B\rangle$$

$$\text{cut-rank}(A, B) = 0$$

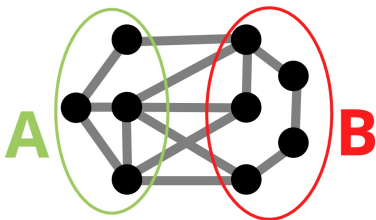
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*LU-equivalent graphs have the same **cut-rank** function.*

When are two graph states $|G\rangle$ and $|G'\rangle$ **equivalent**?



While minimizing r , write:

$$|G\rangle = \sum_{i=1}^r \xi_i |\phi_i^A\rangle \otimes |\phi_i^B\rangle.$$

$$\text{cut-rank}(A, B) = \log_2(r)$$

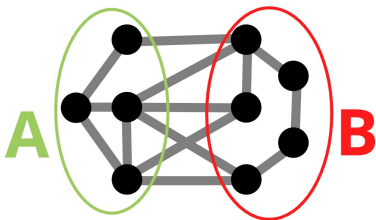
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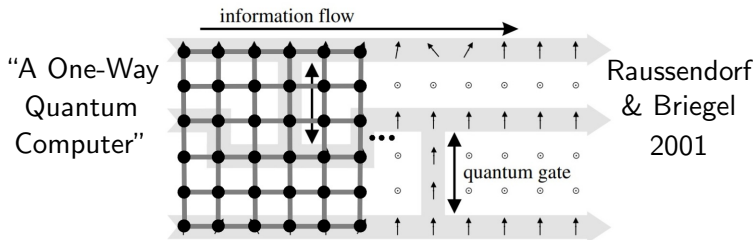
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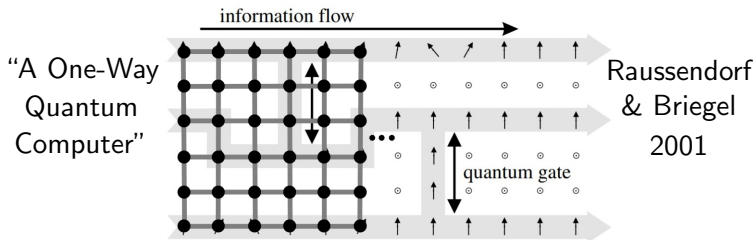
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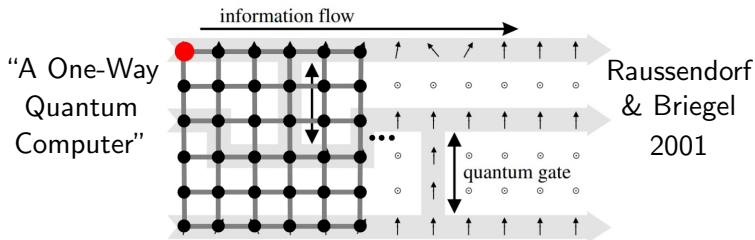


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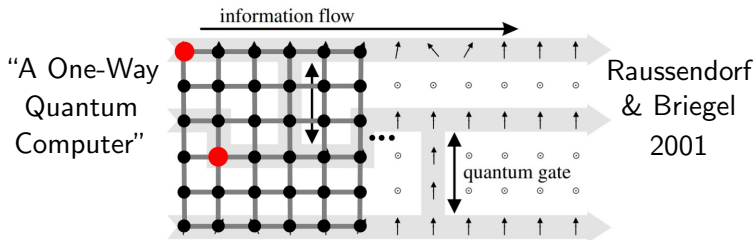


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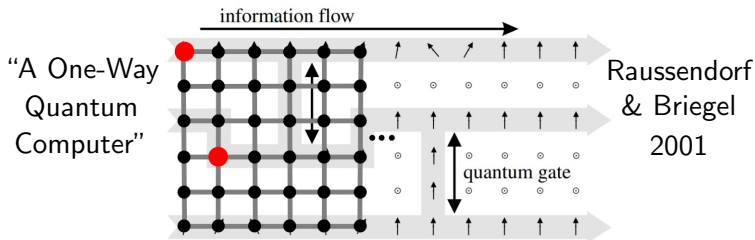


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- Measure a qubit: measuring $[\begin{smallmatrix} \alpha \\ \beta \end{smallmatrix}]$ in the computational basis returns 0 with probability $|\alpha|^2$ and 1 with probability $|\beta|^2$.
- Choose the next measurement based on prior outcomes.

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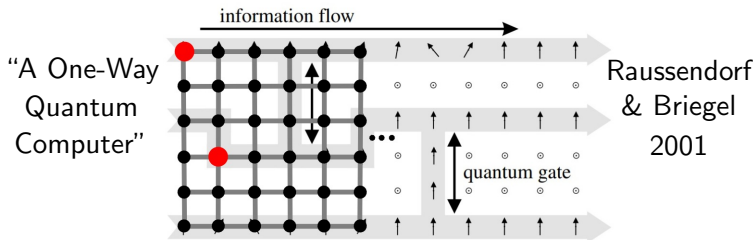


Theorem (Raussendorf and Briegel 2001)

*When every **grid** (“2D cluster state”) can be prepared, this is equivalent to the quantum gate model (up to polynomial factors).*

Question (see Van den Nest, Dür, Vidal, & Briegel 2007)

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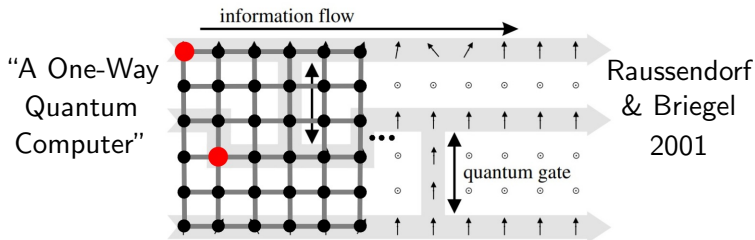


Question

*Are there graphs which can **more efficiently** model every n -qubit quantum gate than **grids**?*

Question (see Van den Nest, Dür, Vidal, & Briegel 2007)

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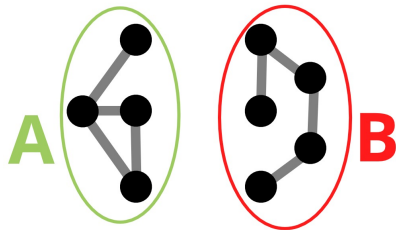


Question (see Rossi, Huber, Bruß, & Macciavello 13)

*Are there architectures which are easier to build experimentally?
Perhaps **hypergraph states**?*

Question (see Van den Nest, Dür, Vidal, & Briegel 2007)

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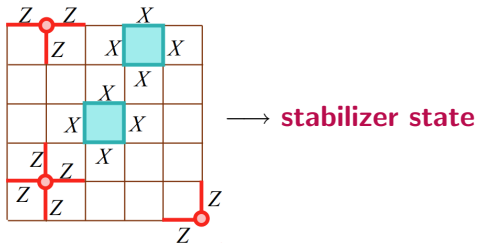


Theorem (Van den Nest, Dür, Vidal, & Briegel 2007)

*Classes of graphs with logarithmic **rank-width** (i.e. “low entanglement”) only yield classical computers.*

Question (see Van den Nest, Dür, Vidal, & Briegel 2007)

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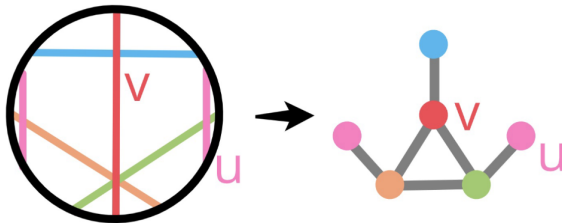


Theorem (Bravyi & Raussendorf 07 + Bravyi, Gosset, & Liu 22)

However, high entanglement is not sufficient; there are also “topological/geometric” obstructions.

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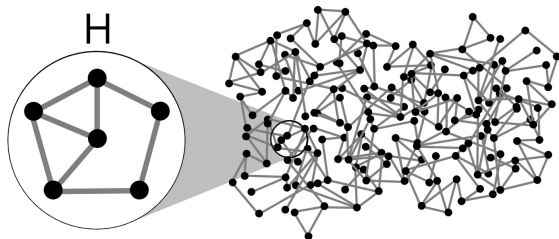


Theorem (Harrison, Iyer, Parekh, Thompson, Zhao 25+)

*The class of all **circle graphs** also yields a classical computer.*

Question (see Van den Nest, Dür, Vidal, & Briegel 2007)

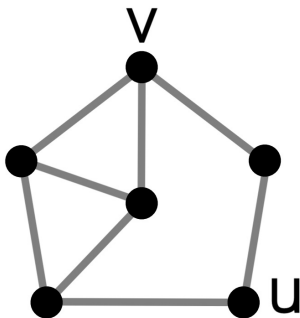
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Conjecture (Geelen)

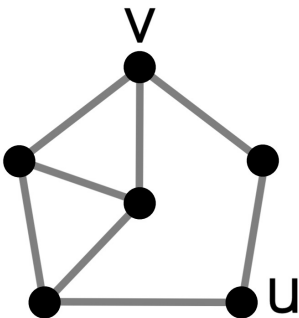
*Every class that does **not** yield a classical computer **contains all graphs** up to local complementation and vertex deletion.*

The **vertex-minors** of a graph G are the graphs that can be obtained from G by:



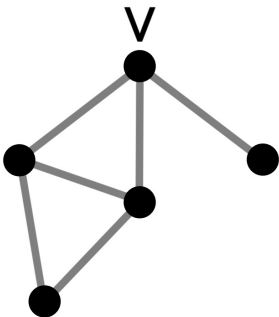
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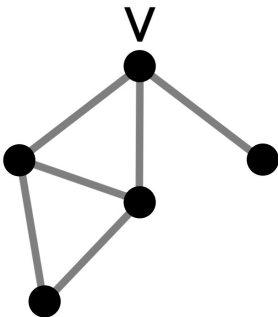
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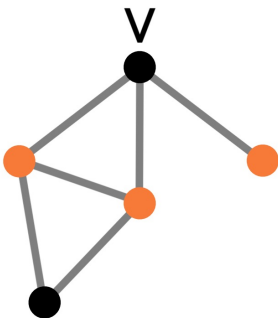
The **vertex-minors** of a graph G are the graphs that can be obtained from G by:

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- **locally complementing** at vertices



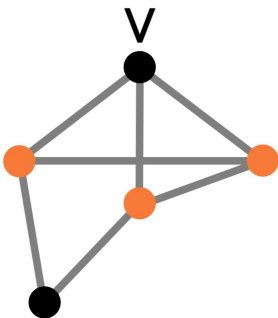
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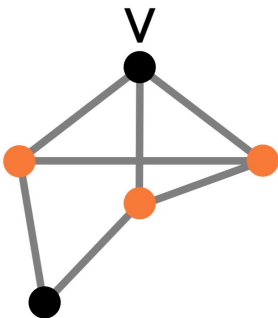
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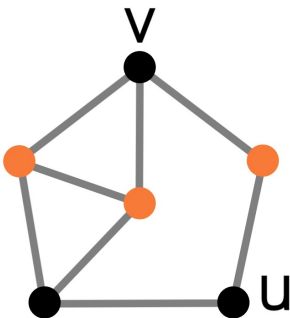
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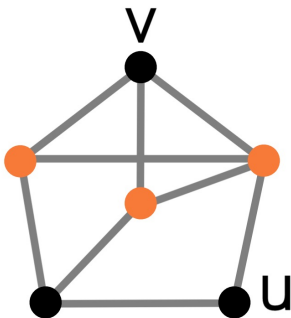
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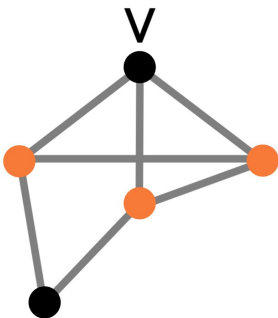
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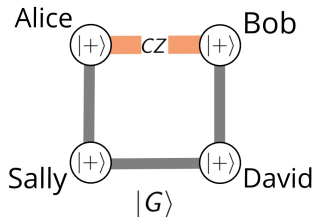
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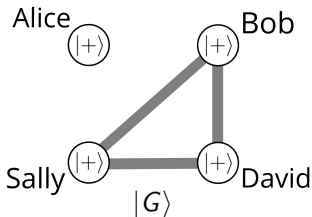
Proposition (Dahlberg-Helsen-Wehner 20)

A graph H without isolated vertices is a **vertex-minor** of G iff $|H\rangle$ can be prepared from $|G\rangle$ using $LC + LPM + CC$.

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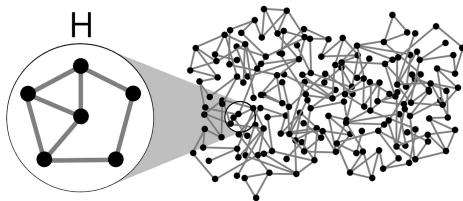
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Theorem (Cautrès, Claudet, Mhalla, Perdrix, Savin, & Thomassé 2024)

*There are graphs with $\mathcal{O}(n^2)$ -many vertices which **contain every n -vertex** graph as a vertex-minor. This is best possible.*

Structure Theorem (Robertson & Seymour 2003)

*The graphs in any proper **minor-closed** class “decompose” into parts that “almost embed” in a surface of bounded genus.*

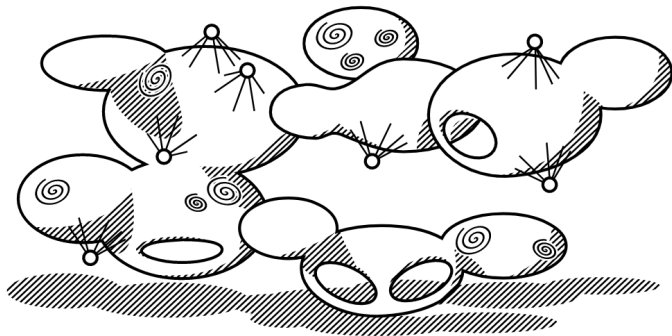
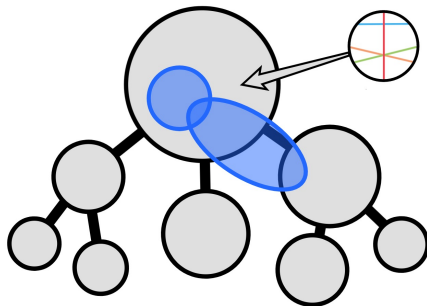


Figure by Felix Reidl

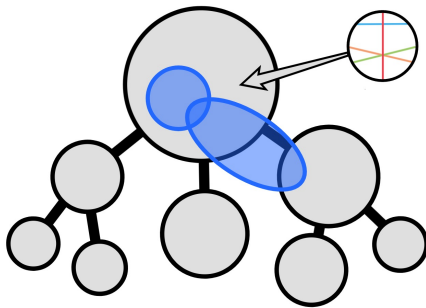
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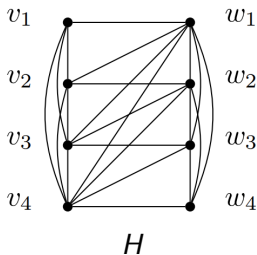
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Ongoing project with Jim Geelen & Paul Wollan
aiming to prove the conjecture.

Theorem (Kwon, McCarty, Oum, Wollan 2021)

A graph class “looks like shallow trees” (w.r.t. **cut-rank**) iff it does not contain all **half-graphs** as vertex-minors.

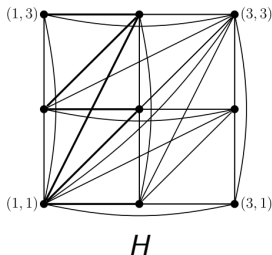


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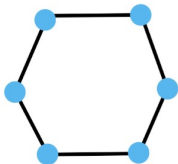


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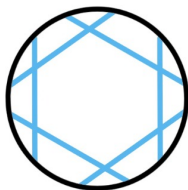
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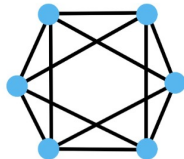
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circle graph



chord diagram

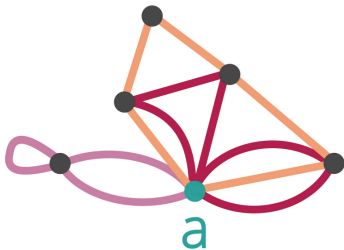


tour graph

Theorem (McCarty 24)

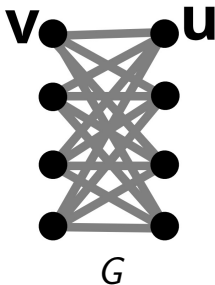
For any Eulerian graph G and vertex a , the **maximum** size of a circuit decomposition where every circuit is odd and hits a equals

$$\text{minimum}_{\gamma', X} \left(\gamma'(E(X)) + \frac{1}{2} |\delta(X)| - \text{odd}_{\gamma'}(G - X) \right).$$



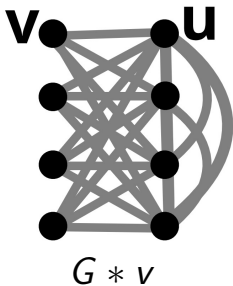
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Apply $\prod_{xy \in E} CZ_{xy}$



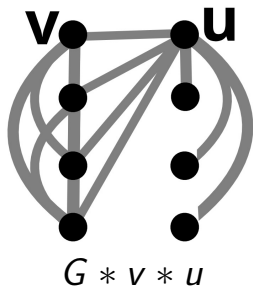
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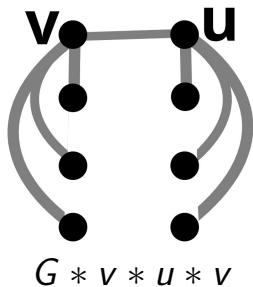
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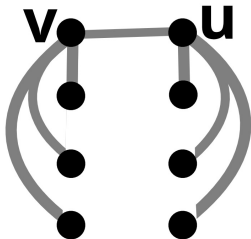


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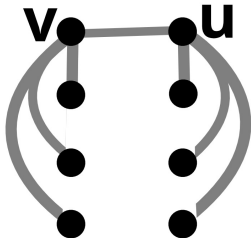
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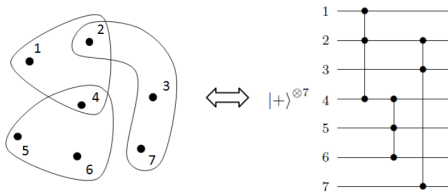


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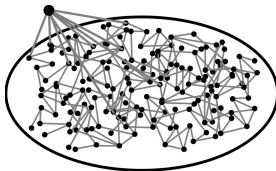


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- **Q:** If an adversary secretly entangled a few qubits with $|G\rangle$, how badly can they affect $|G\rangle$?



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- **Q:** Ask Caleb about random graphs.

Thank you!