

# Reducibility and Discharging: An Introduction by Example

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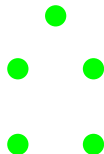
Joint with Craig Timmons and André Kündgen

# The 4-Color Theorem

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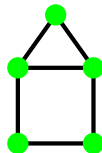
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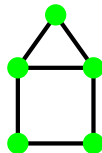
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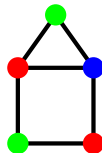
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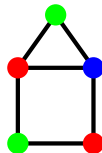


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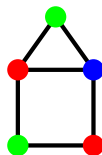
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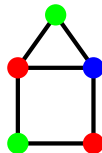




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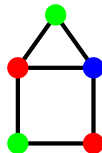
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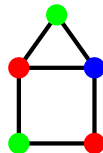
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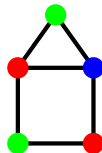
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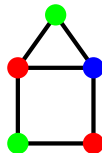
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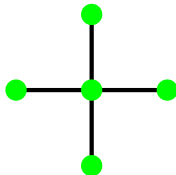
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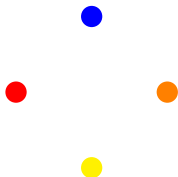
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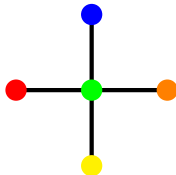
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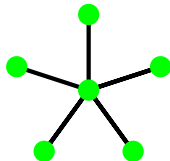
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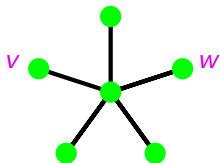
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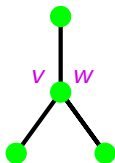
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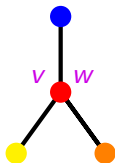
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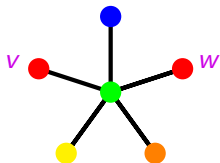
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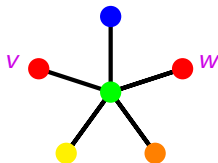




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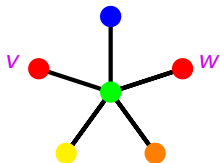


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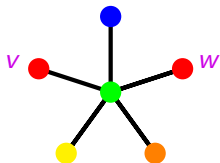
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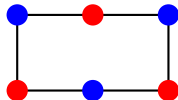
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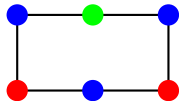
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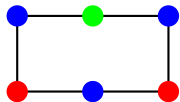
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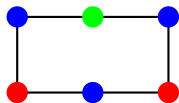


**Thm.** [Grünbaum 1970]

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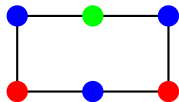
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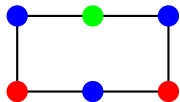
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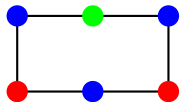
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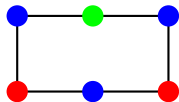
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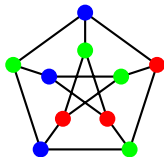
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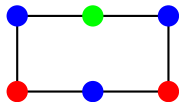
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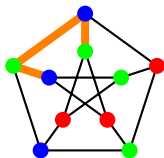
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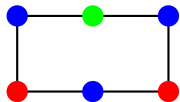
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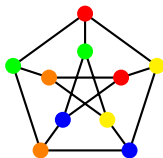
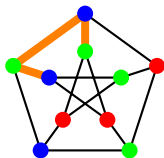
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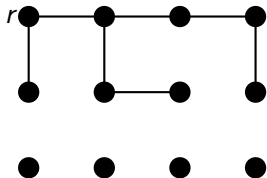
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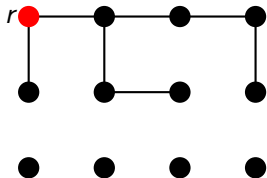
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**Thm.** [Timmons '07] If  $G$  is planar and has girth  $\geq 14$ , then we can partition  $V(G)$  into sets  $I$  and  $F$  s.t.  $G[F]$  is a forest and  $I$  is a 2-independent set in  $G$ .

**Def.** A set  $I$  is 2-independent in  $G$  if  $\forall u, v \in I \text{ dist}(u, v) > 2$ .

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**Pf.** Choose a root in each tree of  $F$ .  
If  $v \in F$  is distance  $k$  from its root,  
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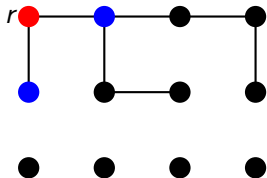
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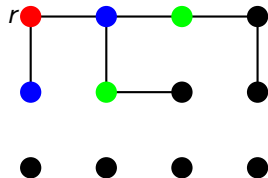
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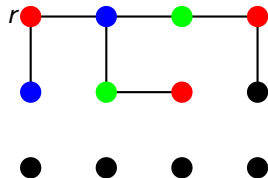
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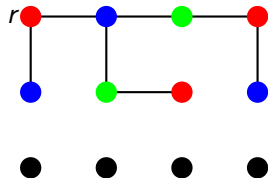
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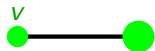


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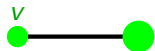
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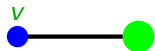
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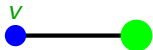


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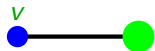
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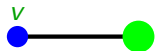
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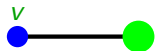
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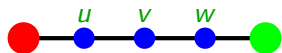
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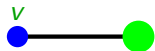
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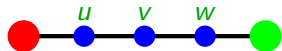
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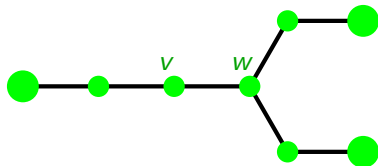
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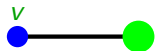
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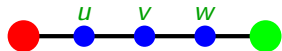
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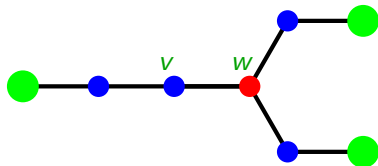
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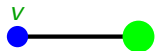
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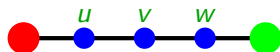
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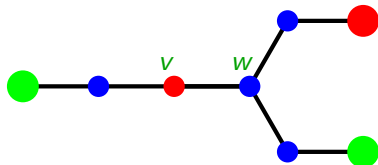
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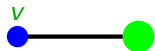
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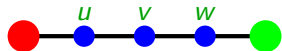
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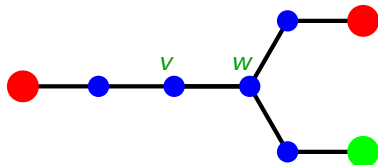
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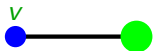
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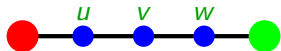
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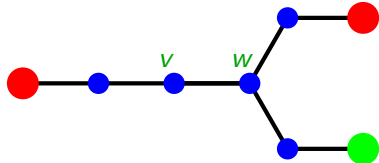
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“nearby” 2-vertices

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**Contradiction!** So  $G$  contains a reducible configuration.

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**Thm.** If  $mad(G) < \frac{28}{12}$ , then we can partition  $V(G)$  into sets  $I$  and  $F$  s.t.  $G[F]$  is a forest and  $I$  is a 2-independent set in  $G$ .

## Open Questions

- ▶ What is the minimum girth  $g$  s.t.  $G$  planar and girth  $\geq g$  implies an  $I, F$ -partition?  
We know that  $8 \leq g \leq 13$
- ▶ What is the minimum girth  $g$  s.t.  $G$  planar and girth  $\geq g$  implies  $\chi_s(G) \leq 4$ ?

# An Efficient Coloring Algorithm

Many discharging proofs translate into linear-time algorithms.

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- ▶ For an arbitrary surface  $S$ , what is the minimum  $\gamma_S$  s.t. girth  $\geq \gamma_S$  and  $G$  embedded in  $S$  implies an  $I, F$ -partition?