

# Perfect graphs with unique $P_4$ -structure

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**Abstract.** We will extend Reed's Semi-Strong Perfect Graph Theorem by proving that unbreakable  $C_5$ -free graphs different from a  $C_6$  and its complement have unique  $P_4$ -structure.

## Introduction

A graph is called *perfect* if for all of its induced subgraphs the chromatic number and the clique-number are the same. The notion of perfect graphs was introduced by Berge in 1960 [1] who also proposed two characterizations of perfect graphs. The first one is the famous Strong Perfect Graph Conjecture which states that a graph is perfect if and only if it contains no cycle of length at least five or a complement of such a cycle as an induced subgraph. This conjecture is open up to today. A second characterization conjectured by Berge was proved by Lovász [8] in 1972 and states that a graph is perfect if and only if its complement is perfect. This result is known as the Perfect Graph Theorem.

One of the most outstanding open problems in algorithmic graph theory is to determine the complexity of recognizing perfect graphs. Results of Lovász [8], Padberg [10] and Bland et al. [2] imply, as it was first observed by Cameron [3] in 1982, that the problem of recognizing perfect graphs is in  $\text{co-}\mathcal{NP}$ . So far it is not known whether

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this problem also belongs to  $\mathcal{NP}$ , i.e., we do not know of any reasonable way to certify the perfection of an arbitrary graph.

One weak form of such a certificate is obtained via the Perfect Graph Theorem: to prove the perfection of a graph it is enough to show that its complement is perfect. In attempting to generalize this kind of certificate, Chvátal [4] invented in 1984 the notion of  $P_4$ -structure. For a given graph, its  $P_4$ -structure is defined as the 4-uniform hypergraph on the same vertex set as the original graph whose edges are all the 4-element sets that induce a  $P_4$  (i.e., a path on four vertices) in the original graph. We say that a graph  $G$  has *unique  $P_4$ -structure* if any other graph that has isomorphic (as a hypergraph)  $P_4$ -structure to  $G$  is isomorphic to  $G$  or to the complement of  $G$ . A graph  $G$  has *strongly unique  $P_4$ -structure* if any other graph that has the same  $P_4$ -structure as  $G$  is equal to  $G$  or  $\overline{G}$ . The  $C_5$  is an example of a graph that has unique but not strongly unique  $P_4$ -structure.

Chvátal [4] conjectured that the perfection of a graph depends solely on its  $P_4$ -structure. He was led to this conjecture by observing that odd cycles and their complements have unique  $P_4$ -structure. Therefore the truth of the Strong Perfect Graph Conjecture would imply his conjecture. Moreover, as the  $P_4$  is a self-complementary graph, the  $P_4$ -structure of a graph and its complement are isomorphic. This shows that Chvátal's conjecture implies the Perfect Graph Theorem. Chvátal therefore suggested his conjecture be called the *Semi Strong Perfect Graph Conjecture*. In 1987, Reed [12] proved the conjecture and so it is now known as the *Semi Strong Perfect Graph Theorem*.

Chvátal has shown that to prove the Strong Perfect Graph Conjecture it is enough to have it proved for the class of so called *unbreakable* graphs. We will prove as a main result in Section 4 that  $C_5$ -free unbreakable graphs different from  $C_6$  and its complement have unique  $P_4$ -structure. This result shows that the Semi Strong Perfect Graph Theorem and the Perfect Graph Theorem are equivalent for the class of  $C_5$ -free unbreakable graphs.

## 1 Notations

If  $x$  and  $y$  are adjacent vertices in a graph, we say that  $x$  *sees*  $y$ . Otherwise we say that  $x$  *misses*  $y$ . For a set  $S$  of vertices we say that  $z$  *disagrees* on  $S$  if it sees neither all nor none of the vertices of  $S$ . Otherwise we say that  $z$  is *homogeneous* on  $S$ . We use the notation  $xy$  as a short form for the edge  $\{x, y\}$ . The vertices  $x$  and  $y$  are called the *endpoints* of the edge  $xy$ . We denote the complement of a graph  $G$  by  $\overline{G}$ . All subgraphs in this paper are *induced* subgraphs.

A graph is called *perfect* if for all of its induced subgraphs the chromatic number and the clique number are the same. If a graph is not perfect then it is called *imperfect*. An imperfect graph that has the property that all its proper induced subgraphs are perfect is called *minimal imperfect*.

The *neighborhood* of a vertex  $x$  is denoted by  $N(x)$ . Sometimes we will also write  $N_G(x)$  to make clear that  $x$  is a vertex of the graph  $G$ .

A path or cycle on  $k$  vertices is denoted by  $P_k$  respectively  $C_k$ . For simplicity of notation we will often denote a path or cycle by just listing its vertices, e.g.,  $abcd$  may stand for the path on four vertices  $\{a, b, c, d\}$  and edges  $ab, bc, cd$ . For a path  $x_1x_2 \dots x_k$  the vertices  $x_1$  and  $x_k$  are called the *endpoints* of the path. We also say that  $x_1$  and  $x_k$  are *connected by the path*  $x_1x_2 \dots x_k$ . All other vertices are called the *interior* of the path. For a  $P_4$  the interior vertices are called the *midpoints*. A path or cycle is called *odd* or *even* if its length is odd or even. An *(odd) hole* is an (odd) induced cycle of length at least five. An *(odd) antihole* is the complement of an (odd) hole. A graph is called *Berge* if it contains neither an odd hole nor an odd antihole. A graph is called *disc* if it is a hole or an antihole.

A *hypergraph*  $\mathcal{H}$  is a pair  $(V, F)$  where  $V$  is a finite set and  $F$  is a subset of the power set of  $V$ . The elements of  $V$  are called *vertices* and the elements of  $F$  are called *hyper-edges*. A hypergraph is called *k-uniform*, if all its hyper-edges have cardinality  $k$ . Two hypergraphs are *isomorphic* if there exists a bijection between their vertex sets that preserves all the hyper-edges.

A *domino* is the graph on vertices  $a, b, c, d, e, f$  with edges  $ab, bc, cd, de, ef, fa, be$ . The graph  $\mathcal{F}$  is the complement of a domino, i.e., the graph on vertices  $a, b, c, d, e, f$



Figure 1: Some special graphs.

and edges  $ab, bc, cd, da, ea, ed, fb, fc$ .

We denote the end of a proof by  $\square$  and the end of a proof of a claim within a proof by  $\diamond$ .

## 2 Known results on perfect graphs

One of the most important results we will make use of in this paper is the Perfect Graph Theorem due to Lovász [9]. It states that

a graph is perfect if and only if its complement is perfect.

A *star-cutset*  $C$  in a graph  $G$  is a set of vertices such that  $G - C$  is disconnected and there exists some vertex  $v$  in  $C$  that is adjacent to all other vertices in  $C$ . The vertex  $v$  is called a *center* of the star-cutset. A graph is called *unbreakable* if neither the graph nor its complement contains a star-cutset. Chvátal [5] proved that

minimal imperfect graphs are unbreakable.

Let  $S$  be a proper subset of the vertex set of a graph  $G$ . Then the vertices in  $G - S$  can be partitioned into three classes: vertices that have no neighbor in  $S$  are called  *$S$ -null*; vertices that are adjacent to every vertex in  $S$  are called  *$S$ -universal*; all other vertices are called  *$S$ -partial*. Using this terminology a proper subset  $H$  of a graph  $G$  is called a *homogeneous set* if  $|H| \geq 2$  and no vertex in  $G - H$  is  $H$ -partial. Lovász [9] proved that

no minimal imperfect graph contains a homogeneous set.

A graph is called *weakly triangulated* if neither the graph nor its complement contains an induced cycle of length greater than four. Hayward [7] proved that

weakly triangulated graphs are perfect.

An *endomorphism* of a graph  $G = (V, E)$  is a mapping  $f : V \rightarrow V$  such that for any edge  $xy$  in  $G$  the image  $f(x)f(y)$  is an edge in  $G$ . The endomorphism is *proper* if  $f(V)$  is a proper subset of  $V$ . It was shown by Reed [11] that

no minimal imperfect graph admits a proper endomorphism.

### 3 Reed's Semi Strong Perfect Graph Theorem

To prove the Semi Strong Perfect Graph Theorem Reed actually proved the following theorem.

**Theorem 1** (Reed [12]) *Let  $G$  and  $H$  be  $P_4$ -isomorphic graphs such that  $G$  is neither  $H$  nor  $\overline{H}$ . Then at least one of the following holds:*

- (i)  $H$  contains a proper induced subgraph isomorphic to  $C_5$ .
- (ii)  $H$  or  $\overline{H}$  has a star-cutset.
- (iii)  $H$  or  $\overline{H}$  has a proper endomorphism.

The Semi Strong Perfect Graph Theorem now follows immediately from this result, as no minimal imperfect graph satisfies any of these conditions. Reed's proof of Theorem 1 relied on yet two other theorems and one lemma which we will state next.

**Theorem 2** (Reed [12]) *If  $G$  and  $H$  are  $P_4$ -isomorphic graphs which are invariant on some disc of size at least six then either*

- (i)  $G = H$ , or
- (ii)  $H$  or  $\overline{H}$  has a star-cutset, or
- (iii)  $H$  contains a  $C_5$  as a proper subgraph. □

**Theorem 3** (Reed [12]) *Consider an unbreakable graph  $H$ , containing no  $C_5$ , that is  $P_4$ -isomorphic to a graph  $G$ . If some set  $D$  induces a  $C_6$  in  $H$  and an  $\mathcal{F}$  (see Figure 1) in  $G$  then  $H$  has a proper endomorphism. □*

**Lemma 1** (Chvátal[4], Hayward [6]) *Discs have unique  $P_4$ -structure. The only exception are discs of size six that have the same  $P_4$ -structure as the graph  $\mathcal{F}$  respectively  $\overline{\mathcal{F}}$  (see Figure 2). Discs of size  $\geq 7$  have strongly unique  $P_4$ -structure.  $\square$*

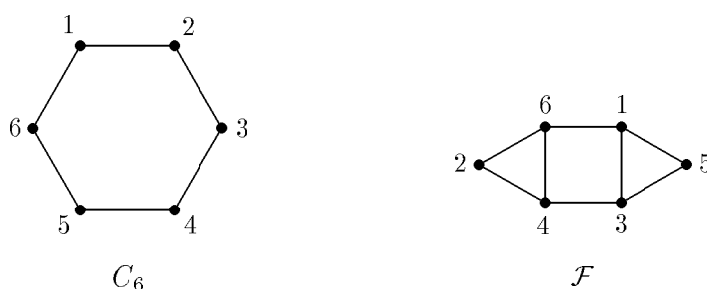


Figure 2: Two graphs with the same  $P_4$ -structure.

Using Theorems 2 and 3 Reed proved Theorem 1 as follows: Let  $G$  and  $H$  be  $P_4$ -isomorphic graphs such that  $G$  is neither  $H$  nor  $\overline{H}$ . We only have to show that  $H$  fulfills at least one of the three conditions in Theorem 1. Hayward [7] proved that no weakly triangulated graph on at least 3 vertices is unbreakable. Thus if  $H$  is weakly triangulated or contains a  $C_5$  then condition (ii) or (i) is satisfied. Hence we may assume that  $H$  contains a disc of size at least six. Let  $D$  be the set of vertices of this disc inducing the subgraphs  $D_G$  and  $D_H$  of  $G$  and  $H$ , respectively. If  $D_H = D_G$  then (i) or (ii) holds by Theorem 2. If  $D_H = D_{\overline{G}}$  then (i) or (ii) holds by Theorem 2 with  $\overline{G}$  in place of  $G$ . Thus we can assume  $D_H \neq D_G$  and  $D_H \neq D_{\overline{G}}$ . Now from Lemma 1 we know that  $D_G$  or  $D_{\overline{G}}$  must be the graph  $\mathcal{F}$ . If  $D_G = \mathcal{F}$  then (i), (ii) or (iii) holds by Theorem 3; if  $D_{\overline{G}} = \mathcal{F}$  then (i), (ii) or (iii) holds by Theorem 3 with  $\overline{G}$  in place of  $G$ .

## 4 Graphs with unique $P_4$ -structure

Theorem 1 of Reed says that if a  $C_5$ -free unbreakable graph has the property that neither the graph nor the complement has a proper endomorphism then the graph has unique  $P_4$ -structure. In this section we will prove a generalization of this result.

Reed himself suggested [12] that the condition that the graph is  $C_5$ -free might

be dropped from Theorem 1. However, in Theorem 2 the condition that  $H$  is  $C_5$ -free cannot be removed. Figure 3 shows two unbreakable graphs with the same  $P_4$ -structure that are invariant on a disc of size six but are not isomorphic.

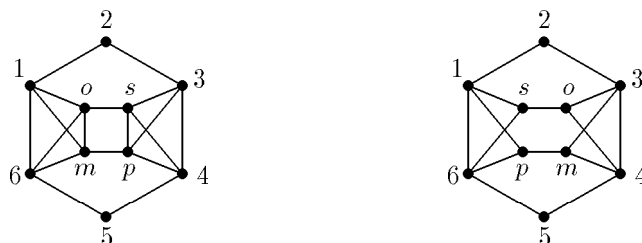


Figure 3: Two unbreakable graphs with the same  $P_4$ -structure

We will now prove that the condition on the proper endomorphism can be dropped from Theorem 1. The only exceptions are  $C_6$  and its complement.

**Theorem 4** *Let  $G$  and  $H$  be  $P_4$ -isomorphic graphs such that  $G$  is neither  $H$  nor  $\overline{H}$ . Then at least one of the following holds:*

- (i)  $H$  contains a proper induced subgraph isomorphic to  $C_5$ .
- (ii)  $H$  or  $\overline{H}$  has a star-cutset.
- (iii)  $H$  or  $\overline{H}$  is a  $C_6$ .

A more compact equivalent formulation is given by the next theorem:

**Theorem 5**  *$C_5$ -free unbreakable graphs different from  $C_6$  and  $\overline{C_6}$  have unique  $P_4$ -structure.* □

Note that this result implies that the Semi Strong Perfect Graph Theorem and the Perfect Graph Theorem are equivalent for the class of  $C_5$ -free unbreakable graphs.

The proof of the Semi Strong Perfect Graph Theorem that we sketched in Section 3 shows, that it is enough for a proof of Theorem 4 to demonstrate the truth of the following theorem which is an analogue of Theorem 3 of Reed.

**Theorem 6** Consider an unbreakable graph  $H$ , containing no  $C_5$ , that is  $P_4$ -isomorphic to a graph  $G$ . If some set  $D$  induces a  $C_6$  in  $G$  and an  $\mathcal{F}$  in  $H$  then  $G$  is a  $C_6$ .

*Proof.* Let  $G$  be an unbreakable graph different from a  $C_6$  that contains no  $C_5$  and let  $H$  be a graph that is  $P_4$ -isomorphic to  $G$ . We may assume that  $G$  and  $H$  are defined on the same set of vertices such that four vertices induce a  $P_4$  in  $G$  if and only if they induce a  $P_4$  in  $H$ . Let  $D$  be a set of vertices that induces a  $C_6$  in  $G$  and the graph  $\mathcal{F}$  in  $H$ . We have to show that this leads to a contradiction. As  $G$  cannot contain a homogeneous set (otherwise  $G$  or  $\overline{G}$  contains a star-cutset), there must exist a vertex  $a$  that is  $D$ -partial in  $G$ . A simple case analysis, using the fact that  $G$  is  $C_5$ -free and that  $D$  induces the graph  $\mathcal{F}$  in  $H$ , shows that up to symmetry the graph induced in  $G$  by  $D \cup \{a\}$  is of one of six types. Figures 4 and 5 show these six possibilities together with the corresponding graphs that are induced by  $D \cup \{a\}$  in  $H$ . The dashed lines indicate edges where we do not care whether they exist or not.

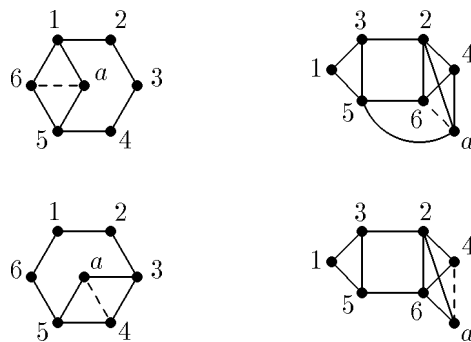


Figure 4: Possible types of partial vertices of the  $C_6$ : twins

For the following we assume that the vertices of  $D$  are labeled  $1, \dots, 6$  in the cyclic order they appear around the  $C_6$  in  $G$  so that vertices 1 and 4 have degree 2 in  $F$ .

Thus,  $V - D$  can be partitioned into sets

$$T_1, T_2, T_3, T_4, T_5, T_6, S_{\{1\}}, S_{\{4\}}, S_{\{1,3,5\}}, S_{\{1,3,4,5\}}, S_{\{2,4,6\}}, S_{\{1,2,4,6\}}, S_{\{2,3,5,6\}}, A, N$$

where:



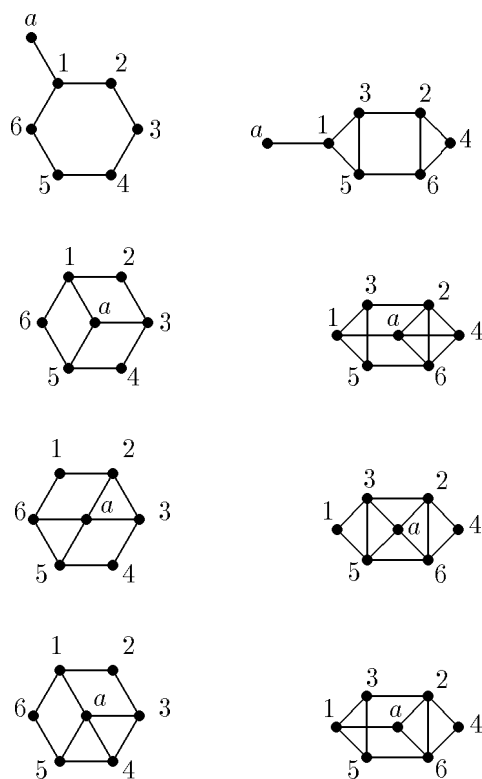


Figure 5: Possible types of partial vertices of the  $C_6$ : non-twins

- (i) For each  $i \in \{1, \dots, 6\}$ ,  $T_i = \{v | N_G(v) \cap D - i = N_G(i) \cap D - i\} = \{v | N_H(v) \cap D - i = N_H(i) \cap D - i\}$
- (ii) For each  $U \in \{\{1\}, \{4\}, \{1, 3, 5\}, \{1, 3, 4, 5\}, \{2, 4, 6\}, \{1, 2, 4, 6\}, \{2, 3, 5, 6\}\}$ ,  $S_U = \{v | N_G(v) \cap D = U\}$ . Note that for each  $U$  and for each  $v$  in  $S_U$ ,  $N_H(v) \cap D$  is determined as shown in Figure 5.
- (iii)  $A$  is the set of vertices adjacent in  $G$  to all of  $D$ ,  $N$  is the set of vertices adjacent in  $G$  to none of  $D$ .

**Claim 1**  $T_2 = T_3 = T_5 = T_6 = \emptyset$ .

Note that the same partitioning as stated above for  $V - D$  exists for any other set  $D'$  which induces a  $C_6$  in  $G$  and an  $F$  in  $H$ . In particular, for each  $v$  in some  $T_i$ , such a partition exists for  $D_v = D - i + v$ . It follows that no vertex  $w$  outside  $T_2 + 2$  disagrees on two vertices of  $T_2 + 2$  as otherwise  $w$  has an unallowable neighborhood either on  $D$  or on  $D_v$  for some  $v$  in  $T_2$ . Thus,  $T_2$  is empty as otherwise  $T_2 + 2$  is a homogeneous set. Similarly,  $T_3, T_5$  and  $T_6$  are also empty.  $\diamond$

At this point, we decompose  $V - D$  into  $X_4 = T_4 \cup S_{\{1,3,5\}} \cup S_{\{1,3,4,5\}}$ ,  $X_1 = T_1 \cup S_{\{2,4,6\}} \cup S_{\{1,2,4,6\}}$ ,  $S_1, S_4, S_{2356}, A, N$ . Note that for each vertex  $v$  in  $X_1$ , we have:  $N_G(v) \cap \{2, 3, 5, 6\} = \{2, 6\}$ , and  $N_H(v) \cap \{2, 3, 5, 6\} = \{3, 5\}$ , whilst for each vertex  $v$  of  $X_4$  we have:  $N_H(v) \cap \{2, 3, 5, 6\} = \{2, 6\}$ , and  $N_G(v) \cap \{2, 3, 5, 6\} = \{3, 5\}$ .

**Claim 2** *If  $S_1 \neq \emptyset$  then  $S_{135} \cup S_{1345} = \emptyset$ .*

Let  $w$  be a vertex in  $S_1$  and  $v$  be a vertex in  $S_{135} \cup S_{1345}$ . Assume that  $v$  and  $w$  are not adjacent in  $G$ . Then  $w1v3$  induces a  $P_4$  in  $G$  but not in  $H$ . Similarly if  $vw$  is an edge in  $G$  then it must also be an edge in  $H$  as otherwise  $wv56$  is a  $P_4$  in  $G$  but not in  $H$ . But now either  $wv54$  is a  $P_4$  in  $G$  but not in  $H$  or  $wv64$  is a  $P_4$  in  $H$  but not in  $G$ .  $\diamond$

**Claim 3**  $S_1 = S_4 = \emptyset$ .

Assume  $S_1 \neq \emptyset$ . Let  $P$  be a minimal path of  $G - N(2) + 3$  from  $S_1$  to  $S_4 \cup X_4 \cup \{3, 4, 5, 6\}$ . Then, one endpoint  $w$  of  $P$  is in  $S_1$  and all its interior vertices are in  $N$ , so the other endpoint  $v$  of  $P$  must be in  $X_4 \cup S_4$ . If  $v$  is in  $S_4$  then  $P + 1 + 2 + 3 + 4$  is a hole  $C$  (we can ofcourse assume  $G$  contains no hole of length seven or greater) so  $vw$  is an edge. But now  $C$  induces a  $C_6$  in both  $H$  and  $G$  and again we are done.

Similarly  $v$  is not in  $T_4$ , as otherwise  $P + 1 + 2 + 3$  is a hole of length at least seven or induces a  $C_6$  in both  $G$  and  $H$  or it is a  $C_5$  in  $G$  contradicting the fact that  $G$  is  $C_5$ -free.

Finally  $v$  is not in  $S_{135} \cup S_{1345}$  by Claim 2. Thus  $P$  does not exist and so  $G$  is not unbreakable, a contradiction. By symmetry,  $S_4$  is also empty.  $\diamond$

**Claim 4**  $N = \emptyset$ .

First note that there are no edges from a vertex  $n \in N$  to a vertex  $v \in S_{135} \cup S_{1345}$  as otherwise  $nv12$  induces a  $P_4$  in  $G$  but not in  $H$ . Similarly there are no edges from  $N$  to  $S_{246} \cup S_{1246}$ . Now there are no edges from a vertex  $n \in N$  to a vertex  $v \in T_1$  as otherwise  $|N_G(n) \cap D_v| = 1$  contradicting Claim 3. Similarly, there are no edges from  $N$  to  $S_4$ . But now,  $2 + N(2)$  is a cutset separating  $N$  from 4, a contradiction.  $\diamond$

At this point, we have a partition of  $V$  into  $X_1, X_4, A, S = S_{2356}$ , and  $D$ .

**Claim 5** *There is no edge between  $S$  and  $X_1 \cup X_4$ ; there are all edges between  $A$  and  $X_1 \cup X_4$ .*

Let  $s \in S$ . If  $s$  sees a vertex  $x \in T_4$  then  $12sx$  is a  $P_4$  in  $G$  but not in  $H$ . If  $s$  sees a vertex  $x \in S_{\{1,3,5\}} \cup S_{\{1,3,4,5\}}$  then  $xs$  must be an edge in  $H$  as otherwise  $1x2s$  is a  $P_4$  in  $H$  but not in  $G$ . If  $x$  is in  $S_{\{1,3,5\}}$  then  $3sx4$  induces a  $P_4$  in  $H$  but not in  $G$ . If  $x$  is in  $S_{\{1,3,4,5\}}$  then  $2sx4$  is a  $P_4$  in  $G$  but not in  $H$ .

Let  $a \in A$ . If  $a$  misses a vertex  $x \in T_4$  then  $6a3x$  induces a  $P_4$  in  $G$  therefore  $a$  must be  $D$ -universal in  $H$  and misses  $x$ . But then  $1a2x$  is a  $P_4$  in  $H$  but not in  $G$ . If  $a$  misses a vertex  $x \in S_{\{1,3,5\}} \cup S_{\{1,3,4,5\}}$  then the  $P_4$   $2a5x$  in  $G$  shows that  $a$  must also be  $D$ -universal in  $H$  and misses  $x$  in  $H$ . But now the set  $\{1, a, 4, x\}$  induces a  $P_4$  in exactly one of  $G$  and  $H$ .  $\diamond$

**Claim 6**  $A = \emptyset$

If  $A$  is non-empty then  $S$  is also non-empty as otherwise  $\overline{G}$  is disconnected. If there is no edge between  $A$  and  $S$  then for any vertex  $a \in A$  we have that  $a \cup N(a) - 4$

separates  $S$  from vertex 4. Thus there must exist a vertex  $s$  that has a neighbor  $a \in A$ . But then  $\overline{N(s)}$  separates  $a$  from  $\{2, 3, 5, 6\}$  in  $\overline{G}$ . This contradicts the fact that  $G$  is unbreakable. So  $A$  is empty.  $\diamond$

**Claim 7**  $S = \emptyset$

If  $|S| \geq 2$  then  $S$  is a homogeneous set. If  $S$  is just one vertex  $s$ , then since  $G$  contains no  $C_5$ , there are no edges from  $X_1 + 1$  to  $X_4 + 4$  (or else a vertex from  $X_1 + 1$  and one from  $X_4 + 4$  together with  $\{2, s, 5\}$  induce a  $C_5$  in  $G$ ). But now,  $s + N(s)$  is a star cutset separating 1 from 4. So,  $S$  must be empty.  $\diamond$

Now, if both  $X_1$  and  $X_4$  are empty then  $G$  is a  $C_6$ . So by symmetry, we can assume that  $X_1$  is non-empty. If there are no two vertices  $x$  and  $y$  in  $X_1 + 1$  with incomparable neighborhoods then let  $z$  be a vertex in  $X_1 + 1$  with maximal neighborhood. Clearly  $z + (N(z) - X_1 - 1)$  is a cutset separating  $X_1 + 1 - z$  from 3. So, we can assume there are two vertices  $x$  and  $y$  in  $X_1 + 1$  and two vertices  $w$  and  $z$  in  $X_4 + 4$  such that  $xz, yw \in E(G)$  and  $xw, yz \notin E(G)$ . Because  $G$  has no  $C_5$  we see that either both or neither of  $xy, wz$  are edges of  $G$ . Note that  $xz$  and  $yw$  are also edges in  $H$  while  $xw$  and  $yz$  are not edges in  $H$ . Moreover  $xy$  and  $zw$  are edges in  $G$  if and only if they are non-edges in  $H$ . In either case, the sets  $\{2, x, y, z, w, 5\}$  and  $\{6, x, y, z, w, 3\}$  induce a  $C_6$  in one of  $G$  or  $H$  and an  $F$  in the other with the vertices of degree 2 in these  $F$  in  $D$ . It follows from our previous remarks that a vertex  $v$  in  $X_1 + 1 - x - y$  satisfies either  $N(v) \cap \{x, y, z, w\} = \{x, y\}$ , or  $N(v) \cap \{x, y, z, w\} = \{z, w\}$ . In either case, we easily arrive at a contradiction by considering the graph induced by  $v, x, y, z, w, 2, 3, 5, 6$  as the set  $\{v, x, y, z\}$  or  $\{v, z, w, x\}$  induces a  $P_4$  in exactly one of  $G$  and  $H$ . So,  $X_1 + 1 = \{x, y\}$ . By symmetry,  $X_4 + 4 = \{w, z\}$ .

Thus  $G$  is either the *cube* or the graph  $Q$  as depicted in Figure 6 and  $H$  is easily seen to be isomorphic to  $G$  or  $\overline{G}$ .  $\square$

The proof of Theorem 4 shows that except for the two graphs depicted in Figure 6,  $C_5$ -free unbreakable graphs even have *strongly* unique  $P_4$ -structure. Thus we have

**Corollary 1**  $C_5$ -free unbreakable graphs different from  $C_6$ ,  $Q$ , *cube* and their comple-

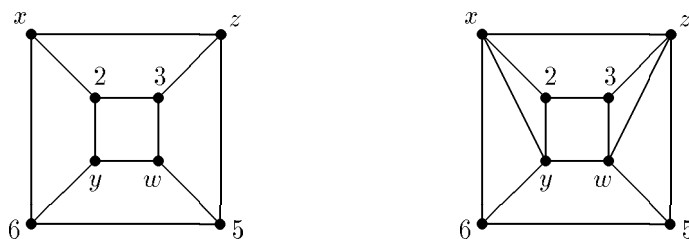


Figure 6: Two exceptional graphs: the *cube* and the graph  $Q$ .

*ments have strongly unique  $P_4$ -structure.*

□

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