

# COMPOSITIO MATHEMATICA

JOHN MITCHEM

## **The point-outercoarseness of complete $n$ -partite graphs**

*Compositio Mathematica*, tome 26, n° 2 (1973), p. 101-110

[http://www.numdam.org/item?id=CM\\_1973\\_\\_26\\_2\\_101\\_0](http://www.numdam.org/item?id=CM_1973__26_2_101_0)

© Foundation Compositio Mathematica, 1973, tous droits réservés.

L'accès aux archives de la revue « Compositio Mathematica » (<http://www.compositio.nl/>) implique l'accord avec les conditions générales d'utilisation (<http://www.numdam.org/conditions>). Toute utilisation commerciale ou impression systématique est constitutive d'une infraction pénale. Toute copie ou impression de ce fichier doit contenir la présente mention de copyright.

NUMDAM

Article numérisé dans le cadre du programme  
Numérisation de documents anciens mathématiques

<http://www.numdam.org/>

## THE POINT-OUTERCOARSENESS OF COMPLETE $n$ -PARTITE GRAPHS

by

John Mitchem

### Introduction

A subdivision of a graph  $G$  is a graph  $G_1$  obtained from  $G$  by replacing an edge  $x = uv$  of  $G$  with a new vertex  $w$  together with edges  $uw$  and  $vw$ . Graph  $H$  is said to be homeomorphic from graph  $G$  if  $H$  can be obtained from  $G$  by a finite sequence of subdivisions. The *subgraph of  $G$  induced by a set  $W$  of vertices* has vertex set  $W$  and its edge set is the set of edges of  $G$  which are incident with two vertices of  $W$ . The *subgraph of  $G$  induced by an edge set  $Y$*  has  $Y$  as its edge set and contains all vertices incident with at least one edge of  $Y$ . For a real number  $r$ ,  $[r]$  denotes the greatest integer not exceeding  $r$ , and  $\{r\}$  is the least integer not less than  $r$ .

Let  $p_1 \leq p_2 \leq \dots \leq p_n$  be positive integers. Then the *complete  $n$ -partite graph  $K(p_1, \dots, p_n)$*  has  $p = \sum_1^n p_i$  vertices, its vertex set can be partitioned into subsets  $V_i$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq n$ , such that  $|V_i| = p_i$ , and two vertices are adjacent if and only if they are in different  $V_i$ . The sets  $V_1, \dots, V_n$  are called the partite sets of  $K(p_1, \dots, p_n)$ . If each  $p_i = 1$ ,  $K(p_1, \dots, p_n)$  is denoted by  $K_n$  and called the complete graph on  $n$  vertices.

An *outerplanar graph* is a graph which can be embedded in the plane so that every vertex of  $G$  lies on the exterior region. In [5] Chartrand and Harary have characterized outerplanar graphs as those graphs which contain no subgraph homeomorphic from  $K_4$  or  $K(2,3)$ .

We define, for each positive integer  $n$ , the *vertex partition number* of a graph  $G$ , denoted by  $\pi_n(G)$ , as the maximum number of subsets into which the vertex set of  $G$  can be partitioned so that each set induces a graph which contains a subgraph homeomorphic from  $K_{n+1}$  or the complete 2-partite graph  $K([\frac{n+2}{2}], \{\frac{(n+2)}{2}\})$ . This general parameter was first introduced by Chartrand, Geller and Hedetniemi in [4].

For  $i = 1, 2, 3, 4$ ,  $\pi_i(g)$  is the maximum number of point induced disjoint subgraphs of  $G$  which are totally disconnected, acyclic, outerplanar, and planar, respectively.

The edge partition number  $\pi'_n(G)$  is defined analogously to  $\pi_n(G)$  with the word 'vertex' replaced by 'edge'. Then  $\pi'_1(G)$  is simply the number

of lines of  $G$ . The only line partition number which has been given considerable study is  $\pi'_4(G)$ , which is called the coarseness of  $G$ . This has been investigated by Beineke [1], Beineke and Chartrand [2], Guy [9], and Beineke and Guy [3], with the last paper giving a partial formula for  $\pi'_4(K(m, n))$ .

The number  $\pi_1(G)$  is the well-known line independence number, see Harary [10]. The number  $\pi_2(G)$  has been studied by Corrádi and Hajnal [7], Dirac and Erdős [8], and Chartrand, Kronk, and Wall [6]. In this paper we investigate  $\pi_3(G)$  which is called the point-outercoarseness of  $G$  and is now denoted simply  $\pi(G)$ .

### Preliminary results

We make two easy observations and then commence the development of the formula for  $\pi(K(p_1, \dots, p_n))$ . Any non-outerplanar graph has at least 4 vertices and 6 edges. This implies

REMARK 1. If  $G$  is a graph with  $p$  points and  $q$  edges, then  $\pi(G) \leq [p/4]$  and  $\pi(G) \leq [q/6]$ .

The maximum number of vertices in any complete subgraph of  $G$  is denoted  $\omega(G)$  and is called the *clique number* of  $G$ .

REMARK 2. If  $G$  has  $p$  vertices and  $\omega(G) \leq 3$ , then  $\pi(G) \leq [p/5]$ .

THEOREM 1. Let  $G = K(p_1, \dots, p_n)$  with  $n \geq 2$ . If  $p_n \geq (\frac{3}{2})(p - p_n)$ , then  $\pi(G) = [(p - p_n)/2]$ .

PROOF. In any decomposition of  $G$  into non-outerplanar subgraphs, each subgraph must include at least two vertices from  $\bigcup_1^{n-1} V_i$ . There are  $p - p_n$  vertices in this set so that  $\pi(G) \leq [(p - p_n)/2]$ .

Any subgraph induced by a set consisting of three vertices from  $V_n$  and two vertices from  $\bigcup_1^{n-1} V_i$  is not outerplanar. From the hypothesis that  $p - p_n \leq (\frac{3}{2})p_n$  it follows that there are  $[(p - p_n)/2]$  disjoint induced non-outerplanar subgraphs of  $G$ . Thus  $\pi(G) = [(p - p_n)/2]$ .

THEOREM 2. If  $G = K(p_1, \dots, p_n)$  where  $n = 2$  or  $3$ , and  $p_n \leq (\frac{3}{2})(p - p_n)$ , then  $\pi(G) = [p/5]$ .

PROOF. Since  $\omega(G) \leq 3$ , Remark 2 implies that  $\pi(G) \leq [p/5]$ . In order to show that  $[p/5]$  non-outerplanar, mutually disjoint, induced subgraphs of  $G$  exist we consider two cases.

CASE (i).  $n = 2$ . Since  $p_1 \leq p_2 \leq (\frac{3}{2})p_1$ , there are  $p_2 - p_1$  mutually disjoint sets of vertices such that each set contains three vertices from  $V_2$  and two vertices from  $V_1$ . Each of these sets induces a non-outerplanar

copy of  $K(2, 3)$ . There are  $p_1 - 2(p_2 - p_1) = 3p_1 - 2p_2 \geq 0$  other vertices in  $V_1$  and  $p_2 - 3(p_2 - p_1) = 3p_1 - 2p_2 \geq 0$  other vertices in  $V_2$ . Call these sets  $V'_1$  and  $V'_2$  respectively. If  $3p_1 - 2p_2 = 0, 1, \text{ or } 2$ , then we have partitioned  $G$  into  $\lceil p/5 \rceil$  non-outerplanar subgraphs. If  $3p_1 - 2p_2 \geq 3$ , then by alternating the use of three vertices from  $V'_2$  and two vertices from  $V'_1$  with two from  $V'_2$  and three from  $V'_1$ , we can complete the partition of  $V(G)$  into  $\lceil p/5 \rceil$  sets of cardinality five, each of which induces a non-outerplanar graph. Thus  $\pi(G) = \lceil p/5 \rceil$  in this case.

CASE (ii).  $n = 3$ . If  $p_1 + p_2 \leq p_3$  we consider graph  $H$  which is  $G$  minus all edges joining  $V_1$  to  $V_2$ . From case (i).  $\pi(G) \geq \pi(H) \geq \lceil p/5 \rceil$ . Thus we suppose  $p_3 < p_1 + p_2$ . For  $i = 1, 2, 3$ , let  $V_i^0 = V_i$ . Form one copy of  $K(2, 3)$  with three vertices  $v_1, v_2, v_3$ , of  $V_3^0$  and two vertices  $v_4, v_5$  of  $V_2^0$ . Let  $V_1^1, V_2^1$  be an ordering of  $V_1$  and  $V_2 - \{v_4, v_5\}$  so that  $|V_1^1| \leq |V_2^1|$ , and let  $V_3^1 = V_3 - \{v_1, v_2, v_3\}$ . Then repeat this procedure with  $V_1^1, V_2^1$ , and  $V_3^1$ , and continue this procedure until reaching a non-negative integer  $j$  such that  $V_3^j \leq V_2^j$ . (Note that  $j$  may be zero.) Let

$$V_1^{j+1}, V_2^{j+1}, V_3^{j+1}$$

be a reordering of  $V_1^j, V_2^j, V_3^j$  such that

$$|V_1^{j+1}| \leq |V_2^{j+1}| \leq |V_3^{j+1}|$$

and observe that

$$0 \leq |V_3^{j+1}| - |V_2^{j+1}| \leq 2.$$

Continue the partition of  $G$  into copies of  $K(2, 3)$  by using three vertices  $w_1, w_2, w_3$ , from  $V_3^{j+1}$  and two vertices  $w_4, w_5$  from  $V_2^{j+1}$ . Let

$$V_1^{j+1}, V_2^{j+1} - \{w_4, w_5\}, V_3^{j+1} - \{w_1, w_2, w_3\}$$

be reordered by

$$V_1^{j+2}, V_2^{j+2}, V_3^{j+2}$$

so that

$$|V_1^{j+2}| \leq |V_2^{j+2}| \leq |V_3^{j+2}|.$$

We stop this procedure when  $|V_3^k| \leq 3$  for some  $k \geq j + 1$ . If

$$|V_1^k| + |V_2^k| + |V_3^k| \leq 4,$$

then  $G$  has been partitioned into  $\lceil p/5 \rceil$  non-outerplanar graphs. Otherwise induce one more non-outerplanar graph with the remaining vertices. Thus  $\pi(G) \geq \lceil p/5 \rceil$ , which completes the proof of the theorem.

**COROLLARY 3.** *If  $G = K(p_1, \dots, p_n)$  where  $n = 2$  or  $3$  then  $\pi(G) = \min \{ \lceil p/5 \rceil, \lfloor (p - p_n)/2 \rfloor \}$ .*

**THEOREM 4.** *Let  $G = K(p_1, \dots, p_n)$  where  $p_n \leq (\frac{3}{2})(p - p_n)$ . Then  $\pi(G) \geq \lceil p/5 \rceil$ .*

PROOF. We use induction and observe that Theorem 2 verifies the result for  $n = 2$  or  $3$ . Assume Theorem 4 holds for  $n \geq 3$  and let  $G = K(p_1, \dots, p_{n+1})$  where  $p_{n+1} \leq (\frac{3}{2})(p - p_{n+1})$ . The subgraph of  $G$  formed by removing all edges joining  $V_1$  with  $V_2$  is a complete  $n$ -partite graph  $H = K(p'_1, \dots, p'_n)$  where  $p'_n = \max\{p_{n+1}, p_1 + p_2\}$ . Since  $p'_n \leq (3/2)(p'_1 + \dots + p'_{n-1})$ , the inductive assumption applies and we have  $\pi(G) \geq \pi(H) \geq \lfloor p/5 \rfloor$ .

The following lemma will be helpful.

LEMMA 1. *Let  $c$  be an integer such that  $1 < c \leq n$ . If  $p_n - p_{n-c+1} \leq 1$ , then the complete  $n$ -partite graph  $G = K(p_1, \dots, p_n)$  contains  $\lfloor p/c \rfloor$  mutually disjoint copies of  $K_c$ .*

PROOF. We use induction on  $p$ . If the order of  $G$  is less than  $n + c$ , then  $p_{n-c+1} = 1$ . We form one copy of  $K_c$  by selecting one vertex from each  $V_i$ ,  $i = n - c + 1, \dots, n$ . The remaining vertices of  $G$  induce a complete graph on  $p - c$  vertices. Thus  $G$  contains  $\lfloor p/c \rfloor$  mutually disjoint copies of  $K_c$ .

Let the order of  $G$  be  $p \geq n + c$  and suppose the lemma is true for all complete  $n$ -partite graphs with less than  $p$  vertices. Form one copy of  $K_c$  by selecting one vertex from each of  $V_{n-c+1}, \dots, V_n$ . The graph  $H$  induced by the remaining vertices of  $G$  is a complete  $n$ -partite graph with  $p'_n - p'_{n-c+1} \leq 1$  where  $p'_i$  is the order of the  $i$ th partite set of  $H$ . By the induction hypothesis  $H$  contains  $\lfloor (p - c)/c \rfloor$  mutually disjoint copies of  $K_c$  and the lemma is proved.

THEOREM 5. *Let  $G = K(p_1, \dots, p_n)$  where  $n \geq 4$ . If  $p \geq 4p_n$ , then  $\pi(G) = \lfloor p/4 \rfloor$ .*

PROOF. We use induction on  $p_n$ . If  $p_n = 1$ ,  $G$  is the complete graph with  $p = n$  vertices and  $\pi(G) = \lfloor p/4 \rfloor$ . Suppose the theorem holds if  $p_n = k \geq 1$  and let  $p_n = k + 1$ . Remove one vertex from each  $V_n, V_{n-1}, V_{n-2}$ , and  $V_{n-3}$ . The resulting graph  $H$  is a complete  $m$ -partite graph with  $n \geq m \geq 4$  and the largest partite set in  $H$  has  $p_{n-1} = k$  or  $p_n$  vertices. The latter case implies that  $p_n - p_{n-3} = 0$ , and Lemma 1 proves the theorem. In the former case the inductive assumption implies  $\pi(H) = \lfloor (p - 4)/4 \rfloor$  and thus  $\pi(G) = \lfloor p/4 \rfloor$ .

### The principal result

Before stating the main theorem, we prove another lemma.

LEMMA 2. *Let  $G = K(p_1, \dots, p_n)$  with  $n \geq 3$ . If  $r$  is a positive integer such that  $p \geq 3r$ ,  $p_1 + \dots + p_{n-1} \geq 2r$ , and  $p_1 + \dots + p_{n-2} \geq r$ , then  $G$  contains at least  $r$  mutually disjoint triangles.*

PROOF. For  $i = 1, \dots, n$ , let  $V_i^0 = V_i$ . Form one triangle with vertices

$$v_{n-2}, v_{n-1}, v_n \text{ of } V_{n-2}^0, V_{n-1}^0, V_n^0$$

respectively. Let

$$V_n^1 = V_n^0 - \{v_n\} \text{ and } V_1^1, \dots, V_{n-1}^1$$

be a reordering of

$$V_1^0, \dots, V_{n-3}^0, V_{n-2}^0 - \{v_{n-2}\}, V_{n-1}^0 - \{v_{n-1}\}$$

such that

$$|V_i^1| \leq |V_{i+1}^1| \text{ for } i = 1, 2, \dots, n-2.$$

Repeat this procedure until either

$$|V_n^k| - |V_{n-2}^k| \leq 1 \text{ and } |V_{n-2}^k| \neq 0$$

for some  $k$  or  $|V_{n-2}^k| = 0$  for some  $k$ . If the former occurs first, then from Lemma 1, it follows that  $G$  contains at least  $r$  mutually disjoint triangles. Thus suppose  $|V_{n-2}^k| = 0$  for some  $j$  and consider two cases.

CASE (i)  $|V_{n-1}^i| - |V_{n-2}^i| \leq 1$  for some  $i < k$ . Each of the  $k$  triangles which have been formed contain one vertex of  $V_n$  and two vertices from distinct  $V_j, j = 1, \dots, n-1$ . Since  $|V_{n-1}^i| - |V_{n-2}^i| \leq 1$ , Lemma 1 implies that at most one vertex of  $\bigcup_1^{n-1} V_j$  is not included in one of the triangles. Thus  $k = [(p_1 + \dots + p_{n-1})/2] \geq r$ .

CASE (ii).  $|V_{n-1}^i| - |V_{n-2}^i| > 1$  for all  $i > k$ . In this case

$$V_{n-1}^i \subset V_{n-1} \text{ for } i = 1, \dots, k-1.$$

Hence each of the  $k$  triangles contains exactly one vertex from  $\bigcup_1^{n-2} V_j$ . This implies

$$k = \left| \bigcup_1^{n-2} V_j \right| \geq r$$

and completes the proof.

THEOREM 6. Let  $G = K(p_1, \dots, p_n)$  with  $n \geq 2$ , then

$$\pi(G) = \begin{cases} [(p-p_n)/2] & \text{if } p \leq (\frac{5}{3})p_n \\ [p/4] & \text{if } p \geq 4p_n \\ [(p+r)/5] & \text{if } (\frac{5}{3})p_n < p < 4p_n \end{cases}$$

where

$$r = \min \{(p-p_n-p_{n-1}-p_{n-2}), [(p-p_n-p_{n-1})/2], [(3p-5p_n)/7]\}.$$

PROOF. If  $p \leq (\frac{5}{3})p_n$  or  $p \geq 4p_n$ , the result follows from Theorems 1 and 5. Thus we consider only  $(\frac{5}{3})p_n < p < 4p_n$  and distinguish three cases depending on  $r$ .

CASE (i).  $r = p - p_n - p_{n-1} - p_{n-2}$ . Since

$$p - p_n - p_{n-1} - p_{n-2} \leq (p - p_n - p_{n-1})/2$$

we have

$$p - p_n - p_{n-1} - p_{n-2} \leq p_{n-2} \leq p_{n-1} \leq p_n.$$

That is the cardinality of  $\bigcup_1^{n-3} V_i$  does not exceed the cardinality of  $V_{n-2}$ . Thus there are  $r$  mutually disjoint copies of  $K_4$  with one vertex in each of the sets

$$V_n, V_{n-1}, V_{n-2}, \bigcup_1^{n-3} V_i.$$

Let  $G$  minus these  $r$  copies of  $K_4$  be denoted by  $H$ . Graph  $H$  has  $p - 4r$  vertices, and we let  $V_i^1 = V_i \cap V(H)$  for  $i = n-2, n-1, n$ . Since  $r \leq (3p - 5p_n)/7$  we have  $\frac{2}{3}(p_n - r) \leq p - p_n - 3r$ , where  $p_n - r = |V_n'|$  and

$$p - p_n - 3r = |V_{n-1}' \cup V_{n-2}'|.$$

Theorem 2 implies that  $\pi(H) = [(p - 4r)/5]$ . Hence

$$\pi(G) \geq r + [(p - 4r)/5] = [(p + r)/5].$$

Since  $G$  does not contain more than  $r$  copies of  $K_4$ , it is clear that  $\pi(G) = [(p + r)/5]$ .

CASE (ii).  $r = [(p - p_n - p_{n-1})/2] < [(3p - 5p_n)/7]$ . In this case we consider the complete  $(n-1)$ -partite graph  $H = G - V_n$ . By hypothesis

$$(1) \quad r \leq p - p_n - p_{n-1} - p_{n-2}$$

and

$$(2) \quad 2r \leq p - p_n - p_{n-1}$$

Inequality (2) together with  $[(p - p_n - p_{n-1})/2] < [(3p - 5p_n)/7]$  imply

$$(3) \quad r \leq p_{n-1}.$$

Adding (2) and (3) we obtain

$$(4) \quad 3r \leq \sum_1^{n-1} p_i.$$

Since (1), (2), and (4) hold, Lemma 2 implies that  $H$  contains at least  $r$  mutually disjoint triangles. The set  $V_n$  contains  $p_n \geq p_{n-1} \geq r$  vertices. Thus,  $G$  contains  $r$  mutually disjoint copies of  $K_4$ , each of which has one vertex from  $V_n$  and three vertices from  $\bigcup_1^{n-1} V_i$ . There are  $p - p_n - 3r$  other vertices in  $\bigcup_1^{n-1} V_i$  and  $p_n - r$  other vertices in  $V_n$ .

The graph  $G'$  induced by the remaining vertices of  $G$  is a complete  $m$ -partite graph,  $m \leq n$ . Since  $r < (3p - 5p_n)/7$ , we have

$$(5) \quad p - p_n - 3r > \frac{2}{3}(p_n - r).$$

That is the number of vertices in  $V(G') - V_n$  is more than two-thirds the number of vertices in  $V(G') \cap V_n$ . From  $r = [(p - p_n - p_{n-1})/2]$  it follows that

$$(6) \quad p_n - r + 1 \geq p - p_n - 3r.$$

If a maximum partite set of  $G'$  is  $V(G') \cap V_n$ , then (5) together with Theorem 4 imply that  $\pi(G') \geq [(p - 4r)/5]$ , and thus  $\pi(G) \geq r + \pi(G') \geq [(p + r)/5]$ . From (6) and the fact that  $|V(G') - V_n| = p - p_n - 3r$  it follows that if  $V(G') \cap V_n$  is not a largest partite set of  $G'$ , then a largest partite set contains exactly  $p_n - r + 1 = p - p_n - 3r$ . Thus  $G'$  is a bipartite graph with partite sets  $V'_1$  and  $V'_2$  where  $|V'_2| = p - p_n - 3r$  and  $|V'_1| = p_n - r$ . According to Theorem 4,  $\pi(G') \geq [(p - 4r)/5]$  and  $\pi(G) \geq [(p + r)/5]$ .

In order to show that equality holds suppose  $\pi(G) > [(p + r)/5]$ . Then there are more than  $r$  mutually disjoint copies of  $K_4$  in  $G$ . Each copy of  $K_4$  must contain two vertices from  $\bigcup_1^{n-2} V_i$ , so that  $p - p_n - p_{n-1} \geq 2(r + 1)$ . This implies that  $[(p - p_n - p_{n-1})/2] > r$  which contradicts the hypothesis for this case. Hence  $\pi(G) = [(p + r)/5]$ .

CASE (iii).  $r = [(3p - 5p_n)/7]$ . In this case we let  $H = G - V_n$ . From the hypothesis for this case we have

$$(7) \quad r \leq p - p_n - p_{n-1} - p_{n-2} \quad \text{and}$$

$$(8) \quad 2r \leq p - p_n - p_{n-1}$$

Furthermore,  $p - p_n - 3r \geq p - p_n - 3((3p - 5p_n)/7) = (\frac{8}{7})p_n - (\frac{2}{7})p > 0$ . Thus  $p - p_n > 3r$  which together with (7), (8) and Lemma 2 imply that  $H$  contains  $r$  mutually disjoint triangles.

Since  $4p_n > p$ , we have that  $3p_n > p - p_n > 3r$ . Thus  $V_n$  contains more than  $r$  vertices. Graph  $G$  has at least  $r$  mutually disjoint copies of  $K_4$  each consisting of one vertex of  $V_n$  and three vertices of  $\bigcup_1^{n-1} V_i$ . There are  $p - 4r$  other vertices in  $G$ . These vertices induce a complete  $m$ -partite subgraph  $G'$  of  $G$  with precisely  $p_n - r$  vertices of  $V_n$  and  $p - p_n - 3r$  vertices of  $\bigcup_1^{n-1} V_i$ . Since  $r \leq (3p - 5p_n)/7$  we have

$$(9) \quad (\frac{3}{2})(p - p_n - 3r) \geq p_n - r > 0.$$

Let  $W$  be a maximum partite set of  $G'$ . If  $W = V_n \cap V(G')$ , then (9) together with Theorem 4 imply that  $\pi(G') \geq [(p - 4r)/5]$ , and  $\pi(G) \geq [(p + r)/5]$ .

Suppose  $W \neq V_n \cap V(G')$ ; then let  $k = 4p_n - p$ . Thus,

$$r = [(3p - 5p_n)/7] = [p_n - 3k/7] = p_n - \{3k/7\}$$



where  $\{x\}$  is the least integer not less than  $x$ . We have

$$(10) \quad p_n - r = \{3k/7\} \text{ and}$$

$$(11) \quad p - p_n - 3r = 3p_n - k - 3(p_n - \{3k/7\}) = -k + 3\{3k/7\}.$$

If  $k = 1$ , then the number of vertices in  $G'$  is  $p - 4r = p - 4p_n + 4\{3k/7\} = -1 + 4 = 3$ , and  $\pi(G) \geq r + [(p - 4r)/5] = [(p + r)/5]$ . If  $k \geq 2$ , then from (10) and (11) we have  $p_n - r \geq (\frac{2}{3})(p - p_n - 3r)$ . This implies that

$$|V(G') - W| \geq |V_n| - r = p_n - r \geq (\frac{2}{3})(p - p_n - 3r) \geq (\frac{2}{3})|W|.$$

Hence, according to Theorem 4,

$$\pi(G') \geq [(p - 4r)/5] \text{ and } \pi(G) \geq r + [(p - 4r)/5] = [(p + r)/5].$$

Suppose  $\pi(G) > [(p + r)/5]$ . Any decomposition of  $G$  into more than  $[(p + r)/5]$  non-outerplanar graphs will necessarily contain  $r + t$  mutually disjoint copies of  $K_4$ ,  $t > 0$ . Let  $V_1^1, V_2^1, \dots, V_m^1$  be the partite sets of the complete  $m$ -partite graph  $H^1$  which remains after deleting these  $r + t$  copies of  $K_4$  from  $G$ . The order of  $H^1$  is  $p - 4r - 4t$  and  $|V_m^1| \geq |V_c^1|$  where  $V_c^1 = V_n \cap V(H^1)$ . We have  $r + t \leq p/4 < p_n$ , and thus

$$(12) \quad |V_m^1| \geq |V_c^1| \geq p_n - r - t > 0.$$

Then

$$(13) \quad \left| \bigcup_1^{m-1} V_i^1 \right| \leq |V(H^1)| - (p_n - r - t) = p - p_n - 3r - 3t.$$

From the fact that  $r > (3p - 5p_n)/7 - t$  we obtain

$$(14) \quad p - p_n - 3r - 3t < (\frac{2}{3})(p_n - r - t).$$

Using (12), (13), and (14) we have

$$\left| \bigcup_1^{m-1} V_i^1 \right| \leq p - p_n - 3r - 3t < (\frac{2}{3})(p_n - r - t) \leq (\frac{2}{3})|V_m^1|.$$

According to Theorem 1,

$$\pi(H^1) = \left[ \left| \bigcup_1^{m-1} V_i^1 \right| / 2 \right] = s.$$

Suppose  $t \geq 2$ . Since  $s \leq [(p - p_n - 3r - 3t)/2]$ , the number of mutually disjoint non-outerplanar subgraphs in this decomposition does not exceed  $r + t + [(p - p_n - 3r - 3t)/2] \leq [p - p_n - r - t]/2$ .

However,  $r + 2 > (3p - 5p_n)/7 + 1$ , which implies

$$(15) \quad \left[ \frac{p - p_n - (r + 2)}{2} \right] \leq \left[ \frac{p - p_n - (3p - 5p_n + 7)/7}{2} \right] = \left[ \frac{2p - p_n}{7} - \frac{1}{2} \right].$$

Also

$$(16) \quad \left\lfloor \frac{p+r}{5} \right\rfloor \geq \left\lfloor \frac{(10p-5p_n-6)/7}{5} \right\rfloor = \left\lfloor \frac{2p-p_n}{7} - \frac{6}{35} \right\rfloor.$$

Since the right side of (15) is not more than the right side of (16), we have  $r+t+s \leq [(p-p_n-r-2)/2] \leq [(p+r)/5]$ . That is this decomposition yields at most  $[(p+r)/5]$  mutually disjoint non-outerplanar subgraphs of  $G$ .

If  $t = 1$  and  $s = 0$ , then this decomposition yields  $r+1$  mutually disjoint non-outerplanar graphs and since  $|V_m^1| > 0$  there is at least one vertex which is not included in any of the  $r+1$  copies of  $K_4$ . Thus  $r+1 \leq r + [(p-r)/5] = [(p+r)/5]$ .

Finally, we suppose  $t = 1$  and  $s > 0$ . Each of these  $s$  graphs has at least five vertices with two vertices in  $\bigcup_1^{m-1} V_i^1$ . Since

$$\left| \bigcup_1^{m-1} V_i^1 \right| < \frac{2}{3} |V_m^1|,$$

one of these  $s$  graphs has six or more vertices. That is in the decomposition of  $G$  into  $r+t+s$  non-outerplanar mutually disjoint graphs one graph has more than 5 points. Thus there are  $r+t$  copies of  $K_4$ , one non-outerplanar graph with at least six vertices and at most  $[(p-4r-4t-6)/5]$  other non-outerplanar graphs. Since  $t = 1$ , this decomposition has at most  $r+2 + [(p-4r-10)/5] = [(p+r)/5]$  non-outerplanar graphs.

Thus, in this case,  $\pi(G) = [(p+r)/5]$  and the theorem is proved.

#### REFERENCES

L. W. BEINEKE

- [1] Genus, thickness, coarseness, and a crossing number, Proc. 1966 Symp. on Graph Theory, Tihany, Acad. Sci. Hung., 1967.

L. W. BEINEKE and G. CHARTRAND

- [2] The coarseness of a graph, Comp. Math. 19 (1969), 290–298.

L. W. BEINEKE and R. K. GUY

- [3] The coarseness of the complete bigraph, Canad. J. Math. 21 (1969), 1086–1096.

G. CHARTRAND, D. GELLER and S. HEDETNIEMI

- [4] Graphs with forbidden subgraphs, J. Combinatorial Theory, 10 (1971), 12–41.

G. CHARTRAND and F. HARARY

- [5] Planar permutation graphs, Ann. Inst. H. Poincaré (Sect. B), 3 (1967), 433–438.

G. CHARTRAND, H. V. KRONK and C. E. WALL

- [6] The point-arboricity of a graph, Israel J. Math., 6 (1968) 168–175.

K. CORRÁDI and A. HAJNAL

- [7] On the maximal number of independent circuits in a graph. Acta Math. Acad. Sci. Hungar. 14 (1963), 423–439.

G. DIRAC and P. ERDÖS

- [8] On the maximal number of independent circuits in a graph. Acta Math. Acad. Sci. Hungar. 14 (1963), 79–93.

R. K. GUY

[9] A coarseness conjecture of Erdős, *J. Comb. Theory*, 3 (1967), 38–42.

F. HARARY

[10] *Graph Theory*, Addison-Wesley, Reading, Mass., 1969, 94–97.

(Oblatum 3-I-1972)

California State University  
Department of Mathematics  
125 South Seventh Street  
SAN JOSE, Calif. 95192  
USA