

# Reducing graphs by automorphisms

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Fix a prime  $p$ . Starting with any finite undirected graph  $G$ , pick an automorphism of  $G$  of order  $p$  and delete all the vertices that are moved by this automorphism. Apply the same procedure to the new graph, and repeat until a graph  $G^*$  is reached that has no automorphisms of order  $p$ . Is the reduced graph  $G^*$  uniquely defined (up to isomorphism) by  $G$ ? I.e., is  $G^*$  independent of the sequence of automorphisms chosen?

In a CSG in 2010 John Faben showed that the answer is “yes” in the special case  $p = 2$  (i.e., reduction by involutions) using Newman’s Lemma on confluence of reduction systems. Later, he noticed that the general case can be handled using the so-called Lovász vector of a graph. I’ll prove the general result and sketch some consequences to the extent that time allows.