# Introduction to the Boolean Satisfiability Problem

Spring 2017
CSCE 235H Introduction to Discrete Structures
URL: cse.unl.edu/~cse235h
All questions: Piazza

# Satisfiability Study

- 7 weeks
- 25 min lectures in recitation
- ~2 hours of homework per week
- Goals:
  - Exposure to fundamental research in CS
  - Understand how to model problems
  - Learn to use SAT solver, MiniSAT

# Boolean Satisfiability Problem

- Given:
  - A Boolean formula
- Question:
  - Is there an assignment of truth values to the Boolean variables such that the formula holds true?

# Boolean Satisfiability Problem

$$a \vee (\neg a \wedge b)$$

$$(a \vee \neg a) \rightarrow (b \wedge \neg b)$$

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$$a \vee (\neg a \wedge b)$$

SATISFIABLE
a=true, b=true

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UNSATISFIABLE
Left side of implication is a tautology.
Right side of implication is a contradiction.
True cannot imply false.

# Applications of SAT

- Scheduling
- Resource allocation
- Hardware/software verification
- Planning
- Cryptography

# Conjunctive Normal Form

- Variable $a, b, p, q, x_1, x_2$
- Literal $a, \neg a, q, \neg q, x_1, \neg x_1$
- Clause $(a \vee \neg b \vee c)$
- Formula $(a \vee \neg b \vee c)$

$$\wedge (b \vee c)$$

$$\wedge (\neg a \vee \neg c)$$

# Converting to CNF

- All Boolean formulas can be converted to CNF
- The $\rightarrow, \leftrightarrow, \oplus$ operators can be rewritten in terms of $\neg, \vee, \wedge$
- $\neg, \vee, \wedge$ can be rearranged using
  - De Morgan's Laws
  - Distributive Laws
  - Double Negative
- May result in exponential size increase of the formula

# Converting to CNF

$$(a \vee \neg a) \rightarrow (b \wedge \neg b) \equiv$$

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$$\neg(a \vee \neg a) \vee (b \wedge \neg b) \equiv$$

$$(\neg a \wedge a) \vee (b \wedge \neg b) \equiv$$

$$(\neg a \vee b) \wedge (\neg a \vee \neg b) \wedge (a \vee b) \wedge (a \vee \neg b)$$

# Interpretation of CNF

- Every clause must be satisfied by at least one true literal
- Total possible number of solutions increases as number of variables increases
- Clauses constrain the possible solutions
- Smaller clauses are more constraining

# Interpretation of CNF

$$(a \vee \neg b \vee \neg c) \wedge (b \vee c) \wedge (\neg a)$$

| a | b | C |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 1 | 1 | 0 |
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# Interpretation of CNF

$$(a \vee \neg b \vee \neg c) \wedge (b \vee c) \wedge (\neg a)$$

$$\neg(\neg a \wedge b \wedge c)$$

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$\neg(a)$

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# Determining SAT/UNSAT

- All that is required to show satisfiability is to find a valid solution
- Many techniques available:
  - Guessing and checking
  - Systematic search
  - Inference

# Systematic Search with Backtracking

- Construct a binary tree of all combinations
- Proceeds in a depth first manner
- Each level corresponds to a variable
- Each branch corresponds to a truth assignment
- Branches of the tree are ‘pruned’ when the assignment cannot be extended in a satisfiable manner

# Systematic Search with Backtracking

$$(a \vee b \vee c)$$
$$\wedge(\neg a \vee \neg b)$$
$$\wedge(\neg b \vee \neg c)$$
$$\wedge(\neg c \vee \neg a)$$

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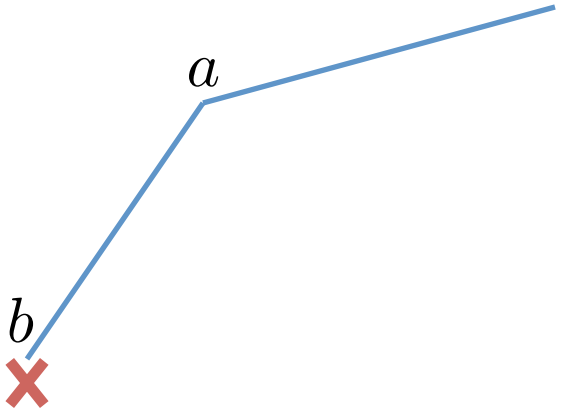

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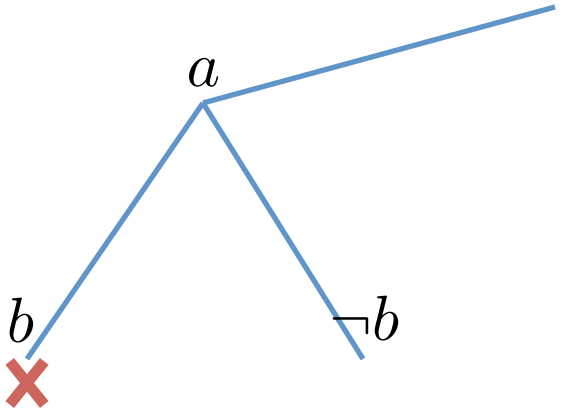

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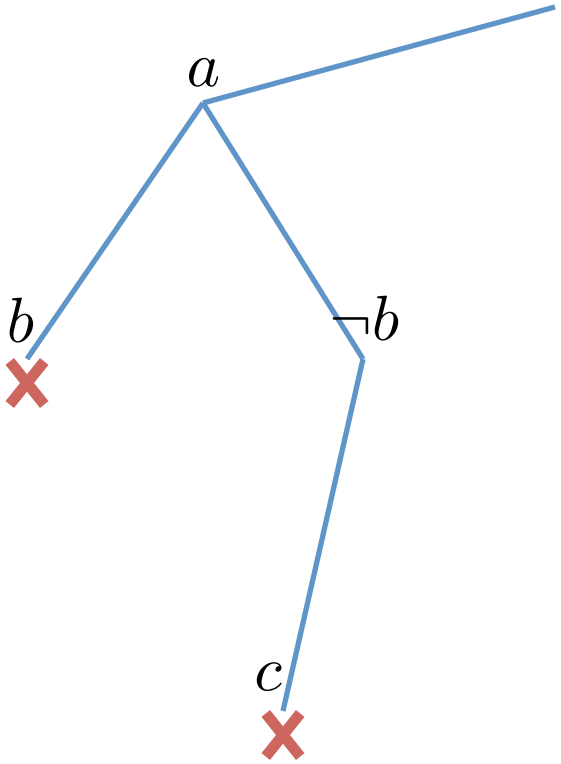

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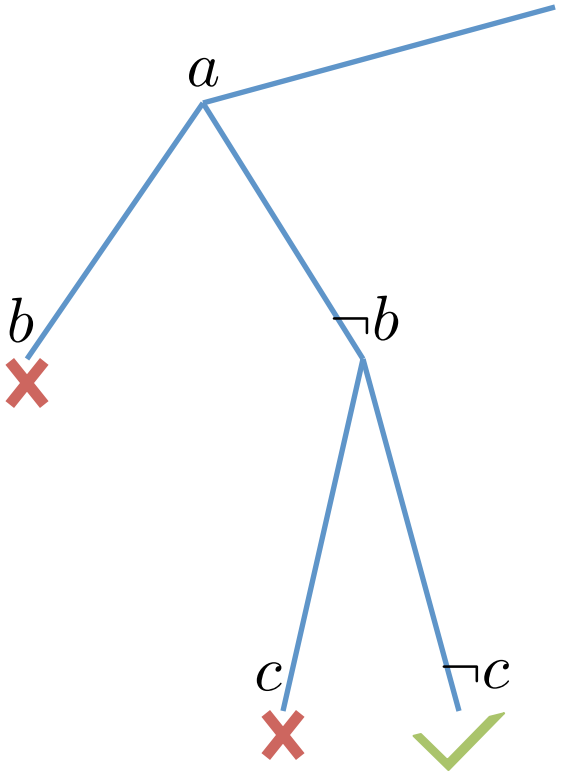


Satisfiable

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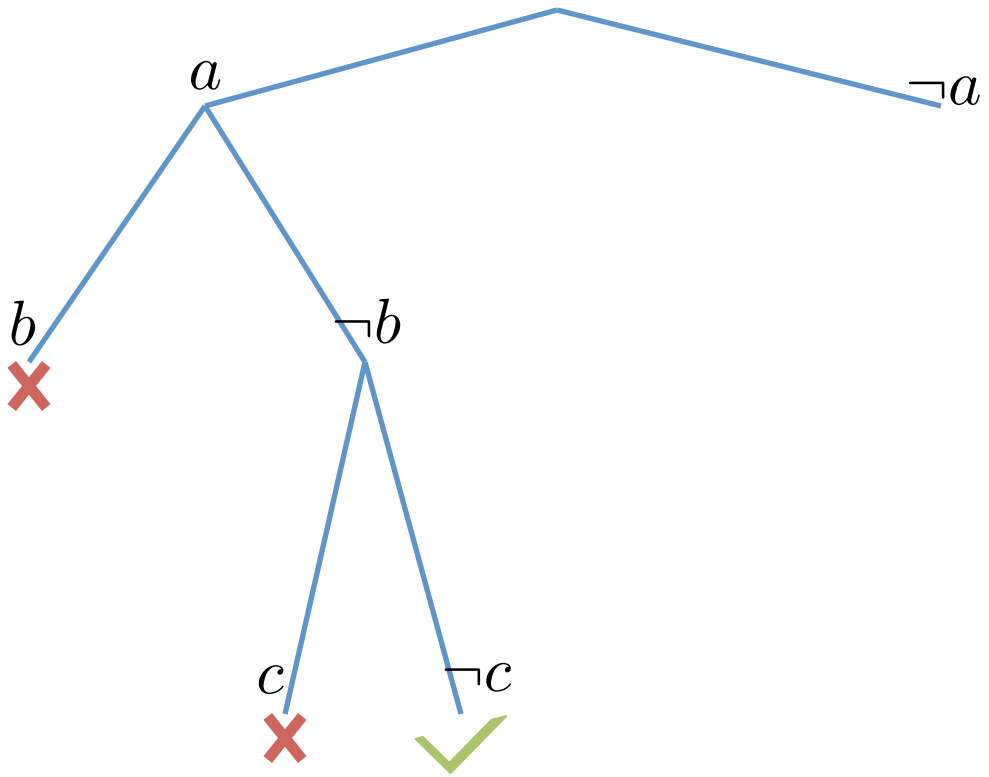


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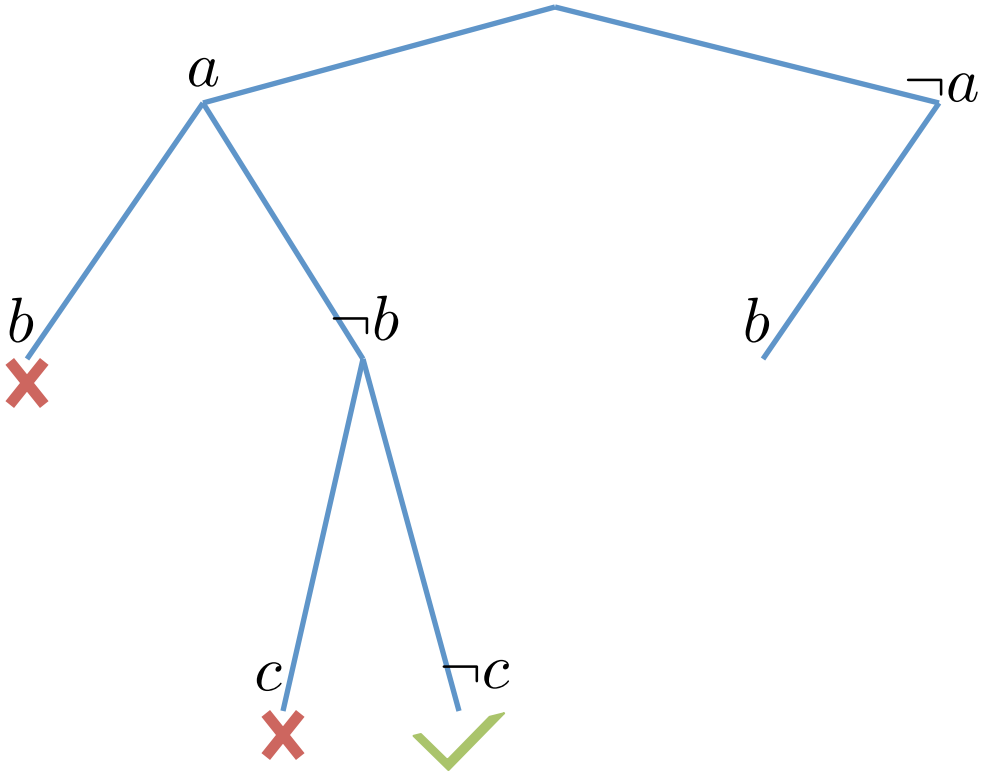


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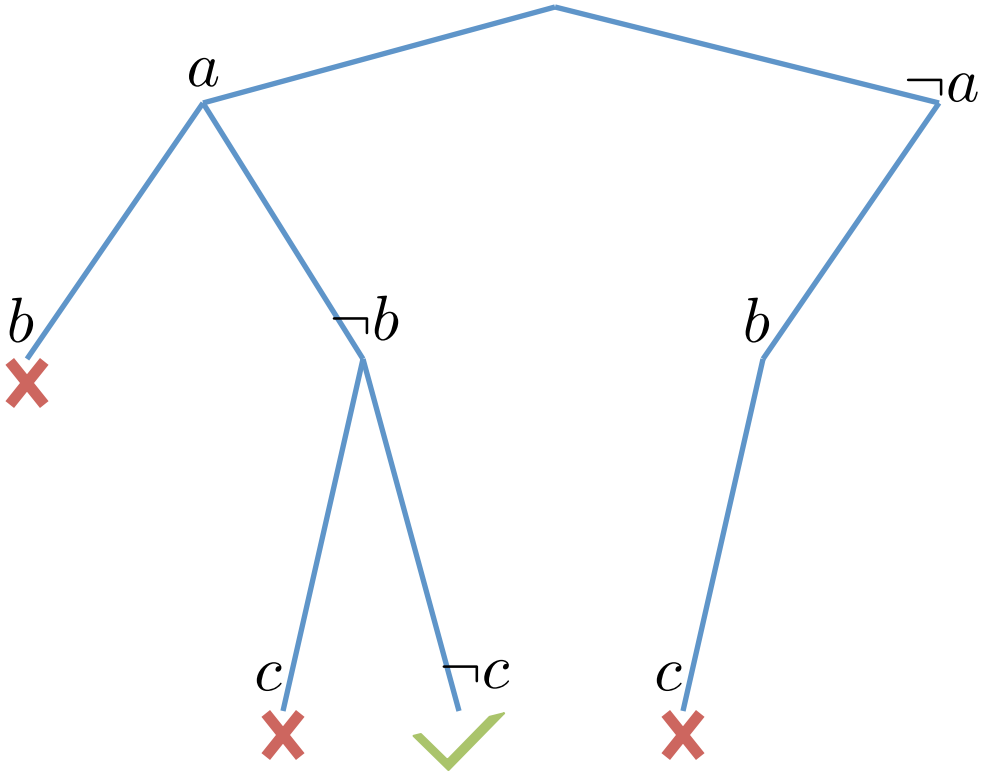


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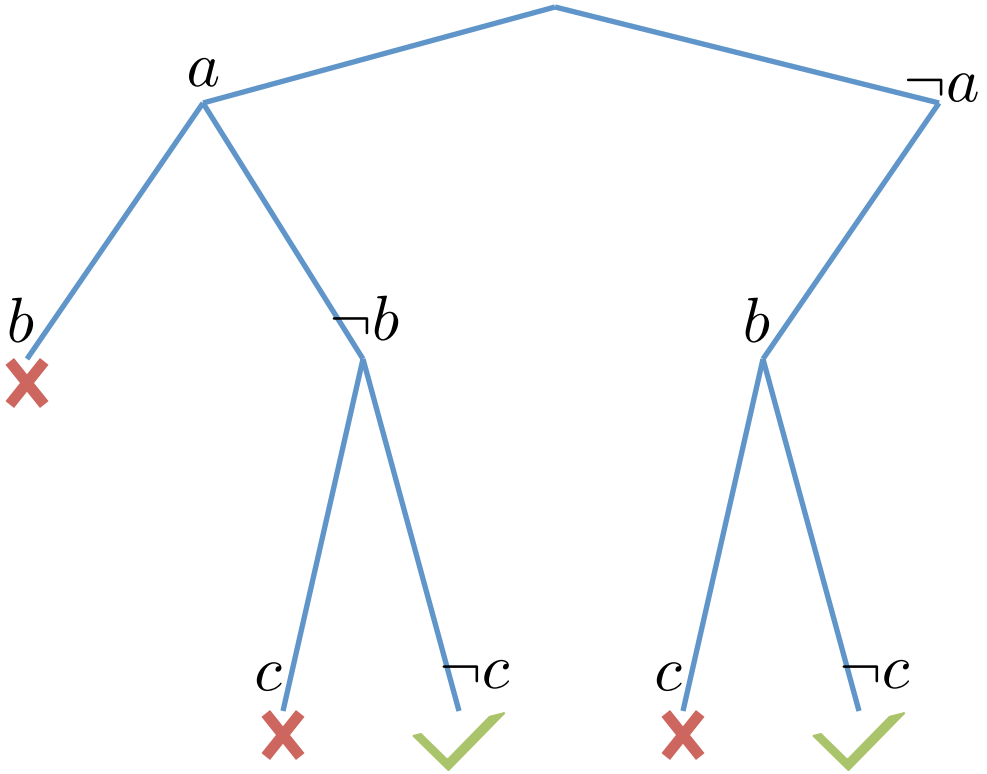


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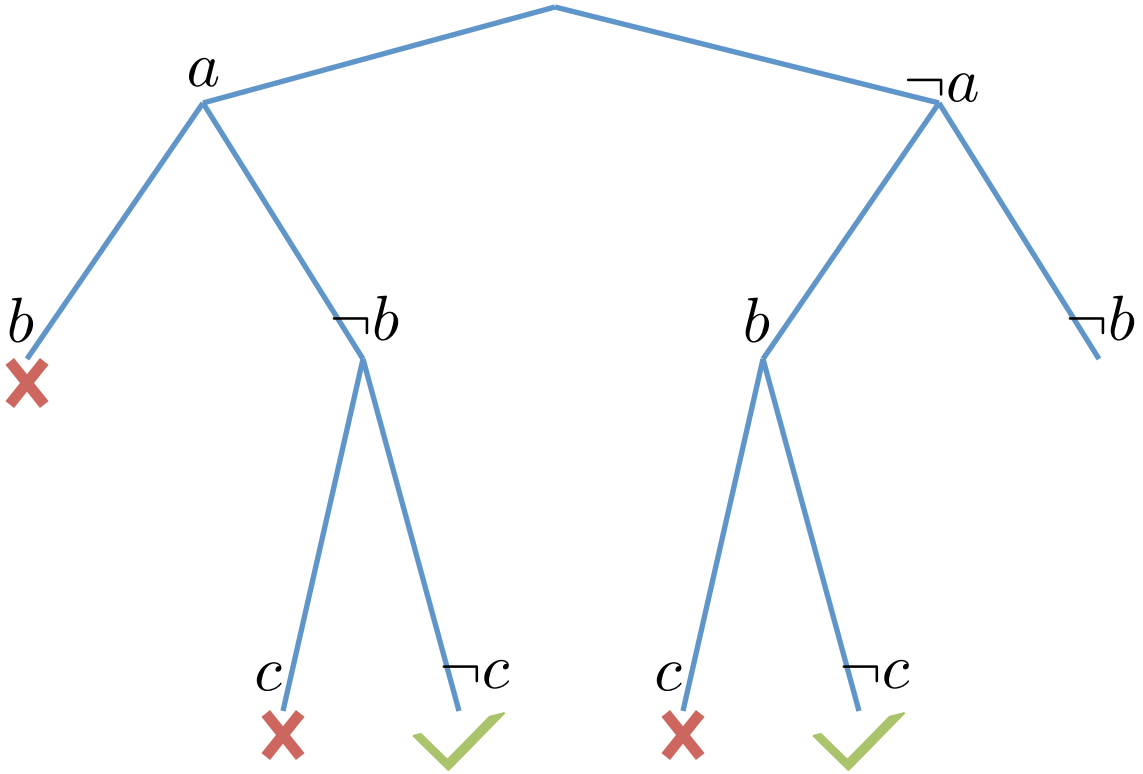


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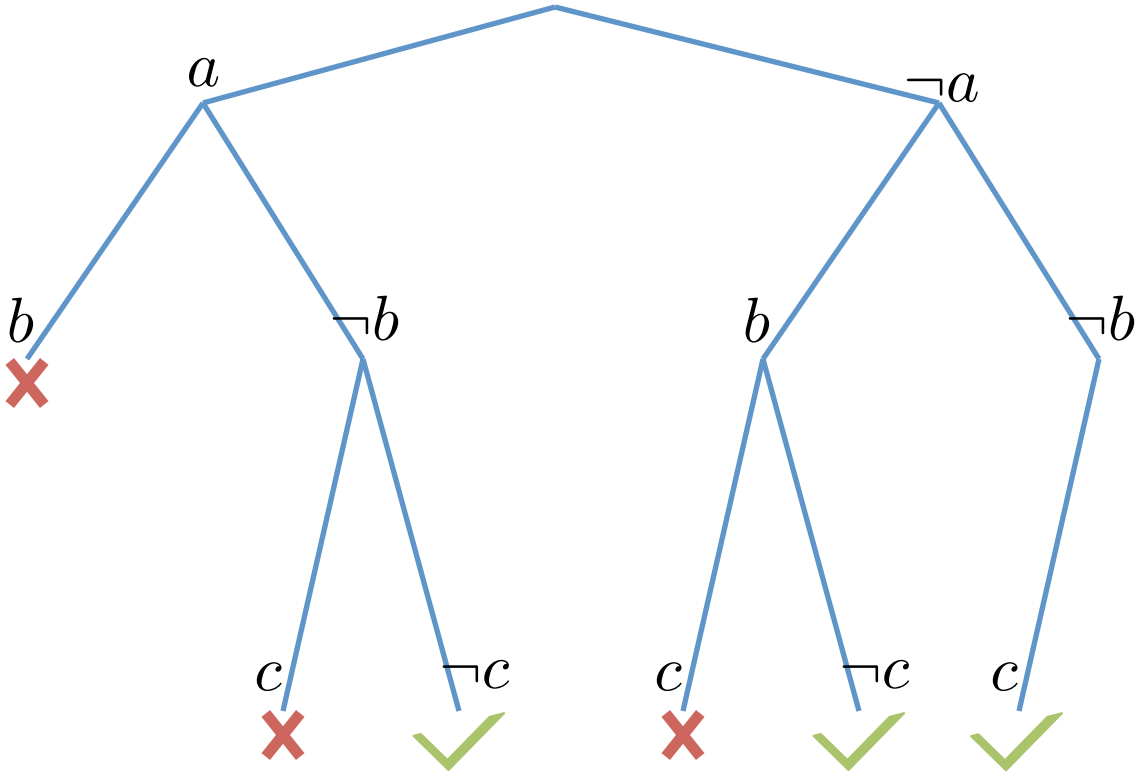

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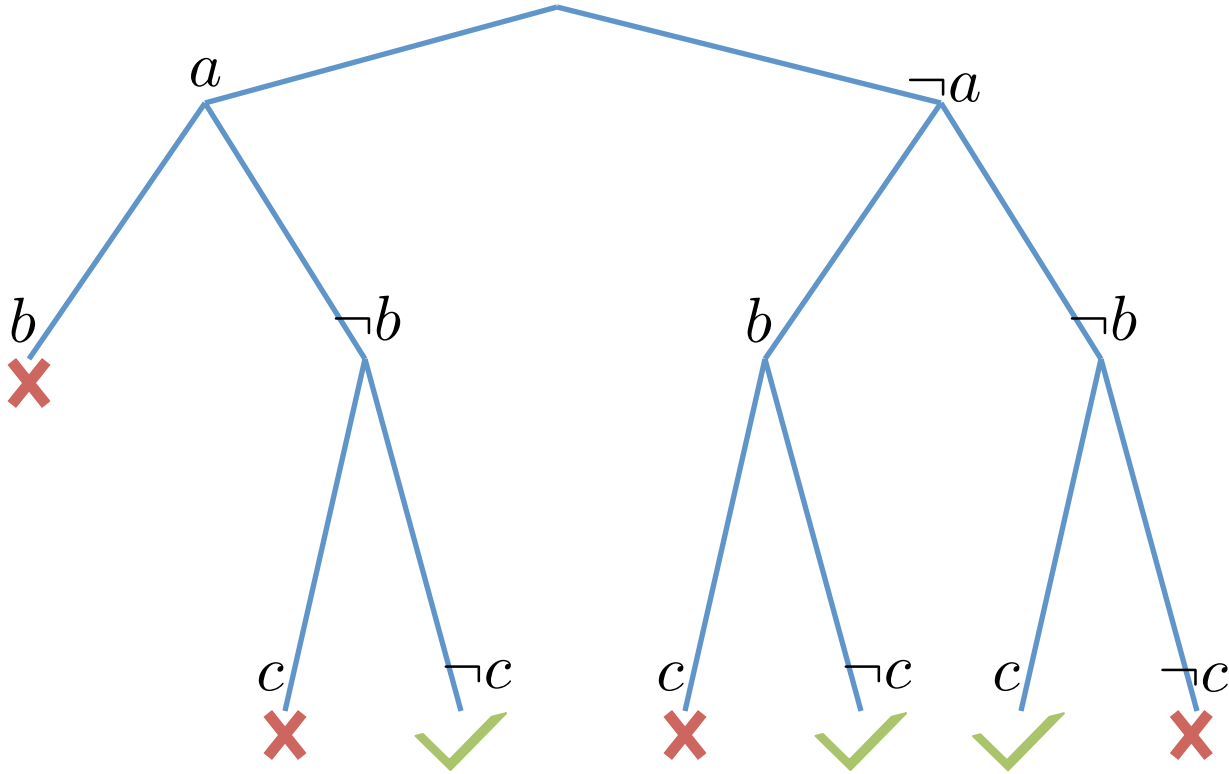


Satisfiable
3 solutions total