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# THE EDIT DISTANCE FUNCTION OF SOME GRAPHS

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**Abstract**

The edit distance function of a hereditary property $\mathscr{H}$ is the asymptotically largest edit distance between a graph of density $p \in [0,1]$ and $\mathscr{H}$. Denote by $P_n$ and $C_n$ the path graph of order $n$ and the cycle graph of order $n$, respectively. Let $C_{2n}^*$ be the cycle graph $C_{2n}$ with a diagonal, and $\widetilde{C_n}$ be the graph with vertex set $\{v_0, v_1, \ldots, v_{n-1}\}$ and $E(\widetilde{C_n}) = E(C_n) \cup \{v_0v_2\}$. Marchant and Thomason determined the edit distance function of $C_6^*$. Peck studied the edit distance function of $C_n$, while Berikkyzy *et al.* studied the edit distance of powers of cycles. In this paper, by using the methods of Peck and Martin, we determine the edit distance function of $C_8^*$, $\widetilde{C_n}$ and $P_n$, respectively.

**Keywords:** edit distance, colored regularity graphs, hereditary property, clique spectrum.

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## 1. Introduction

The edit distance in graphs was introduced by Axenovich, Kézdy and Martin [5] and by Alon and Stav [4] independently. The edit distance problem considered here is "How many edges need to be added or deleted (edited) in a graph $G$

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so that it will have a certain property?" The presence or absence of edges in a certain graph corresponds to pairs of genes which activate or deactivate one another in evolutionary biology. In evolutionary theory, the gene reconstruction avoiding forbidden induced subgraphs is studied [9], which is equivalent to the edit distance problem. The edit distance problem is also important to the algorithmic aspects of property testing [1–4].

The *edit distance* between a graph $G$ and a property $\mathscr{H}$ is

$$dist(G,\mathscr{H}) = \min\left\{|E(G) \triangle E(G')|/\binom{n}{2} : V(G) = V(G'), G' \in \mathscr{H}\right\}.$$

The *edit distance function* of a property $\mathscr{H}$, denoted $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$, measures the maximum distance of a graph with density $p$ from $\mathscr{H}$. Formally,

$$(1) \qquad ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \lim_{n\to\infty} \max\left\{dist(G,\mathscr{H}) : |V(G)| = n, |E(G)| = \left\lfloor p\binom{n}{2}\right\rfloor\right\}.$$

if this limit exists.

A *hereditary property* is a family of graphs that is closed under the taking of induced subgraphs. For a given graph $H$, the property of having no $H$ as an induced subgraph is called a *principal hereditary property*, denoted by $Forb(H)$. Clearly, $Forb(H)$ is a hereditary property for any graph $H$. In fact, for every hereditary property $\mathscr{H}$ there exists a family of graphs $\mathscr{F}(\mathscr{H})$ such that $\mathscr{H} = \bigcap_{H\in\mathscr{F}(\mathscr{H})} Forb(H)$. A hereditary property is said to be *nontrivial* if there is an infinite sequence of graphs that is in the property. The properties for which we study the edit distance are usually hereditary property.

Balogh and Martin [6] showed that the limit in (1) exists and the edit distance function has a number of interesting properties.

**Proposition 1** [11]**.** *Let $\mathscr{H}$ be a nontrivial hereditary property. For $p \in [0,1]$,*

(a) *$ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ is continuous.*

(b) *$ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ is concave down.*

In [4], Alon and Stav proved that for every hereditary property $\mathscr{H}$, there exists a $p^* = p^*(\mathscr{H}) \in [0,1]$ such that the maximum distance of a graph $G$ on $n$ vertices from $\mathscr{H}$ is asymptotically the same as that of the Erdös-Rényi random graph $G(n,p^*)$. Namely,

$$(2) \qquad \max\{dist(G,\mathscr{H}) : |V(G)| = n\} = \mathbb{E}[dist(G(n,p^*),\mathscr{H})] + o(1).$$

We denote the limit in (2) by $d^*_{\mathscr{H}}$.

The edit distance functions of some kinds of graphs have been investigated in recent years, including complete graphs [13] and split graphs [12]. Actually, complete bipartite graphs are also studied. Marchant and Thomason [10] studied the edit distance functions of $K_{2,2}$ and $K_{3,3}$, respectively. Balogh and Martin [6] established the value of $p^*_{Forb(K_{3,3})}$ and $d^*_{Forb(K_{3,3})}$. Martin and McKay studied the edit distance function of $K_{2,t}$ in [14]. Recently, Berikkyzy *et al.* [7] settled the edit distance function for many powers of cycles.

Denote by $P_n$ and $C_n$ the path graph of order $n$ and the cycle graph of order $n$, respectively. Let $C^*_{2n}$ be the cycle graph $C_{2n}$ with a diagonal, and $\widetilde{C_n}$ be the graph with vertex set $\{v_0, v_1, \ldots, v_{n-1}\}$ and $E(\widetilde{C_n}) = E(C_n) \cup \{v_0v_2\}$.

In [10], Marchant and Thomason studied the edit distance function of the graph $C^*_6$. Motivated by this result, we study the edit distance function of the graph $C^*_8$ and prove the following result.

**Theorem 2.** *Let $\mathscr{H} = Forb(C^*_8)$.*

$$ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \min\left\{\frac{p}{2}, \frac{p(1-p)}{1+p}, \frac{1-p}{3}\right\}, \text{ for } p \in [0,1].$$

Peck [15] in her Master's thesis calculated the edit distance function of $C_n$. The result is as follows.

**Theorem 3** [15]**.** *Let $\mathscr{H} = Forb(C_n)$.*

(a) *If $n$ is odd, then* $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \min\left\{\frac{p}{2}, \frac{p(1-p)}{1+(\lceil\frac{n}{3}\rceil-2)p}, \frac{1-p}{\lceil\frac{n}{2}\rceil-1}\right\}$, *for* $p \in [0,1]$.

(b) *If $n$ is even, then* $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \min\left\{\frac{p(1-p)}{1+(\lceil\frac{n}{3}\rceil-2)p}, \frac{1-p}{\lceil\frac{n}{2}\rceil-1}\right\}$, *for* $p \in \left[\lceil n/3\rceil^{-1}, 1\right]$.

Motivated by this result, we study the edit distance function of $\widetilde{C_n}$ and $P_n$.

**Theorem 4.** *Let $\mathscr{H} = Forb(\widetilde{C_n})$ and $n \geq 9$.*

$$ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \min\left\{\frac{p}{2}, \frac{p(1-p)}{1+\left(\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\rceil-2\right)p}, \frac{1-p}{\lceil\frac{n-3}{2}\rceil}\right\}, \text{ for } p \in [0,1].$$

**Theorem 5.** *Let $\mathscr{H} = Forb(P_n)$ and $n \geq 3$.*

$$ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \min\left\{\frac{p(1-p)}{1+\left(\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\rceil-2\right)p}, \frac{1-p}{\lceil\frac{n}{2}\rceil-1}\right\}, \text{ for } p \in \left[\lceil(n-1)/3\rceil^{-1}, 1\right].$$

Our paper is organized as follows. Some definitions and tools are explained in Section 2. We prove Theorems 2, 4 and 5 in Sections 3, 4 and 5, respectively.

## 2. Definitions and Tools

All graphs considered in this paper are simple. The standard graph theory notation not defined here will conform to that in [8]. The edit distance notation not defined here will conform to that in [11].

In order to estimate the edit distance function, Alon and Stav [4] defined a *colored regularity graph* (CRG) $K$ as follows. Let $K$ be a simple complete graph, together with a partition of the vertices into white and black, and a partition of the edges into white, gray, and black. Denote by $VW(K)$ and $VB(K)$ the set of white vertices and the set of black vertices, respectively. Then $V(K) = VW(K) \cup VB(K)$. Denote by $EW(K)$, $EG(K)$ and $EB(K)$ the set of white edges, the set of gray edges and the set of black edges, respectively. Then we have $E(K) = EW(K) \cup EG(K) \cup EB(K)$. A CRG $K'$ is said to be a *sub*-CRG of $K$ if $K'$ can be obtained by deleting vertices of $K$ and is a *proper sub*-CRG if $K' \neq K$.

We say that a graph $H$ *embeds in* $K$ (writing $H \mapsto K$), if there is a function $\varphi : V(H) \to V(K)$ so that if $h_1h_2 \in E(H)$, then either $\varphi(h_1) = \varphi(h_2) \in VB(K)$ or $\varphi(h_1)\varphi(h_2) \in EB(K) \cup EG(K)$ and if $h_1h_2 \notin E(H)$, then either $\varphi(h_1) = \varphi(h_2) \in VW(K)$ or $\varphi(h_1)\varphi(h_2) \in EW(K) \cup EG(K)$. For a hereditary property $\mathscr{H}$, we denote by $\mathscr{K}(\mathscr{H})$ the subset of CRGs $K$ such that any graph $H \in \mathscr{F}(\mathscr{H})$ does not embed in $K$. That is, $\mathscr{K}(\mathscr{H}) = \{K : H \not\mapsto K, \forall H \in \mathscr{F}(\mathscr{H})\}$.

For a hereditary property $\mathscr{H}$, we can use the $g$ function of each CRG $K$ to compute the edit distance function, where $g$ function is defined by

$$g_K(p) = \min\left\{\mathbf{x}^T M_K(p)\mathbf{x} : \mathbf{x}^T\mathbf{1} = 1, \mathbf{x} \geq \mathbf{0}\right\}, \tag{3}$$

and

$$[M_K(p)]_{ij} = \begin{cases} p & \text{if } v_iv_j \in EW(K) \text{ or } v_i = v_j \in VW(K), \\ 1-p & \text{if } v_iv_j \in EB(K) \text{ or } v_i = v_j \in VB(K), \\ 0 & \text{if } v_iv_j \in EG(K). \end{cases}$$

Marchant and Thomason in [10] proved that for every $p \in [0,1]$, there is a CRG $K \in \mathscr{K}(\mathscr{H})$ such that $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = g_K(p)$. That is

**Proposition 6** [10]**.** *Let $\mathscr{H}$ be a nontrivial hereditary property. For $p \in [0,1]$,*

$$ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \min\{g_K(p) : K \in \mathscr{K}(\mathscr{H})\}.$$

In [10], the authors also proved that in order to find such CRGs, we only need to look at all $p$-core CRGs. A CRG $K$ is $p$-core if, for any proper sub-CRG $K'$ of $K$, we have $g_{K'}(p) > g_K(p)$.

The *gray-edge* CRG $K(r,s)$ is the CRG $K$ with $r$ white vertices, $s$ black vertices and all edges gray. The *clique spectrum* of $\mathscr{H}$ is the set $\Gamma(\mathscr{H}) := \{(r,s) : H \not\mapsto K(r,s),\ \forall H \in \mathscr{F}(\mathscr{H})\}$. Clearly, we obtain

**Proposition 7** [11]**.** *Let $\mathscr{H}$ be a nontrivial hereditary property and $\Gamma(\mathscr{H})$ denote the clique spectrum of $\mathscr{H}$. If we define*

$$\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p) := \min_{(r,s)\in\Gamma(\mathscr{H})} g_{K(r,s)}(p) = \min_{(r,s)\in\Gamma(\mathscr{H})} \frac{p(1-p)}{r(1-p)+sp},$$

*then $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) \leq \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$.*

Let $K$ be a $p$-core CRG, $v \in V(K)$, and let $\mathbf{x}$ be an optimal weight vector in the quadratic program (3) that defines $g_K(p)$. The *weight* of $v$, denoted by $\mathbf{x}(v)$, is the entry corresponding to $v$ of the vector $\mathbf{x}$. We denote the *gray neighborhood* of $v$ by $N_G(v) = \{v' \in V(K) : vv' \in EG(K)\}$. The *weighted gray degree* of vertex $v \in V(K)$ is $d_G(v) = \Sigma_{v' \in N_G(v)} \mathbf{x}(v')$ and the number of vertices adjacent to $v$ via gray edges is denoted by $\deg_G(v)$, i.e., $\deg_G(v) = |N_G(v)|$. We use similar notation for the white and black cases. Now we get $d_G(v) + d_W(v) + d_B(v) = 1$ for each $v \in V(K)$.

The *weighted gray codegree* of vertices $v$ and $v'$, denoted by $d_G(v, v')$, is the sum of the weights of the common gray neighbors of $v$ and $v'$. Denote the number of common gray neighbors of vertices $v$ and $v'$ by $\deg_G(v, v')$.

Marchant and Thomason [10] gave the following characterization of all $p$-core CRGs.

**Proposition 8** [10]**.** *Let $K$ be a $p$-core CRG.*

(a) *If $p \leq 1/2$, then there are no black edges, and the white edges are only incident to black vertices.*

(b) *If $p \geq 1/2$, then there are no white edges, and the black edges are only incident to white vertices.*

Martin [13] gave a formula for $d_G(v)$ for all $v \in V(K)$ and a bound on the weight of each $v$.

**Proposition 9** [13]**.** *Let $p \in (0, 1)$ and $K$ be a $p$-core CRG with optimum weight vector $\mathbf{x}$.*

(a) *If $p \leq 1/2$, then $\mathbf{x}(v) = g_K(p)/p$ for all $v \in VW(K)$ and*

$$\mathbf{x}(u) \leq g_K(p)/(1-p),\ d_G(u) = \frac{p - g_K(p)}{p} + \frac{1-2p}{p}\mathbf{x}(u),\ \textit{for each } u \in VB(K).$$

(b) *If $p \geq 1/2$, then $\mathbf{x}(u) = g_K(p)/(1-p)$ for all $u \in VB(K)$ and*

$$\mathbf{x}(v) \leq g_K(p)/p,\ d_G(v) = \frac{1 - p - g_K(p)}{1-p} + \frac{2p-1}{1-p}\mathbf{x}(v),\ \textit{for each } v \in VW(K).$$

The following results will be used in this paper.

**Proposition 10** [13]**.** *Let $p \in (0, 1/2)$ and $K$ be a $p$-core CRG with black vertices and white or gray edges.*

(a) *If $K$ has no gray 3-cycle, then $g_K(p) > p/2$.*

(b) *If $K$ has a gray 3-cycle, but no gray $C_4^+$ (that is, four vertices that induce 5 gray edges), then $g_K(p) \geq \min\{2p/3, (1-p)/3\}$.*

**Proposition 11** [7]**.** *Let $F$ be a connected graph. If some path of maximum length forms a cycle, then $F$ is Hamiltonian.*

**Proposition 12** [7]**.** *Let $F$ be a graph on $n$ vertices with no cycle of length longer than $\lceil \frac{n}{2} \rceil - 1$, with every vertex having degree at least $\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil \geq 2$ and with every pair of vertices having at least one common neighbor. Furthermore, let $F$ have the property that no maximum length path forms a cycle.*

*Let $v_1 \cdots v_\ell$ be a path of maximum length in $F$. Then $v_1$ and $v_\ell$ have exactly one common neighbor $v_c$ on this path. Furthermore, $N(v_1) \subseteq \{v_2, \ldots, v_c\}$ and $N(v_\ell) \subseteq \{v_c, \ldots, v_{\ell-1}\}$.*

## 3. Proof of Theorem 2

In this section, we consider the edit distance function for the hereditary property that forbids $C_{2n}^*$ where $n$ is even and prove that $ed_{Forb(C_8^*)}(p) = \gamma_{Forb(C_8^*)}(p)$ for all $p \in [0, 1]$.

First, we obtain the value of $\gamma_{Forb(C_{2n}^*)}(p)$ for $p \in [0, 1]$ and restrict $ed_{Forb(C_{2n}^*)}(p)$ to $p \in [0, 1/2)$ and CRGs $K$ with only black vertices. Finally, we determine the edit distance $ed_{Forb(C_8^*)}(p) = \gamma_{Forb(C_8^*)}(p)$ and then prove Theorem 2.

**Lemma 13.** *Let $\mathscr{H} = Forb(C_{2n}^*)$, $p \in [0, 1]$ and $n \geq 4$ be even.*

$$\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \min\left\{\frac{p}{2},\ \frac{p(1-p)}{1 + \left(\lceil \frac{2n-1}{3} \rceil - 2\right)p},\ \frac{1-p}{n-1}\right\}.$$

*Furthermore, if there is a $p$-core CRG $K \in K(Forb(C_{2n}^*))$ such that $g_K(p) < \gamma_{Forb(C_{2n}^*)}(p)$ for any $p \in [0, 1]$, then $p < 1/2$ and $K$ has all black vertices.*

***Proof.*** If $n$ is even, the extreme points of the clique spectrum of $Forb(C_{2n}^*)$ are $(2, 0)$, $\left(1, \lceil \frac{2n-1}{3} \rceil - 1\right)$ and $(0, n-1)$. Then $\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \min\left\{\frac{p}{2}, \frac{p(1-p)}{1+(\lceil \frac{2n-1}{3} \rceil - 2)p}, \frac{1-p}{n-1}\right\}$.

Since $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(1/2) = \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(1/2)$ for any hereditary property and $\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(1) = 0$, we may use continuity and concavity to conclude that $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \frac{1-p}{n-1}$ for $p \in [1/2, 1]$. Now we suppose $p \in [0, 1/2)$ and $K$ is a $p$-core CRG such that $g_K(p) < \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$.

If $K$ has only white vertices, then $|V(K)| \leq 2$ and $g_K(p) \geq \frac{p}{2} \geq \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ since $C_{2n}^* \mapsto K(3,0)$. If $K$ has both white and black vertices, then it has 1 white vertex $\omega$ since $C_{2n}^* \mapsto K(2,1)$. Furthermore, it can have at most $\lceil \frac{2n-1}{3} \rceil - 1$ black vertices.

To see this, denote the vertices of $C_{2n}^*$ by $\{0,\ldots,2n-1\}$ where $i \sim i+1$ for $0 \leq i \leq 2n-2$, $2n-1 \sim 0$ and $0 \sim n$. If $n$ is not divisible by 3, then let $S$ consist of the members of $\{0,1,\ldots,2n-1\}$ that are divisible by 3. The graph $C_{2n}^* - S$ has $\lceil \frac{2n-1}{3} \rceil$ connected components, each of which are cliques of size 1 or 2. If $n$ is divisible by 3, then let $S = \{i : i \in \{0,1,\ldots,2n-1\}, i-1 \text{ is divisible by } 3\}$. The graph $C_{2n}^* - S$ has $\lceil \frac{2n-1}{3} \rceil$ connected components, each of which are cliques of size 2 except three edges $n-1 \sim n$, $n \sim 0$ and $0 \sim 2n-1$.

If $d_G(v_i) = \mathbf{x}(\omega)$ for any $v_i \in VB(K)$, then by Proposition 9(a), we have $\frac{g_K(p)}{p} = \frac{p-g_K(p)}{p} + \frac{1-2p}{p}\mathbf{x}(v_i) > \frac{p-g_K(p)}{p}$. Rearranging the terms, we obtain $g_K(p) > \frac{p}{2} \geq \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$, a contradiction. So, there are two black vertices $v_1, v_2$ in $K$ such that $v_1v_2 \in EG(K)$. Let $v_1$ receive $n-1 \sim n$ and $v_2$ receive $0 \sim 2n-1$. Then $C_{2n}^* \mapsto K$. Thus, regardless of whether the edges are white or gray, there are at most $\lceil \frac{2n-1}{3} \rceil - 1$ black vertices in $K$ and $g_K(p) \geq \frac{p(1-p)}{1+(\lceil \frac{2n-1}{3} \rceil - 2)p} \geq \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$.

So, if $p \in [0,1/2)$ and $g_K(p) = ed_{Forb(C_{2n}^*)}(p)$, then $K$ is either $K(2,0)$, $K\left(1, \lceil \frac{2n-1}{3} \rceil - 1\right)$, $K(0,n-1)$ or $K$ has all black vertices (and white or gray edges). ■

***Proof of Theorem* 2.** Now, we calculate $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ where $\mathscr{H} = Forb(C_8^*)$. By Lemma 13, we know $\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \min\left\{\frac{p}{2}, \frac{1-p}{3}, \frac{p(1-p)}{1+p}\right\}$ and only need to consider the $p$-core CRGs $K$ with only black vertices for some $p \in [0,1/2)$.

If $K$ has only black vertices, then $K$ has no gray $C_4^+$ otherwise $C_8^* \mapsto K$. By Proposition 10, we know either $g_K(p) > p/2 \geq \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ or $g_K(p) \geq \min\{2p/3, (1-p)/3\} > \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$. By straightforward calculations, this contradicts to $g_K(p) < \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ for all $p \in [0,1/2)$. ■

## 4. PROOF OF THEOREM 4

In this section, we consider the edit distance function for hereditary property that forbids $\widetilde{C_n}$. Let $\mathscr{H} = Forb(\widetilde{C_n})$. First, we obtain the value of $\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ for $p \in [0,1]$. Then we suppose there is a $p$-core CRG $K \in \mathscr{K}(Forb(\widetilde{C_n}))$ such that $g_K(p) < \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ and establish some characterizations of such a $p$-core CRG $K$. Finally, we obtain a contradiction to such a CRG existing in $\mathscr{K}(Forb(\widetilde{C_n}))$ for our desired range of $p$ values, establishing $\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p) \leq ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$.

**Lemma 14.** *Let $\mathscr{H} = Forb(\widetilde{C_n})$, and $n \geq 6$. Then*

$$\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \min\left\{\frac{p}{2}, \frac{p(1-p)}{1+\left(\left\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\right\rceil - 2\right)p}, \frac{1-p}{\left\lceil\frac{n-3}{2}\right\rceil}\right\}, \text{ for } p \in [0,1].$$

*Furthermore, if there is a $p$-core CRG $K \in \mathscr{K}(\mathscr{H})$ such that $g_K(p) < \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ for any $p \in [0,1]$, then $p < \frac{1}{2}$ and $K$ has all black vertices.*

***Proof.*** The extreme points of the clique spectrum of $Forb(\widetilde{C_n})$ are $(2,0)$, $\left(1, \left\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\right\rceil - 1\right)$ and $\left(0, \left\lceil\frac{n-3}{2}\right\rceil\right)$, which establishes the value of $\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$.

Since $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(1/2) = \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(1/2)$ for any hereditary property and $\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(1) = 0$, we may use continuity and concavity to conclude that $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \frac{1-p}{\lceil\frac{n-3}{2}\rceil}$ for $p \in [1/2, 1]$.

Now, let $p \in [0, 1/2)$ and $K$ be a $p$-core CRG such that $\widetilde{C_n} \not\mapsto K$. If $K$ has at most two vertices, then $g_K(p) \geq \frac{p}{2}$ since $\widetilde{C_n} \mapsto K(3,0)$. If $K$ has both white and black vertices, then it has at most one white vertex since $\widetilde{C_n} \mapsto K(2,1)$. Furthermore, it can have at most $\left\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\right\rceil - 1$ black vertices.

To see this, denote the vertices of $\widetilde{C_n}$ by $\{0, 1, \ldots, n-1\}$ where $i \sim i+1$ for $0 \leq i \leq n-2$, $n-1 \sim 0$ and $0 \sim 2$. Let $S$ consist of the members of $\{3, \ldots, n-1\}$ that are divisible by 3. If $n-1$ is not divisible by 3, then add 0 to $S$. The graph $\widetilde{C_n} - S$ has $\left\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\right\rceil$ connected components, each of which are cliques of size 1 or 2 or 3. Thus, regardless of whether the edges are white or gray, there are at most $\left\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\right\rceil - 1$ black vertices in $K$ and $g_K(p) \geq \frac{p(1-p)}{1+(\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\rceil - 2)p}$, with equality if and only if $K \cong K\left(1, \left\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\right\rceil - 1\right)$.

Summarizing, if $p \in [0, 1/2)$ and $g_K(p) = ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$, then $K$ is either $K(2,0)$, $K\left(1, \left\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\right\rceil - 1\right)$, $K\left(0, \left\lceil\frac{n-3}{2}\right\rceil\right)$, or $K$ has all black vertices (and white or gray edges). ■

We only need to consider the $K \in \mathscr{K}(Forb(\widetilde{C_n}))$ with all black vertices such that $g_K(p) < \gamma_{Forb(\widetilde{C_n})}(p)$. Now, we establish some characterizations of such a $p$-core CRG $K$.

**Proposition 15.** *Let $p \in [0, 1/2)$ and $K$ be a $p$-core CRG such that $K$ has only black vertices and white and gray edges. If $\widetilde{C_n} \not\mapsto K$ then $K$ has no gray cycle of length $l \in \left\{\left\lceil\frac{n-1}{2}\right\rceil, \ldots, n-1\right\}$.*

***Proof.*** Suppose $K$ has some gray cycle of length $l \in \left\{\left\lceil\frac{n-1}{2}\right\rceil, \ldots, n-1\right\}$. Partition the vertices of $\widetilde{C_n}$ into $l$ parts so that one part is the triangle and each of the others parts is either a set of two consecutive vertices (an edge) or single vertex. Because of the structure of $\widetilde{C_n}$ and the fact that $\left\lceil\frac{n-1}{2}\right\rceil \leq l \leq n-1$, it is always possible to do so. This partition witnesses an embedding of $\widetilde{C_n}$ into the $l$-cycle of $K$ because we can map consecutive parts to consecutive vertices on the $l$-cycle. Since non-consecutive parts do not have edges between them and Proposition 8(a) gives that the edges of $K$ are either white or gray, this map is an embedding that demonstrates $\widetilde{C_n} \mapsto K$, a contradiction. ■

**Proposition 16.** *Let* $p \in \left[\frac{1}{\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\rceil}, \frac{1}{2}\right)$, *and* $K$ *be a* $p$*-core CRG with all black vertices such that* $g_K(p) < \gamma_{Forb(\widetilde{C_n})(p)}$. *Then*

(a) *for every* $v \in V(K)$, $\deg_G(v) \geq \lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\rceil$, *and*

(b) *for every* $v, w \in V(K)$, $\deg_G(v, w) \geq 1$.

***Proof.*** (a) Let $v, w \in V(K)$. By using Proposition 9(a),

$$\begin{aligned}\deg_G(v) &\geq \left\lceil\frac{d_G(v)}{\max\{\mathbf{x}(w)\}}\right\rceil \geq \frac{\frac{p-g_K(p)}{p} + \frac{1-2p}{p}\mathbf{x}(v)}{\frac{g_K(p)}{1-p}}\\ &\geq \frac{(p-g_K(p))(1-p)}{pg_K(p)} = \frac{1-p}{g_K(p)} - \frac{1-p}{p}\\ &> \frac{(1-p)+\left(\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\rceil - 1\right)p}{p} - \frac{1-p}{p} = \left\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\right\rceil - 1.\end{aligned}$$

(b) By the inclusion-exclusion principle, $d_G(v) + d_G(w) - d_G(v, w) \leq 1$, and by using Proposition 9(a), we have $d_G(v, w) \geq 2\frac{p-g_K(p)}{p} + \frac{1-2p}{p}(\mathbf{x}(v)+\mathbf{x}(w))-1 \geq \frac{p-g_K(p)}{p} \geq \frac{p-2g_K(p)}{p}$ and for all $u \in V(K)$, $\mathbf{x}(u) \leq g_K(p)/(1-p)$. Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned}\deg_G(v, w) &\geq \left\lceil\frac{d_G(v, w)}{\max\{\mathbf{x}(u)\}}\right\rceil \geq \left\lceil\frac{\frac{p-2g_K(p)}{p}}{\frac{g_K(p)}{1-p}}\right\rceil = \frac{1-p}{g_K(p)} - \frac{2(1-p)}{p}\\ &> \frac{(1-p)+\left(\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\rceil - 1\right)p}{p} - \frac{2(1-p)}{p} = \left\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\right\rceil - \frac{1}{p}.\end{aligned}$$

Since $p \geq \frac{1}{\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\rceil}$, we have $\deg_G(v, w) \geq 1$. ■

We consider the value of $ed_{Forb(\widetilde{C_n})}(p)$ from the perspective of the gray subgraphs of CRGs $K$. Let $F$ be a graph such that $V(F) = V(K)$ and $E(F) = EG(K)$, where $K \in \mathscr{K}(Forb(\widetilde{C_n}))$ is a $p$-core CRG with all black vertices such that $g_K(p) < \gamma_{Forb(\widetilde{C_n})}(p)$. By Proposition 16, $F$ is a connected graph and each pair of vertices has at least one common neighbor.

**Proposition 17.** *Let* $n \geq 9$ *and* $F$ *be a graph with no cycle with length in* $\left\{\lceil\frac{n-1}{2}\rceil, \ldots, n-1\right\}$ *and every pair of vertices having at least one common neighbor. Then* $F$ *has no cycle of with length greater than* $\lceil\frac{n-1}{2}\rceil - 1$.

***Proof.*** Let $v_1 \cdots v_\ell v_1$ be a shortest cycle in $F$ among all those with length greater than $n-1$. Consider the path $v_1 \cdots v_{\lceil \frac{n-1}{2} \rceil - 1}$ on the cycle $v_1 \cdots v_\ell v_1$.

Assume $v_i$ is a common neighbor of $v_1$ and $v_{\lceil \frac{n-1}{2} \rceil - 1}$, then either $v_1 v_i v_{i+1} \cdots v_\ell v_1$ or $v_1 \cdots v_i v_{\lceil \frac{n-1}{2} \rceil - 1} \cdots v_\ell v_1$ has length less than $\ell$. Without loss of generality, we assume $v_1 v_i v_{i+1} \cdots v_\ell v_1$ has length less than $\ell$, which implies

$$\left\lceil \frac{n-1}{2} \right\rceil - 1 \geq \ell - i + 2 \geq \ell - \left( \left\lceil \frac{n-1}{2} \right\rceil - 2 \right) + 2 \geq n - \left\lceil \frac{n-1}{2} \right\rceil + 4.$$

Thus,

$$2 \left\lceil \frac{n-1}{2} \right\rceil - 1 - n - 4 \geq 0,$$

a contradiction, since $2 \lceil \frac{n-1}{2} \rceil - 1 - n - 4 < 2 \left( \frac{n-1}{2} + 1 \right) - 1 - n - 4 < 0$.

Therefore, $F$ has no cycle of with length greater than $\lceil \frac{n-1}{2} \rceil - 1$. ■

Then, we consider the maximum-length path in the graph $F$. If this path forms a cycle, then Proposition 11 gives that $F$ must be Hamiltonian. By Proposition 17, $|V(K)| \leq \lceil \frac{n-1}{2} \rceil - 1$ and $g_K(p) \geq \frac{1-p}{\lceil \frac{n-1}{2} \rceil - 1}$, a contradiction. Thus, no maximum-length path in $F$ forms a cycle. By Proposition 17, $F$ has no cycle of with length greater than $\lceil \frac{n-1}{2} \rceil - 1$. And, by Proposition 16, every vertex in $F$ has degree at least $\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil \geq 2$ and every pair of vertices has at least one common neighbor.

Let $v_1 \cdots v_\ell$ be a maximum-length path in $F$ such that the sum $\mathbf{x}(v_1) + \mathbf{x}(v_\ell)$ is largest among all such paths. Then by Proposition 12, we have $v_1$ and $v_\ell$ have a unique common neighbor $v_c$ and $N(v_1) \subseteq \{v_2, \ldots, v_c\}$. Let $v_1$ have $d$ neighbors in $F$. Since $v_1$ cannot have neighbors outside of this path, $d_G(v_1) \leq \mathbf{x}(v_2) + \cdots + \mathbf{x}(v_c)$. And if $v_i \in \{v_1, \ldots, v_{c-1}\}$ is a predecessor of a neighbor of $v_1$ in $F$, then it is an endpoint of a path containing the same $\ell$ vertices, namely $v_i v_{i-1} \cdots v_1 v_{i+1} v_{i+2} \cdots v_c \cdots v_\ell$. Hence all $d$ predecessors of gray neighbors of $v_1$ (including $v_1$ itself) have weight at most $\mathbf{x}(v_1)$. By Proposition 9, $\frac{p - g_K(p)}{p} + \frac{1-p}{p}\mathbf{x}(v_1) = \mathbf{x}(v_1) + d_G(v_1) \leq \mathbf{x}(v_1) + \cdots + \mathbf{x}(v_c) \leq d\mathbf{x}(v_1) + (c-d)\frac{g}{1-p}$, which implies

$$g_K(p) \left( \frac{c-d}{1-p} + \frac{1}{p} \right) \geq 1 - \mathbf{x}(v_1) \left( d - \frac{1-p}{p} \right).$$

By Propositions 15 and 16, we have $c \leq \lceil \frac{n-1}{2} \rceil - 1$ and $d > \lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil - 1$. So when $p \geq \lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil^{-1}$, by Proposition 9(a), we have $\mathbf{x}(v) \leq g_K(p)/(1-p)$, hence

$$g_K(p) \geq \frac{1-p}{c} \geq \frac{1-p}{\lceil \frac{n-1}{2} \rceil - 1} \geq \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p),$$

a contradiction. So $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ for all $p \in \left[ \frac{1}{\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil}, \frac{1}{2} \right)$.

Finally, $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \frac{p}{2}$ for $p = \frac{1}{\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil}$, and $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \frac{p}{2}$ for $p = 0$. Then, since the function $\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ is linear over this interval and $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ is continuous and concave down, we have $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ for $p \in \left[0, \frac{1}{\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil}\right]$. Hence the two functions are equal for all $p \in [0, 1]$.

## 5. Proof of Theorem 5

Similarly as Section 4, but it also involves some crucial differences. We first prove the following lemma.

**Lemma 18.** *Let $\mathscr{H} = Forb(P_n)$ where $P_n$ denotes the path on $n \geq 3$ vertices.*

$$\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \min \left\{ \frac{p(1-p)}{1 + \left(\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil - 2\right) p}, \frac{1-p}{\lceil \frac{n}{2} \rceil - 1} \right\}, \quad \textit{for} \quad p \in [0, 1].$$

*Furthermore, if there is a $p$-core CRG $K \in \mathscr{K}(\mathscr{H})$ such that $g_K(p) < \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ for any $p \in (0, 1)$, then $p < \frac{1}{2}$ and $K$ has all black vertices.*

***Proof.*** The extreme points of the clique spectrum of $Forb(P_n)$ are $\left(1, \lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil - 1\right)$ and $\left(0, \lceil \frac{n}{2} \rceil - 1\right)$, which establishes the value of $\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$.

Since $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(1/2) = \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(1/2)$ for any hereditary property and $\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(1) = 0$, we may use continuity and concavity to conclude that $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \frac{1-p}{\lceil \frac{n}{2} \rceil - 1}$ for $p \in [1/2, 1]$.

Now, let $p \in [0, 1/2)$ and $K$ be a $p$-core CRG such that $P_n \not\mapsto K$. If $K$ has only white vertices, then $K \approx K(1, 0)$ and $g_K(p) = p > \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$. If $K$ has both white and black vertices, then it has at most one white vertex since $P_n \mapsto K(2, 1)$. Furthermore, it can have at most $\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil - 1$ black vertices. To see this, denote the vertices of $P_n$ by $\{0, 1, \ldots, n-1\}$ where $0 \sim 1 \sim 2 \sim \cdots \sim n-1$. Let $S$ consist of the members of $\{0, 1, \ldots, n-1\}$ that are divisible by 3. The graph $P_n - S$ has $\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil$ connected components, each of which are cliques of size 1 or 2. Thus, regardless of whether the edges are white or gray, there are at most $\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil - 1$ black vertices in $K$ and $g_K(p) \geq \frac{p(1-p)}{1 + (\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil - 2)p}$, with equality if and only if $K \approx K\left(1, \lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil - 1\right)$.

Summarizing, if $p \in [0, 1/2)$ and $g_K(p) = ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$, then $K$ is either $K\left(1, \lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil - 1\right)$, $K\left(0, \lceil \frac{n}{2} \rceil - 1\right)$ or $K$ has all black vertices (and white or gray edges). ■

When $n < 5$, $\gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \min\{p, 1-p\}$. This observation plus continuity and concavity give that $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ for all $p \in [0, 1]$. From now on, we assume $n \geq 5$.

We only need to consider the $K \in \mathscr{K}(Forb(P_n))$ with all black vertices such that $g_K(p) < \gamma_{Forb(P_n)}(p)$. Now, we establish some characterizations of such a $p$-core CRG $K$.

**Proposition 19.** *Let $p \in \left[\frac{1}{\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\rceil}, \frac{1}{2}\right)$, and $K$ be a $p$-core CRG with all black vertices such that $g_K(p) < \gamma_{Forb(P_n)}(p)$. Then*
(a) *for every $v \in V(K)$, $\deg_G(v) \geq \lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\rceil$, and*
(b) *for every $v, w \in V(K)$, $\deg_G(v, w) \geq 1$.*

***Proof.*** (a) Let $v, w \in V(K)$. By using Proposition 9(a),

$$\begin{aligned}\deg_G(v) &\geq \left\lceil \frac{d_G(v)}{\max\{\mathbf{x}(w)\}} \right\rceil \geq \frac{\frac{p-g_K(p)}{p} + \frac{1-2p}{p}\mathbf{x}(v)}{\frac{g_K(p)}{1-p}} \\ &\geq \frac{(p-g_K(p))(1-p)}{pg_K(p)} = \frac{1-p}{g_K(p)} - \frac{1-p}{p} \\ &> \frac{(1-p) + \left(\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\rceil - 1\right)p}{p} - \frac{1-p}{p} = \left\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \right\rceil - 1.\end{aligned}$$

(b) By the inclusion-exclusion principle, $d_G(v) + d_G(w) - d_G(v, w) \leq 1$, and by using Proposition 9(a), we have $d_G(v, w) \geq 2\frac{p-g_K(p)}{p} + \frac{1-2p}{p}(\mathbf{x}(v)+\mathbf{x}(w))-1 \geq \frac{p-g_K(p)}{p} \geq \frac{p-2g_K(p)}{p}$ and for all $u \in V(K)$, $\mathbf{x}(u) \leq g_K(p)/(1-p)$. Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned}\deg_G(v, w) &\geq \left\lceil \frac{d_G(v, w)}{\max\{\mathbf{x}(u)\}} \right\rceil \geq \left\lceil \frac{\frac{p-2g_K(p)}{p}}{\frac{g_K(p)}{1-p}} \right\rceil = \frac{1-p}{g_K(p)} - \frac{2(1-p)}{p} \\ &> \frac{(1-p) + \left(\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\rceil - 1\right)p}{p} - \frac{2(1-p)}{p} = \left\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \right\rceil - \frac{1}{p}.\end{aligned}$$

Since $p \geq \frac{1}{\lceil\frac{n-1}{3}\rceil}$, we have $\deg_G(v, w) \geq 1$. ■

**Proposition 20.** *Let $p \in [0, 1/2)$ and $K$ be a $p$-core CRG such that $K$ has only black vertices and white and gray edges. If $P_n \not\mapsto K$ then $K$ has no gray path with length greater than $\lceil\frac{n}{2}\rceil - 1$.*

***Proof.*** Suppose $K$ has some gray path of length $l > \lceil\frac{n}{2}\rceil - 1$. Partition the vertices of $P_n$ into $l$ parts so that each of parts is either a set of two consecutive vertices (an edge) or single vertex. Because of the structure of $P_n$ and the fact that $l > \lceil\frac{n}{2}\rceil - 1$, it is always possible to do so. This partition witnesses an embedding of $P_n$ into $l$-path of $K$ because we can map consecutive parts to consecutive vertices on the $l$-path. Since non-consecutive parts do not have edges between them and Proposition 8(a) gives that the edges of $K$ are either white or gray, this map is an embedding that demonstrates $P_n \mapsto K$, a contradiction. ■

We consider the value of $ed_{Forb(P_n)}(p)$ from the perspective of the gray subgraphs of CRGs $K$. Let $F$ be a graph, $V(F) = V(K)$, $E(F) = EG(K)$ where $K \in \mathscr{K}(Forb(P_n))$ is a $p$-core CRG with all black vertices such that $g_K(p) < \gamma_{Forb(P_n)}(p)$. By Proposition 19, we obtain $F$ is a connected graph. Suppose a maximum-length path forms a cycle in the graph $F$. Then Proposition 11 implies that $F$ must be Hamiltonian. By Proposition 20, $|V(K)| \leq \lceil \frac{n}{2} \rceil - 1$ and $g_K(p) \geq \frac{1-p}{\lceil \frac{n}{2} \rceil - 1}$, a contradiction, and so we may assume that no maximum-length path in $F$ forms a cycle. By Proposition 20, $F$ has no path with length greater than $\lceil \frac{n}{2} \rceil - 1$, so $F$ has no cycle with length greater than $\lceil \frac{n}{2} \rceil - 1$. And, by Proposition 19, every vertex in $F$ has degree at least $\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil \geq 2$ and every pair of vertices has at least one common neighbor.

Let $v_1 \cdots v_\ell$ be such a maximum-length path in $K$ such that the sum $\mathbf{x}(v_1) + \mathbf{x}(v_\ell)$ is the largest among all such paths. By Proposition 12, $v_1$ and $v_\ell$ have a unique common neighbor $v_c$ and $N(v_1) \subseteq \{v_2, \ldots, v_c\}$. Let $v_1$ have $d$ neighbors in $F$. Since $v_1$ cannot have neighbors outside of this path, the sum of the weights of the neighbors of $v_1$ satisfies $d_G(v_1) \leq \mathbf{x}(v_2) + \cdots + \mathbf{x}(v_c)$ in $K$. And if $v_i \in \{v_1, \ldots, v_{c-1}\}$ is a predecessor of a neighbor of $v_1$, then it is an endpoint of a path containing the same $\ell$ vertices, namely $v_i v_{i-1} \cdots v_1 v_{i+1} v_{i+2} \cdots v_c \cdots v_\ell$. Hence all $d$ predecessors of gray neighbors of $v_1$ (including $v_1$ itself) have weight at most $\mathbf{x}(v_1)$. By Proposition 9, $\frac{p-g_K(p)}{p} + \frac{1-p}{p}\mathbf{x}(v_1) = \mathbf{x}(v_1) + d_G(v_1) \leq \mathbf{x}(v_1) + \cdots + \mathbf{x}(v_c) \leq d\mathbf{x}(v_1) + (c-d)\frac{g_K(p)}{1-p}$, which implies

$$g_K(p)\left(\frac{c-d}{1-p} + \frac{1}{p}\right) \geq 1 - \mathbf{x}(v_1)\left(d - \frac{1-p}{p}\right).$$

By Propositions 19 and 20, we have $c \leq \lceil \frac{n}{2} \rceil - 1$ and $d \geq \lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil$. And, when $\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil^{-1} \leq p \leq \frac{1}{2}$, by Proposition 9(a), we have $\mathbf{x}(v) \leq g_K(p)/(1-p)$, hence

$$g_K(p) \geq \frac{1-p}{c} \geq \frac{1-p}{\lceil \frac{n}{2} \rceil - 1} \geq \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p),$$

a contradiction.

So we can get $ed_{\mathscr{H}}(p) = \gamma_{\mathscr{H}}(p)$ for $p \in \left[\frac{1}{\lceil \frac{n-1}{3} \rceil}, 1\right]$. The proof is thus complete.


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