A formalization of forcing and the unprovability of the continuum hypothesis

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joint w/ Floris van Doorn

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Outline

Introduction

Syntax

Boolean-valued models of ZFC

Forcing

Some neat tricks

Conclusions

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Contin	uum h	vnothesis			

- Posed by Cantor in 19th century: does there exist an infinite cardinality strictly larger than the countable natural numbers N but strictly smaller than the uncountable real numbers ℝ?
- was Hilbert's 1st question
- Proved independent (neither provable nor disprovable) from ZFC by Paul Cohen ('60s) and Kurt Godel ('30s). Cohen's invention of forcing earned him a Fields medal, the only one ever awarded for work in mathematical logic.

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Continuum hypothesis

• Independence of CH has never been formalized!

Formalizing 100 Theorems

There used to exist a <u>"top 100" of mathematical theorems</u> on the web, which is a rather arbitrary list (and most of the theorems seem rather elementary), but still is nice to look at. On the current page will keep track of which theorems from this list have been formalized. Currently the fraction that already has been formalized seems to be

94%

24. The Undecidability of the Continuum Hypothesis

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The Fly	pitch	project			

formally proving the independence of the continuum hypothesis

Website: flypitch.github.io

- Aims to formalize the independence of CH
- Along the way, build reusable libraries for mathematical logic and set theory
- Written in Lean 3.

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What is required for the formalization?

To formalize just the **statement**, "the continuum hypothesis is neither provable nor disprovable from ZFC", we need:

- First-order logic (terms, formulas, quantifiers, sentences...)
- Provability, i.e. a proof system
- The axioms of ZFC and also CH as first-order formulas

To formalize the proof, we need:

- Semantics (ordinary soundness theorem)
- Completeness theorem
- Boolean-valued semantics and soundness for first-order logic
- Forcing

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First-order logic

```
structure Language : Type (u+1) :=
(functions : \mathbb{N} \rightarrow Type u)
(relations : \mathbb{N} \rightarrow Type u)
```

/- The language of abelian groups -/
inductive abel_functions : N → Type
| zero : abel_functions 0
| plus : abel_functions 2

def L_abel : Language := $\langle abel_functions, (\lambda_, empty) \rangle$

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First-order logic

```
def term := preterm L 0
```

- preterm L n is a partially applied term. If applied to n terms, it becomes a term.
- Every element of preterm L 0 is a well-formed term.
- We use this encoding to avoid mutual or nested inductive types, since those are not too convenient to work with in Lean.

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First-order logic

Similarly for formulas:

```
inductive preformula : N → Type u
| falsum {} : preformula 0 -- notation ⊥
| equal (t<sub>1</sub> t<sub>2</sub> : term L) : preformula 0 -- notation ≃
| rel {l : N} (R : L.relations 1) : preformula 1
| apprel {l : N} (f : preformula (l + 1)) (t : term L) :
    preformula 1
| imp (f<sub>1</sub> f<sub>2</sub> : preformula 0) : preformula 0 -- notation ⇒
| all (f : preformula 0) : preformula 0 -- notation ∀'
```

```
def formula := preformula L 0
```

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A mode	el of Z	FC in Lean			

The following construction is due to Aczel, and was implemented in Coq by Werner and then in Lean by Carneiro:

```
inductive pSet : Type (u+1)
| mk (\alpha : Type u) (A : \alpha \rightarrow pSet) : pSet
```

- Note that mk empty empty.elim always exists, and corresponds to the empty set at the bottom of the von Neumann hierarchy.
- (Extensional) equality can be defined by structural recursion (the elimination principle for the inductive type pSet *is* ∈-recursion): Two pre-sets are extensionally equivalent if every element of the first family is extensionally equivalent to some element of the second family and vice-versa.

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A model of ZFC in Lean

 $\begin{array}{l} \textbf{def equiv} : \forall \ (\textbf{x y} : \textbf{pSet}), \ \textbf{Prop} \\ \mid \left< \alpha, \textbf{A} \right> \left< \beta, \textbf{B} \right> := (\forall \textbf{a} : \alpha, \ \exists \textbf{b} : \beta, \ \textbf{equiv} \ (\textbf{A} \ \textbf{a}) \ (\textbf{B} \ \textbf{b})) \ \land \ (\forall \textbf{b} : \beta \\ , \ \exists \textbf{a} : \alpha, \ \textbf{equiv} \ (\textbf{A} \ \textbf{a}) \ (\textbf{B} \ \textbf{b})) \end{array}$

• Notice that an equivalent model of ZFC is produced by defining:

```
inductive bSet : Type (u+1)
| mk (\alpha : Type u) (A : \alpha \rightarrow bSet) (A' : \alpha \rightarrow bool) : bSet
```

• At first, this seems needlessly complicated (we can recover the original pSet by recursively ignoring anything which is assigned ff : bool).

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 However, if we remember that bool is a complete boolean algebra (bool, ⊤, ⊥, ¬, ⊔, ¬, ∐, □, ⇒), we see that by replacing universal/existential quantification in Prop with infima/suprema in bool, we can "internalize" the truth-values of equiv₂ to bool:

def equiv₁ :
$$\forall$$
 (x y : bSet), Prop
| $\langle \alpha, \mathbf{A}, \mathbf{A}' \rangle \langle \beta, \mathbf{B}, \mathbf{B}' \rangle$:= (\forall a : α , \mathbf{A}' a = tt $\rightarrow \exists$ b : β , \mathbf{B}' b = tt \land
equiv₁ (A a) (B b)) \land (\forall b : β , \mathbf{B}' b = tt $\rightarrow \exists$ a : α , \mathbf{A}' a = tt \land equiv₁ (A a) (B b))

/- Assuming Prop \simeq bool, equiv₂ is equivalent to equiv₁-/ def equiv₂ : \forall (x y : bSet), bool $| \langle \alpha, \mathbf{A}, \mathbf{A}' \rangle \langle \beta, \mathbf{B}, \mathbf{B}' \rangle := \prod \mathbf{a} : \alpha, \mathbf{A}' \mathbf{a} \Longrightarrow \bigsqcup \mathbf{b} : \beta, \mathbf{B}' \mathbf{b} \sqcap \text{ equiv}_2$ (A a) (B b) $\sqcap \prod \mathbf{b} : \beta, \mathbf{B}' \mathbf{b} \Longrightarrow \bigsqcup \mathbf{a} : \alpha, \mathbf{A}' \mathbf{a} \sqcap \text{ equiv}_2$ (A a) (B b)

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The forcing extension

The definition of $equiv_2$ makes sense for any complete boolean algebra. Accordingly, we define

```
inductive bSet (\mathbb{B} : Type u) [complete_boolean_algebra \mathbb{B}] : Type
(u+1)
| mk (\alpha : Type u) (\mathbb{A} : \alpha \rightarrow bSet) (\mathbb{B} : \alpha \rightarrow \mathbb{B}) : bSet
```

Note:

- When B is the singleton algebra unit, bSet unit is isomorphic to pSet.
- bSet B is exactly the "name construction" from forcing; bSet B comprises the "B-names".

Theorem. For every \mathbb{B} , **bSet** \mathbb{B} is a **boolean-valued model** of ZFC.

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- In general, can define B-valued semantics for arbitrary first-order theories and prove a soundness theorem (if φ has truth-value b ∈ B in some B-valued model M and φ ⊢ ψ, then ψ has truth-value greater than or equal to b).
- Equality is interpreted as binary \mathbb{B} -valued function $(=^{\mathbb{B}})$.

aiueo semantics

An n-ary relation symbol is interpreted as an n-ary B-valued function satisfying a B-valued congruence lemma with respect to equality (e.g. x =^B y ⊓ R(x) ≤ R(y)).

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Boolean-valued semantics

- Helpful special case: $\mathbb{B} =$ (measure algebra of a probability space modulo measure-zero events).
- It is profitable to keep in mind the following analogy, developed by Scott. Let M be a B-valued structure.
- A unary B-valued predicate φ on M assigns an event to every element m of M, whose measure we can think of as being the probability that φ(m) is true.
- Specializing to the language of set theory, in a B-valued model of set theory, set membership (X ∈ Y) is no longer bool-valued, but B-valued. Subsets of Z are determined by indicator functions χ : Z → B.

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- Boolean-valued semantics
 - To every B-valued set (m : M), we can attach an "indicator function" λx, x ∈ m which assigns to every x a probability that it is actually a member of m.
 - Thus, by virtue of extensionality, we may think of the elements of a \mathbb{B} -valued model of ZFC as being "set-valued random variables", or "random sets".
 - (In this analogy, given a universe of random sets, the purpose of the generic filter or ultrafilter in forcing is then to simultaneously evaluate the outcomes of the random variables, collapsing them into an ordinary universe of sets.)

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Unprova	ability	of CH			

- How do we represent CH as a formula in ZFC?
 - Let x < y mean "there is no surjection from x onto y"
 - Let $x \leq y$ mean "there is an injection from x into y"
 - Then

 $\mathsf{CH} := \neg \left(\exists x \exists y, (\omega < x) \land (x < y) \land (y \le \mathcal{P}(\omega)) \right).$

- To show ZFC ⊭ CH, suffices (by applying the B-valued soundness theorem) to exhibit a B-valued model of ZFC such that CH has truth value ≠ T.
- So, it remains to find some complete boolean algebra $\mathbb B$ such that CH is not true in **bSet** $\mathbb B$.

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Forcing					

- Traditionally, forcing is thought of as a technique for extending a ground model of ZFC to a forcing extension (another model of ZFC), where certain properties can be "forced" to be true or false, and the complete boolean algebra B usually lives in the ground model.
- Our situation is different. pSet can be thought of as a "standard model" of ZFC in Lean, but it is built from a type universe Type u, and generally the parameter B (in bSet B) will be a type in Type u.
- The "ground model" (pSet) still embeds into the forcing extension: for any B, there is a canonical map ("check-names") from pSet to bSet B:

-- notation
$$(x \mapsto \check{x})$$

def check : (pSet : Type (u+1)) \rightarrow bSet \mathbb{B}
 $|\langle \alpha, \mathbf{A} \rangle := \langle \alpha, \lambda$ a, check (A a), λ a, $\top \rangle$

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Forcing					

- To perform forcing, we need to understand how the metatheory (Lean) interacts with the internal logic of the forcing extension (bSet \mathbb{B}).
- These interactions are mediated by check : pSet \rightarrow bSet $\mathbb B.$
- The ordinals attached to Type u are equivalence classes of well-ordered types in Type u, thus ordinal.(u) : Type (u+1).
- The internal logic of pSet is closely tied to that of Lean: the class of set-theoretic ordinals in pSet is isomorphic to ordinal. (u).
- In turn, check sends pSet ordinals into the bSet ordinals.
- Note: ω in bSet is equal to $\check{\omega}$

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The isomorphism between Lean ordinals and pSet ordinals is given by indexing the construction of von Neumann ordinals in one direction, and sending a set to its ordinal rank in the other:

```
-- pseudocode

def pSet.ordinal.mk : ordinal \rightarrow pSet

| 0 := \emptyset

| succ \xi := pSet.succ (ordinal.mk \xi) -- (mk \xi \cup \{mk \ \xi\})

| is_limit \xi := () \eta < \xi, (ordinal.mk \eta)
```

```
def rank : pSet \rightarrow ordinal
| \langle \alpha, A \rangle := ordinal.sup (\lambda a : \alpha, (rank (A a)).succ)
```

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 $\bullet\,$ We want to pick some $\mathbb B$ such that

$$\neg \mathsf{CH} := \exists x \exists y, (\omega < x) \land (x < y) \land (y \le \mathcal{P}(\omega))$$

is true.

• The idea is that we pick x to be $\check{\aleph_1}$ and y to be $\check{\aleph_2}$.

We need to ensure two things:

- 1. that there are no surjections from ω onto $\check{\aleph_1}$ or $\check{\aleph_1}$ onto $\check{\aleph_2}$, and
- 2. that there is an injection from $\check{\aleph_2}$ into $\mathcal{P}(\omega)$.

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Converting internal $\forall \exists$ statements to external $\forall \exists$ statements

Let (x, y : pSet) such that x < y and suppose that $bSet \mathbb{B}$ thinks there is a surjection f from \check{x} onto \check{y} . That is, in \mathbb{B} , we have that

 $\top \leqslant$ (is_func f) \sqcap ($\square z \in y$, $\bigsqcup w \in x$, f $\vec{w} = \vec{z}$)

Then the key observation is that this $\forall \exists$ -statement in **bSet** \mathbb{B} can be turned in to a $\forall \exists$ -statement in the metatheory:

 \forall (j : y.type), ∃ (i : x.type), ⊥ < (is_func f) ⊓ f (x.func i) $\check{}^{=^{B}}$ (y.func j) $\check{}^{}$

A mild combinatorial condition on \mathbb{B} ensuring that all antichains are countable (CCC) rules out the above statement from being true when y.type is uncountable (because then, any function induced by the $\forall \exists$ statement above has an uncountable fiber indexing an antichain).

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Cohen forcing

- A subset of a topological space X is regular open if it is the interior of its closure.
- The regular opens RO(X) form a complete boolean algebra.
- The boolean algebra we use to force $\neg CH$ is:

 $\mathbb{B}_{\operatorname{cohen}} := \operatorname{RO}(2^{\aleph_2 \times \omega})$

 X has a basis of clopens, generated by a subbasis of "principal opens" parametrized by ℵ₂ × ω of the form

principal_open (ν , n) := { g : $\aleph_2 \times \omega \rightarrow 2 \mid g (\nu, n) = 0$ }

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Cohen f	orcing				

 Recall that for every B, the powerset of ω in bSet B is determined by indicator functions χ : ω → B. So, by virtue of our choice of B := B_cohen, for every ν < ℵ₂, we can attach the following indicator function:

def cohen_real.mk : $\aleph_2 \rightarrow (\mathbb{N} \rightarrow \mathbb{B}_{cohen}) := \lambda \ \nu : \aleph_2, \ (\lambda \ n : \mathbb{N}, \ principal_open \ (\nu,n))$

- cohen_real.mk ν is the Cohen real attached to ν, and it's straightforward to check that this induces an injection ℵ₂ → P(ω) in bSet B (so we have "added ℵ₂-many Cohen reals")
- $\bullet\,$ Furthermore, one checks that $\mathbb B$ has the CCC, completing the forcing argument.

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The final result

```
theorem CH_unprovable_from_ZFC : \neg (ZFC' \vdash' CH_sentence) :=
begin
  intro H,
  suffices forces_false : \top \Vdash [V \mathbb{B}] bd_falsum,
    from absurd (nontrivial.bot_lt_top) (not_lt_of_le
    forces_false),
  refine forced_absurd _ _, exact ZFC', exact CH_f, swap, apply
    neg_CH_f,
  let prf_of_CH_f := sprovable_of_provable (classical.choice H),
  have CH_f_true := boolean_soundness prf_of_CH_f
    (V_B_nonempty),
  convert CH_f_true, rw[inf_axioms_top_of_models
    (bSet_models_ZFC' _)]
```

end

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But wait, there's more

That was all done before April. Over the summer, we've added quite a bit more to the codebase...



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But wait, there's more

- There's also a forcing argument for CH!
- It actually relies on more set theory (e.g. construction of \aleph_1 , not just $\check{\aleph_1}$) than the Cohen forcing argument for \neg CH.
- Except for the (very) standard fact that ZFC proves the existence of a successor cardinal to ω , we have...



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- Forcing CH
 - Whereas Cohen forcing creates a new injection ℵ₂ → P(ω), we can use collapse forcing to create a new surjection ℵ₁ → P(ω).
 - Let $\mathbb{P}_{collapse}$ be the poset of countable partial functions $\aleph_1 \to \mathcal{P}(\omega)$. The "principal open" sets

$$D_p := \{g : \aleph_1 \to \mathcal{P}(\omega) \ | \ g \text{ extends } p\}, \quad p \in \mathbb{P}_{\mathsf{collapse}}$$

form the basis of a topology τ on the function set $\mathcal{P}(\omega)^{\aleph_1}$. Put $\mathbb{B}_{\text{collapse}} := \operatorname{RO} \left(\mathcal{P}(\omega)^{\aleph_1}, \tau \right)$.

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- To specify the surjection $\aleph_1 \twoheadrightarrow \mathcal{P}(\omega)$, need to specify a subset of the powerset $\mathcal{P}(\aleph_1 \times \mathcal{P}(\omega))$.
- Let $p(\nu, S)$ be the (singleton) countable partial function which sends $\nu : \aleph_1$ to $S : \mathcal{P}(\omega)$.
- Then we can check that the indicator function

$$(\nu, S) \mapsto D_{p(\nu, S)},$$

induces a surjection in bSet $\mathbb{B}_{collapse}$ from $\check{\aleph_1}$ to $\mathcal{P}(\omega)$.

• Then it remains to check that $\check{\aleph_1} = \aleph_1$ and $\mathcal{P}(\omega) = \mathcal{P}(\omega)$

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 This follows from the following property: for any y : pSet, and for any f : bSet B_collapse, if bSet B_collapse thinks that f : ω → y is a function, then there exists a g : ω → y in pSet such that ğ = f.

As before, reflect a boolean-valued $\forall \exists$ statement into the metatheory. The following lemma is always true:



Recursively applying this lemma, obtain values g_0, \ldots, g_n, \ldots such that

$$\perp < \cdots < \left(\prod_{k \leq n} ((k, g_k) \in^{\mathbb{B}} g) \right) < \cdots < ((0, g_0) \in^{\mathbb{B}} g)$$

The intersection of this chain thinks that g is the required lift of f. In general, this intersection might be empty, but it is nonempty for $\mathbb{B}_{collapse}$, (essentially) because the union of a chain of countable partial functions is again a countable partial function. By a denseness argument, g has the required property.

Putting it all together, we have...

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The final result

```
theorem CH_unprovable_from_ZFC : ¬ (ZFC' ⊢' CH_sentence) :=
unprovable_of_model_neg (V B_cohen) fundamental_theorem_of_forcing
  (nontrivial.bot_lt_top) V_B_cohen_models_neg_CH
```

```
theorem neg_CH_unprovable_from_ZFC : ¬ (ZFC' ⊢' ~CH_sentence) :=
unprovable_of_model_neg (V B_collapse) fundamental_theorem_of_forcing
  (nontrivial.bot_lt_top) (by {rw forced_in_not, from
        V_B_collapse_models_CH})
```

```
def independent {L : Language} (T : Theory L) (f : sentence L) : Prop := \neg (T \vdash' f \vee T \vdash' \sim f)
```

```
theorem independence_of_CH : independent ZFC' CH_sentence :=
begin
    have := CH_unprovable_from_ZFC,
    have := neg_CH_unprovable_from_ZFC,
    finish
```

end

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- The calculus of the forcing relation (in the poset P of forcing conditions) can be thought of as a shorthand for the calculation of inequalities of boolean truth-values after embedding P into a boolean completion, i.e. p ⊢ q ⇔ p ≤ q
- e.g., given a predicate φ(x), the sentence ∀x, φ(x) is "true" if we have that T ≤ ∏_x φ(x). Think of ≤ as a turnstile (⊢).
- Calculations are hard if you manipulate these expressions as infinite sums and products.
- Calculations are easy if you think of these as formulas and replay the proofs from first-order logic.

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- In Lean, proving $p_1, .., p_k, .., p_n \vdash p_k$ is trivial (by assumption).
- Calculating a₁ □ · · · □ a_k □ · · · □ a_n ≤ a_k in B is also trivial, but harder to write a tactic that proves this uniformly in k and n.
- Solution: use the tactic framework to automate calculations in $\mathbb B.$
- Yoneda lemma: $a \leqslant b \iff \forall \Gamma, \Gamma \leqslant a \rightarrow \Gamma \leqslant b$.
- Applying this turns the previous problem into $(\Gamma : \mathbb{B}), \Gamma \leq a_1, \ldots, \Gamma \leq a_k, \ldots, \Gamma \leq a_n \vdash \Gamma \leq a_k$, which is now trivial (by assumption). Easy to automate.

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Old and busted:

```
example { \mathbb{B} } [complete_boolean_algebra \mathbb{B}] {a b c : \mathbb{B}} :
 (a \Longrightarrow b) \sqcap (b \Longrightarrow c) \leq a \Longrightarrow c :=
begin
  rw[<-deduction], unfold imp, rw[inf_sup_right, inf_sup_right],</pre>
  simp only [inf_assoc, sup_assoc], refine sup_le _ _,
  ac_change' (-a \sqcap a) \sqcap (-b \sqcup c) \leq c,
  from inf_le_left_of_le (by simp), rw[inf_sup_right],
  let x := _, let y := _, change b \sqcap (x \sqcup y) \leq _,
  rw[inf_sup_left], apply sup_le,
  { simp[x, inf_assoc.symm] },
  { from inf_le_right_of_le (by simp) }
end
```

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New hotness:

```
\begin{array}{l} \mbox{example} \{ \ \mathbb{B} \ \} \ [\mbox{complete_boolean_algebra} \ \mathbb{B}] \ \{ a \ b \ c \ : \ \mathbb{B} \} \ : \\ ( \ a \implies b \ ) \ \sqcap \ ( \ b \implies c \ ) \leqslant a \implies c \ := \\ \mbox{by {tidy_context, bv_imp_intro, from a_1_right (a_1_left H)} \end{array}
```

```
-- tactic state before final step:

-- a b c G : \mathbb{B},

-- G_1 : \mathbb{B} := a \sqcap G,

-- a_1_left : G_1 \leq a \Longrightarrow b,

-- a_1_right : G_1 \leq b \Longrightarrow c,

-- H : G_1 \leq a

-- \vdash G_1 \leq c
```

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- This technique also exposes a family of setoids on bSet B induced by B-valued equality: for every Γ, λx y, Γ ≤ x =^B y is an equivalence relation.
- If the remainder of a proof is just equality reasoning (mod B), we can just quotient by the setoid and run congruence closure.

example {a b c d e : bSet \mathbb{B} } : (a =^B b) \sqcap (b =^B c) \sqcap (c =^B d) \sqcap (d =^B e) \leq a =^B e := by tidy_context; bv_cc
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 Over the second s

 The B-valued soundness theorem says that for any first-order sentence φ, any proof tree

 $\mathsf{ZFC} \vdash \varphi$

can be replayed in any \mathbb{B} -valued model.

- The completeness theorem says that if φ can be proven in every (ordinary, i.e. bool-valued) model of ZFC, then there is a proof tree ZFC $\vdash \varphi$.
- While custom automation makes B-valued proofs easier, we could also prove things like "Zorn's lemma is equivalent to AC" by working in an arbitrary ordinary model of ZFC, then transfer the proof to all B-valued models of ZFC.

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Formula pretty-printing

- Our FOL formulas use de Bruijn indices, which are not so fun to read.
- Solution: write a print_formula program in Lean to pretty-print them using named variables!

Example:

#eval print_formula axiom_of_regularity -- $(\forall x1, ((x1 = \emptyset) \lor \exists x2, (x2 \in x1 \land (\forall x3, (x3 \in x1 \Longrightarrow \neg x3 \in x2)))))$

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Formula parsing

- Lean also uses de Bruijn indices to represent variables, but parses them from a named representation entered by the user.
- So, use metaprogramming to hijack Lean's parser and pattern-match on the parsed expr to produce a deeply-embedded FOL formula!

Example:

```
def my_formula : formula L :=
by parse_formula (\forall x y : \alpha, (x = y))
```

#print my_formula -- $\forall' \forall' (\&1 \simeq \&0)$

• (maybe) roll our own formula parser with a monadic parser combinator library

Introduction	Syntax 000	Boolean-valued models of ZFC	Forcing 000000000000000000000000000000000000	Some neat tricks 00000000	Conclusions
Summa	ry				

- Started in October 2018, now at 20,000 lines of code
- Our translation of the forcing argument into type theory shows that a ground model of set theory is not really needed to do forcing.
- Challenges: many parts of textbook expositions did not have type-theoretic analogues, and the forcing argument for CH via Boolean-valued models is not well-documented.
- Transfinite induction almost never needed once we have bSet ${\mathbb B}$ and its recursion principle.
- Domain specific automation is useful; Lean makes it easy to write.

Introduction	Syntax	Boolean-valued models of ZFC	Forcing	Some neat tricks	Conclusions
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Summary

Thank you!

- flypitch.github.io
- https://www.github.com/flypitch/flypitch