

# A rank conjecture

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**Conjecture.** Suppose that  $f_1, \dots, f_k$  and  $g_1, \dots, g_k$  are polynomials in  $\mathbb{F}_2[x]$ , having  $r_1, \dots, r_k < k$  and  $d_1, \dots, s_k < k$  non-zero terms, respectively; and, suppose that  $g(x)$  is an irreducible polynomial such that the order of  $x \bmod (2, g(x))$  is greater than twice the maximal degree of the  $f_i$ 's and  $g_i$ 's. Then, so long as

$$M > (r_1 + \dots + r_k + s_1 + \dots + s_k)k^{o(1)},$$

and so long as

$$f_1(X)g_1(X), f_2(X)g_2(X), \dots, f_k(X)g_k(X)$$

are linearly independent over  $\mathbb{F}_2$ , we have that the following matrix has full rank (i.e. rank  $k$ ) in the residue field  $\mathbb{F}_2[x]/(g(x))$ :

$$\begin{bmatrix} f_1(1)g_1(1) & f_2(1)g_2(1) & \cdots & f_k(1)g_k(1) \\ f_1(x)g_1(x) & f_2(x)g_2(x) & \cdots & f_k(x)g_k(x) \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ f_1(x^M)g_1(x^M) & f_2(x^M)g_2(x^M) & \cdots & f_k(x^M)g_k(x^M) \end{bmatrix}$$

**Remark.** If in place of products of polynomials, we just had that the rows of the matrix have entries  $f_1(x^j), f_2(x^j), \dots, f_k(x^j)$ , then by taking linear combinations of the columns in a certain Vandermonde matrix, it is quite easy to show that if  $M = r_1 + \dots + r_k$  then this  $f_i$  matrix has full rank.