

The Mutilated Checkerboard in Set Theory

John McCarthy
Computer Science Department
Stanford University
jmc@cs.stanford.edu
<http://www-formal.stanford.edu/jmc/>

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An 8 by 8 checkerboard with two diagonally opposite squares removed cannot be covered by dominoes each of which covers two rectilinearly adjacent squares. I present a set theory description of the proposition and an informal proof that the covering is impossible. While no present system that I know of will accept either the formal description or the proof, I claim that both should be admitted in any *heavy duty set theory*.

We have the definitions

$$Board = Z8 \times Z8,$$

$$mutilated-board = Board - \{(0, 0), (7, 7)\},$$

$$\begin{aligned} domino-on-board(x) \equiv & (x \subset Board) \wedge card(x) = 2 \\ & \wedge (\forall x1 \ x2)(x1 \neq x2 \wedge x1 \in x \wedge x2 \in x \\ & \supset adjacent(x1, x2)), \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
adjacent(x1, x2) &\equiv |c(x1, 1) - c(x2, 1)| = 1 \\
&\wedge c(x1, 2) = c(x2, 2) \\
&\vee |c(x1, 2) - c(x2, 2)| = 1 \wedge c(x1, 1) = c(x2, 1),
\end{aligned}$$

and

$$\begin{aligned}
&partial-covering(z) \\
&\equiv (\forall x)(x \in z \supset domino-on-board(x)) \\
&\wedge (\forall x \ y)(x \in z \wedge y \in z \supset x = y \vee x \cap y = \{\})
\end{aligned}$$

Theorem:

$$\neg(\exists z)(\text{partial-covering}(z) \wedge \bigcup z = \text{mutilated-board})$$

Proof:

We define

$$x \in \text{Board} \supset \text{color}(x) = \text{rem}(c(x, 1) + c(x, 2), 2)$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{domino-on-board}(x) &\supset \\ (\exists u v)(u \in x \wedge v \in x \wedge \text{color}(u) = 0 \wedge \text{color}(v) = 1), \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{partial-covering}(z) &\supset \\ \text{card}(\{u \in \cup z \mid \text{color}(u) = 0\}) \\ &= \text{card}(\{u \in \cup z \mid \text{color}(u) = 1\}), \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{card}(\{u \in \text{mutilated-board} \mid \text{color}(u) = 0\}) \\ &\neq \text{card}(\{u \in \text{mutilated-board} \mid \text{color}(u) = 1\}), \end{aligned}$$

and finally

$\neg(\exists z)(\text{partial-covering}(z) \wedge \text{mutilated-board} = \bigcup z)$ (

Q.E.D.