

Pacific Journal of Mathematics

**WILD POINTS OF CELLULAR ARCS IN 2-COMPLEXES IN E^3
AND CELLULAR HULLS**

GAIL ATNEOSEN

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GAIL H. ATNEOSEN

Loveland has established that if W is the set of wild points of a cellular arc that lies on a 2-sphere in E^3 , then either W is empty, W is degenerate, or W contains an arc. This note considers 2-complexes rather than 2-spheres. Making strong use of Loveland's results and others, it is proved that a cellular arc in a 2-complex in E^3 either contains an arc of wild points or has at most one wild point that has a neighborhood in the 2-complex homeomorphic to an open 2-cell. In the case of noncellular arcs in E^3 , one can investigate "minimal cellular sets" containing the arc. A *cellular hull* of a subset A of E^3 is a cellular set containing A such that no proper cellular set also contains A . A characterization is given of those arcs in E^3 that have cellular hulls that lie in tame 2-complexes in E^3 .

A 2-complex in E^3 is the homeomorphic image of a 2-dimensional finite Euclidean polyhedron. A subset X of E^3 is said to be *locally tame* at a point p of X if there is a neighborhood N of p in E^3 and a homeomorphism h of $\text{Cl}(N)$ (Cl = closure) onto a polyhedron in E^3 such that $h(\text{Cl}(N \cap X))$ is a finite Euclidean polyhedron. A point p of a subset X of E^3 is said to be a *wild point* of X if X is not locally tame at p . A subset G of E^3 is said to be *cellular* (in E^3) if there exists a sequence Q_1, Q_2, \dots of 3-cells in E^3 such that for each positive integer i , $Q_{i+1} \subset \text{Interior } Q_i$ and $G = \bigcap_{i=1}^{\infty} Q_i$. If A and B are two arcs in E^3 , then A is said to be *equivalent* to B if there is a homeomorphism h mapping E^3 onto E^3 such that $h(A) = B$.

THEOREM 1. *Let A be a cellular arc in a 2-complex in E^3 . If the set of wild points of A does not contain an arc, then A has at most one wild point that has a neighborhood in the 2-complex homeomorphic to an open 2-cell.*

Proof. Assume that A has two wild points p and q that have neighborhoods in the 2-complex homeomorphic to an open 2-cell and contradict the hypothesis that A is cellular. Then p lies on a subarc of A that is contained in the interior of a closed 2-cell. The argument of Theorem 5 of [3] then establishes that p lies on a subarc C of A that is contained in a 2-sphere in E^3 . Since C is a cellular arc by [6], it follows from [5] that p is the only wild point of C . Thus p and q are isolated wild points of A .

If p and q are the endpoints of A , it follows from Theorem 10 of [8] that A is not cellular, so this case cannot occur.

Next consider the case when p is an interior point of A and q is an endpoint of A . As above, we obtain that p lies interior to a subarc C of A whose only wild point is p and that C is contained in a 2-sphere S . By [4] and [2] we may assume that S is locally polyhedral except at p . If C_1 and C_2 are subarcs of C such that $C_1 \cup C_2 = C$ and $C_1 \cap C_2 = p$, then Theorem 5 of [4] implies that C_1 and C_2 are equivalent. An application of Theorem 1 of [4] yields that if C_1 and C_2 are both locally tame at p then C is locally tame at p . Hence p is a wild point of both C_1 and C_2 . Let B be a subarc of A with endpoints p and q . Then B is a cellular arc whose endpoints are isolated wild points, by [8] this case cannot occur.

By arguments as in the above two cases, it follows that the last case, in which both p and q are interior points of A , can also not occur.

For the following theorem we need to define a particular 2-complex called a 3-book. A 3-book is defined to be a subset of E^3 which is the union of three closed 2-cells which meet precisely on a single arc on the boundary of each.

THEOREM 2. *An arc A in E^3 has a cellular hull that lies in a tame 2-complex in E^3 if and only if A is equivalent to an arc in a tame 3-book.*

Proof. If A has a cellular hull that lies in a tame 2-complex, then the set of wild points of A is a closed totally disconnected set. It follows easily from [7] that such an arc is equivalent to an arc in a tame 3-book.

Conversely, suppose that A lies in a tame 3-book B . Consider a maximal chain (ordered by inclusion) that has B as a member and also has the property that each member of the chain is a cellular set that contains A . The intersection of the members of this maximal chain then yields a cellular hull of A that lies in the tame 2-complex B .

The arc in [1] is an example of an arc that does not have a cellular hull that lies in any tame 2-complex.

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Vol. 33, No. 3

May, 1970

Charles A. Akemann, <i>Approximate units and maximal abelian C^*-subalgebras</i>	543
Gail Atneosen, <i>Wild points of cellular arcs in 2-complexes in E^3 and cellular hulls</i>	551
John Logan Bryant and De Witt Summers, <i>On embeddings of 1-dimensional compacta in a hyperplane in E^4</i>	555
H. P. Dikshit, <i>On a class of Nörlund means and Fourier series</i>	559
Nancy Dykes, <i>Generalizations of realcompact spaces</i>	571
Hector O. Fattorini, <i>Extension and behavior at infinity of solutions of certain linear operational differential equations</i>	583
Neal David Glassman, <i>Cohomology of nonassociative algebras</i>	617
Neal Hart, <i>Ulm's theorem for Abelian groups modulo bounded groups</i>	635
Don Barker Hinton, <i>Continuous spectra of second-order differential operators</i>	641
Donald Gordon James, <i>On Witt's theorem for unimodular quadratic forms. II</i>	645
Melvin F. Janowitz, <i>Principal multiplicative lattices</i>	653
James Edgar Keesling, <i>On the equivalence of normality and compactness in hyperspaces</i>	657
Adalbert Kerber, <i>Zu einer Arbeit von J. L. Berggren über ambivalente Gruppen</i>	669
Keizō Kikuchi, <i>Various m-representative domains in several complex variables</i>	677
Jack W. Macki and James Stephen Muldowney, <i>The asymptotic behaviour of solutions to linear systems of ordinary differential equations</i>	693
Andy R. Magid, <i>Locally Galois algebras</i>	707
T. S. Ravisankar, <i>On differentially simple algebras</i>	725
Joseph Gail Stampfli, <i>The norm of a derivation</i>	737
Francis C.Y. Tang, <i>On uniqueness of central decompositions of groups</i>	749
Robert Charles Thompson, <i>Some matrix factorization theorems. I</i>	763
Robert Charles Thompson, <i>Some matrix factorization theorems. II</i>	811