

Conjugacy pinched and cyclically pinched one-relator groups.

Benjamin FINE, Gerhard ROSENBERGER and Michael STILLE

Abstract

Here we consider two classes of torsion-free one-relator groups which have proved quite amenable to study-the **cyclically pinched one-relator groups** and the **conjugacy pinched one-relator groups**. The former is the class of groups which are free products of free groups with cyclic amalgamations while the latter is the class of HNN extensions of free groups with cyclic associated subgroups. Both are generalizations of surface groups. We compare and contrast results in these classes relative to n -freeness, separability properties including conjugacy separability, subgroup separability and residual finiteness, decision theoretic properties including the isomorphism problem and hyperbolicity.

1 Introduction

The theory of one-relator groups has always been of central importance in combinatorial group theory. The motivations for this interest are varied and arise from both topology and complex function theory as well as from algebra. From a topological viewpoint the class of fundamental groups of compact surfaces - the surface groups - falls into the class of one-relator groups. Many general questions concerning one-relator groups are in turn motivated by surface groups. From an algebraic

Mathematics 1991 Subject Classification Code: Primary 20E05, 20E06,
20E07.

Servicio Publicaciones Univ. Complutense. Madrid, 1997.

viewpoint one-relator groups are of interest because they provide a natural generalization of free groups with which they exhibit many similarities. Good general references on one-relator groups are the article by G. Baumslag [G.B. 1] and the book of Lyndon and Schupp [L-S].

The cornerstone of one-relator group theory is the Freiheitssatz. The proof and its many modifications (see [F-R 1]) have provided several techniques for a general treatment of one-relator groups. However many examples and counterexamples show that the theory is quite complex and in order to proceed further focus must be narrowed and in particular restrictions must be placed on the form of the relator. If $G = \langle x_1, \dots, x_n; R \rangle$ then Karrass, Magnus and Solitar [K-M-S] proved that G is torsion-free unless $R = S^m$ for some $m \geq 2$ and some non-trivial, non-power word S in the free group on x_1, \dots, x_n , in which case all elements of finite order are conjugate to powers of S . Torsion one-relator groups have proved somewhat more amenable to study than torsion-free due to the Spelling Theorem of B.B. Newman [Ne 1].

In this paper we examine two classes of torsion-free one-relator groups which have proven tractable for study. Both arise originally from the study of surface groups but have additional motivations as well. The first is the class of **cyclically pinched one relator groups**. These are groups which have presentations of the form

$$G = \langle a_1, \dots, a_p, a_{p+1}, \dots, a_n; U = V \rangle \quad (1)$$

where $1 \neq U = U(a_1, \dots, a_p)$ is a non-primitive (not part of a free basis) word in the free group F_1 on a_1, \dots, a_p and $1 \neq V = V(a_{p+1}, \dots, a_n)$ is a non-primitive word in the free group F_2 on a_{p+1}, \dots, a_n . Structurally such a group is the free product of the free groups on a_1, \dots, a_p and a_{p+1}, \dots, a_n respectively amalgamated over the cyclic subgroups generated by U and V . The class of cyclically pinched one-relator groups has been extensively studied and it has been shown that in general such a group shares many of the algebraic properties of surface groups. In the next section we will discuss these groups in detail.

The second class is the class of **conjugacy pinched one relator groups**. These are groups which have presentations of the form

$$G = \langle a_1, \dots, a_n, t; tUt^{-1} = V \rangle \quad (2)$$

where $1 \neq U = U(a_1, \dots, a_n)$ and $1 \neq V = V(a_1, \dots, a_n)$ are words in the free group on a_1, \dots, a_n . Structurally such a group is an HNN extension

of the free group on a_1, \dots, a_n with cyclic associated subgroups generated by U and V . These are closely related to the cyclically pinched case and will be discussed in detail in section 3.

2 Surface Groups and Cyclically Pinched One-Relator Groups

A **surface group** of genus g is the fundamental group of a compact surface of genus g . In the orientable case with genus $g \geq 2$ the resulting group T_g has a presentation

$$T_g = \langle a_1, b_1, \dots, a_g, b_g; [a_1, b_1] \dots [a_g, b_g] = 1 \rangle \quad (3)$$

If we let $U = [a_1, b_1] \dots [a_{g-1}, b_{g-1}]$, $V = [a_g, b_g]$ then T_g has the form

$$T_g = \langle a_1, b_1, \dots, a_g, b_g; U = V^{-1} \rangle .$$

and hence T_g is a cyclically pinched one-relator group. In the non-orientable case the resulting group U_g has a presentation

$$U_g = \langle a_1, \dots, a_g; a_1^2 \dots a_g^2 = 1 \rangle .$$

If we let $U = a_1^2 \dots a_{g-1}^2$, $V = a_g^2$ then for $g \geq 2$, U_g is also a cyclically pinched one-relator group.

The question arises as to which properties of surface groups are shared by all cyclically pinched one-relator groups. The generalization in turn of cyclically pinched one-relator groups where torsion is allowed in the generators leads to **groups of F-type** which can be considered as a natural algebraic generalization of finitely generated Fuchsian groups. These latter class was introduced in [F-R 2] and has also been extensively studied (see [F-R 3] and the references there).

An orientable surface group T_g has the property that any $2g - 1$ elements generate a free subgroup. A simple topologically motivated proof of this is as follows. By abelianizing it is clear that the rank (minimum number of necessary generators) of T_g is $2g$. Suppose H is a subgroup of T_g , then from covering space theory $H = \pi_1(S)$ where S is a cover of S_g , the orientable surface of genus g . If $|T_g : H| < \infty$, then S must be another orientable surface of genus $g_1 \geq g$ and hence

$H = T_{g_1}$. If H has infinite index in T_g then homotopically S is a wedge of circles and H is a free group. Now suppose we have $x_1, \dots, x_n \in T_g$ with $n \leq 2g - 1$, and let $H = \langle x_1, \dots, x_n \rangle$. If H had finite index in T_g , then the rank of H would be greater than $2g$ which is impossible since H has rank $\leq n$. Therefore H must have infinite index in T_g and hence must be a free group. In general we say that a group G is n -free if any set of $\leq n$ elements of G generates a free subgroup and therefore the above argument shows that any orientable surface group is $(2g - 1)$ -free. A modified argument shows that a non-orientable surface group of genus g is $(g - 1)$ -free. G. Baumslag [G.B. 2] generalized this to certain cyclically pinched one-relator groups.

Theorem A1. [G.B. 2] *Let G be a cyclically pinched one-relator group with the property that U and V are not proper powers in the respective free groups on the generators which they involve. Then G is 2-free.*

Using Nielsen and extended Nielsen reduction (see the article [F-R-S 1] for terminology), G. Rosenberger [Ro 1] was then able to give a complete classification of the subgroups of rank ≤ 4 of cyclically pinched one-relator groups.

Theorem A2. [Ro 1] *Let G be a cyclically pinched one-relator group with the property that U and V are not proper powers in the respective free groups on the generators which they involve. Then*

- (1) G is 3-free.
- (2) Let $H \subset G$ be a subgroup of rank 4. Then one of the following two cases occurs:
 - (i) H is free of rank 4.
 - (ii) If $\{x_1, \dots, x_4\}$ is a generating system for H then there is a Nielsen transformation from $\{x_1, \dots, x_4\}$ to $\{y_1, \dots, y_4\}$ with $y_1, y_2 \in zF_1z^{-1}$, $y_3, y_4 \in zF_2z^{-1}$ for a suitable $z \in G$. Further there is a one-relator presentation for H on $\{x_1, \dots, x_4\}$.

We note that the 3-free part of the above theorem was reproven in a different manner by G. Baumslag and P. Shalen [B-S 1]. Further the free-ness part of the above results was extended in the following manner

by Fine, Gaglione, Rosenberger and Spellman [F-G-R-S] again using Nielsen reduction techniques.

Theorem A3. *Let B_1, \dots, B_n be pairwise disjoint sets of generators, each of size ≥ 2 and for $i = 1, \dots, n$ let $W_i = W_i(B_i)$ be a non-trivial word in the free group on B_i , neither a proper power nor a primitive element. Let*

$$G = \langle B_1, \dots, B_n; W_1 W_2 \dots W_n = 1 \rangle .$$

Then G is n -free.

A similar result can be obtained if the words W_i are proper powers.

Theorem A4. *Let B_1, \dots, B_n be pairwise disjoint non-empty sets of generators, and for $i = 1, \dots, n$ let $W_i = W_i(B_i)$ be a non-trivial word in the free group on B_i . Let*

$$G = \langle B_1, \dots, B_n; W_1^{t_1} W_2^{t_2} \dots W_n^{t_n} = 1 \rangle$$

with $t_i \geq 1$. Then G is $(n-1)$ -free.

This result is the best possible since a non-orientable surface group of genus g is $(g - 1)$ free but not free.

These results were used in conjunction with a study by Gaglione and Spellman [G-S 1,2,3] and Fine, Gaglione, Rosenberger and Spellman [F-G-R-S] on the universal theory of non-abelian free groups. We'll say more about this in the next section in conjunction with conjugacy pinched one-relator groups.

Recall that a group G is residually finite if given $g \in G$ there exists a finite quotient G^* of G with the image of g non-trivial in G^* . G. Baumslag [G.B. 3] has shown that all cyclically pinched one-relator groups are residually finite.

Theorem A5. *Let G be a cyclically pinched one-relator group, then G is residually finite.*

The residual finiteness of one-relator groups in general is undecided. However it has been conjectured by G. Baumslag that one-relator groups with torsion are residually finite. Several special cases of this conjecture have been handled by Allenby and Tang [A1-T1]. In addition to residual finiteness cyclically pinched one-relator groups satisfy several stronger

separability properties. A group G is **conjugacy separable** if given elements g, h in G either g is conjugate to h or there exists a finite quotient where they are not conjugate. J. Dyer [Dy] has proved the conjugacy separability of cyclically pinched one-relator groups. Note that conjugacy separability in turn implies residual finiteness.

Theorem A6. [Dy] *A cyclically pinched one-relator group is conjugacy separable, that is two elements of a cyclically pinched one-relator group G are conjugate if and only if they are conjugate in every finite factor group of G .*

It was conjectured that this result could be extended to general Fuchsian groups. Building on work of Stebe[St] and Allenby and Tang [A-T], Fine and Rosenberger [F-R 4] proved the conjugacy separability of general Fuchsian groups.

A group G is **subgroup separable** or **LERF** if H is any finitely generated subgroup of G and $g \in G, g \notin H$, then there exists a finite quotient G^* of G such that image of g lies outside the image of H . P.Scott [Sc] proved that surface groups are subgroup separable and then Brunner, Burns and Solitar [Br-B-S] showed that in general cyclically pinched one-relator groups are subgroup separable. Free groups themselves are subgroup separable and Tretkoff [Tr], Gitik[G], Tang[T], Kim[K], Niblo[N], Aab [A] and others have worked on the general question of when free products with amalgamation of subgroup separable groups is again subgroup separable.

Theorem A7. [Br-B-S] *Let G be a cyclically pinched one-relator group. Then G is subgroup separable.*

One-relator groups and groups of F-type in general satisfy many linearity properties - that is properties of linear groups. A result of P.Shalen [Sh] can be used to establish that a cyclically pinched one-relator group where neither U nor V (in presentation 1) is a proper power actually has a faithful presentation in $PSL_2(\mathcal{O})$. Earlier Wehrfritz [We] had established that such a group has a faithful representation over a commutative field.

Theorem A8. *Let G be a cyclically pinched one-relator group with the property that U and V are not proper powers in the respective free group on the generators which they involve. Then G has a faithful representation in $PSL_2(\mathcal{O})$.*

The decision theory of cyclically pinched one-relator groups is also very well determined. Magnus proved [M] that as a consequence of the Freiheitssatz the word problem is solvable in general for one-relator groups. Lipschutz [Li] using small cancellation theory proved that cyclically pinched one-relator groups have solvable conjugacy problem. Subsequently Juhasz [J] using extended small cancellation theory has stated that all one-relator groups have solvable conjugacy problem.

Theorem A9. [Li] *A cyclically pinched one-relator group has a solvable conjugacy problem.*

Rosenberger [Ro 2], again using Nielsen reduction methods, has given a positive solution to the isomorphism problem for cyclically pinched one-relator groups, that is, he has given an algorithm to determine if an arbitrary one-relator group is isomorphic or not to a given cyclically pinched one-relator group.

Theorem A10. [Ro 2] *The isomorphism problem for any cyclically pinched one-relator group is solvable; given a cyclically pinched one-relator group G there is an algorithm to decide in finitely many steps whether an arbitrary one-relator group is isomorphic or not to G .*

More specifically let G be a non-free cyclically pinched one-relator group such that at most one of U and V is a power of a primitive element in F_1 respectively F_2 . Suppose x_1, \dots, x_{p+q} is a generating system for G . Then one of the following two cases occurs:

- (1) *There is a Nielsen transformation from $\{x_1, \dots, x_{p+q}\}$ to a system $\{a_1, \dots, a_p, y_1, \dots, y_q\}$ with $y_1, \dots, y_q \in F_2$ and $F_2 = \langle V, y_1, \dots, y_q \rangle$.*
- (2) *There is a Nielsen transformation from $\{x_1, \dots, x_{p+q}\}$ to a system $\{y_1, \dots, y_p, b_1, \dots, b_q\}$ with $y_1, \dots, y_p \in F_1$ and $F_1 = \langle U, y_1, \dots, y_p \rangle$.*

For x_1, \dots, x_{p+q} there is a presentation of G with one-relator. Further G has only finitely many Nielsen equivalence classes of minimal generating systems.

The small cancellation theory used by Lipschutz and Juhasz is closely tied to hyperbolicity in the sense of Gromov (see [G]). As a consequence of a result of Bestvina and Feighn [Be-F] we obtain that a cyclically pinched one-relator groups where not both U and V are proper powers is hyperbolic.

Theorem A11. *Let G be a cyclically pinched one-relator group with the property that not both U and V are proper powers in the respective free group on the generators which they involve. Then G is word hyperbolic.*

Theorem A11 was further generalized by Juhasz and Rosenberger (see [J-R]).

From a result of G. Baumslag and Shalen [B-S 2] a one-relator group G with at least three generators admits a free product with amalgamation decomposition $G = A \star_C B$ with A, B and C all finitely generated. Such a decomposition is called a **Baumslag-Shalen decomposition**. Clearly cyclically pinched one-relator groups are straightforward examples of such decompositions for one-relator groups. However in general very little is known about the exact nature of the factors. A study of the factors was done by Fine and Peluso [F-P] who gave the following partial converse to the cyclically pinched case.

Theorem A12. [F-P] *Let G be a torsion-free one-relator group with Baumslag-Shalen decomposition $A \star_C B$ with both A and B free groups. Then G must be cyclically pinched if either C has finite index in both factors or C is in the derived group in both factors.*

Further, if C has finite index in both factors then the groups A, B, C are all infinite cyclic and G has a presentation of the form $\langle a, b; a^n = b^m \rangle$ with $m, n > 1$.

A result of Bieri [Bi] is that if $G = A \star_C B$ is a torsion-free one-relator group with A, B finitely presented and C of finite index in both A and B then A and B must be free groups. Combining this with Theorem A12 gives us:

Corollary A12. *Let G be a torsion-free one-relator group with Baumslag-Shalen decomposition $A \star_C B$. If C is a free group and of finite index in both A and B then the groups A, B, C are all infinite cyclic and G has a presentation of the form $\langle a, b; a^n = b^m \rangle$ with $m, n > 1$.*

3 Conjugacy Pinched One-Relator Groups

If we return to the surface group T_g

$$T_g = \langle a_1, b_1, \dots, a_g, b_g; [a_1, b_1] \dots [a_g, b_g] = 1 \rangle \quad (3.)$$

and we let $b_g = t$ then T_g has the form

$$T_g = \langle a_1, b_1, \dots, a_g, t; tUt^{-1} = V \rangle .$$

where $U = a_g$ and $V = [a_1, b_1] \dots [a_{g-1}, b_{g-1}] a_g$ and hence T_g is also a conjugacy pinched one-relator group.

The question arises as to which of the general properties of cyclically pinched one-relator groups can be extended to the class of conjugacy pinched one-relator groups. Given the structural similarities of free product with amalgamation and HNN extensions many similarities in properties are to be expected, of course somewhat modified.

Besides the natural ties with surface groups conjugacy pinched one-relator groups arise independently in other contexts as well. Recall that a group acts freely on a tree T if it acts as a group of isometries on T with no fixed points or inversions. If the tree is an ordinary simplicial tree then from Bass-Serre theory G must be a free group. If T is an R -tree (see [B]) then Rips Theorem says that G must be a free product of abelian groups and surface groups. Bass studied the general concept of a free action on a Λ -tree where Λ is an ordered abelian group. As examples of groups which allow free actions on Λ -trees are cyclically pinched one-relator groups and conjugacy pinched one-relator groups except for the Klein bottle group $\langle a, b; aba^{-1} = b^{-1} \rangle$ (as a subgroup).

Further conjugacy pinched one-relator groups appear in the classification of fully residually free groups and the study of CSA groups (see F-G-M-R-S)). We'll say more of this shortly.

The 2-free and 3-free results for cyclically pinched one-relator groups carry over with modifications to conjugacy pinched one-relator groups. The results for cyclically pinched one-relator groups used Nielsen reduction in free products with amalgamation as developed by Zieschang [Z], Rosenberger [Ro 3,4,5] and others (see [F-R-S 1]). The corresponding theory of Nielsen reduction for HNN groups was developed by Peczynski and Reiwier [P-R] and is used in the analysis of conjugacy pinched one-relator groups. Important for applications of in Peczynski and Reiwier's results is the case where the associated subgroups are malnormal in the base. Recall that $H \subset G$ is malnormal if $xHx^{-1} \cap H = \{1\}$ if $x \notin H$. For a cyclic subgroup $\langle U \rangle$ of a free group F this requires that U is not a proper power in F . Using this Fine, Roehl and Rosenberger proved the following two-free result.

Theorem B1. [F-R-R 1] Let $G = \langle a_1, \dots, a_n, t; tUt^{-1} = V \rangle$ be a conjugacy pinched one-relator group. Suppose that neither U nor V are proper powers in the free group on a_1, \dots, a_n . If $\langle x, y \rangle$ is a two-generator subgroup of G then one of the following holds:

- (1) $\langle x, y \rangle$ is free of rank two
- (2) $\langle x, y \rangle$ is abelian
- (3) $\langle x, y \rangle$ has a presentation $\langle a, b; aba^{-1} = b^{-1} \rangle$.

As a direct consequence of the proof we also obtain the following.

Corollary B1. Let G be as in Theorem B1 and suppose that U is not conjugate to V^{-1} in the free group on a_1, \dots, a_n . Then any two-generator subgroup of G is either free or abelian.

The extension of Theorem B1 to a 3-free result proved to be quite difficult and required some further modifications. A two-generator subgroup N of a group G is maximal if $\text{rank} N = 2$ and if $N \subset M$ for another two-generator subgroup M of G then $N = M$. A maximal two-generator subgroup $N = \langle U, V \rangle$ is strongly maximal if for each $X \in G$ there is a $Y \in G$ such that $\langle U, XVX^{-1} \rangle \subset \langle U, YVY^{-1} \rangle$ and $\langle U, YVY^{-1} \rangle$ is maximal. Building upon and extending the theory of Pecziński and Reiwier the following is obtained.

Theorem B2. [F-R-R 2] Let $G = \langle a_1, \dots, a_n, t; tUt^{-1} = V \rangle$ be a conjugacy pinched one-relator group. Suppose that $\langle U, V \rangle$ is a strongly maximal subgroup of the free group on a_1, \dots, a_n . Then G is 3-free.

If $\langle U, V \rangle$ is not strongly maximal we can further obtain that a subgroup of rank 3 is either free or has a one-relator presentation.

Theorem B2. [F-R-R 2] Let $G = \langle a_1, \dots, a_n, t; tUt^{-1} = V \rangle$ be a conjugacy pinched one-relator group. Suppose that neither U nor V is a proper power in the free group on a_1, \dots, a_n and in this free group U is not conjugate to either V or V^{-1} . Let $H = \langle x_1, x_2, x_3 \rangle \subset G$. The H is free or has a one-relator presentation on $\langle x_1, x_2, x_3 \rangle$.

An analysis of the techniques used in the proof of Theorem B2 leads to several partial solutions of the isomorphism problem for conjugacy pinched one-relator groups. First:

Theorem B3. [F-R-R 2] Let $G = \langle a_1, \dots, a_n, t; tUt^{-1} = V \rangle$ be a conjugacy pinched one-relator group and suppose that neither U nor V is a proper power in the free group on a_1, \dots, a_n . Suppose further that there is no Nielsen transformation from $\{a_1, \dots, a_n\}$ to a system $\{b_1, \dots, b_n\}$ with $U \in \{b_1, \dots, b_{n-1}\}$ and that there is no Nielsen transformation from $\{a_1, \dots, a_n\}$ to a system $\{c_1, \dots, c_n\}$ with $V \in \{c_1, \dots, c_{n-1}\}$. Then:

- (1) G has rank $n + 1$ and for any minimal generating system for G there is a one-relator presentation.
- (2) The isomorphism problem for G is solvable, that is it can be decided algorithmically in finitely many steps whether an arbitrary given one-relator group is isomorphic to G .
- (3) G is Hopfian

We note that the results of the above theorem hold when $n = 2$ and U, V are elements of $F^p F'$ where F is the free group on a_1, a_2 and $F^p F'$ is the subgroup generated by the p th powers ($p \geq 2$) and the commutators.

The techniques developed for the proofs of Theorem B2 and B3 were also used in the study of the isomorphism problem for a class of para-free groups introduced by G. Baumslag. In particular in [GB 3] Gilbert Baumslag introduced the class of groups $G_{i,j}$ for natural numbers i, j , defined by the presentations

$$G_{i,j} = \langle a, b, t; a^{-1} = [b^i, a][b^j, t] \rangle$$

This class is of special interest since the groups are para-free, that is they share many properties with the free group F of rank 2. In particular, if $\gamma_n(G_{i,j})$ are the terms of the lower central series of $G_{i,j}$, then for all n , $G_{i,j}/\gamma_n(G_{i,j}) \cong F/\gamma_n(F)$ and further the intersection over all n of the $\gamma_n(G_{i,j})$ is $\{1\}$.

Magnus and Chandler [Ch-M] in their History of Combinatorial Group Theory mention the class $G_{i,j}$ to demonstrate the difficulty of the isomorphism problem for torsion-free one-relator groups. They remark that as of 1980 there was no proof showing that any of the groups $G_{i,j}$ are non-isomorphic. S. Liriano [Lir] used representations of $G_{i,j}$ into $\text{PSL}(2, p^k)$, $k \in \mathbb{N}$, to show that $G_{1,1}$ and $G_{30,30}$ are non-isomorphic.

Notice that if we let $U = a[b^i, a]b^j$ and $V = b^j$ then $G_{i,j}$ is a conjugacy pinched one-relator groups

$$G_{i,j} = \langle a, b, t; t^{-1}Ut = V \rangle.$$

If in addition $j = 1$ then $\langle b \rangle$ and $\langle a[b^i, a]b \rangle$ are maximal cyclic in $\langle a, b \rangle$ and hence malnormal and hence the techniques of Theorems B2 and B3 can be applied. Fine, Rosenberger and Stille [F-R-S 2] then proved:

Theorem B4. [F-R-S 2] *Let i be a natural number. Then:*

(1) *the isomorphism problem for $G_{i,1}$ is solvable, that is it can be decided algorithmically in finitely many steps whether or not an arbitrary one-relator group is isomorphic to $G_{i,1}$.*

(2) *$G_{i,1}$ is not isomorphic to $G_{1,1}$ for $i \geq 2$.*

(3) *if i, k are primes then*

$$G_{i,1} \cong G_{k,1} \text{ if and only if } i = k.$$

(4) *for all natural numbers i , $G_{i,1}$ is Hopfian, every automorphism of $G_{i,1}$ is induced by an automorphism of the free group $F^* = F^*(A, B, T)$ of rank 3, with respect to the epimorphism $A \rightarrow a, B \rightarrow b, T \rightarrow t$, and the automorphism group $\text{Aut } G_{i,1}$ is finitely generated.*

These techniques can also be applied to analyze a second class of groups further extending surface groups. These have the presentations

$$K_{\sigma, \alpha, n} = \langle a_1, \dots, a_n, t; t^{-1}a_1^\alpha \dots a_n^\alpha t = a_{\sigma(1)}^\alpha \dots a_{\sigma(n)}^\alpha \rangle \quad (2)$$

where $\alpha \in \mathbb{N}, n \in \mathbb{N}$ and $\sigma \in S_n$, that is σ is a permutation on $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$. Notice that if $\alpha = 1, n$ is odd and $\sigma = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 & \dots & n \\ n & n-1 & \dots & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ then $K_{\sigma, 1, n}$ is the surface group of genus $\frac{n+1}{2}$. Notice further that if $\alpha = 1$ the relator in $K_{\sigma, 1, n}$ is a quadratic word.

Theorem B5. [F-R-S 3] *Let $K_{\sigma, \alpha, n}$ be as above. If $\{x_1, \dots, x_{n+1}\}$ is a generating system of $K_{\sigma, \alpha, n}$ then $\{x_1, \dots, x_{n+1}\}$ is Nielsen equivalent to $\{a_1, \dots, a_n, t\}$.*

From the Nielsen cancellation method on quadratic words the following corollary is obtained.

Corollary B5. *If $\alpha = 1$ then $K_{\sigma,1,n}$ is a free product of a free group and a surface group. If n is even $K_{\sigma,1,n}$ is never a surface group.*

Kim[K], Niblo [N], Wise [W] and Rosenberger and Sasse[R-S] all considered the residual finiteness and subgroup separability of conjugacy pinched one-relator groups. Let G be a group and u, v elements of infinite order in G . G has regular quotients at u if there exists a positive integer m such that for each positive integer s there is a finite index normal subgroup N of G with $N \cap \langle u \rangle = \langle u^{ms} \rangle$. G has regular quotients at $\{u, v\}$ if there exists a positive integer m such that for each positive integer s there is a finite index normal subgroup N of G with $N \cap \langle u \rangle = \langle u^{ms} \rangle$ and $N \cap \langle v \rangle = \langle v^{ms} \rangle$. Niblo [Ni] and Kim [K] proved that if F is a free group and F has regular quotients at $\{U, V\}$ then the corresponding conjugacy pinched one-relator group $\langle F, t; tUt^{-1} = V \rangle$ is subgroup separable. D.Wise [W] subsequently showed that a free group has regular quotients at a pair of elements unless the elements have conjugate powers. Combining these we have the following.

Theorem B6. *Let $G = \langle a_1, \dots, a_n, t; tUt^{-1} = V \rangle$ be a conjugacy pinched one-relator group with U, V non-trivial elements of infinite order in the free group on a_1, \dots, a_n which do not have conjugate powers in this free group. Then G is subgroup separable.*

This result has been extended in various ways. Rosenberger and Sasse [Ro-S] proved the following.

Theorem B7. *Let A be a group and U, V be elements of infinite order in A and let $G = \langle A, t; tUt^{-1} = V \rangle$ be the HNN extension associating U and V . Suppose further that A has regular quotients at $\{U, V\}$ and that A is both $\langle U \rangle$ -separable and $\langle V \rangle$ -separable. Then G is residually finite.*

D.Wise [W] extended this in the following way. Recall that the Baumslag-Solitar group $BS(n, m)$ is the group $\langle a, t; ta^nt^{-1} = a^m \rangle$. If $n \neq \pm m$ then $BS(n, m)$ is not subgroup separable (see [Me]).

Theorem B8. [W] *Let*

$$G = \langle a_1, \dots, a_n, t_1, \dots, t_m; t_1 U_1 t_1^{-1} = V_1, \dots, t_m U_m t_m^{-1} = V_m \rangle$$

be a multiple cyclic HNN extension of the free group on a_1, \dots, a_n where $U_1, V_1, \dots, U_m, V_m$ are non-trivial cyclically reduced words in this free

group. Then G is subgroup separable unless it contains a subgroup isomorphic to $BS(m, n)$ with $n \neq \pm m$.

Wise and independently Aab [A] also considered the subgroup separability of graphs of free groups with cyclic edge groups, continuing the work of Brunner, Burns and Solitar [B-B-S], Tretkoff [T], Gitik [Gi], Kim [K] and Niblo [Ni] mentioned in the last section.

Conjugacy pinched one-relator groups also arise in the study of fully residually free groups. This is tied to some questions in logic studied by Gaglione and Spellman (see [G-S 1 2 3] and the references there) and independently by Myasnikov and Remeslennikov [M-R]. We must define some necessary concepts.

A group G is **residually free** if for each non-trivial $g \in G$ there is a free group F_g and an epimorphism $h_g : G \rightarrow F_g$ such that $h_g(g) \neq 1$ and is **fully residually free** provided to every finite set $S \subset G \setminus \{1\}$ of non-trivial elements of G there is a free group F_S and an epimorphism $h_S : G \rightarrow F_S$ such that $h_S(g) \neq 1$ for all $g \in S$. Clearly fully residually free implies residually free.

Further a group G is **universally free** if it has the same universal theory as the class of non-abelian free groups (see [F-G-R-S] for a precise formulation) and recall that it is **n -free** for a positive integer n , provided every subgroup of G generated by n or fewer distinct elements is free; **commutative transitive** if commutativity is transitive on the non-identity elements in G ; and **tree-free** if G acts freely on some Λ -tree in the sense of Bass [B] where Λ is some ordered abelian group. Gaglione and Spellman [G-S 6] and independently Remeslennikov [Re], extending a theorem of B. Baumslag [Ba 1] proved that if G is a non-abelian residually free group then the following are equivalent: (1) G is fully residually free; (2) G is commutative transitive; (3) G is universally free. Further they showed that universally free groups are tree free [G-S 5], [Re]. Fine, Gaglione, Rosenberger and Spellman [F-G-R-S] and again independently Remeslennikov [Re] showed that the converse is not true, that is there exist tree-free groups which are not universally free. In [F-G-M-R-S] it was proved every 2-free residually free group is 3-free. Since 2-free groups are commutative transitive (see section 2) it follows from the Baumslag result that 2-free residually free groups are fully residually free. There are fully residually free groups which are not 2-free and there are 3-free, fully residually free groups which are not 4-free

[F-G-R-S]. A very important construction in the development of these results is a special type of HNN extension called a rank one extension of centralizers. If the base group is free this is a special type of conjugacy pinched one-relator group. In particular let $G \neq 1$ be a commutative transitive group, let $u \in G \setminus \{1\}$ and let $M = Z_G(u)$. Then

$$G(u, t) = \langle G, t; \text{rel}(G), t^{-1}zt = z, \text{ for all } z \in M \rangle$$

is the free rank one extension of the centralizer M of u in G . Free groups are commutative transitive and in a free group centralizers are cyclic. Hence if the base is free the corresponding rank one extension of centralizers has the presentation $\langle F, t; tUt^{-1} = U \rangle$ which is a conjugacy pinched one-relator group.

Using these ideas Fine, Gaglione, Myasnikov, Rosenberger and Spellman [F-G-M-R-S] were able to give a complete classification of all fully residually free groups of rank three or less. In particular if G is a fully residually free group of rank ≤ 3 then G is either free, abelian or a free rank one centralizer extension of a free group of rank two. Specifically the main results are the following.

Theorem B9. *Every 3-generator, fully residually free group lies in \mathcal{F} , where \mathcal{F} is the smallest class of groups containing the infinite cyclic groups and closed under the following four "operators":*

- (1) *Isomorphism*
- (2) *Finitely Generated Subgroups*
- (3) *Free Products of Finitely Many Factors*
- (4) *Free Rank One Extensions of Centralizers.*

Theorem B10. *Every 2-free, residually free group is 3-free.*

We note that the proof of this theorem as well as the next using the Nielsen reduction techniques in HNN groups developed in [F-R-R 2].

Theorem B11. *Let G be a fully residually free group. Then*

- (1) *if $\text{rank}(G) = 1$ then G is infinite cyclic.*
- (2) *if $\text{rank}(G) = 2$ then either G is free of rank 2 or free abelian of rank 2*
- (3) *if $\text{rank}(G) = 3$ then either G is free of rank 3, free abelian of rank 3 or a free rank one extension of centralizers of a free group of rank 2. That is G has a one-relator presentation*

$$G = \langle x_1, x_2, x_3; x_3^{-1}vx_3 = v \rangle$$

where $v = v(x_1, x_2)$ is a non-trivial element of the free group on x_1, x_2 which is not a proper power.

Finally we mention hyperbolicity. Two elements U, V of a group G are conjugacy separated if no conjugate of $\langle U \rangle$ intersects non-trivially with a conjugate of $\langle V \rangle$. Kharlamopovich and Myasnikov [K-M] extended the result of Bestvina and Feighn to HNN groups. From their results we get the following.

Theorem B12. *Let $G = \langle a_1, \dots, a_n, t; tUt^{-1} = V \rangle$ be a conjugacy pinched one-relator group. If neither U nor V is a proper power and U, V are conjugacy separated in the free group on a_1, \dots, a_n then G is hyperbolic.*

References

- [A] M. Aab, *Graphen von Gruppen mit Untergruppenen Separabler Fundamentalgruppe*, Dissertation Dortmund (1995).
- [Al- T 1] R.B.J.T. Allenby and C.Y. Tang, *Residual finiteness of some one-relator groups with torsion*, J. Algebra **71** (1981), 132-140.
- [Al- T 2] R.B.J.T. Allenby and C.Y. Tang, *Subgroup Separability of generalized free products of free-by-finite groups*, to appear.
- [B] H. Bass, *Group actions on non-archimedean trees*, Arboreal Group Theory, Mathematical Sciences Research Publications, R.C. Alperin editor, Springer-Verlag New York, New York, 1991, pp. 69-131.
- [Ba 1] B. Baumslag, *Residually free groups*, Proc. London Math. Soc. **17** **3** (1967), 402-418.
- [Ba 2] B. Baumslag, *Free groups and free products*, Comm. Pure and Appl. Math. **20** (1967), 635-645.
- [G.B. 1] G. Baumslag, *A survey of groups with a single relation*, Proceedings of Groups St. Andrews 1985 LMS lecture Notes Series **121** (1986), 30-58.

- [G.B. 2] G. Baumslag, *On generalized free products*, Math. Z. **78** (1962), 423-438.
- [G.B. 3] G. Baumslag, *Groups with the same lower central series as a relatively free group. II. Properties*, Trans. AMS **142** (1969), 507-538.
- [B-S 1] G. Baumslag and P. Shalen, *Groups whose three generator subgroups are free*, Bull. Austral. Math. Soc. **40** (1989), 163-174.
- [B-S 2] G. Baumslag and P. Shalen, *Amalgamated Products and Finitely Presented Groups*, Comment. Math. Helv. **65** (1990), 243-254.
- [Be-F] M. Bestvina and M. Feighn, *Hyperbolicity of Amalgamated Free products*, to appear.
- [Bi] R. Bieri, *Homological Dimension of Discrete Groups*, Queen Mary College Mathematics Notes, 1976.
- [Ch-M] B. Chandler and W. Magnus, *The History of Combinatorial Group Theory*, Springer-Verlag 1982.
- [Dy] J.L. Dyer, *Separating Conjugates in Amalgamated Free Products and HNN Extensions*, J. Austr. Math Soc. Ser. A **29** (1980), 35-51.
- [F-G-R-S] B. Fine, A. Gaglione, G. Rosenberger and D. Spellman, *n-free groups and questions about universally free groups*, - Proceedings Groups St Andrews/Galway 1993 -London Math Soc. Lecture Notes Series 211 (1995), 191-204.
- [F-G-M-R-S] B. Fine, A. Gaglione, A. Myasnikov, G. Rosenberger and D. Spellman, *A Classification of Fully Residually Free Groups*, J. Alg., to appear.
- [F-P] B. Fine and A. Peluso, *Amalgam Decompositions for One-Relator Groups*, J. Pure and Appl. Alg., to appear.
- [F-R-R 1] B. Fine, F. Röhl and G. Rosenberger, *Two generator subgroups of certain HNN groups*, Contemporary Math. **109** (1990), 19-23.

- [F-R-R 2] B. Fine, F. Röhl and G. Rosenberger, *On HNN groups whose three-generator subgroups are free*, Infinite Groups and Group Rings, World Scientific, 1993, pp. 13–37.
- [F-R 1] B. Fine and G. Rosenberger, *The Freiheitssatz and its Extensions*, Cont. Math. **169** (1994), 213-252.
- [F-R 2] B. Fine and G. Rosenberger, *Generalizing Algebraic Properties of Fuchsian Groups*, in Proceedings of Groups St. Andrews 1989, London Mathematical Soc. Lecture Notes Series 159, 1989 1, pp. 124-148.
- [F-R 3] B. Fine and G. Rosenberger, *Groups of F-Type: Reflections and Extensions*, Group Theory (Sehgal and Solomon, eds.), 1993, pp. 93-127.
- [F-R-S 1] B. Fine, G. Rosenberger and M. Stille, *Nielsen Transformations and Applications: A Survey*, Groups Korea 1994 (Kim-Johnson, eds.), DeGruyter, 1995, pp. 69-105.
- [F-R-S 2] B. Fine, G. Rosenberger and M. Stille, *The Isomorphism problem for a Class of Parafree Groups*, Proc. Edinburgh Math. Soc., to appear 1997.
- [F-R-S 3] B. Fine, G. Rosenberger and M. Stille, *A Note on a Class of Groups Extending Surface Groups*, to appear.
- [G-S 1] A. Gaglione and D. Spellman, *Generalizations of free groups: some questions*, Comm. in Alg. **22 8** (1993), 3159-3169.
- [G-S 2] A. Gaglione and D. Spellman, *Parametric words and models of the elementary theory of non-abelian free groups*, - Proceedings Groups St Andrews/Galway 1993 -London Math Soc.Lecture Notes Series 211 (1995), 233-248.
- [G-S 3] A. Gaglione and D. Spellman, *Some Model Theory of Free Groups and Free Algebras*, Houston J. Math **19** (1993), 327-356.
- [G-S 4] A. Gaglione and D. Spellman, *More Model Theory of Free Groups*, Houston J. Math **21** (1995), 225-245.

- [G-S 5] A. Gaglione and D. Spellman, *Every Universally Free Group is Tree Free*, Proc. Ohio State Conference for H. Zassenhaus (1993), World Scientific, 149-154.
- [G-S 6] A. Gaglione and D. Spellman, *Even More Model Theory of Free Groups*, Infinite Groups and Group Rings, World Scientific, 1993, pp. 37-40.
- [Gi] R. Gitik, *Graphs and Separability Properties of Groups*, MSRI Reprint No. 048-95 (1995).
- [G] M. Gromov, *Hyperbolic Groups*, Essays in Group Theory S. Gersten ed. MSRI Publication 8, Springer-Verlag, 1987.
- [J] A. Juhasz, *Solution of the Conjugacy Problem in One-Relator Groups*, Algorithms and Classification in Combinatorial Group Theory (G. Baumslag and C. F. Miller. eds.), MSRI, (1992), pp. 69-81.
- [J-R] A. Juhasz and G. Rosenberger, *On the Combinatorial Curvature of Groups of F-type and Other One-Relator Products of Cyclics*, Cont. Math. 169 (1994), 373-384.
- [K-M-S] A. Karrass, W. Magnus and D. Solitar, *Elements of Finite Order in a Group with a Single Defining Relation*, Comm. Pure and Appl. Math. 13 (1960), 57-66.
- [K-M] O. Kharlamovich and A. Myasnikov, *Hyperbolic Groups and Free Constructions*, Trans. Amer. Math. Soc., to appear.
- [K] G. Kim, *Cyclic Subgroup Separability of HNN Extensions*, Bull. Korean Math. Soc. 30 (1993), 285-293.
- [Li] S. Lipschutz, *The conjugacy problem and cyclic amalgamation*, Bull. Amer. Math. Soc. 81 (1975), 114-116.
- [Lir] S. Liriano, *The non-isomorphism of two one-relator groups is established*, Ph. D. thesis New York 1993.
- [M] W. Magnus, *Das Identitätsproblem für Gruppen mit einer definierenden Relation*, Math. Ann. 106 (1932), 295-307.

- [M-K-S] W. Magnus, A. Karrass, and D. Solitar, *Combinatorial Group Theory* -, Wiley 1966, Second Edition, Dover Publications, New York, 1976.
- [Me] S. Meskin, *Non-Residually Finite One-Relator Groups*, Trans. Amer. Math. Soc. **164** (1972), 105-114.
- [M-Re] A. G. Myasnikov and V. N. Remeslennikov, *Exponential groups 1: Foundations of the theory and tensor completion University*, N9 (1993), 1-25.
- [M-Re 1] A. G. Myasnikov and V. N. Remeslennikov, *Exponential groups, preprint, New York* (1994).
- [M-Re 2] A. G. Myasnikov and V. N. Remeslennikov, *Exponential groups 2: Extensions of centralizers and tensor completion of CSA groups, to appear*.
- [Ne 1] B. B. Newman, *Some results on One-Relator Groups*, Bull. Amer. Math. Soc. **74** (1968), 568-571.
- [Ne 2] B. B. Newman, *Soluble Subgroups of One-Relator Groups with Torsion*, J. Austr. Math. Soc. **16** (1973), 278-285.
- [Ni] G. A. Niblo, *HNN Extensions of a Free Group by Z Which are Subgroup Separable*, -Proc. London Math. Soc. **61** (1990), 18-32.
- [P-R] N. Peczynski and W. Reiwer, *On cancellations in HNN groups*, Math. Z. **158** (1978), 79-86.
- [Re] V. N. Remeslennikov, *\exists -free groups and groups with a length function, preprint*.
- [Ro 1] G. Rosenberger, *On one-relator groups that are free products of two free groups with cyclic amalgamation*, Groups St Andrews 1981 (1983), 328-344.
- [Ro 2] G. Rosenberger, *The isomorphism problem for cyclically pinched one-relator groups*, J. Pure and Applied Algebra - **95** (1994), 75-86.
- [Ro 3] G. Rosenberger, *Zum Isomorphieproblem für Gruppen mit einer definierenden Relation*, Ill. J. Math. **20** (1976), 614-621.

- [Ro 4] G. Rosenberger, *Gleichungen in freien Produkten mit Amalgam*, Math. Z. **173** (1980), 1-12 Correction: Math. Z. **178** (1981), 579.
- [Ro 5] G. Rosenberger, *Applications of Nielsen's Reduction Method in the Solution of Combinatorial Problems in Group Theory*, London Math. Soc. Lecture Notes **36** (1979), 339-358.
- [Ro-S] G. Rosenberger and S. L. Sasse, *Residual Properties of HNN Extensions with Cyclic Associated Subgroups*, Algebra Colloq. **3** (1996), 91-96.
- [Sh] P. Shalen, *Linear representations of certain amalgamated products*, J. Pure and Applied Algebra **15** (1979), 187-197.
- [We] B.A.F. Wehrfritz, *Generalized Free products of Linear Groups*, Proc. London Math. Soc. **27** **3** (1973), 402-424.
- [W] D. Wise, *Subgroup Separability of Cyclic HNN Extensions of Free Groups*, to appear.
- [Z] H. Zieschang, *Über die Nielsensche Kurzungsmethode in freien Produkten mit Amalgam*, Invent. Math. **10** (1970), 4-37.

Benjamin Fine
Department of Mathematics
Fairfield University
Fairfield
Connecticut 06430
United States

Gerhard Rosenberger
Fachbereich Mathematik Universität
Dortmund
44221 Dortmund
Federal Republic of Germany

Michael Stille
Fachbereich Mathematik Universität
Dortmund
44221 Dortmund
Federal Republic of Germany

Recibido: 10 de Marzo de 1997
Revisado: 15 de Junio de 1997