

# Contents

Preface	xi
Origin of the book and structure of the chapters	xi
Some notes on using the book as a course text	xi
Acknowledgments	xii
Chapter 1. Background: Simple groups and their properties	1
Introduction: Statement of the CFSG—the list of simple groups	1
1.1. Alternating groups	2
1.2. Sporadic groups	3
1.3. Groups of Lie type	5
Some easy applications of the CFSG-list	19
1.4. Structure of $\mathcal{K}$ -groups: Via components in $F^*(G)$	20
1.5. Outer automorphisms of simple groups	23
1.6. Further CFSG-consequences: e.g. doubly-transitive groups	25
Chapter 2. Outline of the proof of the CFSG: Some main ideas	29
2.0. A start: Proving the Odd/Even Dichotomy Theorem	29
2.1. Treating the Odd Case: Via standard form	36
2.2. Treating the Even Case: Via trichotomy and standard type	38
2.3. Afterword: Comparison with later CFSG approaches	44
Applying the CFSG toward Quillen’s Conjecture on $\mathcal{S}_p(G)$	45
2.4. Introduction: The poset $\mathcal{S}_p(G)$ and the contractibility conjecture	45
2.5. Quillen-dimension and the solvable case	47
2.6. The reduction of the $p$ -solvable case to the solvable case	49
2.7. Other uses of the CFSG in the Aschbacher-Smith proof	52
Chapter 3. Thompson Factorization—and its failure: FF-methods	55
Introduction: Some forms of the Frattini factorization	55
3.1. Thompson Factorization: Using $J(T)$ as weakly-closed “ $W$ ”	57
3.2. Failure of Thompson Factorization: FF-methods	59
3.3. Pushing-up: FF-modules in Aschbacher blocks	61
3.4. Weak-closure factorizations: Using other weakly-closed “ $W$ ”	66
Applications related to the Martino-Priddy Conjecture	70
3.5. The conjecture on classifying spaces and fusion systems	70
3.6. Oliver’s proof of Martino-Priddy using the CFSG	72
3.7. Oliver’s conjecture on $J(T)$ for $p$ odd	74
Chapter 4. Recognition theorems for simple groups	77
Introduction: Finishing classification problems	77
4.1. Recognizing alternating groups	80

4.2. Recognizing Lie-type groups	80
4.3. Recognizing sporadic groups	82
Applications to recognizing some quasithin groups	84
4.4. Background: 2-local structure in the quasithin analysis	84
4.5. Recognizing rank-2 Lie-type groups	86
4.6. Recognizing the Rudvalis group $Ru$	87
Chapter 5. Representation theory of simple groups	89
Introduction: Some standard general facts about representations	89
5.1. Representations for alternating and symmetric groups	91
5.2. Representations for Lie-type groups	92
5.3. Representations for sporadic groups	97
Applications to Alperin's conjecture	98
5.4. Introduction: The Alperin Weight Conjecture (AWC)	98
5.5. Reductions of the AWC to simple groups	99
5.6. A closer look at verification for the Lie-type case	100
A glimpse of some other applications of representations	102
Chapter 6. Maximal subgroups and primitive representations	105
Introduction: Maximal subgroups and primitive actions	105
6.1. Maximal subgroups of symmetric and alternating groups	106
6.2. Maximal subgroups of Lie-type groups	110
6.3. Maximal subgroups of sporadic groups	113
Some applications of maximal subgroups	114
6.4. Background: Broader areas of applications	114
6.5. Random walks on $S_n$ and minimal generating sets	115
6.6. Applications to $p$ -exceptional linear groups	117
6.7. The probability of 2-generating a simple group	119
Chapter 7. Geometries for simple groups	121
Introduction: The influence of Tits's theory of buildings	121
7.1. The simplex for $S_n$ ; later giving an apartment for $GL_n(q)$	122
7.2. The building for a Lie-type group	125
7.3. Geometries for sporadic groups	129
Some applications of geometric methods	131
7.4. Geometry in classification problems	131
7.5. Geometry in representation theory	133
7.6. Geometry applied for local decompositions	136
Chapter 8. Some fusion techniques for classification problems	139
8.1. Glauberman's $Z^*$ -theorem	139
8.2. The Thompson Transfer Theorem	143
8.3. The Bender-Suzuki Strongly Embedded Theorem	145
Analogous $p$ -fusion results for odd primes $p$	149
8.4. The $Z_p^*$ -theorem for odd $p$	149
8.5. Thompson-style transfer for odd $p$	150
8.6. Strongly $p$ -embedded subgroups for odd $p$	150
Chapter 9. Some applications close to finite group theory	153
9.1. Distance-transitive graphs	153

9.2. The proportion of $p$ -singular elements	154
9.3. Root subgroups of maximal tori in Lie-type groups	156
Some applications more briefly treated	157
9.4. Frobenius' conjecture on solutions of $x^n = 1$	157
9.5. Subgroups of prime-power index in simple groups	158
9.6. Application to 2-generation and module cohomology	159
9.7. Minimal nilpotent covers and solvability	160
9.8. Computing composition factors of permutation groups	160
Chapter 10. Some applications farther afield from finite groups	161
10.1. Polynomial subgroup-growth in finitely-generated groups	161
10.2. Relative Brauer groups of field extensions	162
10.3. Monodromy groups of coverings of Riemann surfaces	163
Some exotic applications more briefly treated	165
10.4. Locally finite simple groups and Moufang loops	165
10.5. Waring's problem for simple groups	167
10.6. Expander graphs and approximate groups	167
<b>Appendix</b>	169
Appendix A. Some supplementary notes to the text	171
A.1. Notes for 6.1.1: Deducing the structures-list for $S_n$	171
A.2. Notes for 8.2.1: The cohomological view of the transfer map	172
A.3. Notes for (8.3.4): Some details of proofs in Holt's paper	174
Appendix B. Further remarks on certain exercises	183
B.1. Some exercises from Chapter 1	183
B.2. Some exercises from Chapter 4	184
B.3. Some exercises from Chapter 5	191
B.4. Some exercises from Chapter 6	193
Bibliography	199
Index	213