

## Re: Another algorithmic complexity question

**Source:** <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/Lisp/comp.lang.lisp/2003-11/2975.html>

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**Date:** 11/27/03

Date: 26 Nov 2003 20:03:07 -0500

Christophe Rhodes <[csr21@cam.ac.uk](mailto:csr21@cam.ac.uk)> writes:

> *David Steuber* <[david.steuber@verizon.net](mailto:david.steuber@verizon.net)> writes:  
>  
>> *Paul Dietz* <[paul.f.dietz@motorola.com](mailto:paul.f.dietz@motorola.com)> writes:  
>>  
>>> *I believe he means no fully ANSI compliant implementation of Lisp has  
>>> ever been built (individually or collectively). Some come close, but  
>>> perfection is elusive.*  
>>  
>> *For some reason I find that rather disturbing. Is it really that  
>> complex? Or are there other reasons?*  
>  
> *It seems to be quite tricky. I don't think it's for want of trying  
> (though it may be for want of market pressure).*  
>  
> *As we say these days, "patches welcome" :-)*

Well, "actual" compliance means bug-free. That's hard to assure in a system of the size of a CL.

This is the reason I created the term "purports to conform", which a lot of implementations do. In effect, what that means is "willing to receive bug reports where non-conformance is detected".

I think in practice the notion of purporting to conform is much more meaningful than the notion of actual conformance. In fact, it's theoretically possible to actually conform without intending to and without a commitment to continuing to be that way on an ongoing basis... or even without detecting the fact. It's the commitment that matters, not the "incidental" fact.