

COVARIANT PRESCRIPTIONS FOR HOLOGRAPHIC ENTANGLEMENT

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[based on work w/ Matt Headrick, 2208.10507]

AdS/CFT after 25 years

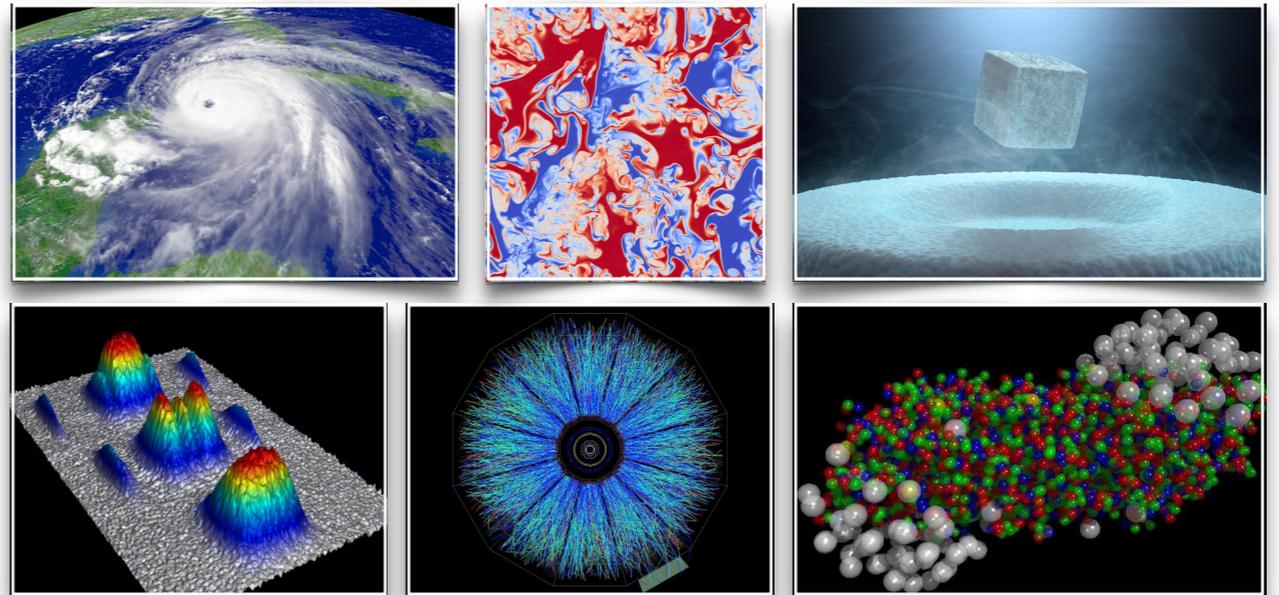
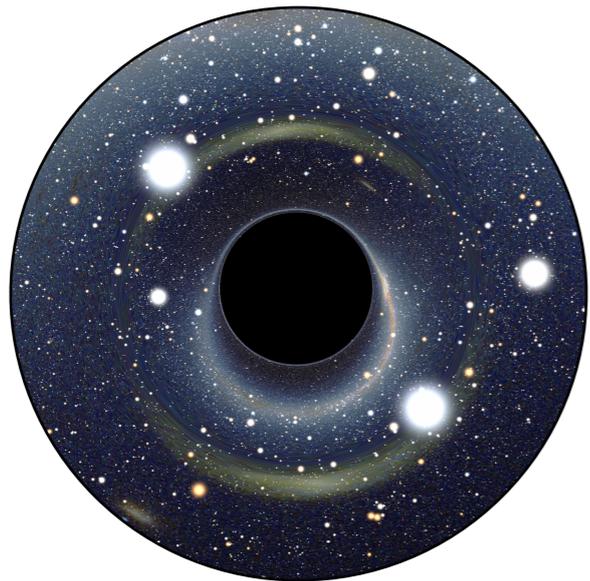
String theory (gravity) \iff field theory (no gravity)

“in bulk” = higher dimensions

“on boundary” = lower dimensions

describes gravitating systems, e.g. black holes

describes experimentally accessible systems



Invaluable tool to:

- ~ Study **strongly interacting field theory** (hard, but describes many systems) by working with higher-dimensional gravity on AdS (easy).
- ~ Study **quantum gravity** in AdS (hard, but needed to understand spacetime) by using the field theory (easy for certain things)

Pre-requisite:

We need to understand the AdS/CFT dictionary...

- How does bulk spacetime emerge from the CFT?
 - Which CFT quantities give the bulk metric?
 - What determines bulk dynamics (Einstein's eq.)?
 - How does one recover a local bulk operator from CFT quantities?
- What part of bulk can we recover from a restricted CFT info?
 - What bulk region does a CFT state (at a given instant in time) encode?
 - What bulk region does a spatial subregion of CFT state encode?
- (How) does the CFT “see” inside a black hole?
 - (How) does it unitarily describe black hole formation & evaporation process?
 - How does it resolve curvature singularities?

Recent hints / expectations: entanglement plays a crucial role...

Entanglement Entropy (EE)

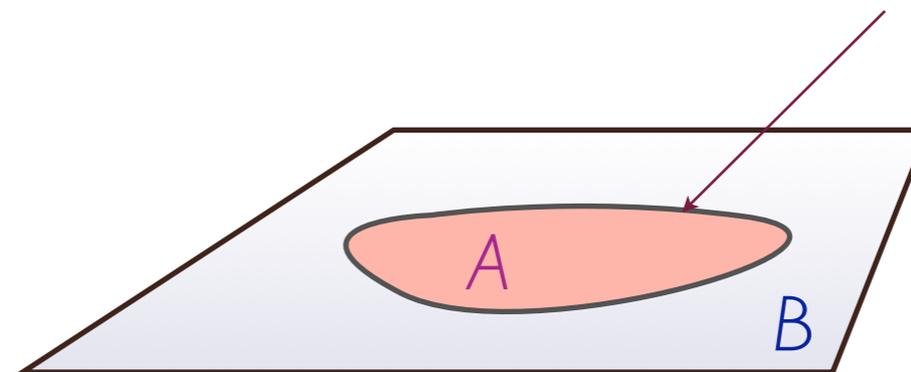
Suppose we only have access to a subsystem A of the full system $= A + B$. The amount of entanglement is characterized by Entanglement Entropy S_A :

- reduced density matrix $\rho_A = \text{Tr}_B |\psi\rangle\langle\psi|$
(more generally, for a mixed total state, $\rho_A = \text{Tr}_B \rho$)

- EE = von Neumann entropy $S_A = -\text{Tr} \rho_A \log \rho_A$

- e.g. in local QFT:

A and B can be spatial regions, separated by a smooth entangling surface

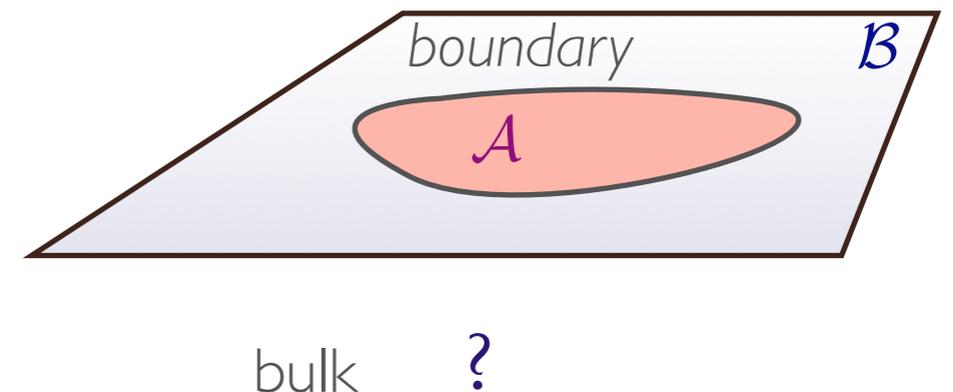


The good news & the bad news

- **But** EE is hard to deal with...
 - non-local quantity, intricate & sensitive to environment
 - difficult to measure
 - difficult to calculate... especially in strongly-coupled quantum systems

- **AdS/CFT to the rescue?**

- ~ Is there a natural bulk dual of EE?
(= “Holographic EE”)



Yes! - described geometrically...

Motivation

- Holography:
 - Tool to elucidate quantum gravity -- dictionary?
- Entanglement:
 - Expected to underlie bulk spacetime emergence -- how?
 - Usefully characterized via entanglement entropy -- underlying structure?
 - → Reformulate holographic entanglement entropy (HEE)
- General covariance:
 - Required for any physical quantity
 - Needed to probe time dependence
 - Complementary toolkit; breaks degeneracy
 - May yield crucial insights

OUTLINE

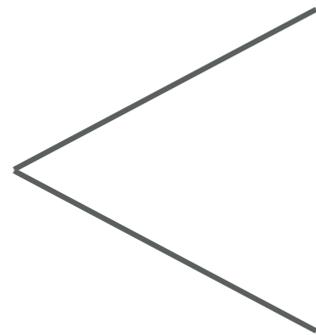
☑ Motivation

□ Background

□ Setup & Toolkit

□ Results

□ Summary



• Surfaces

• Threads

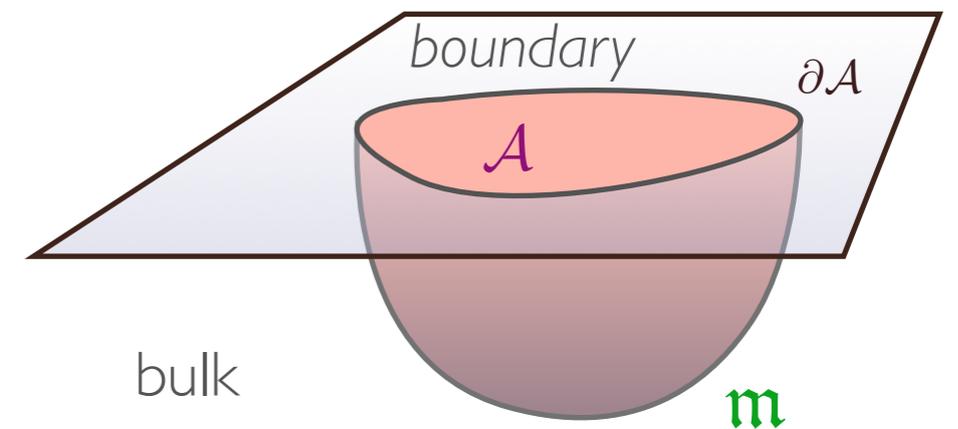
• Expectations

RT and HRT

Proposal [RT=Ryu & Takayanagi, '06] for *static* configurations:

In the bulk, entanglement entropy S_A for a boundary region A is captured by the area of a minimal co-dimension-2 bulk surface m at constant t homologous to A

$$S_A = \min_{\partial m = \partial A} \frac{\text{Area}(m)}{4G_N}$$



In *time-dependent* situations, RT prescription needs to be covariantized:

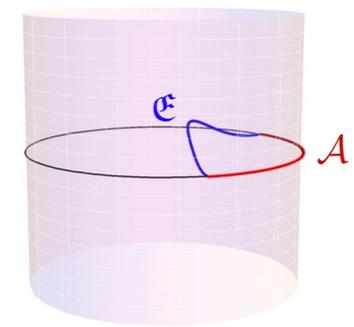
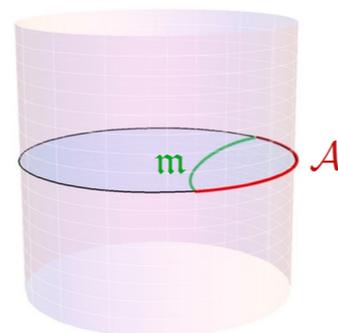
[HRT =VH, Rangamani, Takayanagi '07]

minimal surface m
at constant time



extremal surface \mathcal{E}
in the full bulk

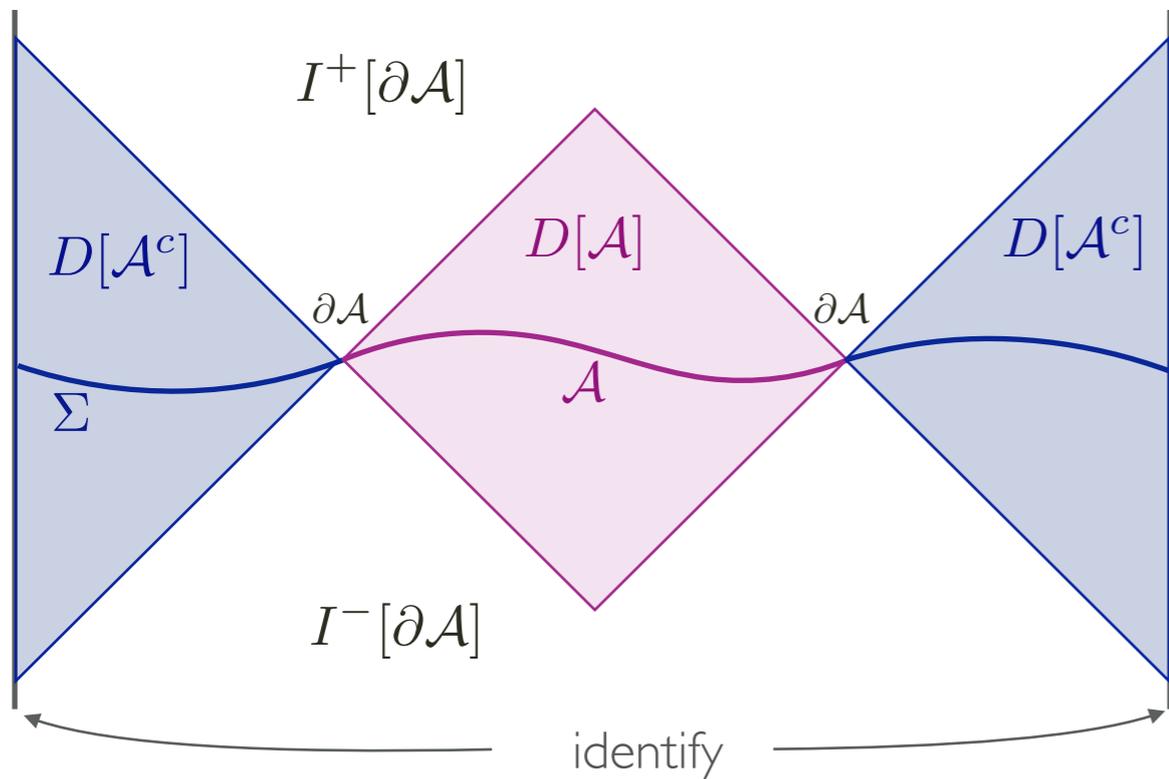
This gives a well-defined quantity in any (arbitrarily time-dependent asymptotically AdS) spacetime.



Entanglement wedge

- Boundary spacetime partition from entangling surface $\partial\mathcal{A}$:

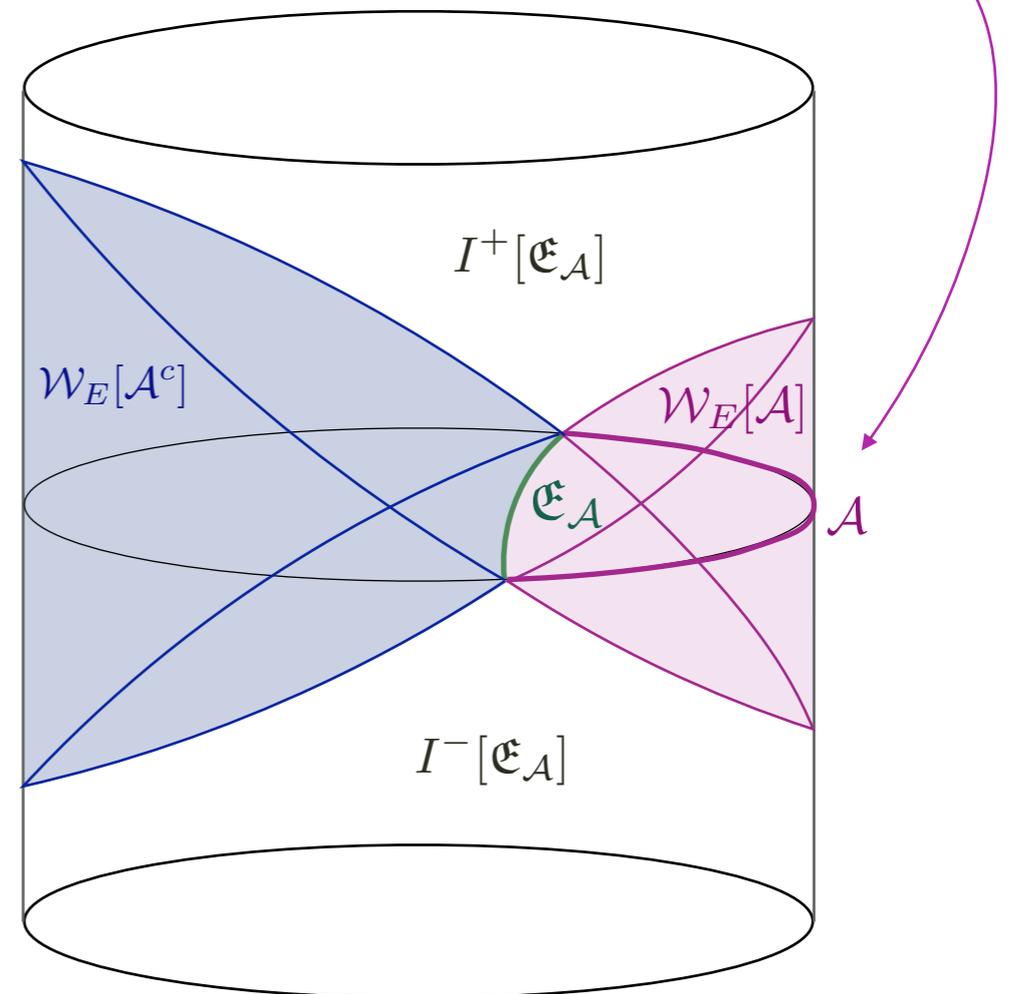
$$\partial\mathcal{M} = D[\mathcal{A}] \cup D[\mathcal{A}^c] \cup I^-[\partial\mathcal{A}] \cup I^+[\partial\mathcal{A}]$$



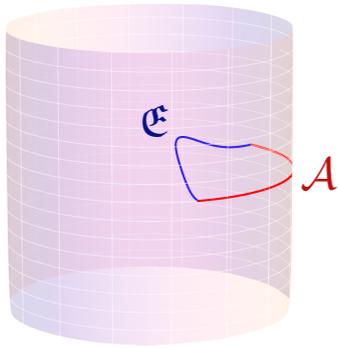
- Induces a corresponding partition into 4 bulk regions from $\mathfrak{E}_{\mathcal{A}}$:

$$\mathcal{M} = \mathcal{W}_E[\mathcal{A}] \cup \mathcal{W}_E[\mathcal{A}^c] \cup I^-[\mathfrak{E}_{\mathcal{A}}] \cup I^+[\mathfrak{E}_{\mathcal{A}}]$$

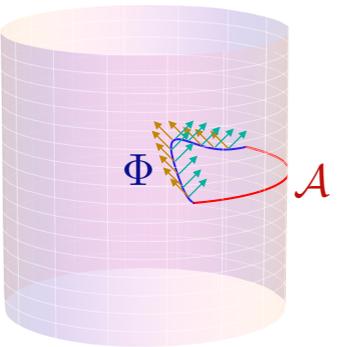
entanglement wedge of \mathcal{A}



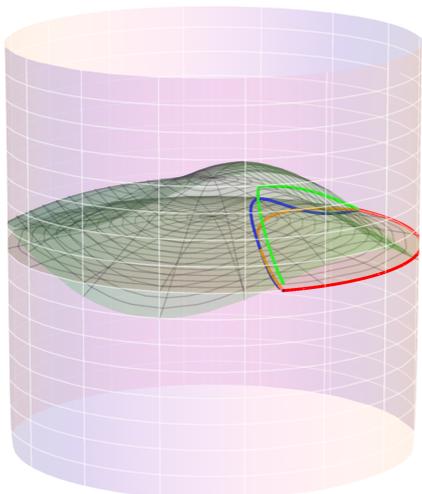
Extremal surface reformulations



- \mathcal{E} = Extremal surface
 - (relatively) easy to find
 - minimal set of ingredients required in specification
 - need to include homology constraint as extra requirement



- Φ = Surface with zero null expansions [HRT]
 - (cf. light sheet construction & covariant entropy bound [Bousso, '99]:
Bulk entropy through light sheet of surface $\sigma \leq \text{Area}(\sigma)/4$)
 - Φ = surface admitting a light sheet closest to bdy



- Maximin surface [Wall, '12]
 - maximize over minimal-area surface on a spacelike slice
 - requires the entire collection of slices & surfaces
 - implements homology constraint automatically
 - useful for proofs (e.g. SSA)
- Minimax surface -- discussed later...

Geometrically, all of these are ultimately the same construct...

Curiosities / drawbacks of surfaces

- Naively (from UV/IR intuition) over-localized
- Arbitrarily large jumps in entanglement wedge (at 'phase transitions')



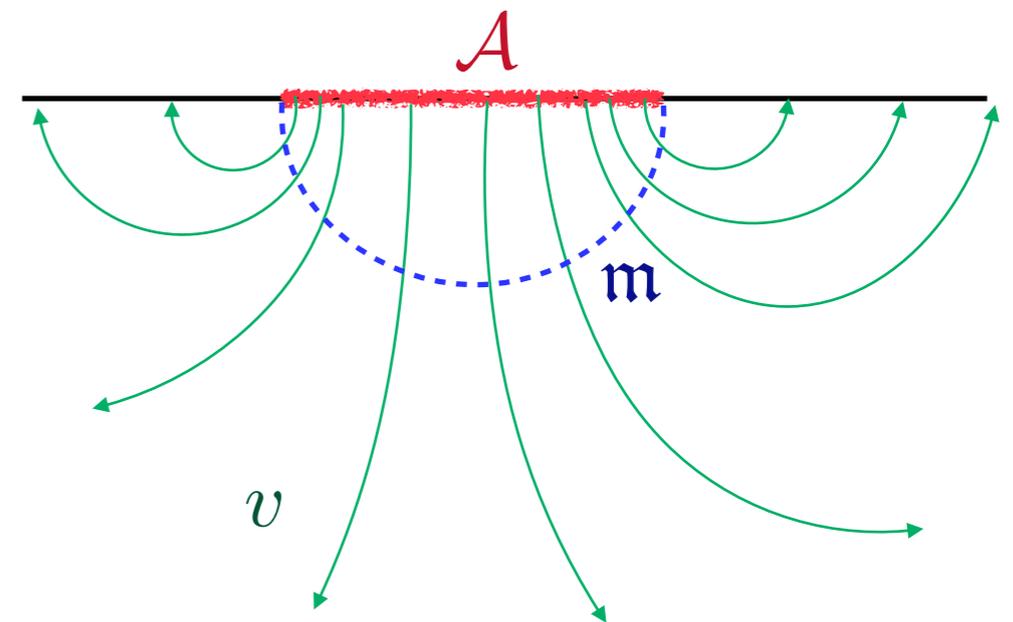
- Does not elucidate the relation to quantum information...
 - Where does the information live?
 - Mutual information $I(A:B) = S(A) + S(B) - S(AB)$ is given by surfaces located in different spacetime regions.
 - Geometric proof of SSA ($S(AB) + S(BC) \geq S(B) + S(ABC)$) obscures its meaning as monotonicity under inclusion of correlations...

Riemannian bit-threads

- Reformulate EE in terms of flux of flow v [Freedman & Headrick, '16]
 - let v be a vector field satisfying $\nabla \cdot v = 0$ and $|v| \leq 1$. Then EE is given by

$$S_{\mathcal{A}} = \max_v \int_{\mathcal{A}} v$$

- By Max Flow - Min Cut theorem, equivalent to RT:
(bottleneck for flow = minimal surface)
- Useful reformulation of HEE:
 - flow continuous under varying region (while bottlenecks can jump discontinuously)
 - automatically implements homology constraint and global minimization of RT
 - maximal flow defined even without a regulator (when flux has UV divergence)
 - can be computed more efficiently (via linear programming methods)
 - implements QI meaning of EE and its inequalities more naturally
 - provides more intuition: think of each bit thread as connecting an EPR pair

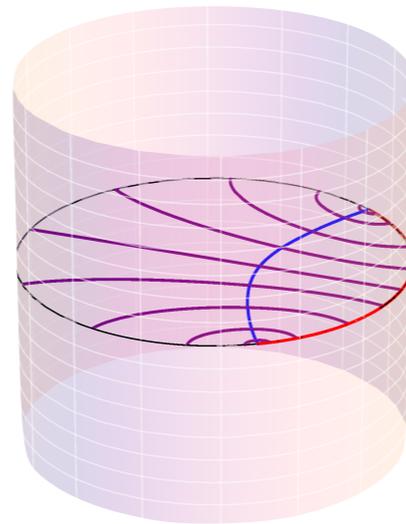
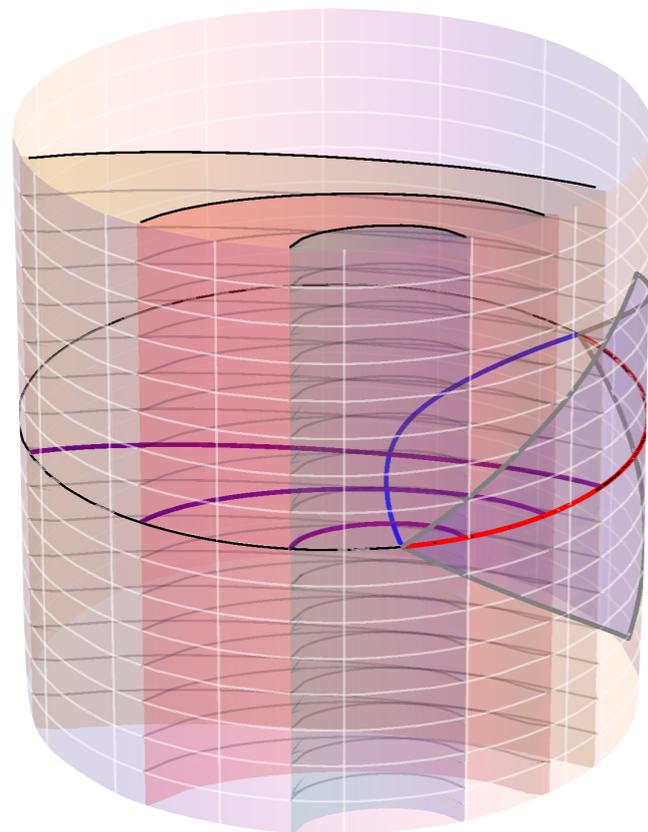


Primary question:

How do Riemannian threads

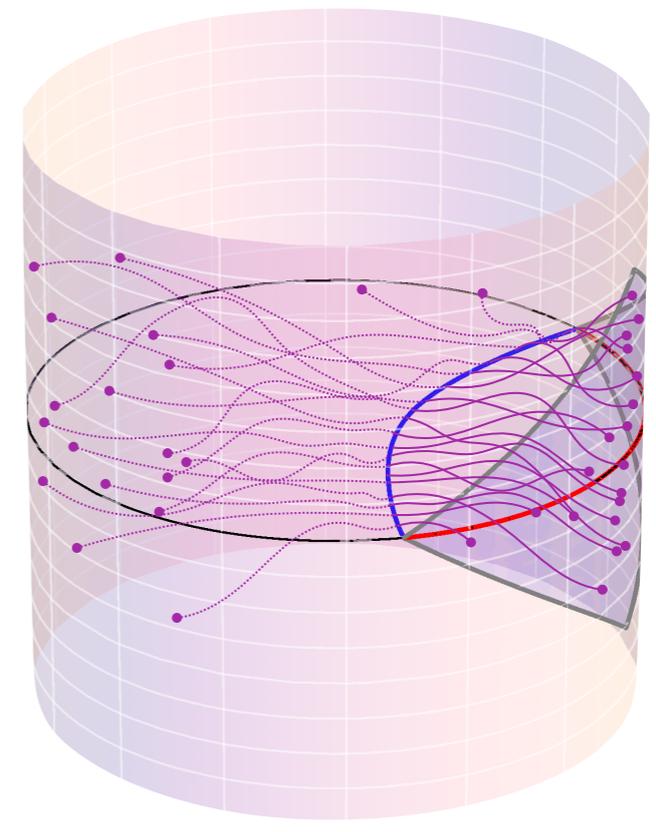
\exists 2 natural possibilities:

extend threads in time
flow sheets



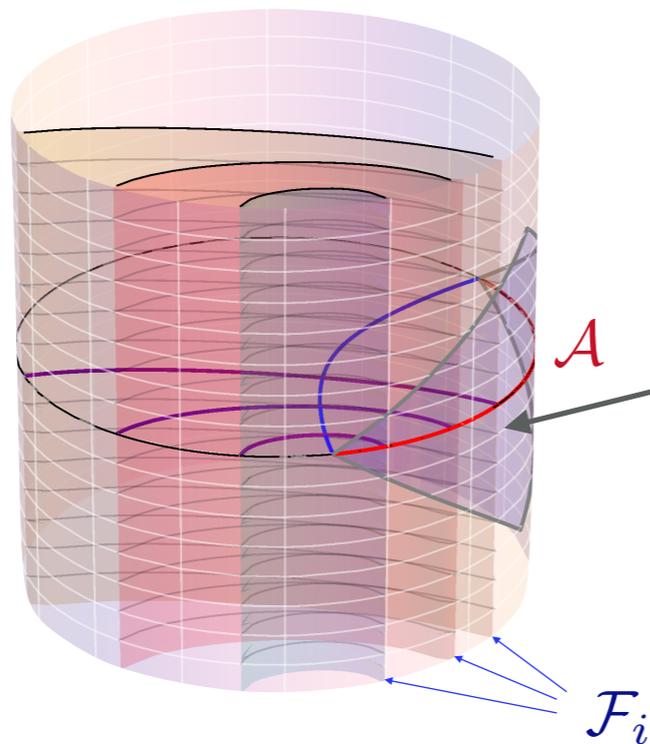
covariantize?

keep 1-d threads
flow lines



Naive expectations

- Extend in time:
 - boundary EPR pair \leadsto pair of worldlines
 - bit thread \leadsto "bit cloth" / "flow sheet" = timelike worldsheet \mathcal{F}



- cf. slice codim.-1 RT surf. \Leftrightarrow 1-d bit thread
 \leadsto bulk codim.-2 HRT surf. \Leftrightarrow 2-d flow sheet

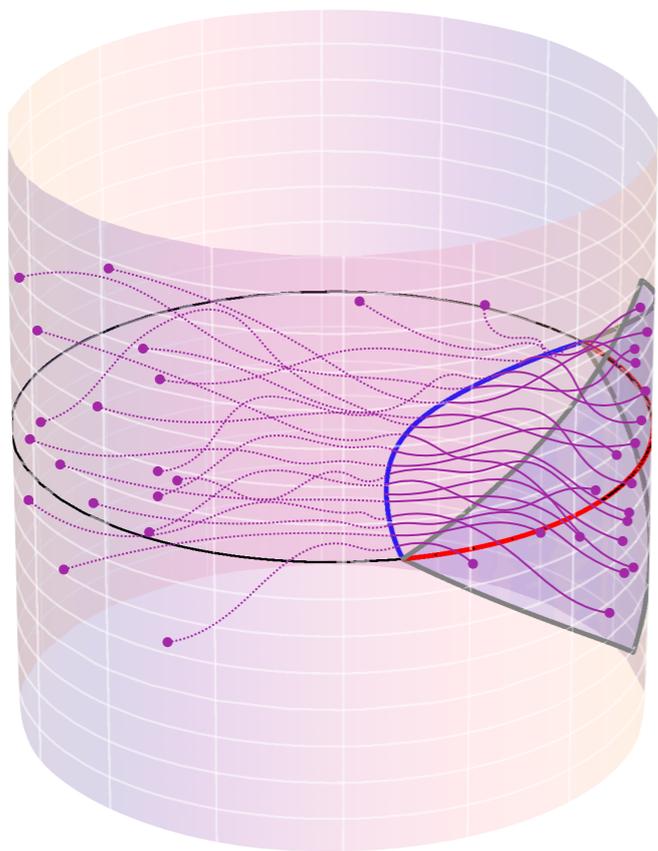
$$S_{\mathcal{A}} \stackrel{?}{=} \# \text{ sheets through } D[\mathcal{A}]$$

(w/ \mathcal{F} subject to requisite norm bound
& can't end in bulk)

- But:
 - norm bound too global
 - generically no canonical way of "evolving" $\partial\mathcal{A}(t)$
 - even for fixed $\{\mathcal{A}(t), \forall t\}$, \mathcal{F} depends on t-foliation...

Naive expectations

- EE pertains to a given instant in time
 - in strongly interacting QFT, EPR pair localizes only for short duration \leadsto bdy events
 - cf. entanglement distillation



Suggests **threads** from $D[\mathcal{A}]$ to $D[\mathcal{A}^c]$

$$S_{\mathcal{A}} \stackrel{?}{=} \# \text{ threads from } D[\mathcal{A}]$$

- ?: what are the restrictions on these threads?
- Are they localized to certain spacetime regions?
 - Is their density bounded?
 - Can they be timelike?

OUTLINE

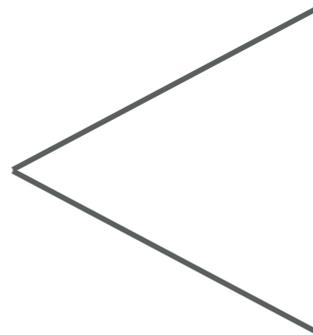
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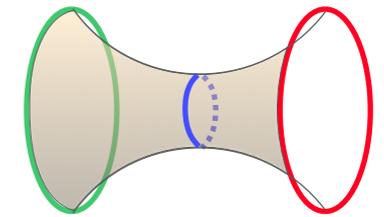
▣ Summary



- HEE regulator
- Beyond holography
- Lagrangian duality

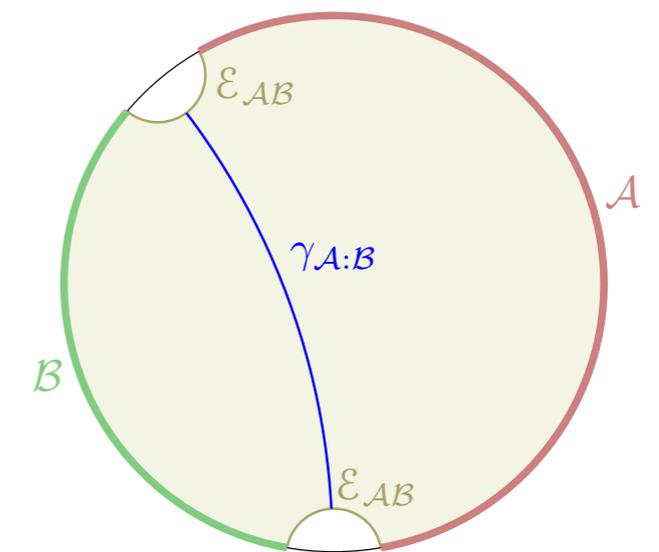
HEE regulator

- NB. finite HEE for multi-boundary wormholes for \mathcal{A} = entire piece of connected bdy Cauchy slice

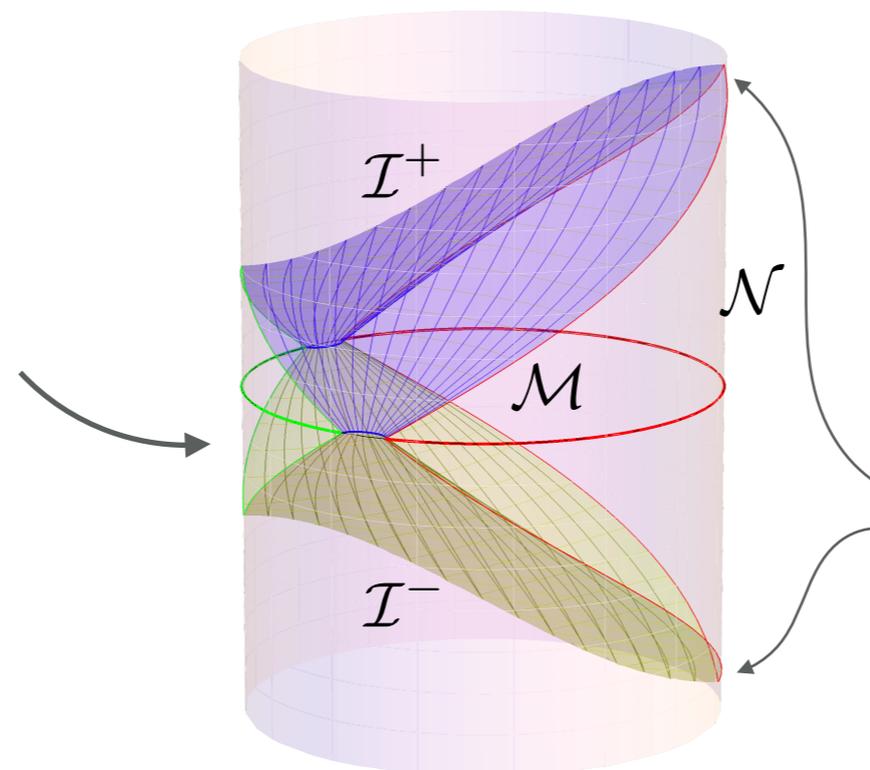


- Regulate HEE via entanglement wedge cross section [Dutta, Faulkner, '19]
 - widen $\partial\mathcal{A}$ to separate \mathcal{A} and $\mathcal{A}^c := \mathcal{B}$

$$S_{\mathcal{A}} := \frac{\text{Area}(\gamma_{\mathcal{A}:\mathcal{B}})}{4G_N}$$



- relevant part of ST inside EW of $\mathcal{A}\mathcal{B}$

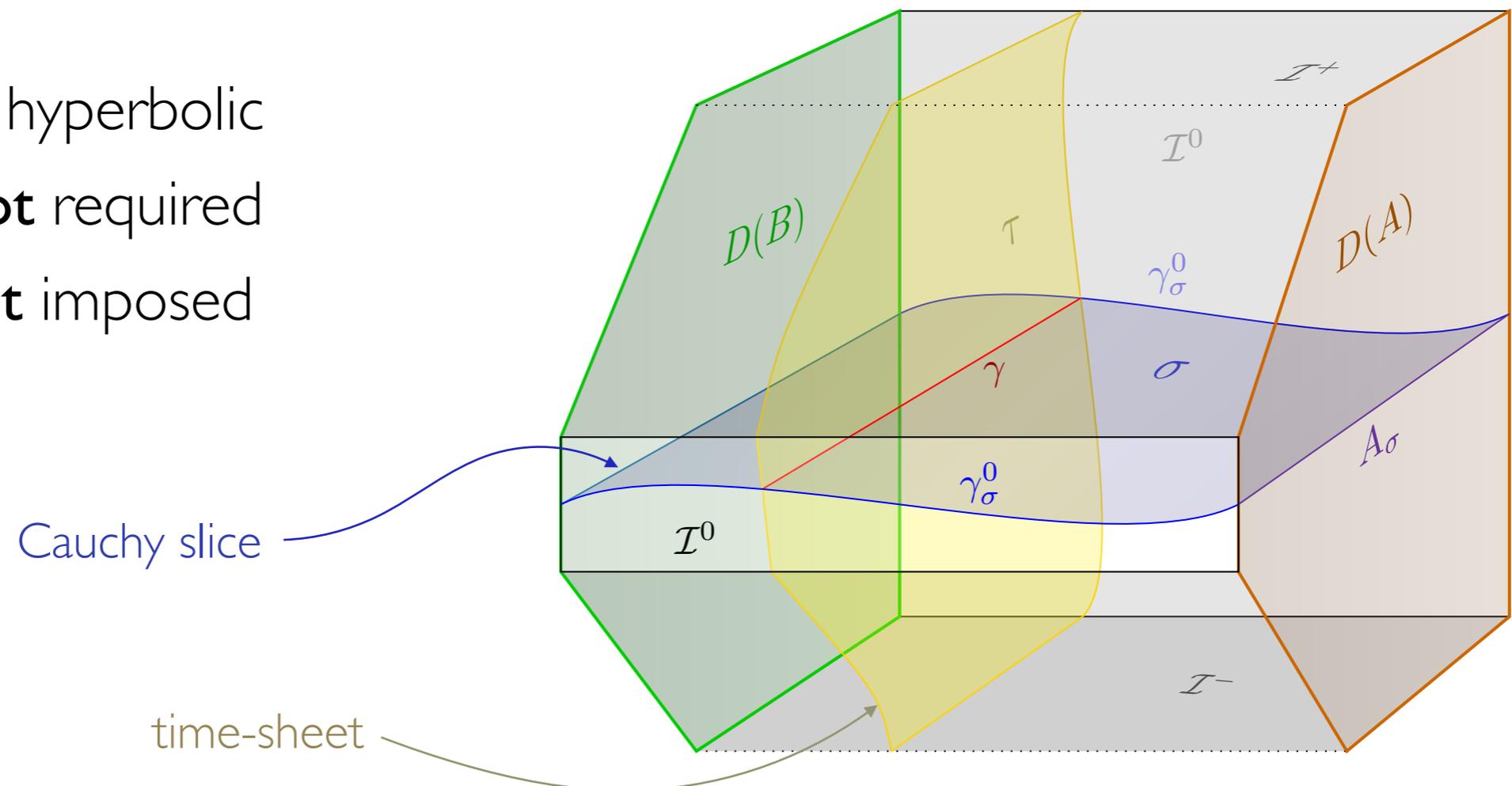


WLOG treat as de-facto boundaries, but full ST can be reinstated later.

Beyond holography

- Consider a Lorentzian $d \geq 3$ dimensional spacetime, with:
 - timelike spatial bdy $\mathcal{N} := D[\mathcal{A}] \cup D[\mathcal{B}]$
 - spacelike or null future/past bdy \mathcal{I}^\pm
 - optionally end of the world brane \mathcal{I}^0
- globally hyperbolic
- NEC **not** required
- E.eq. **not** imposed

$$\mathcal{I} = \mathcal{I}^+ \cup \mathcal{I}^- \cup \mathcal{I}^0$$



Convex program & Lagrangian duality

- Convex program:

- Convex program P : minimize $f_0(y)$ over $y \in \mathcal{D}$ such that $\forall i, f_i(y) \leq 0, \forall j, h_j(y) = 0$
-

- More general problems may be converted to the requisite form via convex relaxation

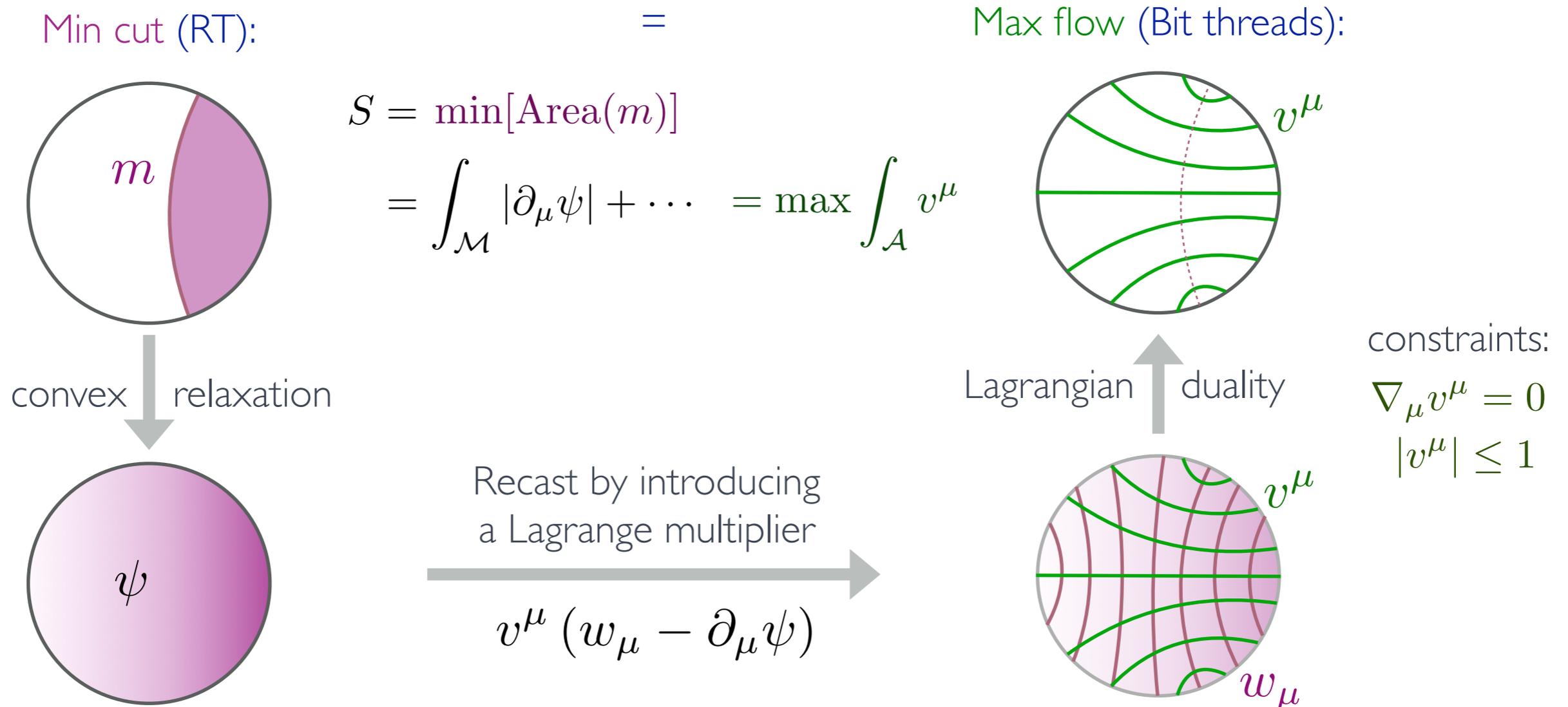
- use Lagrange multipliers $L(y, \lambda, \nu) \equiv f_0(y) + \sum_i \lambda_i f_i(y) + \sum_j \nu_j h_j(y)$

- solution via convex optimization: $p^* = \inf_y \sup_{\lambda, \nu} L(y, \lambda, \nu)$

- Lagrangian duality: swap order
 - new extremization problem, in new variables
 - strong duality: primal and dual solutions agree

ex: Max flow - min cut

- Max-flow/min-cut (MFMC) is an example of Lagrangian duality in theory of convex optimization [VH, Headrick, '17]
- Riemannian case:



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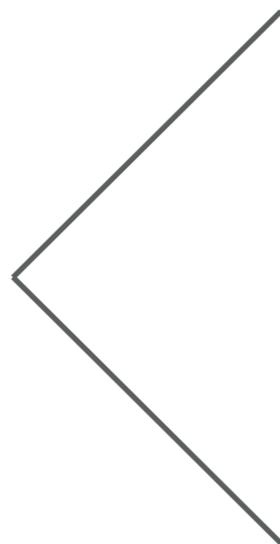
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- Maximin \mathcal{S}_- & minimax \mathcal{S}_+
- Detour: minimax theory
- Convex relaxed \mathcal{S}_c
- Holographic coincidence
- Optimal flows

Maximin

- Start w/ $S_- := \sup_{\sigma \in \mathcal{S}} \inf_{\gamma \in \Gamma_\sigma} \text{area}(\gamma)$
 - $\sigma \in \mathcal{S}$ → codim.-1 slices
 - $\gamma \in \Gamma_\sigma$ → codim.-2 surfaces on σ homol. to A rel. to $\mathcal{I}^0 \cap \sigma$

- Use Riemannian MFMC to reexpress in terms of slice flows \sim "maximax":

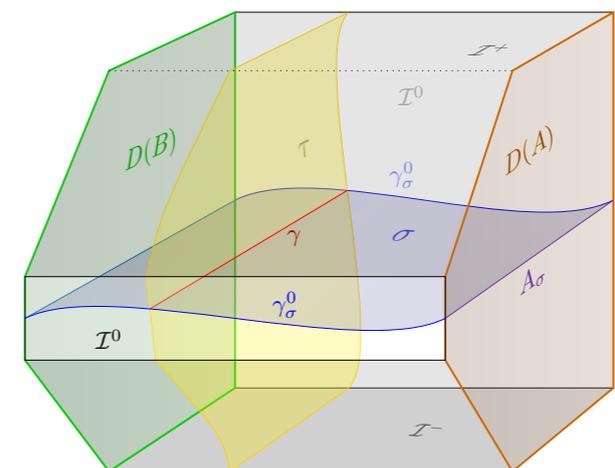
$$S_- = \sup_{\sigma \in \mathcal{S}} \sup_{v \in \mathcal{F}_\sigma} \int_{A_\sigma} *v.$$

σ -flows

- Put space & time variations on equal footing:

$$S_- = \sup_{\sigma \in \mathcal{S}} \inf_{\tau \in \mathcal{T}} \text{area}(\sigma \cap \tau)$$

$\tau \in \mathcal{T}$ → codim.-1 time-sheets homol. to $D[A]$ rel. to \mathcal{I}



Minimax

- Change order of extremizations from maximin:

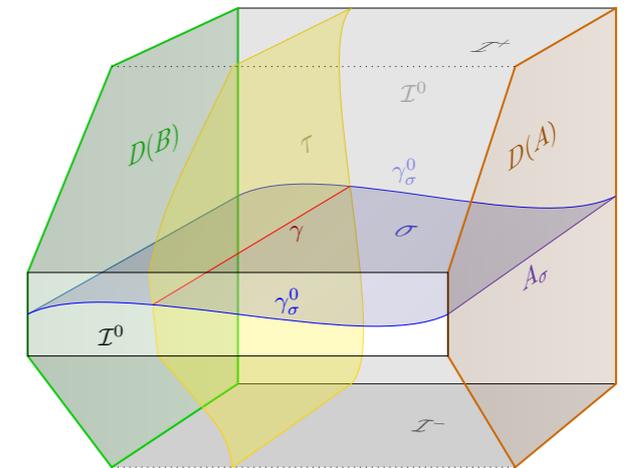
$$S_+ := \inf_{\tau \in \mathcal{T}} \sup_{\sigma \in \mathcal{S}} \text{area}(\sigma \cap \tau)$$

- Re-write more analogously to original maximin:

$$S_+ = \inf_{\tau \in \mathcal{T}} \sup_{\substack{\gamma \subset \tau \\ \text{achronal}}} \text{area}(\gamma)$$

- Naively: apply Lorentzian min flow - max cut [VH, Headrick, '17] on time-sheet flow to convert to "minimin"?

Subtlety: that only requires achronality within time-sheet; for S_+ we have a stronger condition of achronality in bulk... (but OK in holography [Grimaldi, Grado-White, Headrick, VH: W.I.P])



?: What is the relation between S_- and S_+ ?

Minimax theory

- Consider a function $f : X \times Y \rightarrow \mathbf{R}$
- Q: what is the relation between maximin & minimax?

$$\sup_{x \in X} \inf_{y \in Y} f(x, y)$$

$$\inf_{y \in Y} \sup_{x \in X} f(x, y)$$

- Not necessarily equal;

e.g. $X, Y = \{0, 1\}$, $f(x, y) = (-1)^{x+y} \Rightarrow$ -1 1

Minimax theory

- Consider a function $f : X \times Y \rightarrow \mathbf{R}$
- Q: what is the relation between maximin & minimax?

$$\sup_{x \in X} \inf_{y \in Y} f(x, y) \leq \inf_{y \in Y} \sup_{x \in X} f(x, y)$$

since $\inf_{y \in Y} f(x_0, y) \leq f(x_0, y_0) \leq \sup_{x \in X} f(x, y_0)$

- Q: when is the inequality saturated?
 - when \exists a global saddle point (x_0, y_0) saturating both inequalities
 - when X and Y are convex subsets of affine spaces, and f is concave-convex

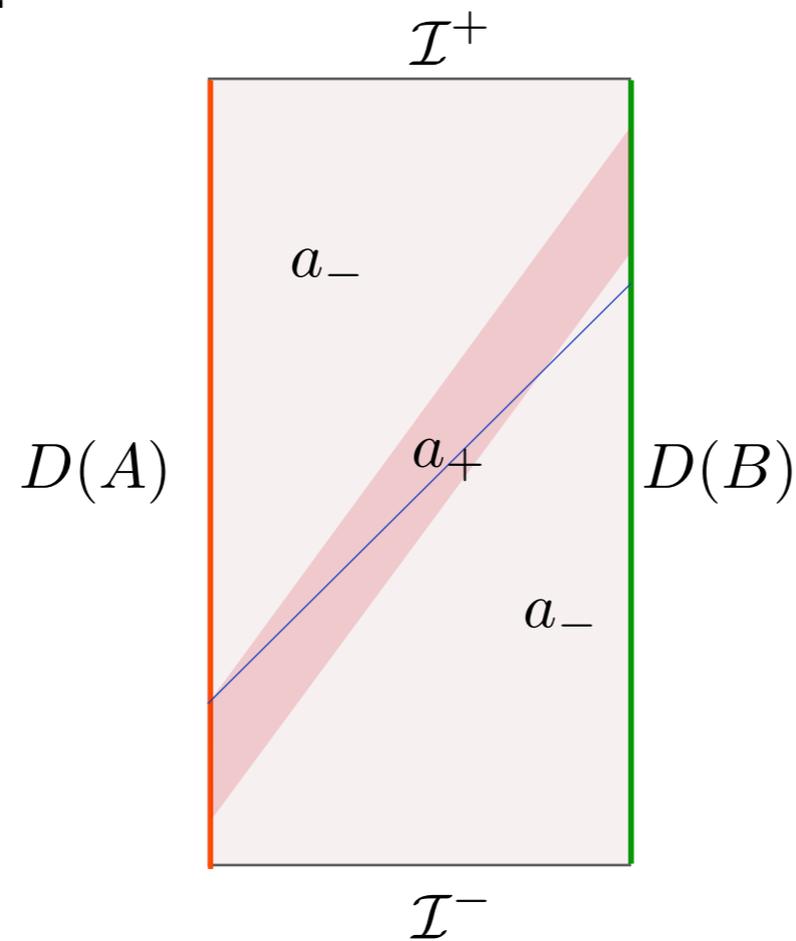
in $x|_y$ in $y|x$



Toy spacetime

- Easy to find example of spacetime (in our generalized setting) wherein maximin \neq minimax:

$$a_- < a_+$$



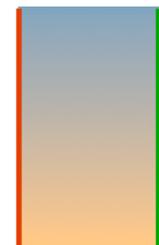
- However, this ST does not satisfy NEC.
- Already if bottom region has $a_b > a_+$, then maximin = minimax = a_b

Convex relaxation

- Instead of $\text{area}(\sigma \cap \tau)$, we want to define concave-convex f
- convex-relax hypersurfaces to level sets of scalar fields ϕ, ψ

$$\sigma \rightsquigarrow \mathcal{S}_c := \left\{ \phi : \bar{\mathcal{M}} \rightarrow \left[-\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2} \right] \mid \phi|_{\mathcal{I}^\pm} = \pm \frac{1}{2}, d\phi \in j^+ \right\}$$

future-directed causal 1-form



$$\tau \rightsquigarrow \mathcal{T}_c := \left\{ \psi : \bar{\mathcal{M}} \rightarrow \left[-\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2} \right] \mid \psi|_{D(A)} = -\frac{1}{2}, \psi|_{D(B)} = \frac{1}{2} \right\}$$



- generalize the area of intersection of hypersurfaces:

$$f[\phi, \psi] := \int_{\mathcal{M}} \sqrt{g} |d\phi \wedge d\psi| \quad (\phi \in \mathcal{S}_c, \psi \in \mathcal{T}_c)$$

wedgedot pairing $|W \wedge X| := \max\{|W \wedge X|, |W \cdot X|\}$

$$f[\phi, \psi] = \int_{-1/2}^{1/2} dt \int_{-1/2}^{1/2} ds \text{area}'(\sigma_t, \tau_s) \quad \text{with} \quad \text{area}'(\sigma, \tau) := \int_{\sigma \cap \tau} \sqrt{h} \times \begin{cases} 1 & (\tau \text{ timelike or null at } \sigma) \\ \coth \chi & (\tau \text{ spacelike at } \sigma) \end{cases}$$

Convex relaxed "entropy"

$$S_c := \sup_{\phi \in \mathcal{S}_c} \inf_{\psi \in \mathcal{T}_c} f[\phi, \psi] = \inf_{\psi \in \mathcal{T}_c} \sup_{\phi \in \mathcal{S}_c} f[\phi, \psi]$$

convex-maximin

convex-minimax

- must lie between non-convex values: $S_- \leq S_c \leq S_+$
- More suggestive formulation? Lagrange dualize!

(various possibilities...)

dualize on ψ for fixed ϕ

→ V-flow program

(→ covariant bit threads)

dualize on ϕ for fixed ψ

→ U-flow program

V-flows & U-flows

$$S_c := \sup_{\phi \in \mathcal{S}_c} \inf_{\psi \in \mathcal{T}_c} f[\phi, \psi] = \inf_{\psi \in \mathcal{T}_c} \sup_{\phi \in \mathcal{S}_c} f[\phi, \psi]$$

V-flow:

$$S_c = \sup_{V \in \mathcal{F}} \int_{D(A)} *V$$



$$d*V = 0, \quad *V|_{\mathcal{I}} = 0$$

$$\exists \phi \in \mathcal{S}_c \text{ s.t. } d\phi \pm V \in j^+$$

\forall bulk timelike curve,

$$\int dt |V_{\perp}| \leq 1$$

U-flow:

$$S_c = \inf_{U \in \mathcal{G}} \int_{\mathcal{I}^+} *U$$



$$d*U = 0, \quad *U|_{\mathcal{I}^0 \cup \mathcal{N}} = 0,$$

$$\exists \psi \in \mathcal{T}_c \text{ s.t. } U \pm d\psi \in j^+$$

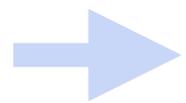
\forall bulk spacelike curve from $D(A)$ to $D(B)$,

$$\int ds |U_{\perp}| \geq 1$$

V and U threads

- Define "threads"

- integral curves of vector field dual to V , or $(D-1)$ -form $*V$ (oriented, can't intersect)



- unoriented curves obeying a density bound

$$\Delta(q, p) := \int_q dt \int_p ds \delta(x(t), y(s)) |(-\dot{x}) \wedge \dot{y}|$$

- V-thread = curve between $D(A)$ and $D(B)$

Maximize $\mu(\mathcal{P})$ over measure μ on \mathcal{P} subject to: $\forall q \in \mathcal{Q}, \int_{\mathcal{P}} d\mu(p) \Delta(q, p) \leq 1$

- U-thread = causal curve between \mathcal{I}^- and \mathcal{I}^+

Minimize $\nu(\mathcal{Q})$ over measure ν on \mathcal{Q} subject to: $\forall p \in \mathcal{P}, \int_{\mathcal{Q}} d\nu(q) \Delta(q, p) \geq 1$

- density bounds are non-local, and reinforce each other
- U-threads effectively form a barrier separating $D(A)$ from $D(B)$
- V-threads covariantize the original bit threads

Holographic coincidence

- For general ("beyond holography") spacetimes, $S_- \leq S_c \leq S_+$
 (= globally hyperbolic w/ timelike parts of bdy but no energy conditions or field equations...)
 \downarrow
 maximin \downarrow minimax
 convex relaxed m.m.

- BUT for holographic spacetimes, $S_- = S_c = S_+ = S_{\text{HRT}}$

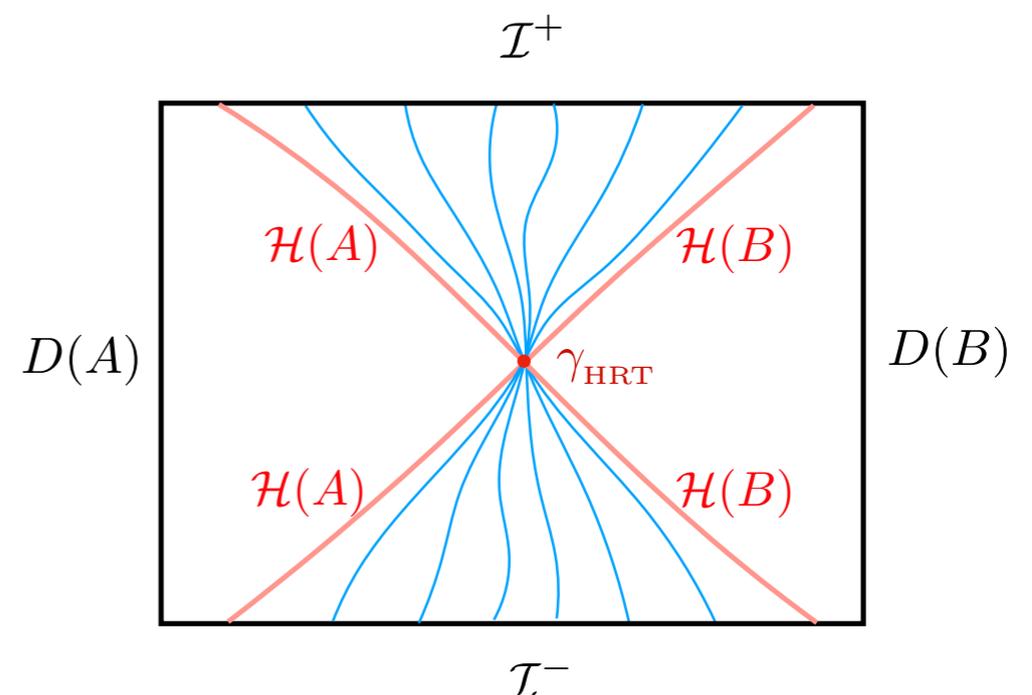
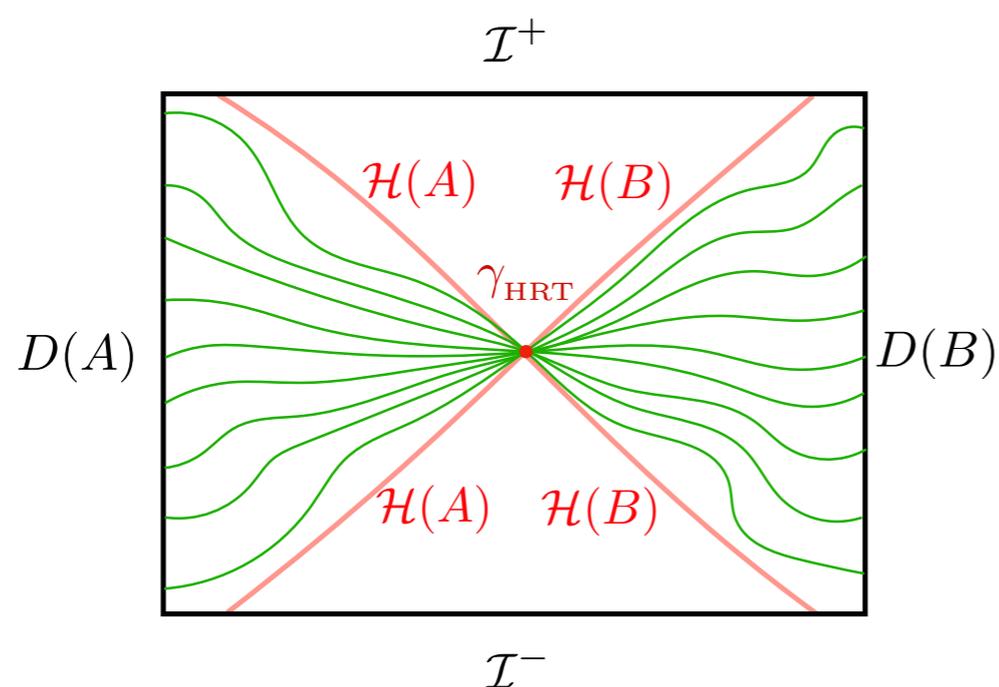
- NEC \leadsto congruence from HRT surf. has non-positive & generically decreasing expansion
- AdS b.c. \leadsto no null generators emanate from EOWB.

- Pf:*
- HRT surf. is area-maximizing within entanglement horizon (= time-sheet τ)
 - HRT surf. is area-minimizing within maximin slice (= Cauchy slice σ)
 - \leadsto HRT surf. is a global saddle point $\implies S_- = S_+ = S_{\text{HRT}}$ \square

- Alt.: $S_+ \leq S_{\text{HRT}}$ [minimax], $S_- \leq S_+$ [min-max ineq.], & $S_- = S_{\text{HRT}}$ [Wall] \square

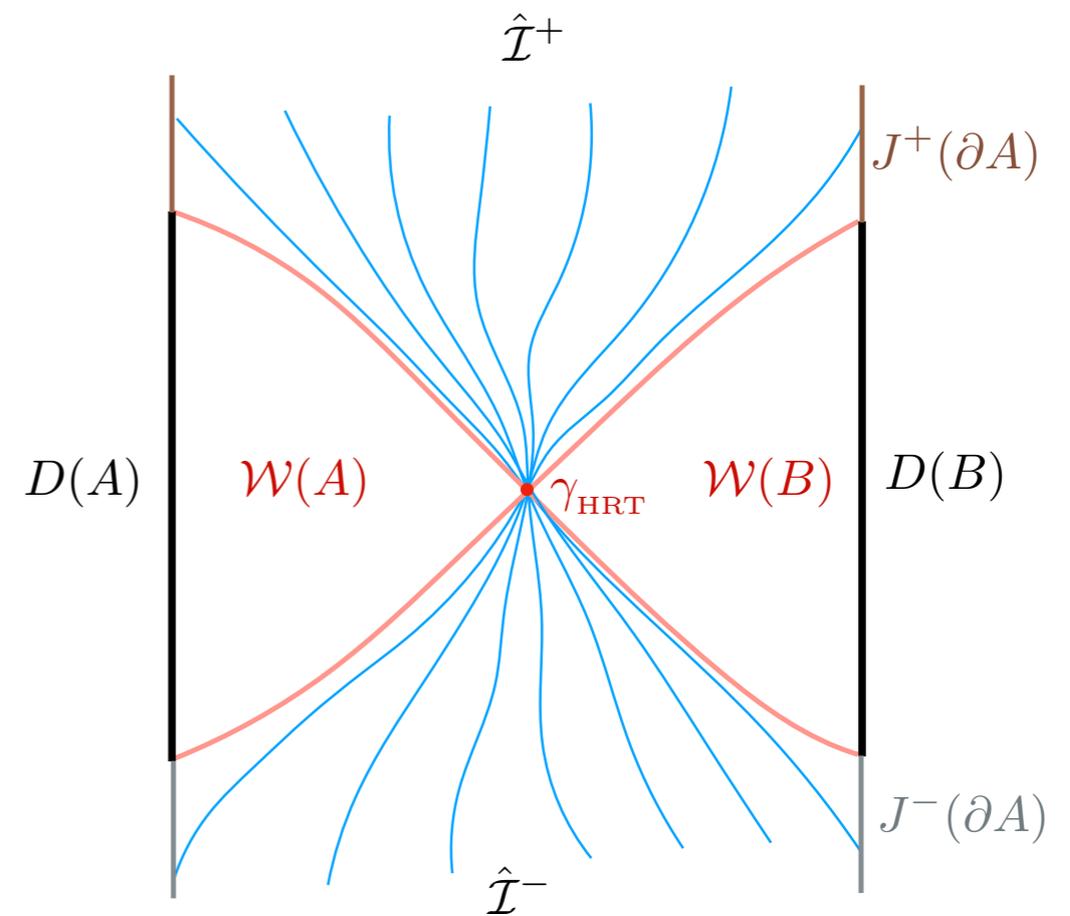
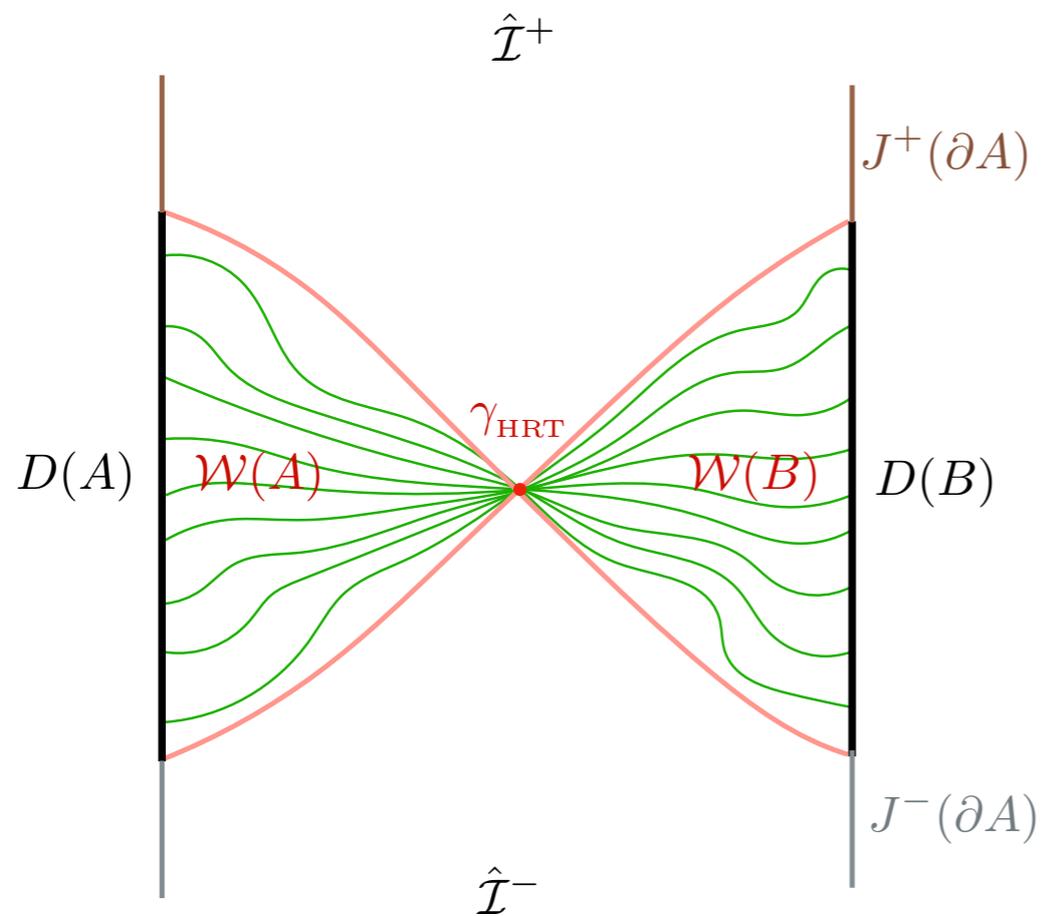
Optimal flows

- General V-flows and U-flows are quite floppy and spread out
 - just subject to b.c.s and norm bound (\leadsto U-flow lines are timelike everywhere)
- *Optimal flows in holographic ST* are more restricted (though still floppy):
 - V-flow lines are confined to entanglement wedges \mathcal{W}_A and \mathcal{W}_B
 - U-flow lines are expelled from (interior of) entanglement wedges \mathcal{W}_A and \mathcal{W}_B
 - Both flows pass through HRT surface:



Optimal flows

- In full (unregulated) spacetime:



OUTLINE

- ☑ Motivation
- ☑ Background
- ☑ Setup & Toolkit
- ☑ Results
- Summary

New covariant HEE prescriptions:

$$\sup_{\sigma \in \mathcal{S}} \sup_{v \in \mathcal{F}_\sigma} \int_{A_\sigma} *v$$

$$\sup_{\sigma \in \mathcal{S}} \inf_{\tau \in \mathcal{T}} \text{area}(\sigma \cap \tau)$$

S_-

$$\inf_{\tau \in \mathcal{T}} \sup_{\substack{\gamma \subset \tau \\ \text{achronal}}} \text{area}(\gamma)$$

$$\inf_{\tau \in \mathcal{T}} \sup_{\sigma \in \mathcal{S}} \text{area}(\sigma \cap \tau)$$

S_+

S_c

$$\sup_{\phi \in \mathcal{S}_c} \inf_{\psi \in \mathcal{T}_c} \int_{\mathcal{M}} \sqrt{g} |d\phi \wedge d\psi|$$

minimax
theorem

$$\inf_{\psi \in \mathcal{T}_c} \sup_{\phi \in \mathcal{S}_c} \int_{\mathcal{M}} \sqrt{g} |d\phi \wedge d\psi|$$

$\psi \leftrightarrow V$
duality

$\phi \leftrightarrow U$
duality

$$\sup_{V \in \mathcal{F}} \int_{D(A)} *V$$

$(V, \phi) \leftrightarrow (U, \psi)$
duality

$$\inf_{U \in \mathcal{G}} \int_{\mathcal{I}^+} *U$$

V-flow \leftrightarrow V-thread
conversion

U-flow \leftrightarrow U-thread
conversion

$$\sup_{\mu} \mu(\mathcal{P})$$

$\mu \leftrightarrow \nu$
duality

$$\inf_{\nu} \nu(\mathcal{Q})$$

Lessons

- Power of Lagrangian duality & reformulations
 - New hints re. nature of HEE
(perhaps V-threads \sim entanglement distillation; U-threads \sim entanglement of formation)
 - Important geometrical quantities (HRT surface, entanglement wedge) emerge naturally
 - Dependence on region switches between objective and constraint
 - Dual formulations for proofs (e.g. S_c obeys SA) -- looks different, has different advantages, so may be useful in establishing further properties of HEE...
 - Convex programs, so computationally convenient
- Simpler structure for holographic spacetimes
 - HRT surface (= localized on intersection of slice and time-sheet) is a global saddle point, so maximin = minimax even without convex relaxation
 - Convex-relaxed expressions (V-flows, U-flows) retain this via the optimized flows collimated through the HRT surface

Extensions & future directions

- Easy extensions (developed in paper)
 - Embedding into full ST & removing the regulator
 - Multiple regions
- HEE properties from minimax
- Covariant formulations for quantum and stringy corrections to HEE
- Inspire formulations for tensor networks w/ time
- Covariant formulations for generalizations / other contexts
 - weaker norm bounds for multiflows
 - thread / hyperthread constructions for multipartite entanglement measures
 - non-AdS backgrounds



Thank you