



Colliders in the Sky

Constraining Primordial Non-Gaussianity
with CMB and LSS Observations

Oliver H. E. Philcox

Assistant Professor @ Stanford

Primordial non-Gaussianity

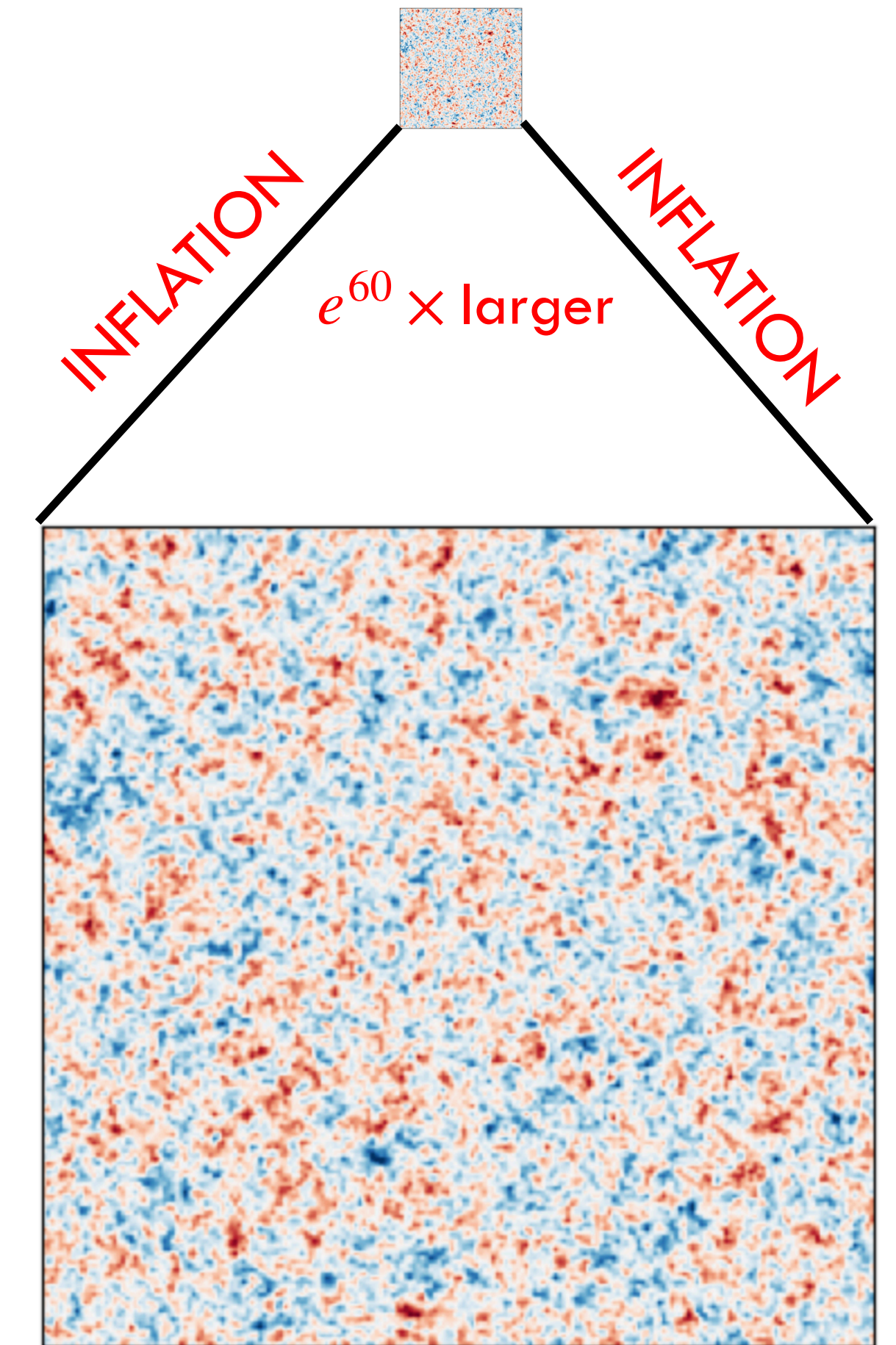
START: Quantum Fluctuations in Inflaton ϕ

Single-field, slow-roll inflation, with Bunch-Davies vacuum

Vanilla inflation \Rightarrow **Gaussian** fluctuations in ζ

New physics \Rightarrow **non-Gaussian** fluctuations in ζ

Self-interactions, new fields, new vacuum states, thermal dissipation, ...



By searching for **non-Gaussianity**, we can constrain **inflationary** physics!

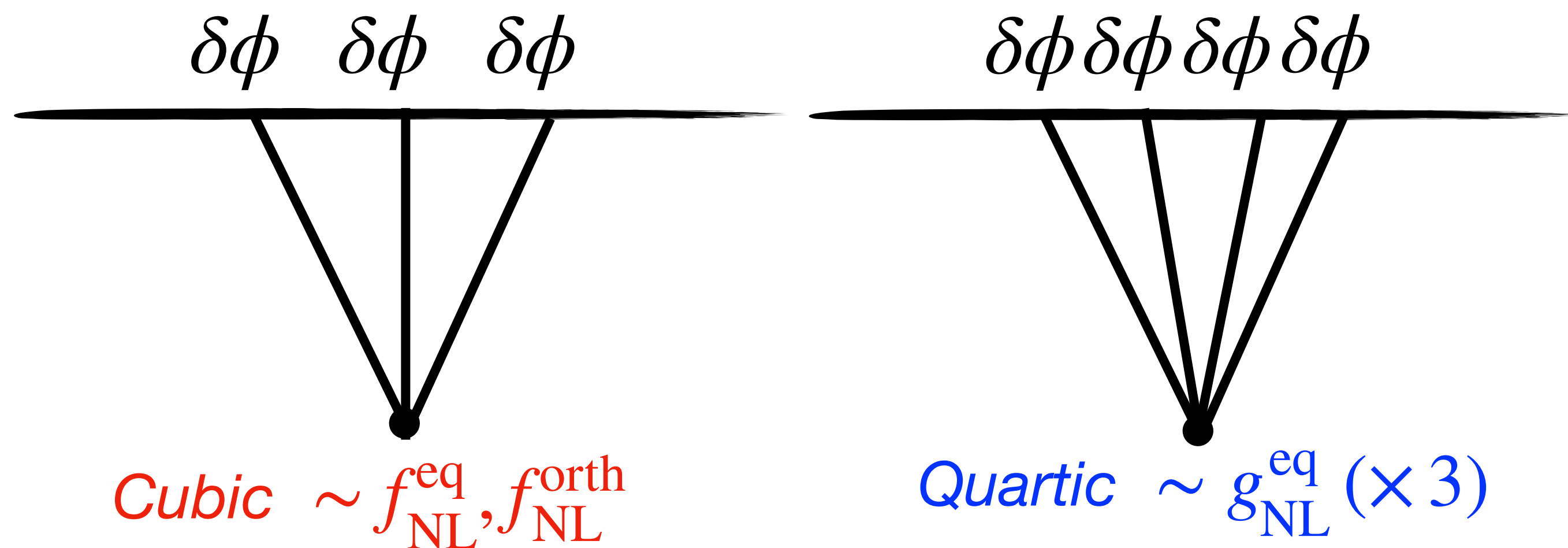
END: Classical Fluctuations in Curvature ζ

COBE, WMAP, Planck, Linde, Guth, Starobinsky, ...

Self-Interactions

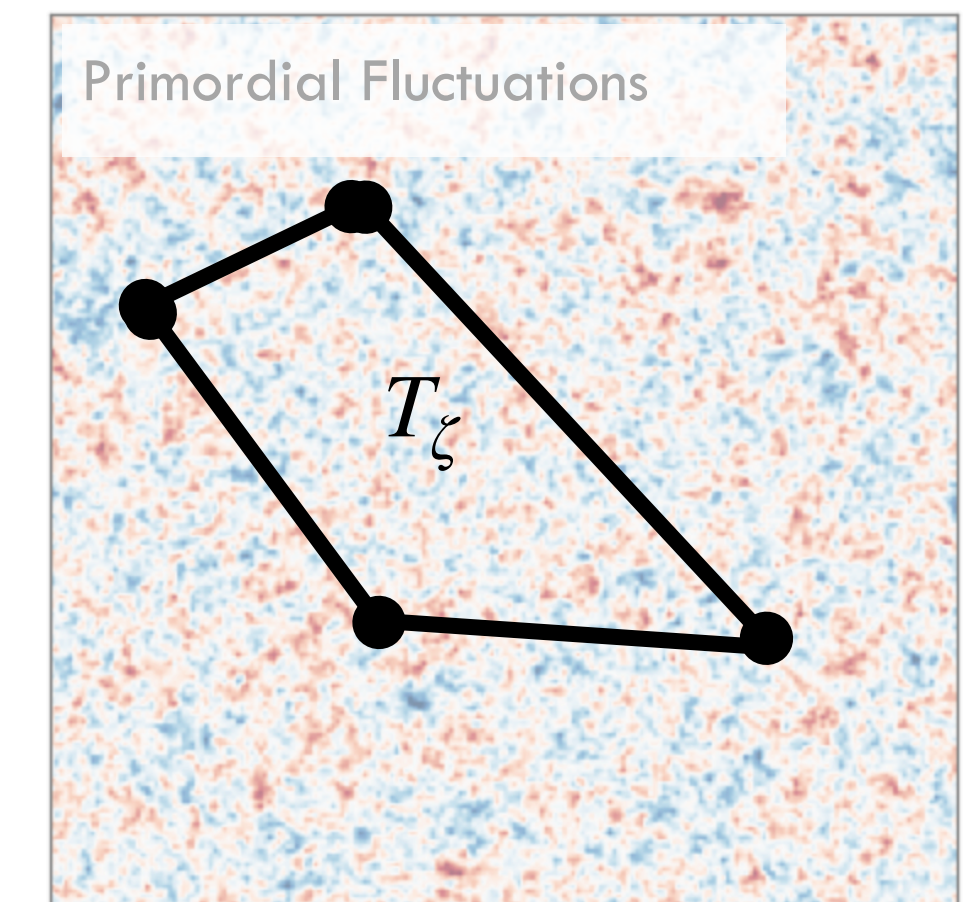
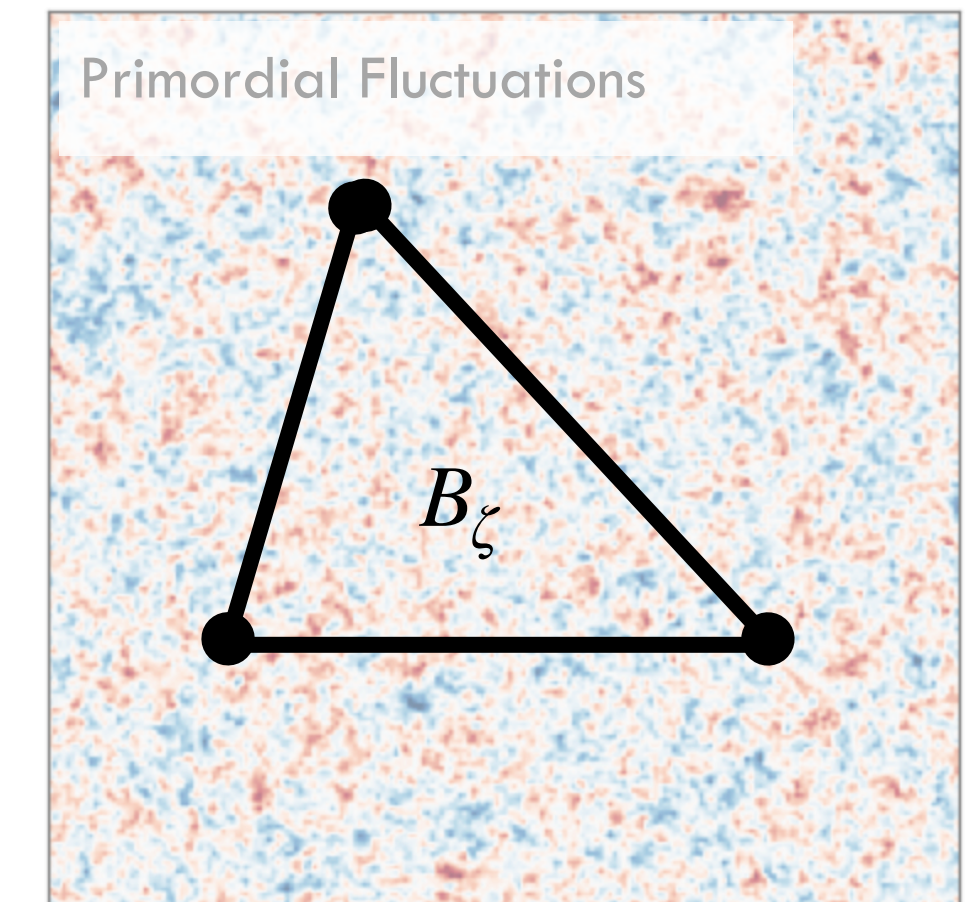
- Many models of inflation feature **self-interactions**:

$$\mathcal{L} \supset \delta\dot{\phi}^3, \quad \delta\dot{\phi}(\partial\phi)^2, \quad \delta\dot{\phi}^4, \quad \dots$$



- These lead to **three-** and **four-point** functions at the end of inflation
- The **shape** encodes the **interaction vertex**, the **amplitude** encodes the microphysics

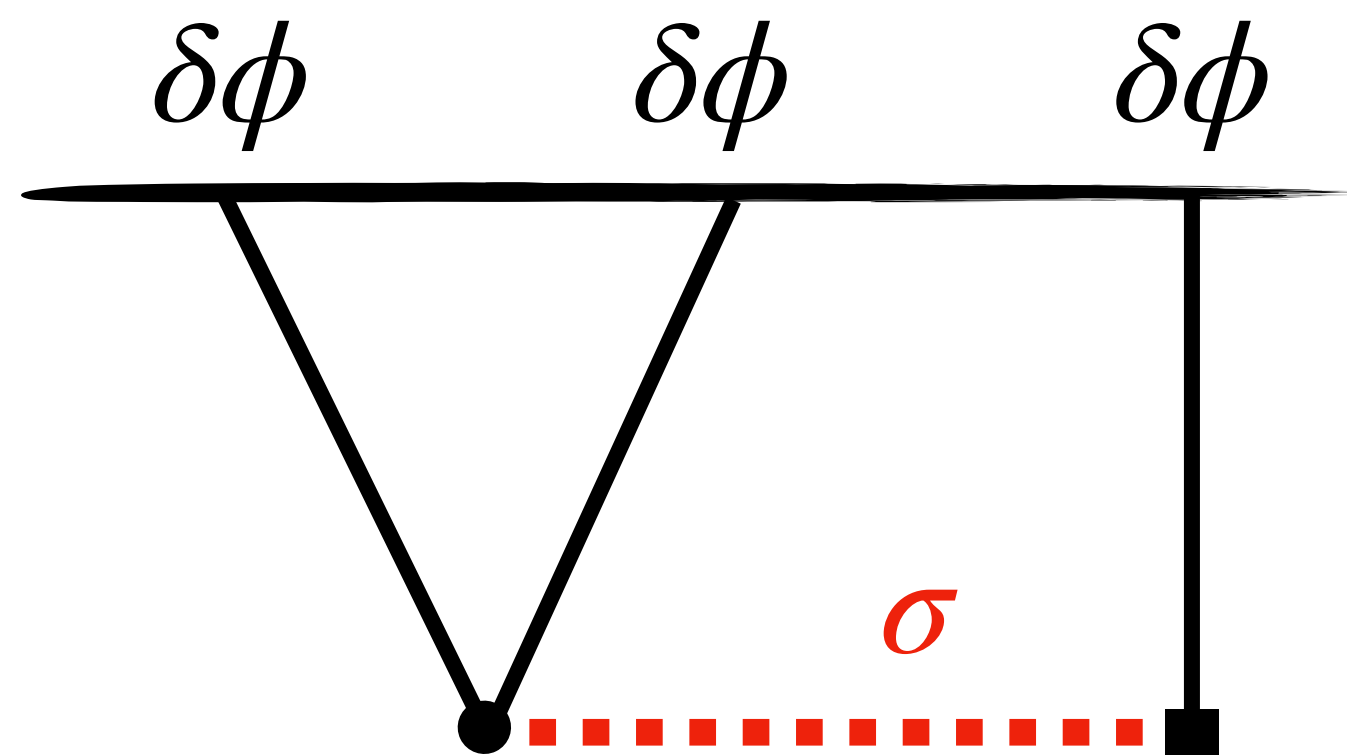
$$\text{e.g. } \langle \zeta(\mathbf{k}_1)\zeta(\mathbf{k}_2)\zeta(\mathbf{k}_3) \rangle \sim f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{eq}} \times \text{shape}$$



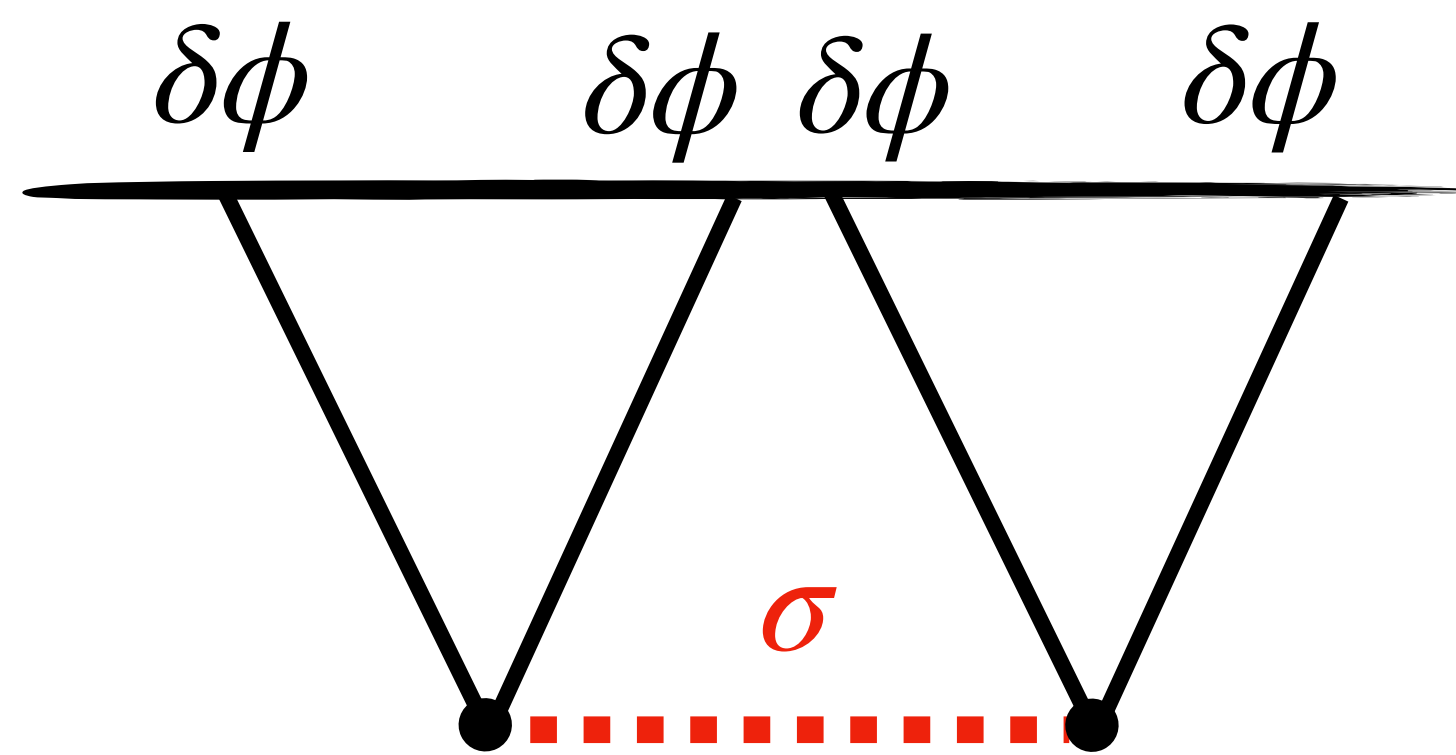
Self-Interactions

- Other models feature **new particles**, σ :

$$\mathcal{L} \supset \delta\dot{\phi}\sigma, \quad \delta\dot{\phi}^2\sigma, \quad \delta\dot{\phi}^3\sigma, \dots$$



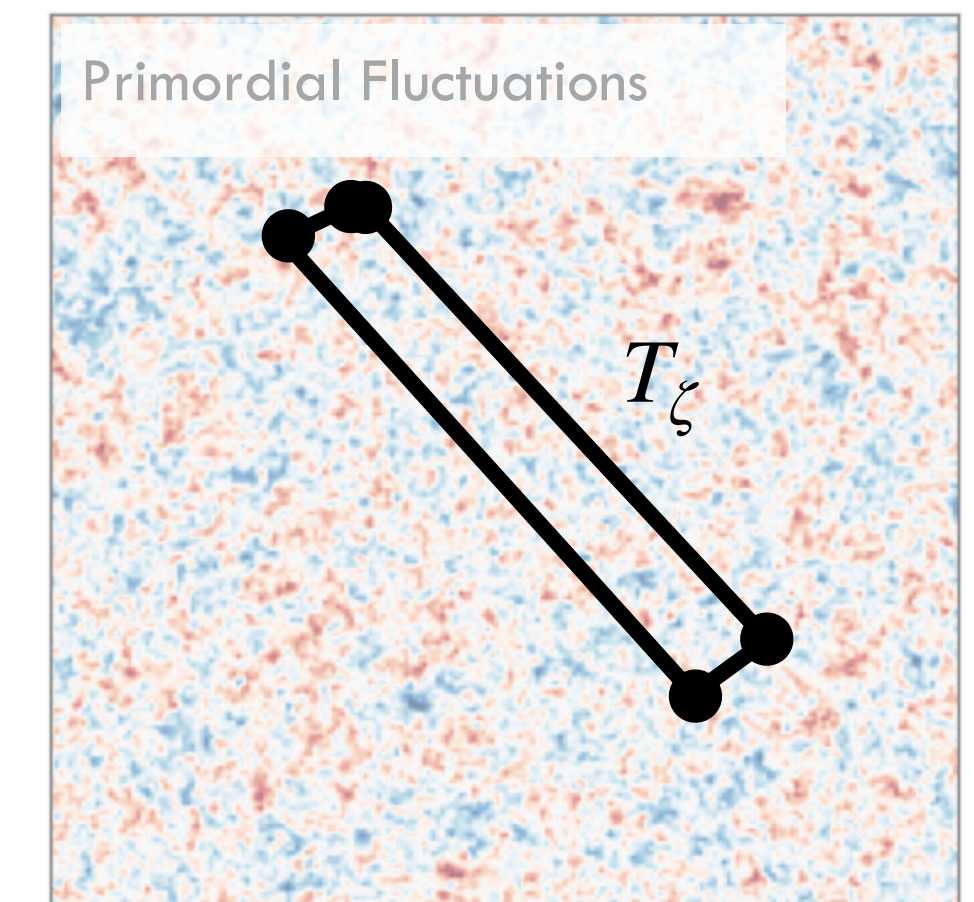
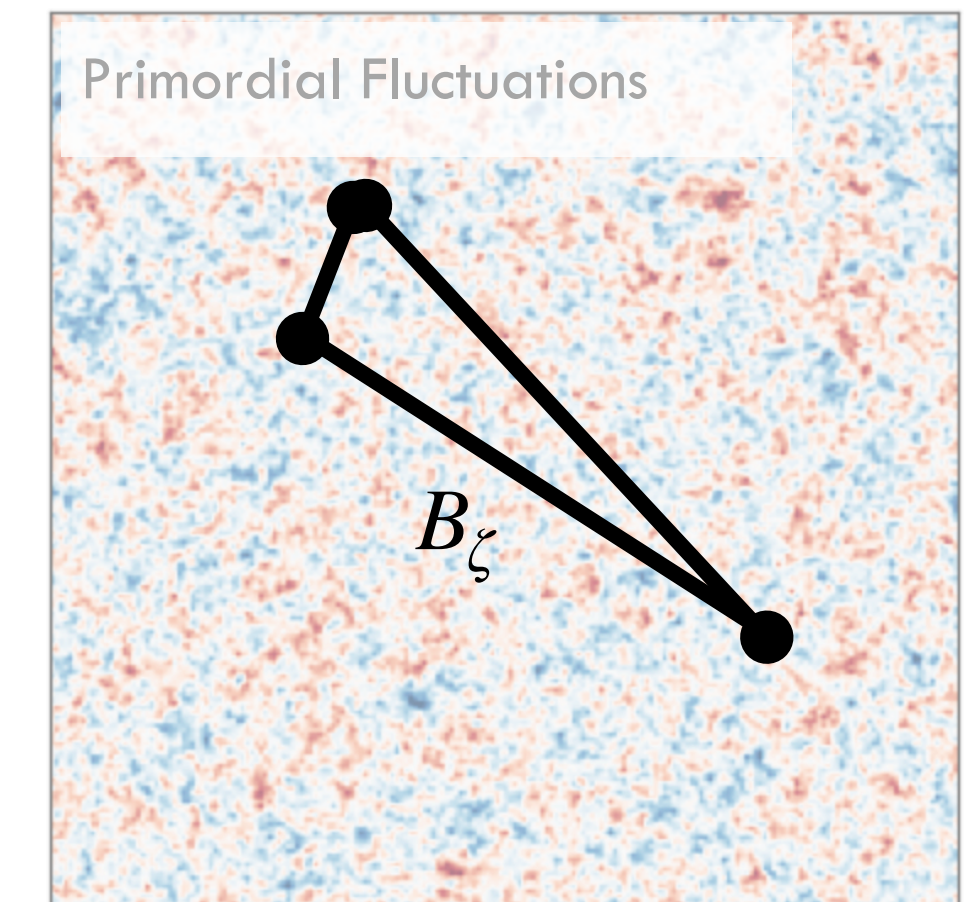
Linear-Quadratic $\sim f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}}$



*Quadratic*² $\sim \tau_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}}$ (+ linear-cubic, $\sim g_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}}$)

- These lead to **three**- and **four**-point functions at the end of inflation
- The **shape** encodes the **interaction vertex**, the **amplitude** encodes the microphysics

e.g. $\langle \zeta(\mathbf{k}_1)\zeta(\mathbf{k}_2)\zeta(\mathbf{k}_3) \rangle \sim f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}} \times \text{shape}$



The Cosmological Collider

- The **three-** and **four-point** functions track the **exchange** of a particle $\sigma_{\mu_1 \dots \mu_s}$ of mass $m_\sigma \sim H$ and spin $s = 0, 1, 2, \dots$
- In the **collapsed limit** (low exchange momentum), the inflationary signatures are set by **symmetry** and depend **only** on the mass m_σ , the spin, s , and the speed c_σ

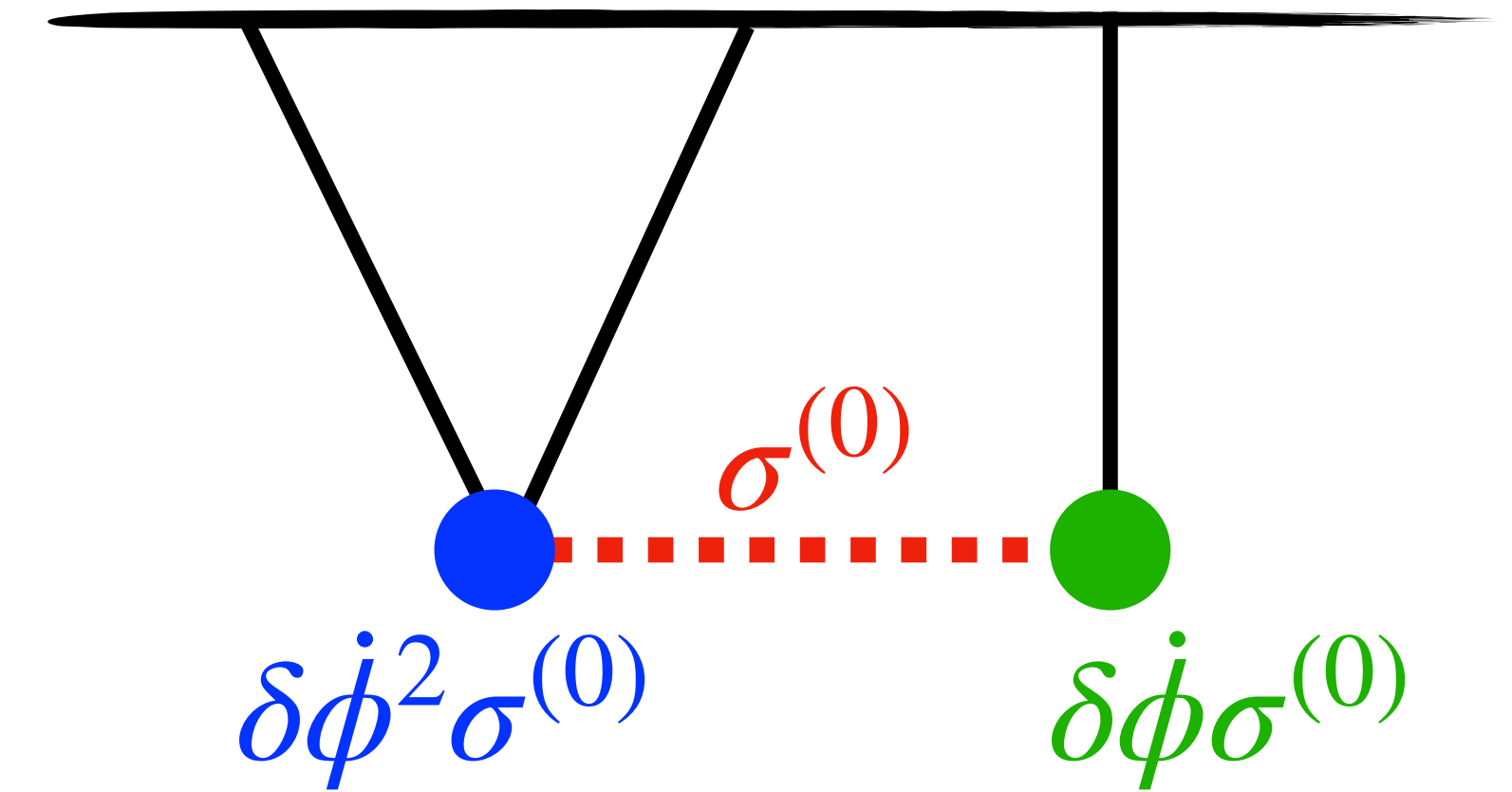
$$\langle \zeta^4 \rangle \sim \tau_{\text{NL}} \times \frac{1}{k_1^3 k_3^3 k_{12}^3} \left[\left(\frac{k_{12}}{k_1 k_3} \right)^{3/2+i\mu_s} + \left(\frac{k_{12}}{k_1 k_3} \right)^{3/2-i\mu_s} \right] \mathcal{L}_s(\hat{\mathbf{k}}_1 \cdot \hat{\mathbf{k}}_3)$$

Amplitude $\sim e^{-m_\sigma/H}$ Shape (mass dependent) Angle (spin-dependent)

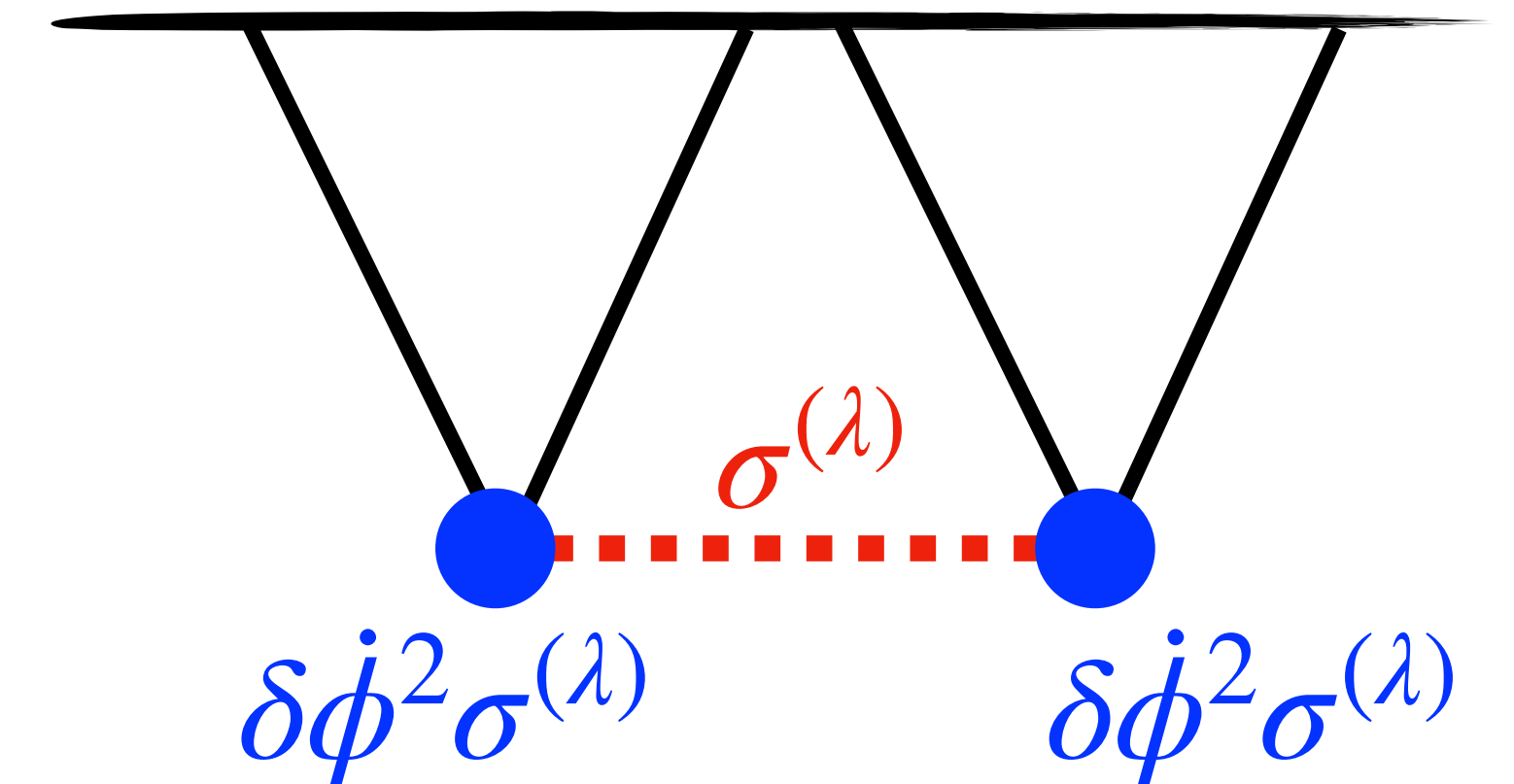
for mass parameter $\mu_s = \sqrt{m_\sigma^2/H^2 - 9/4}$

- We get **oscillations** for particles with $m_\sigma \gtrsim H$

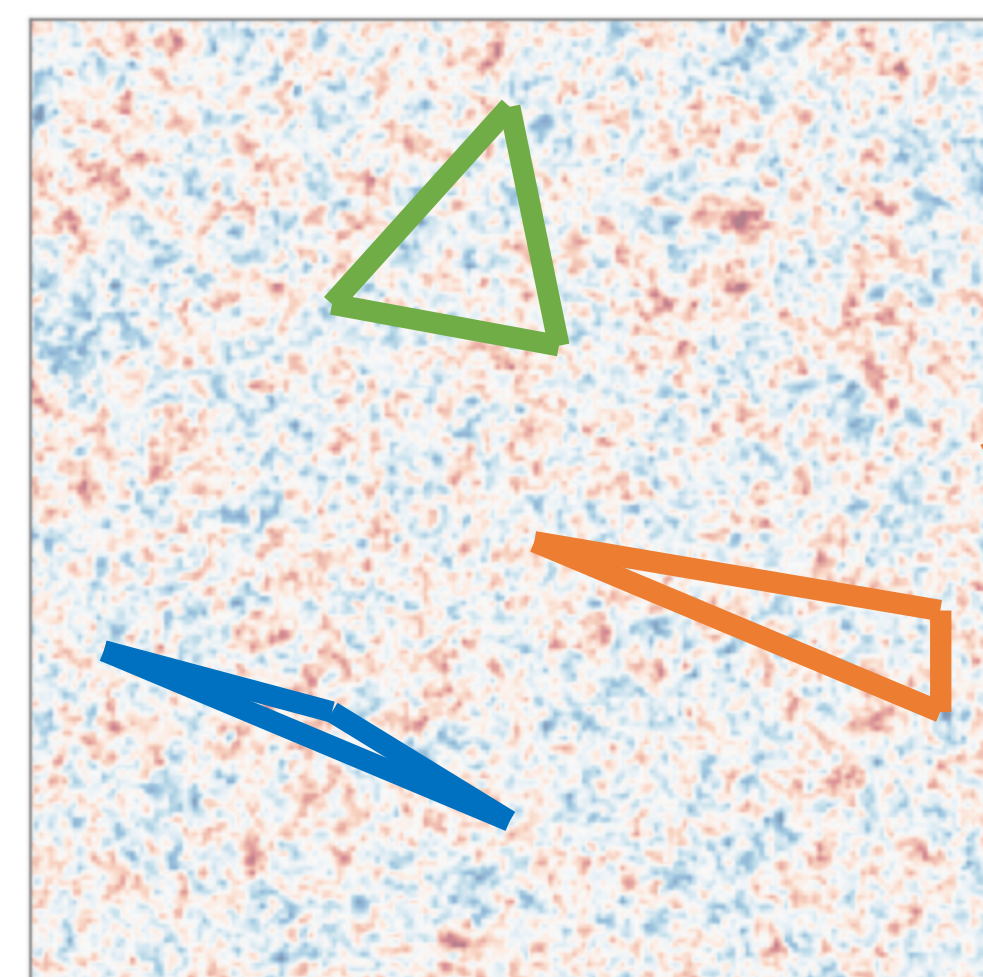
Three-Point



Four-Point



How to Measure Primordial Non-Gaussianity

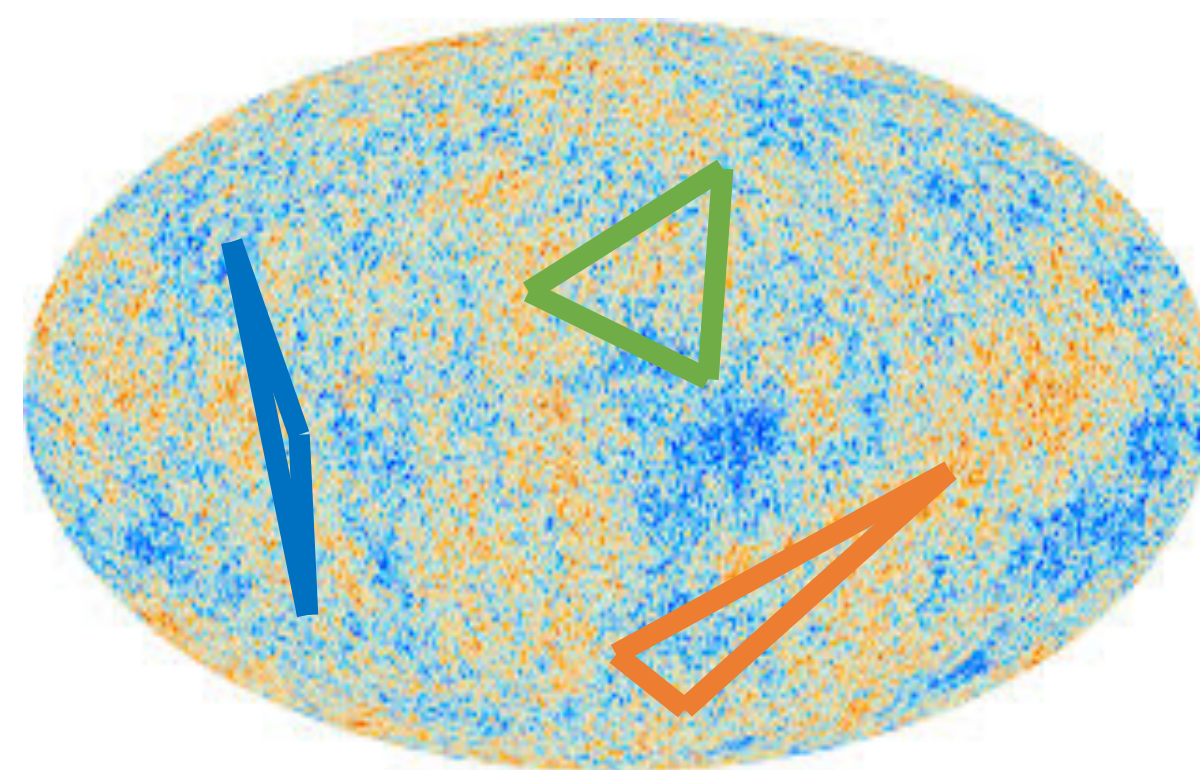


Primordial Correlator

$$\langle \zeta^n \rangle \neq 0?$$

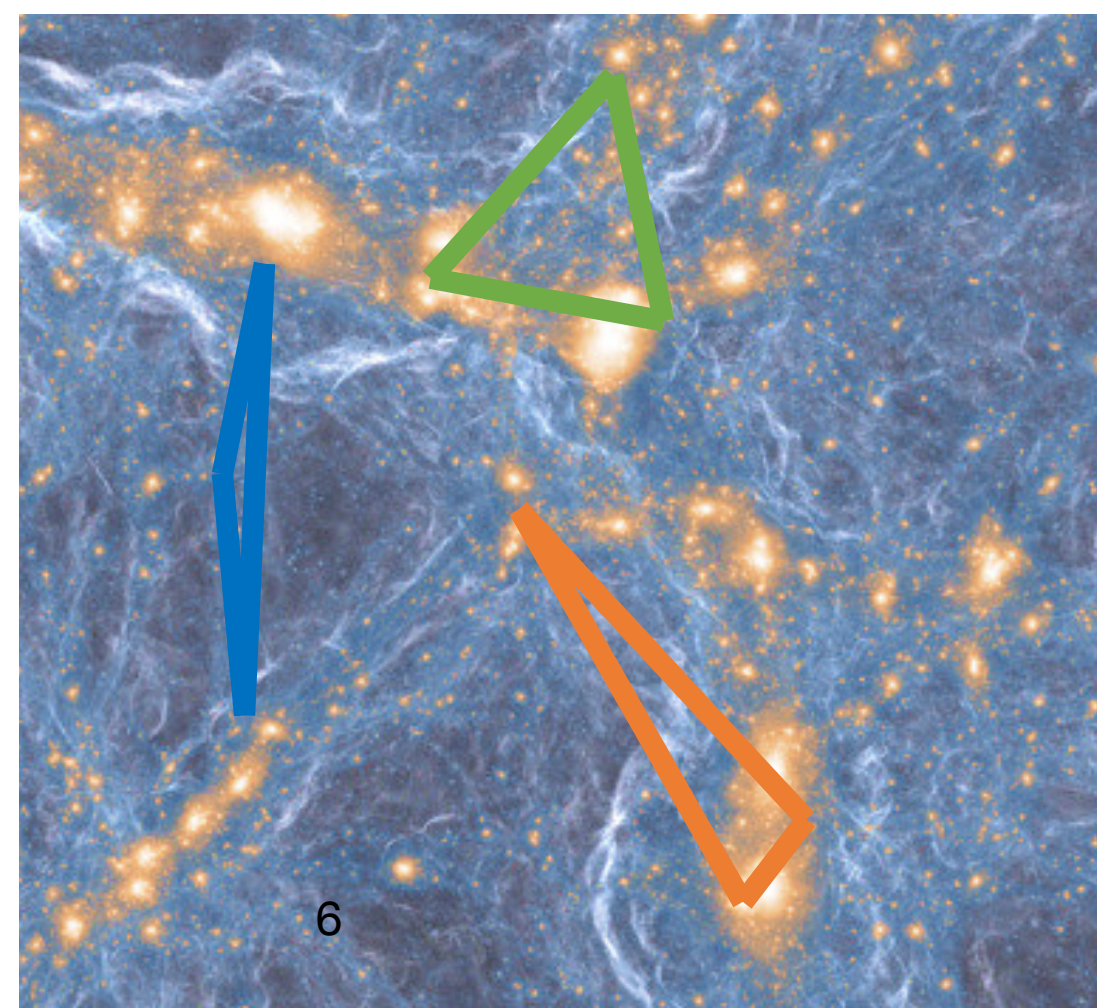
Linear Physics

Non-Linear Physics



Cosmic Microwave Background Correlator

$$\langle \delta T^n \rangle \neq 0?$$



Galaxy Distribution Correlator

$$\langle \delta \rho_{\text{galaxy}}^n \rangle \neq 0?$$

How to Measure a Three-Point Function

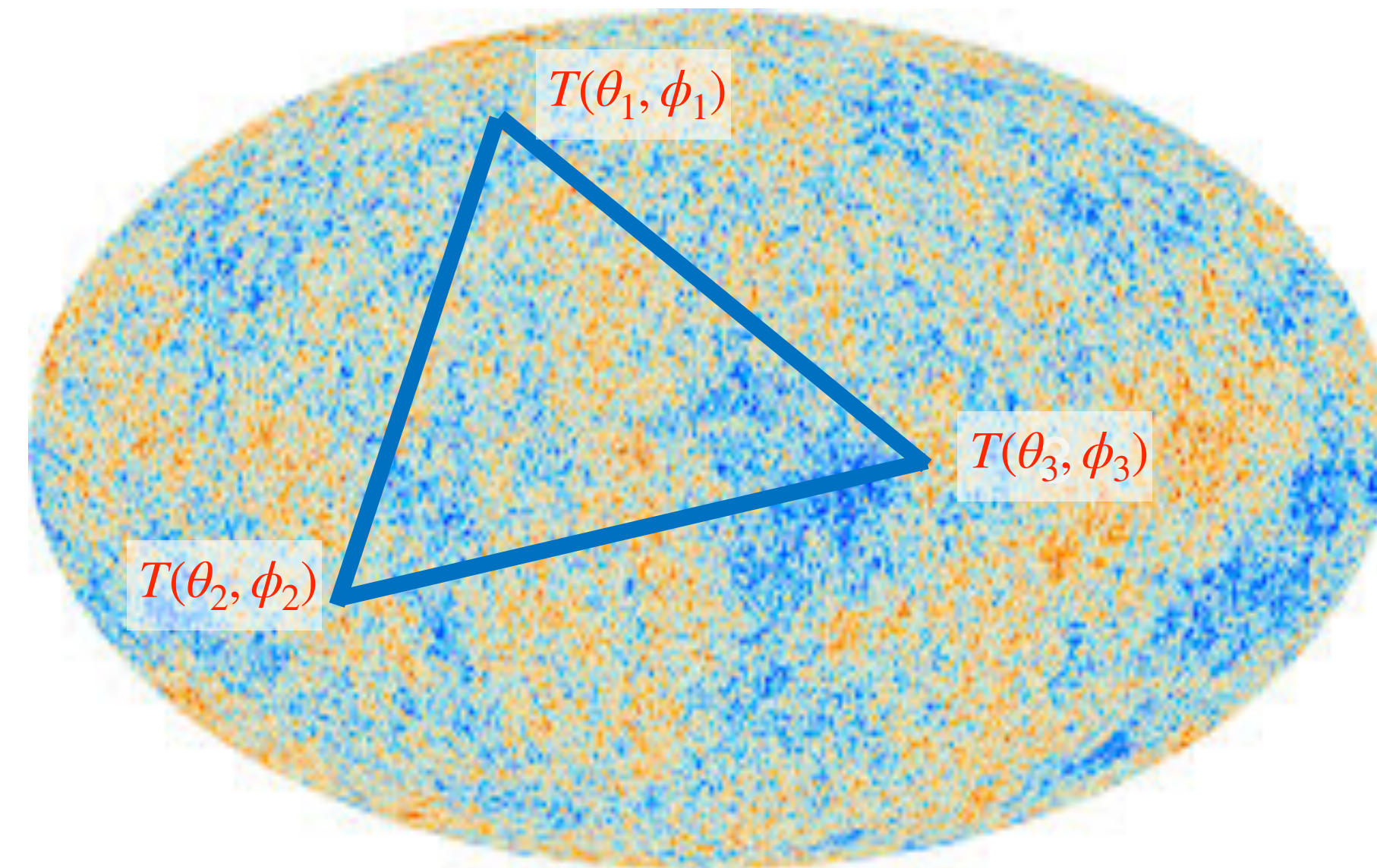
- CMB experiments measure the **temperature** and **polarization** across the whole sky

$$T(\theta, \phi), \quad E(\theta, \phi) \quad \leftrightarrow \quad a_{\ell m}^T, \quad a_{\ell m}^E$$

- Since the physics is **linear** we just need to correlate the CMB at **three** angles

$$\langle T(\theta_1, \phi_1) T(\theta_2, \phi_2) T(\theta_3, \phi_3) \rangle \leftrightarrow \langle a_{\ell_1 m_1}^T a_{\ell_2 m_2}^T a_{\ell_3 m_3}^T \rangle$$

- This is computationally **expensive**:
 - The bispectrum is **3-dimensional** [after symmetries]
 - There's $N_{\text{pix}}^3 \sim 10^{21}$ combinations of points!



How to Measure a Three-Point Function

Most CMB analyses use two tricks:

1. Compression:

- We compress all 10^{21} elements into a single number, encoding the amplitude of a specific model, e.g., $f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}}$

$$\widehat{f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}}} \sim \sum_{\ell_1 m_1 \ell_2 m_2 \ell_3 m_3} \underbrace{\langle a_{\ell_1 m_1} a_{\ell_2 m_2} a_{\ell_3 m_3} \rangle_{\text{theory}}^\dagger}_{\text{Model}} \times \underbrace{(C^{-1}a)_{\ell_1 m_1} (C^{-1}a)_{\ell_2 m_2} (C^{-1}a)_{\ell_3 m_3}}_{\text{Data}}$$

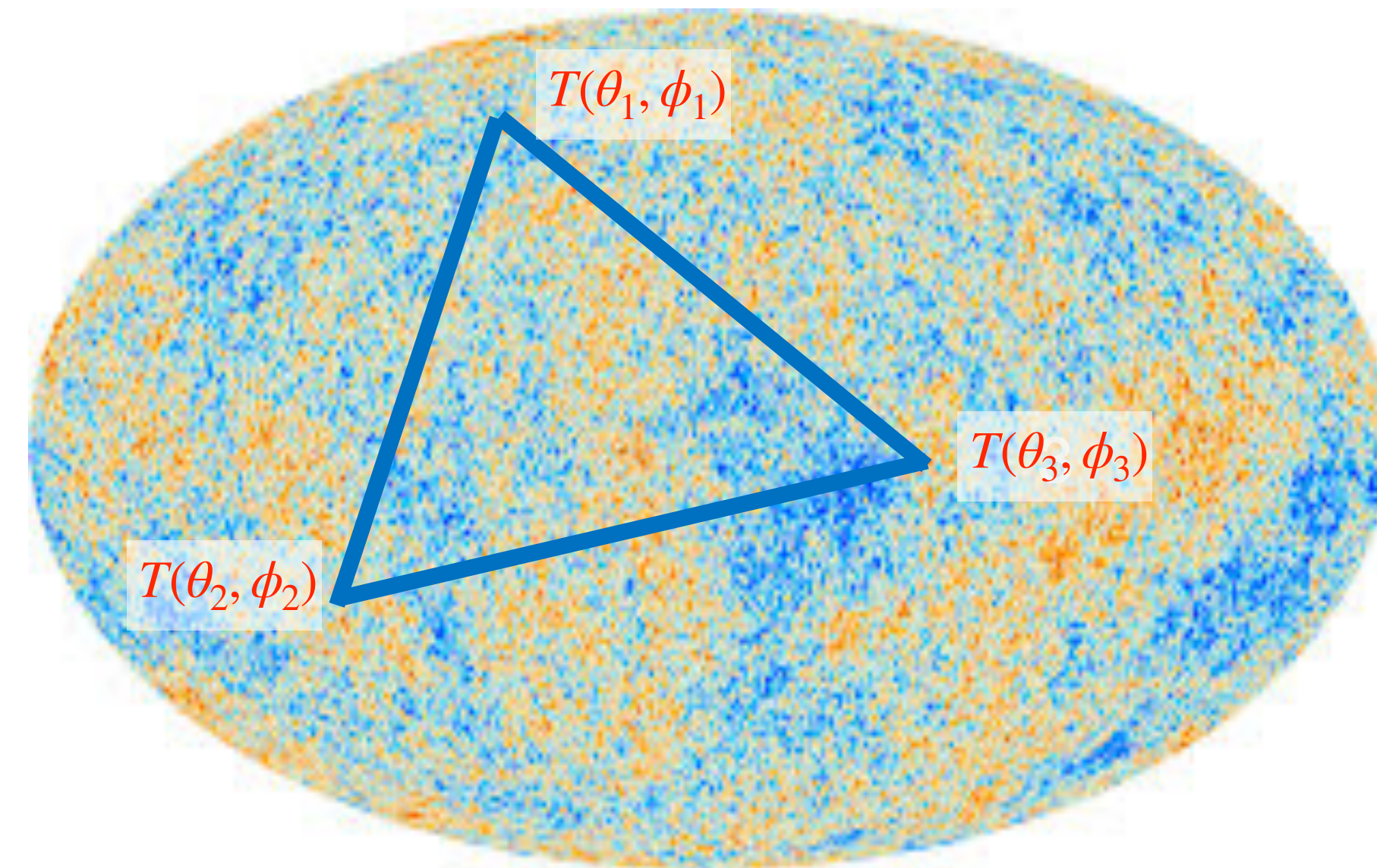
- This is an **optimal estimator** for f_{NL} , i.e. it is **lossless**

2. Separability:

- If the **theory model** is **separable**, we can rewrite the ℓ, m sum using spherical harmonic transforms!

$$B_\zeta(k_1, k_2, k_3) \sim \sum_n \alpha_n(k_1) \beta_n(k_2) \gamma_n(k_3)$$

- This reduces the complexity from $\mathcal{O}(N_{\text{pix}}^3)$ to $\mathcal{O}(N_{\text{pix}} \log N_{\text{pix}})$



(**Note:** binned/modal analyses use a similar trick, but compress to a lower-dimensional basis, rather than a single amplitude)

CMB Bispectrum Constraints

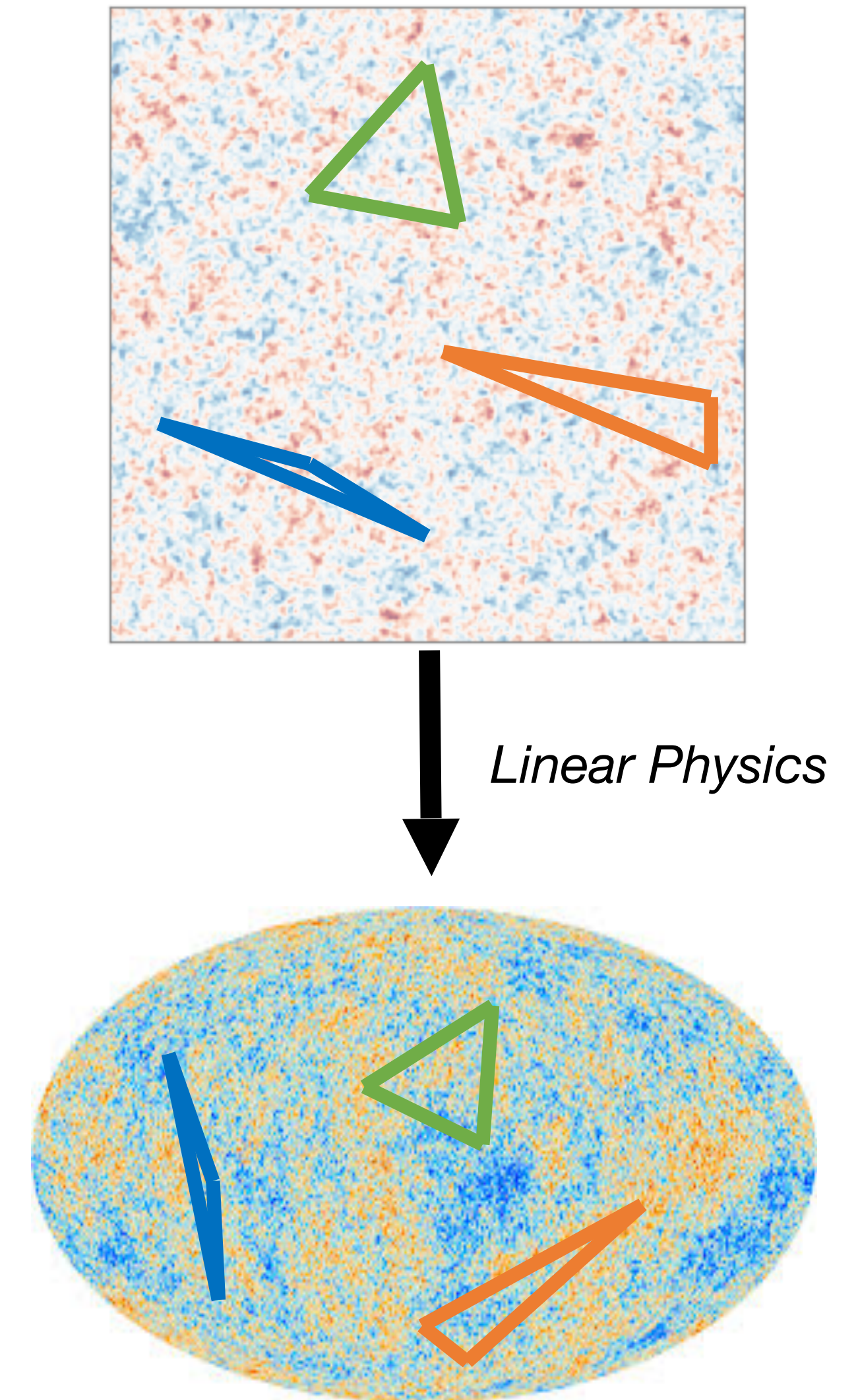
- *Planck* placed **strong** constraints on scalar **three-point** functions, e.g.,

Planck 2018	Local	-0.9 ± 5.1	← <i>New light scalars</i>
	Equilateral	-26 ± 47	← <i>Self-interactions</i>
	Orthogonal	-38 ± 24	

- These span **many** phenomenological templates
- *Planck* uses both **separable** shapes and **modal/bin** approximations
- Recent work has also constrained **tensor** three-point functions, e.g., $\langle \zeta \zeta h \rangle$ and **cosmological collider** bispectra

Conclusion: Scalar primordial non-Gaussianity is **small**: $10^{-5} |f_{\text{NL}}| \ll 1$

However, we are still far from the (rough) theory targets: $\sigma(f_{\text{NL}}) \sim 1$



What's Next for PNG?

1. More models

- Folded NG? Excited states? Slow colliders? Strongly-mixed colliders?

2. Higher-orders

- Four-point functions? Five-point functions? Non-perturbative effects?

3. Other datasets

- Next-generation CMB? Galaxy clustering? Weak lensing? 21cm observations?

The CMB Trispectrum

Very few previous works have considered **four-point** functions!

- Are they worth investigating?

Yes!

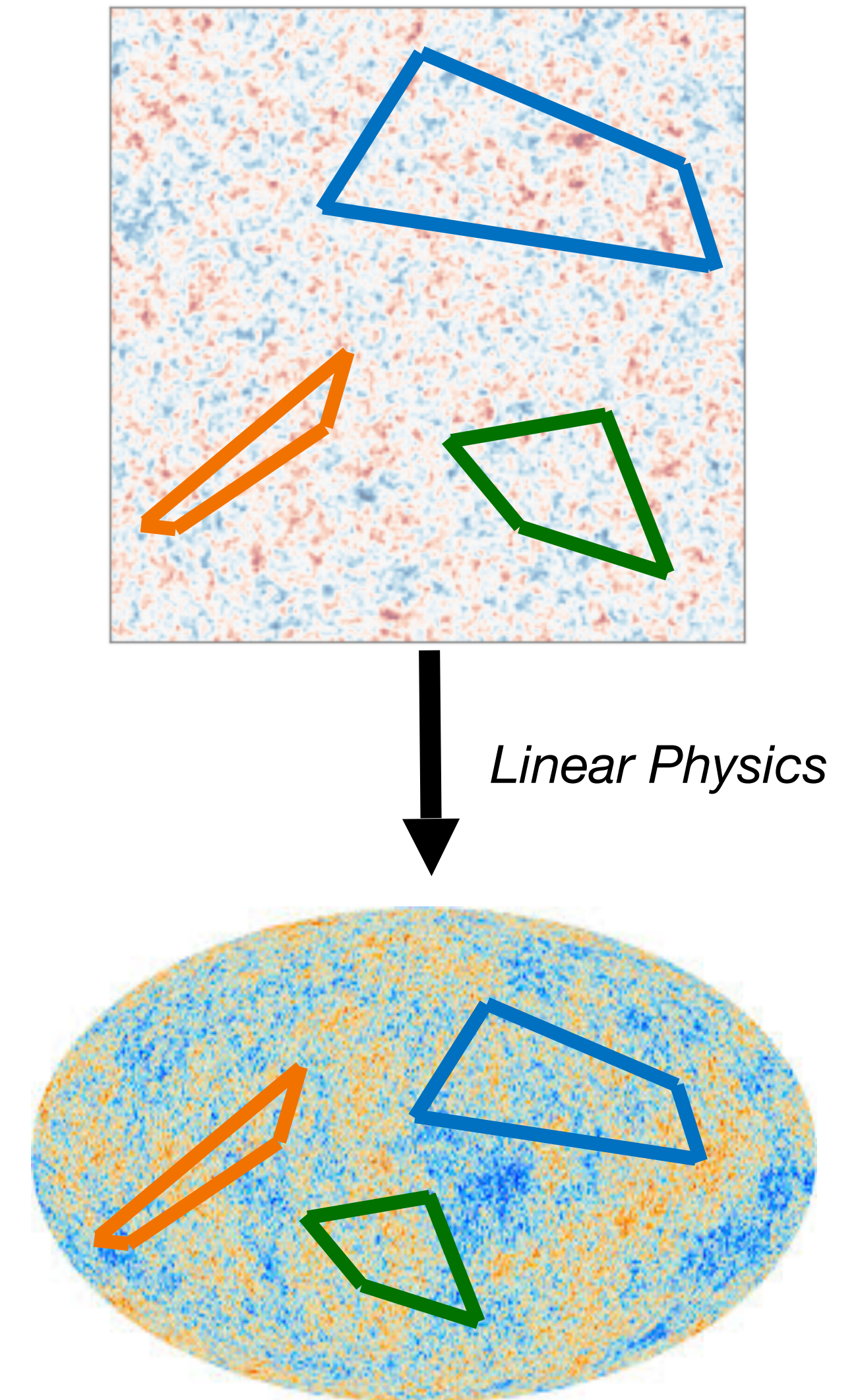
- **Cubic-terms** in the Lagrangian could be protected by **symmetry**

$$\mathcal{L} \sim \frac{1}{2}(\partial\sigma)^2 + \cancel{\dot{\sigma}^3} + \cancel{\dot{\sigma}(\partial\sigma)^2} + \delta\sigma^4 + \dots$$

(for a general light scalar σ , ignoring coupling amplitudes)

Killed by \mathbb{Z}_2 symmetry ($\sigma \rightarrow -\sigma$), or some supersymmetries

- Four-point functions can reveal **hidden particle physics**, e.g, **helicities**
- Collider trispectra *don't* require a **linear mixing** with the inflaton
- Until recently, we *only* had constraints on
 - **Local effects** ($g_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}}, \tau_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}}$)
 - **Self-interactions** (from the EFT of inflation: $g_{\text{NL}}^{\text{eq}} \times 3$)



How to Measure a Four-Point Function

Measuring the CMB trispectrum is a challenge!

- The trispectrum is **five-dimensional** [after symmetries] and depends on 10^{28} sets of points!

$$\langle T(\theta_1, \phi_1) T(\theta_2, \phi_2) T(\theta_3, \phi_3) T(\theta_4, \phi_4) \rangle \leftrightarrow \langle a_{\ell_1 m_1}^T a_{\ell_2 m_2}^T a_{\ell_3 m_3}^T a_{\ell_4 m_4}^T \rangle$$

- We can use **compression** as for the bispectrum:

$$\widehat{g_{\text{NL}}} \sim \sum_{\ell_1 m_1 \ell_2 m_2 \ell_3 m_3 \ell_4 m_4} \langle a_{\ell_1 m_1} a_{\ell_2 m_2} a_{\ell_3 m_3} a_{\ell_4 m_4} \rangle_{\text{theory}}^\dagger \times (C^{-1}a)_{\ell_1 m_1} (C^{-1}a)_{\ell_2 m_2} (C^{-1}a)_{\ell_3 m_3} (C^{-1}a)_{\ell_4 m_4}$$

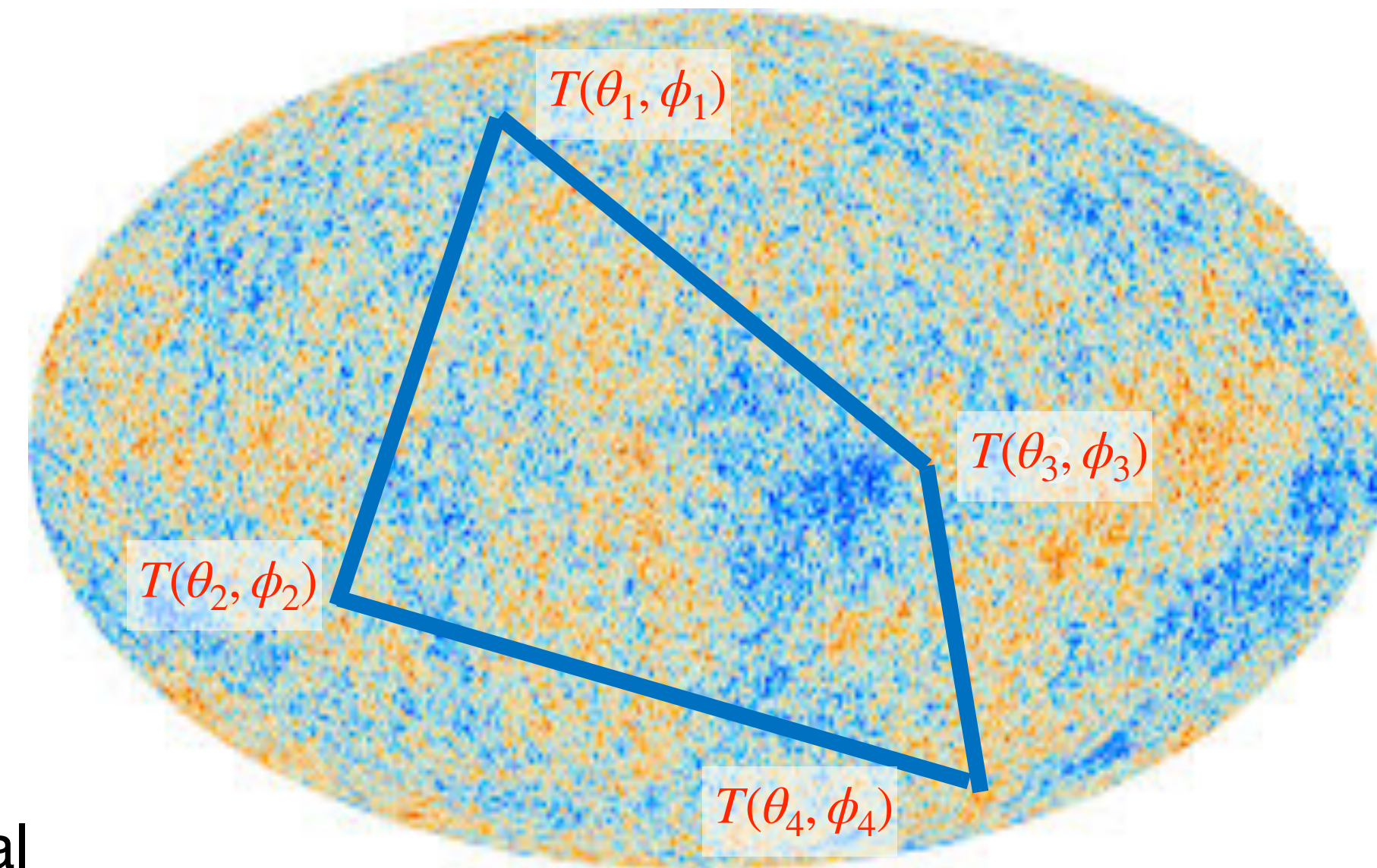
Model

Data

- To **compute** the ℓ, m sum we use a variety of tricks, including low-dimensional integrals, harmonic transforms, and Monte Carlo summation

$$T_\zeta(k_1, k_2, k_3, k_4, s, t, u) \sim F(k_1)G(k_2)H(k_3)I(k_4)J(s^{1/2}) + \dots$$

- If the trispectrum can be (integral-) **factorized**, this reduces the complexity from $\mathcal{O}(N_{\text{pix}}^4)$ to $\mathcal{O}(N_{\text{pix}} \log N_{\text{pix}})$



Optimal Trispectrum Analyses

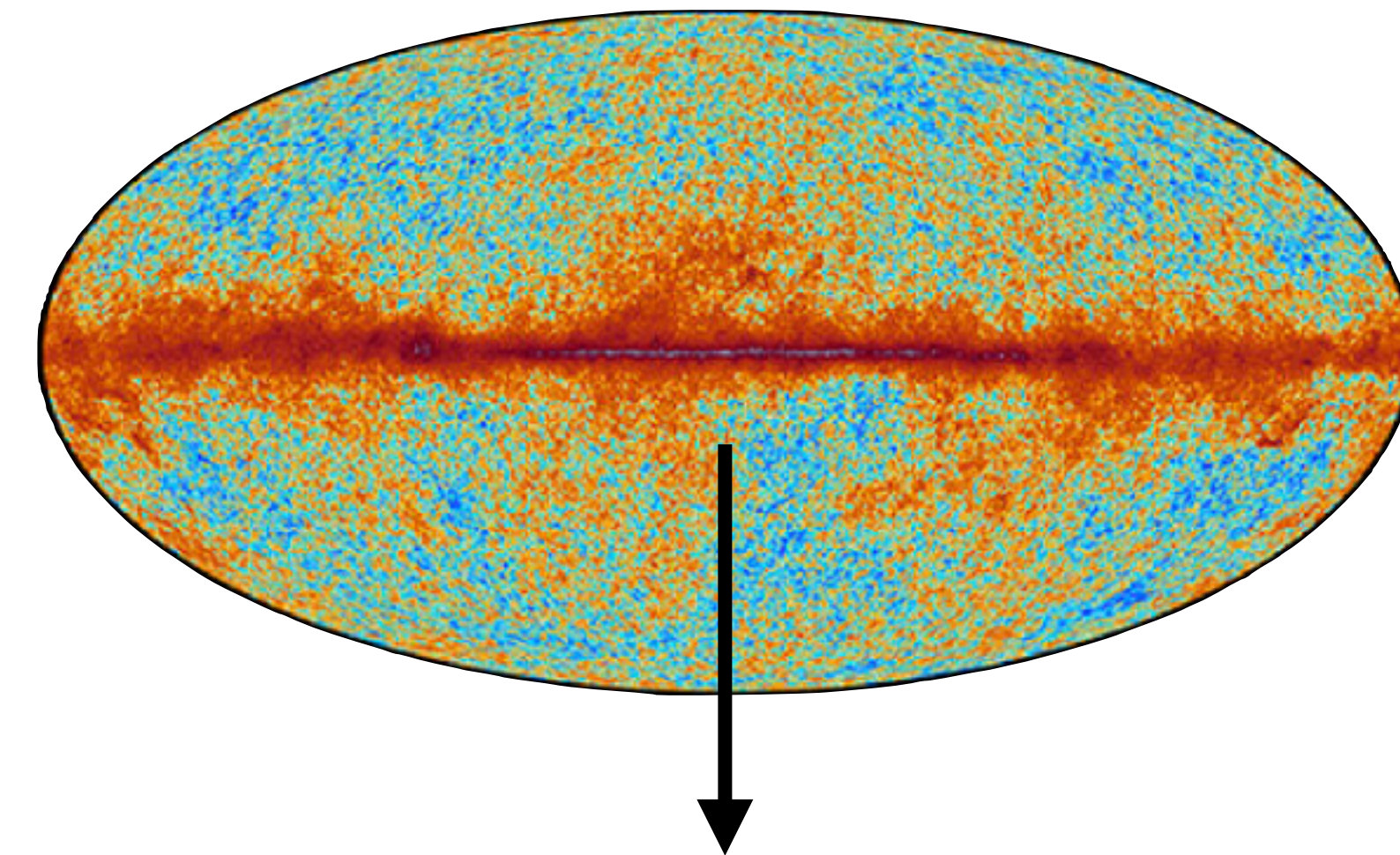


The result: **fast** estimation of four-point amplitudes!

The estimators are

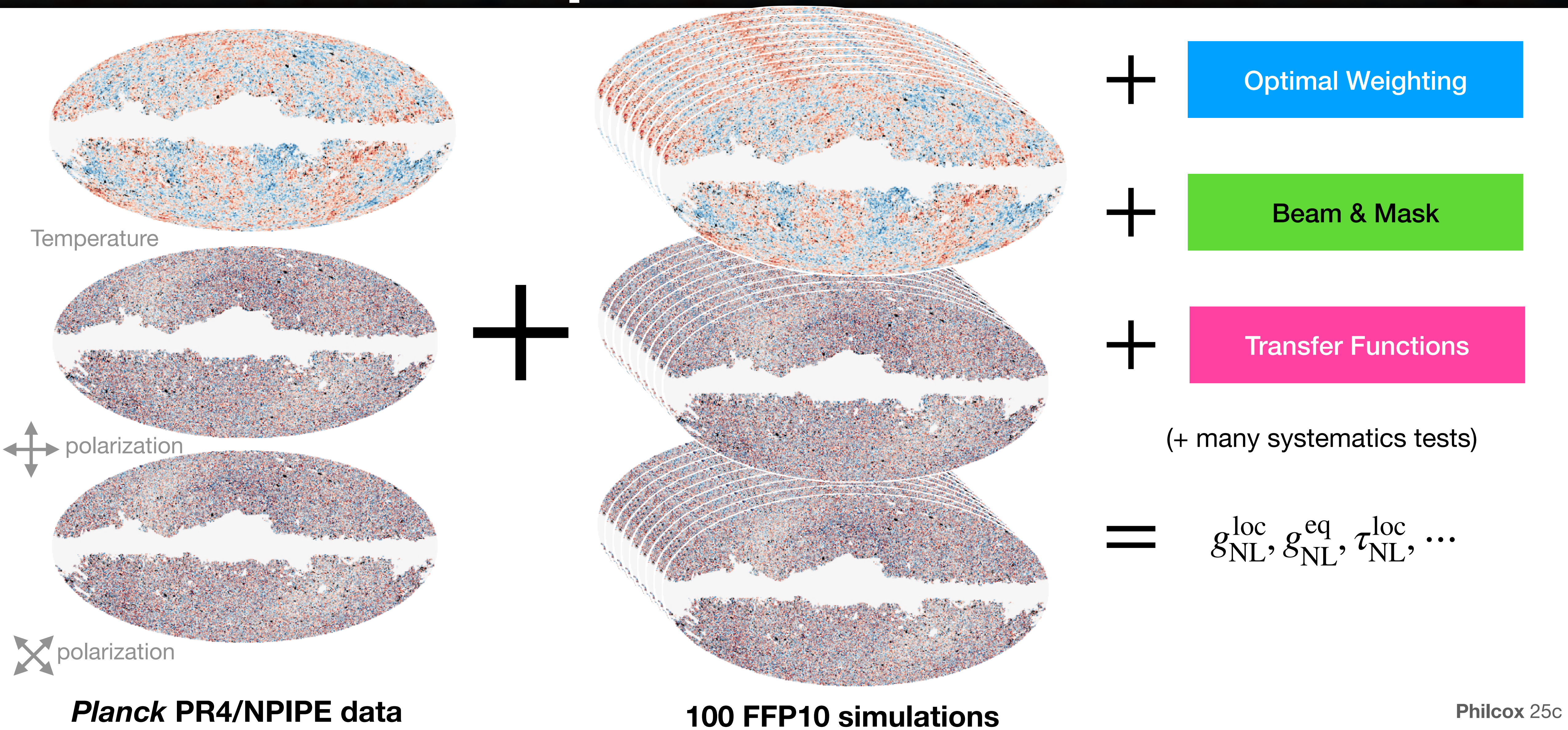
- **Unbiased** (by the mask, geometry, beams, lensing, ...)
- **Efficient** (limited by spherical harmonic transforms)
- **Minimum-Variance** (they saturate the Cramer-Rao bound)
- **Open-Source** (entirely written in Python/Cython)
- **General** (17 classes of **factorizable** model included so far)

Public at <https://github.com/oliverphilcox/PolySpec>



inflation parameters

The *Planck* Trispectrum



Detecting Non-Gaussianity?



What did we try to detect?

1. **Cubic local** shape ($g_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}}$)
2. **Quadratic² local** shape ($\tau_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}}$)
3. **Constant** shape ($g_{\text{NL}}^{\text{con}}$)
4. **Effective Field Theory of Inflation** shapes ($\times 3$)
5. **Direction-dependent** shapes
6. **Cosmological Collider** shapes [non-analytic part]
7. Weak **Gravitational Lensing**
8. Unresolved **Point-Sources**
9. ISW-lensing **Trispectra**

All of these can be integral-factorized!

Detecting Non-Gaussianity?



What did we try to detect?

1. **Cubic local** shape ($g_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}}$)
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Did we detect it?

No

No

No

No ($\times 3$)

No ($\times 8$)

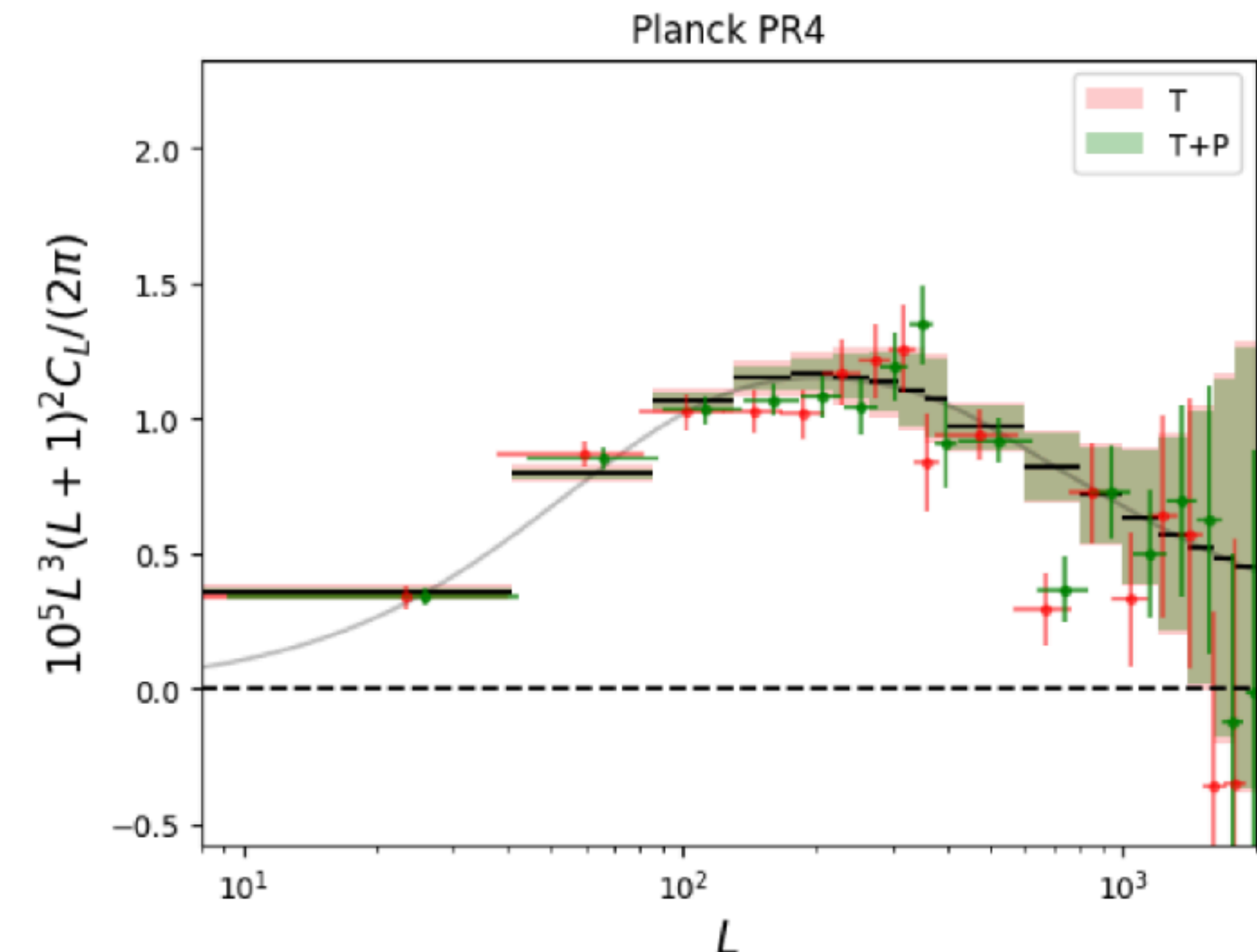
No ($\times 17$)

Yes!!!

No

No

All of these can be integral-factorized!



Gravitational Lensing
(43σ , but not a new detection)

Equilateral Non-Gaussianity

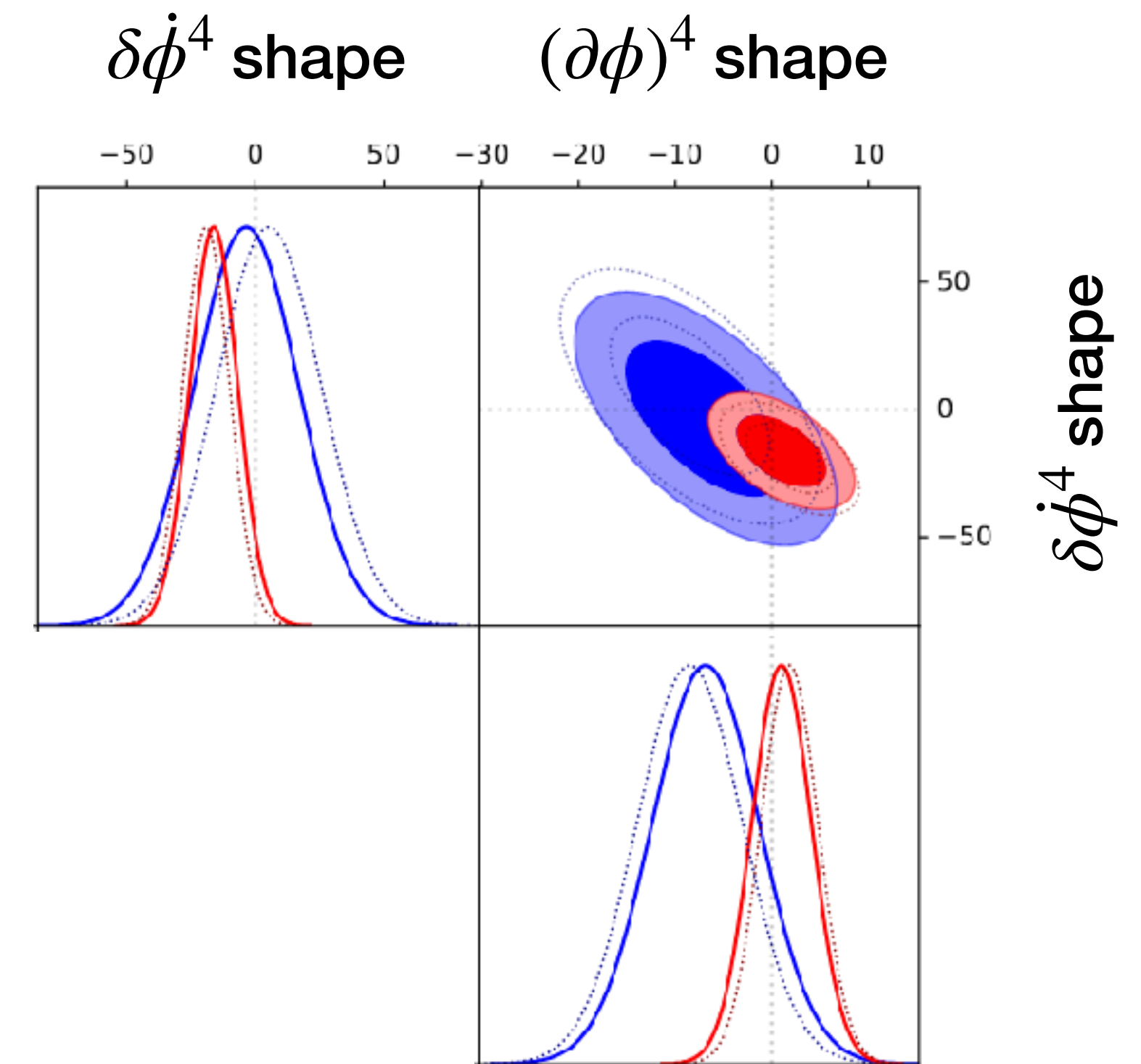
We can constrain cubic *self-interactions* in inflation

- Constrains models such as:
 - **Effective Field Theory** couplings
 - **DBI** inflation (*string theory* + *small sound-speed*)
 - **Generic** single-field inflation (including *Lorentz Invariant* models)
 - **Ghost** inflation, **k**-inflation, and beyond...

Outcome: Consistent with zero!

- (50 – 150%) better than any previous constraints!

T+Pol \gg **T-only**



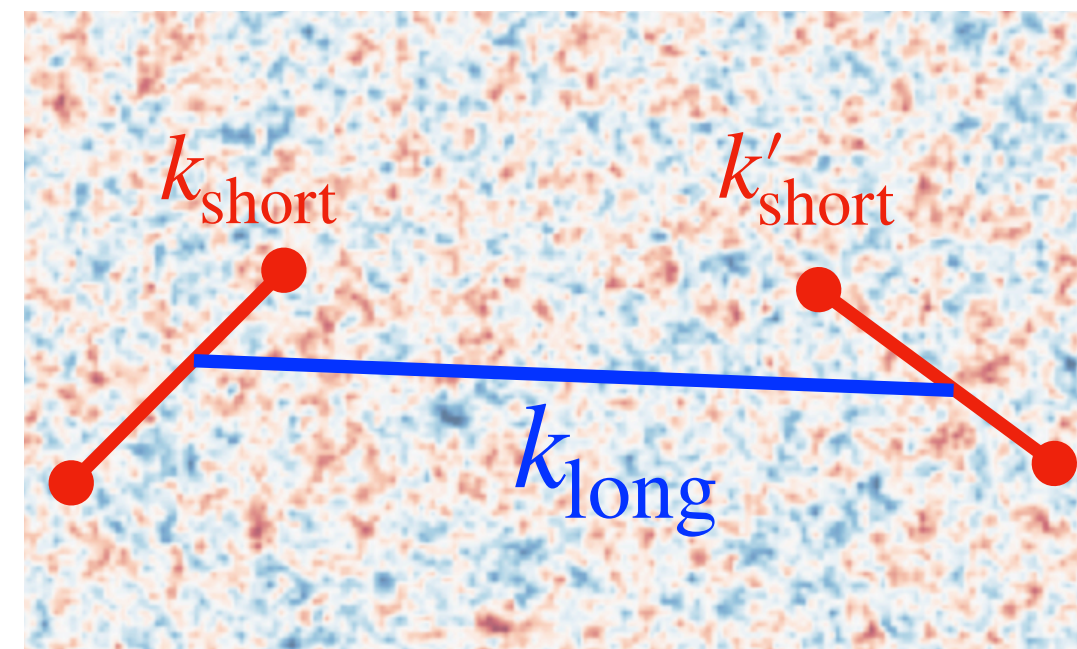
The third shape — $\delta\dot{\phi}^2(\partial\phi)^2$ — is very correlated, so we don't plot it [but we don't detect it]

Cosmological Colliders

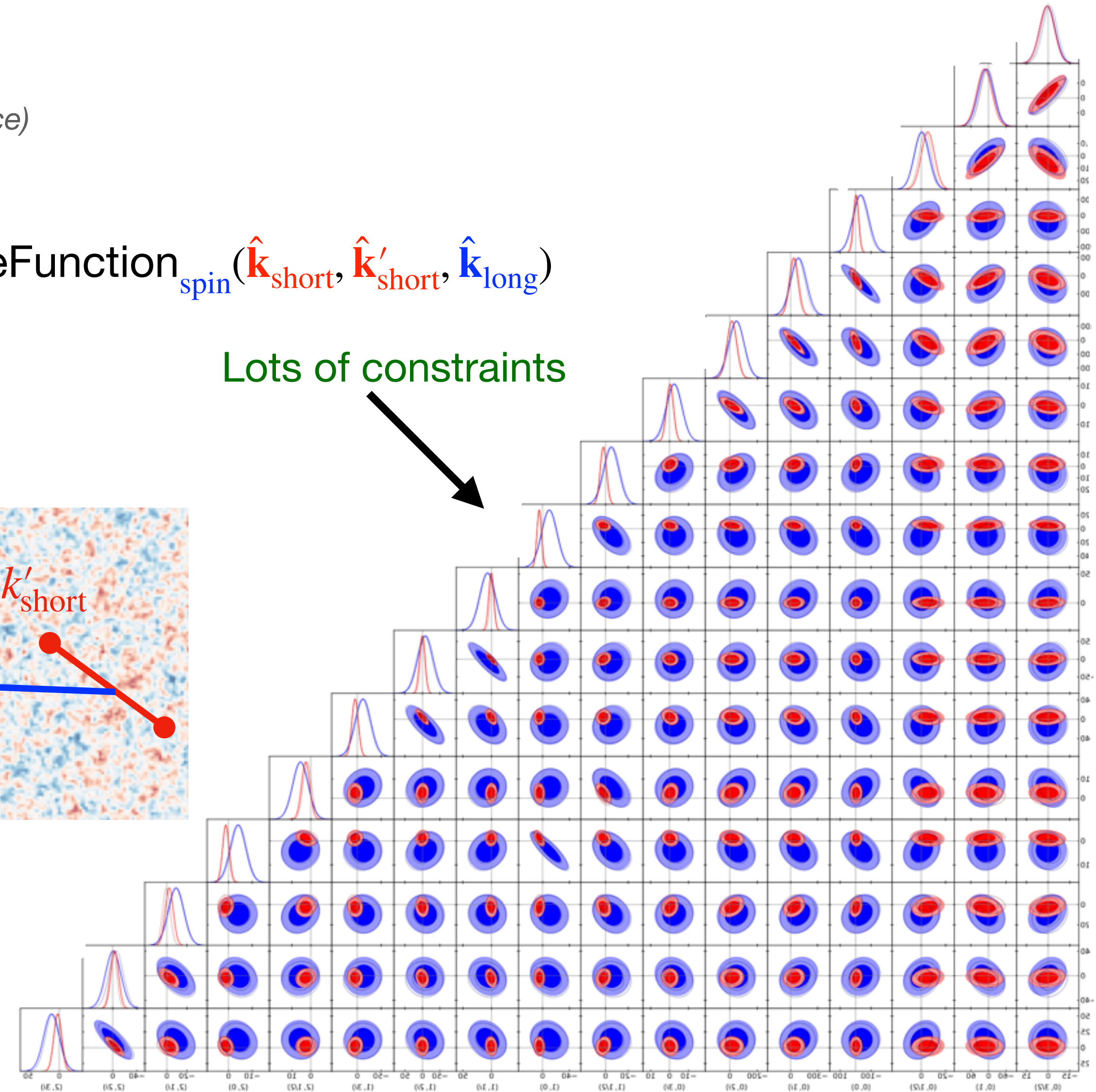
We can search for **massive** and **spinning** particles (*non-analytic piece*)

$$\langle \zeta^4 \rangle \sim P_\zeta(k_{\text{short}})P(k'_{\text{short}})P_\zeta(k_{\text{long}}) \times \left(\frac{k_{\text{long}}^2}{k_{\text{short}}k'_{\text{short}}} \right)^{3/2 \pm i\sqrt{m_\sigma^2/H^2 - 9/4}} \text{AngleFunction}_{\text{spin}}(\hat{\mathbf{k}}_{\text{short}}, \hat{\mathbf{k}}'_{\text{short}}, \hat{\mathbf{k}}_{\text{long}})$$

- Several regimes, including:
 - **Light Fields** (Complementary Series):
 $m_\sigma \lesssim 3H/2$
 - **Conformally Coupled Fields**:
 $m_\sigma = 3H/2$
 - **Heavy Fields** (Principal Series):
 $m_\sigma \gtrsim 3H/2$



Lots of constraints

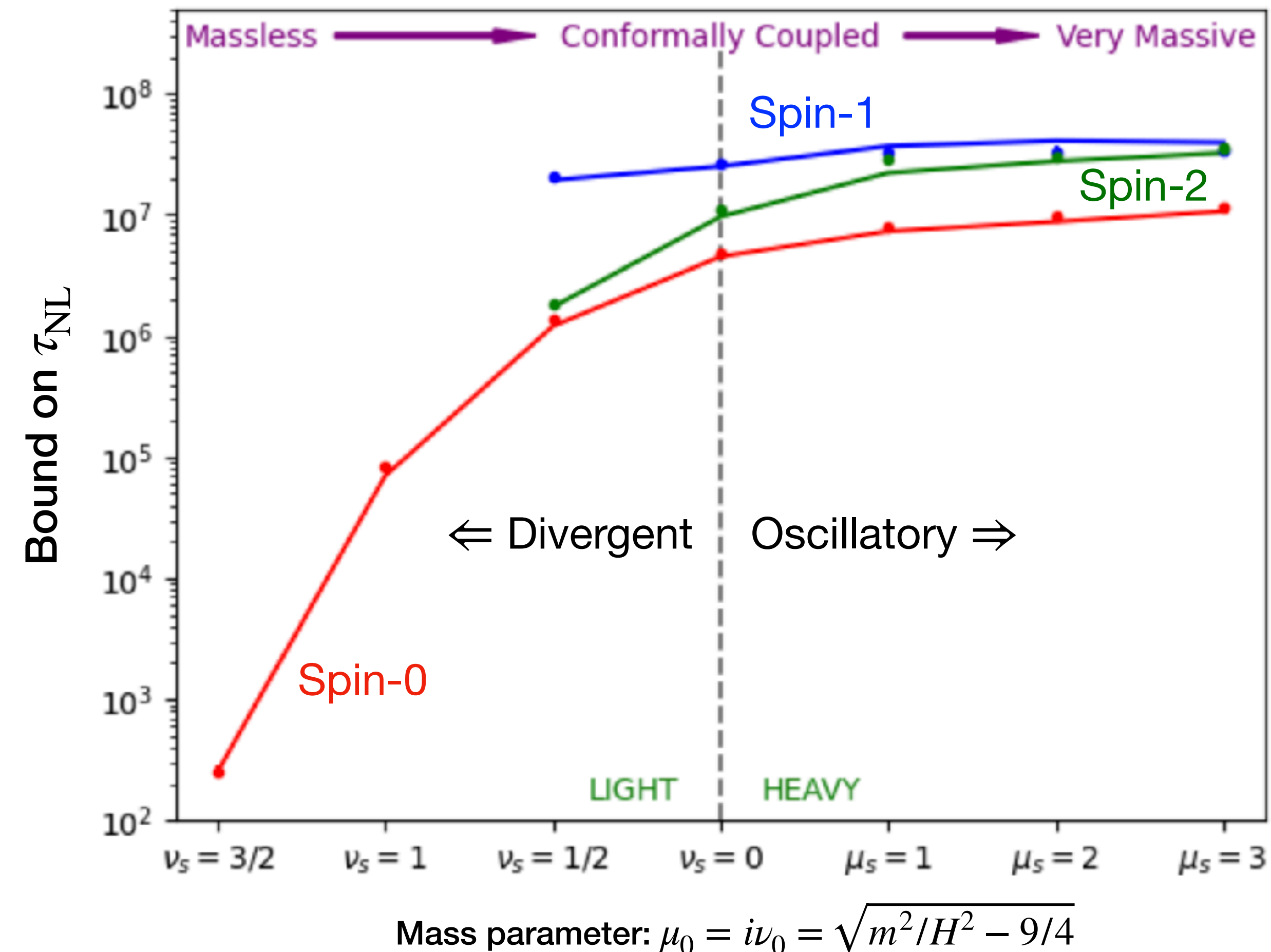


No detections!

Cosmological Colliders

We can search for **massive** and **spinning** particles *(non-analytic piece)*

- Several regimes, including:
 - **Light** Fields (Complementary Series): $m_\sigma \lesssim 3H/2$
 - **Conformally Coupled** Fields: $m_\sigma = 3H/2$
 - **Heavy** Fields (Principal Series): $m_\sigma \gtrsim 3H/2$
- As expected, **light fields** are easiest to constrain since their trispectrum **diverges**
- Odd-spins are **hard** to constrain due to cancellations!
- **Note:** many of the collider signals are **orthogonal** to the standard templates! [Suman+25, Sohn+24]



What's Next For the Trispectrum?

There are *many* ways to extend.

1. More **Data**

$$\sigma(\tau_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}}) \sim \ell_{\text{max}}^{-2}$$

- ACT, SPT, Simons Observatory, LiteBird, CMB-HD, ... will provide data down to **much** smaller scales!
- **Polarization** will be particularly useful and could benefit from **delensing**

2. More **Models**

- Lighter particles? Heavier particles? Unparticles?
- Tensor non-Gaussianity?
- Collider physics beyond the collapsed limit?
- Thermal baths? Higher-spin particles? Modified sound speeds? Loops? Fermions?
- Scale-dependence? Isocurvature? Primordial magnetic fields?

Separable Inflationary Correlators

- Efficient **bispectrum** and **trispectrum** analyses require **factorizable** primordial signals.

$$B_{\zeta}(k_1, k_2, k_3) \sim F(k_1)G(k_2)H(k_3)$$

- Separable** N -point function $\rightarrow \mathcal{O}(N_{\text{pix}} \log N_{\text{pix}})$ algorithm

$$T_{\zeta}(k_1, k_2, k_3, k_4, s, t, u) \sim F(k_1)G(k_2)H(k_3)I(k_4)J(s^{1/2}) + \dots$$

- Non-separable** N -point function $\rightarrow \mathcal{O}(N_{\text{pix}}^N)$ algorithm

- Many models of interest are **not separable**

- Some require complex oscillatory integrals (via *in-in*)
- Others cannot be expressed analytically (e.g., *numerical methods*)

$$B_{\zeta}(k_1, k_2, k_3) \sim \frac{k_1 k_2 k_3}{(k_1 + k_2 + k_3)^3}$$

- To analyze these models, we have two options:

- Bin the statistic** [lossy, and expensive to compute theory predictions!]
- Create a **separable approximation** [e.g., modal decompositions]

Separable Inflationary Bispectra

- **Modal approach**: represent the bispectrum as a **sum** of **polynomials**:

$$(k_1 k_2 k_3)^2 B_\zeta(k_1, k_2, k_3) \sim \sum_{p+q+r=0} \alpha_{pqr} k_1^p k_2^q k_3^r \quad (\text{or Legendre polynomials})$$

- Given a **target** bispectrum, the coefficients α_{pqr} are computed with **linear algebra**
- Each term is **factorizable**, so we can build an efficient CMB estimator!
- *However*, this basis is **big** (≈ 5000 terms used in the *Planck* collider analysis) and does not represent all shapes of interest.

- **Alternative approach**: **learn** the basis from the **theory** itself

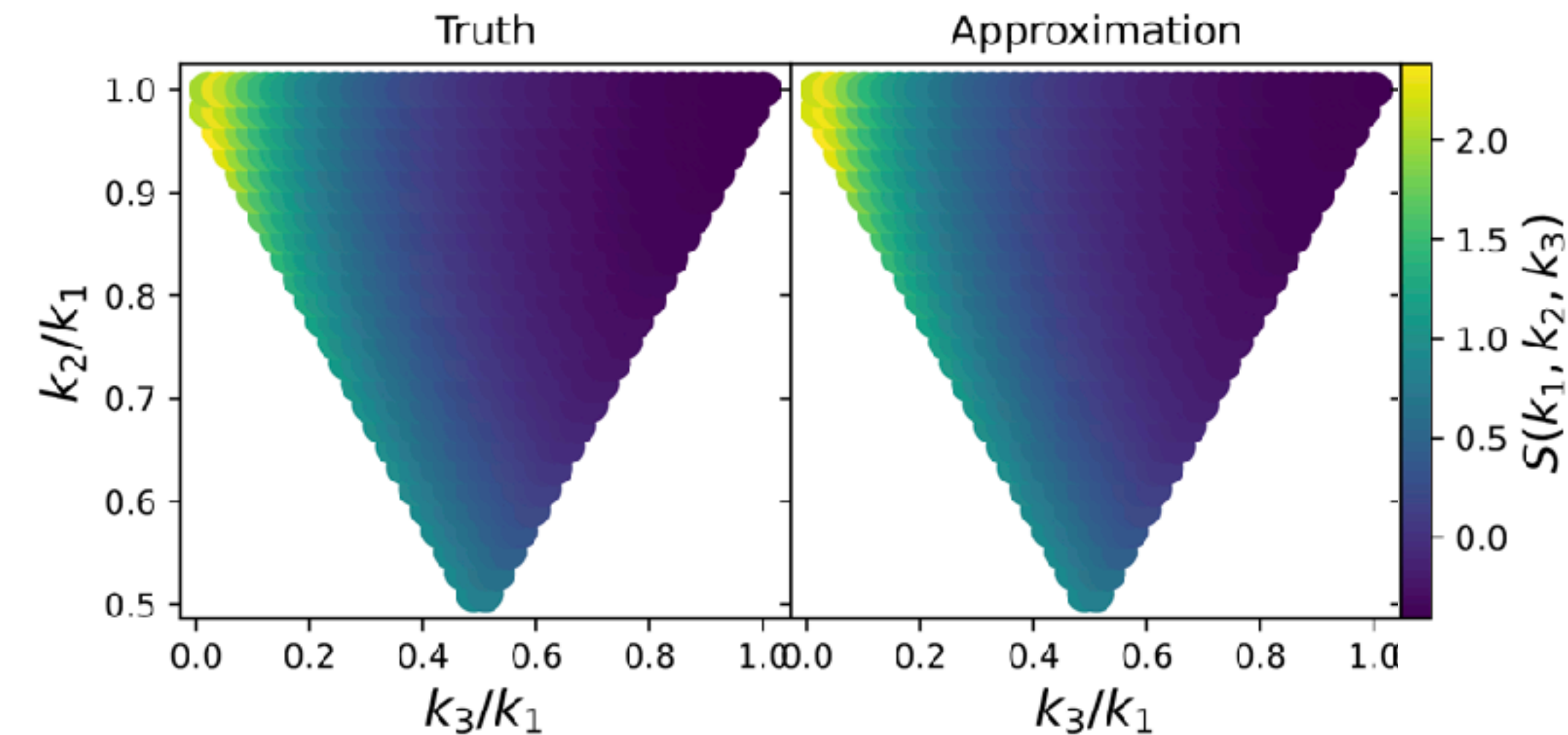
$$(k_1 k_2 k_3)^2 B_\zeta(k_1, k_2, k_3) \sim \sum_n w_n \alpha_n(k_1) \beta_n(k_2) \gamma_n(k_3) + \text{perms.}$$

- Given a **target** bispectrum, the **functions** $\alpha_n, \beta_n, \gamma_n$ and **weights** w_n are computed using **machine learning**
- By carefully choosing the loss function, we can **optimize** the decomposition for the task of interest, e.g., *Planck* CMB analysis
- This typically requires **far fewer terms** ($N \lesssim 3$) to compute the bispectra!

Separable Bispectra in Practice

- This is implemented in the `separable_bk` code, which includes:
 - Simple **neural network** architecture, supplemented with permutation symmetries
 - Training with **stochastic gradient descent**
 - Fast pytorch implementation, giving basis functions in $\mathcal{O}(\text{minutes})$
- We test `separable_bk` using **numerical** bispectra obtained with the **CosmoFlow** code
 - We use a **strongly-mixed** collider shape that **cannot** be computed analytically
 - With just **three** terms, we find approximations with $> 99.9\%$ accuracy!

$$(k_1 k_2 k_3)^2 B_\xi(k_1, k_2, k_3) \sim \sum_n w_n \alpha_n(k_1) \beta_n(k_2) \gamma_n(k_3) + \text{perms.}$$



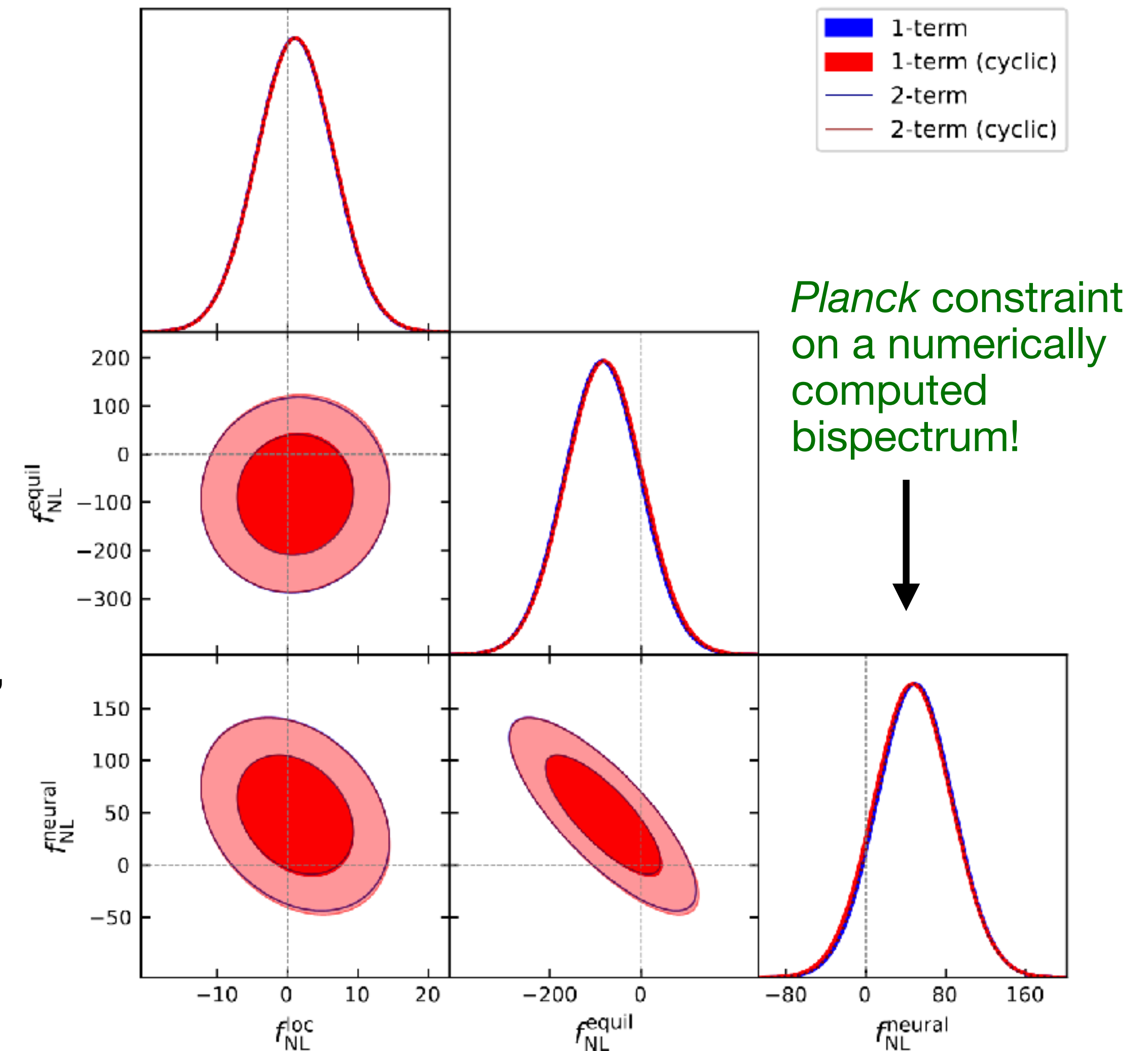
Collider bispectrum shape
(deprojecting equilateral piece)

Available at https://github.com/KunhaoZhong/separable_bk

Separable Bispectra in Practice

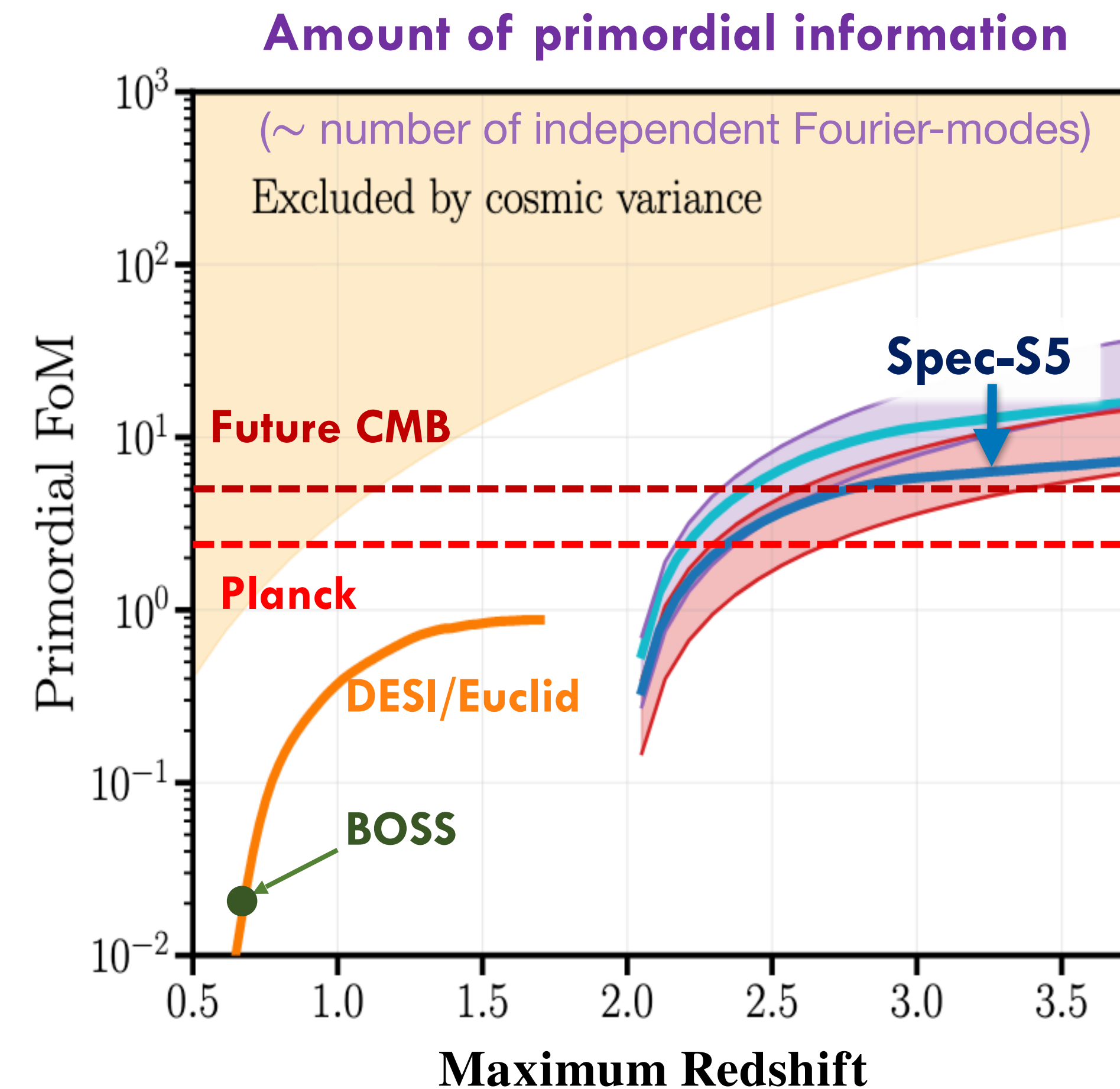
- The output of `separable_bk` is a set of **basis functions** describing a particular primordial bispectrum.
- These can be interfaced with the ***PolySpec*** code to compute f_{NL} bounds, e.g., from *Planck*
- Since the number of separable terms is **small**, we can analyze **collider** bispectra in similar computation time to standard shapes, such as local and equilateral!
- This will allow us to constrain **arbitrary** primordial bispectra, including those that can only be computed numerically.
- There is **lots** to explore, e.g., analysis of strongly-mixed colliders, and extension to trispectra

Available at https://github.com/KunhaoZhong/separable_bk



The Future of Non-Gaussianity

- Future **CMB** experiments will improve bounds on PNG by $\lesssim 3 \times$
 - This is a **two-dimensional** field
 - We're running out of modes to look at
 - Large-scales are **cosmic-variance-limited**
 - Small-scales are limited by **secondaries** and **Silk damping**
- What about **galaxy surveys**?
 - The data precision is **rapidly increasing**
 - Legacy surveys map **a million** galaxies [BOSS]
 - New surveys map $\sim 100 \times$ more! [DESI, Euclid, Rubin, Roman, SphereX,...]
 - This is a **three-dimensional** field
 - We aren't limited by **projection effects**
 - There are new observables e.g., galaxy **shapes**, kSZ cross-correlations, ...



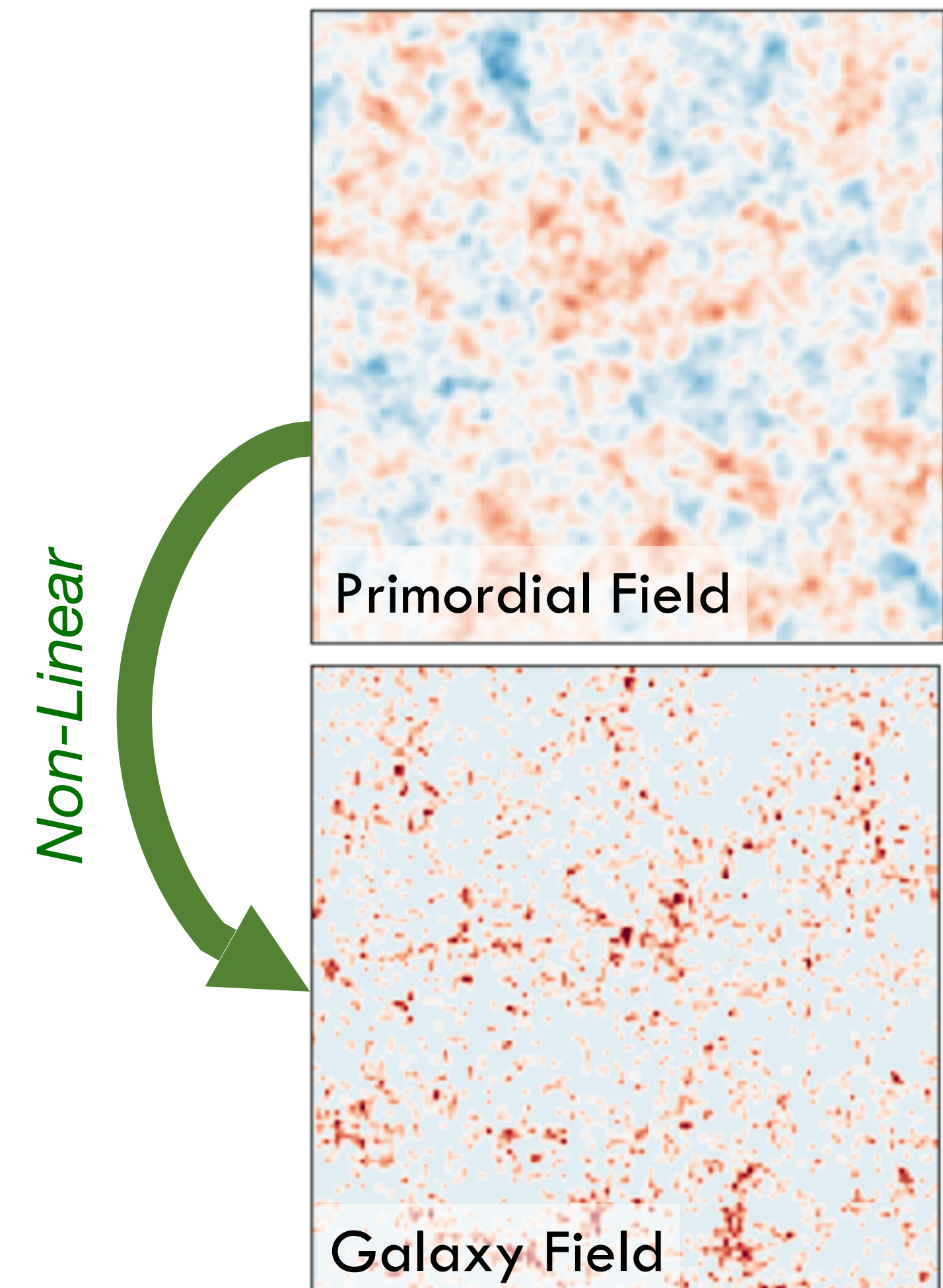
Inflation from Galaxy Surveys

- Modern galaxy surveys map of the distribution of galaxies in three-dimensions: $\delta_g(\mathbf{x}, z)$
- This **traces dark matter** evolution and the **initial conditions**
- To extract **inflationary information**, we need a **joint** model of all effects:

$$\langle \delta_g \delta_g \delta_g \rangle \sim \text{Primordial Physics} + \text{Gravity} + \text{cross-terms}$$

State-of-the-art method:

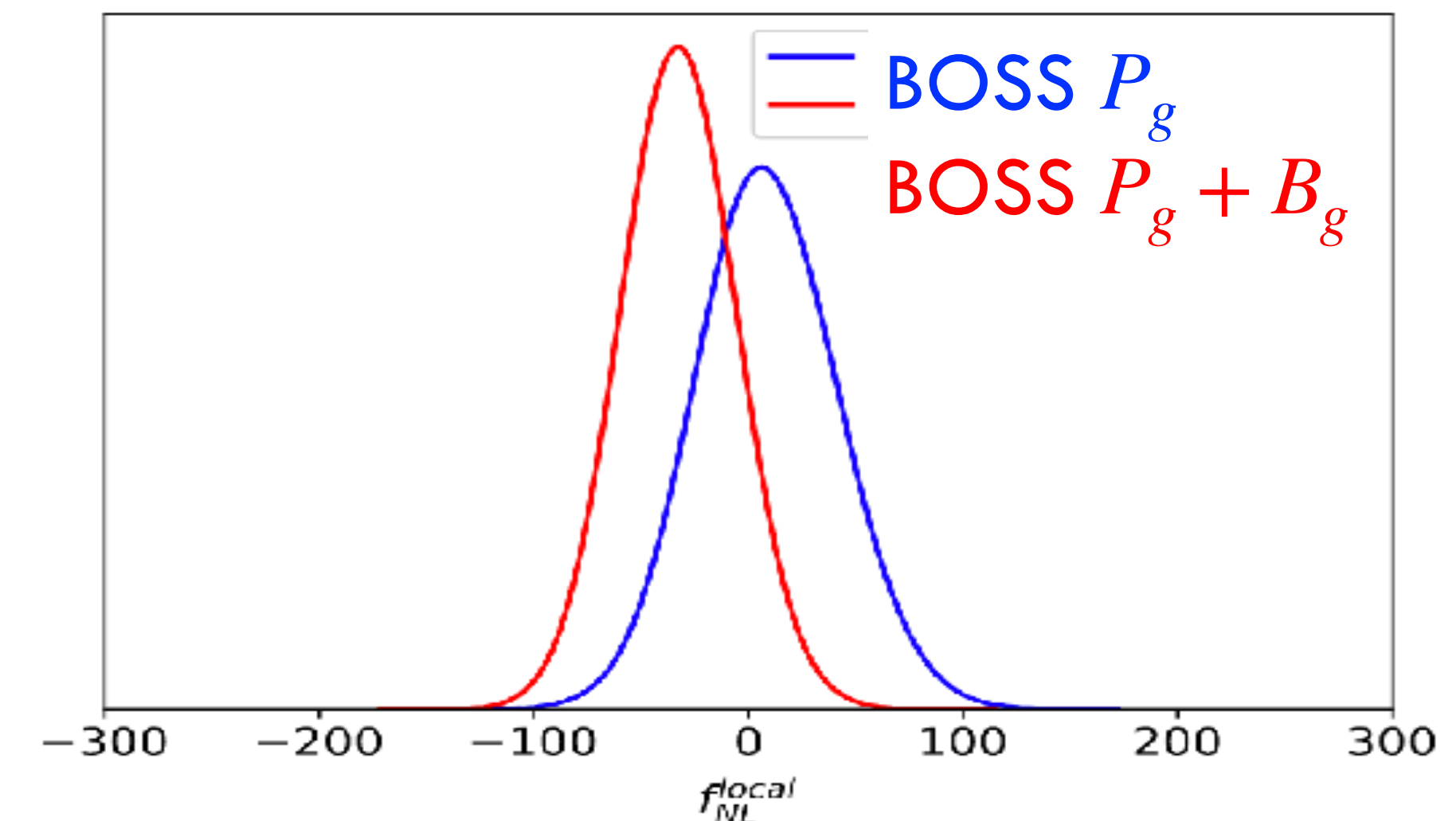
Effective Field Theory of Large Scale Structure (EFTofLSS)



Inflation from Galaxy Surveys

- Recent works have constrained inflationary **bispectra** with **legacy galaxy survey** data (SDSS-BOSS):
 - $f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}}$: **Local** three-point functions from additional **light fields**
 - $f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{eq,orth}}$: **Equilateral** three-point functions from cubic interactions in single-field inflation
 - $f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{coll}}(m_\sigma, c_\sigma)$: **Collider** three-point functions from the exchange of massive scalar fields
- For now, the constraints are **much** worse than the CMB (5 – 20×)
- Much better data is coming soon!*

Light Field Constraints



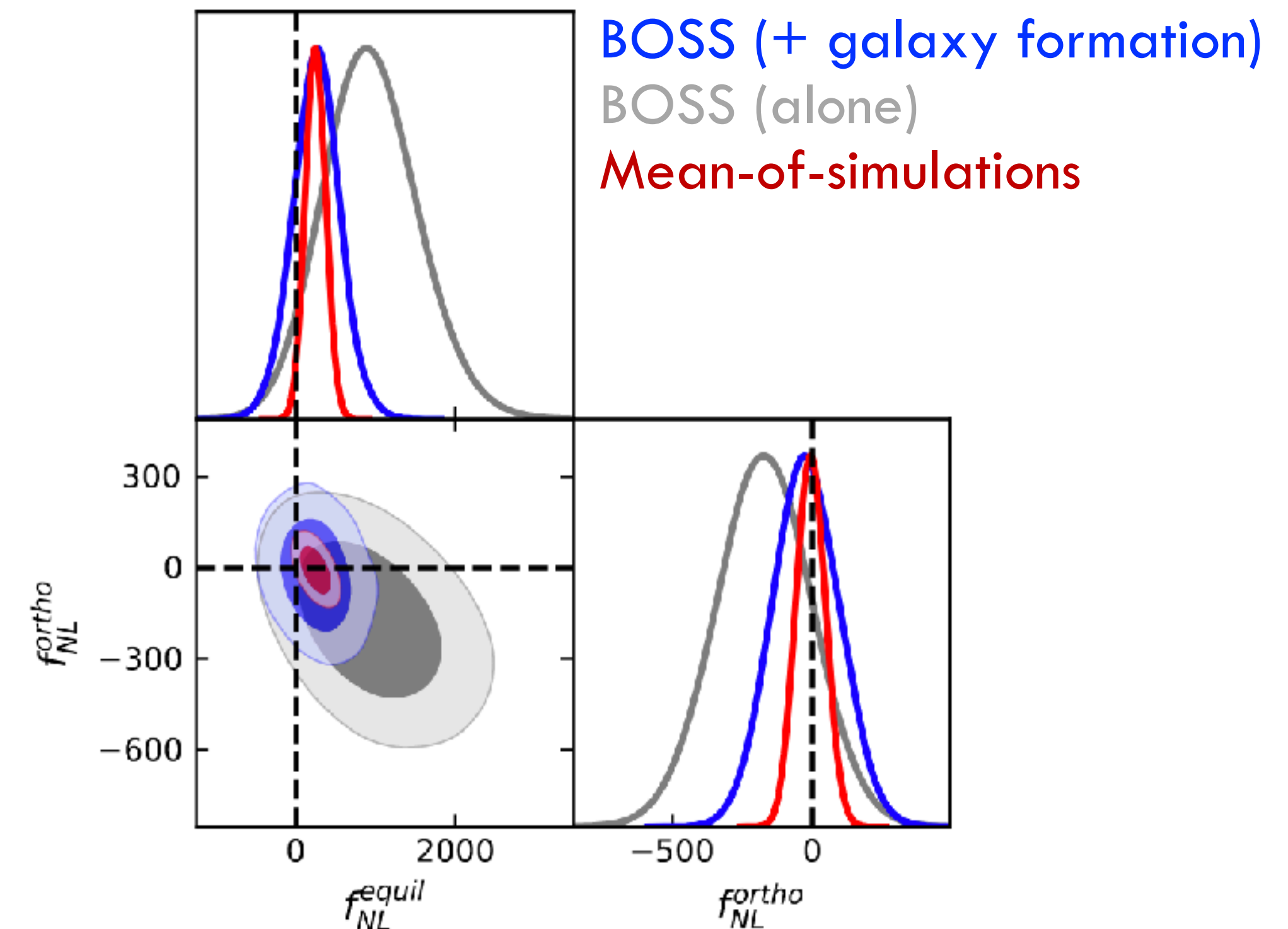
$$f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}} = -33 \pm 28 \quad (9 \pm 34 \text{ w/o bispectra})$$

(CMB: ± 5 , Target: ± 1)

Inflation from Galaxy Surveys

- Recent works have constrained inflationary **bispectra** with **legacy galaxy survey** data (SDSS-BOSS):
 - $f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}}$: **Local** three-point functions from additional **light fields**
 - $f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{eq,orth}}$: **Equilateral** three-point functions from cubic interactions in single-field inflation
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Self-Interaction Constraints



$$f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{eq}} = 940 \pm 600, f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{orth}} = -170 \pm 170$$

(CMB: $\pm 50, \pm 25$, Target: ± 1)

Inflation from DESI

The first year of DESI data is now public!

- We have developed an **independent** pipeline for analyzing the **power spectrum** and **bispectrum**
- This has been used to constrain: Λ CDM (Ω_m, H_0, σ_8), dark energy ($w_0 w_a$), curvature (Ω_k), neutrino masses ($\sum m_\nu$)

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New constraints on inflation!

- Multi-field:** $f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}} = 0 \pm 7$
- Single-Field:** $f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{eq}} = 200 \pm 230, f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{orth}} = -24 \pm 86$

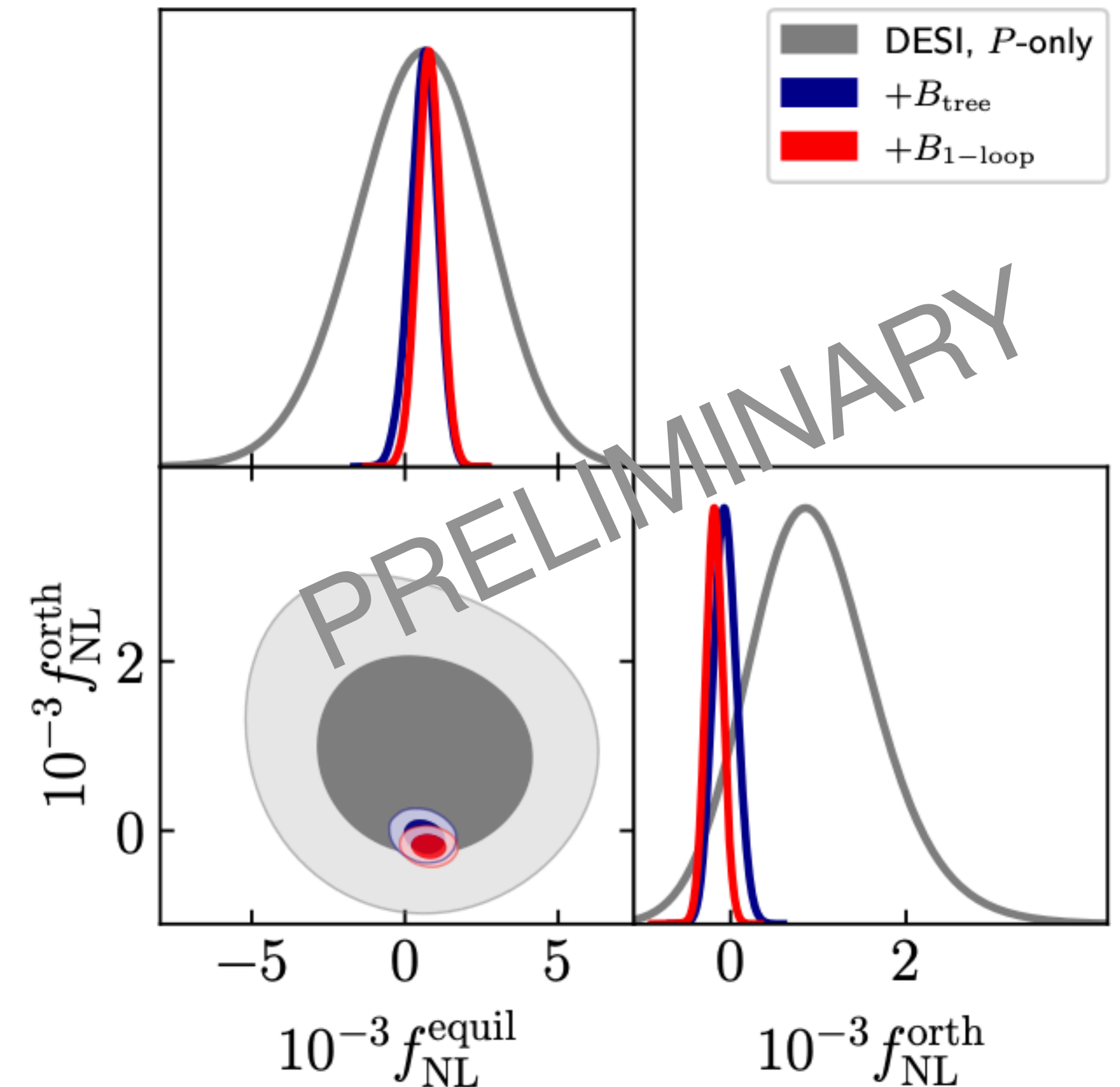
Compare to official DESI results:

$$f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}} = -2 \pm 10$$

(Using the DESI DR1 one-loop power spectrum and bispectrum, plus the high- z quasar sample)

- Adding **Planck**, we obtain the **tightest** constraint on local PNG yet!!

$$f_{\text{NL}}^{\text{loc}} = 0 \pm 4$$



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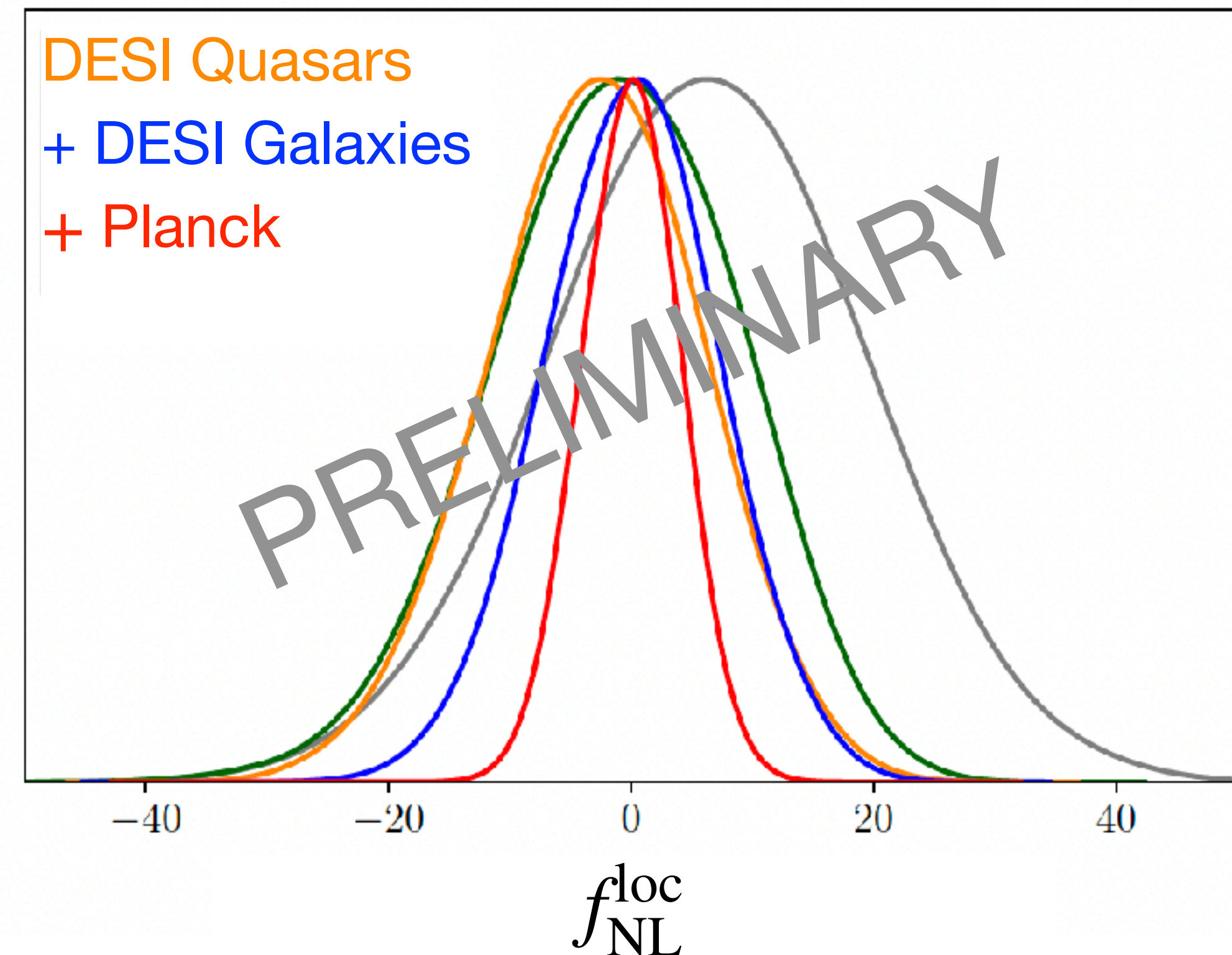
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Summary

PNG analysis is a very active field!

- We can now constrain inflationary **four-point** functions in the CMB, including the **cosmological collider**!
- We can probe **arbitrary** non-separable bispectrum models with CMB data and **machine-learning**
- **Galaxy surveys** are providing exciting new insights into inflation and are starting to rival the CMB

Contact: ohp2@cantab.ac.uk