



# Cosmology and AI

Benjamin D. Wandelt



# “Discovering new physics” is the new Turing test of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI)


 **Burny — Omni/Acc**   
@burny\_tech



**Sam Altman** (CEO of OpenAI): There are more breakthroughs required in order to get to AGI


Cambridge Student: "To get to AGI, can we just keep min maxing language models, or is there another breakthrough that we haven't really found yet to get to AGI?"

Sam Altman: "We need another breakthrough. We can still push on large language models quite a lot, and we will do that. We can take the hill that we're on and keep climbing it, and the peak of that is still pretty far away. But, within reason, I don't think that doing that will (get us to) AGI. If (for example) super intelligence can't discover novel physics I don't think it's a superintelligence. And teaching it to clone the behavior of humans and human text - I don't think that's going to get there. And so there's this question which has been debated in the field for a long time: what do we have to do in addition to a language model to make a system that can go **discover new physics?**"


See the final question around 1 hour 2 minutes in

 **ai\_in\_check** @ai\_in\_check · Nov 16, 2023  
Replying to @AISafetyMemes and @sama  
new sama video just dropped  
[youtu.be/NjpNGOCJRMM](https://youtu.be/NjpNGOCJRMM)

 Sam Altman & OpenAI | 2023 Hawking Fellow | Ca... 

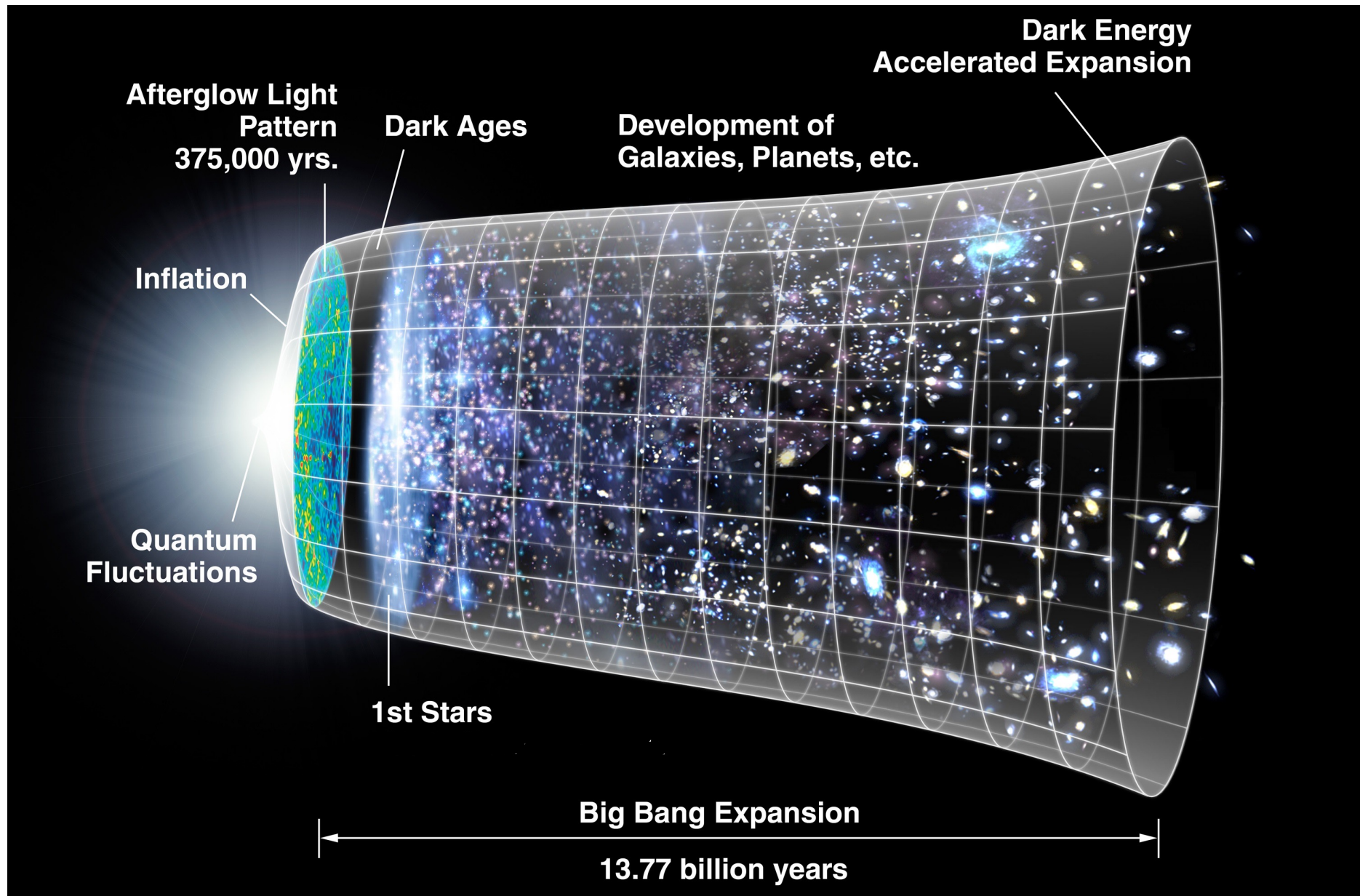


MORE VIDEOS

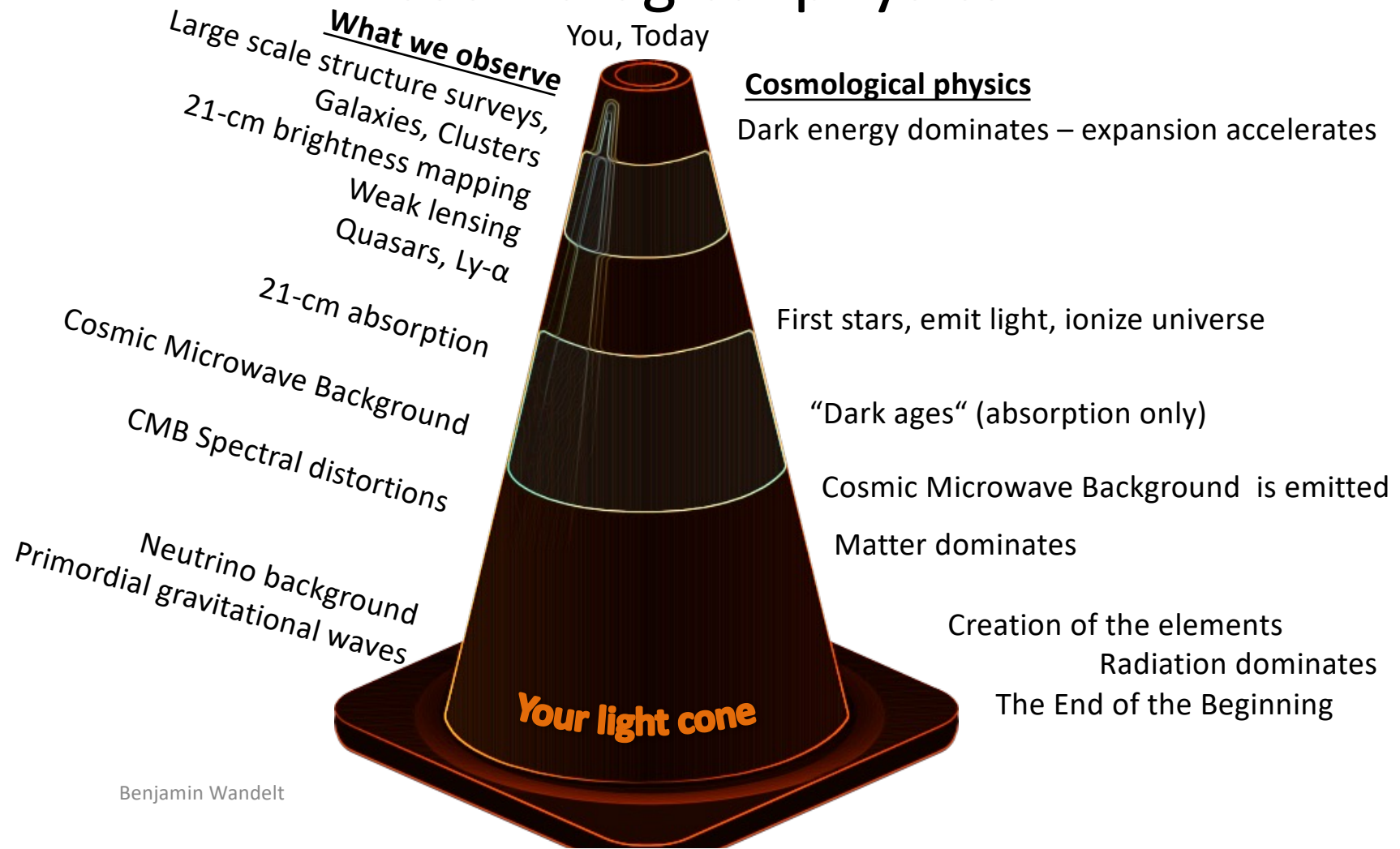
1:02:37 / 1:04:19 · Is there another ... 

From youtube.com

6:56 AM · Nov 16, 2023 · 1.9M Views



# Our past lightcone: the playground of cosmological physics



# What we want to learn

Inflation non-Gaussianity  
 $A_S, n_S, r, f_{nl}, \dots$  **Cosmic Beginning**

Primordial gravitational waves

Neutrino mass Black holes

$\Omega_m, \Omega_b, m_\nu, \tau, \dots$  **Cosmic Content**

Dark matter baryons Star formation

$H_0, \Omega_\Lambda, w_0, w_a, \dots$  **Cosmic Fate**

Expansion speed Dark Energy

Statistics of the “initial conditions”

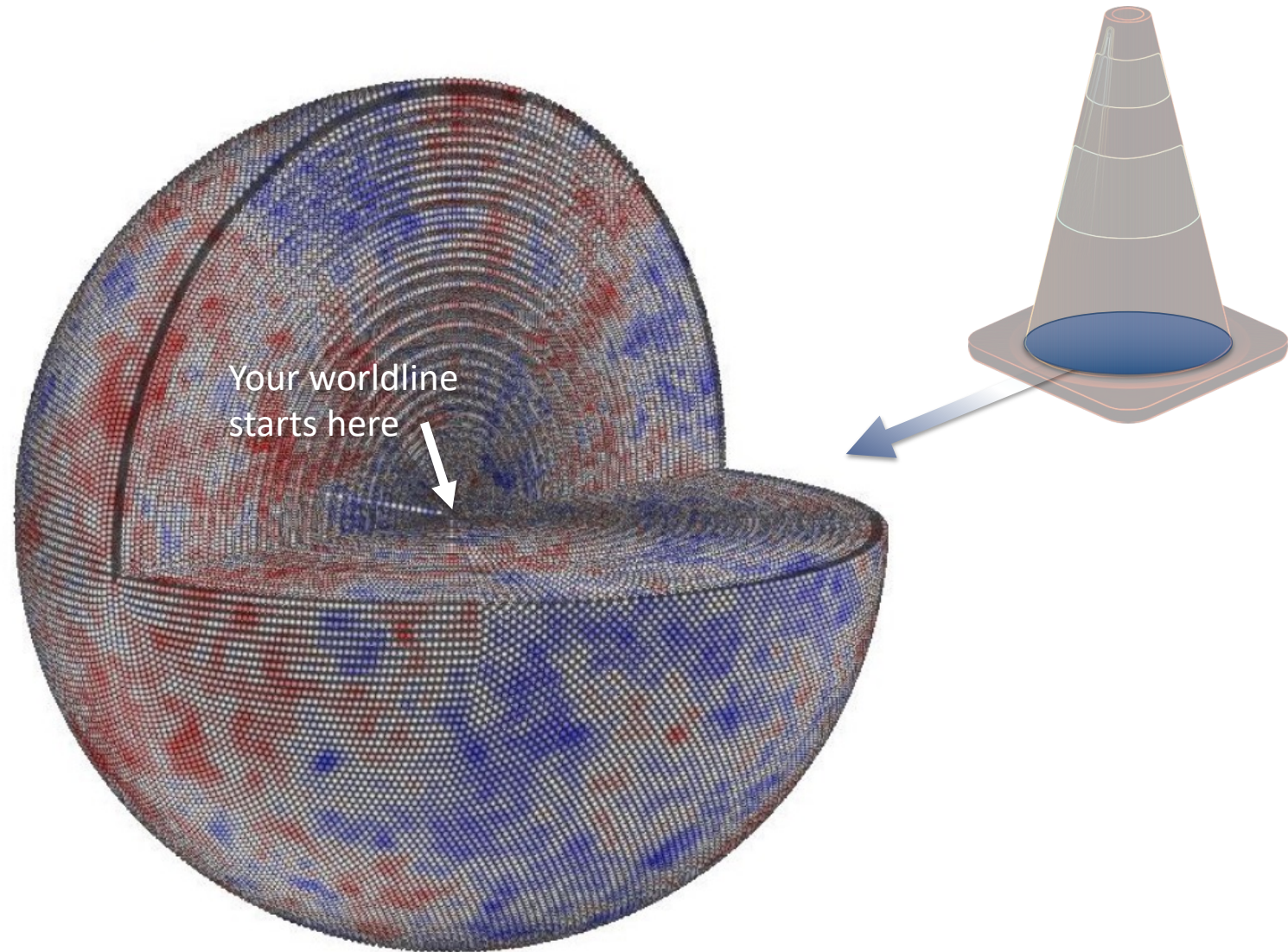
Recipe for our universe

Dynamics

Expansion geometry

**The initial conditions of the universe on the base of the past light cone**

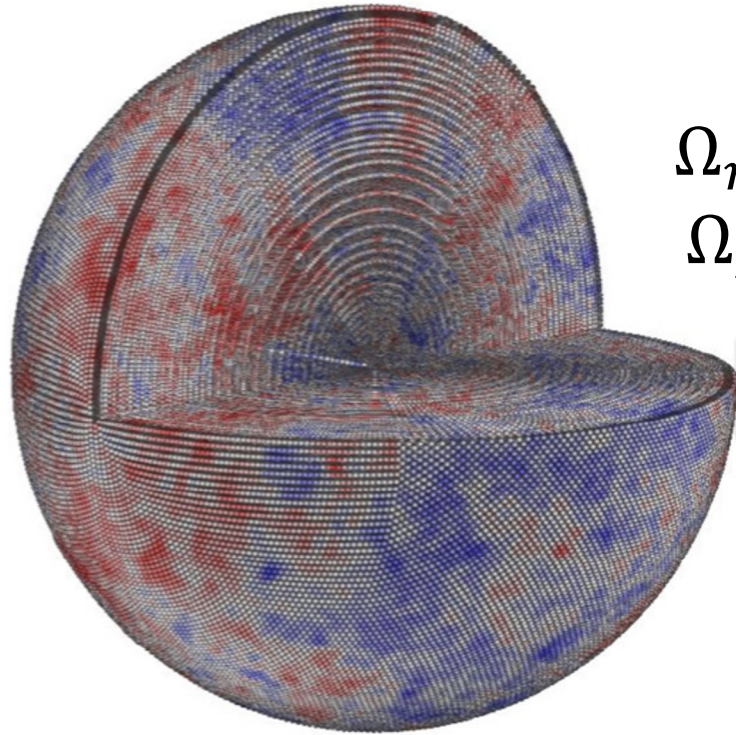
(curvature perturbations)



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# Computational Cosmology

$A_s, n_s, r, f_{nl}, \dots$



Initial conditions of the universe

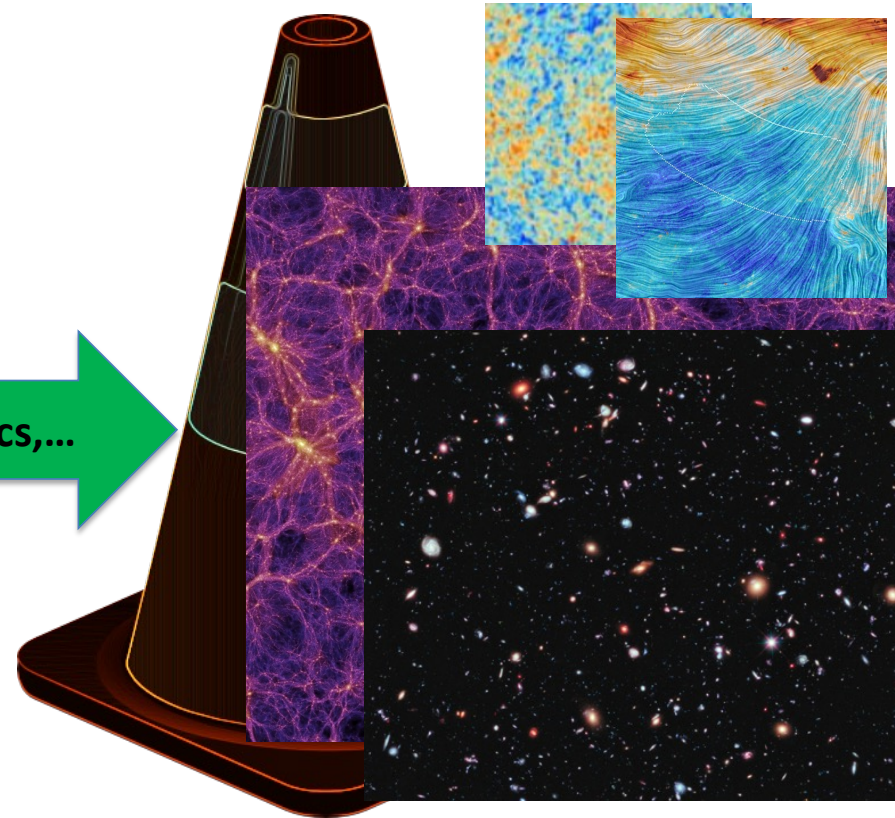
$\Omega_m, \Omega_b, m_\nu, \dots$

$\Omega_\Lambda, w_0, w_a, \dots$

Gravity, Hydrodynamics,...



Galaxy formation  
and evolution,  
Black holes,  
Star formation



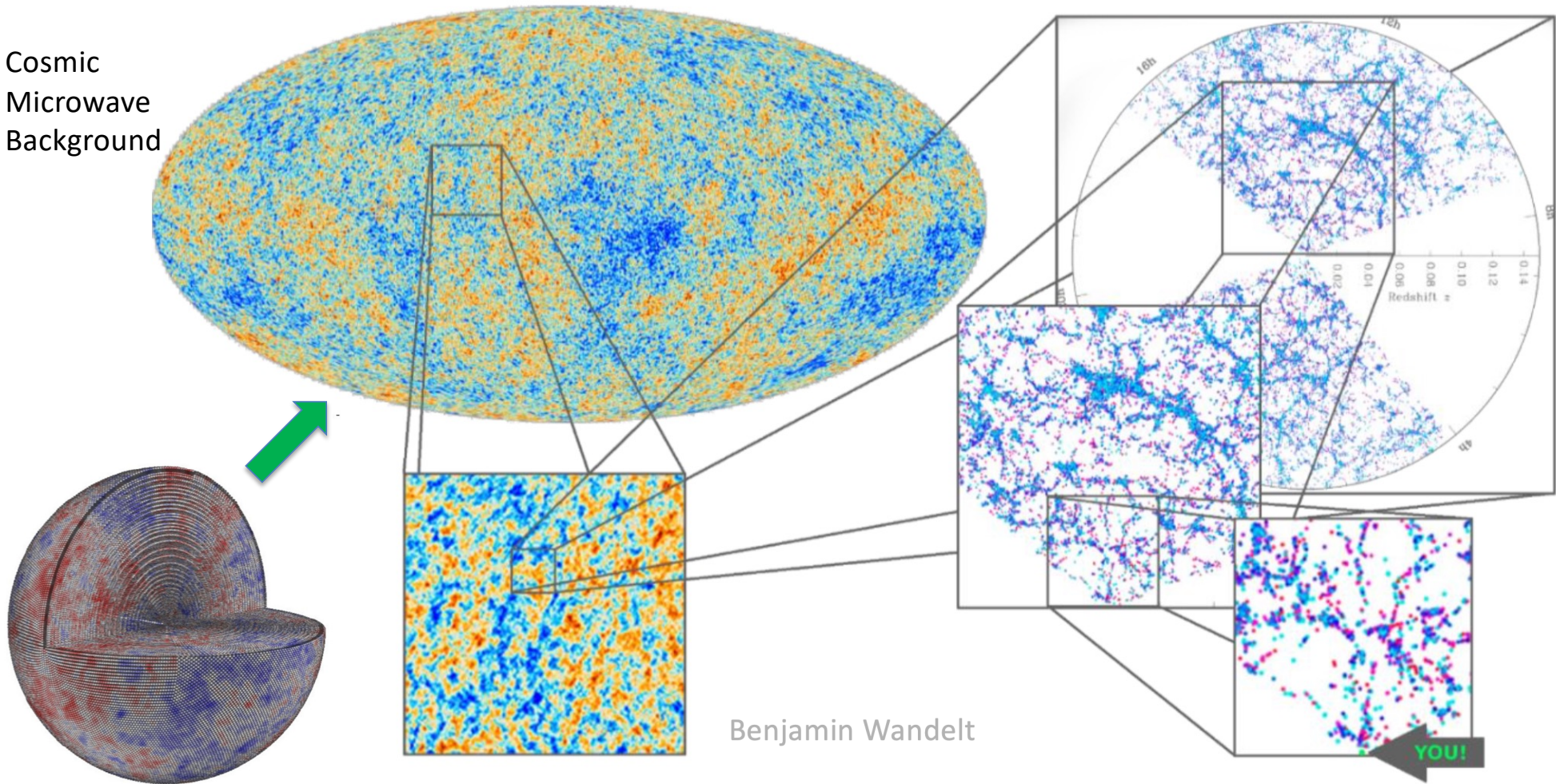
The observed universe

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# How do we handle the vast scale hierarchies?

Cosmic  
Microwave  
Background

Galaxy  
surveys



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YOU!



# The simulation-analysis asymmetry

- Computational simulation models have become very detailed digital twins of the universe.
- But *data analysis* has been based on restrictive analytical/perturbative/semi-numerical approximations.

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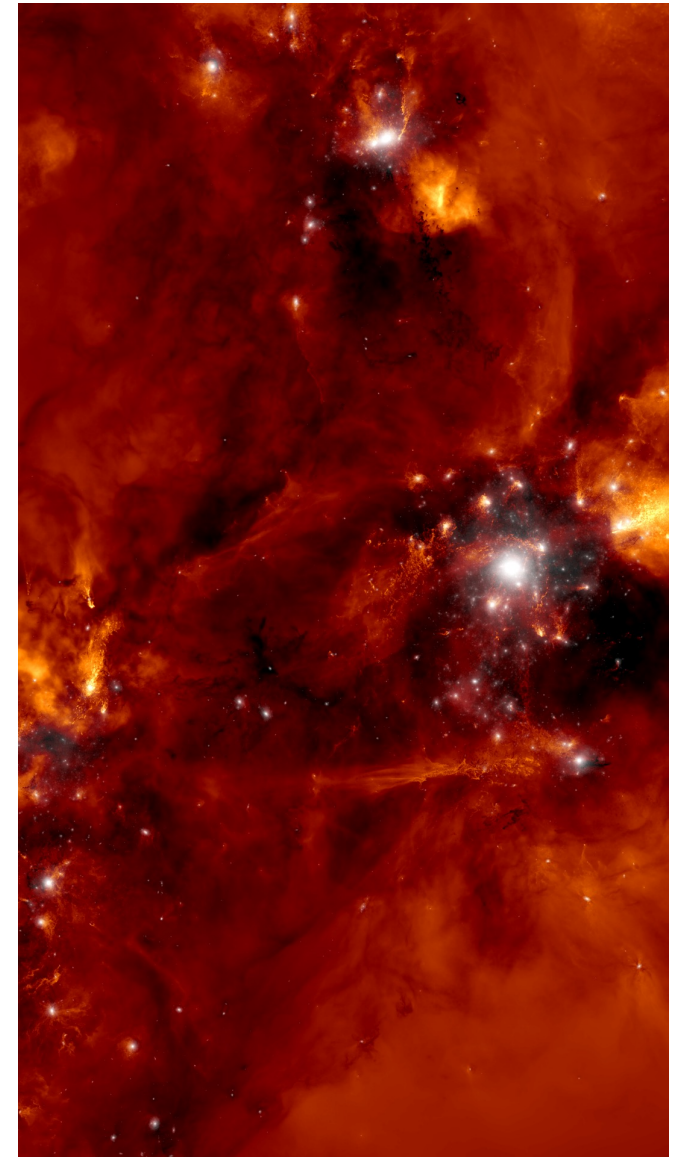


Image credit: Illustris TNG50

# How to deal with complexity on small scales?

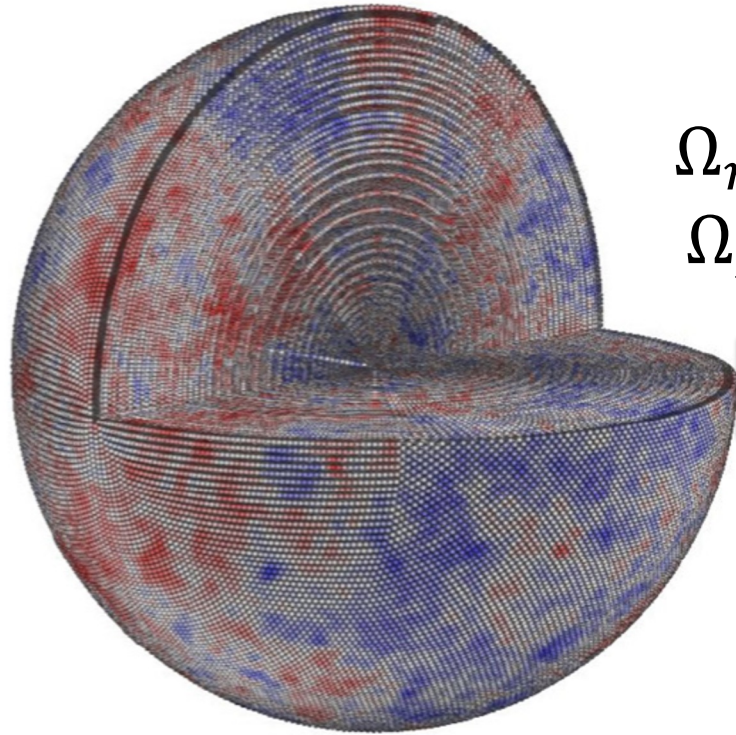
125 Mpc/h

The image shows a dense, interconnected network of purple and yellow filaments, representing a cosmological simulation. The filaments are thin and form a complex web-like structure. A scale bar is present, indicating a distance of 125 Mpc/h. The overall appearance is that of a highly complex and interconnected system.

How to deal with complexity on  
small scales?

# Computational Cosmology

$A_s, n_s, r, f_{nl}, \dots$



Initial conditions of the universe

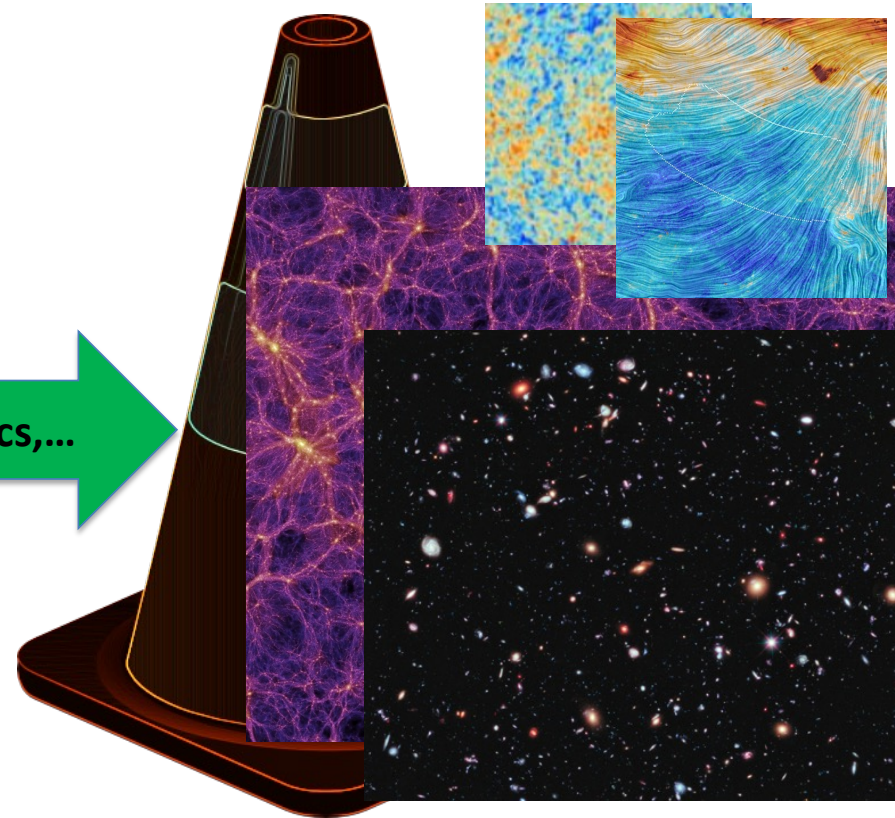
$\Omega_m, \Omega_b, m_\nu, \dots$

$\Omega_\Lambda, w_0, w_a, \dots$

Gravity, Hydrodynamics,...



Galaxy formation  
and evolution,  
Black holes,  
Star formation

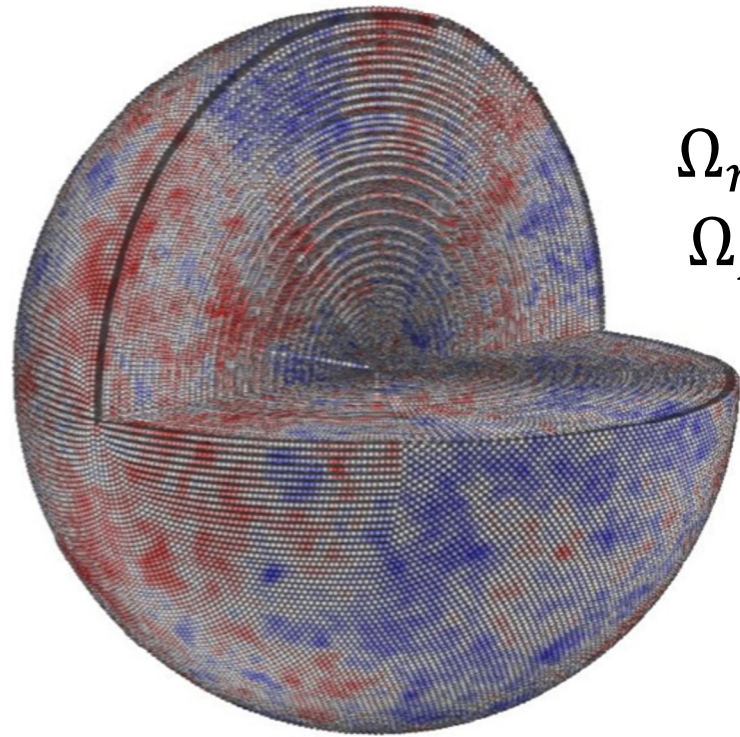


The observed universe

Benjamin Wandelt

# Cosmological and Astrophysical Discovery

$A_s, n_s, r, f_{nl}, \dots$



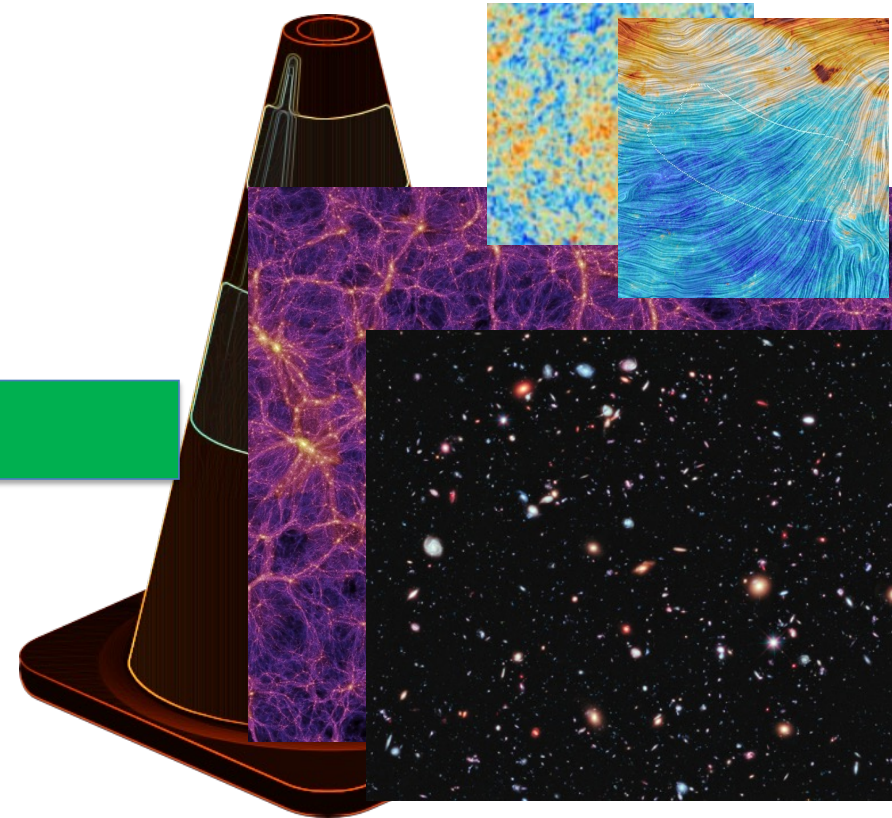
Initial conditions of the universe

$\Omega_m, \Omega_b, m_\nu, \dots$

$\Omega_\Lambda, w_0, w_a, \dots$

Inference

Galaxy formation  
and evolution,  
Black holes,  
Star formation



The observed universe

Benjamin Wandelt

# The promise of AI for cosmology

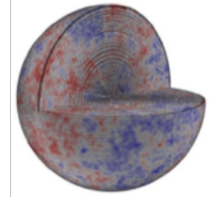
- Can we use AI to bridge the scale hierarchies?
- Can we use AI to have the same fidelity in data analysis as in modeling?

Machine learning, Artificial Intelligence, and Bayesian Analysis open a new way to connect theory and data towards more a more symmetrical analysis

This is made possible by breakthroughs in “Implicit Inference” methods and ML-accelerated generation/simulation models

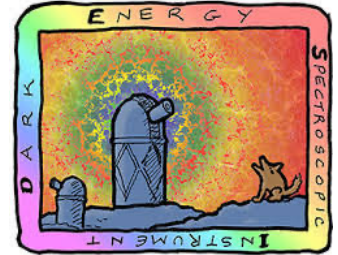
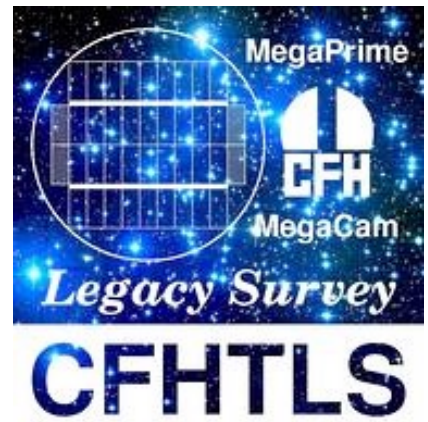
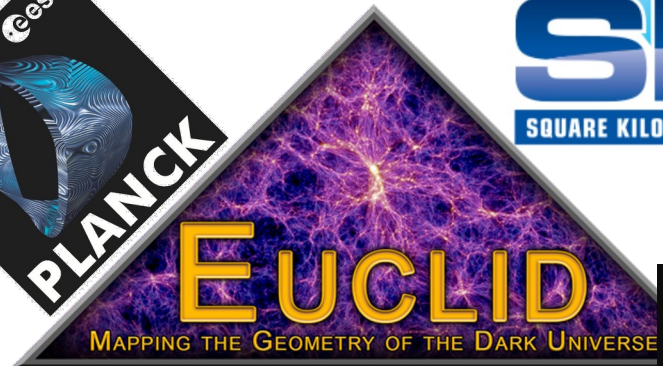
In this approach cosmological and astrophysical physics connect with data at a much more fine-grained level than in the past, unlocking large discovery potential.

# The Simons Collaboration on “Learning the Universe”



- Recognizes the opportunity to cross scales gaps using recent ML breakthroughs
- International collaboration that brings together experts on
  - Star formation,
  - ISM,
  - Black hole accretion,
  - Galaxy formation and evolution,
  - Cosmology
  - ML, and
  - Bayesian Inference
- Goal: Prove the principle on current data sets and develop methods for the next generation
- Director: Greg Bryan
- PIs: Simone Ferraro, Lars Hernquist, Shirley Ho, Jens Jasche, Guilhem Lavaux, Eve Ostriker, Laurence Perreault-Levasseur, Aarti Singh, Rachel Somerville, Volker Springel, Ben Wandelt

# We have no lack of data





Can we analyze data if all we can do is simulate it?

*Yes!*

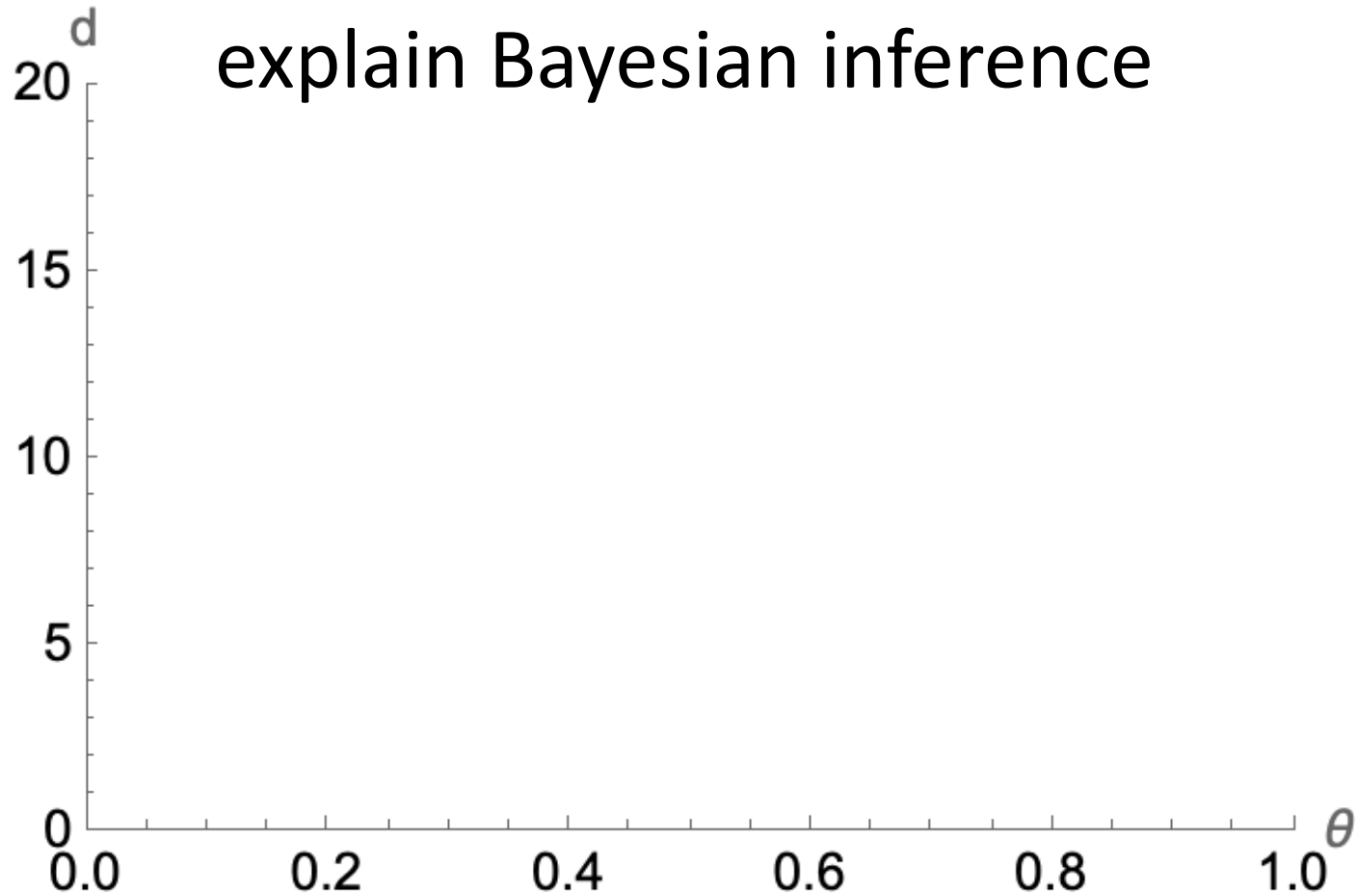
A major shift over the last 5 years.

Likelihood is represented *implicitly* through simulations

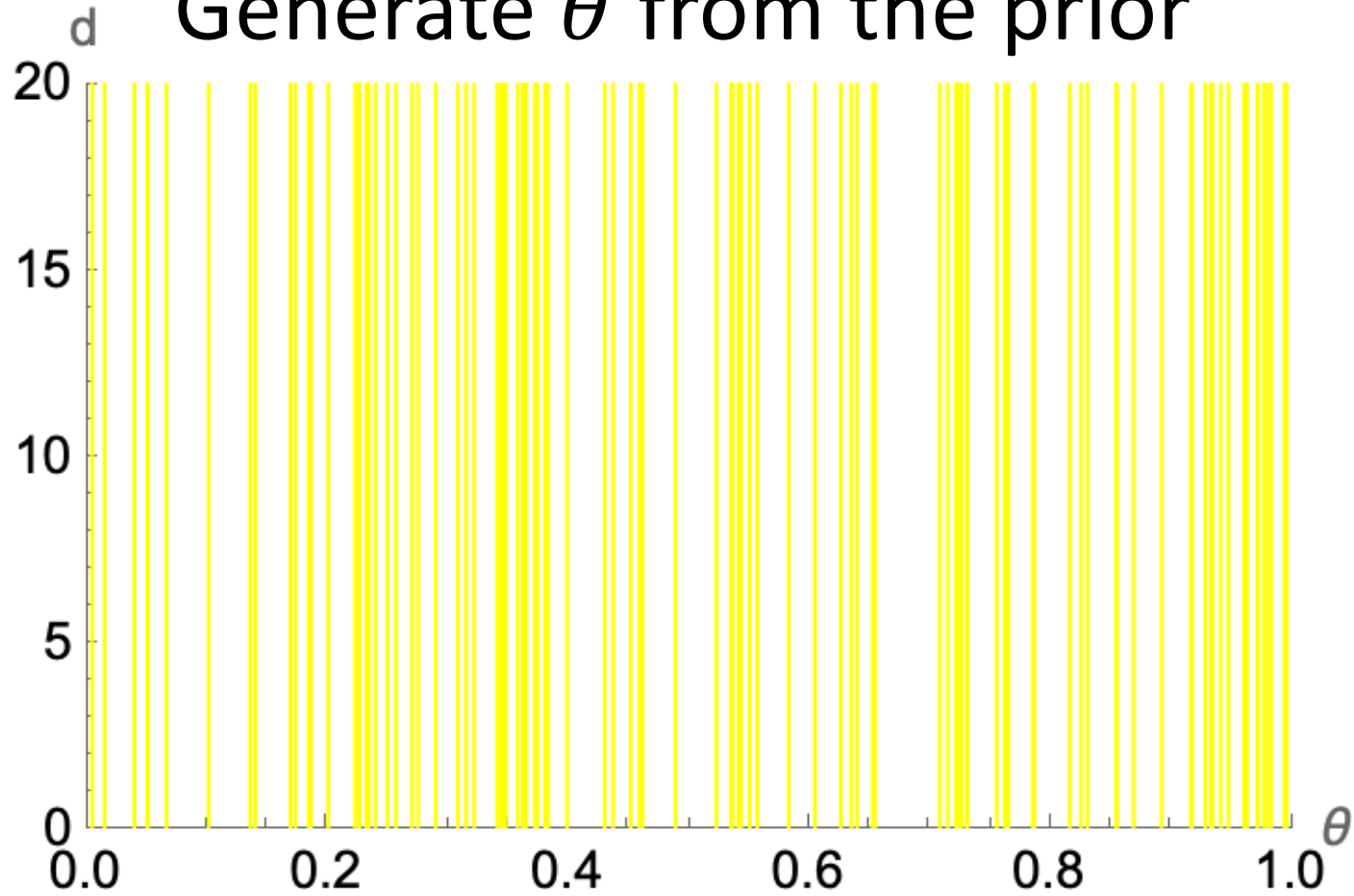
$$d \leftrightarrow p(d|\theta)$$

Let's do a simple example.

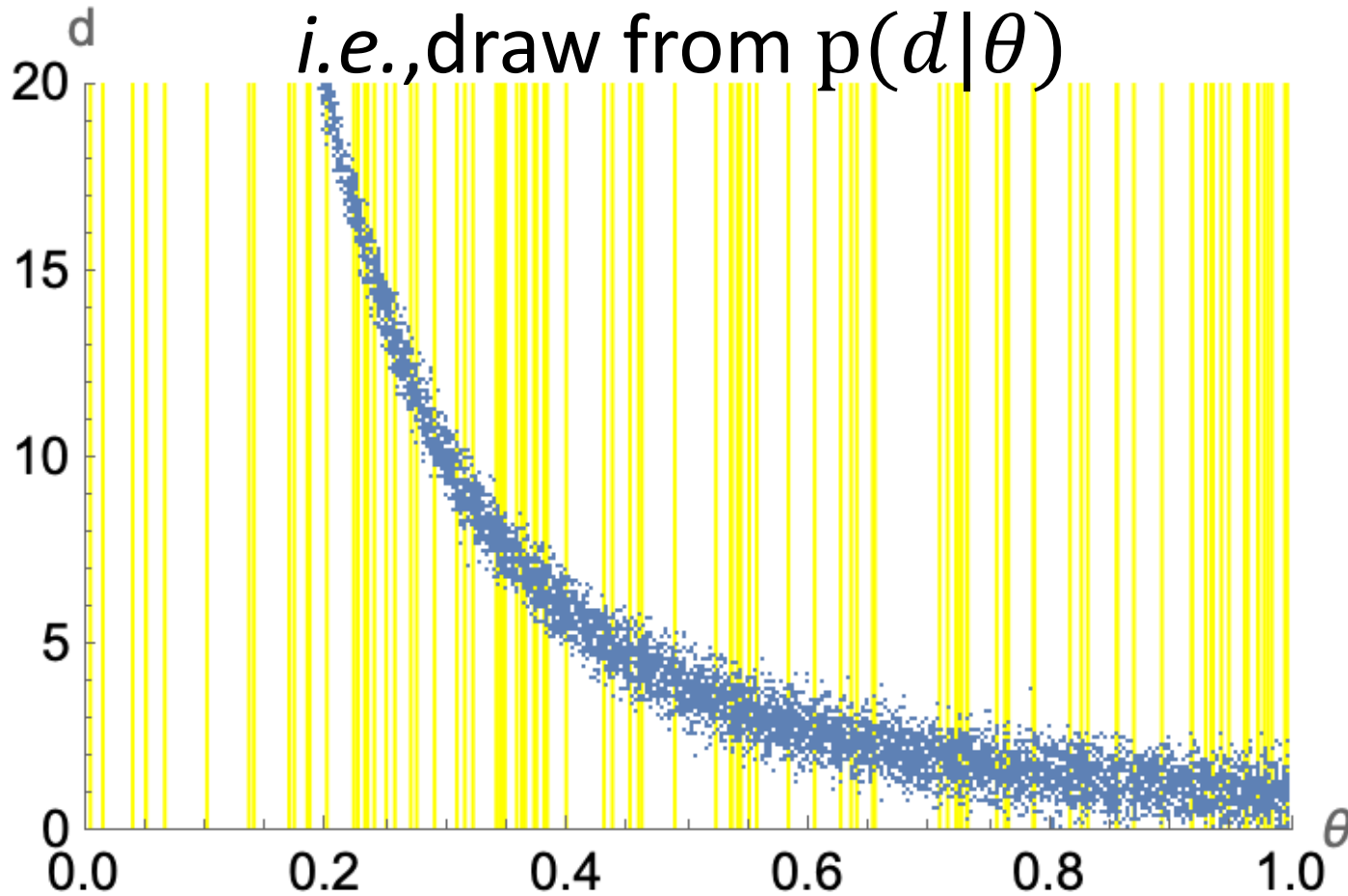
# The easiest diagram to explain Bayesian inference



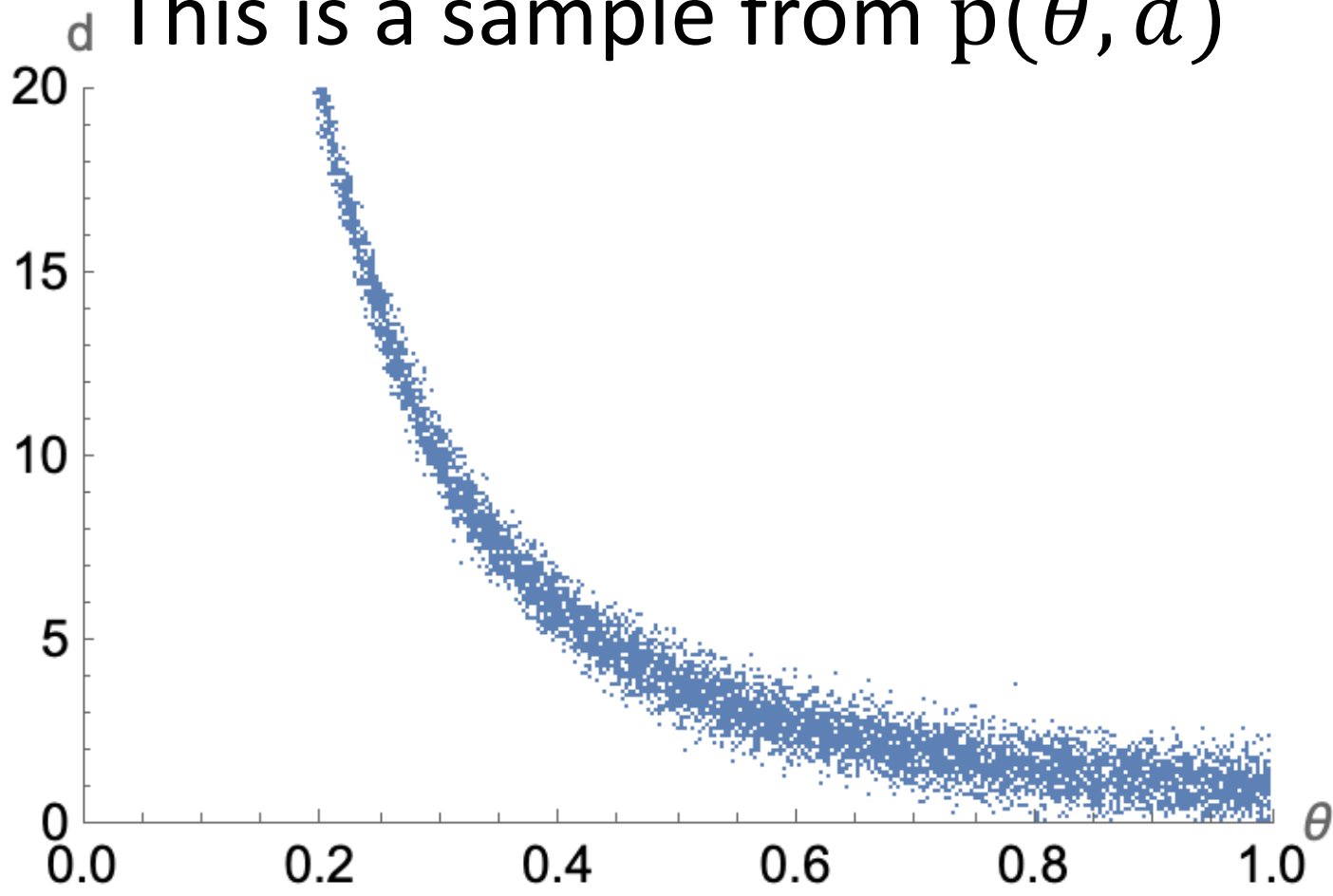
# Generate $\theta$ from the prior



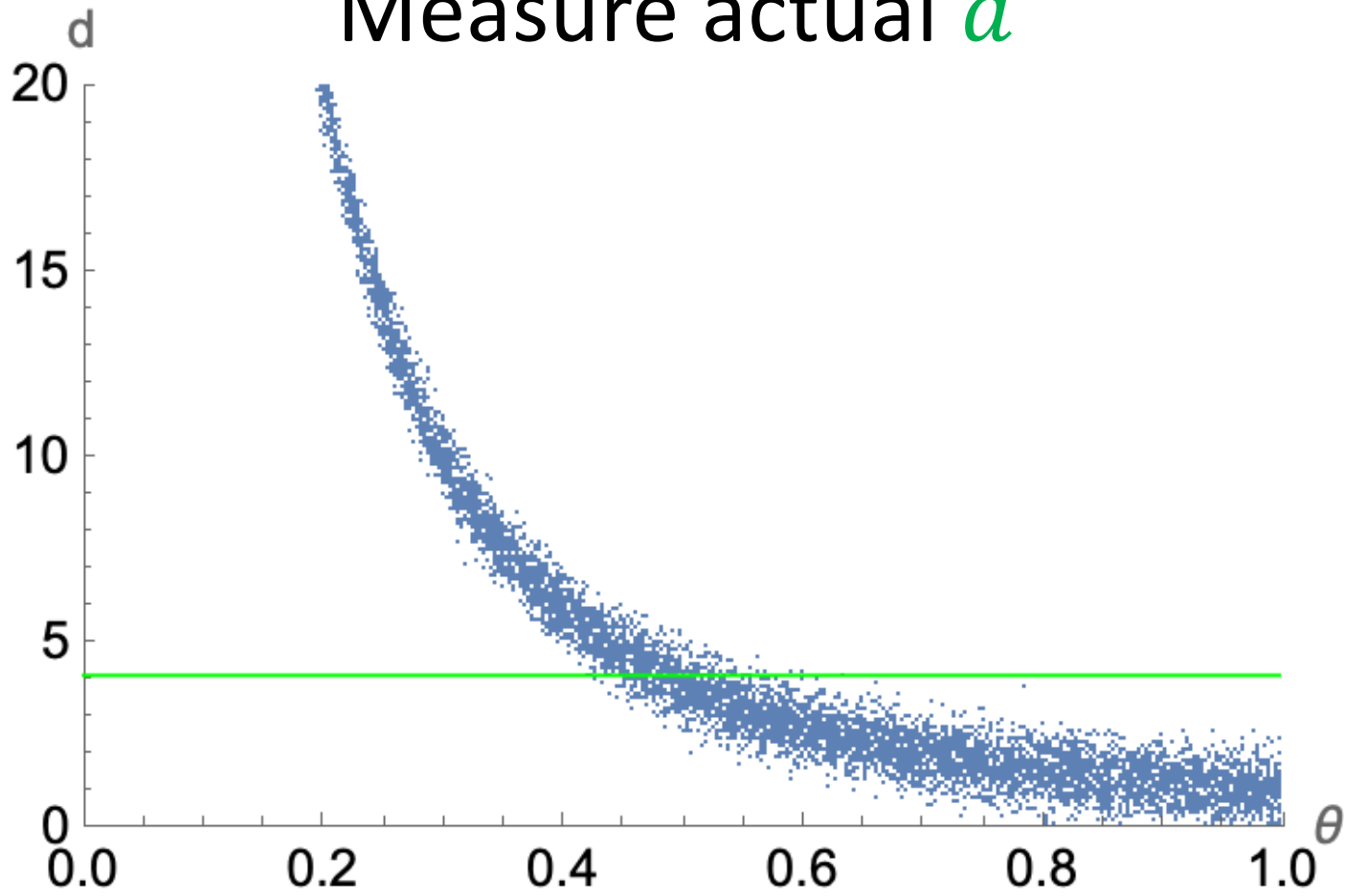
*Simulate/generate  $d$  given  $\theta$*   
*i.e., draw from  $p(d|\theta)$*



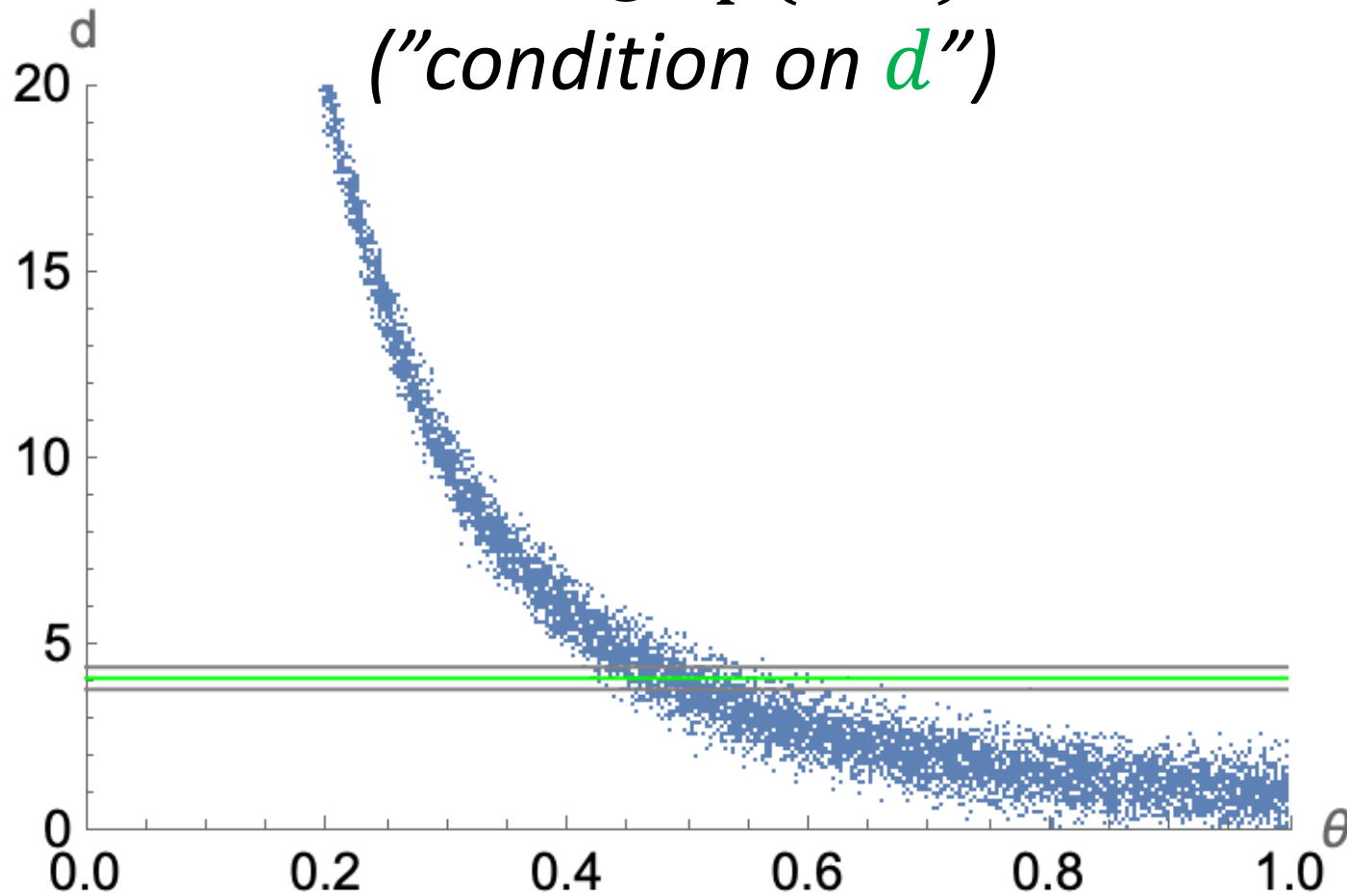
This is a sample from  $p(\theta, d)$



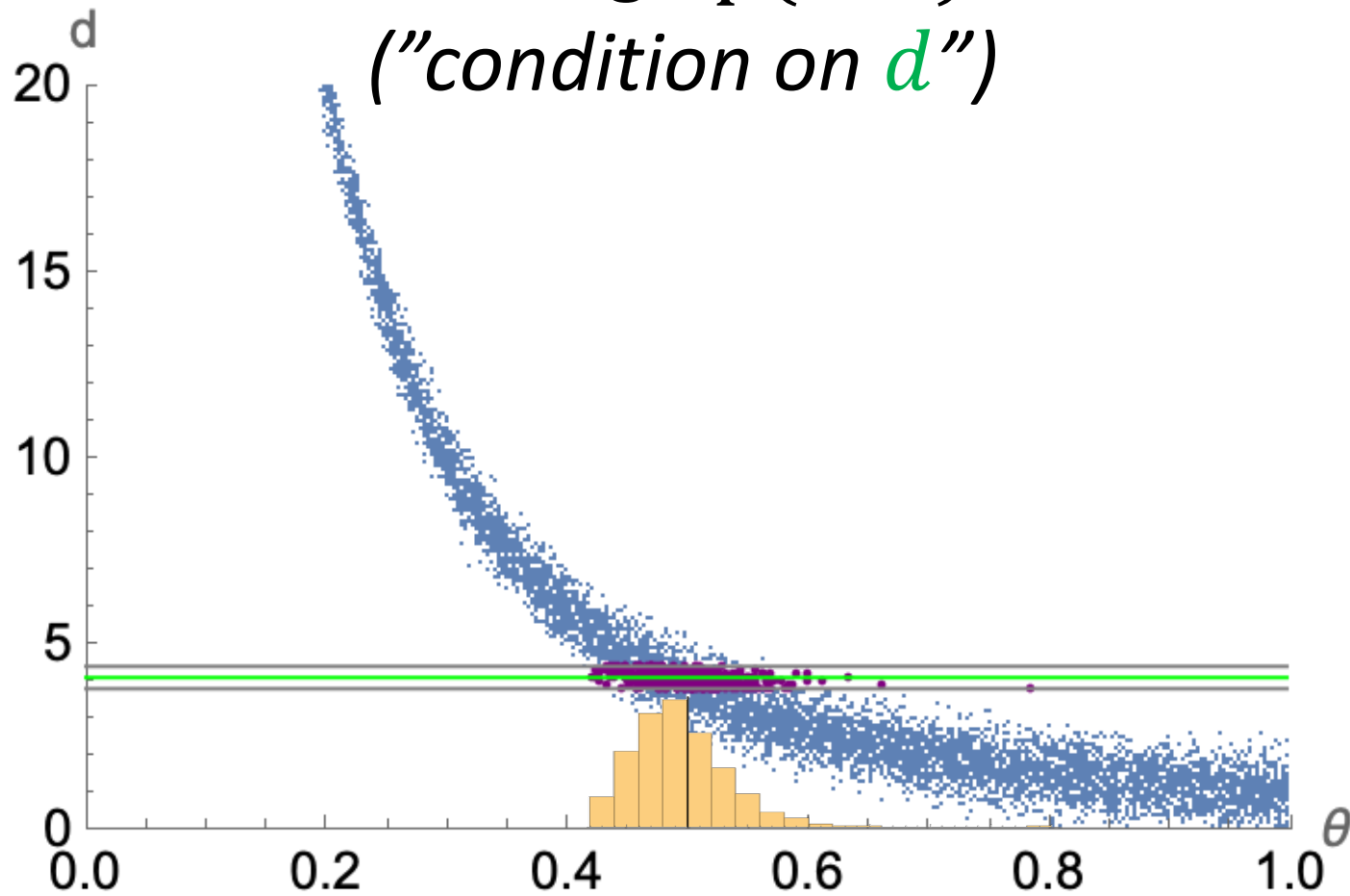
# Measure actual $d$



Slice through  $p(\theta, d)$  at  $d$   
(*"condition on  $d$ "*)

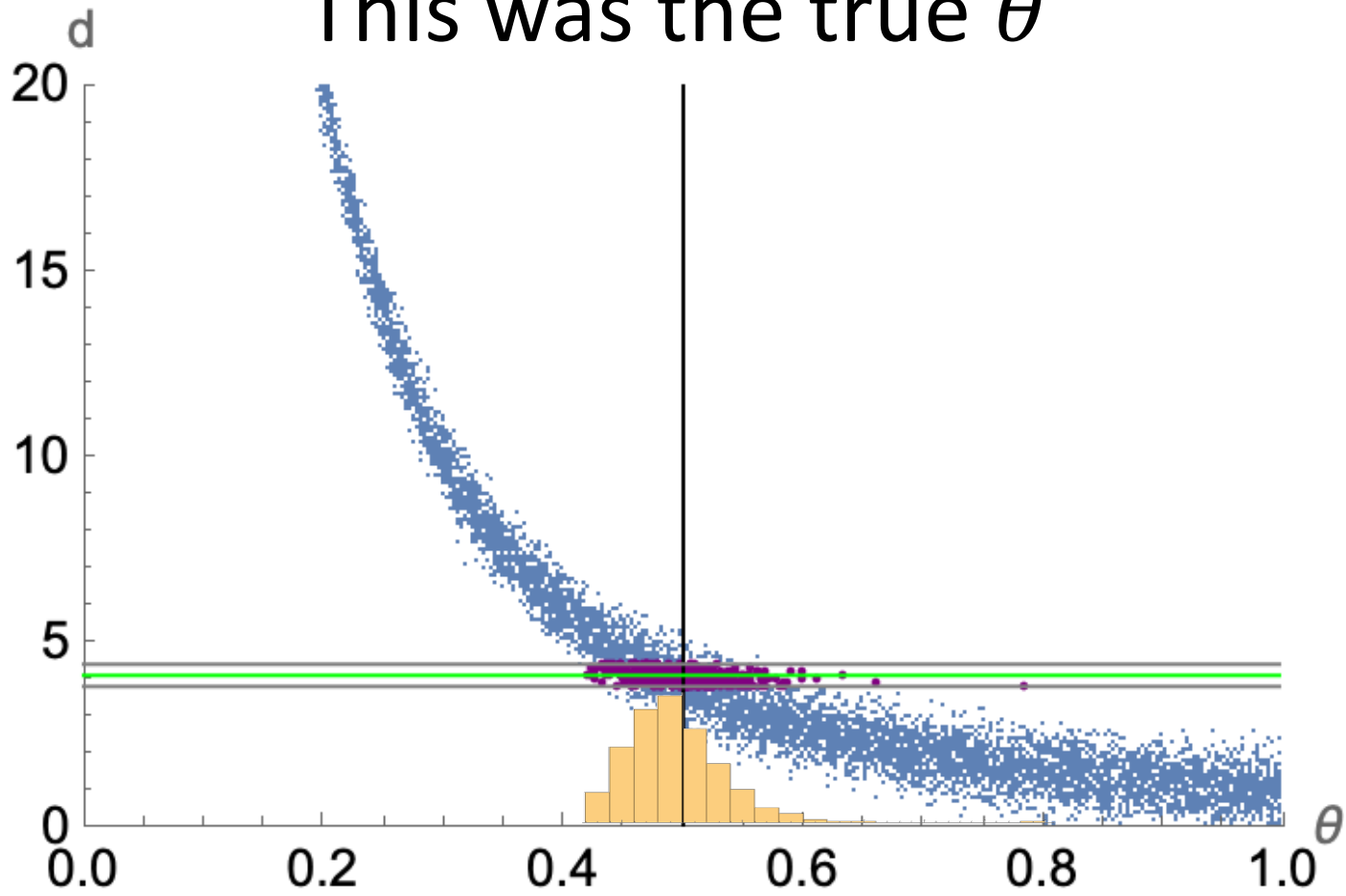


Slice through  $p(\theta, d)$  at  $d$   
("condition on  $d$ ")

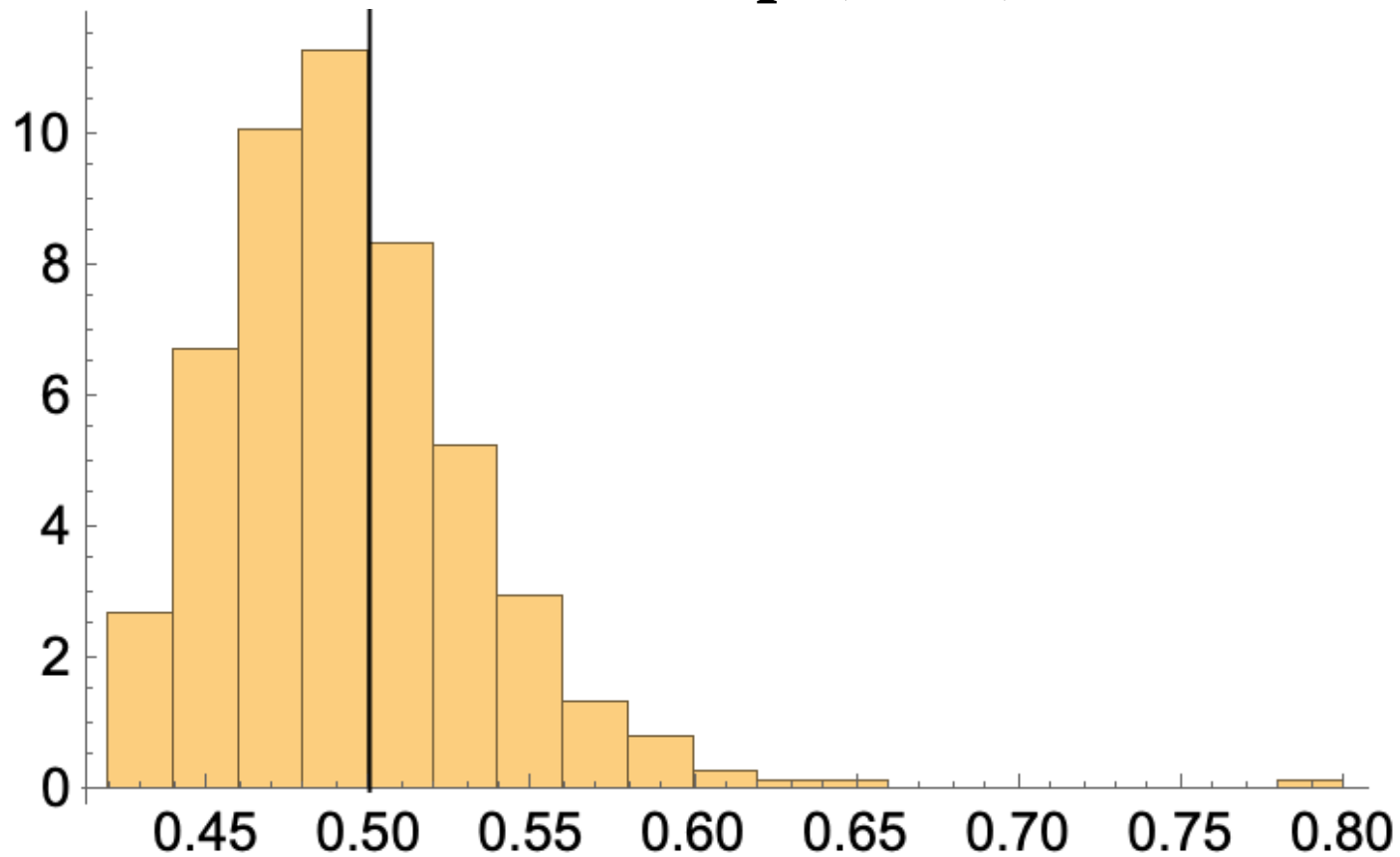




This was the true  $\theta$



# Posterior $p(\theta|d)$



How many likelihood evaluations?

How many prior evaluations?

# This is *Implicit* Inference

- When likelihood and/or prior are not *explicitly* specified but *implicit* in...
  - simulations, generative models, labelled data.
- Various forms known as
  - Likelihood-free inference
  - Simulation-based inference
  - Approximate Bayesian Computation (ABC)

# Machine learning takes us the rest of the way

- Many problems that we considered impossible now **solved**
  - Automated finding of informative data summary statistics
    - computing informative summaries for intractable models (*e.g.*, IMNN, FI)
  - Posteriors/likelihoods/priors for intractable models
    - **Implicit Inference** (likelihood-free, or simulation-based): LRE, DELFI
    - Routinely used to compute Bayesian posteriors (*e.g.*, Moment Networks)
    - Posterior samples for huge non-linear inverse problems (*e.g.*, Initial Conditions)
  - Bayesian Evidence for intractable models
    - Evidence Networks

IMNN: Charnock, Lavaux & Wandelt arXiv:1802.03537; LRE: Cranmer, Pavez & Louppe 1506.02169; Miller et al. 2107.01214  
DELFI: Papamakarios, Murray + coauthors: 1705.07057, 1805.07226; Alsing & Wandelt 1712.00012;  
Alsing, Feeney & Wandelt 1801.01497, arXiv:1903.01473; MN & EN: Jeffrey & Wandelt arXiv:2011.05991, 2305.11241;  
FI: Coulton & Wandelt 2305.08994, ICs: Legin et al., 2304.03788

# Simplest example

- What do you train a ML model  $f(x)$  to compute when you train it with  $(x, y)$  pairs to predict  $y$  from  $x$ , minimizing squared error?

$$L = \sum_i (f(x_i) - y_i)^2$$
$$\approx \int (f(x) - y)^2 p(x, y) dx dy$$

minimize  $\rightarrow \hat{f} = \int y p(y|x) dy$

# MOMENT AND POSTERIOR MARGINAL NETWORKS

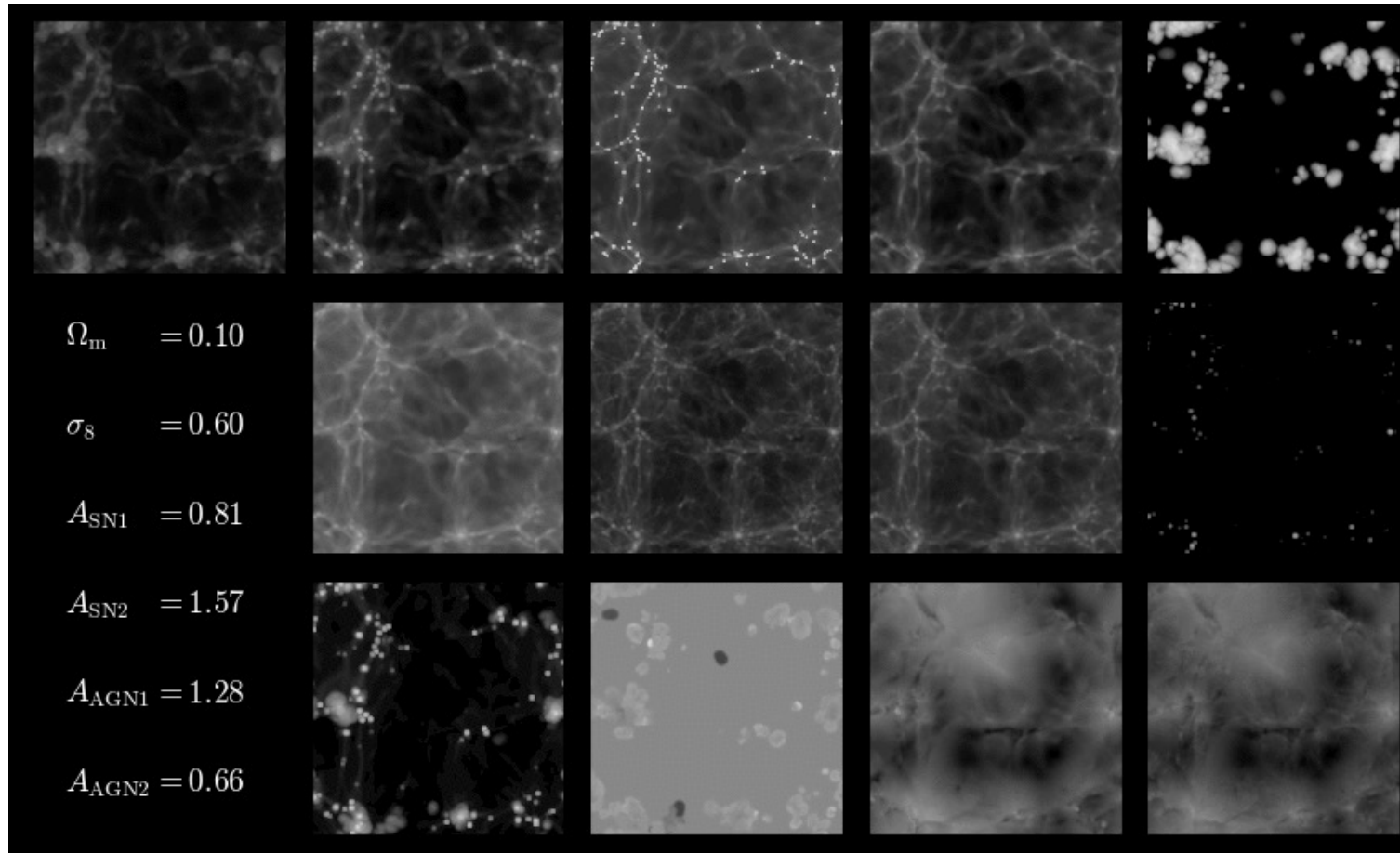
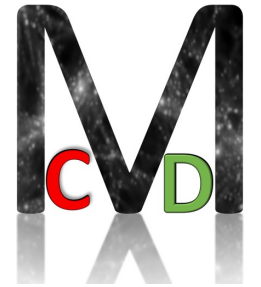
Main idea: construct  $\mathcal{F}(d), \mathcal{G}(d)$  to go directly from data to posterior.

- **Moment networks:** obtain posterior moments directly from data by training NNs to solve

$$\langle \theta \rangle_{p(\theta|d)} = \arg \min_{\mathcal{F}(d)} \int \|\theta - \mathcal{F}(d)\|_2^2 p(d, \theta) dd d\theta$$

$$\text{Var}[\theta]_{p(\theta|d)} = \arg \min_{\mathcal{G}(d)} \int \|\|\theta - \langle \theta \rangle_{p(\theta|d)}\|_2^2 - \mathcal{G}(d)\|_2^2 p(d, \theta) dd d\theta$$

# Example: **CAMELS** hydrosimulations



Paco Villaescusa-Navarro,  
Shy Genel,  
Daniel Angles-Alcazar, and  
the CAMELS collaboration

13 fields from

1000 IllustrisTNG sims  
1000 SIMBA sims  
and  
2000 matched Nbody sims

**arXiv:2109.10915**

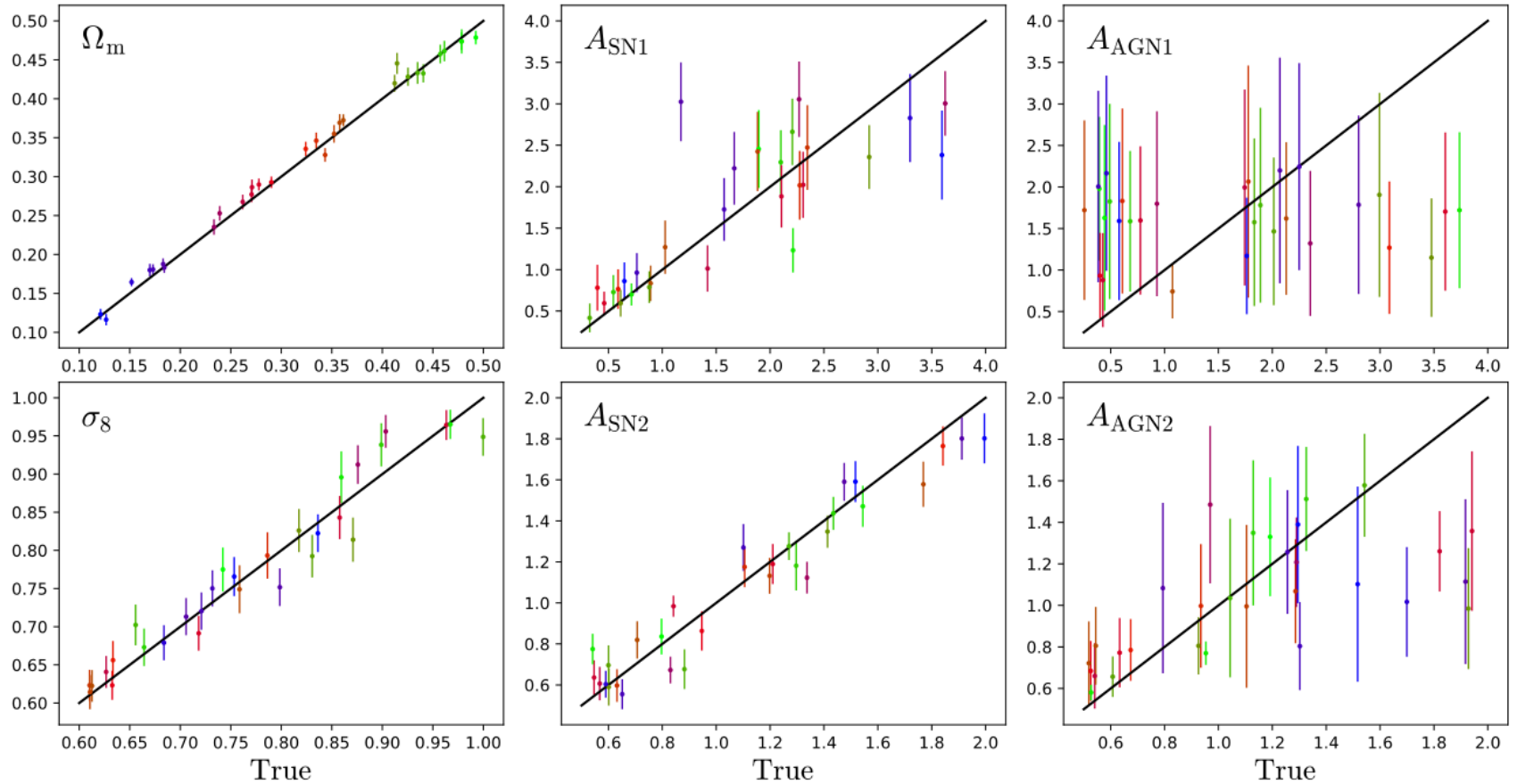
**<https://camels-multifield-dataset.readthedocs.io>**

# SBI: COSMOLOGY FROM SMALL-SCALE HYDRO

Computing posterior means & variances from **gas temperature**

$$\mathcal{L} = \sum_{i=1}^6 \log \left( \sum_{j \in \text{batch}} (\theta_{i,j} - \mu_{i,j})^2 \right) + \sum_{i=1}^6 \log \left( \sum_{j \in \text{batch}} \left( (\theta_{i,j} - \mu_{i,j})^2 - \sigma_{i,j}^2 \right)^2 \right)$$

Posterior means & variances computed by **moment network** minimizing  $\mathcal{L}$





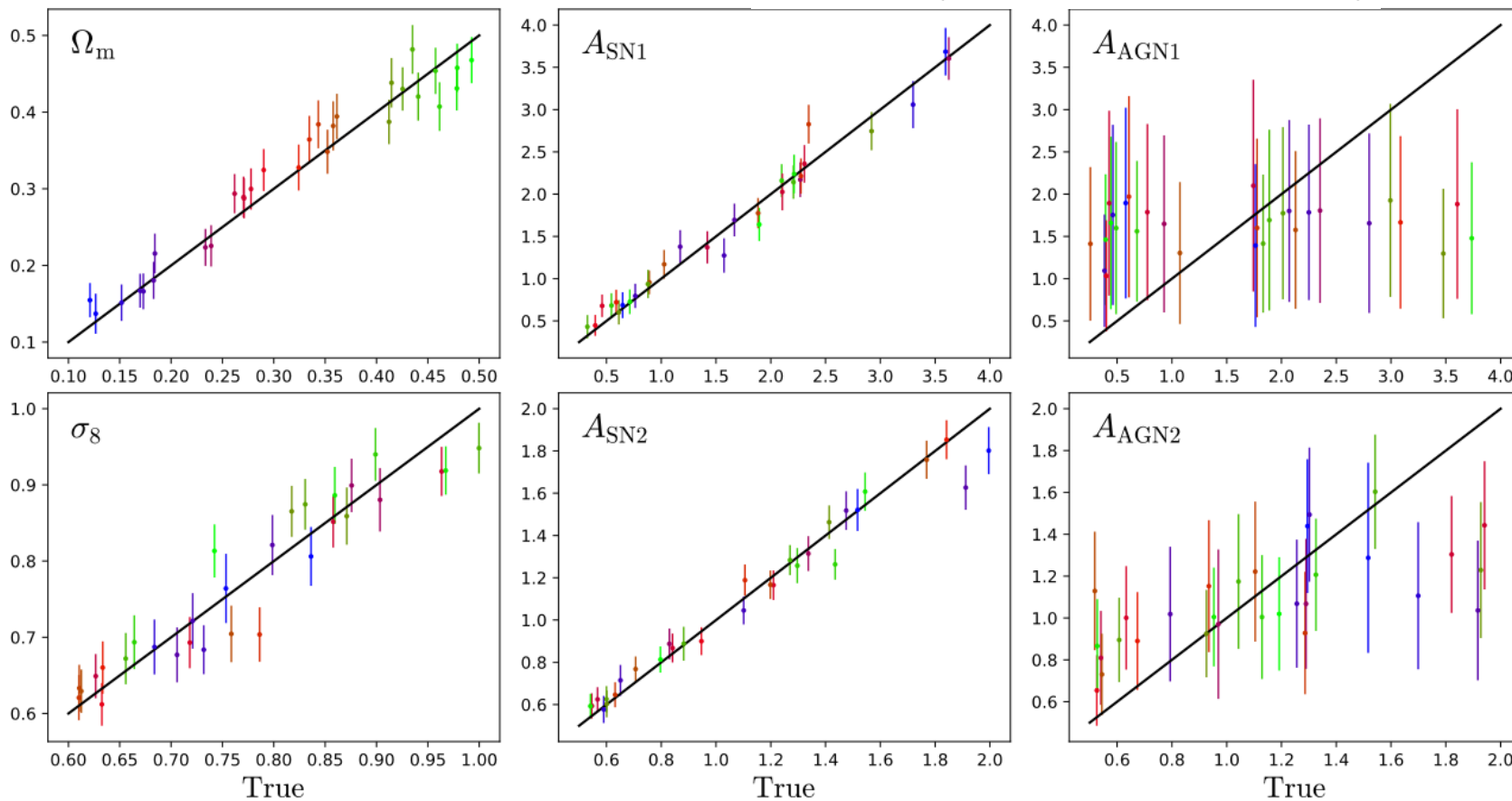
# SBI: COSMOLOGY FROM SMALL-SCALE HYDRO

Villaescusa-Navarro, arXiv:2109.09747

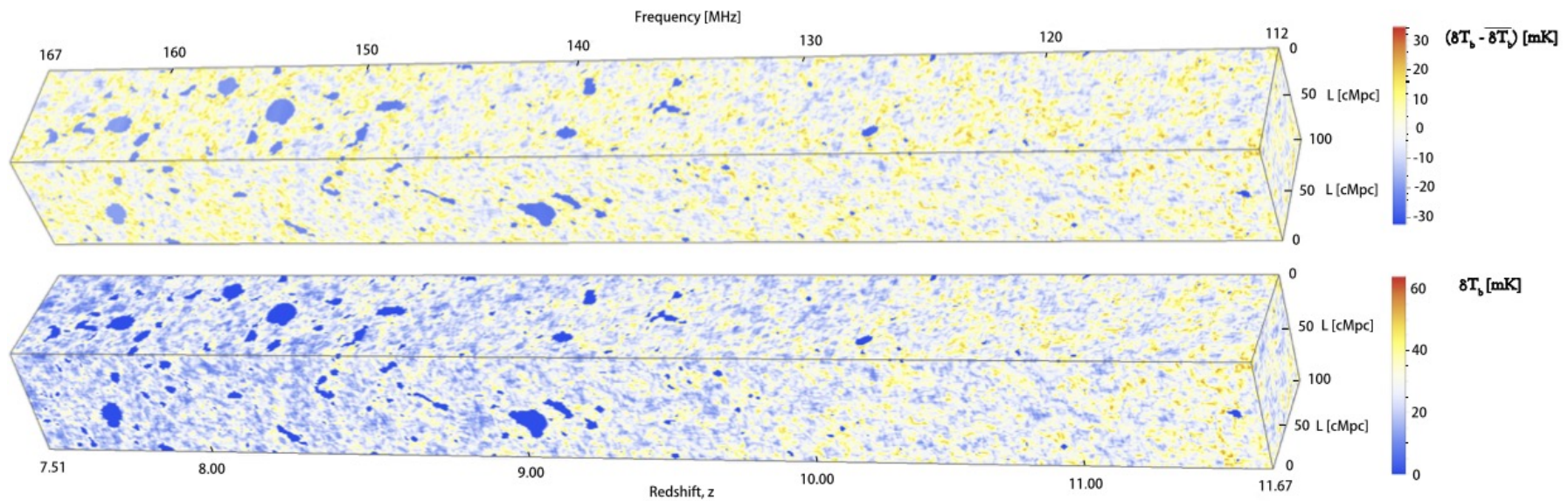
Computing posterior means & variances from **gas metallicity**

$$\mathcal{L} = \sum_{i=1}^6 \log \left( \sum_{j \in \text{batch}} (\theta_{i,j} - \mu_{i,j})^2 \right) + \sum_{i=1}^6 \log \left( \sum_{j \in \text{batch}} \left( (\theta_{i,j} - \mu_{i,j})^2 - \sigma_{i,j}^2 \right)^2 \right)$$

Posterior means & variances computed by **moment network** minimizing  $\mathcal{L}$



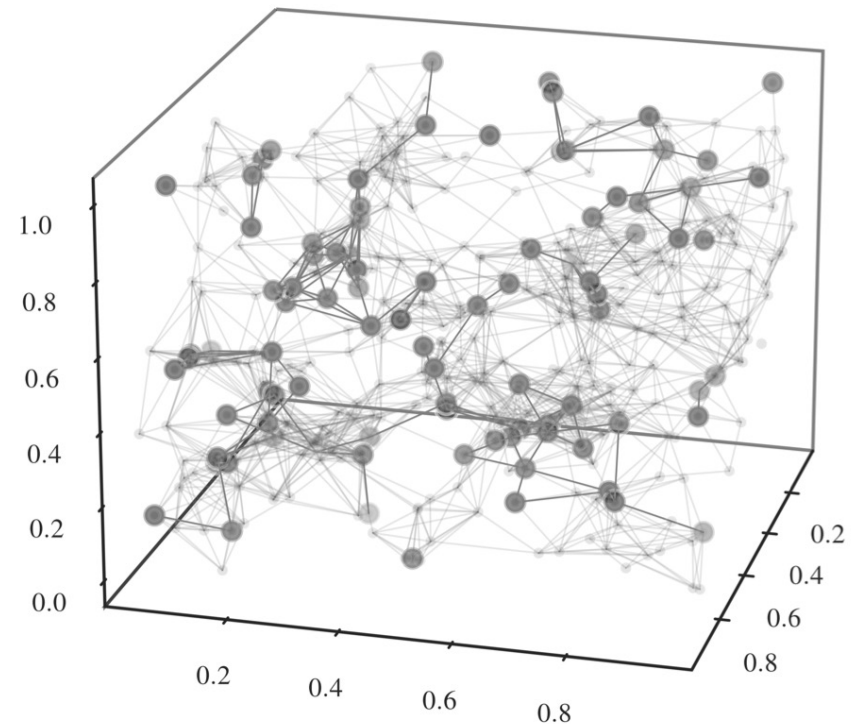
# Examples: Implicit Inference to Infer Reionization Parameters from 3D 21cm Light Cones



Zhao, Mao, Cheng, Wandelt arXiv:2105.03344

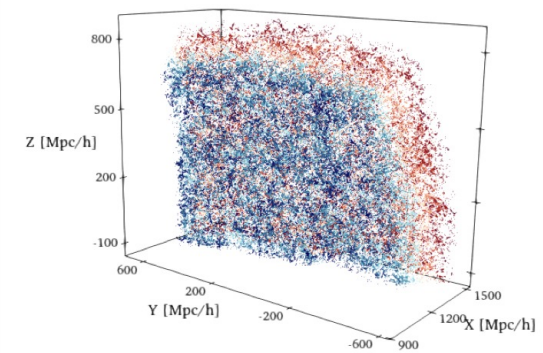
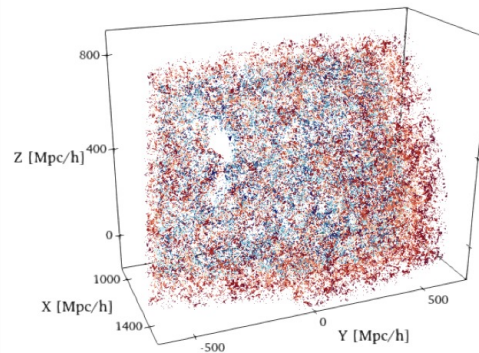
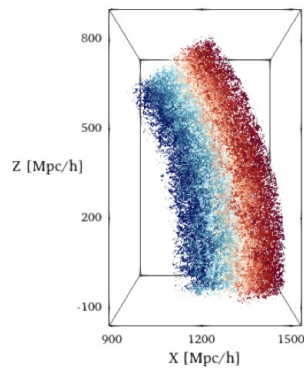
# Example: optimal cosmological inference from graphs

Uses message passing graphs to encode *rotational and translational symmetries* and infer cosmological parameters

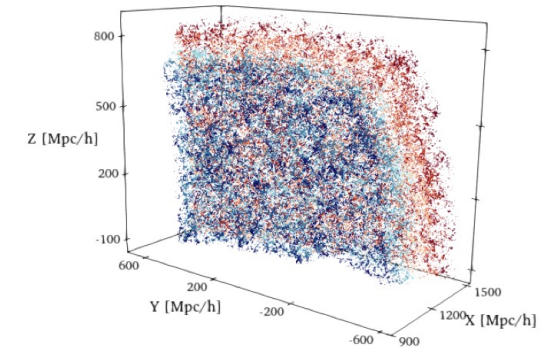
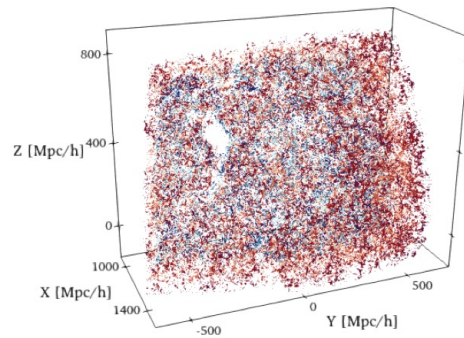
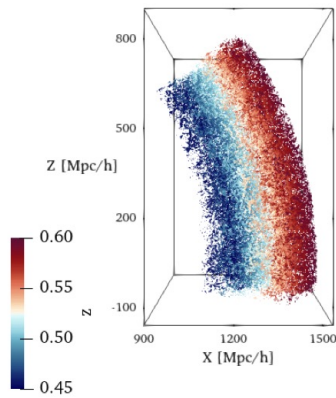


# Analysis of galaxy surveys: now have proof of principle on actual data with SIMBIG

CMASS SGC

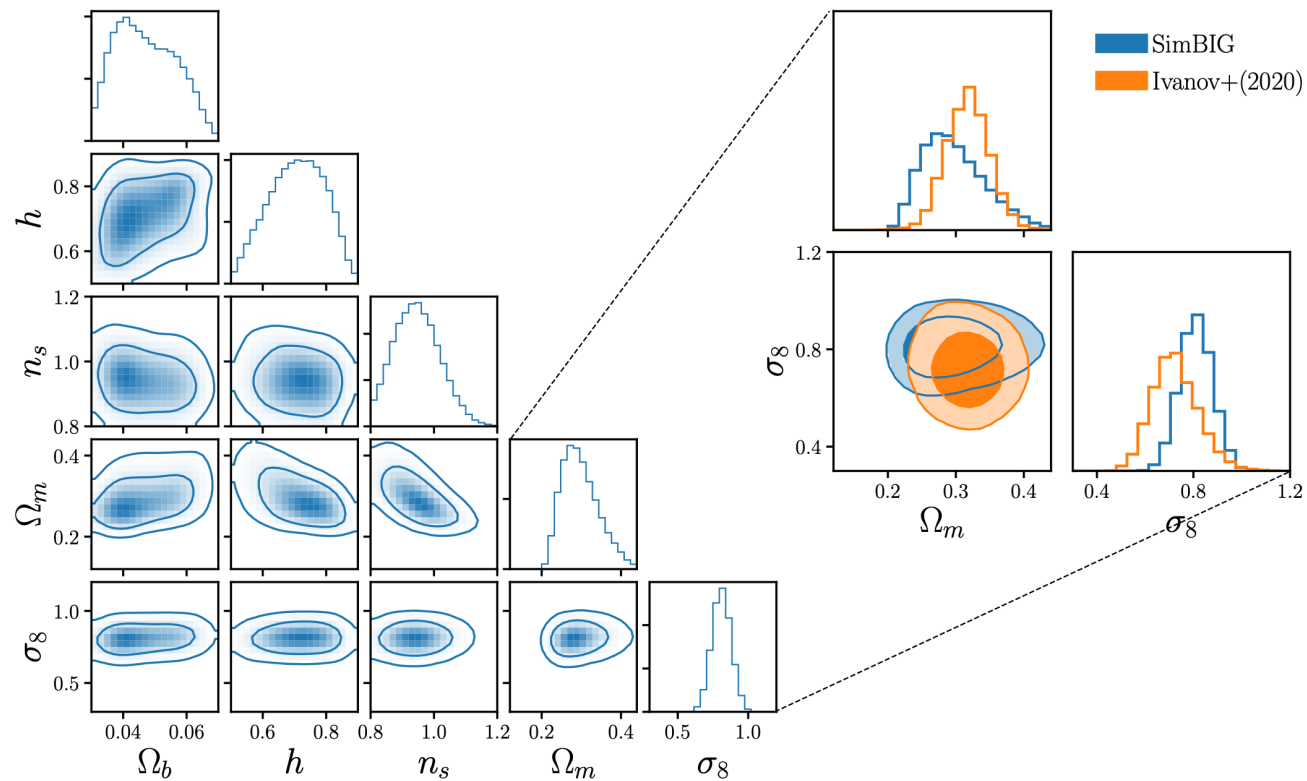


SimBIG Forward Model

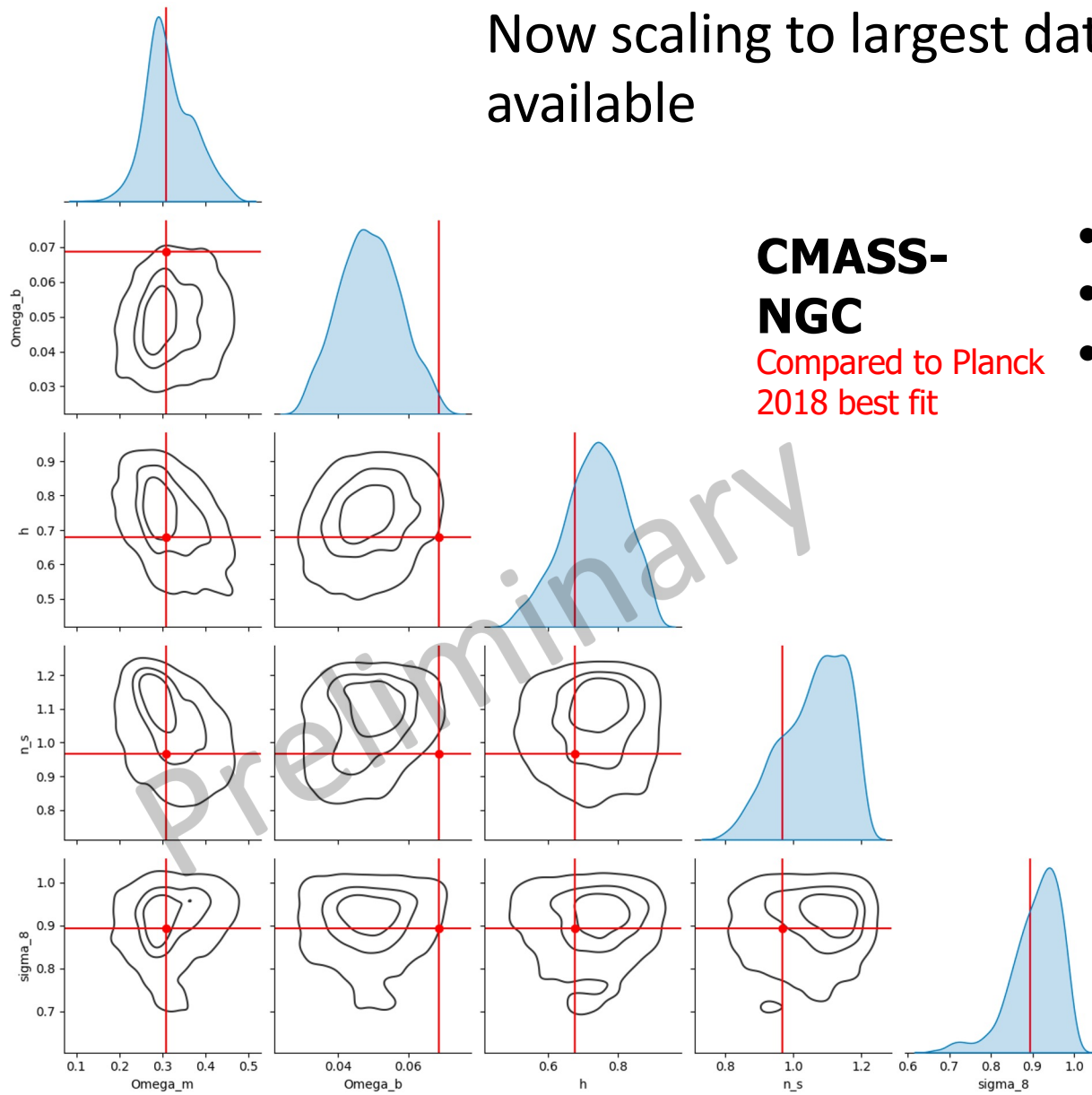


Hahn et al., arXiv:2211.00723

# Analysis of galaxy surveys: now have proof of principle on actual data with SIMBIG

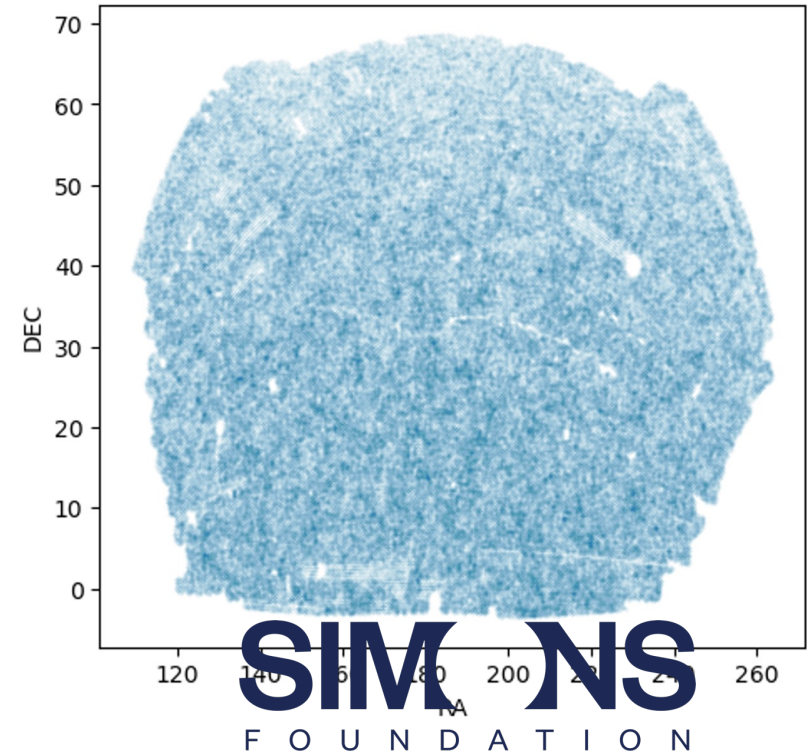


Now scaling to largest data sets currently available

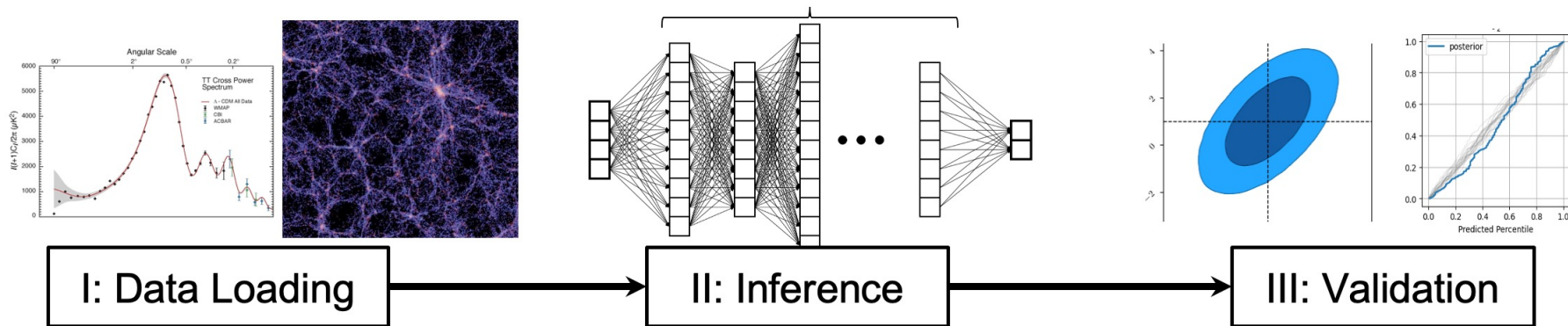


- 2000 pmwd simulations,
- 5 HOD settings per simulation
- Cut at  $k \leq 0.2 \text{ (Mpc/h)}^{-1}$

CMASS NGC



# Learning the Universe Implicit Likelihood Inference (LtU-ILI)

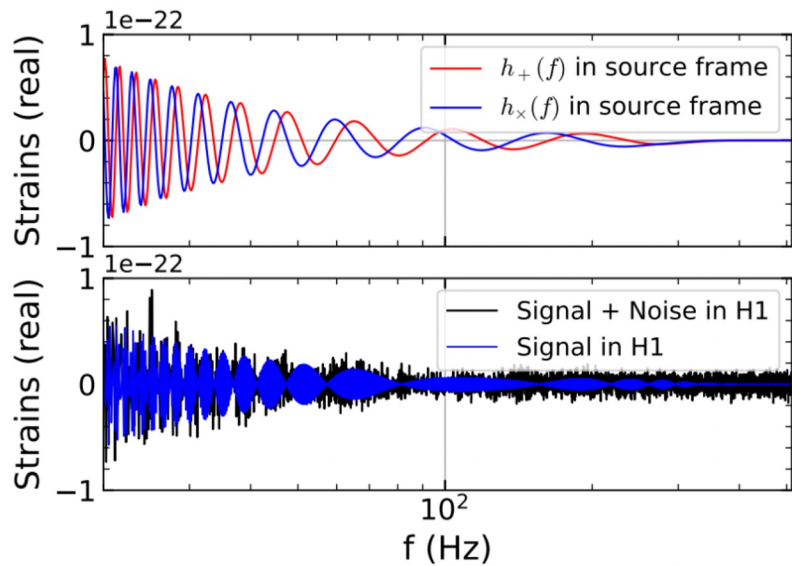


An all-in-one framework for implicit inference in astronomy and cosmology.

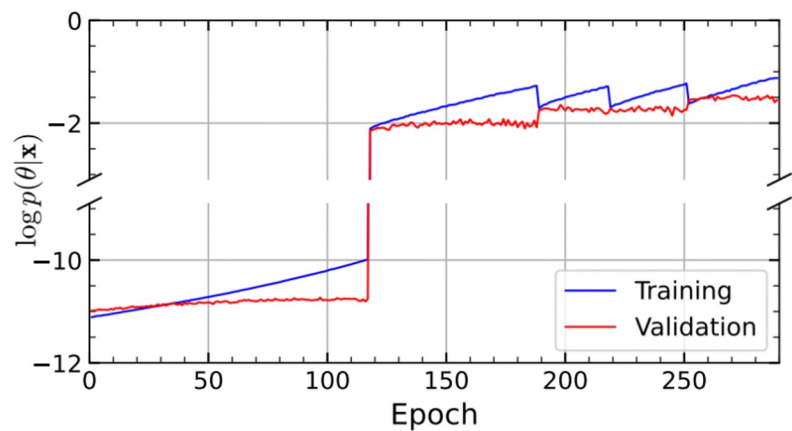
- **A lightweight, user-focused design** for both exploratory analysis and production testing.
- Automation of: setup, preprocessing, **model ensembling**, training/testing, and **validation metrics**.
- **All-inclusive of different methods**, including: Neural Posterior/Likelihood/Ratio Estimation and sequential learning
- Easy integration with modern embedding networks such as **CNNs and graph neural networks**
- Combines multiple backends (**sbi**, **pydelfi**, **lampe**) for exhaustive apples-to-apples comparisons
- **Jupyter** and **command-line** interface

[arXiv:2402.05137](https://arxiv.org/abs/2402.05137)

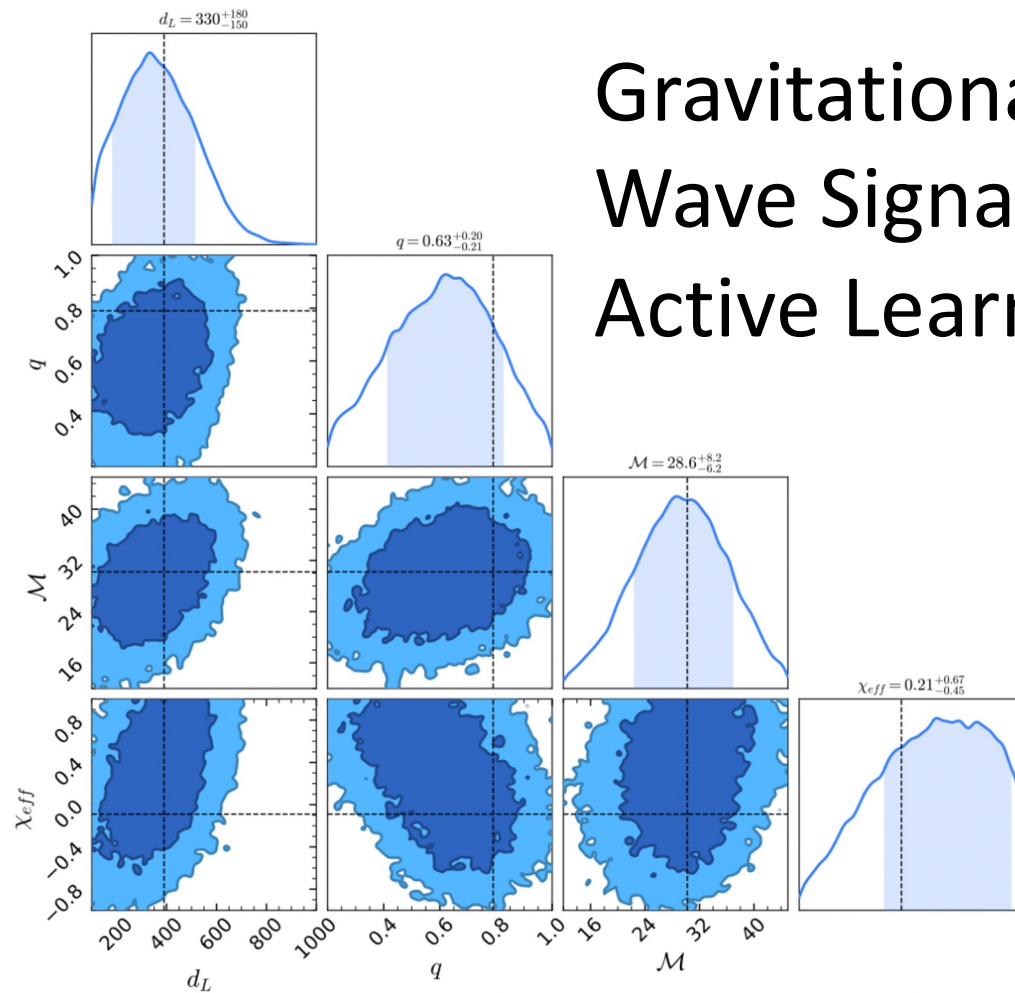
**Matt Ho**, Simon Ding, Nicolas Chartier, Chirag Modi, Pablo Lemos, Deaglan Bartlett, Shivam Pandey, Lucia Perez, Guilhem Lavaux, Ludvig Doeser, Lucas Makinen, Carolina Cuesta, Axel Lapel, Hadi Sotoudeh



(a) Example of GW signal in source and detector frame.



(b) Multi-round training and validation posterior probability.



(c) Posterior corner plot for SNPE inference.

# Gravitational Wave Signals with Active Learning



# Best part: A full inference pipeline in 5 lines!

```
... # Imports

X, Y = load_data() # Load training data and parameters
loader = ili.dataloaders.NumpyLoader(X, Y) # Create a data loader

trainer = ili.inference.InferenceRunner.load(
    backend = 'lampe', engine = 'NPE', # Choose Neural Posterior Estimation
    prior = ili.utils.Uniform(low=-1, high=1), # Define a prior
    nets = [ili.utils.load_nde_lampe(model='maf')] # Define a neural network architecture
)

posterior, _ = trainer(loader) # Run training to map data -> parameters

samples = posterior.sample(x[0], (1000,)) # Generate 1000 samples from the posterior
```

[arXiv:2402.05137](https://arxiv.org/abs/2402.05137)

**Itu-ili**

<https://github.com/maho3/Itu-ili>

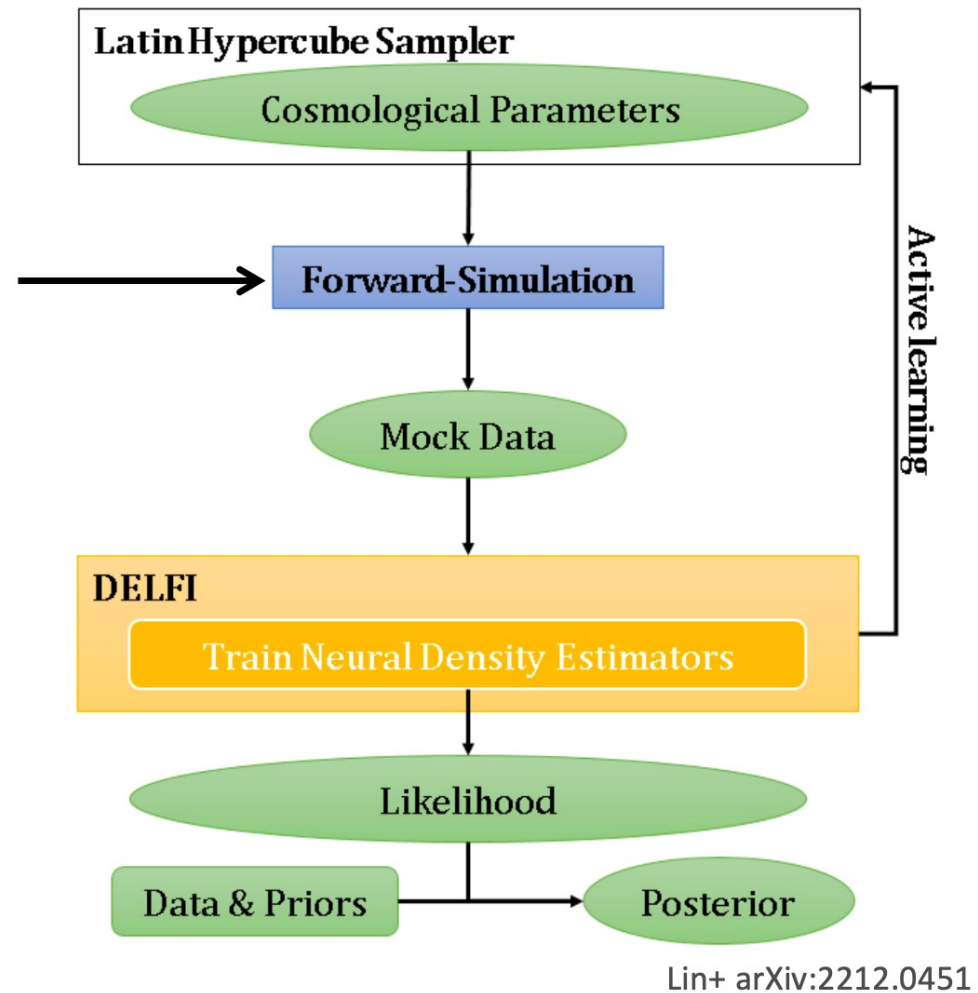
# Real data: KiDS-1000 cosmic shear analysis

**SBI: simulation-based inference**

non-linear structure  
systematic effects  
shear/redshift calibration  
observational complexities

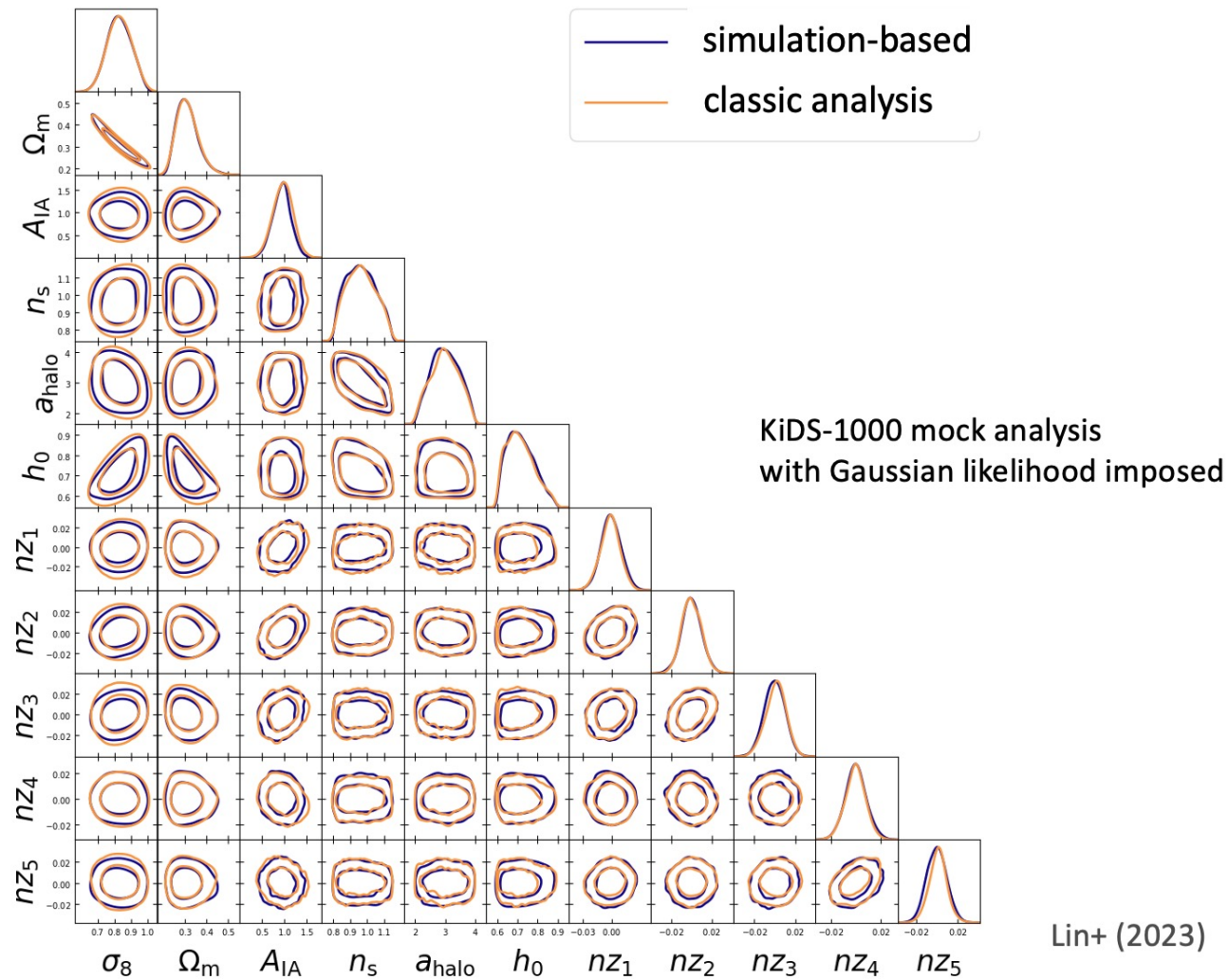
**NLE: neural likelihood estimation**

Slide credit: B. Joachimi

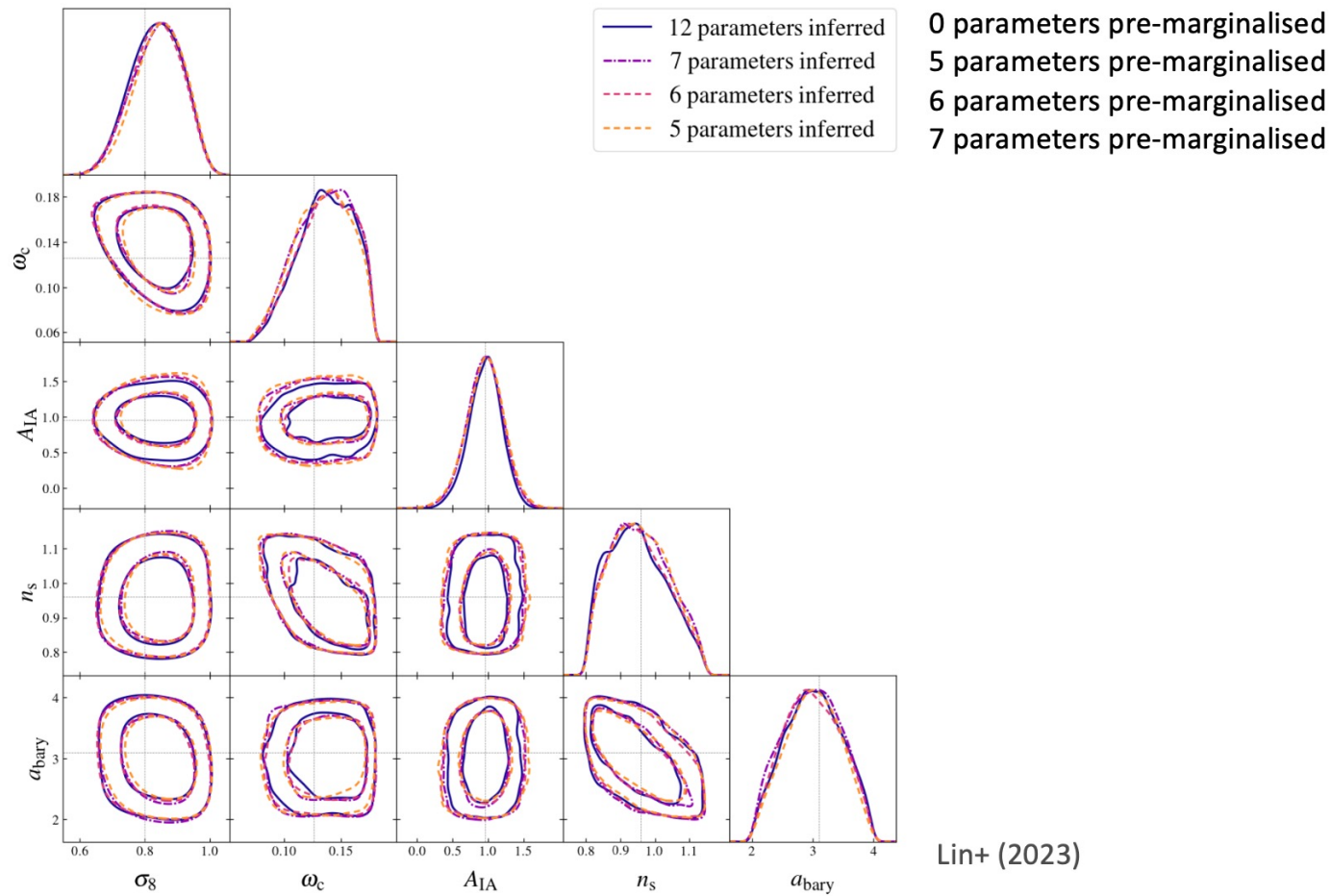


Lin+ arXiv:2212.0451

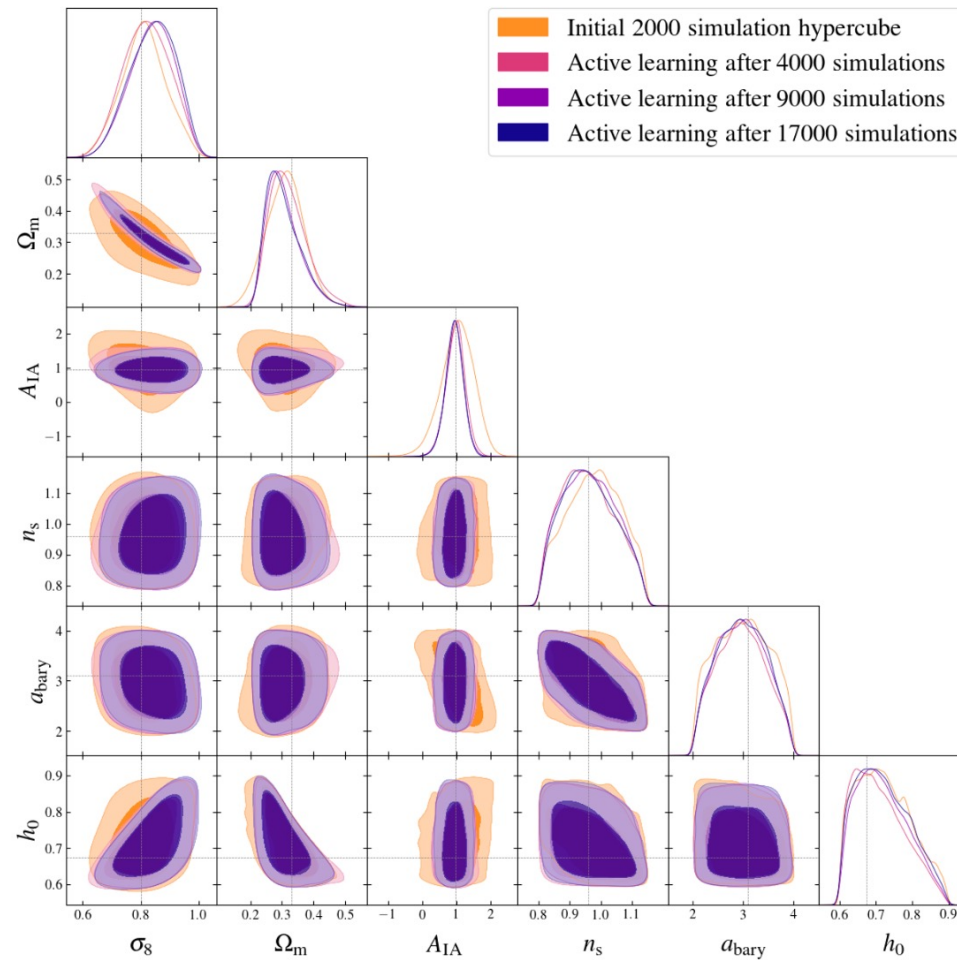
# KiDS-1000 cosmic shear analysis



# KiDS-1000 cosmic shear analysis: “pre-” marginalization test



# KiDS-1000 cosmic shear analysis: convergence with number of simulations



Actual data results: see  
von Wietersheim-Kramsta et al  
arXiv:2404.15402

Lin+ (2023)

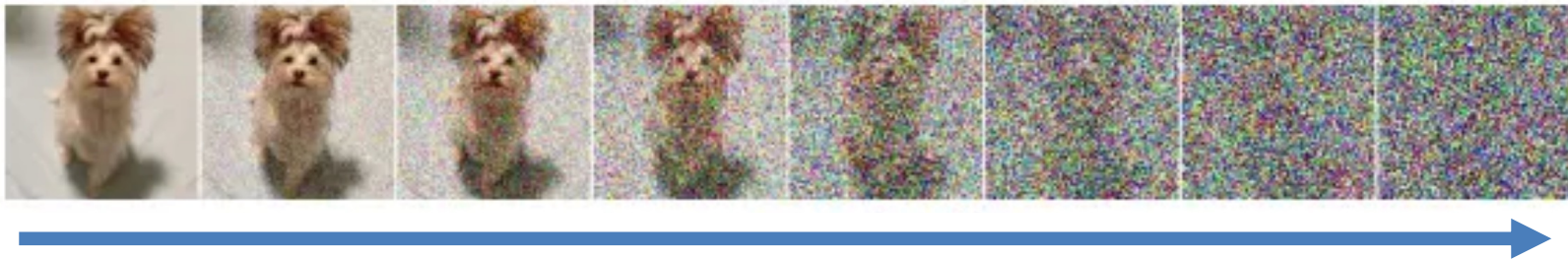
# Beyond parameters

First initial condition reconstructions from fully non-linear simulations with Implicit Inference and conditional score-based diffusion models

R. Legin *et al.*, arxiv:2304.03788

# “Score”-based Diffusion: Training

- Consider a random walk of images
- Initialise with training example as initial condition
- At every step learn a denoiser (the “score”)
- Add Gaussian noise at every step
- Central limit theorem: this has an Gaussian *attractor*



# Score"-based Diffusion: Generation

- Use trained denoiser to solve a series of inference problems to go from Gaussian noise back to a sample of the initial conditions
- If the number of steps is large enough, each step is a Gaussian inference problem.
- Train a neural network on simulations to learn the posterior mean for each of these steps





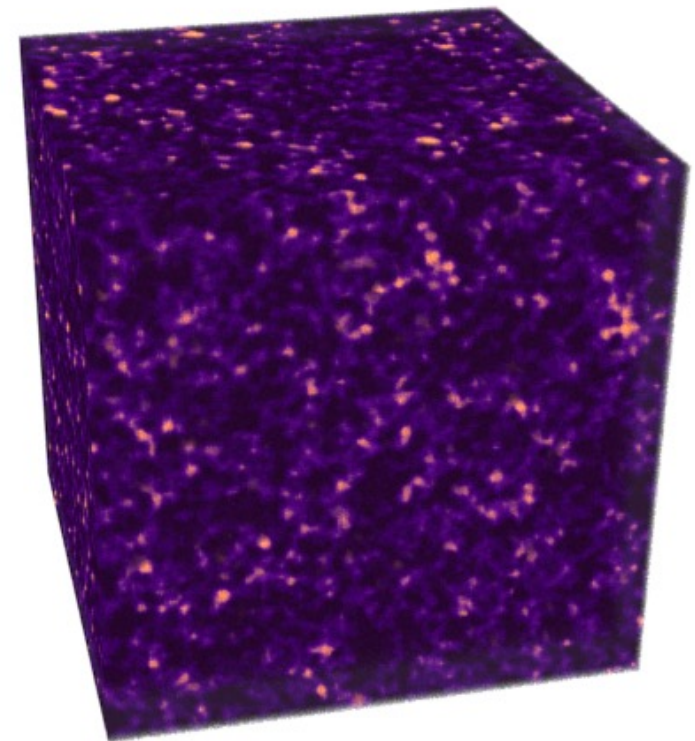
# Train full n-body dynamics

- **QUIJOTE:** Largest release of N-body simulation data to date
  - 43,100 full GADGET 3 simulations (1 Gpc)<sup>3</sup>, 512<sup>3</sup> or 1024<sup>3</sup> particles
  - ~1 PB of data
- Goal: quantify statistics information content of non-Gaussian non-linear density field about cosmological parameters
- Includes full dark matter snapshots, halo and void catalogues, and many pre-computed statistics.

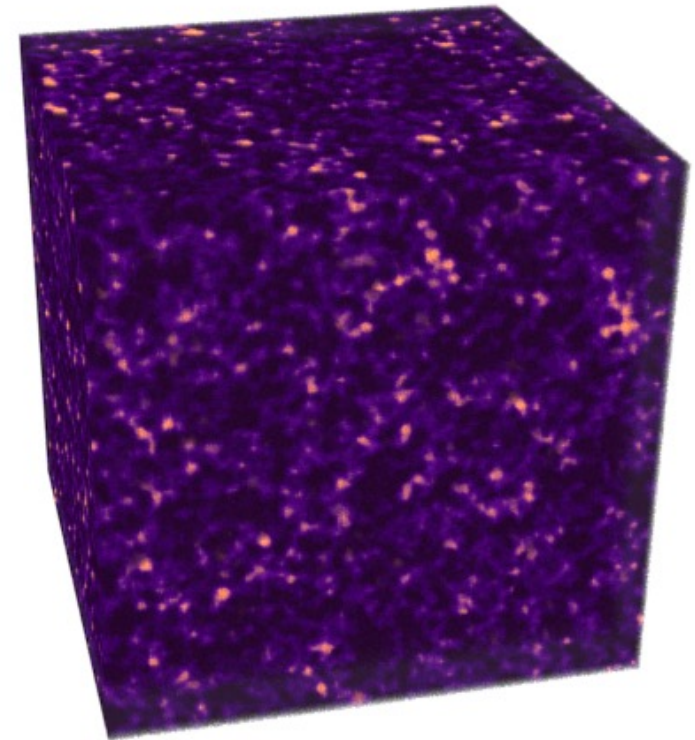
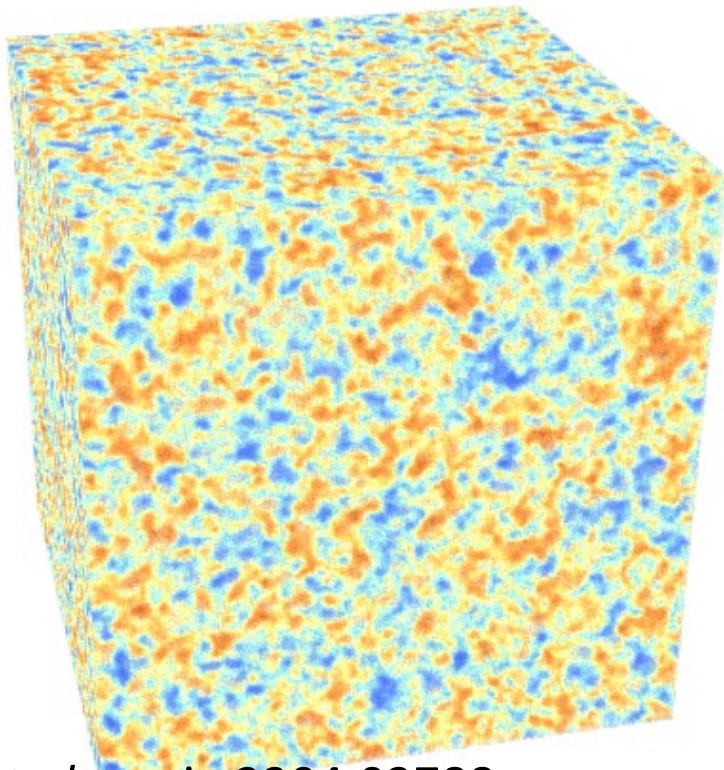
Villaescusa-Navarro et al, **arXiv:1909.05273**

# First full-field inference of initial conditions from fully non-linear density field

- 1 (Gpc)<sup>3</sup> GADGET 1024<sup>3</sup> particle simulation at  $z=0$
- Binned on 128<sup>3</sup> grid
- Resolution 8 Mpc/h

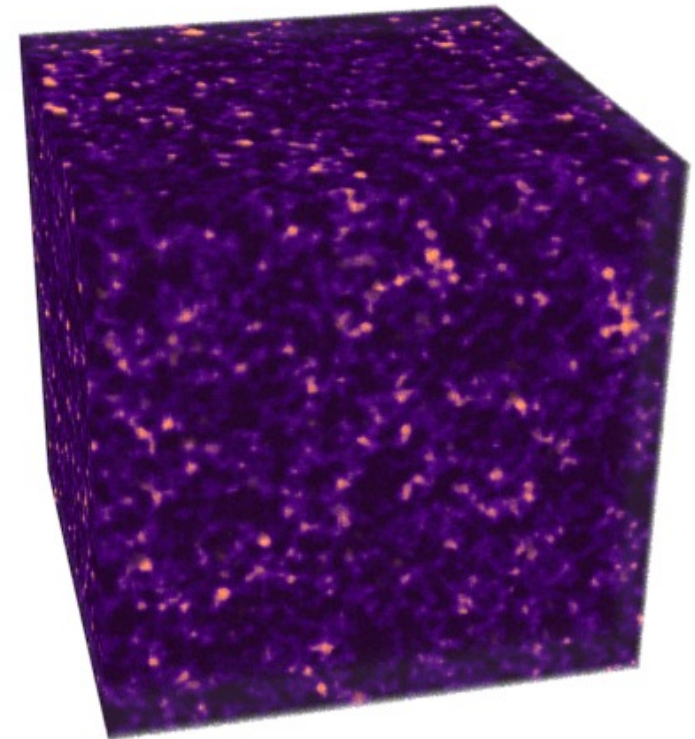
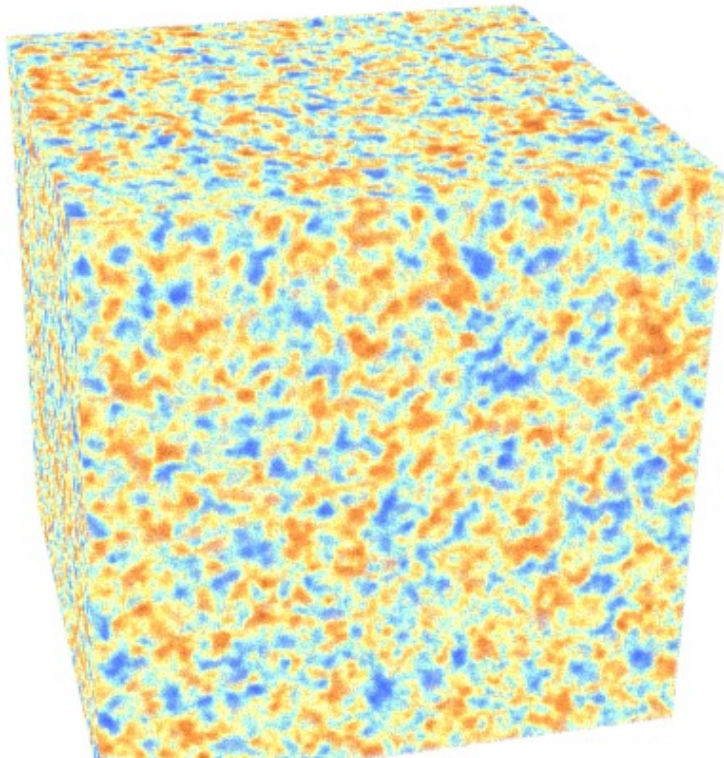


# First full-field inference of initial conditions from fully non-linear density field



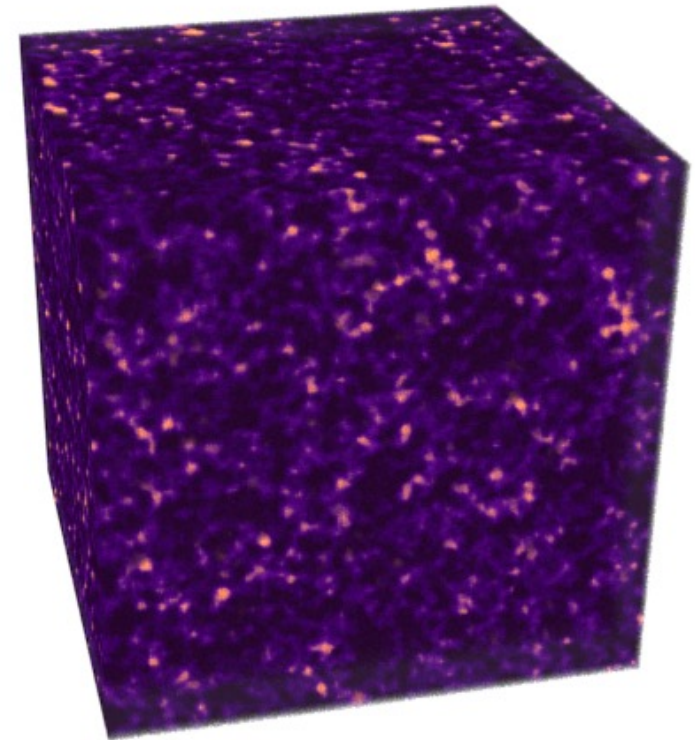
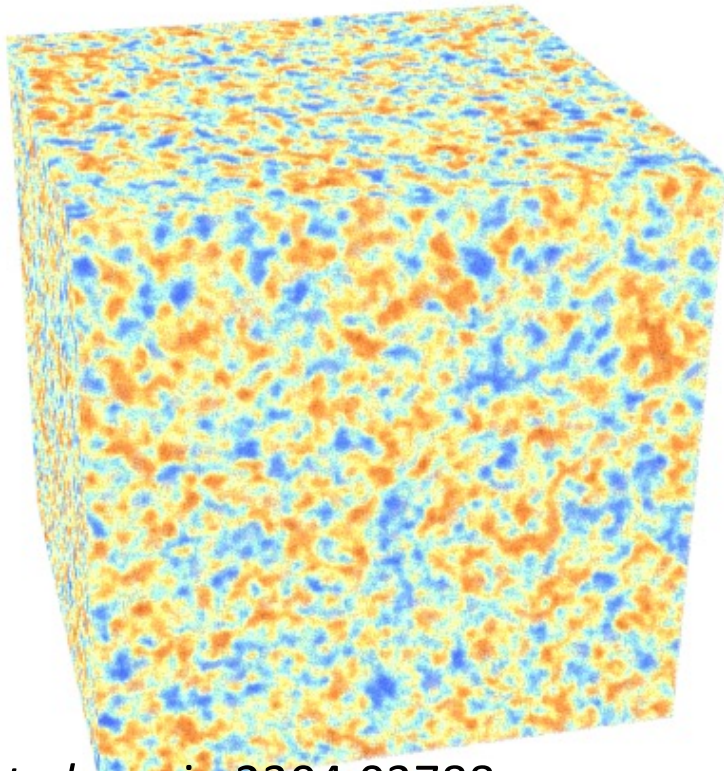
R. Legin *et al.*, arxiv:2304.03788

# First full-field inference of initial conditions from fully non-linear density field



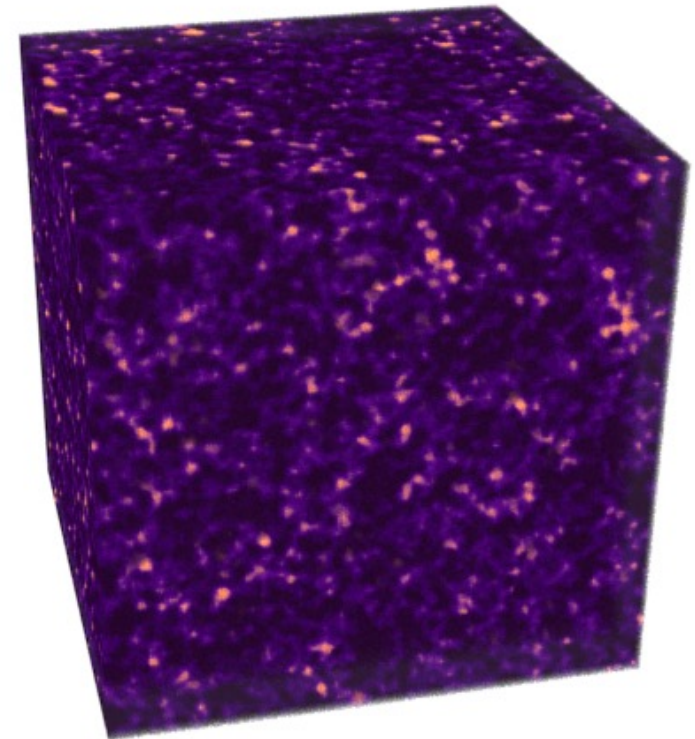
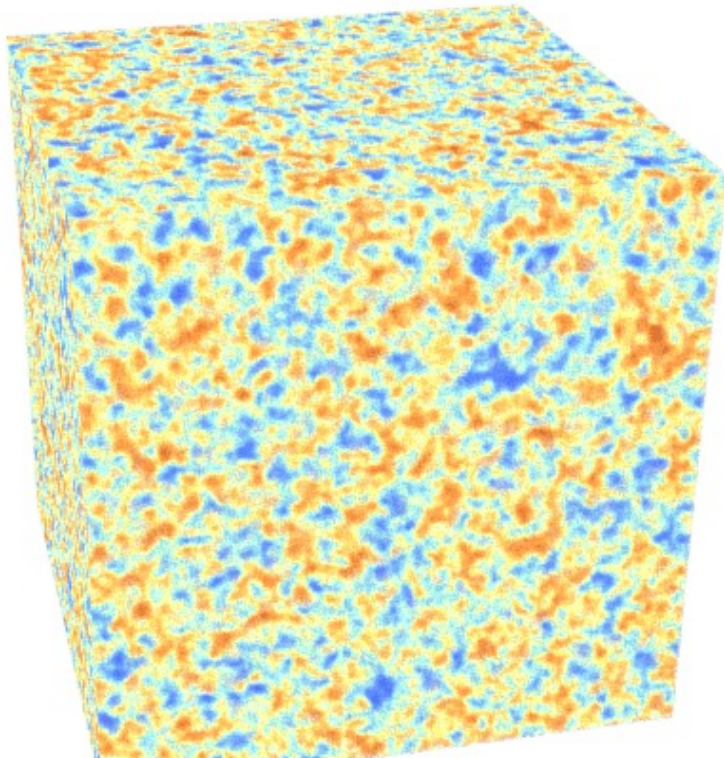
R. Legin *et al.*, arxiv:2304.03788

# First full-field inference of initial conditions from fully non-linear density field



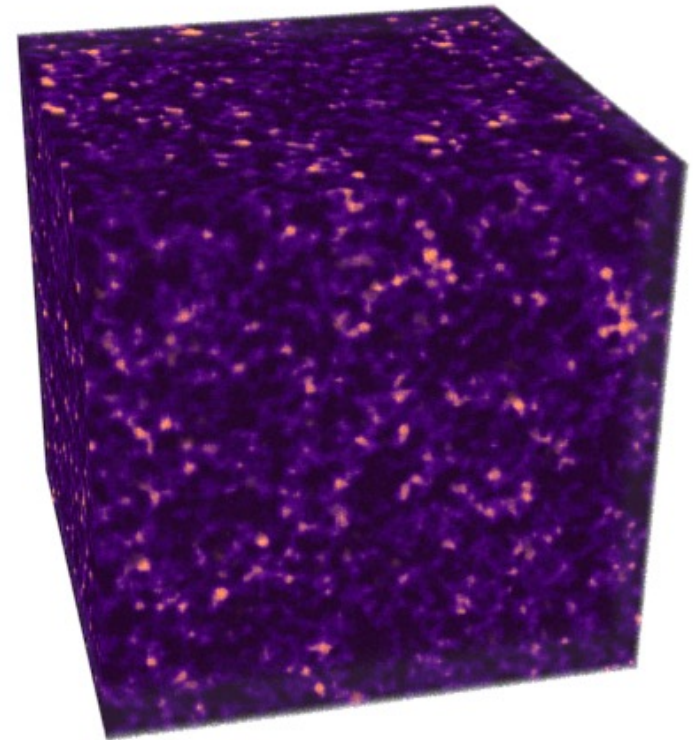
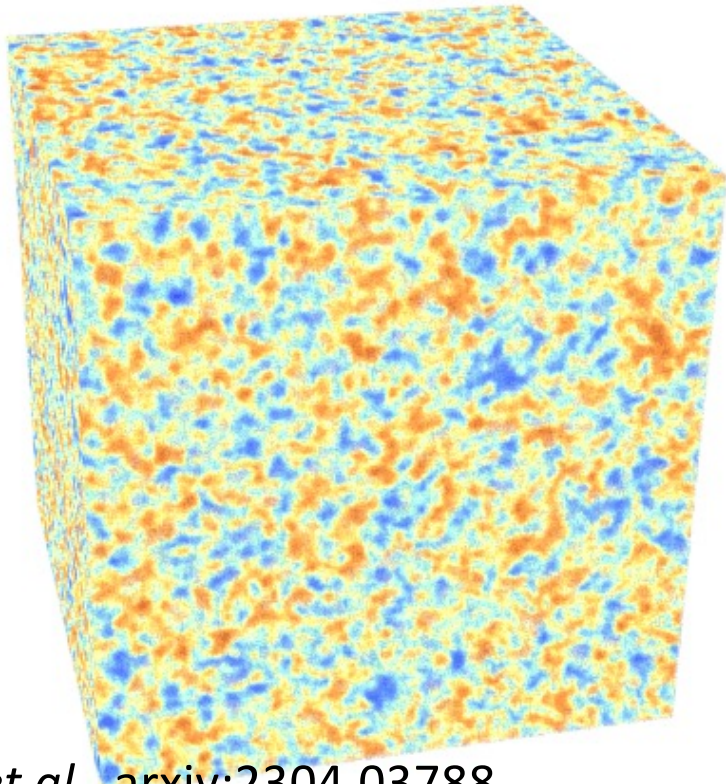
R. Legin *et al.*, arxiv:2304.03788

# First full-field inference of initial conditions from fully non-linear density field



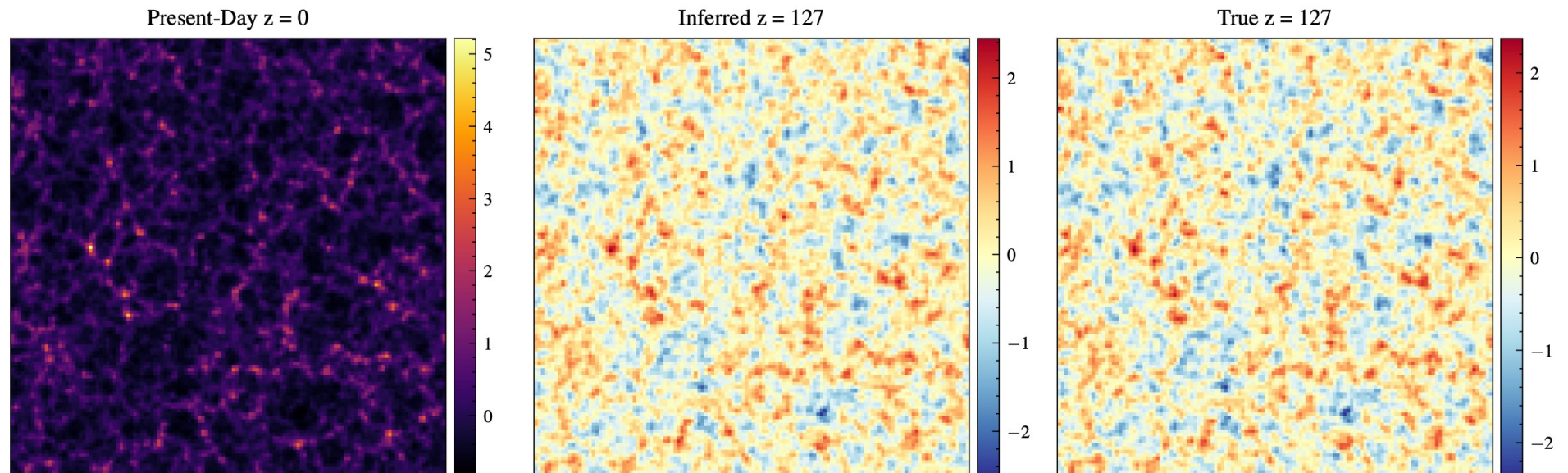
R. Legin *et al.*, arxiv:2304.03788

# First full-field inference of initial conditions from fully non-linear density field



R. Legin *et al.*, arxiv:2304.03788

# Faithful reconstruction...

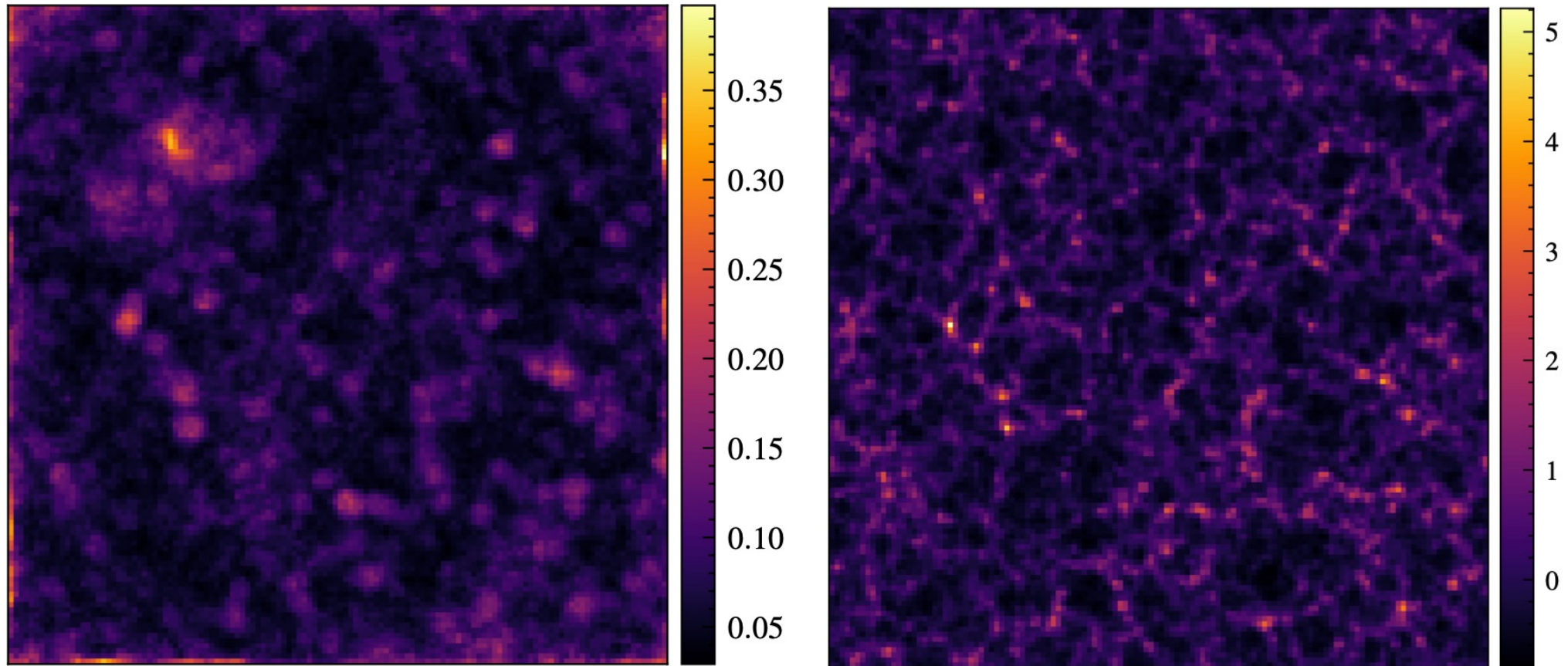


R. Legin *et al.*, arxiv:2304.03788



... including uncertainties (posterior variance)

Present-Day  $z = 0$



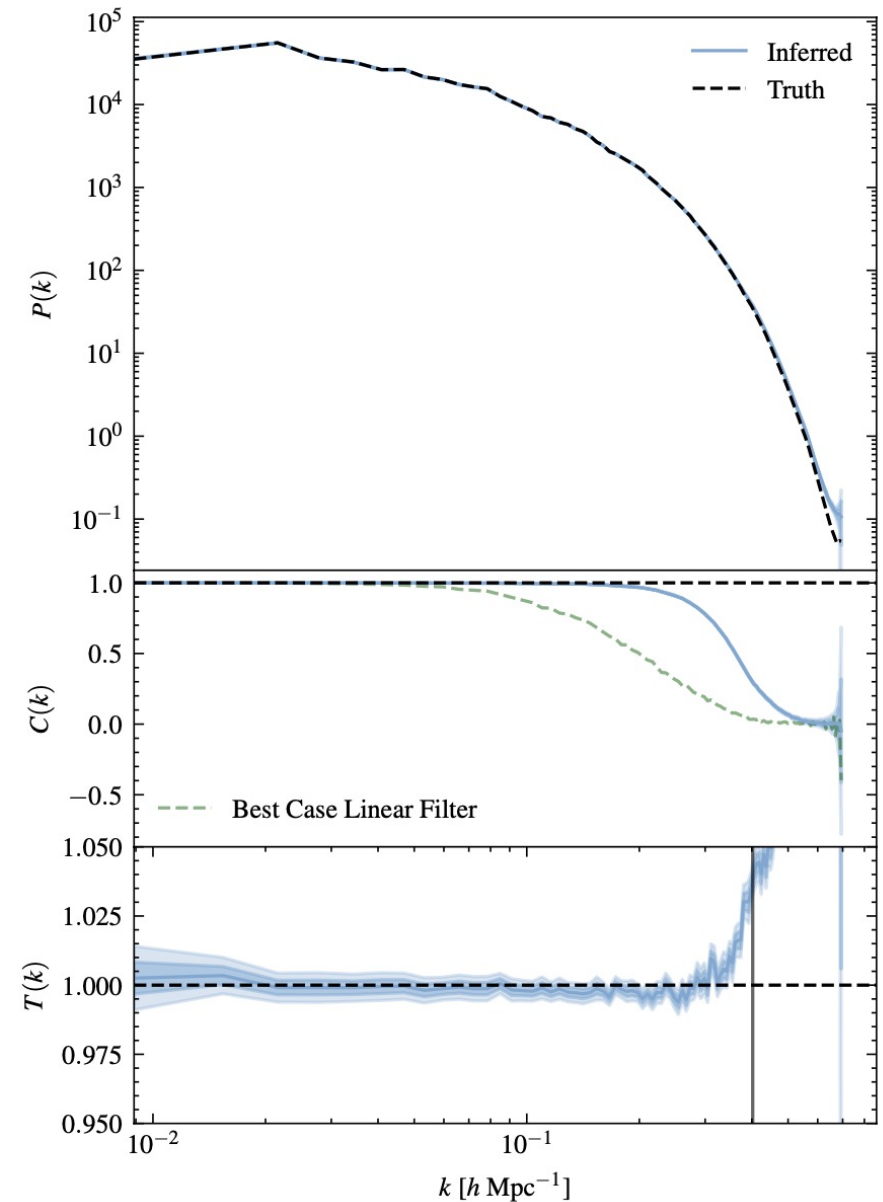
R. Legin *et al.*, arxiv:2304.03788

# Accurate reconstructions

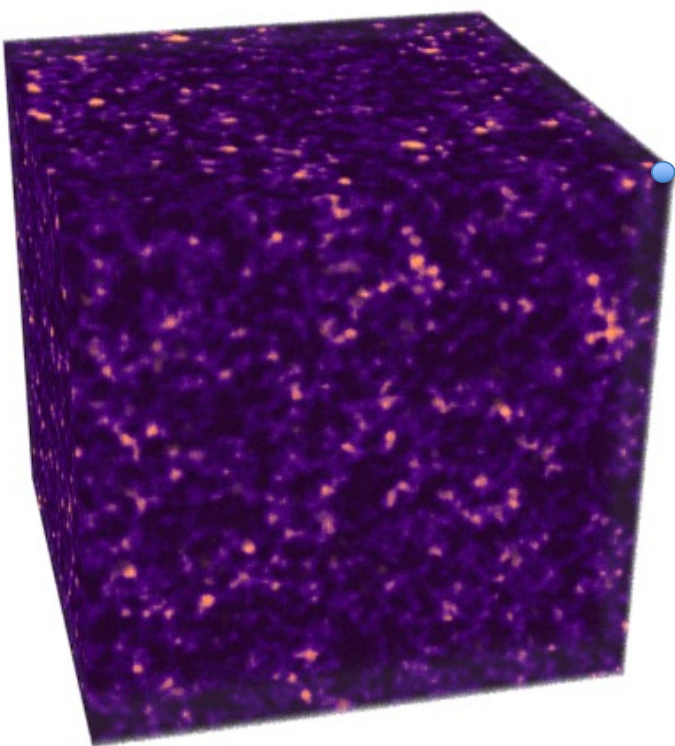
Points to note:

- full non-linear gravity
- No need for differentiability of the computational model

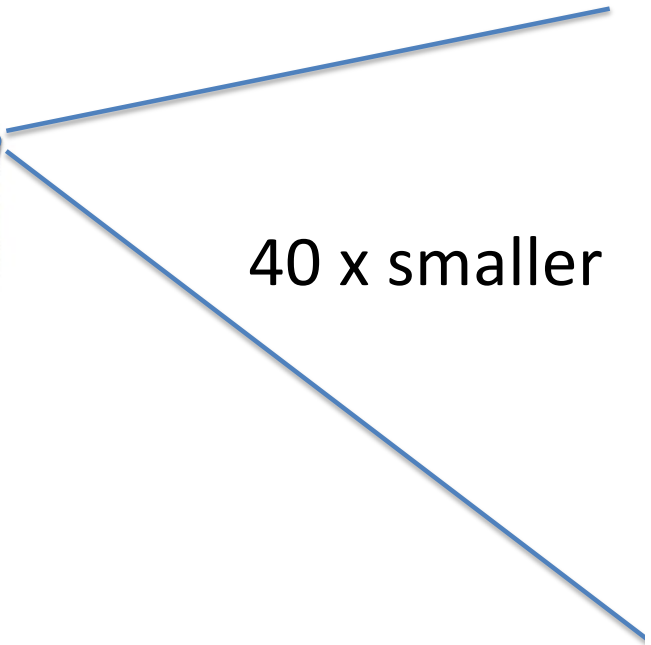
R. Legin *et al.*, arxiv:2304.03788



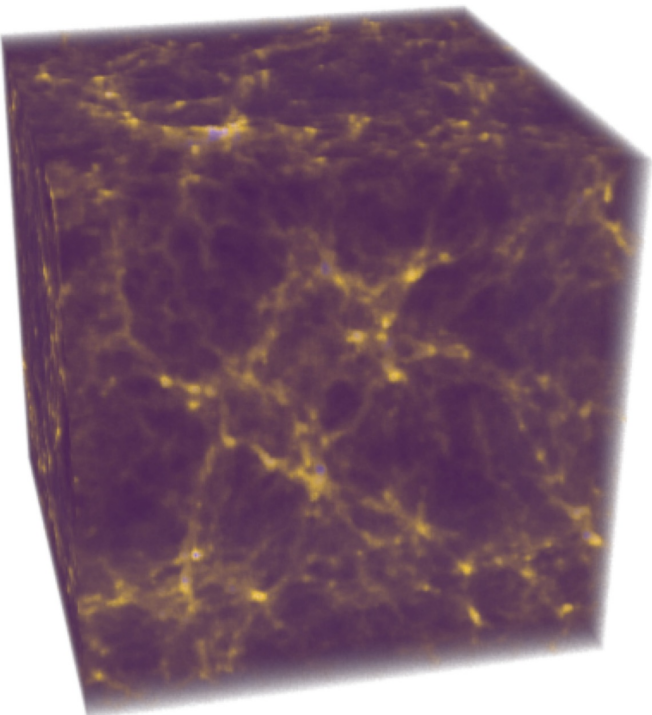
# Going even more non-linear



1 Gpc/h



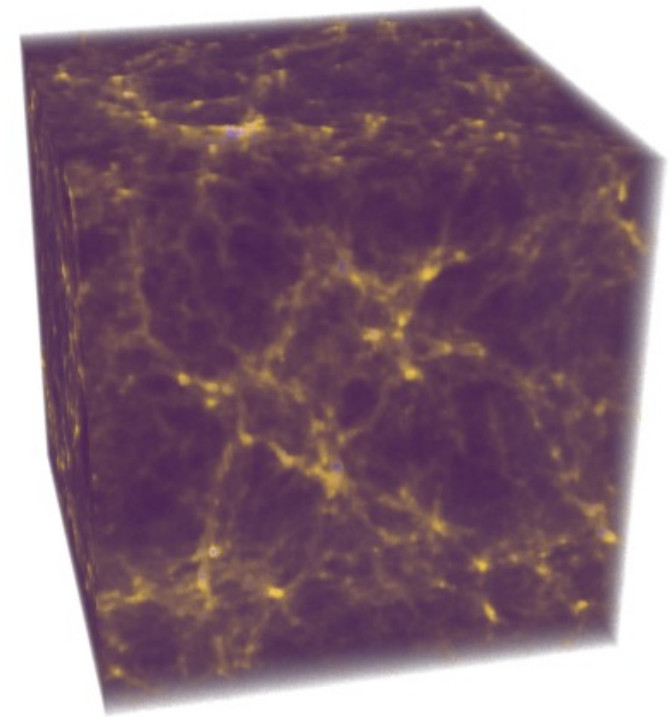
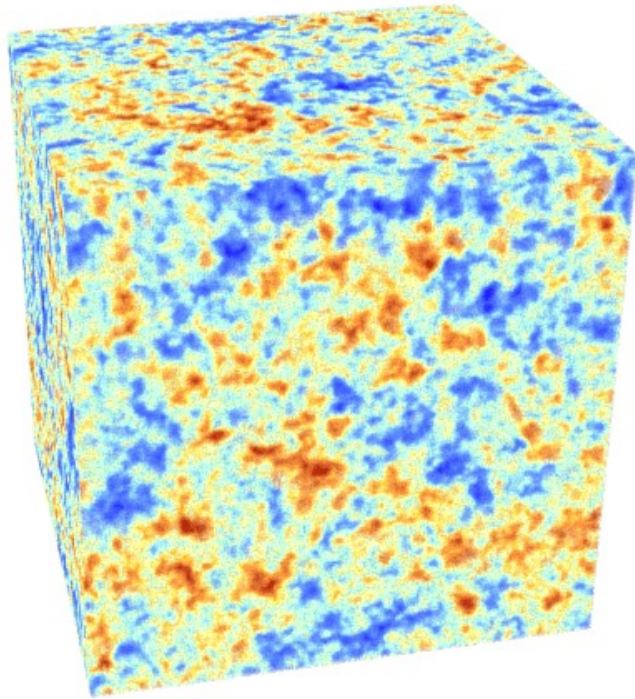
40 x smaller



25 Mpc/h

# Extremely non-linear regime cosmological ICs

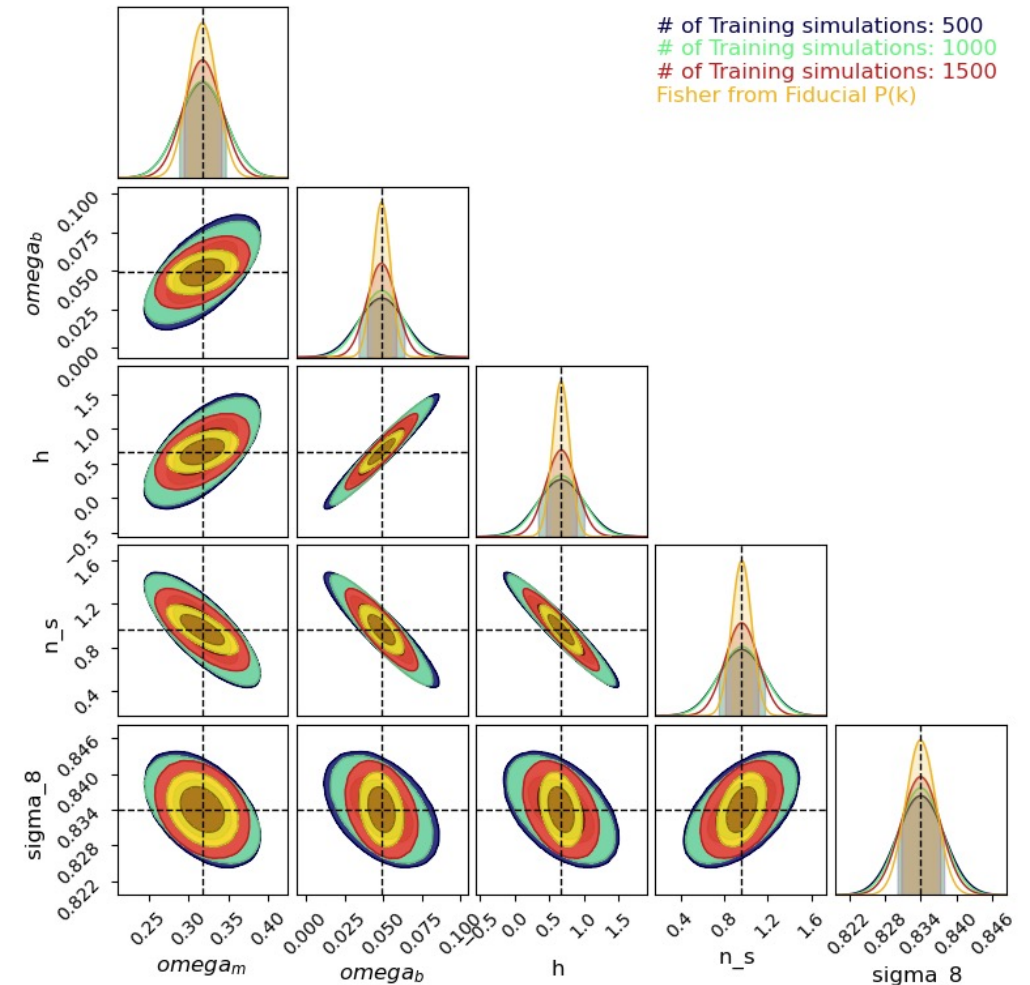
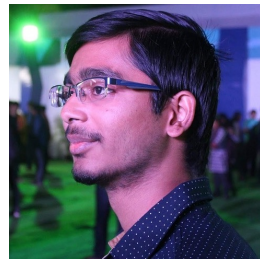
Comparable accuracy as large-scale result!



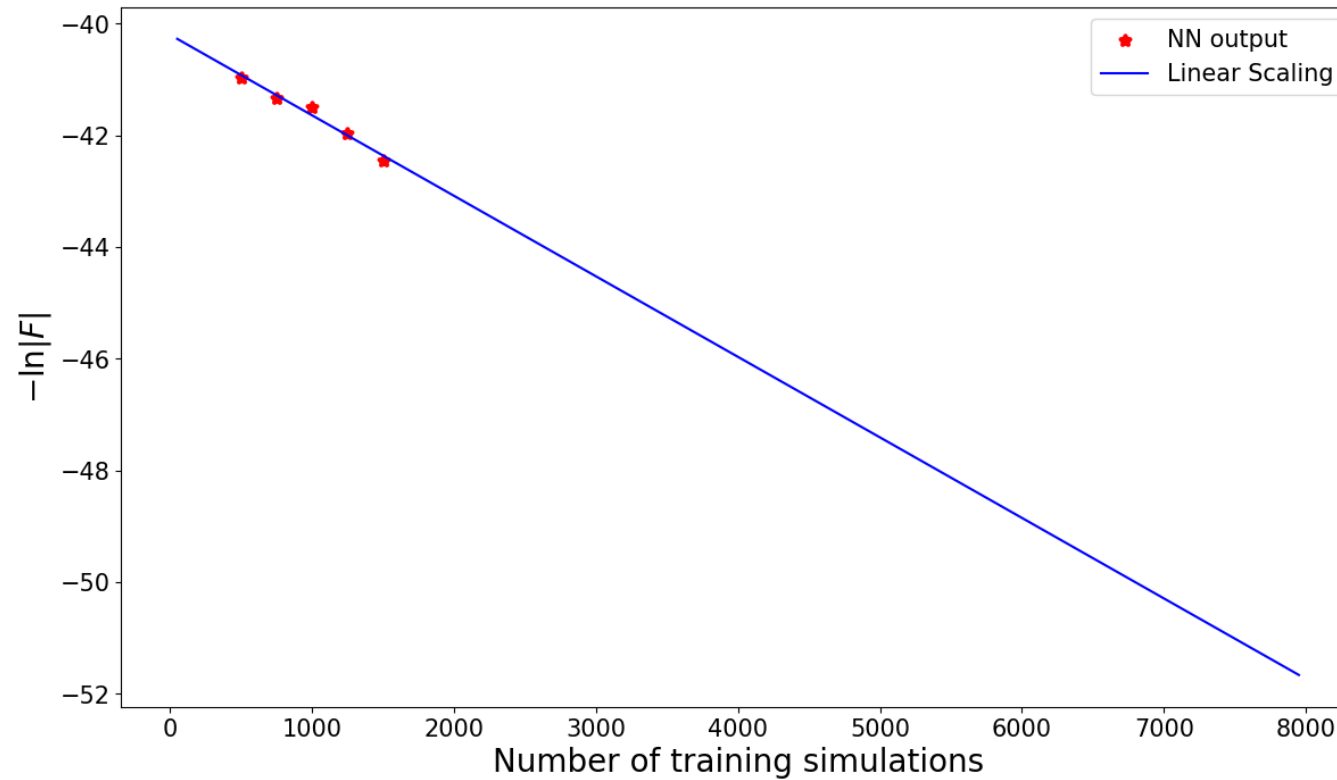
# How many simulations are enough?

- How do we know if inference is limited by the number of training simulations?
- Combine training simulations with a set of sims in the neighborhood of a fiducial point
- Simple experiment: power spectrum inference from Quijote sims

A. Bairagi et al., in prep.



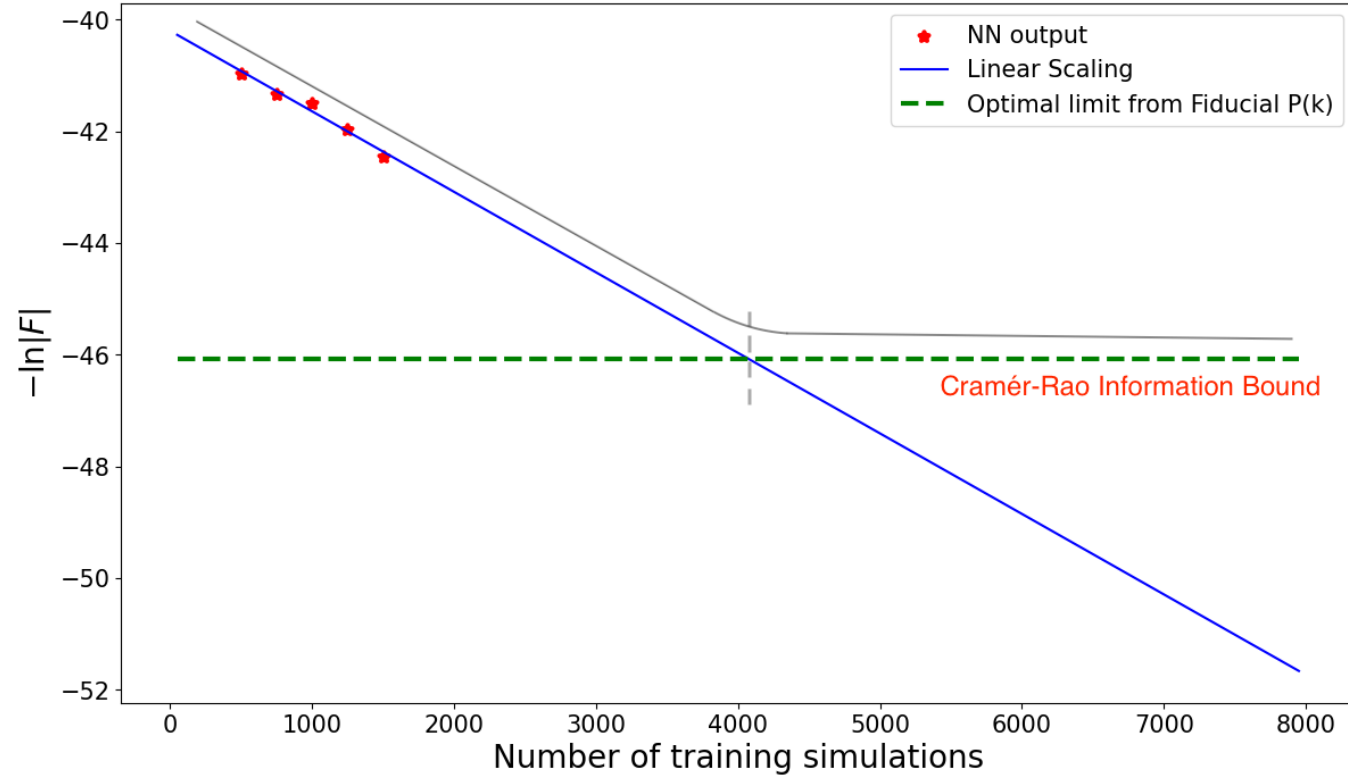
# Cosmological neural scaling law



A. Bairagi et al., in prep.

Benjamin Wandelt

# Cosmological neural scaling law

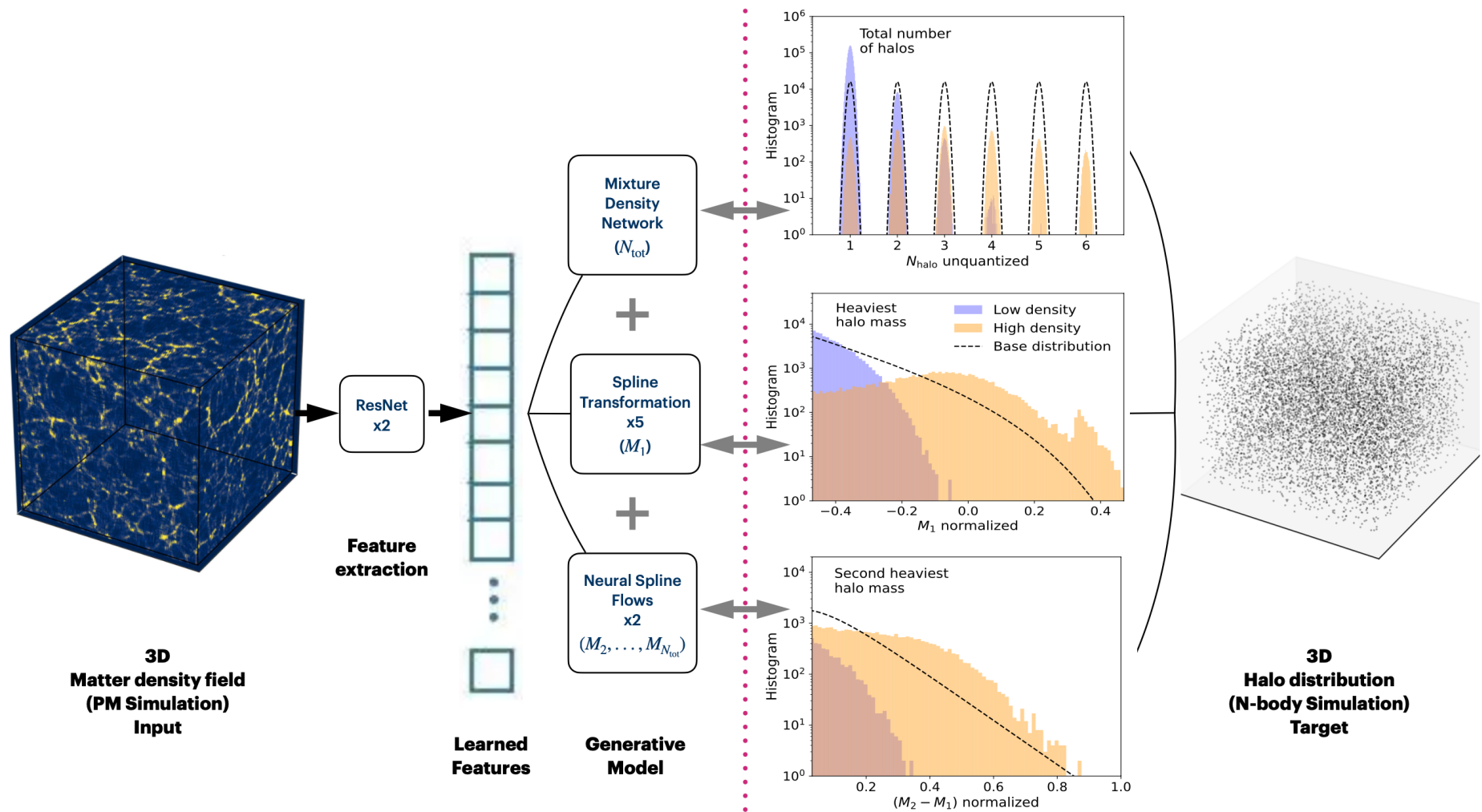


# How will we get all the simulations?

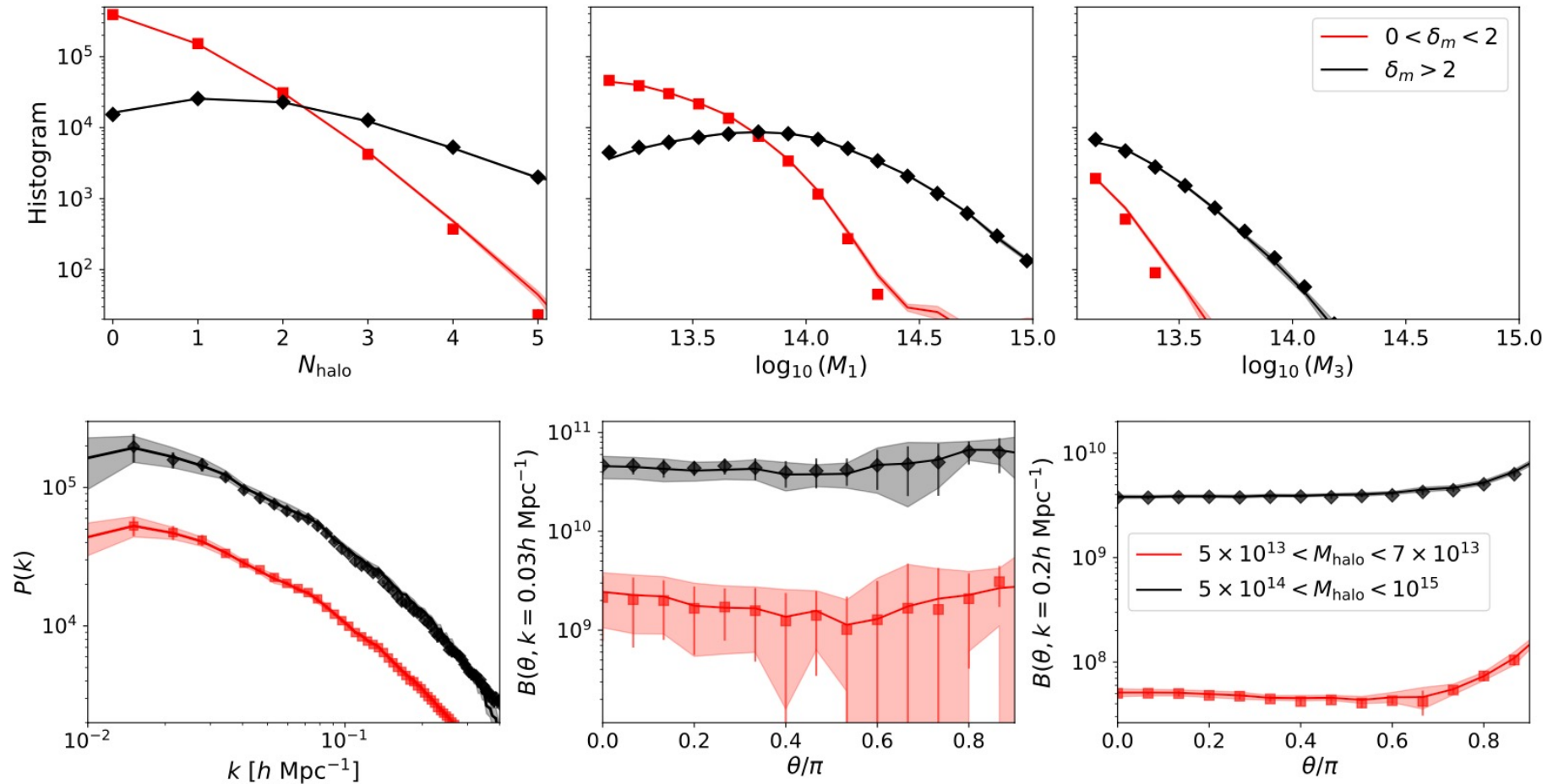
- Use/generate simulation corpora (Quijote and Abacus n-body sims, CAMELS hydrosimulations, ...)
- Emulators! (e.g. Ramanah et al 2019, Jamieson et al 2023,...)



# From fast PM to halos with CHARM



# Works like a CHARM!



# From information to insight

Can we use machine learning to discover

...new models (e.g. symbolic searches)?

...the most important degrees of freedom in data?

# Evidence-based Model Comparison using Implicit Inference

$$p(\theta|d) = \frac{p(d|\theta)p(\theta)}{p(d)}$$

The equation is annotated with three checkmarks: a blue checkmark above the denominator  $p(d)$ , a purple checkmark above the numerator  $p(d|\theta)p(\theta)$ , and a blue checkmark above the entire fraction.

Actually,  $p(d|M_i)$



# Bayesian model comparison

$$\frac{p(M_i|d)}{p(M_j|d)} = \frac{p(d|M_i)}{p(d|M_j)} \frac{p(M_i)}{p(M_j)}$$

Bayes factor  $K$

# Bayesian model comparison

*Even if* likelihood and posterior are explicitly given

- Likelihood can be costly to evaluate
- **Evidence can be hard to compute**

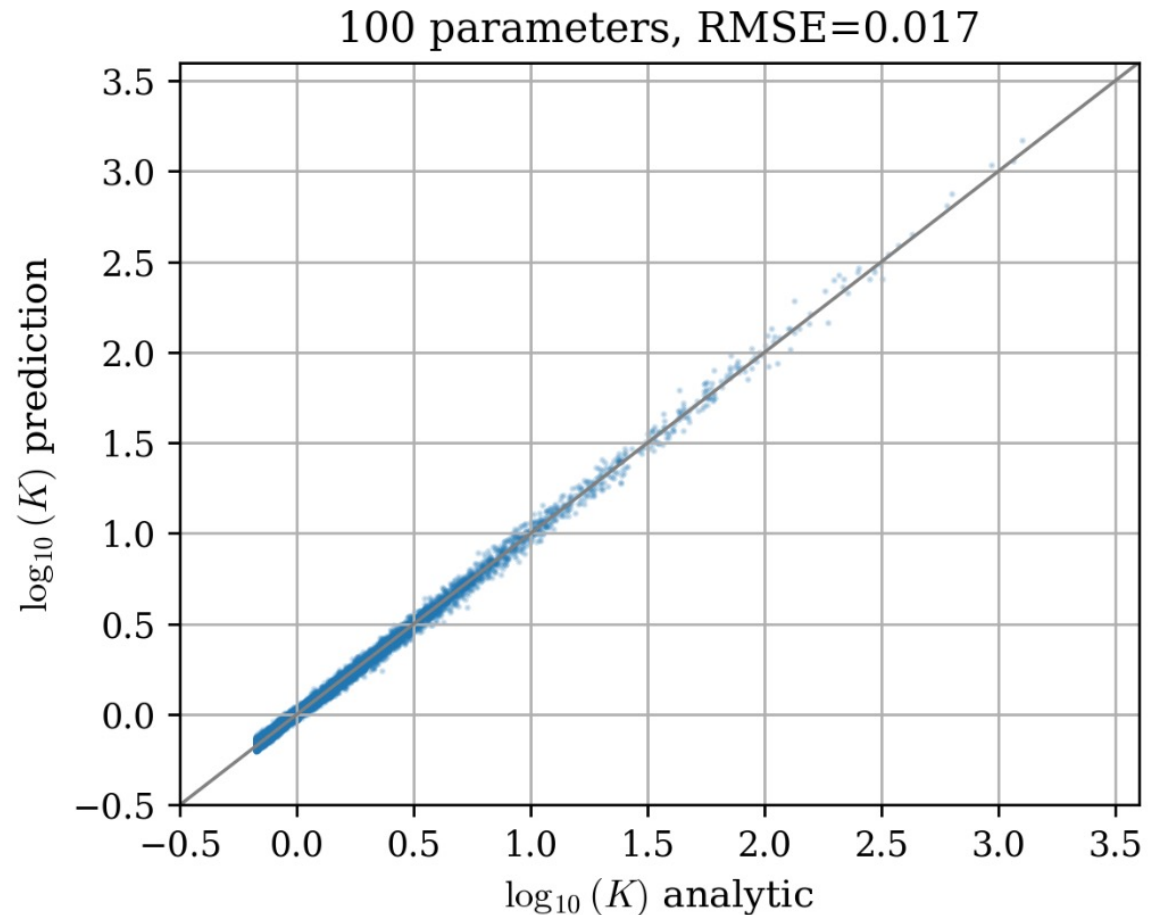
$$P(\theta|d, M) = \frac{P(d|\theta, M)P(\theta|M)}{P(d|M)}$$

$$\Rightarrow P(d|M) = \int P(d|\theta, M)P(\theta|M)d\theta$$

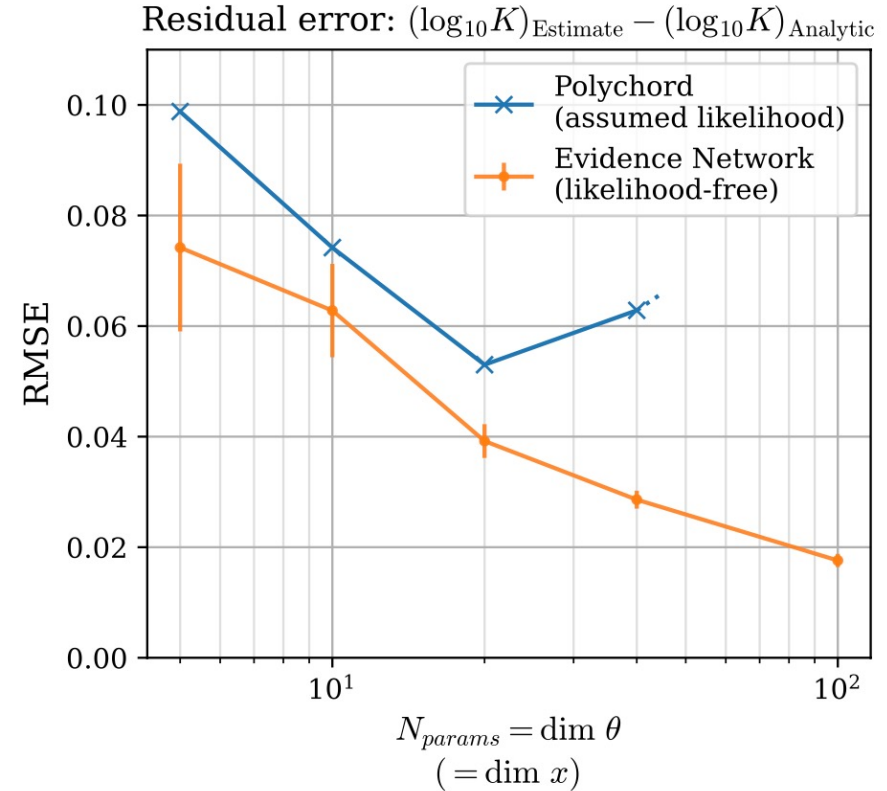
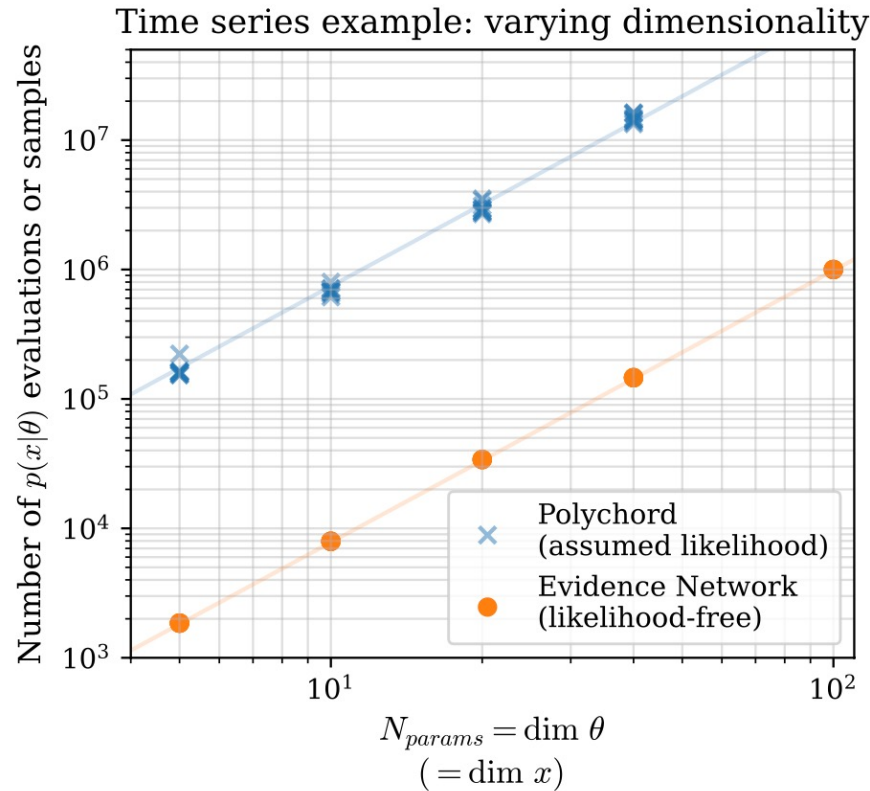
# Example: evidence ratio with 100 parameters

Evidence Networks trained to compute evidence ratio based only on simulated examples and a custom loss function.

This evidence computation does not explicitly depend on number of parameters!



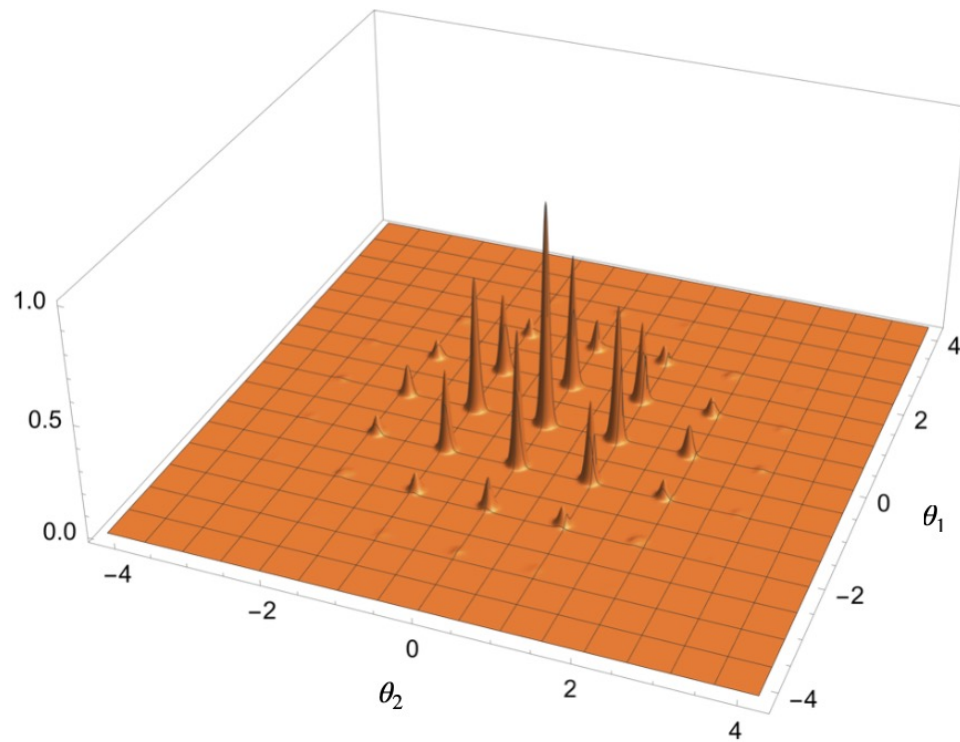
# Evidence nets: more accurate and faster than best-of-class nested sampling method



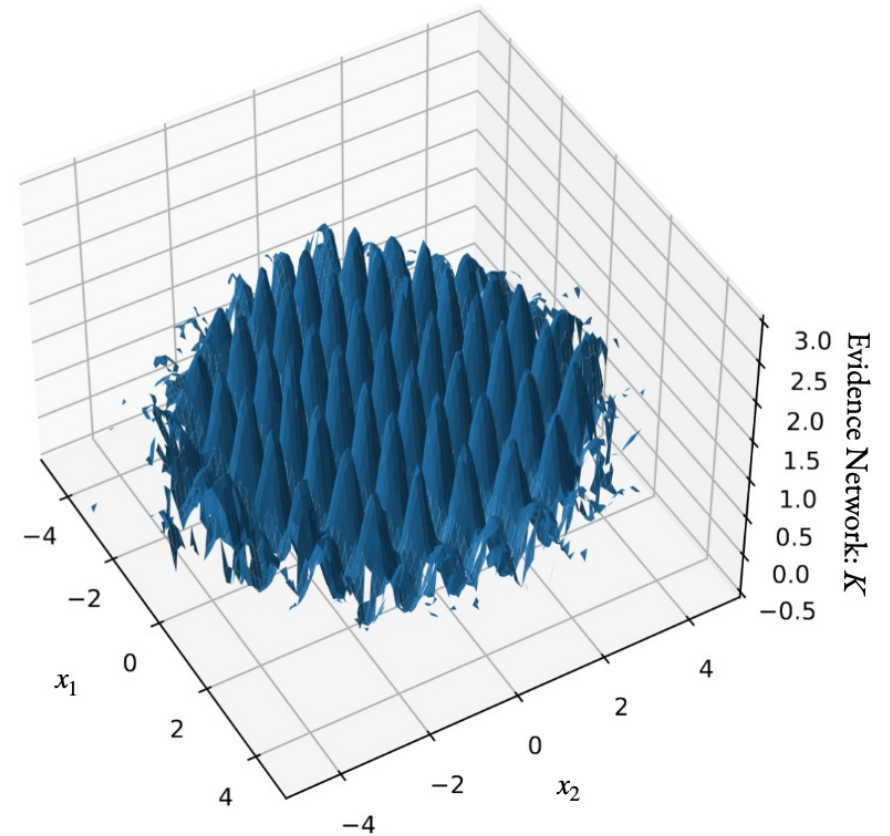
Computational cost of evidence network includes time to generate sims and train. **Application to a given data set is nearly instantaneous.**



# Works on traditionally intractable examples

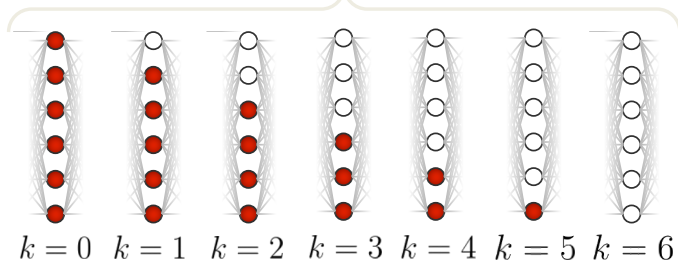
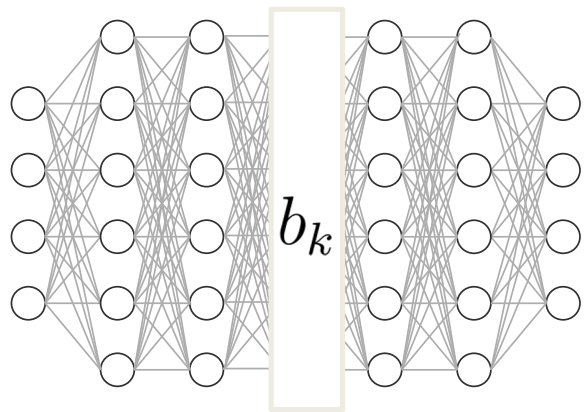


Jeffrey & Wandelt, arXiv:2305.11241



Benjamin Wandelt

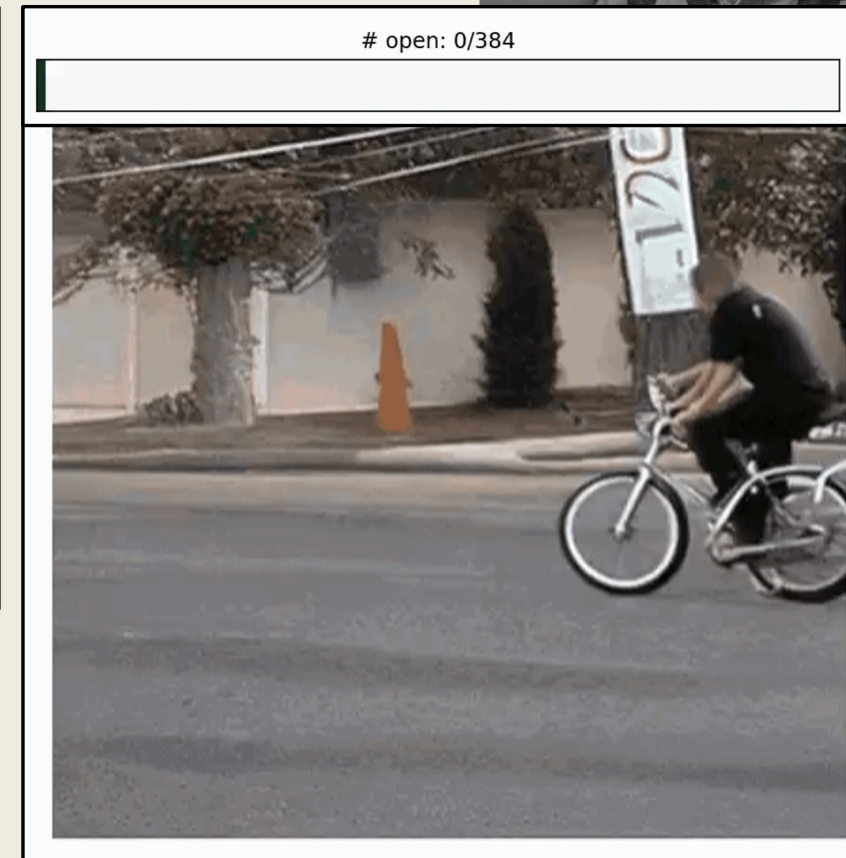
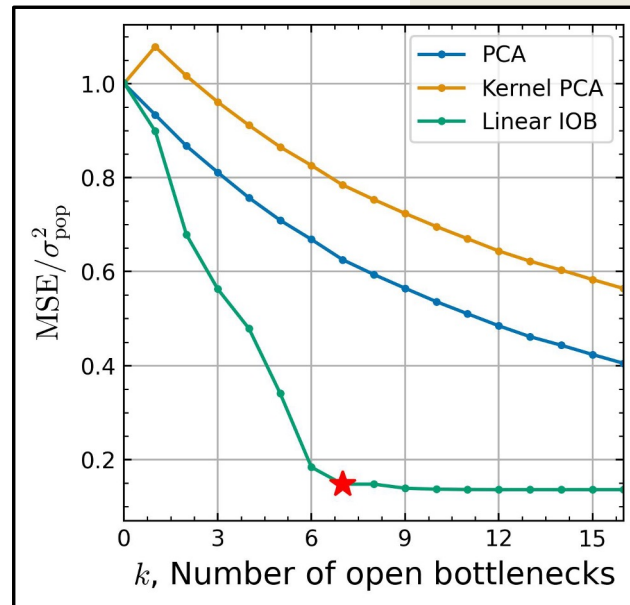
# Information Ordered Bottlenecks



$$\mathcal{L} := \sum_{k=0}^{k_{\max}} \mathcal{L}_k$$

Scientific Discovery from  
Ordered Information  
Decomposition

Matthew Ho (UvA 1 @ 4:20pm)



# Key insights

- Cosmology is no longer data-limited but model-limited.
- ML allows us to recast physics questions as optimization problems.
- AI cannot do it alone: AI + physics/astronomy
- Combine new machine learning methods, fast simulation techniques, and statistical methods
- Need interpretability for insight and discovery