

Quantum critical transport, duality, and M-theory

hep-th/0701036

Christopher Herzog (Washington)

Pavel Kovtun (UCSB)

Subir Sachdev (Harvard)

Dam Thanh Son (Washington)



Talks online at <http://sachdev.physics.harvard.edu>



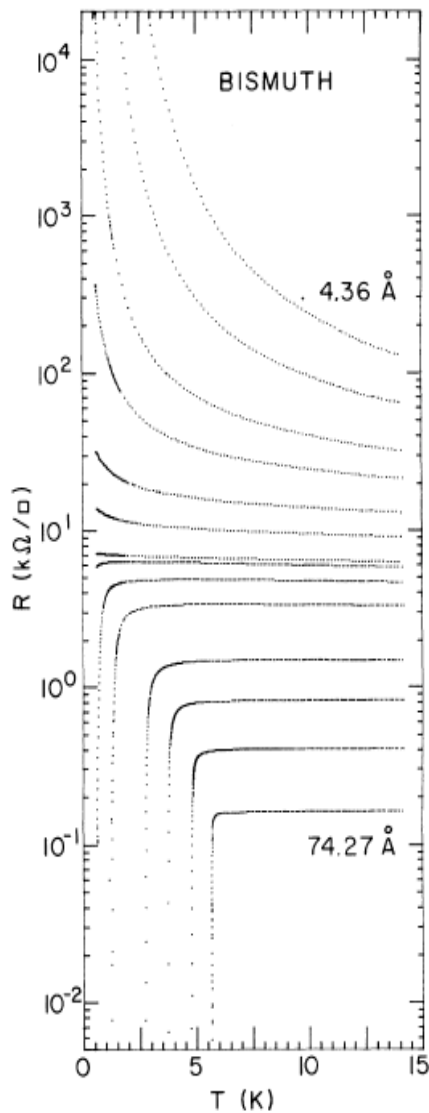


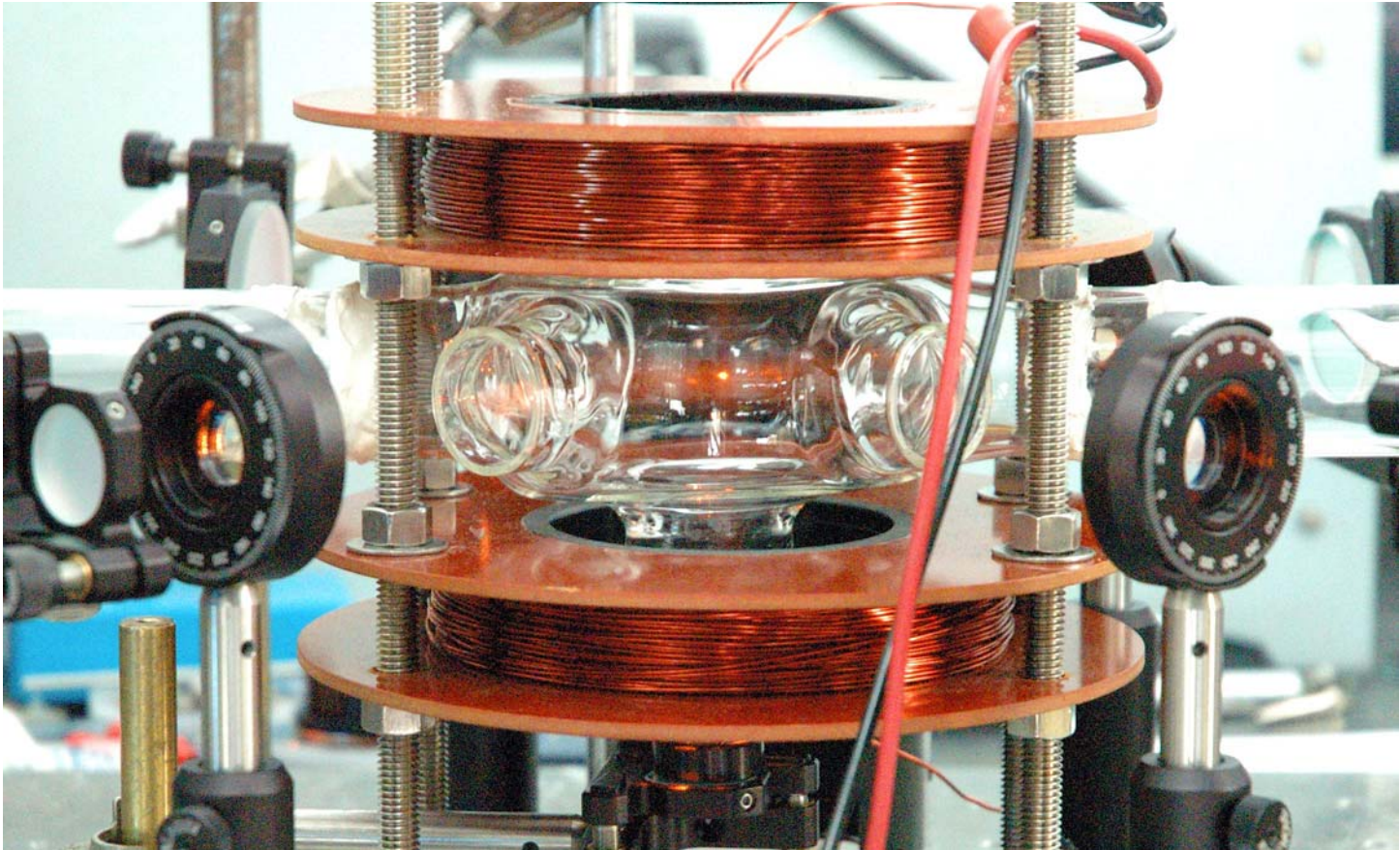
FIG. 1. Evolution of the temperature dependence of the sheet resistance $R(T)$ with thickness for a Bi film deposited onto Ge. Fewer than half of the traces actually acquired are shown. Film thicknesses shown range from 4.36 to 74.27 Å.

Conductivity σ

$$\sigma_{\text{Superconductor}} (T \rightarrow 0) = \infty$$

$$\sigma_{\text{Insulator}} (T \rightarrow 0) = 0$$

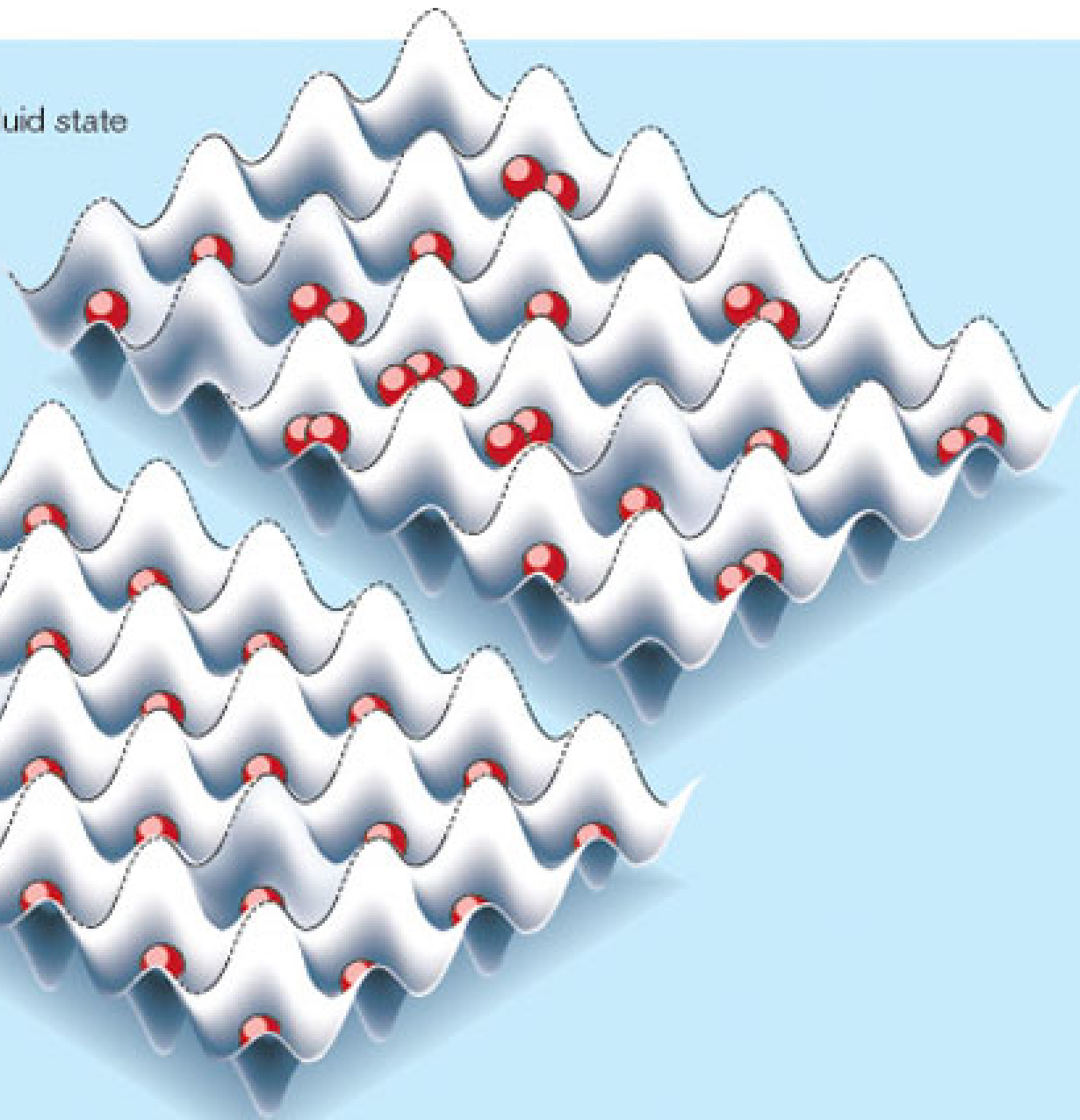
$$\sigma_{\text{Quantum critical point}} (T \rightarrow 0) \approx \frac{4e^2}{h}$$



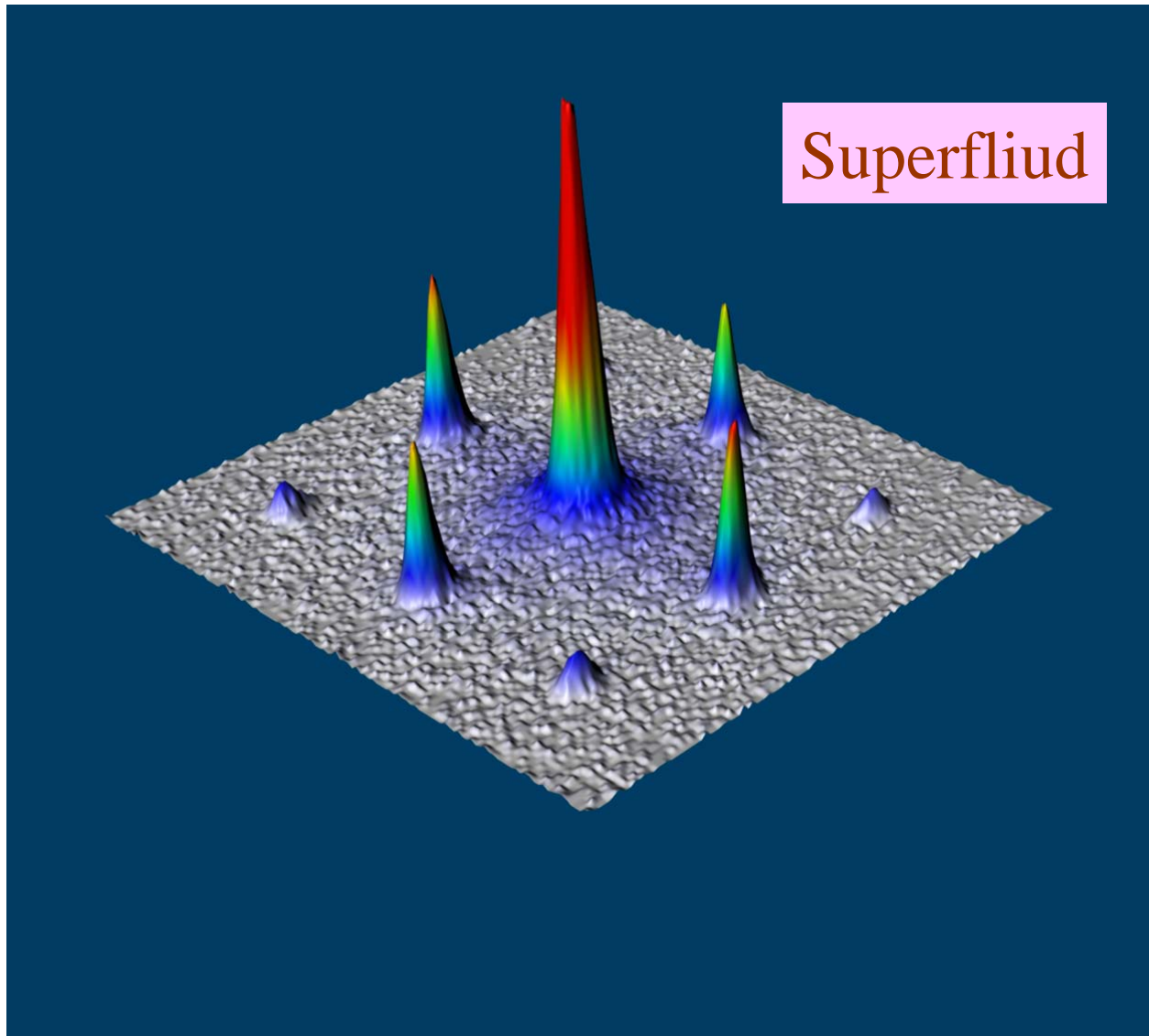
Trap for ultracold ^{87}Rb atoms

a Superfluid state

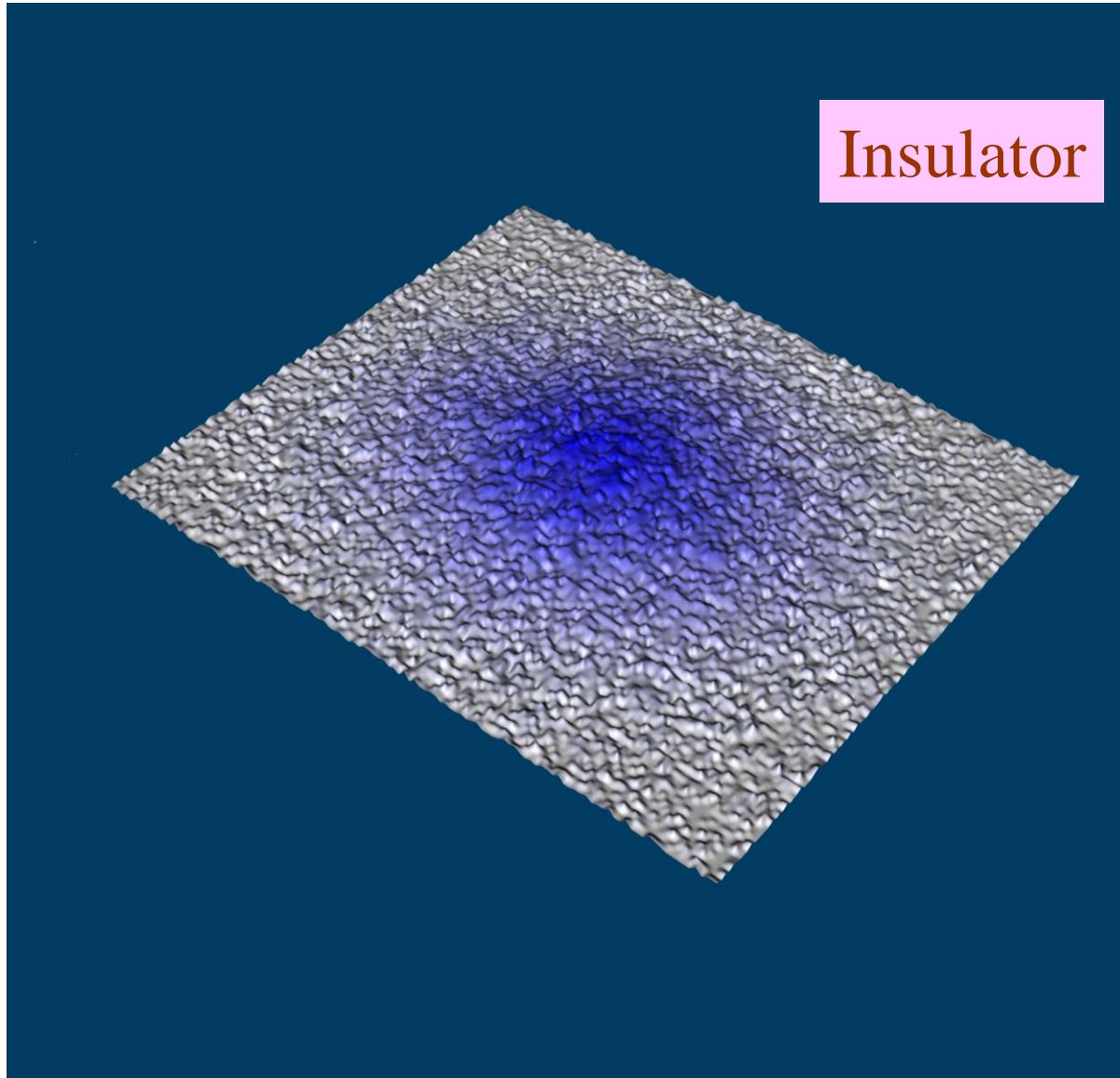
b Insulating state



Velocity distribution of ^{87}Rb atoms



Velocity distribution of ^{87}Rb atoms



Outline

1. Boson Hubbard model – conformal field theory (CFT)
2. Hydrodynamics of CFTs
3. Duality
4. SYM_3 with $N=8$ supersymmetry

Outline

1. Boson Hubbard model – conformal field theory (CFT)
2. Hydrodynamics of CFTs
3. Duality
4. SYM_3 with $N=8$ supersymmetry

Boson Hubbard model

Degrees of freedom: Bosons, b_j^\dagger , hopping between the sites, j , of a lattice, with short-range repulsive interactions.

$$H = -t \sum_{\langle ij \rangle} b_i^\dagger b_j - \mu \sum_j n_j + \frac{U}{2} \sum_j n_j (n_j - 1) + \dots$$

$$n_j \equiv b_j^\dagger b_j$$

M.P.A. Fisher, P.B. Weichmann,
G. Grinstein, and D.S. Fisher
Phys. Rev. B **40**, 546 (1989).

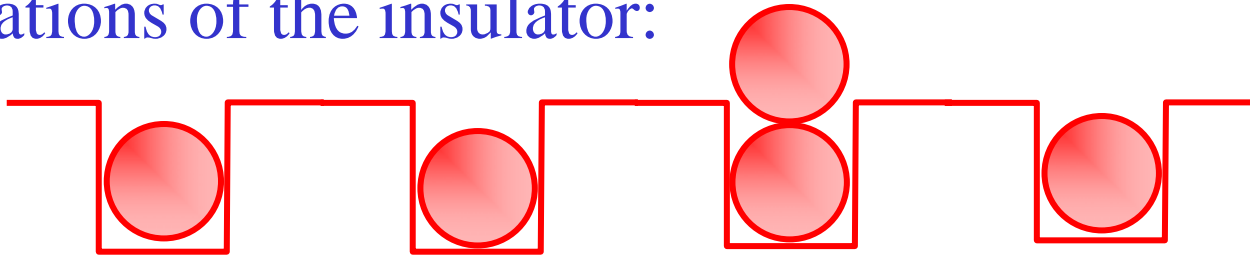
For small U/t , superfluid

For large U/t , insulator

The insulator:



Excitations of the insulator:

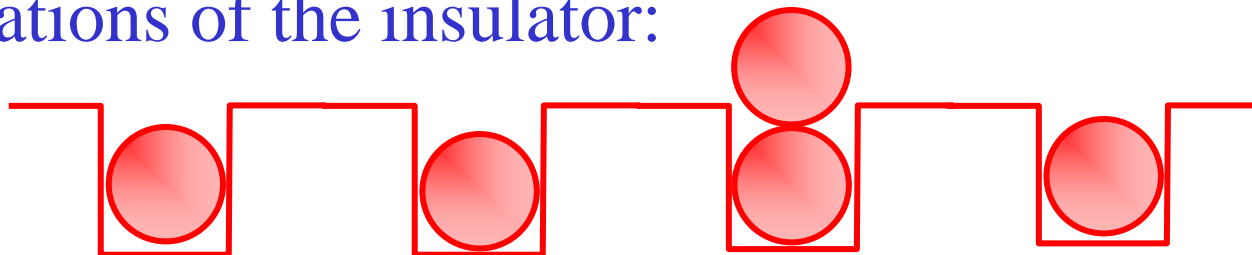


Particles $\sim \psi^\dagger$



Holes $\sim \psi$

Excitations of the insulator:



Particles $\sim \psi^\dagger$



Holes $\sim \psi$

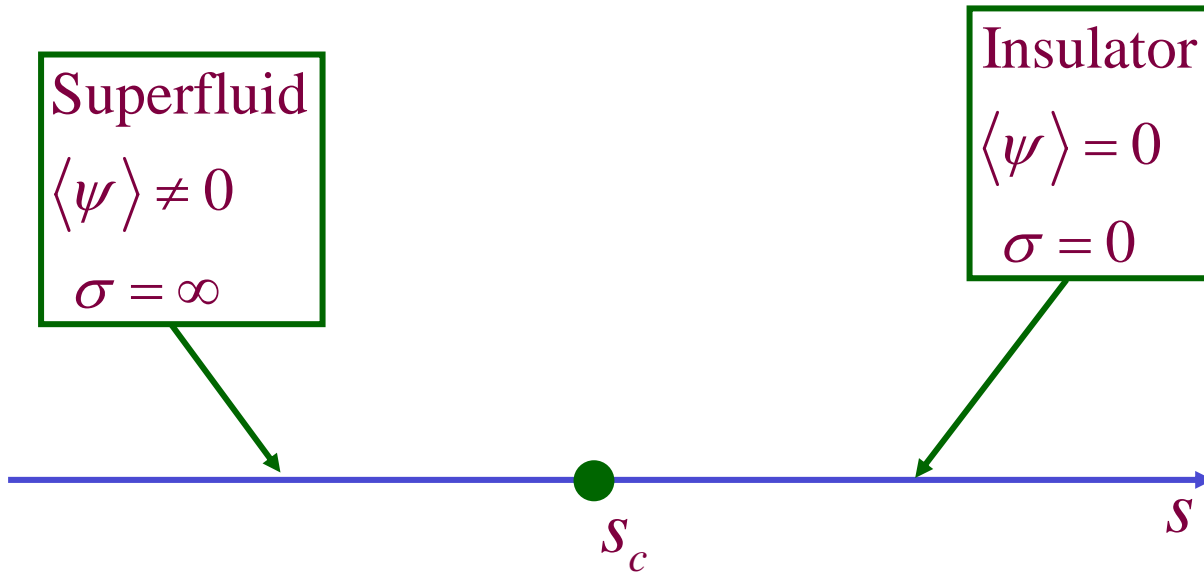
Density of particles = density of holes \Rightarrow

“relativistic” field theory for ψ :

$$\mathcal{S} = \int d^3x \left[|\partial_\mu \psi|^2 + s|\psi|^2 + \frac{u}{2}|\psi|^4 \right]$$

Insulator $\Leftrightarrow \langle \psi \rangle = 0$

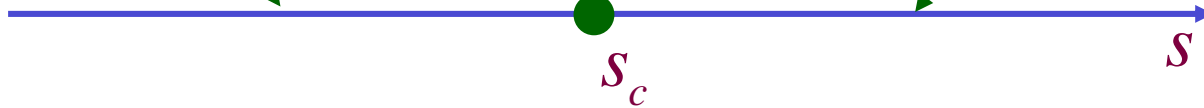
Superfluid $\Leftrightarrow \langle \psi \rangle \neq 0$



Conformal field theory:
Wilson-Fisher fixed point

Superfluid
 $\langle \psi \rangle \neq 0$
 $\sigma = \infty$

Insulator
 $\langle \psi \rangle = 0$
 $\sigma = 0$



Outline

1. Boson Hubbard model – conformal field theory (CFT)
2. Hydrodynamics of CFTs
3. Duality
4. SYM_3 with $N=8$ supersymmetry

CFT correlator of U(1) current J_μ in 2+1 dimensions

$$\langle J_\mu(p) J_\nu(-p) \rangle = K \sqrt{p^2} \left(\eta_{\mu\nu} - \frac{p_\mu p_\nu}{p^2} \right)$$

K : a universal number analogous to the level number of the Kac-Moody algebra in 1+1 dimensions

Application of Kubo formula shows that

$$\sigma = \frac{4e^2}{h} 2\pi K$$

However: computation is at $T = 0$, with $\omega \rightarrow 0$,
while experimental measurements are for

$$\hbar\omega \ll k_B T$$

However: computation is at $T = 0$, with $\omega \rightarrow 0$,
while experimental measurements are for

$$\hbar\omega \ll k_B T$$

Does this matter ?

CFT correlator of $U(1)$ current J_μ in 1+1 dimensions

Charge density correlation at $T = 0$:

$$\langle J_R(x, \tau) J_R(0) \rangle \sim \frac{1}{(\tau + ix)^2}$$

$$\langle J_t(k, \omega) J_t(-k, -\omega) \rangle \sim \frac{k^2}{k^2 - \omega^2}$$

CFT correlator of U(1) current J_μ in 1+1 dimensions

Charge density correlation at $T \geq 0$:

$$\langle J_R(x, \tau) J_R(0) \rangle \sim \frac{\pi^2 T^2}{\sin^2(\pi T(\tau + ix))}$$

$$\langle J_t(k, i\omega_n) J_t(-k, -i\omega_n) \rangle \sim \frac{k^2}{k^2 + \omega_n^2}$$

Conformal mapping of plane to cylinder with circumference $1/T$

CFT correlator of U(1) current J_μ in 1+1 dimensions

Charge density correlation at $T \geq 0$:

$$\langle J_R(x, \tau) J_R(0) \rangle \sim \frac{\pi^2 T^2}{\sin^2(\pi T(\tau + ix))}$$

$$\langle J_t(k, i\omega_n) J_t(-k, -i\omega_n) \rangle \sim \frac{k^2}{k^2 + \omega_n^2}$$

$$\langle J_t(k, \omega) J_t(-k, -\omega) \rangle \sim \frac{k^2}{k^2 - \omega^2}$$

Conformal mapping of plane to cylinder with circumference $1/T$

However: computation is at $T = 0$, with $\omega \rightarrow 0$,
while experimental measurements are for

$$\hbar\omega \ll k_B T$$

Does this matter ?

However: computation is at $T = 0$, with $\omega \rightarrow 0$,
while experimental measurements are for

$$\hbar\omega \ll k_B T$$

Does this matter ?

For CFTs in 1+1 dimensions: **NO**

Correlators of conserved charges are

independent of the ratio $\hbar\omega / k_B T$

No diffusion of charge, and no hydrodynamics

However: computation is at $T = 0$, with $\omega \rightarrow 0$,
while experimental measurements are for

$$\hbar\omega \ll k_B T$$

Does this matter ?

For CFTs in 2+1 dimensions: YES

However: computation is at $T = 0$, with $\omega \rightarrow 0$,
while experimental measurements are for

$$\hbar\omega \ll k_B T$$

Does this matter ?

For CFTs in 2+1 dimensions: YES

$\hbar/k_B T$ is a characteristic *decoherence* or *collision* time

$\hbar\omega \gg k_B T$: Collisionless physics

$\hbar\omega \ll k_B T$: Hydrodynamic, collision-dominated transport

For $|\omega - k| \gg k_B T / \hbar$ we should have collisionless conformal behavior

$$\langle J_t(k, \omega) J_t(-k, -\omega) \rangle_{\text{ret}} = K \frac{k^2}{\sqrt{k^2 - \omega^2}}$$

while for $\omega, k \ll k_B T / \hbar$ we should have hydrodynamics:

$$\langle J_t(k, \omega) J_t(-k, -\omega) \rangle_{\text{ret}} = \chi \frac{Dk^2}{-i\omega + Dk^2}$$

Conductivity obeys Einstein relation $(\hbar/4e^2)\sigma = D\chi \neq K$

CFT correlator of U(1) current J_μ in 2+1 dimensions

$$\langle J_\mu(p) J_\nu(-p) \rangle = K \sqrt{p^2} \left(\eta_{\mu\nu} - \frac{p_\mu p_\nu}{p^2} \right)$$

K : a universal number analogous to the level number of the Kac-Moody algebra in 1+1 dimensions

Application of Kubo formula shows that

$$\sigma = \frac{4e^2}{h} 2\pi K$$

CFT correlator of U(1) current J_μ at $T = 0$

$$\langle J_\mu(p) J_\nu(-p) \rangle = K \sqrt{p^2} \left(\eta_{\mu\nu} - \frac{p_\mu p_\nu}{p^2} \right)$$

K : a universal number analogous to the level number of the Kac-Moody algebra in 1+1 dimensions

Application of Kubo formula shows that

$$\sigma\left(\frac{\omega}{T} = \infty\right) = \frac{4e^2}{h} 2\pi K$$

CFT correlator of U(1) current J_μ at $T > 0$

$$\langle J_\mu(k, \omega) J_\nu(-k, -\omega) \rangle = \sqrt{k^2 - \omega^2} \left(P_{\mu\nu}^T K^T(k, \omega) + P_{\mu\nu}^L K^L(k, \omega) \right)$$

The projectors are defined by

$$P_{ij}^T = \delta_{ij} - \frac{k_i k_j}{k^2} \quad \text{and} \quad P_{\mu\nu}^L = \eta_{\mu\nu} - \frac{p_\mu p_\nu}{p^2} - P_{\mu\nu}^T \quad ; \quad p = (k, \omega)$$

while $K^{L,T}(k, \omega)$ are universal functions of ω/T and k/T

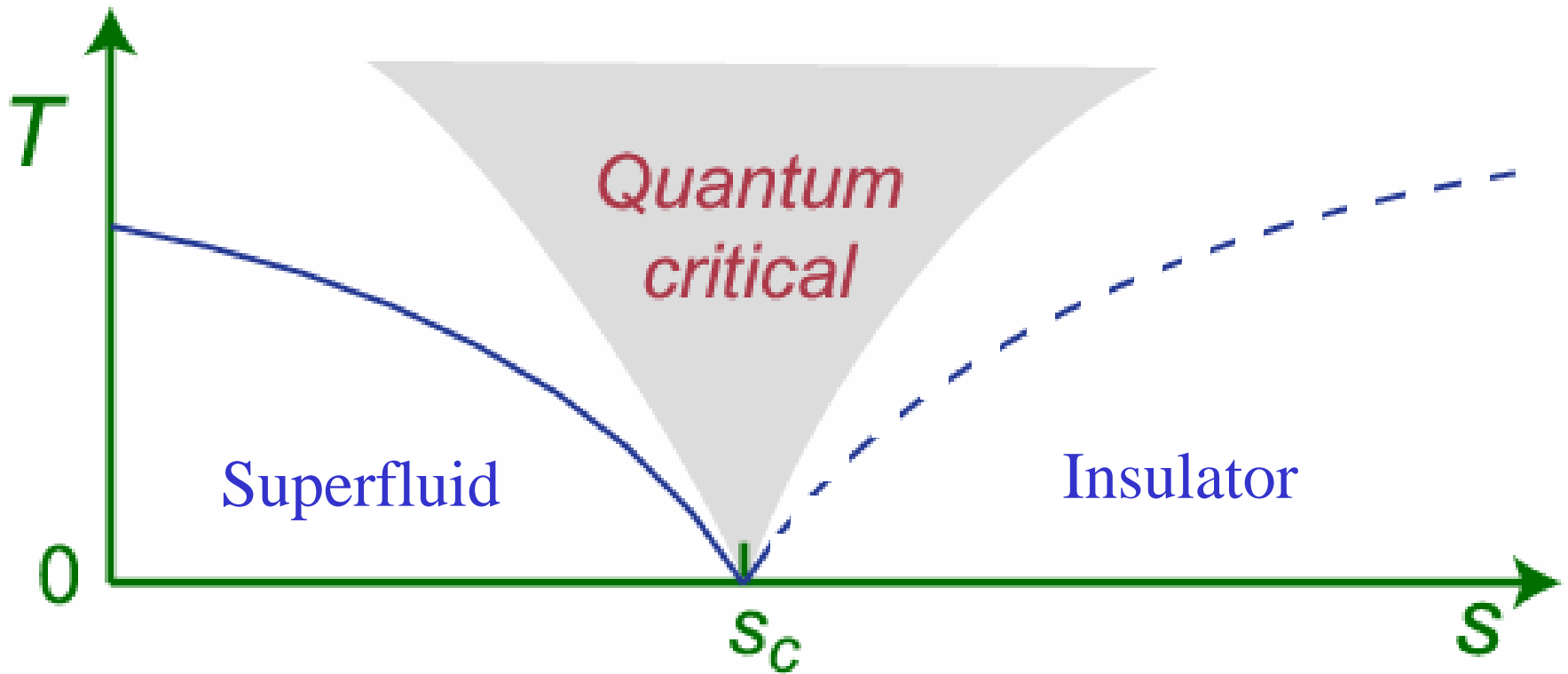
Application of Kubo formula shows that

$$\sigma\left(\frac{\omega}{T}\right) = \frac{4e^2}{h} 2\pi K^T(0, \omega) = \frac{4e^2}{h} 2\pi K^L(0, \omega)$$

$$\mathcal{S} = \int d^2x \int_0^{1/T} d\tau \left[|\partial_\mu \psi|^2 + s|\psi|^2 + \frac{u}{2}|\psi|^4 \right]$$

Insulator $\Leftrightarrow \langle \psi \rangle = 0$

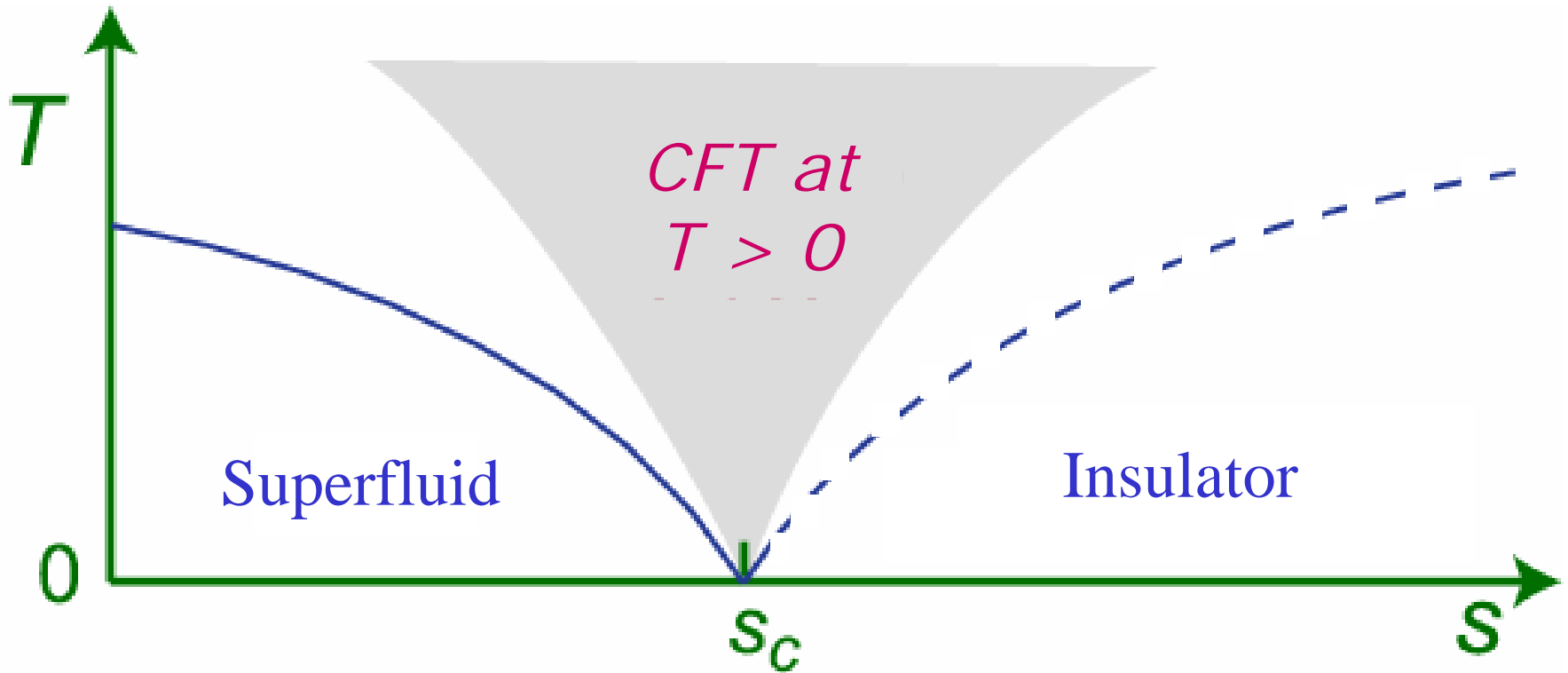
Superfluid $\Leftrightarrow \langle \psi \rangle \neq 0$



$$\mathcal{S} = \int d^2x \int_0^{1/T} d\tau \left[|\partial_\mu \psi|^2 + s|\psi|^2 + \frac{u}{2}|\psi|^4 \right]$$

Insulator $\Leftrightarrow \langle \psi \rangle = 0$

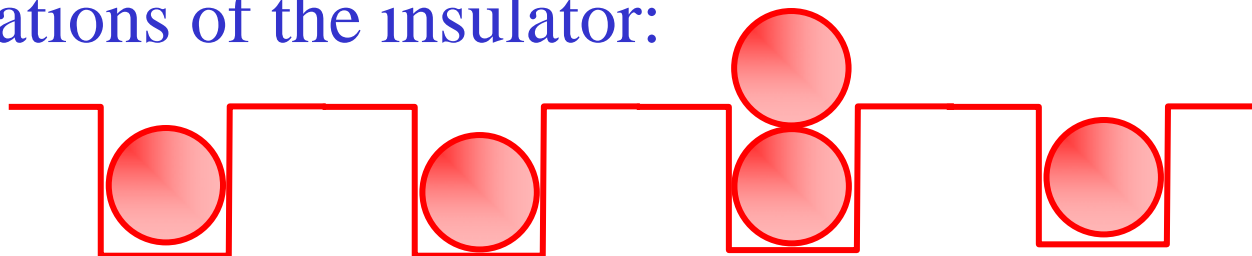
Superfluid $\Leftrightarrow \langle \psi \rangle \neq 0$



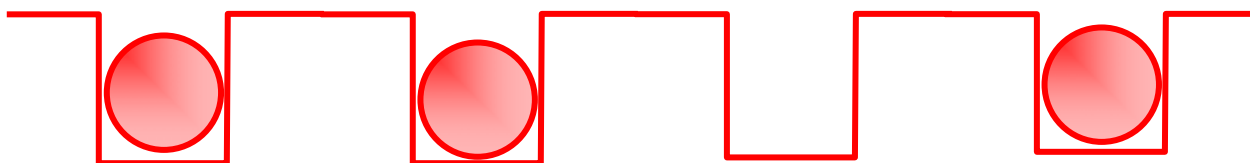
Outline

1. Boson Hubbard model – conformal field theory (CFT)
2. Hydrodynamics of CFTs
3. Duality
4. SYM_3 with $N=8$ supersymmetry

Excitations of the insulator:



Particles $\sim \psi^\dagger$



Holes $\sim \psi$

Density of particles = density of holes \Rightarrow

“relativistic” field theory for ψ :

$$\mathcal{S} = \int d^3x \left[|\partial_\mu \psi|^2 + s|\psi|^2 + \frac{u}{2}|\psi|^4 \right]$$

Insulator $\Leftrightarrow \langle \psi \rangle = 0$

Superfluid $\Leftrightarrow \langle \psi \rangle \neq 0$

Approaching the transition from the superfluid

Excitations of the superfluid: (A) **Spin waves**

With $\psi \sim e^{i\theta}$, action for spin waves is

$$\mathcal{S}_{sw} = \frac{\rho_s}{2} \int d^3x (\partial_\mu \theta)^2$$

Dual form: After a Hubbard-Stratonovich transformation, write

$$\mathcal{S}_{sw} = \int d^3x \left[\frac{1}{2\rho_s} J_\mu^2 + i J_\mu \partial_\mu \theta \right]$$

Integrating over θ yields $\partial_\mu J_\mu = 0$. Solve, by writing

$$J_\mu = \epsilon_{\mu\nu\lambda} \partial_\nu A_\lambda$$

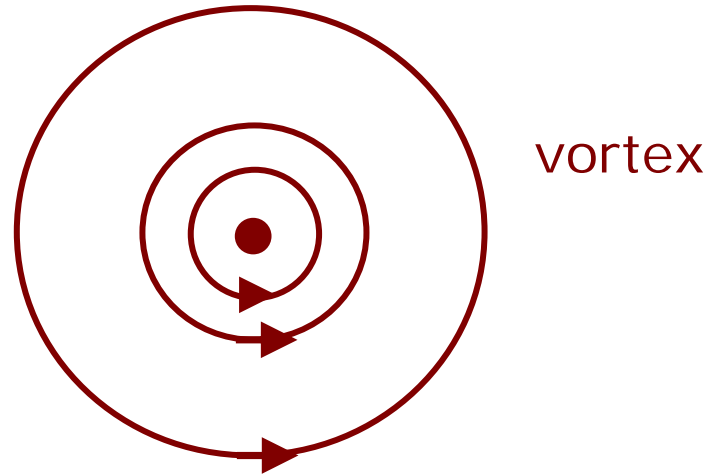
leading to

$$\mathcal{S}_{sw} = \int d^3x \left[\frac{1}{2\rho_s} (\epsilon_{\mu\nu\lambda} \partial_\nu A_\lambda)^2 \right]$$

Spin waves are dual to a U(1) gauge theory in 2+1 dimensions

Approaching the transition from the superfluid

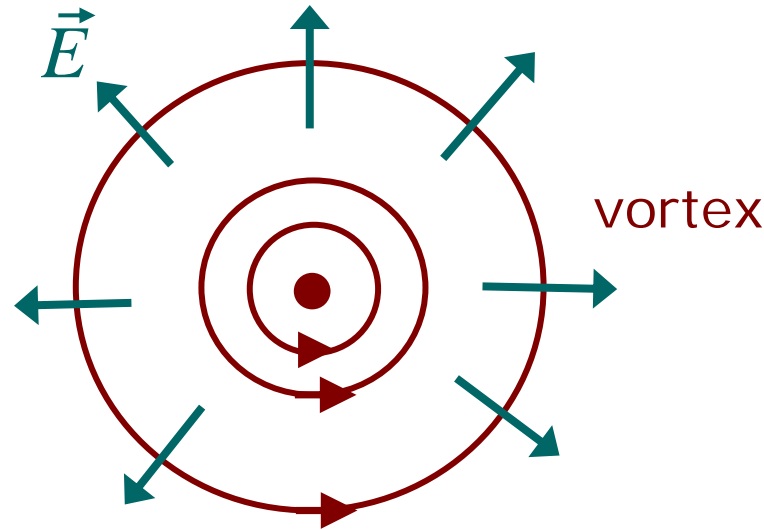
Excitations of the superfluid: (B) **Vortices**



A vortex is a point-like object. We can therefore define a local field operator, φ , which annihilates a vortex.

Approaching the transition from the superfluid

Excitations of the superfluid: (B) **Vortices**



A vortex is a point-like object. We can therefore define a local field operator, φ , which annihilates a vortex.

Each vortex is the source of an 'electric field' \vec{E} associated with the U(1) gauge field A_μ .

Consequently, φ carries +1 U(1) gauge charge.

Approaching the transition from the superfluid

Excitations of the superfluid: **Spin wave and vortices**

φ : vortex annihilation operator.

$\epsilon_{\mu\nu\lambda}\partial_\nu A_\lambda$: boson current $\sim i\psi^*\partial_\mu\psi - i\partial_\mu\psi^*\psi$.

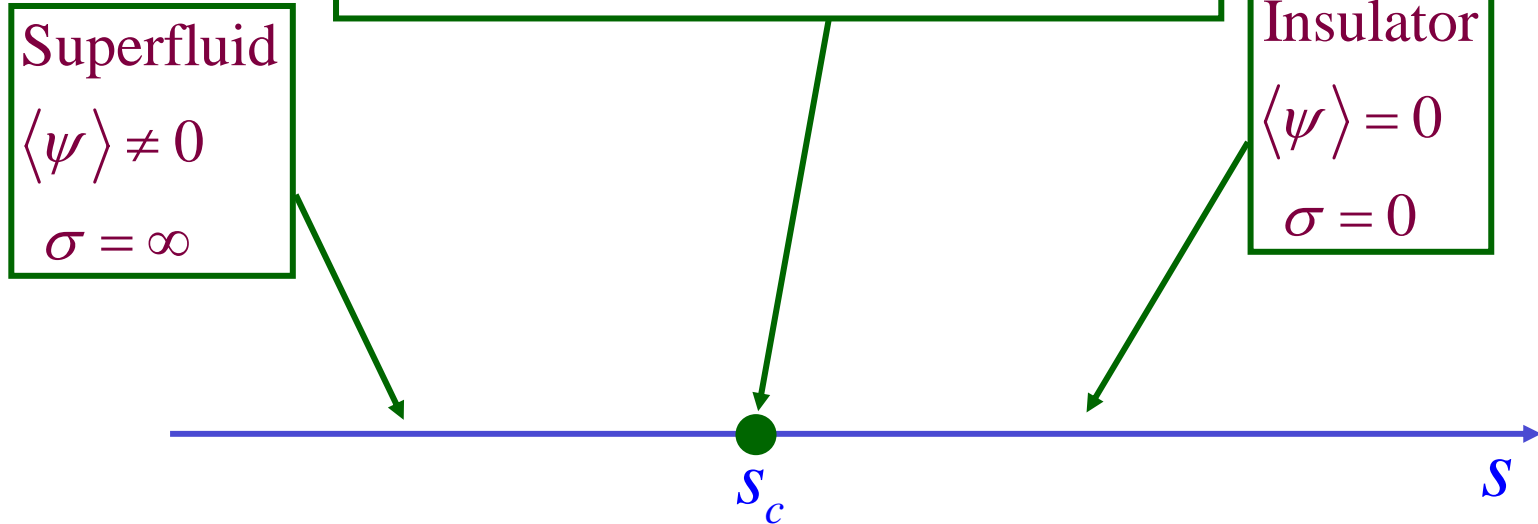
Density of vortices = density of antivortices \Rightarrow
“relativistic” field theory for φ :

$$\mathcal{S}_{\text{dual}} = \int d^3x \left[|(\partial_\mu - iA_\mu)\varphi|^2 + \tilde{s}|\varphi|^2 + \frac{\tilde{u}}{2}|\varphi|^4 + \frac{1}{2\rho_s}(\epsilon_{\mu\nu\lambda}\partial_\nu A_\lambda)^2 \right]$$

Superfluid $\Leftrightarrow \langle \varphi \rangle = 0$

Insulator $\Leftrightarrow \langle \varphi \rangle \neq 0$

Conformal field theory: Wilson-Fisher fixed point



Using the boson quasiparticle excitations of the insulator $\sim \psi$

$$\mathcal{S} = \int d^3x \left[|\partial_\mu \psi|^2 + s|\psi|^2 + \frac{u}{2}|\psi|^4 \right]$$

Conformal field theory: Wilson-Fisher fixed point

Superfluid

$$\langle \psi \rangle \neq 0$$

$$\langle \varphi \rangle = 0$$

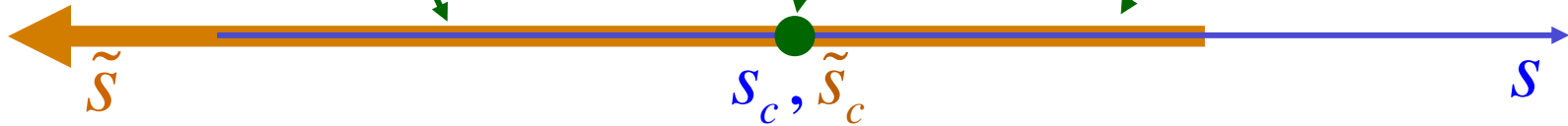
$$\sigma = \infty$$

Insulator

$$\langle \psi \rangle = 0$$

$$\langle \varphi \rangle \neq 0$$

$$\sigma = 0$$



Using the boson quasiparticle excitations of the insulator $\sim \psi$

$$\mathcal{S} = \int d^3x \left[|\partial_\mu \psi|^2 + s|\psi|^2 + \frac{u}{2}|\psi|^4 \right]$$

is dual to

Using the vortex quasiparticle excitations of the superfluid $\sim \varphi$

$$\mathcal{S}_{\text{dual}} = \int d^3x \left[|(\partial_\mu - iA_\mu)\varphi|^2 + \tilde{s}|\varphi|^2 + \frac{\tilde{u}}{2}|\varphi|^4 + \frac{1}{2e^2}(\epsilon_{\mu\nu\lambda}\partial_\nu A_\lambda)^2 \right]$$

Consequences of duality on CFT correlators of U(1) currents

$$\begin{aligned}\langle J_\mu(k, \omega) J_\nu(k, \omega) \rangle_{\mathcal{S}} &= \sqrt{k^2 - \omega^2} \left(P_{\mu\nu}^T K^T(k, \omega) + P_{\mu\nu}^L K^L(k, \omega) \right) \\ \langle \tilde{J}_\mu(k, \omega) \tilde{J}_\nu(k, \omega) \rangle_{\mathcal{S}_{\text{dual}}} &= \sqrt{k^2 - \omega^2} \left(P_{\mu\nu}^T \tilde{K}^T(k, \omega) + P_{\mu\nu}^L \tilde{K}^L(k, \omega) \right)\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}K^L(k, \omega) \tilde{K}^T(k, \omega) &= \frac{1}{4\pi^2} \\ K^T(k, \omega) \tilde{K}^L(k, \omega) &= \frac{1}{4\pi^2}\end{aligned}$$

Application of Kubo formula shows that

$$\sigma\left(\frac{\omega}{T}\right) = \frac{4e^2}{h} 2\pi K^T(0, \omega) = \frac{4e^2}{h} 2\pi K^L(0, \omega)$$

Outline

1. Boson Hubbard model – conformal field theory (CFT)
2. Hydrodynamics of CFTs
3. Duality
4. SYM₃ with N=8 supersymmetry

SYM₃ with $\mathcal{N} = 8$ supersymmetry and $SU(N)$ gauge group

- Obtained by compactifying SYM₁₀ on $R^3 \times T^7$: has a global SO(7) R-charge symmetry
- Contains a single dimensionful gauge coupling constant, g_{3D} .
- It is believed that g_{3D} flows in the infrared to a fixed point which defines a SCFT. The fixed point has strong universal interactions (like the Wilson-Fisher fixed point) but no relevant perturbation which preserves all (super)symmetries (unlike the Wilson-Fisher fixed point).
- The fixed point has an emergent global SO(8) R-charge symmetry.

AdS/CFT correspondence

- $SU(N)$ SYM_3 is the low energy theory of Type IIA strings on N co-incident D2 branes
- Flow to strong coupling is captured by the lift to M theory.
- The $SU(N)$ SYM_3 SCFT is described by M theory on N M2 branes
- The large N limit of the SCFT is described by eleven dimensional supergravity on $\text{AdS}_4 \times S^7$ – the $SO(8)$ R-charge symmetry is explicitly realized.
- The correspondence extends also to $T > 0$. The supergravity theory acquires a black hole, and Hawking temperature of black hole \leftrightarrow temperature of SCFT

Correlations of SO(8) currents of the SYM₃ SCFT at $T > 0$

- Related to the dynamics of a 4-dimensional SO(8) gauge in the curved gravity background.
- SO(8) gauge field has a dimensionless coupling constant g_{4D} with the value

$$\frac{1}{g_{4D}^2} = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{6\pi} N^{3/2}$$

- SO(8) gauge field is weakly coupled in the large N limit and exact results can be obtained for all ω and k .

Correlations of SO(8) currents of the SYM₃ SCFT at $T > 0$

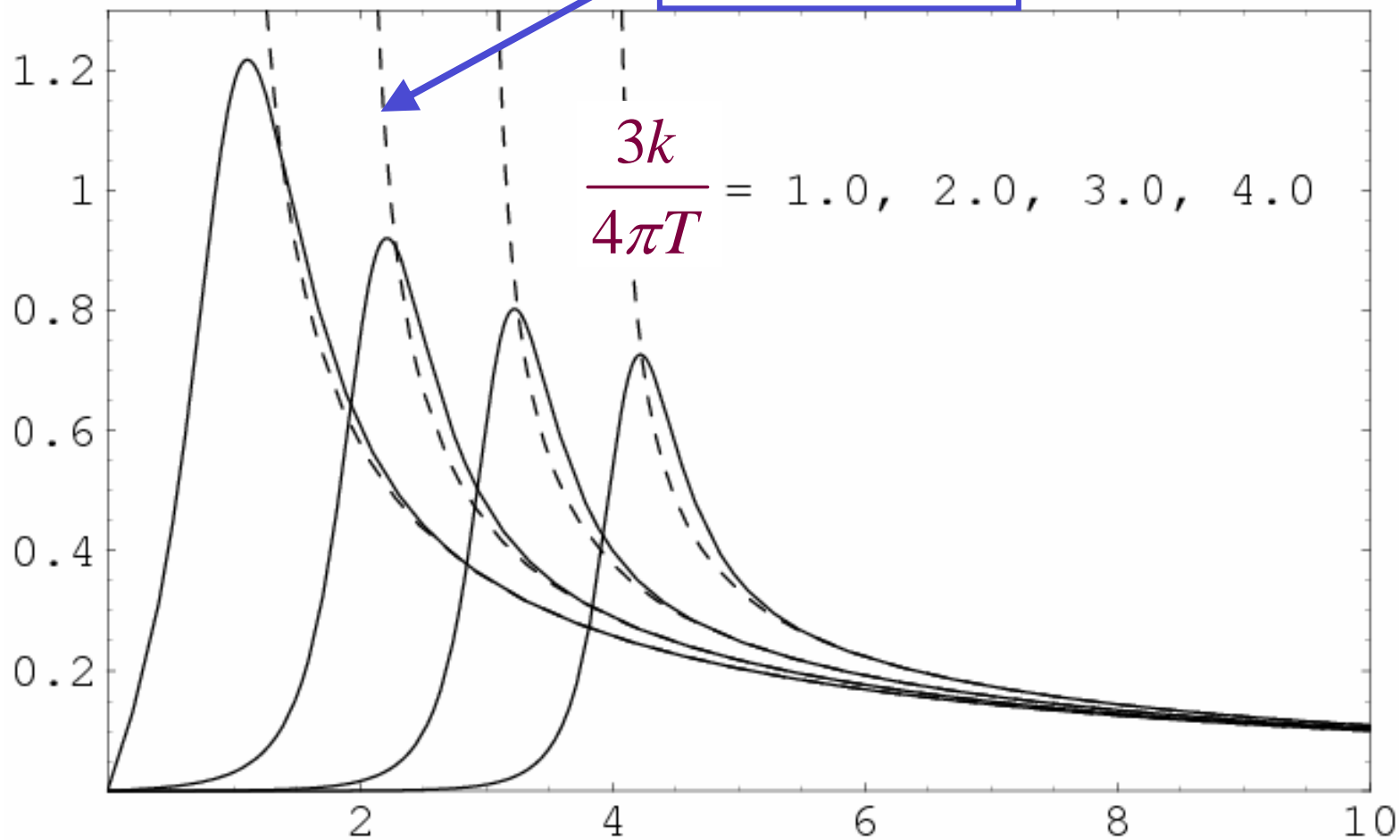
$$C_{tt}(k, \omega) \delta^{ab} = \langle J_t^a(k, \omega) J_t^b(-k, -\omega) \rangle_{\text{ret}}$$

For $|\omega - k| \gg T$ we have collisionless conformal behavior

$$C_{tt}(k, \omega) = \frac{1}{g_{4D}^2} \frac{k^2}{\sqrt{k^2 - \omega^2}}$$

$\text{Im}C_{tt}/k^2$

CFT at $T=0$



$3\omega/4\pi T$

Correlations of SO(8) currents of the SYM₃ SCFT at $T > 0$

$$C_{tt}(k, \omega) \delta^{ab} = \langle J_t^a(k, \omega) J_t^b(-k, -\omega) \rangle_{\text{ret}}$$

For $|\omega - k| \gg T$ we have collisionless conformal behavior

$$C_{tt}(k, \omega) = \frac{1}{g_{4D}^2} \frac{k^2}{\sqrt{k^2 - \omega^2}}$$

while for $\omega, k \ll T$ we have hydrodynamics:

$$C_{tt}(k, \omega) = \chi \frac{Dk^2}{-i\omega + Dk^2}$$

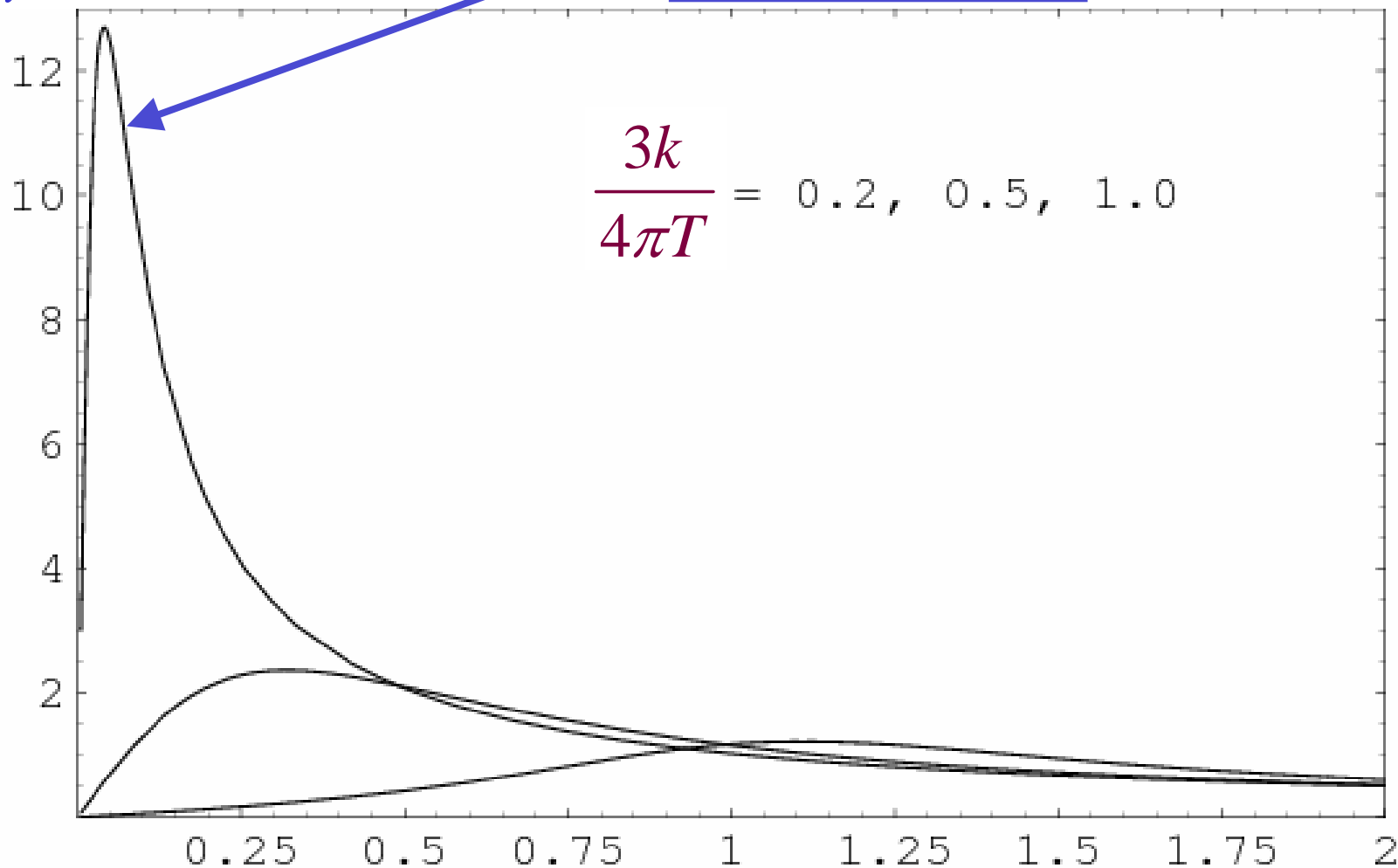
with $\chi = 4\pi T / (3g_{4D}^2)$ and

$$D = \frac{3}{4\pi T}$$

Note, exact result for a diffusion constant.

$\text{Im}C_{tt}/k^2$

diffusion peak



$3\omega/4\pi T$

Correlations of SO(8) currents of the SYM₃ SCFT at $T > 0$

$$C_{tt}(k, \omega)\delta^{ab} = \langle J_t^a(k, \omega) J_t^b(-k, -\omega) \rangle_{\text{ret}}$$

For $|\omega - k| \gg T$ we have collisionless conformal behavior

$$C_{tt}(k, \omega) = \frac{1}{g_{4D}^2} \frac{k^2}{\sqrt{k^2 - \omega^2}}$$

while for $\omega, k \ll T$ we have hydrodynamics:

$$C_{tt}(k, \omega) = \chi \frac{Dk^2}{-i\omega + Dk^2}$$

with $D = 3/(4\pi T)$ and $\chi = 4\pi T/(3g_{4D}^2)$.

Correlations of SO(8) currents of the SYM₃ SCFT at $T > 0$

$$C_{tt}(k, \omega) \delta^{ab} = \langle J_t^a(k, \omega) J_t^b(-k, -\omega) \rangle_{\text{ret}}$$

For $|\omega - k| \gg T$ we have collisionless conformal behavior

$$C_{tt}(k, \omega) = \frac{1}{g_{4D}^2} \frac{k^2}{\sqrt{k^2 - \omega^2}}$$

while for $\omega, k \ll T$ we have hydrodynamics:

$$C_{tt}(k, \omega) = \chi \frac{Dk^2}{-i\omega + Dk^2}$$

with $D = 3/(4\pi T)$ and $\chi = 4\pi T/(3g_{4D}^2)$.

Notice, however, that $D\chi = 1/g_{4D}^2$! This is *unexpected* and implies $\sigma(\omega/T \rightarrow 0) = \sigma(\omega/T \rightarrow \infty)$.

Correlations of SO(8) currents of the SYM₃ SCFT at $T > 0$

$$\langle J_{\mu}^a(k, \omega) J_{\nu}^b(-k, -\omega) \rangle = \delta^{ab} \sqrt{k^2 - \omega^2} \left(P_{\mu\nu}^T K^T(k, \omega) + P_{\mu\nu}^L K^L(k, \omega) \right)$$

The self-duality of the 4D SO(8) gauge fields leads to

$$K^L(k, \omega) K^T(k, \omega) = \frac{N^3}{18\pi^2}$$

Correlations of SO(8) currents of the SYM₃ SCFT at $T > 0$

$$\langle J_\mu^a(k, \omega) J_\nu^b(-k, -\omega) \rangle = \delta^{ab} \sqrt{k^2 - \omega^2} \left(P_{\mu\nu}^T K^T(k, \omega) + P_{\mu\nu}^L K^L(k, \omega) \right)$$

The self-duality of the 4D SO(8) gauge fields leads to

$$K^L(k, \omega) K^T(k, \omega) = \frac{N^3}{18\pi^2}$$

Analyticity of correlations at $T > 0$ implies

$$K^T(0, \omega) = K^L(0, \omega),$$

and so the conductivity

$$\sigma(\omega/T) = K^T(0, \omega) = K^L(0, \omega) = \sqrt{\frac{N^3}{72\pi^2}}$$

is frequency independent.

Correlations of SO(8) currents of the SYM₃ SCFT at $T > 0$

$$\langle J_{\mu}^a(k, \omega) J_{\nu}^b(-k, -\omega) \rangle = \delta^{ab} \sqrt{k^2 - \omega^2} \left(P_{\mu\nu}^T K^T(k, \omega) + P_{\mu\nu}^L K^L(k, \omega) \right)$$

The self-duality of the 4D SO(8) gauge fields leads to

$$K^L(k, \omega) K^T(k, \omega) = \frac{N^3}{18\pi^2}$$

Holographic self-duality

Open questions

1. Does $K^L K^T = \text{constant}$ (*i.e.* holographic self-duality) hold for SYM_3 SCFT at finite N ?
2. Is there any CFT_3 with an Abelian $U(1)$ current whose conductivity can be determined by self-duality ? (unlikely, because global and topological $U(1)$ currents are interchanged under duality).
3. Is there any CFT_3 solvable by AdS/CFT which is not (holographically) self-dual ?
4. Is there an AdS_4 description of the hydrodynamics of the $O(N)$ Wilson-Fisher CFT_3 ? (can use $1/N$ expansion to control strongly-coupled gravity theory).