3d Abelian Gauge Theories at the Boundary

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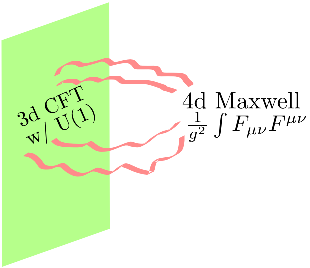
Overview

3d Abelian Gauge Theories (in their putative IR conformal phase) as conformal boundary conditions for 4d Maxwell



1. Family of conformal boundary conditions $B(\tau, \bar{\tau})$ parametrized by the gauge coupling τ.
2. Decoupling limit: free Maxwell in the bulk + 3d CFT with $U(1)$ global symmetry at the boundary
3. EM duality $\rightsquigarrow$ different decoupling: new CFT with 3d gauge fields coupled to $U(1)$

Motivations

1. "Simple" example of BCFT. Tools from the CFT side (bootstrap) and tools from the gauge-theory side (action of the EM duality on the boundary theories).

2. CM application: similarity with EFT of graphene [Son], relations with FQHE [Son]

3. In conjunction with 3d dualities: additional computational tool for 3d CFTs, alternative to ϵ expansion or large N_f
   - Energy operator and F_{S^3} of the $O(2)$ model
   - New prediction for F_{S^3} of large N_f QED_3

Free conformal b.c. for Maxwell on $\mathbb{R}^3 \times \mathbb{R}_+$

Coordinates: $x = (x^a, y \geq 0)$, $F = dA$

$$S = -\frac{i}{8\pi} \int_{y \geq 0} \mathrm{d}^4 x \left[\tau (F^-)^2 - \bar{\tau} (F^+)^2 \right] , \; \tau = \frac{\theta}{2\pi} + \frac{2\pi i}{g^2} \; ,$$

b.c. obtained from vanishing of the boundary term

$$\delta S_\partial \propto \int_{y=0} \mathrm{d}^3 x \; \delta A^a (\tau F^-_{ya} - \bar{\tau} F^+_{ya}) \big|_{y=0} \; .$$

In terms of the boundary currents

$$2\pi i \, \hat{J}_a \equiv (\tau F^-_{ya} - \bar{\tau} F^+_{ya}) \big|_{y=0} \; , \quad 2\pi i \, \hat{I}_a \equiv (F^-_{ya} - F^+_{ya}) \big|_{y=0} \; .$$

Conformal boundary conditions

$$\begin{array}{lll} \text{Dirichlet} & \hat{J}_a = \text{free} & \hat{I}_a = 0 \; , \\ \text{Neumann} & \hat{J}_a = 0 & \hat{I}_a = \text{free} \; , \end{array}$$

The BCFT is just a trivial MFT for the non-zero boundary current.

EM duality action on free b.c

$SL(2,\mathbb{Z})$ duality group $\tau \to \frac{a\tau+b}{c\tau+d}$, $a,b,c,d \in \mathbb{Z}$ s.t. $ad-bc=1$ induces action on b.c, since

$$\begin{pmatrix} \hat{J} \\ \hat{I} \end{pmatrix} \to \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \hat{J} \\ \hat{I} \end{pmatrix}$$

most general free conformal b.c: "(p,q)"

$$p\hat{J}_a + q\hat{I}_a = 0 \ , p,q \in \mathbb{Z}$$

The BCFT is just a trivial MFT for the non-zero boundary current.

Requires additional topological dof on the boundary
[Witten][Gaiotto-Witten][Tikhonov-Kapustin]

Interacting b.c. for Maxwell on $\mathbb{R}^3 \times \mathbb{R}_+$

Start with a 3d CFT with a $U(1)$ global symmetry at the boundary and 4d Maxwell with Neumann b.c.

Around $\tau = \infty$ couple them by "weakly" gauge $U(1)$ with the boundary value A_a of the 4d gauge field

$$\int_{y=0} \mathrm{d}^3x \; \hat{J}^a_{\mathsf{CFT}} A_a + \text{seagulls} \; .$$

Due to edge modes: " Modified Neumann b.c"

$$\hat{J}^a = \hat{J}^a_{\mathsf{CFT}}$$

Defines interacting set of correlators at the boundary: 2pt functions of $\hat{J}^a, \hat{I}^a$ are non-trivial functions of $\tau, \bar{\tau}$.

At $\tau = \infty$ $\hat{I}_a$ decouples and we recover the original 3d CFT + MFT of $\hat{I}_a$

A family of BCFTs

Conformal b.c.: make sure this coupling preserves the boundary conformal symmetry:

- Gauge coupling τ is the coefficient of a bulk operator. Boundary interactions cannot renormalise it (Locality)

  As interactions localized on the boundary, τ is exactly marginal. Two loop check [Teber] and more general argument based on Ward identities [Herzog-Huang][Dudal-Mizher-Pais]
- Assume we can set the boundary couplings to their critical values$^{(*)}$

$$\Longrightarrow \text{Continuous family of BCFTs } B(\tau, \bar{\tau})$$

$^{(*)}$ Possible obstructions as we move in τ plane: emergence of a condensate, boundary operator crossing marginality,...

"Integrate" out the bulk: $B(\tau, \bar{\tau})$ is a conformal manifold of 3d CFTs, generically without a stress tensor

Decoupling Limits

Approach a "local" 3d CFT when bulk decouples

- The " original" decoupling:

$$\tau \to \infty, \quad B(\tau, \bar{\tau}) \to \hat{I}_a \text{ MFT } + \underbrace{\text{3d CFT}}_{T_{0,1}}$$

- Cusp on the real axis: $\tau \to -\frac{q}{p}$, $q, p \in \mathbb{Z}$ (this is $\tau' \to \infty$)

$$B(\tau, \bar{\tau}) \to (p\hat{J}_a + q\hat{I}_a) \text{ MFT } + \underbrace{\text{3d CFT'}}_{T_{p,q}}$$

In general $T_{p,q}$ can be obtained from $T_{0,1}$ by $SL(2,\mathbb{Z})$ action on 3d CFTs with a $U(1)$ symmetry [Witten]

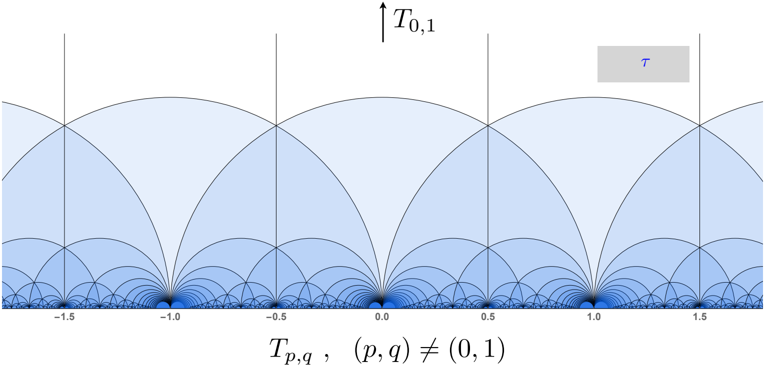
$$S : \tau \to -\frac{1}{\tau} \qquad \text{3d gauging } U(1) \text{ \& } U(1)' = U(1)_{\text{top}}$$

$$T : \tau \to \tau + 1 \qquad \text{CS contact term for the global } U(1)$$

$\rightsquigarrow$ $T_{p,q}$ is a 3d Abelian gauge theory with a $U(1)$ global symmetry

Application

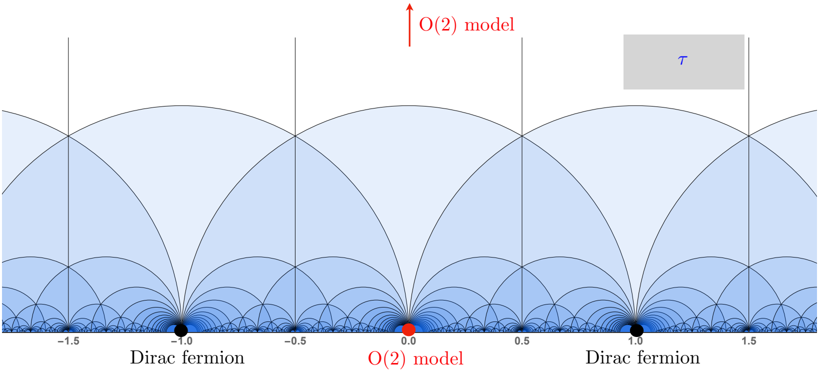
$B(\tau, \bar{\tau})$ interpolates between data of ∞-ly many 3d gauge theories $T_{p,q}$ with a $U(1)$ global symmetry.



If $T_{0,1}$ is known $\rightsquigarrow$ conformal perturbation theory around $\tau = \infty$ and extrapolate to $\tau = -\frac{q}{p}$ to compute data of $T_{p,q}$.

The Best Case scenario

$$U(1) + \phi \longleftrightarrow \phi$$
$$U(1)_{\pm 1} + \phi \longleftrightarrow \psi$$



Web of 3d dualities from different decoupling limits on $B(\tau, \bar{\tau})$

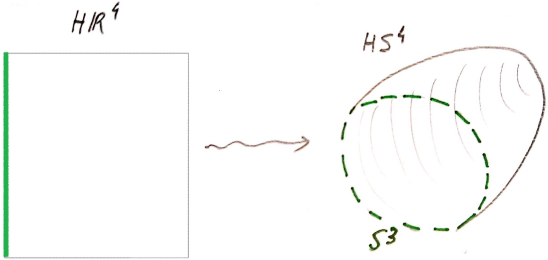
[Wang-Senthil][Seiberg-Senthil-Wang-Witten][Metlitski-Vishwanath][Hsiao-Son]

Observables

- Scaling Dimensions / OPE coefficients of local operators on the boundary
- Current Central Charges [Hsiao-Son][Teber-Kotikov]
- Boundary Anomalies [Herzog-Huang][Herzog-Huang-Jensen]
- Boundary Free Energy (next slide)
- Endpoints of Bulk Wilson Lines

Boundary Free Energy

$$F_\partial = -\frac{1}{2}\log\frac{|Z_{HS^4}|^2}{Z_{S^4}} = -\mathrm{Re}\log Z_{HS^4} + \frac{1}{2}\log Z_{S^4}$$ [Gaiotto]

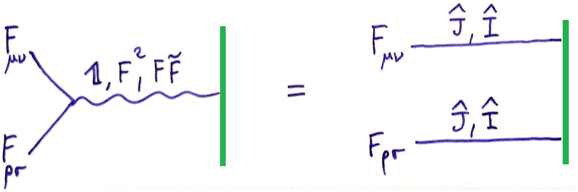


Similar to $F^{\mathrm{CFT}}_{S^3}$ (conjecturally) monotonic under boundary RG flow. In our set-up we find

$$\frac{\partial F_\partial}{\partial \mathrm{Im}\tau} = \frac{\pi}{6}\, a_{F^2}(\tau,\bar\tau) \qquad \frac{\partial F_\partial}{\partial \mathrm{Re}\tau} = \frac{\pi}{6}\, i\, a_{F\tilde F}(\tau,\bar\tau)$$

Since in any BCFT $\langle \mathcal{O}(\vec{x}, y)\rangle = a_O y^{-\Delta_O}$

$a_{F^2}, a_{F\tilde{F}}$ completely determined by boundary currents 2pt functions via a boundary bootstrap [Liendo-Rastelli-van Rees] reasoning



$$a_{F^2} = 3(\pi^2 c_{\hat{I}\hat{I}} - \frac{1}{2\pi\,\text{Im}\tau}), \quad a_{F\tilde{F}} = i\frac{3\pi^2}{\text{Im}\tau}(c_{\hat{I}\hat{J}} - \text{Re}\tau\, c_{\hat{I}\hat{I}}),$$

F_∂ fixed by current 2pt functions $\hat{I}$, $\hat{J}$ and an initial condition

Boundary free energy and EM duality

The decoupling limit fixes the initial condition

$$F_\partial \underset{\tau\to\infty}{\sim} \underbrace{-\frac{1}{4}\log\left[\frac{2\,\mathrm{Im}\tau}{|\tau|^2}\right]}_{\text{4d free vector}} + \underbrace{F^{\text{CFT}}_{0,1}}_{S^3\text{part funct}} + \mathcal{O}(|\tau|^{-1}) \ .$$

Around the gauged cusp $\tau = -q/p$, $\tau' = \frac{p'\tau+q'}{p\tau+q}$

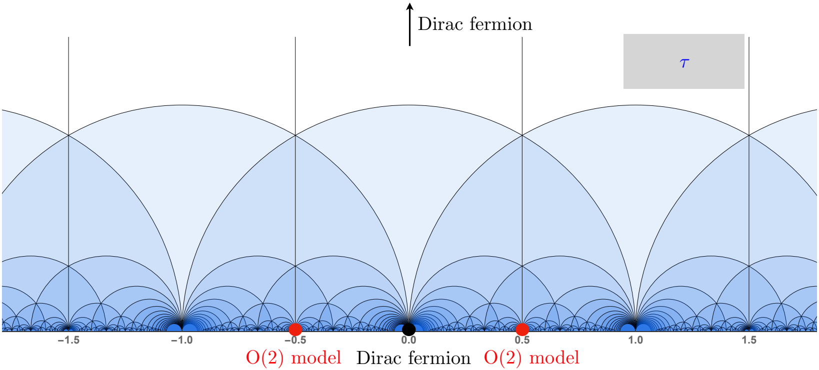
$$F_\partial \underset{\tau'\to\infty}{\sim} -\frac{1}{4}\log\left[\frac{2\,\mathrm{Im}\tau'}{|\tau'|^2}\right] + F^{\text{CFT}}_{p,q} + \mathcal{O}(|\tau'|^{-1}) \ .$$

Same singularity in terms of τ', but different finite piece

Compute F_∂ perturbatively, extrapolate to the gauged cusp, subtract the free-vector contribution in the new cusp

Application: $O(2)$ model and large N_f QED_3 from free fermions

From free Dirac to the $O(2)$ model



Shift in τ s.t. the Dirac fermion is T-invariant

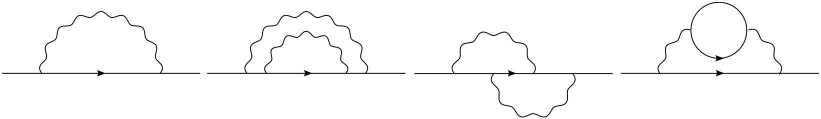
Perturbation theory around $\tau = \infty$ and $\tau = 0$ and extrapolation to $\tau = 1/2$ to get observables of the $O(2)$ model

Anomalous dimension of $\bar{\psi}\psi$

$\bar{\psi}\psi$ is a good operator around the Dirac cusp. It will be related to the energy operator at the of the $O(2)$ model

Dimreg ($d = 3 - 2\epsilon$ with fixed codimension). Non-local photon propagator between two points on the boundary

$$\langle A_a(\vec{p},0)A_b(-\vec{p},0)\rangle = 2\pi\frac{\mathrm{Im}\tau}{|\tau|^2}\left[\frac{\delta_{ab}}{|\vec{p}|} + \frac{\mathrm{Re}\tau}{\mathrm{Im}\tau}\epsilon_{abc}\frac{p^c}{\vec{p}^2}\right] \, .$$



$$\boxed{\gamma_{\bar{\psi}\psi} = -\frac{8}{3\pi}\frac{\mathrm{Im}\tau}{|\tau|^2} + \frac{36\pi^2-32}{27\pi^2}\frac{(\mathrm{Im}\tau)^2}{|\tau|^4} - \frac{8}{3}\frac{(\mathrm{Re}\tau)^2}{|\tau|^4} + \mathcal{O}(|\tau|^{-3})}$$

Boundary Free Energy

F_∂ is completely determined in terms of the current central charges $c_{\hat{I}\hat{I}}, c_{\hat{I}\hat{J}}, c_{\hat{J}\hat{J}}$

The relevant diagrams for NLO were computed by [Klebanov-Giombi-Tarnopolsky],

$$c_{\hat{J}\hat{J}} = \frac{1}{8\pi^2} + \frac{368 - 45\pi^2}{576\pi^3}\frac{\mathrm{Im}\tau}{|\tau|^2} + \mathcal{O}(|\tau|^{-2}) \ ,$$

$$F_\partial = -\frac{1}{4}\log\left[\frac{2\,\mathrm{Im}\tau}{|\tau|^2}\right] + F_{\text{Dirac}} + \frac{\pi}{16}\frac{\mathrm{Im}\tau}{|\tau|^2} + \frac{(368 - 45\pi^2)(\mathrm{Im}\tau)^2 + (144 + 45\pi^2)(\mathrm{Re}\tau)^2}{2304|\tau|^4} + \mathcal{O}(|\tau|^{-3})$$

Extrapolation to $O(2)$

Duality-improved Padé approximant at 2 loops [Beem-Rastelli-Sen-van Rees] manifestly invariant under $\tau \leftrightarrow \mathrm{S}\tau$

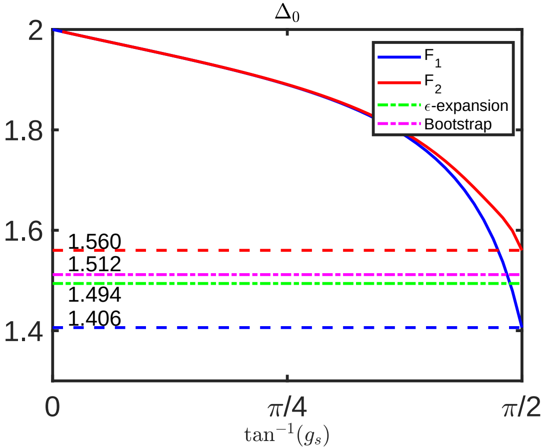
$$F_1(g_s, \theta) = \frac{h_1}{g_s^{-1} + (\mathrm{S} \cdot g_s)^{-1} - h_2} \ ,$$

$$F_2(g_s, \theta) = \frac{h_3 \left(g_s^{-1/2} + (\mathrm{S} \cdot g_s)^{-1/2} \right)}{g_s^{-3/2} + (\mathrm{S} \cdot g_s)^{-3/2} + h_4 \left(g_s^{-1/2} + (\mathrm{S} \cdot g_s)^{-1/2} \right)} \ .$$

with $g_s = g^2$ and

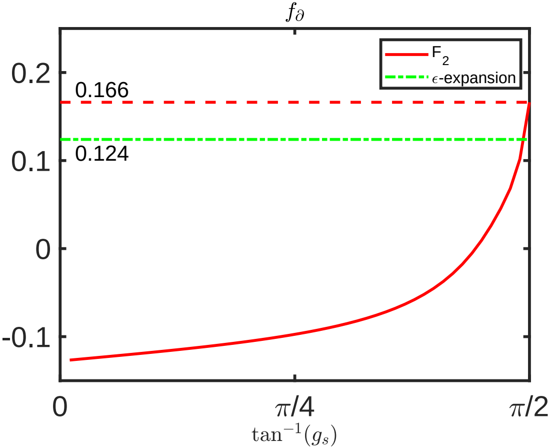
$$\mathrm{S} \cdot g_s = \frac{g_s^2 \theta^2 + 16\pi^4}{\pi^2 g_s} \ .$$

Energy operator of the $O(2)$ model



Comparison with ϵ-expansion and bootstrap predictions (at $\tan^{-1}(g_s) = \pi/2$) [Kos,Poland,Simmons-Duffin, Vichi][Kleinert,Neu,Schulte-Frohlinde,Chetyrkin,Larin]

S^3 Free energy in $O(2)$



Comparison with $4-\epsilon$ -expansion $\mathcal{O}(\epsilon^5)$ predictions (at $\tan^{-1}(g_s)=\pi/2$)[Fei-Giombi-Klebanov-Tarnopolsky]

Large N_f QED$_3$

$2N_f$ free Dirac fermions (with same charge) at the boundary and take large N_f with $\lambda = g^2 N_f$ fixed.

Compute F_∂ exactly in the 't Hooft coupling λ

By Witten's $SL(2,\mathbb{Z})$ action, $\lambda \to \infty$ should correspond to large N_f QED_3.

We recover [Klebanov-Pufu-Sachdev-Safdi] and predict $O(N_f^{-1})$

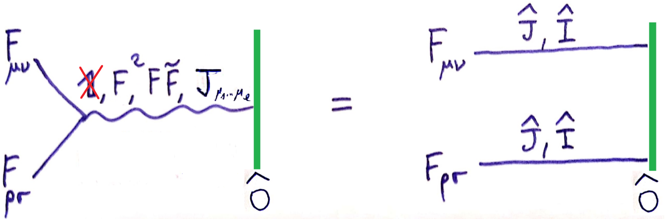
$$F_{\mathrm{QED}_3} = 2N_f F_{\mathrm{Dirac}} + \frac{1}{2}\log\left(\frac{\pi N_f}{4}\right) + \frac{92-9\pi^2}{18\pi^2}\frac{1}{N_f} + \mathcal{O}\left(N_f^{-2}\right) \ .$$

Non-perturbative test (in g) of the this construction

A Bootstrap perspective

Considered a continuous family of interacting b.c. for Maxwell theory. Some universal features:

- EoM & Bianchi ⇒ boundary conserved currents $\hat{J}_a, \hat{I}_a$
- Bulk is free ⇒ relations between $\langle \hat{I}\hat{I} \dots \rangle, \langle \hat{I}\hat{J} \dots \rangle, \langle \hat{J}\hat{J} \dots \rangle$. Constraint on bdry theories!



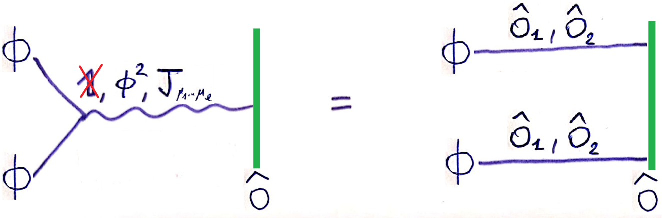
$$\rightsquigarrow \lambda_{\hat{I}\hat{I}\hat{O}} = A(\hat{O})\lambda_{\hat{I}\hat{J}\hat{O}}, \; \lambda_{\hat{J}\hat{J}\hat{O}} = B(\hat{O})\lambda_{\hat{I}\hat{J}\hat{O}}$$

- Boundary bootstrap of mixed correlators of $\hat{J}_a, \hat{I}_a$ subjected to these relations.

Similar problem (WIP)

Space of conformal b.c. for a free scalar ϕ in d-dimensions. Some universal features:

- EoM $\Rightarrow$ protected operators $\widehat{O}_1 = \phi|_\partial$, $\widehat{O}_2 = \partial_\perp \phi|_\partial$
- Bulk is free $\Rightarrow$ relations between correlators $\langle \widehat{O}_1 \widehat{O}_1 \dots \rangle, \langle \widehat{O}_1 \widehat{O}_2 \dots \rangle, \langle \widehat{O}_2 \widehat{O}_2 \dots \rangle$. Constraint on bdry theories!



$$\rightsquigarrow \lambda_{11\widehat{O}}\lambda_{22\widehat{O}} = \frac{(\widehat{\Delta}-2)(\cos(\pi\widehat{\Delta})+1)}{(\widehat{\Delta}-1)(\cos(\pi\widehat{\Delta})-1)}\lambda^2_{12\widehat{O}}, \quad (d=4)$$

- Numerical bootstrap of mixed correlators of $\widehat{O}_1, \widehat{O}_2$ subjected to these relations.

Conclusions and Directions

- Explored the space of conformal b.c. a free 4d $U(1)$ gauge theory
- In the absence of phase transition we can approach the data of an infinite family of 3d abelian gauge theories
- 3d dualities + perturbation theory + improved Padé resummation $\rightarrow$ new computational tool

Some directions

- More observables of the $O(2)$ model/higher loops/resummation
- Bootstrap perspective: space of conformal b.c. for the free vector? Space of conformal b.c. for a free scalar? (WIP)
- Away from free theory in the bulk?

Thanks!