



# No $\nu s$ Is Good News

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SMU

Neutrinos in Physics and  
Astrophysics

1-18-2025

Based on:

[2405.00836](#)

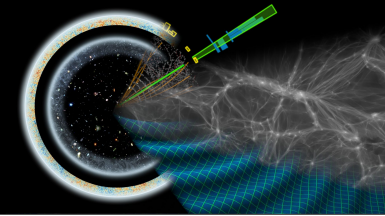
Craig, Green, JM, Rajendran

[2407.07878](#)

Green, JM

Image Credits: PICO; ATLAS; Hahn, Abel; Caltech-JPL

# History of the Universe



Cosmic Neutrino Background

Cosmic Microwave Background

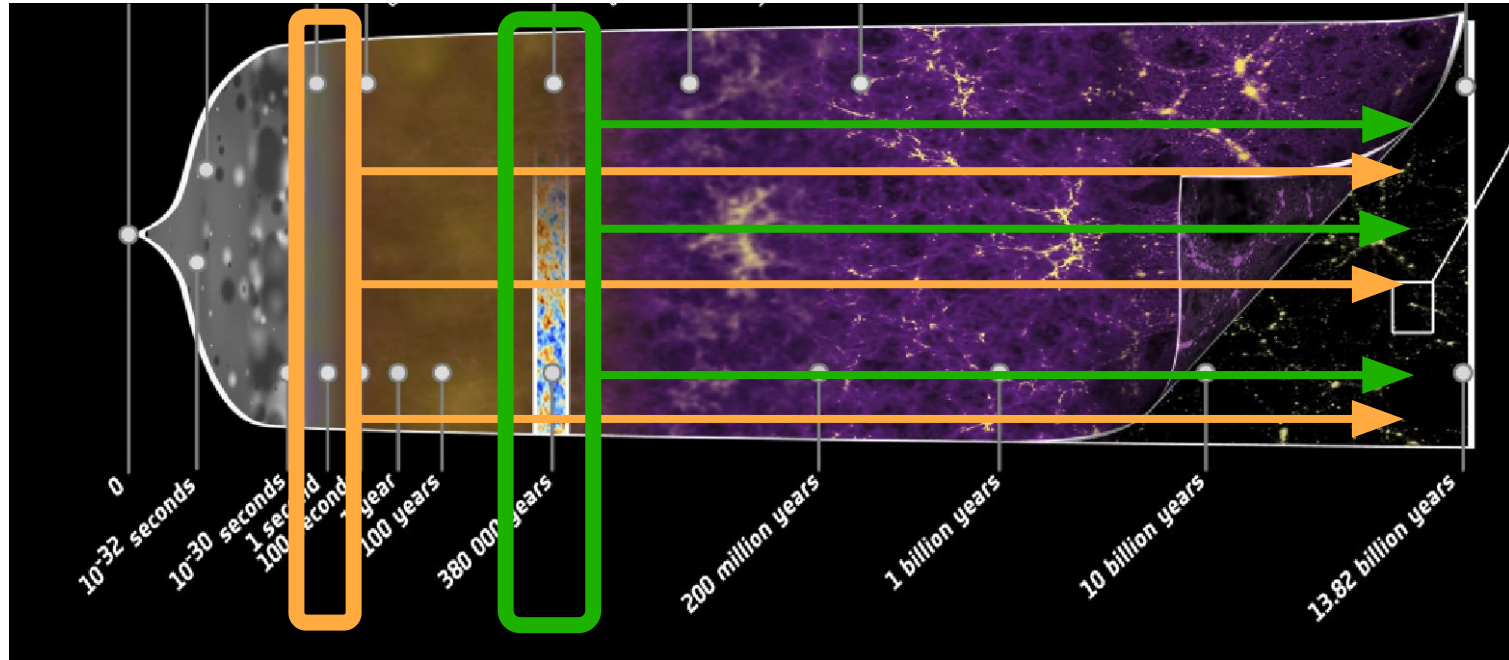
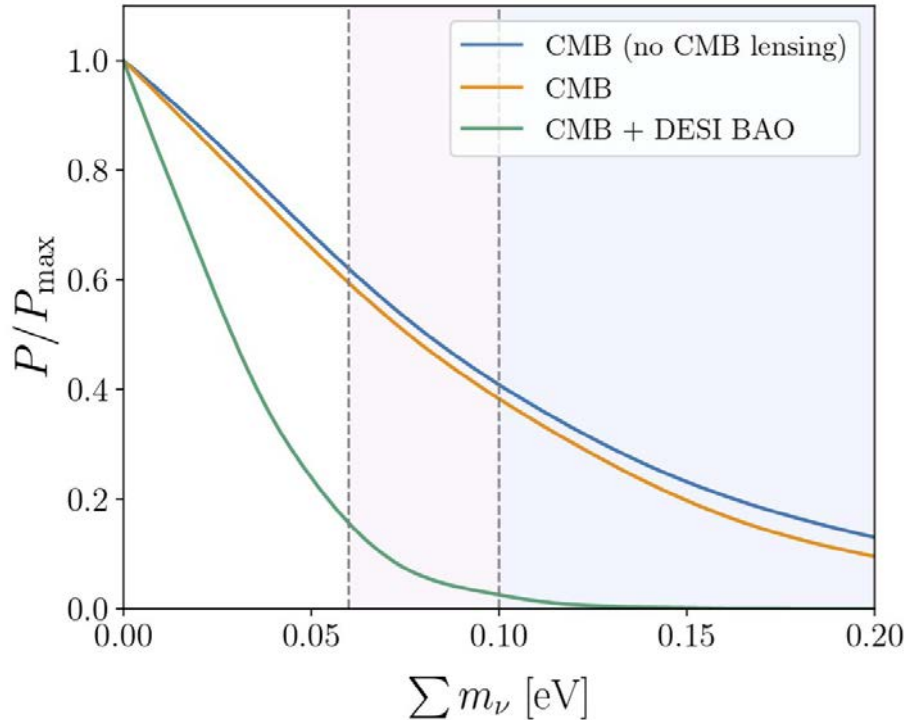
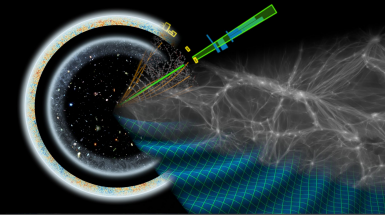


Image Credit: NASA

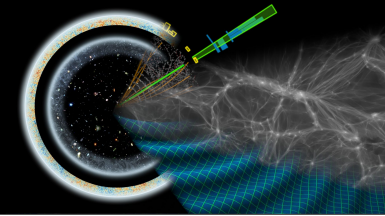
# Cosmological Measurement of Neutrino Mass



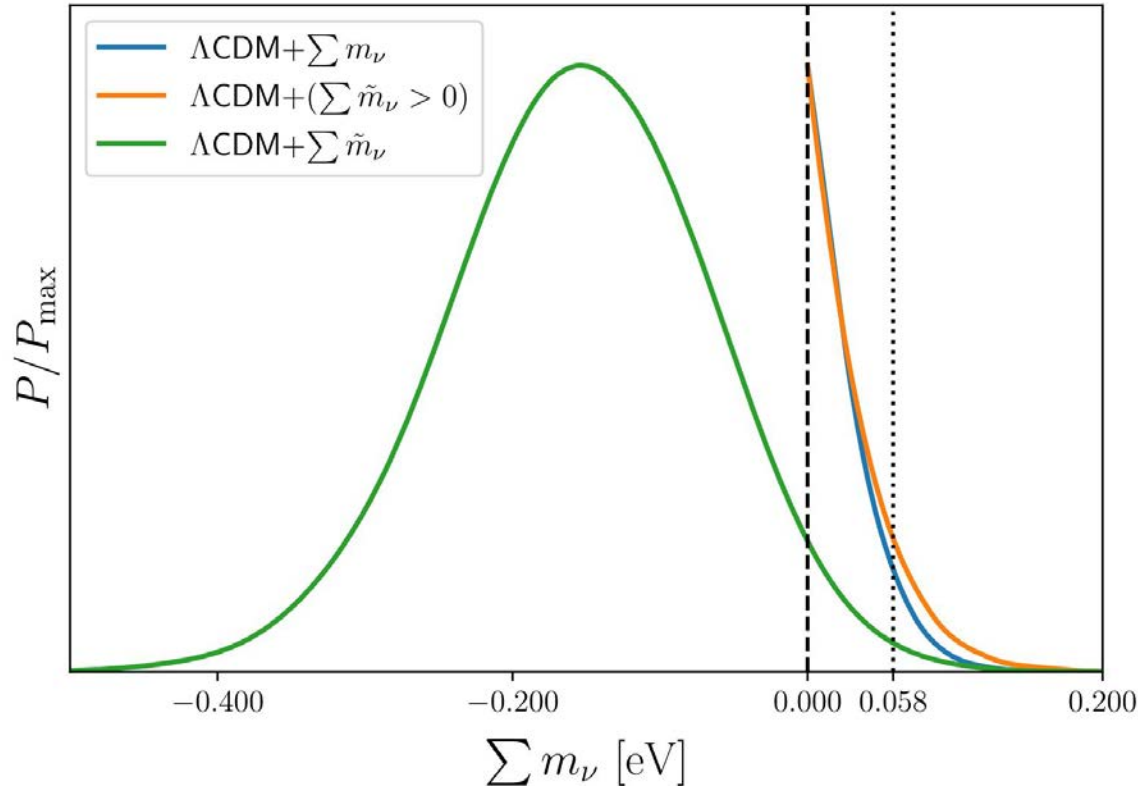
- DESI BAO, combined with CMB data, now allows for tightest yet constraint on sum of neutrino masses

$$\Sigma m_\nu < 72 \text{ meV (95\%)}$$

- Uncertainty is approaching level necessary for detection of minimum mass implied by flavor oscillations



# Negative Neutrino Mass?



- Measurements actually favor negative neutrino mass

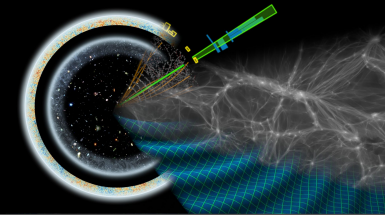
$$\sum m_\nu = -160 \pm 90 \text{ meV (68\%)}$$

- This measurement disfavors the minimal mass for the normal hierarchy (58 meV) at 99% confidence

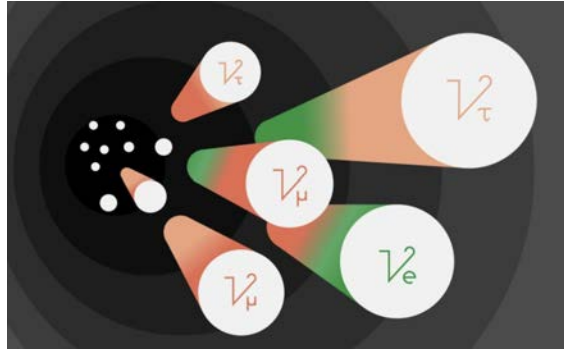


An artistic illustration of the Cosmic Neutrino Background. On the left, a circular cross-section of the universe shows a dark interior filled with stars and galaxies, surrounded by a glowing, multi-layered shell representing the early universe. A green beam of light or neutrinos originates from the center and extends towards the right. On the right, a complex network of white lines represents the cosmic web, with a blue grid-like structure overlaid on it. A green telescope-like structure is positioned at the top right, pointing towards the center. The overall background is a dark grey gradient.

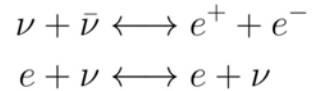
# Cosmic Neutrino Background



# Cosmic Neutrino Background



Cosmic neutrinos are light thermal relics from the early universe



$$\frac{\Gamma}{H} \sim \left( \frac{T}{1 \text{ MeV}} \right)^3$$

$$N_{\text{eff}}$$

CvB makes up significant fraction of radiation energy density at early times

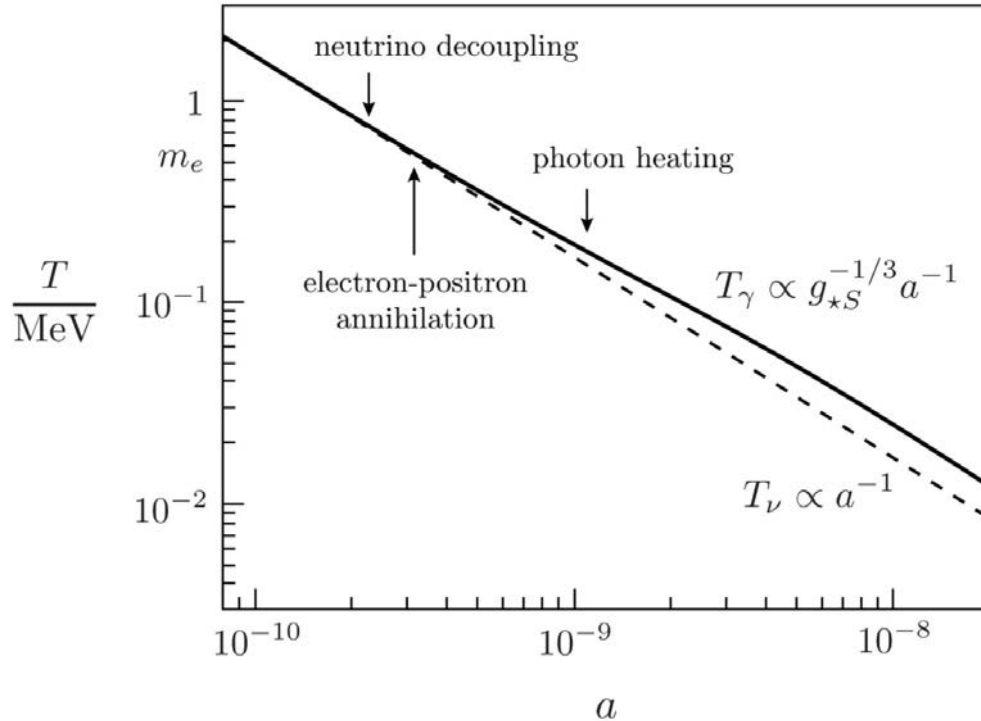
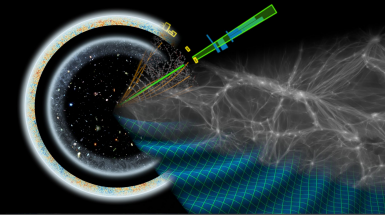
$$\rho_r = \rho_\gamma \left( 1 + \frac{7}{8} \left( \frac{4}{11} \right)^{4/3} N_{\text{eff}} \right)$$

$$\sum m_\nu$$

Massive neutrinos act like hot dark matter affecting structure growth at more recent times

$$f_\nu \equiv \frac{\Omega_\nu}{\Omega_m} \simeq 4.3 \times 10^{-3} \left( \frac{\sum m_\nu}{58 \text{ meV}} \right)$$

# Cosmic Neutrino Background - Instantaneous Decoupling Model



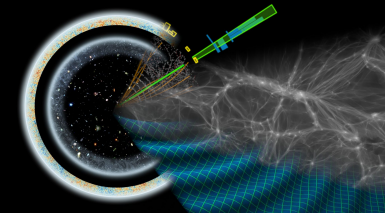
Cosmic neutrinos decoupled from the thermal plasma around 1 MeV, and were then diluted relative to photons by electron-positron annihilation

$$T_\nu = \left(\frac{4}{11}\right)^{1/3} T_\gamma$$

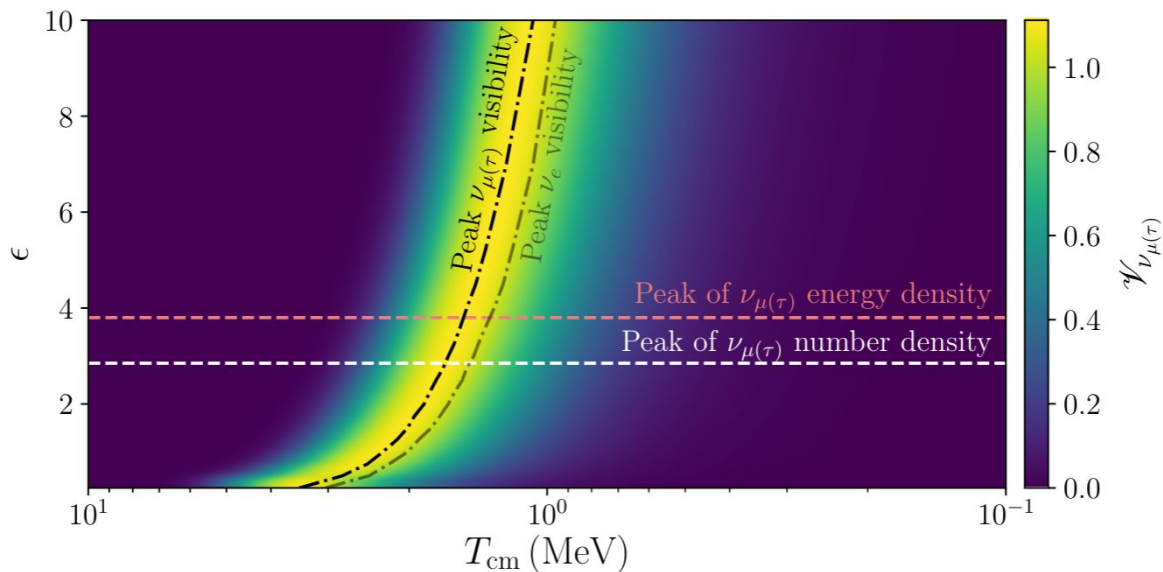
Cosmic neutrino background makes up a **significant fraction of the energy density** prior to recombination

$$\rho_\nu \simeq 0.471 \rho_r$$

# Cosmic Neutrino Background - Precision Model



Neutrino Differential Visibility



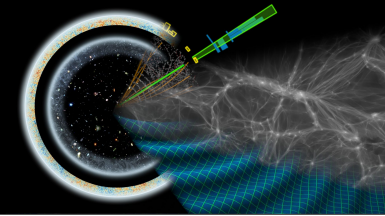
The energy density of the cosmic neutrino background can be calculated precisely, including the effects of non-instantaneous weak decoupling

$$N_{\text{eff}} = \frac{8}{7} \left( \frac{11}{4} \right)^{4/3} \frac{\rho_{\nu}}{\rho_{\gamma}}$$

$$N_{\text{eff}}^{\text{SM}} = 3.044(1)$$

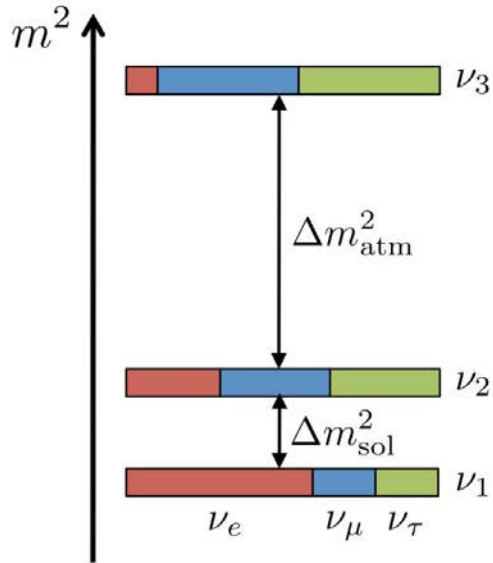
Escudero Abenza (2020); Akita, Yamaguchi (2020); Froustey, Pitrou, Volpe (2020); Bennett, et al (2021); Bond, Fuller, Grohs, JM, Wilson (2024)



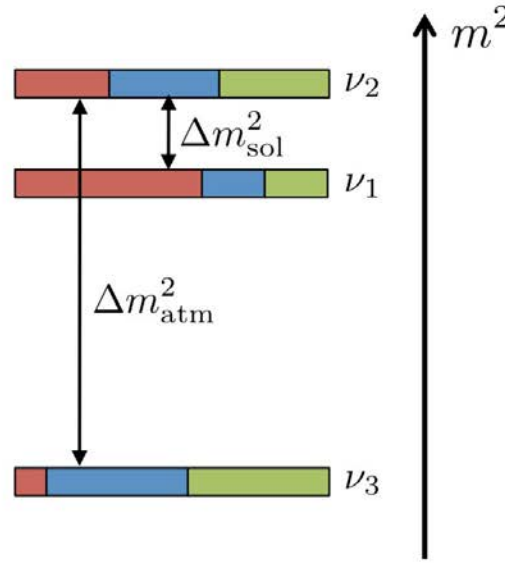


# Massive Cosmic Neutrinos

normal hierarchy (NH)



inverted hierarchy (IH)



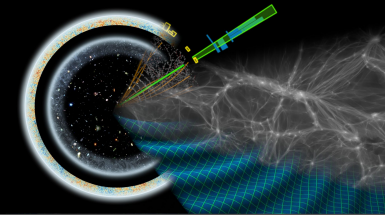
$$\sum m_\nu \gtrsim 58 \text{ meV}$$

$$\sum m_\nu \gtrsim 105 \text{ meV}$$

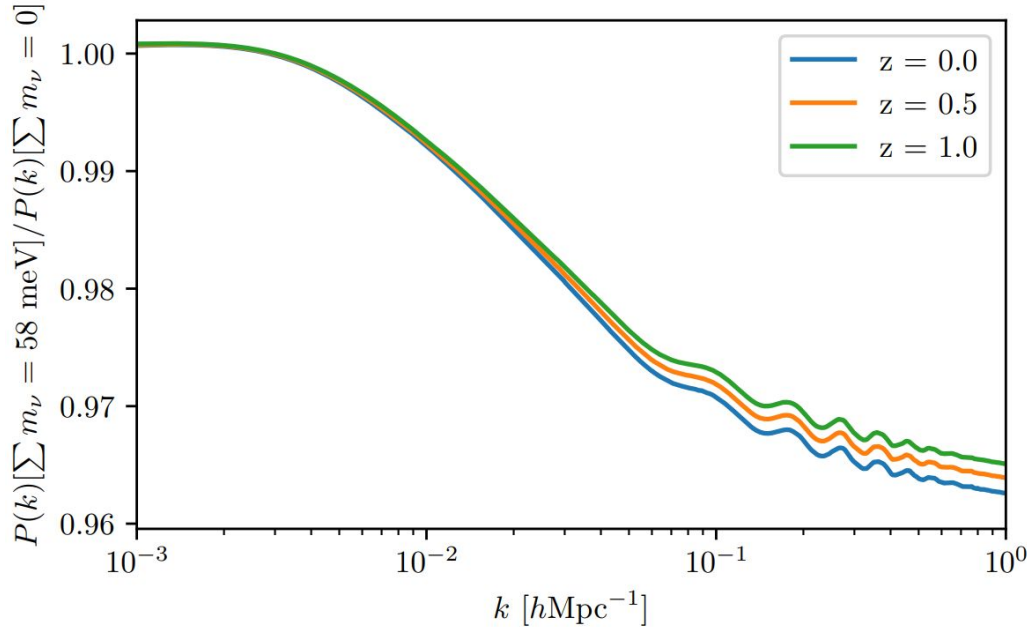
Cosmic neutrino background provides an **abundance of non-relativistic neutrinos**

$$n_{\nu_i,0} = 112 \text{ cm}^{-3}$$

Cosmology is sensitive to the gravitational effects of the cosmic neutrino background, allowing a measurement of a sum of neutrino masses



# Massive Neutrinos Suppress Matter Clustering



Suppression of matter clustering due to massive neutrinos  
( $A_s, \Omega_m h^2, \Omega_b h^2, H_0$  fixed)

The large velocities of cosmic neutrinos causes them to free stream out of potential wells and **suppress the growth of structure** on scales smaller than their free-streaming length

$$f_\nu \equiv \frac{\Omega_\nu}{\Omega_m} \simeq 4.3 \times 10^{-3} \left( \frac{\sum m_\nu}{58 \text{ meV}} \right)$$

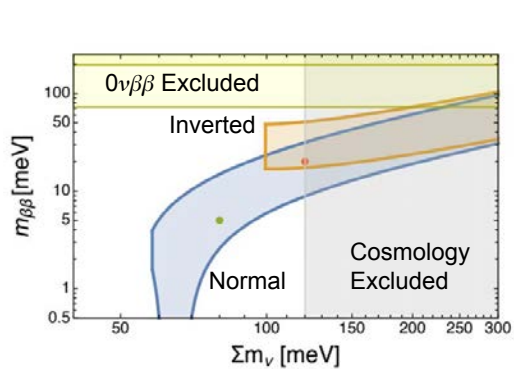
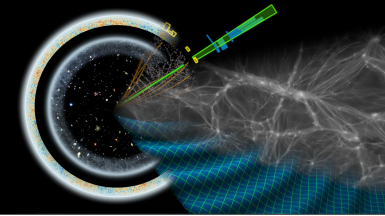
$$P(k > k_{\text{fs}}) \simeq (1 - 8f_\nu) P(k > k_{\text{fs}}) |_{\sum m_\nu = 0}$$

Hu, Eisenstein, Tegmark (1998); Cooray (1999); Abazajian, et al (2011);  
Green, JM (2021); Gerbino, Grohs, Lattanzi, et al (2022)

A complex visualization illustrating cosmological probes of neutrino mass. On the left, a circular cross-section of the universe shows a dark central region with a glowing orange and blue outer shell. A green beam of light originates from the center and passes through a series of yellow and blue rectangular components, resembling a telescope or detector array. Below this, a blue grid-like structure represents spacetime curvature, with a green beam of light passing through it. On the right, a network of white lines and nodes represents the cosmic web. The overall scene is set against a dark grey background.

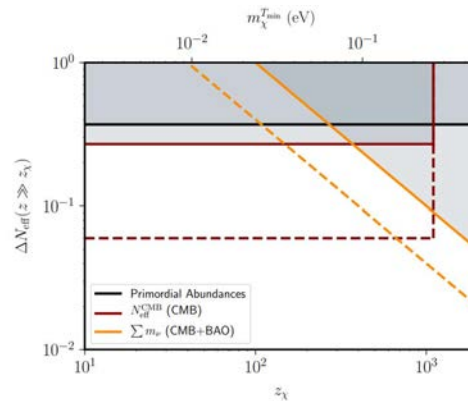
# Cosmological Probes of Neutrino Mass

# Value of Cosmological Neutrino Mass Measurement



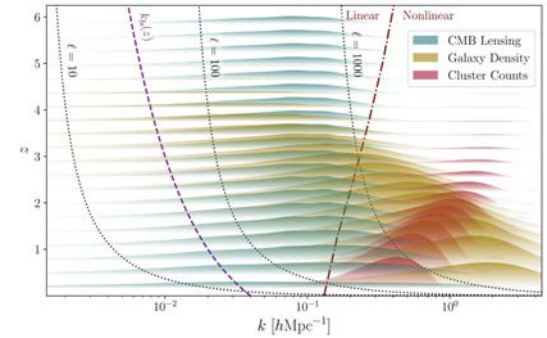
## Particle Physics

- Absolute neutrino mass scale sets a target for **complementary lab-based searches** for neutrino mass



## Cosmology

- Provides **end-to-end test of cosmic history** and is sensitive to new massive species (including gravitinos)

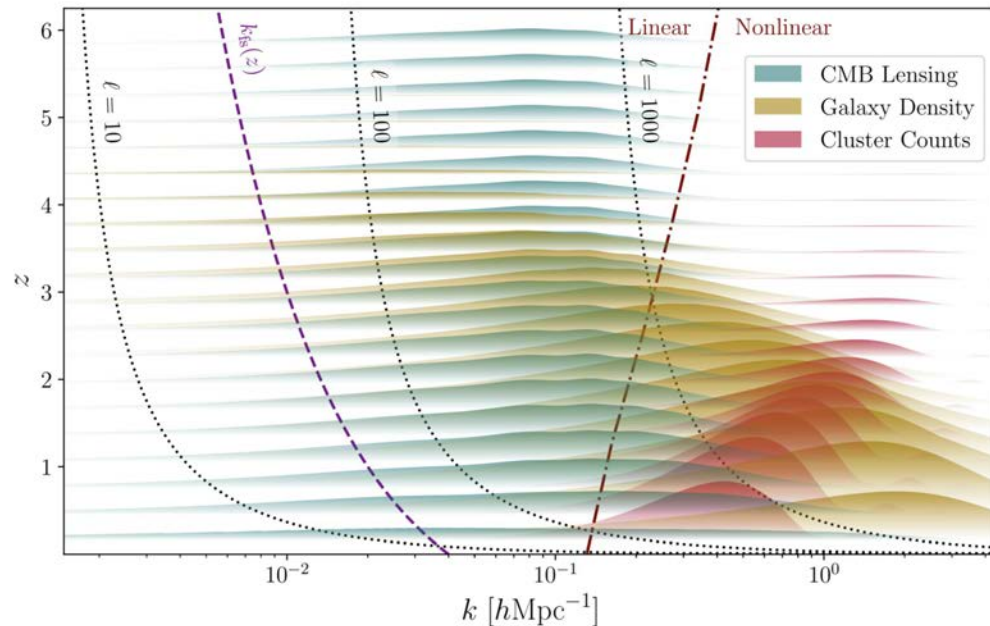
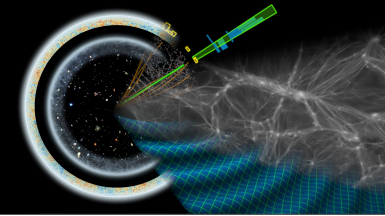


## Astrophysics

- Multiple probes of matter power allow neutrino mass to be disentangled from **nonlinear and baryonic effects**



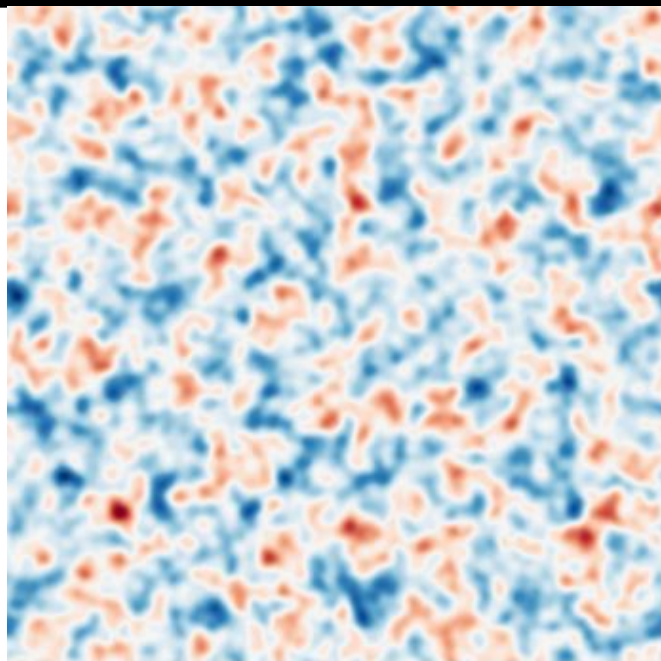
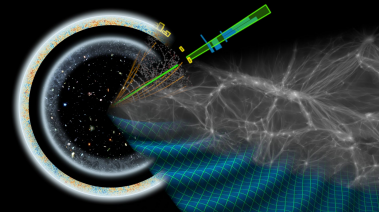
# Measuring Clustering with Cosmological Surveys



Sensitivity regimes of various probes of clustering

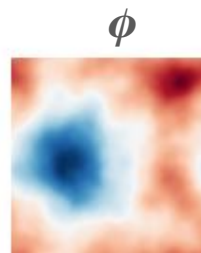
- Galaxy number density, galaxy weak lensing, counts of galaxy clusters, and weak lensing of the cosmic microwave background (among other probes) are sensitive to the clustering of matter across a wide range of scales and redshifts
- CMB lensing provides an unbiased measurement of integrated matter clustering in the linear regime

# Unlensed CMB Polarization

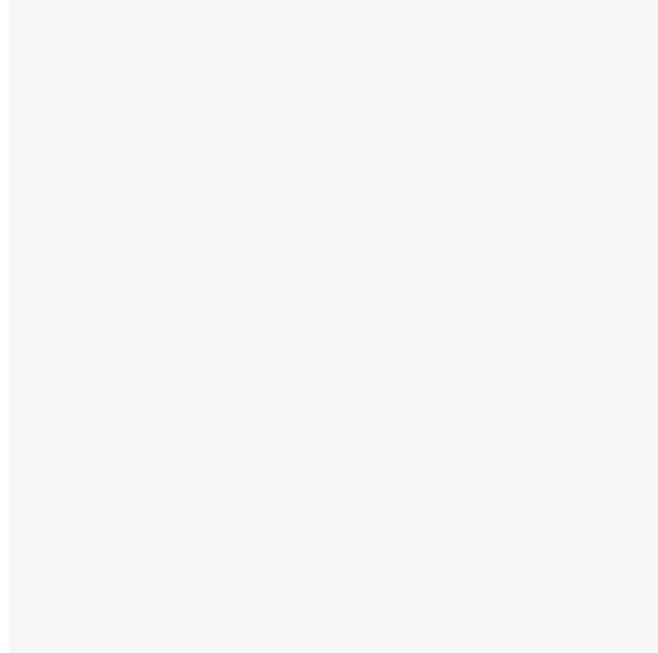


Unlensed E

5° × 5° simulated maps



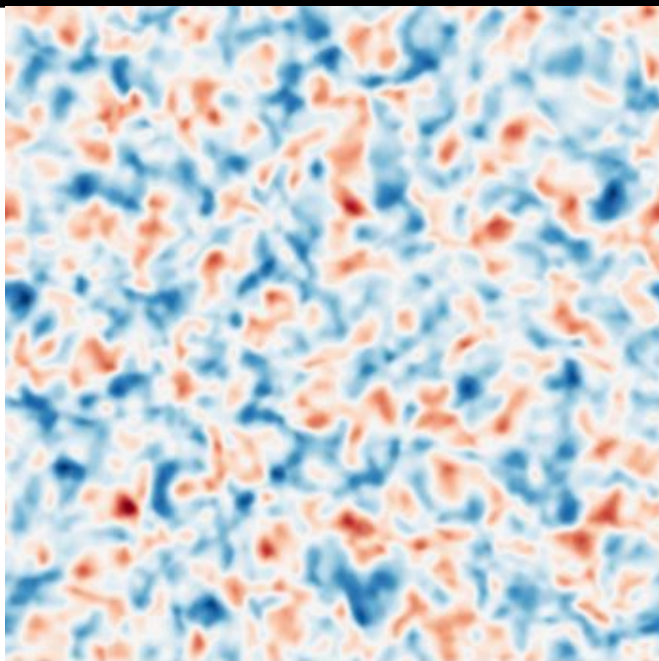
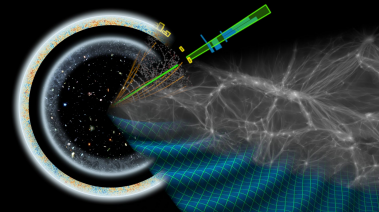
$\phi$



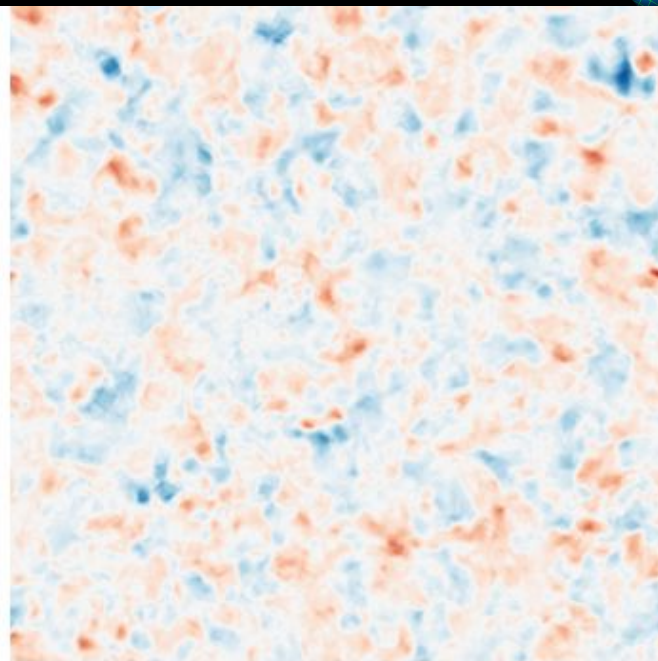
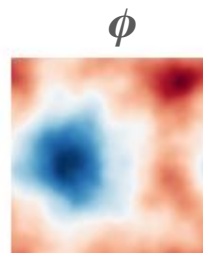
Unlensed B

Image Credit: Guzman

# Lensed CMB Polarization



Lensed E

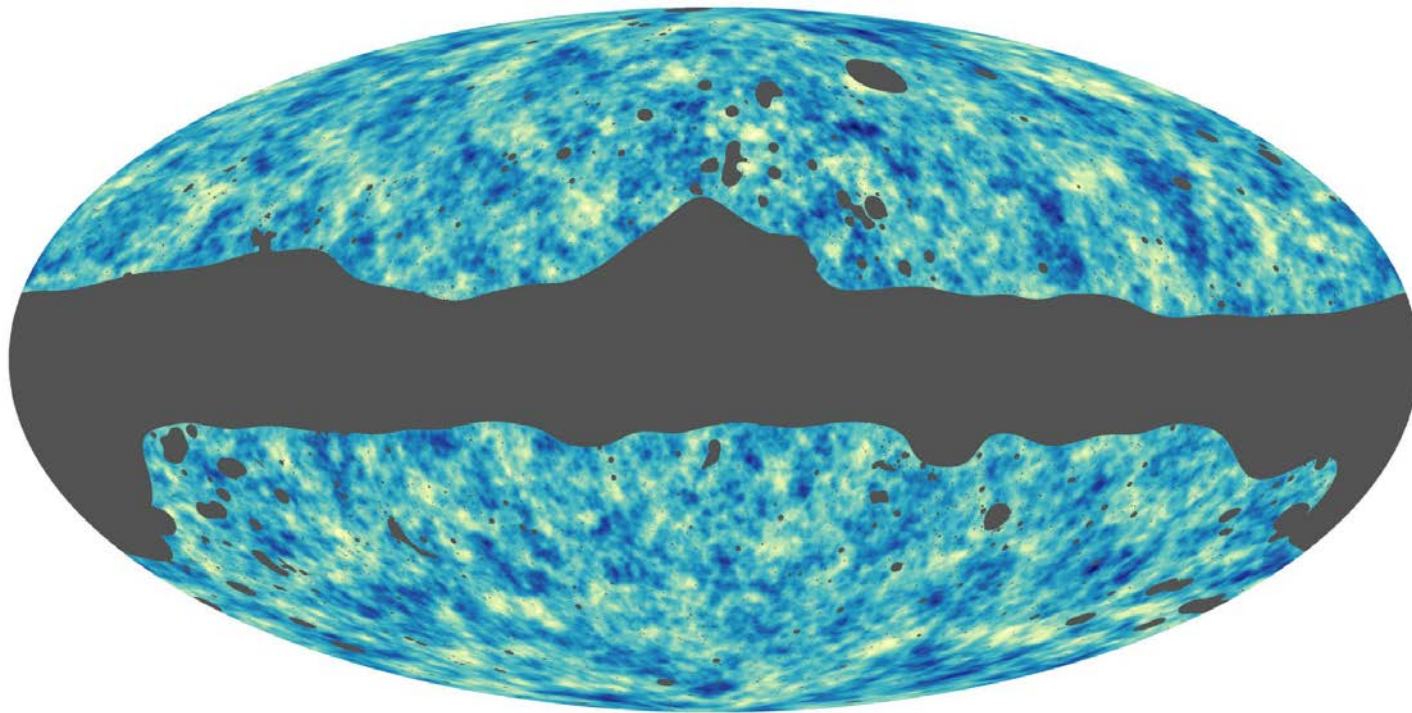
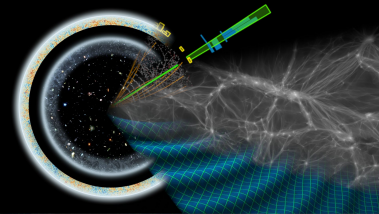


Lensed B

$5^\circ \times 5^\circ$  simulated maps

Image Credit: Guzman

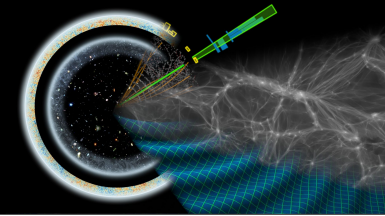
# CMB Lensing Reconstruction



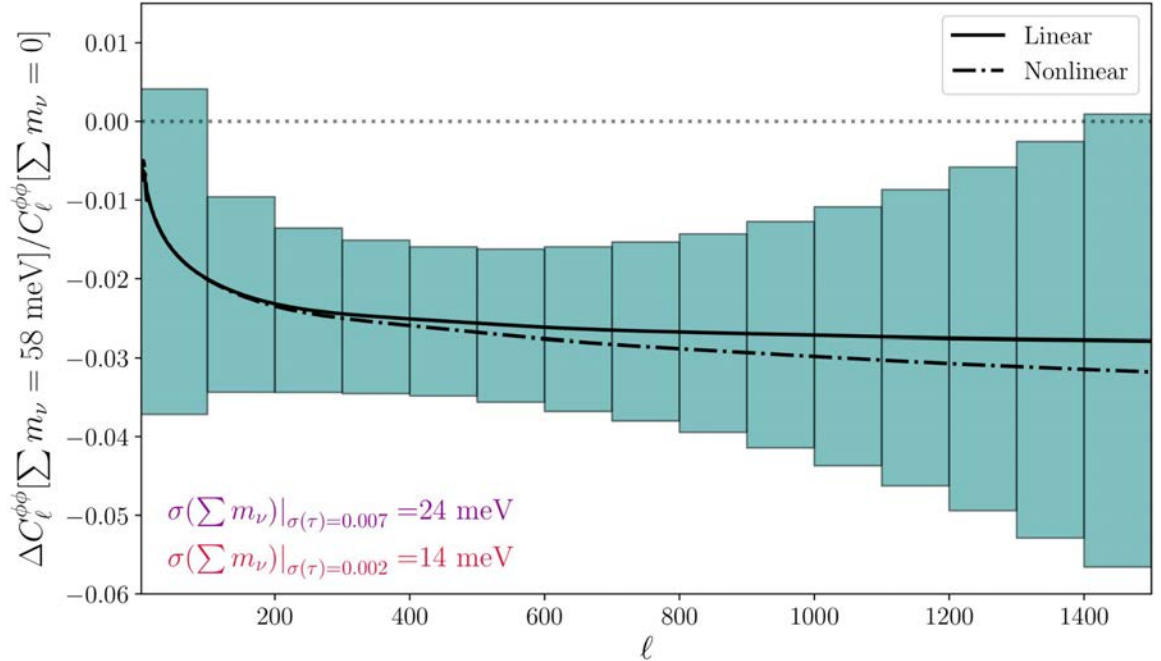
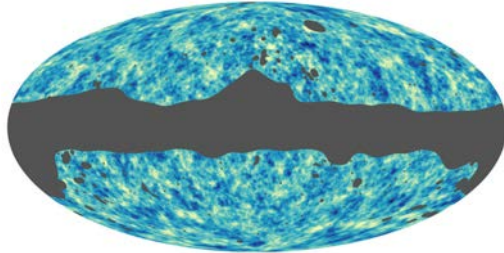
$40\sigma$  observation

Planck (2018)



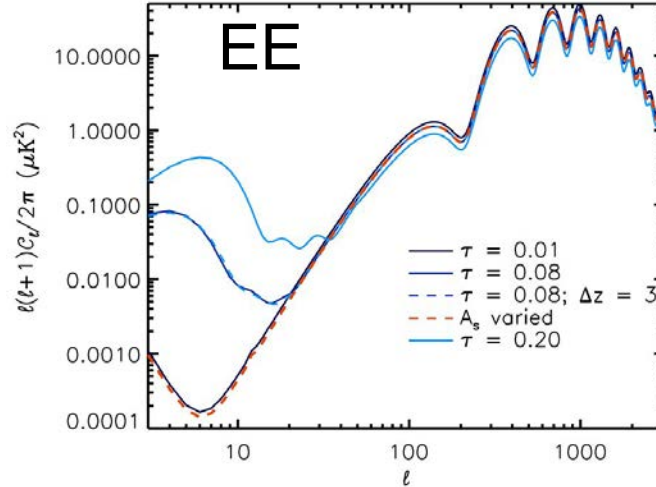
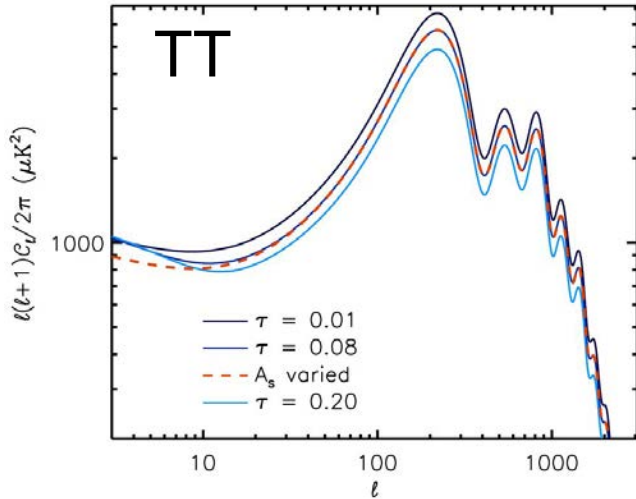
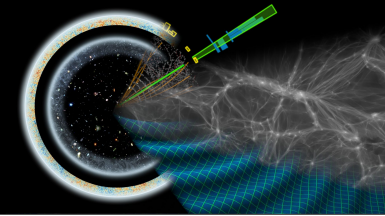


# Neutrino Mass with CMB Lensing



Measuring suppression of clustering with CMB-S4 lensing

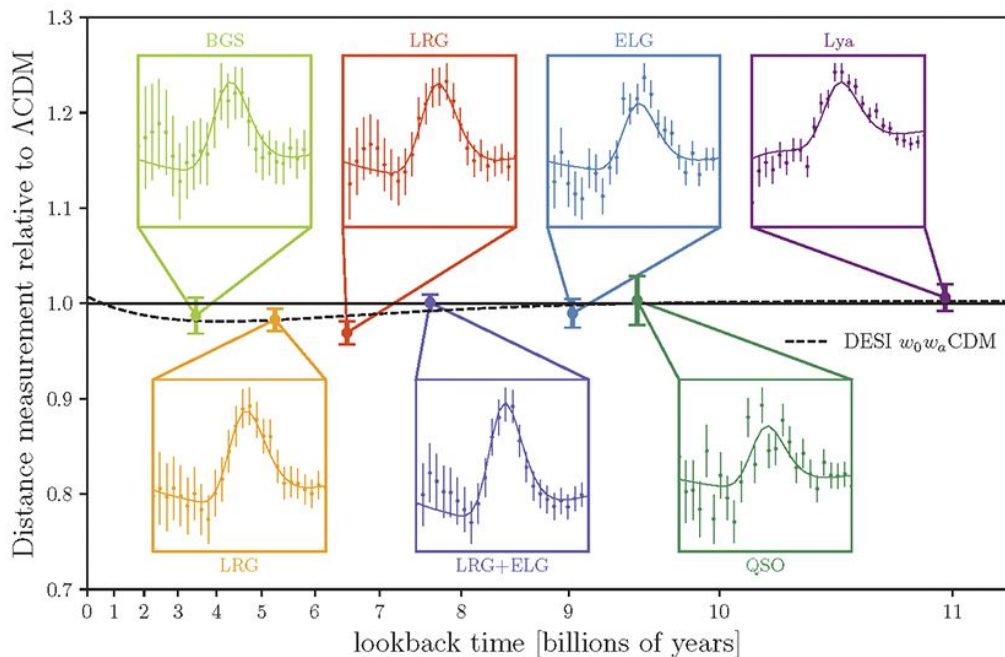
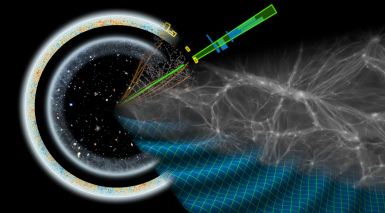
# CMB Measurements of the Primordial Amplitude



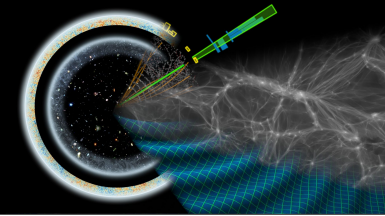
- Measurements of the CMB power spectra at  $\ell > 30$  tightly constrain the combination  $A_s e^{-2\tau}$ , while polarization at  $\ell < 20$  is sensitive to  $\tau^2$
- Large scale polarization is most easily measured with a CMB satellite or balloon-borne CMB experiment

Planck 2018:  
 $\tau = 0.054 \pm 0.007$

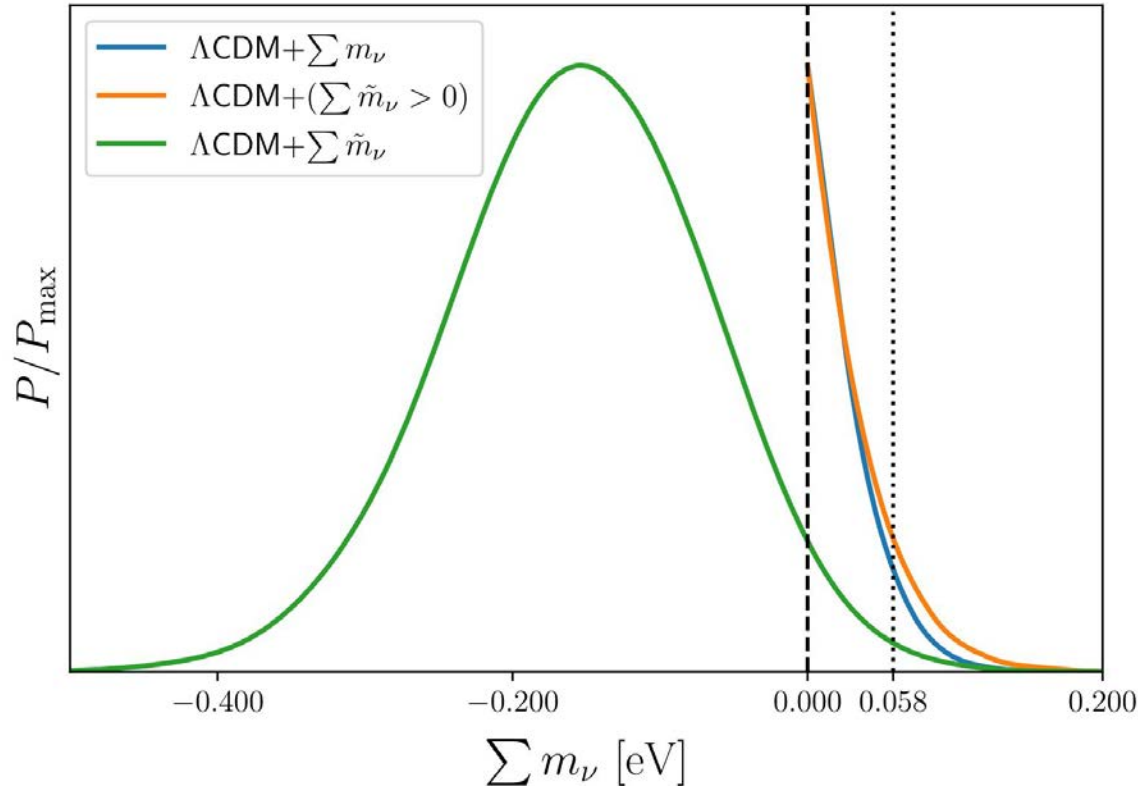
# Matter Density with Baryon Acoustic Oscillations



- Spectroscopic galaxy surveys such as DESI precisely measure the expansion history using Baryon Acoustic Oscillations (BAO) as a standard ruler
- This provides a precise determination of the matter density, essential for a calibration of the amplitude of the matter power spectrum



# Current Measurement



- Planck + ACT Lensing + DESI BAO measurements **favor negative neutrino mass**

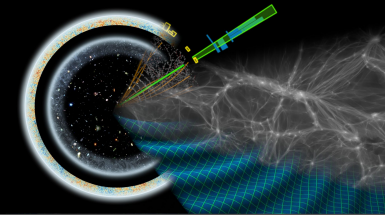
$$\sum m_\nu = -160 \pm 90 \text{ meV (68\%)}$$

- This measurement disfavors the minimal mass for the normal hierarchy (58 meV) at 99% confidence



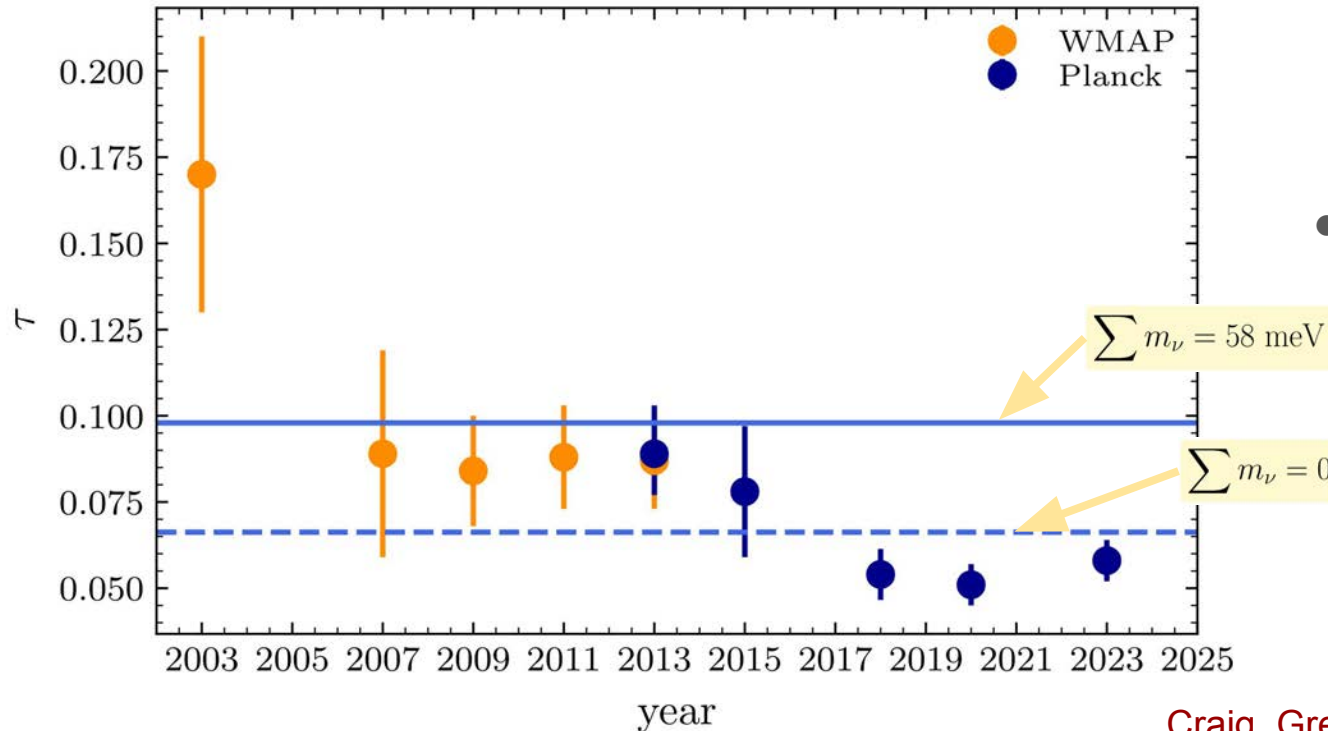
The image is a composite graphic. On the left, a circular view of a galaxy is shown with a colorful, multi-colored ring around its edge. A green telescope-like structure is positioned above the galaxy, with several orange lines radiating from its lens towards the galaxy's center. Below the galaxy, a blue grid pattern is visible, which appears to be a representation of spacetime curvature or a gravitational well. On the right side of the image, there is a white, intricate network of lines and nodes, resembling a complex web or a network diagram. The text "Possible Explanations" is centered in the middle of the image.

# Possible Explanations

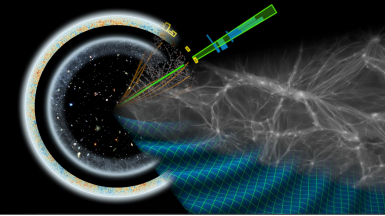


# Optical Depth Systematic

History of the  $\tau$  Measurement

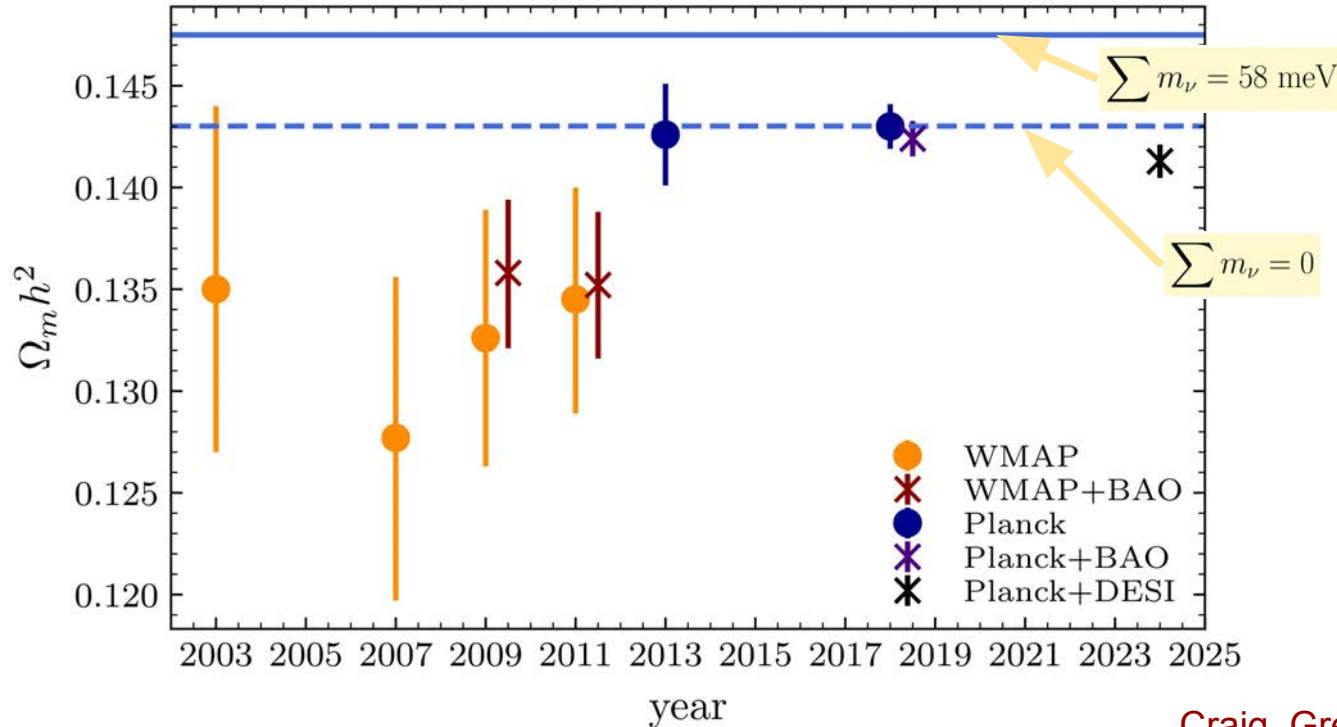


- The best-fit value of the optical depth has evolved over time
- A shift much larger than the statistical error on  $\tau$  would be required to explain inference of negative neutrino mass

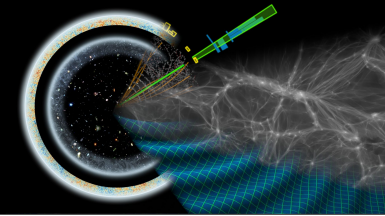


# Matter Density Systematic

History of the  $\Omega_m h^2$  Measurement



- The preference for negative neutrino mass could be explained by a shift to the matter density
- Measurements of matter density have remained roughly consistent over time



# New Physics?

$$P(\Sigma m_\nu)(k \gg k_{\text{fs}}, z) \approx \left( 1 - 2f_\nu - \frac{6}{5}f_\nu \log \frac{1+z_\nu}{1+z} \right) P(\Sigma m_\nu=0)(k \gg k_{\text{fs}}, z)$$

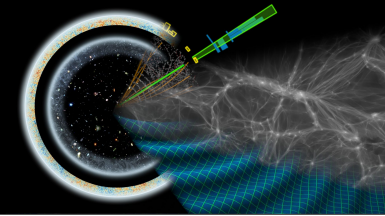
Massive neutrinos do not cluster like cold dark matter

Dark matter clustering is suppressed in presence of free-streaming neutrinos

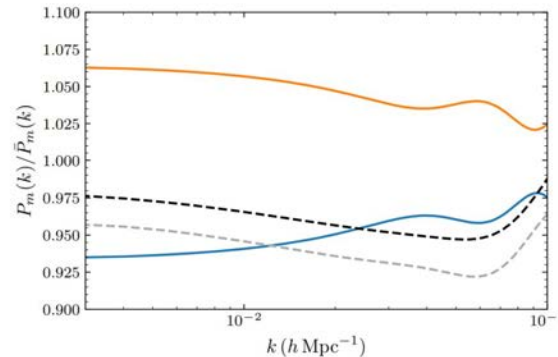
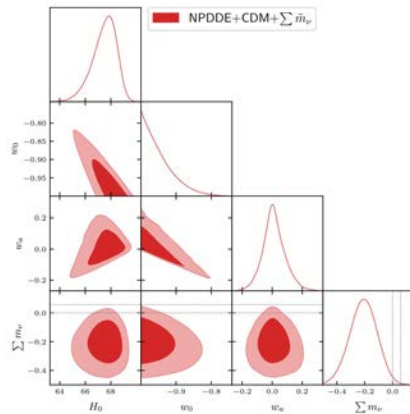
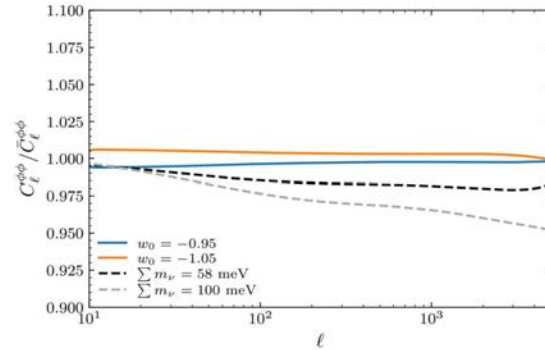
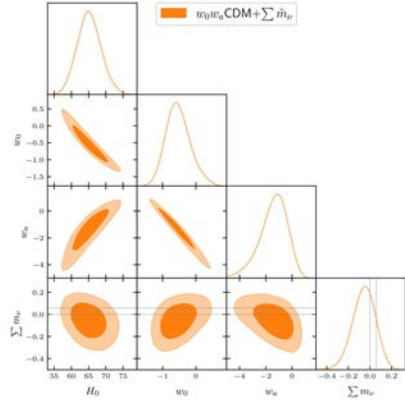
$$z_\nu \approx 100 \left( \frac{m_\nu}{50 \text{ meV}} \right)$$

Neutrinos become non-relativistic at high redshift

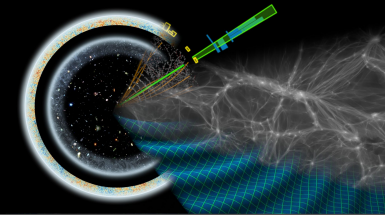




# Dark Energy is Unlikely to be Solution

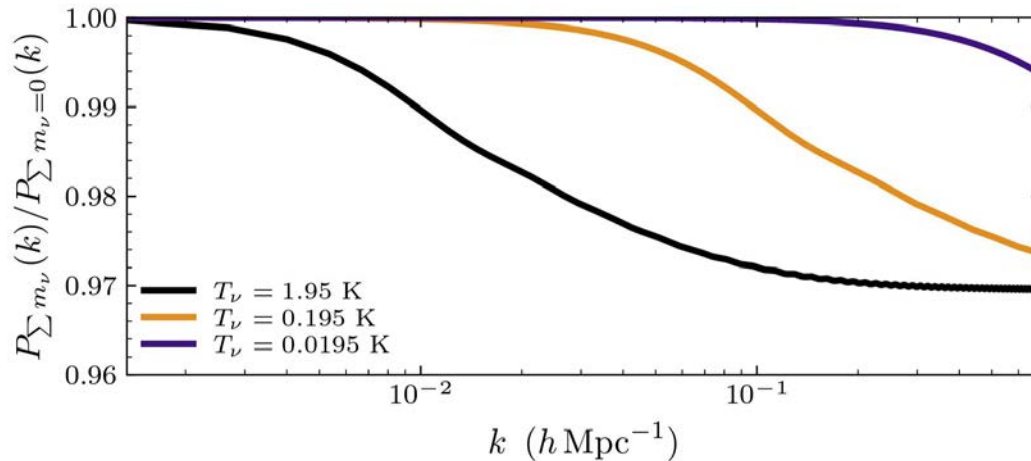


- Like neutrino mass, dark energy impacts the growth of structure
- Because dark energy operates in only the relatively recent cosmic past, a fairly large change to cosmic history is required to achieve the requisite enhanced CMB lensing power
- Non-phantom dark energy acts to suppress clustering, leading to a preference for even more negative neutrino mass

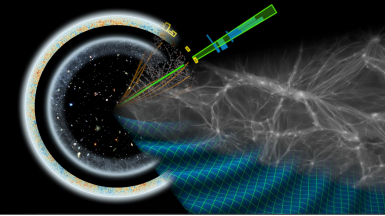


# New Physics for Vanishing Neutrino Mass

$$\mathcal{L}_\phi \supset \frac{\lambda_{ij}}{2} \bar{\nu}_i \nu_j \phi + \frac{\tilde{\lambda}_{ij}}{2} \bar{\nu}_i \gamma_5 \nu_j \phi + \text{h.c.}$$



- Neutrino decay
- Neutrino annihilation
- Neutrino cooling or heating
- Time-varying mass



# New Physics for Negative “Neutrino Mass”

$$P^{(\epsilon, \Sigma m_\nu)}(k \gg k_{\text{fs}}, z) \approx \left( 1 - 2f_\nu + \frac{6}{5}(\epsilon + f_b) \log \frac{1 + z_\star}{1 + z} \right) P^{(\epsilon=0, \Sigma m_\nu=0)}(k \gg k_{\text{fs}}, z)$$

Enhancement from long-range  
force on dark matter

- New long-range force for dark matter

- Primordial trispectrum that mimics CMB lensing

$$\zeta(\vec{x}) = \zeta_G(\vec{x}) + \sqrt{\tau_{\text{NL}}^\sigma} \zeta_G(\vec{x}) \sigma(\vec{x})$$

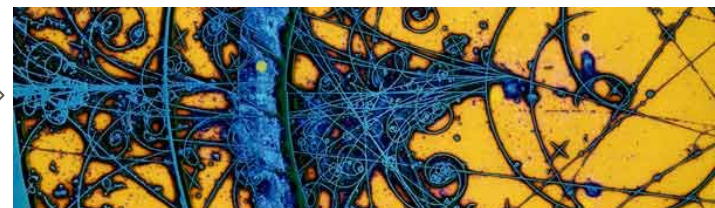
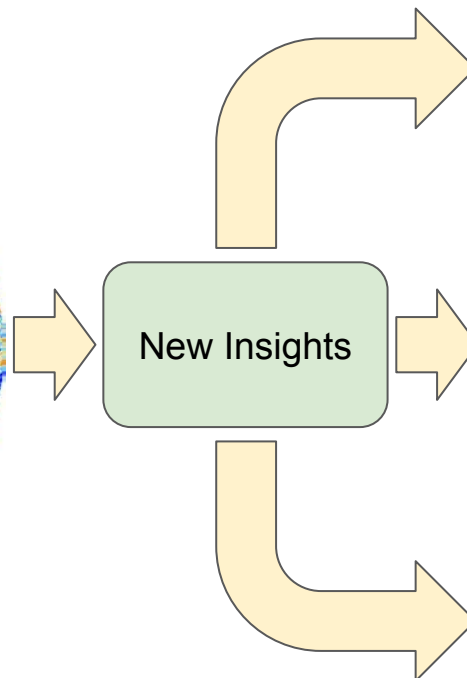
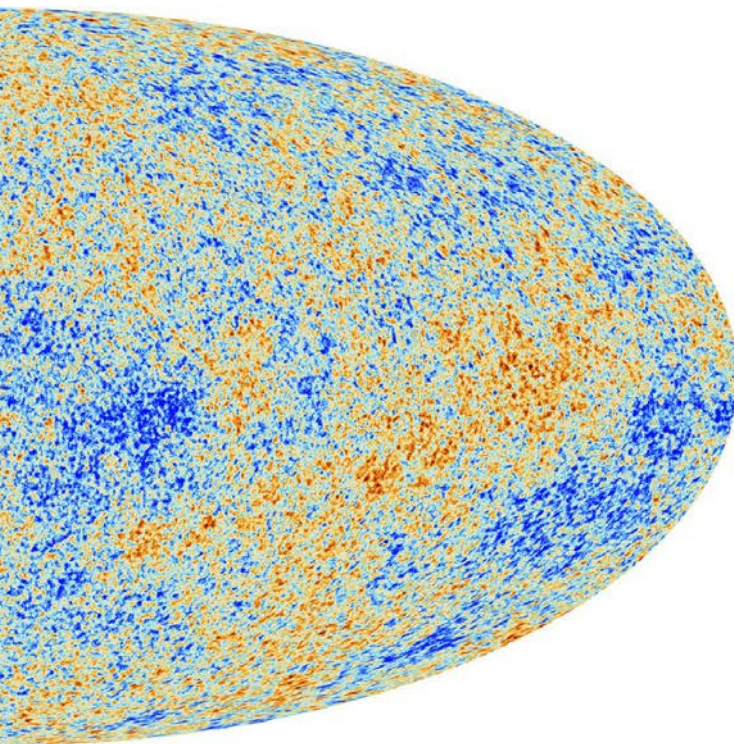
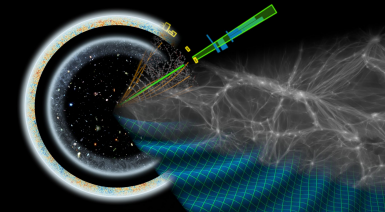
$$\left\langle \zeta_{\vec{k}_1} \zeta_{\vec{k}_2} \zeta_{\vec{k}_3} \zeta_{\vec{k}_4} \right\rangle' = \tau_{\text{NL}}^\sigma P_\zeta(k_1) P_\zeta(k_3) P_\sigma(|\vec{k}_1 + \vec{k}_2|) + \text{permutations}$$



# Conclusion



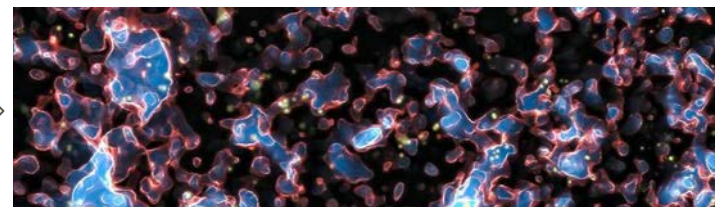
# Conclusion



**Particle Physics**



**Cosmology**



**Astrophysics**

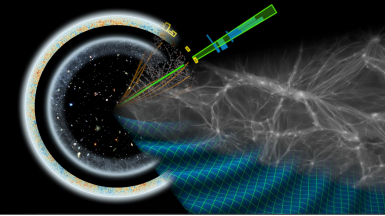




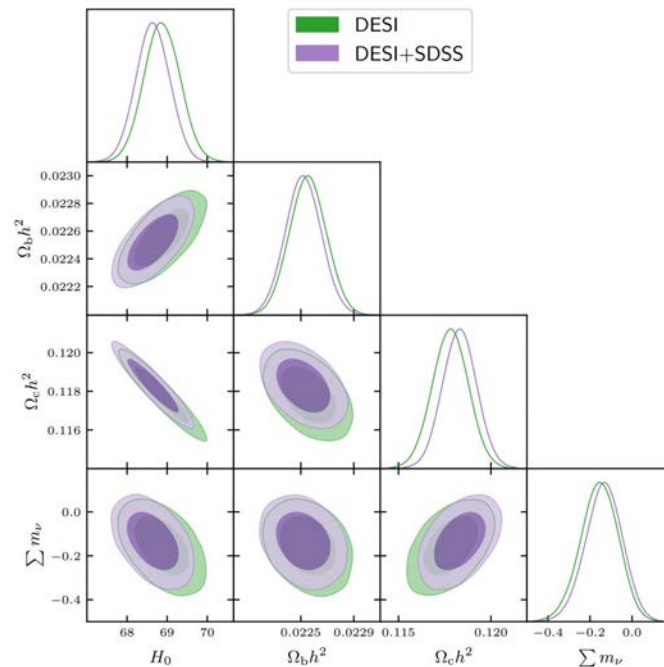
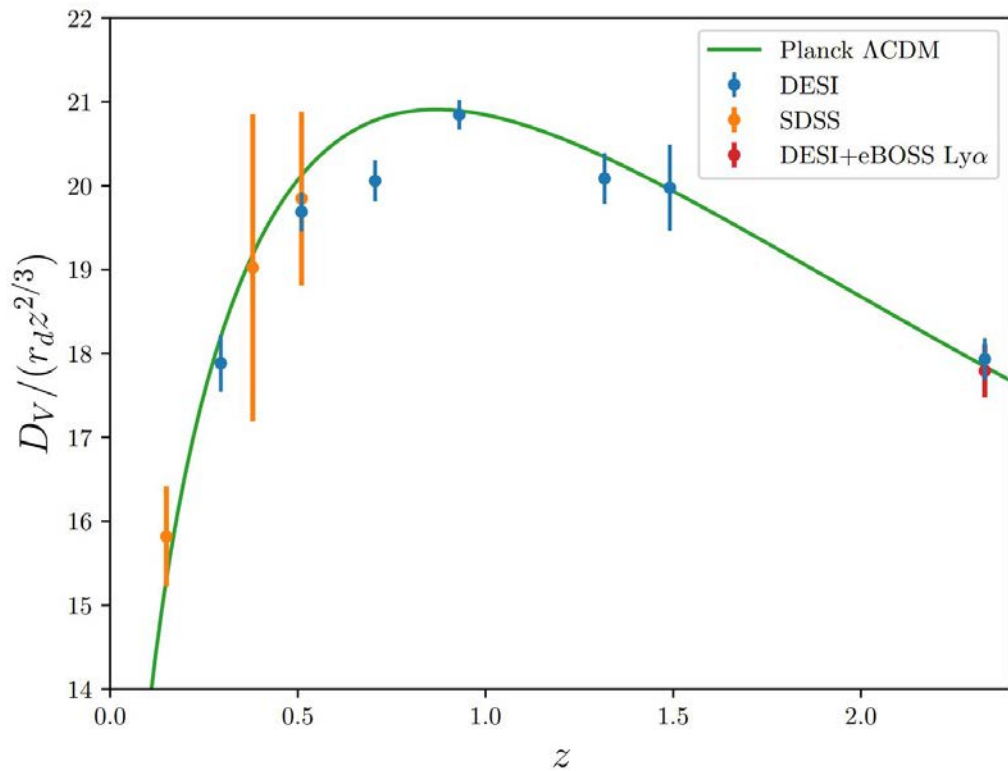
Congratulations  
George and Baha!



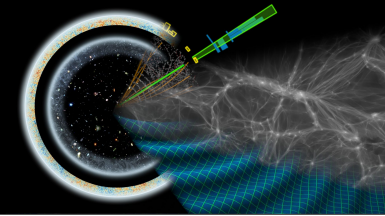
# Backup Slides



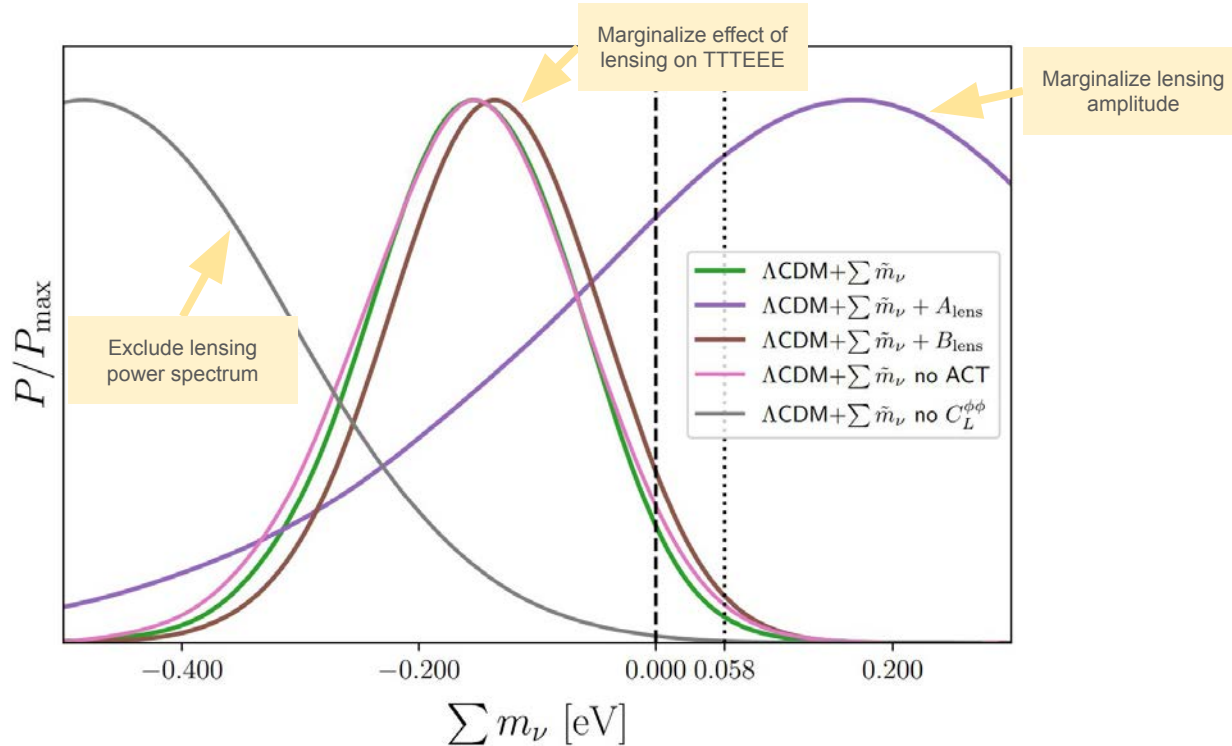
# Is DESI Discrepant with Planck?



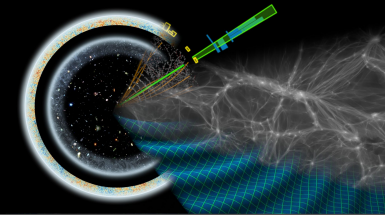




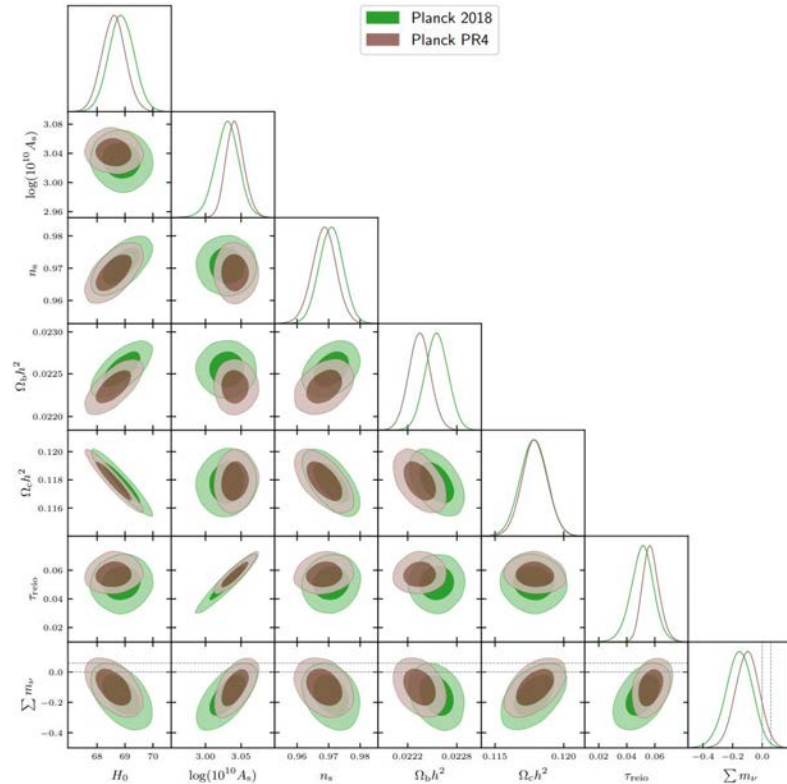
# CMB Lensing Systematic?



- Preference for negative neutrino mass comes from both 2-point and 4-point CMB lensing statistics, and is dominated by 4-point measurement
- Planck and ACT lensing measurements are in good agreement (despite measuring different scales)

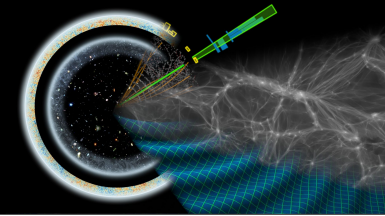


# Robustness to Different Planck Likelihoods

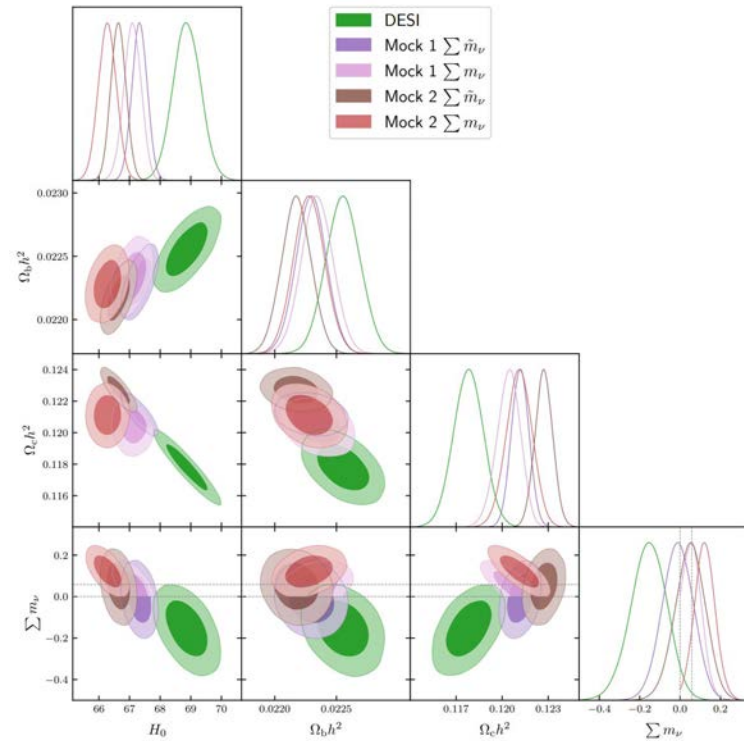
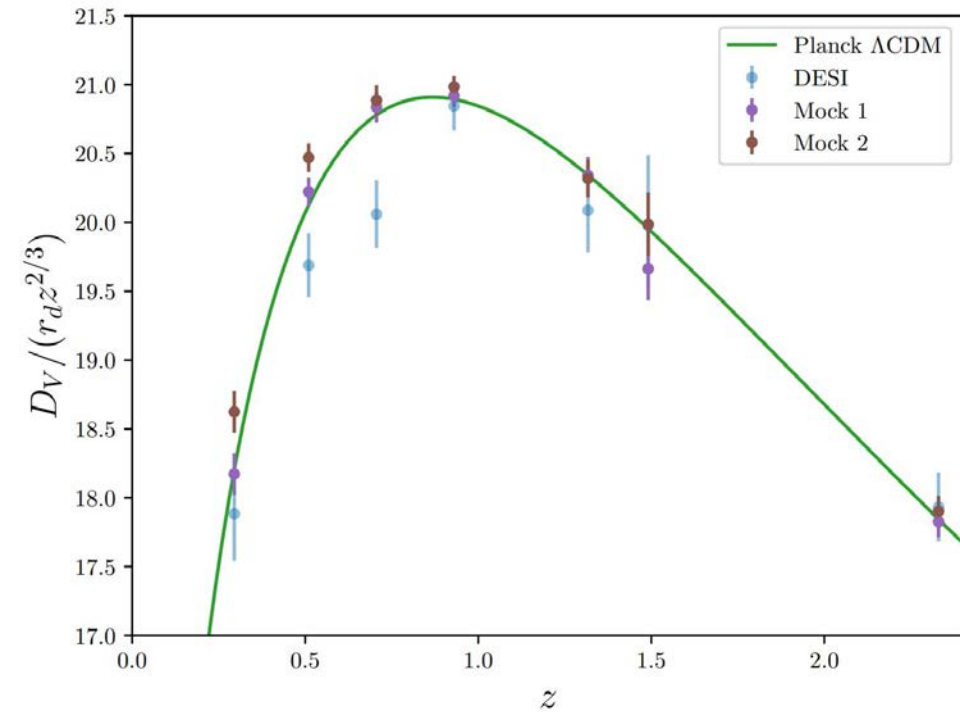


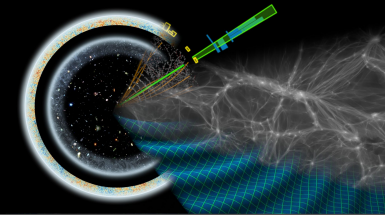
- Use of PR4 Planck likelihood does not significantly shift inference of negative neutrino mass
- The upward shift compared to Planck 2018 is due to a preference for a larger value of the optical depth



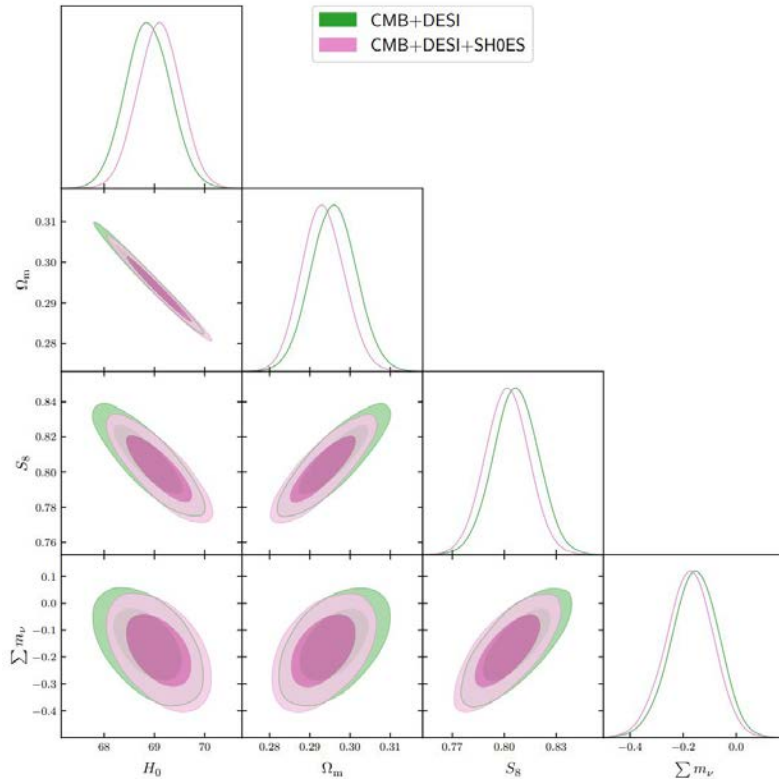


# Mock DESI Analysis



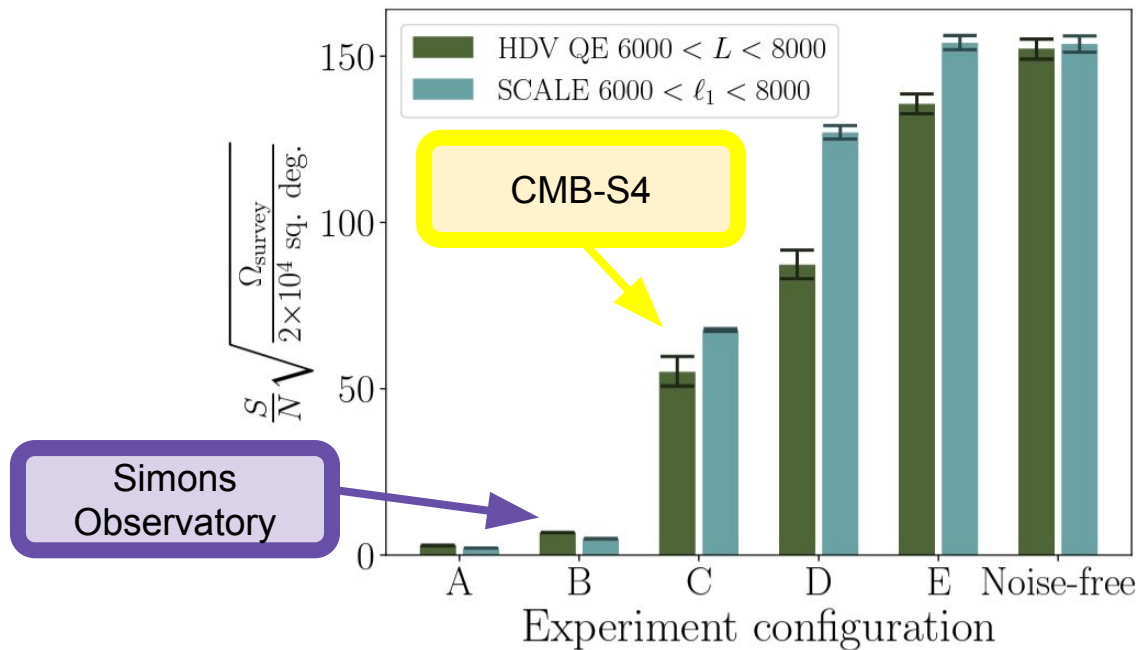
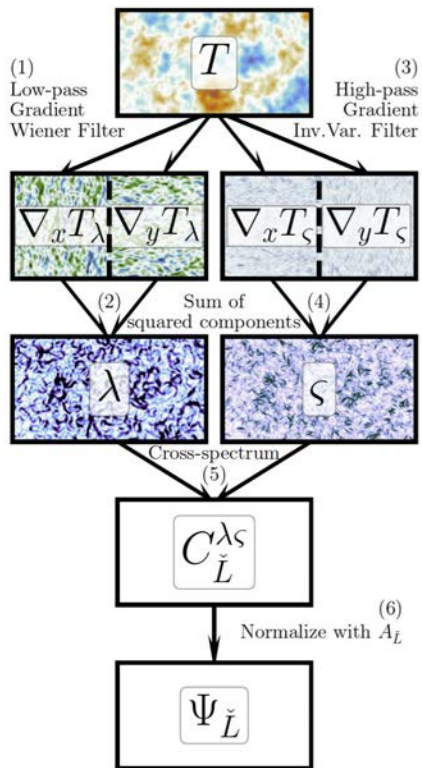
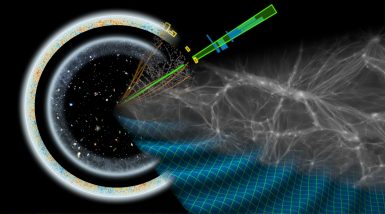


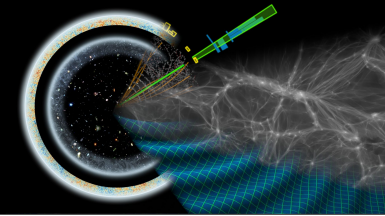
# Including SH0ES Data



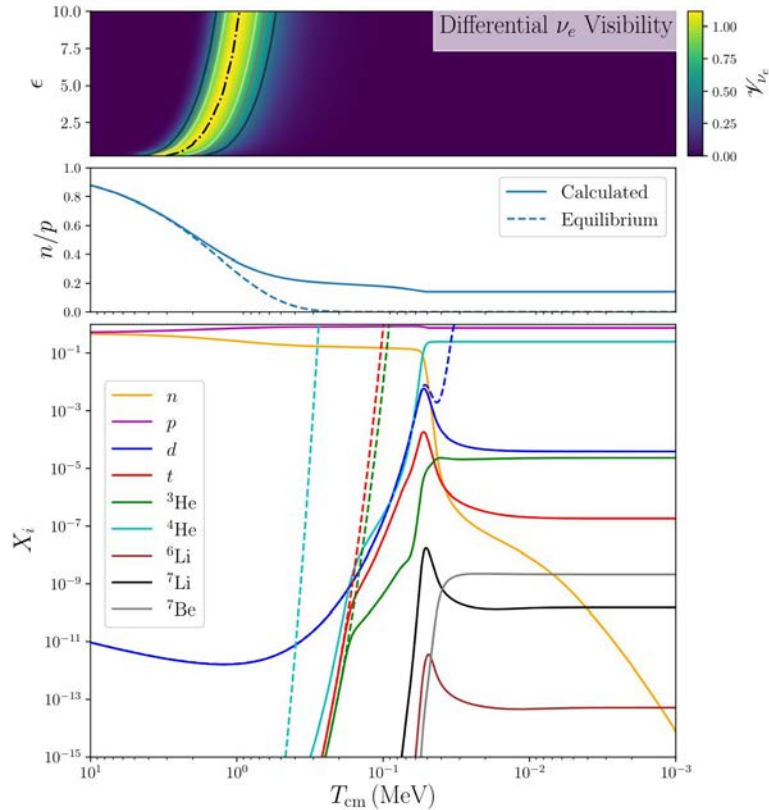
- Including SH0ES Supernova data has essentially no impact on the inference of neutrino mass
- Note that the Hubble tension suggests that this combination of datasets exhibits at least some level of internal inconsistency

# Improved Lensing Measurement with Small Correlated Against Large Estimator (SCALE)





# BBN and New Physics in the Neutrino Sector



The precision with which we can measure primordial light element abundances (especially deuterium and Helium-4) allows us to use BBN as a powerful probe of new physics

This becomes an even sharper test when combined with CMB constraints

Fischler, JM (2010); Lague, JM (2020);  
Bond, Fuller, Grohs, JM, Wilson (2024);  
Yeh, Shelton, Fields, Olive (2022)