

# ACTIVE SUBSPACES

Emerging ideas for parameter reduction in  
computational science and engineering

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
**ENERGY**

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SLIDES AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

**DISCLAIMER:** These slides are meant to complement the oral presentation. Use out of context at your own risk.

What kinds of problems are you trying to solve?

What kinds of models do you work with?

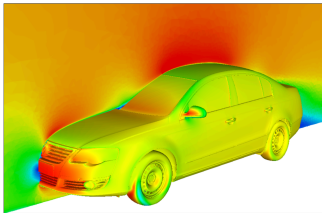
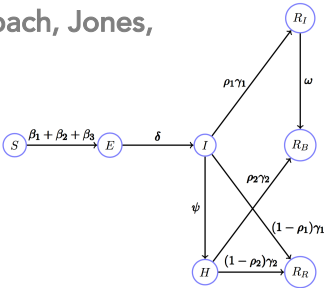
Do the models have parameters?  
If so, what do the parameters do or represent?

**Why do I care?**

**(And why I think you should, too.)**

# Ebola transmission models

Diaz, Constantine, Kalmbach, Jones, and Pankavich (2018)

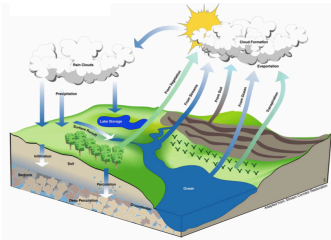


# Automobile design

Othmer, Lukaczyk, Constantine, and Alonso (2016)

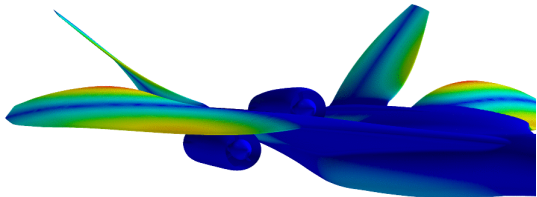
# Aerospace design

Lukaczyk, Palacios, Alonso, and Constantine (2014)



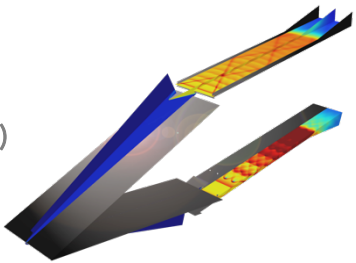
# Integrated hydrologic models

Jefferson, Gilbert, Constantine, and Maxwell (2015)



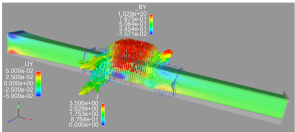
# Hypersonic scramjet models

Constantine, Emory, Larsson, and Iaccarino (2015)



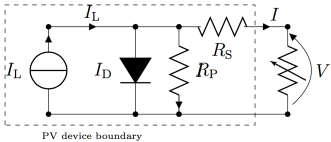
# Magnetohydrodynamics models

Glaws, Constantine, Shadid, and Wildey (2017)

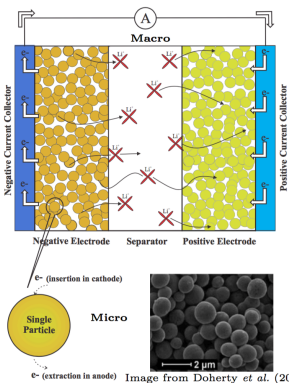


# Solar cell models

Constantine, Zaharatos, and Campanelli (2015)



$$f(\mathbf{x})$$



# Lithium ion battery model

Constantine and Doostan (2017)



## PROPERTIES:

Computer model of a physical system

Several independent inputs

Deterministic

Continuous inputs / outputs

"Smoothness"

$$f(\mathbf{x})$$

## TO DO:

### APPROXIMATION

$$\tilde{f}(\mathbf{x}) \approx f(\mathbf{x})$$

### INTEGRATION

$$\int f(\mathbf{x}) \, d\mathbf{x}$$

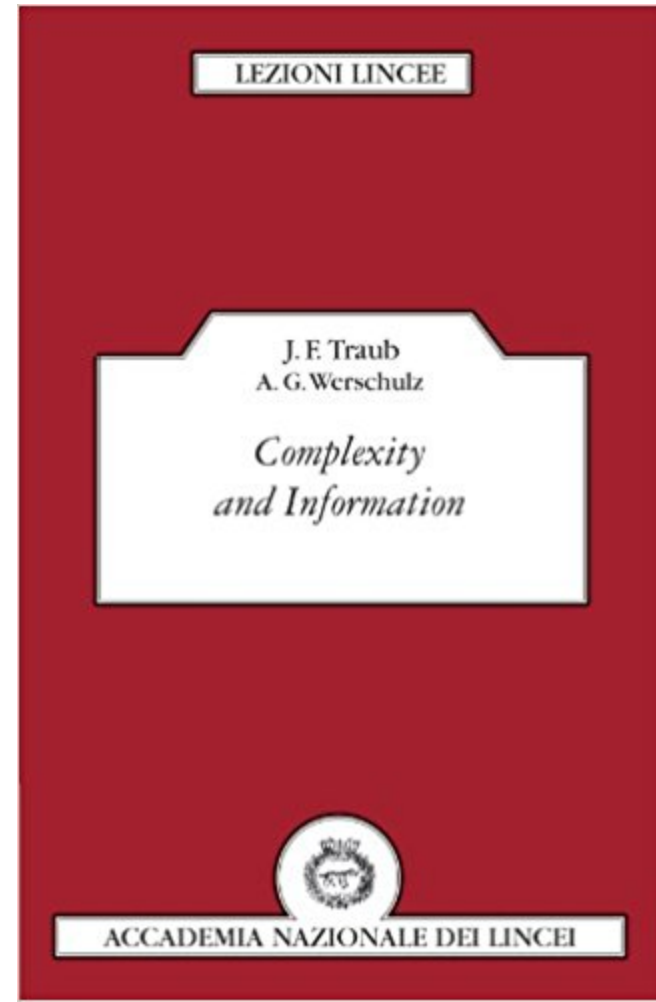
### OPTIMIZATION

$$\underset{\mathbf{x}}{\text{minimize}} \, f(\mathbf{x})$$

**How many dimensions is high dimensions?**

# Troubles in high dimensions

the information-based complexity (IBC)  
notion of **tractability**



**REDUCED-ORDER MODELS  
or  
PARALLEL PROCESSING**

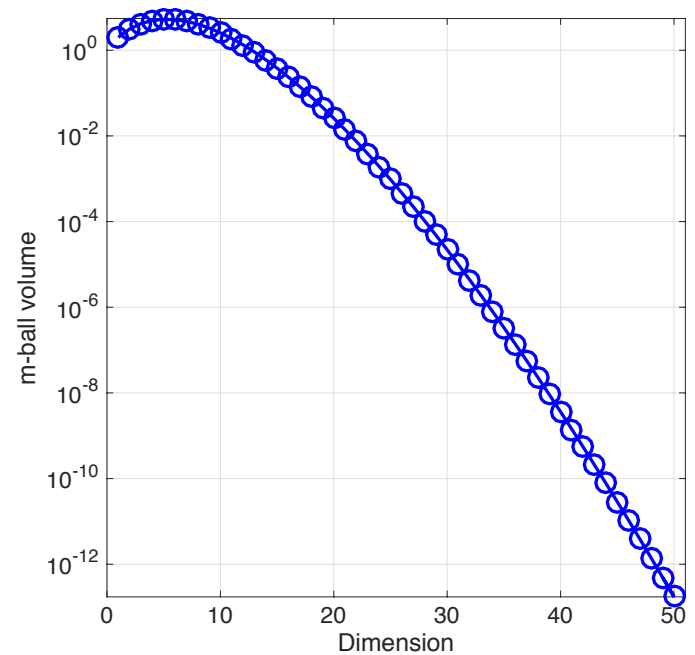
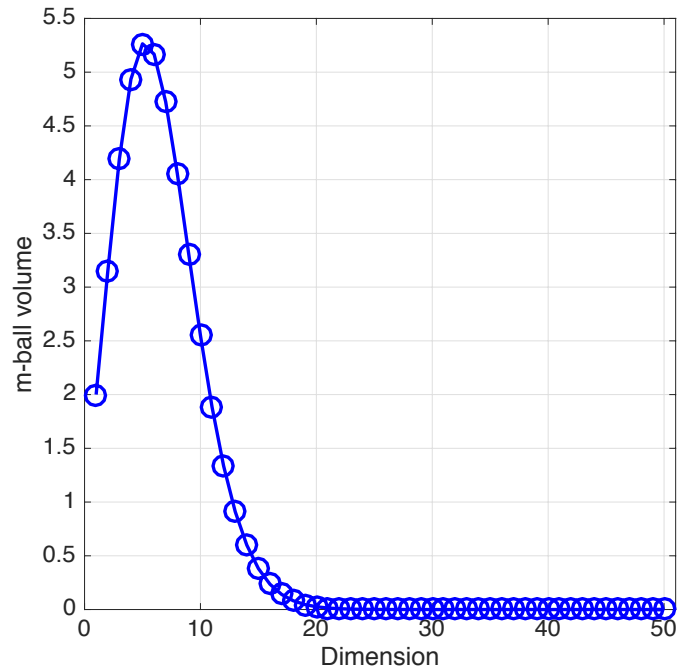
<b>Number of parameters</b> (the dimension)	<b>Number of model runs</b> (at 10 points per dimension)	<b>Time for parameter study</b> (at 1 second per run)
1	10	10 sec
2	100	~ 1.6 min
3	1,000	~ 16 min
4	10,000	~ 2.7 hours
5	100,000	~ 1.1 days
6	1,000,000	~ 1.6 weeks
...	...	...
20	1e20	3 trillion years (240x age of the universe)

**BETTER DESIGNS  
or  
ADAPTIVE SAMPLING**

<b>Number of parameters</b> (the dimension)	<b>Number of model runs</b> (at 10 points per dimension)	<b>Time for parameter study</b> (at 1 second per run)
1	10	10 sec
2	100	~ 1.6 min
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6	1,000,000	~ 1.6 weeks
...	...	...
20	1e20	3 trillion years (240x age of the universe)

# Troubles in high dimensions

volume of a unit ball in  $m$  dimensions:  $\frac{\pi^{\frac{m}{2}}}{\Gamma(\frac{m}{2} + 1)}$



# When Is “Nearest Neighbor” Meaningful?

Kevin Beyer, Jonathan Goldstein, Raghu Ramakrishnan, and Uri Shaft

CS Dept., University of Wisconsin-Madison  
1210 W. Dayton St., Madison, WI 53706  
{beyer, jgoldst, raghu, uri}@cs.wisc.edu

Database Theory --- ICDT'99, Springer (1999)

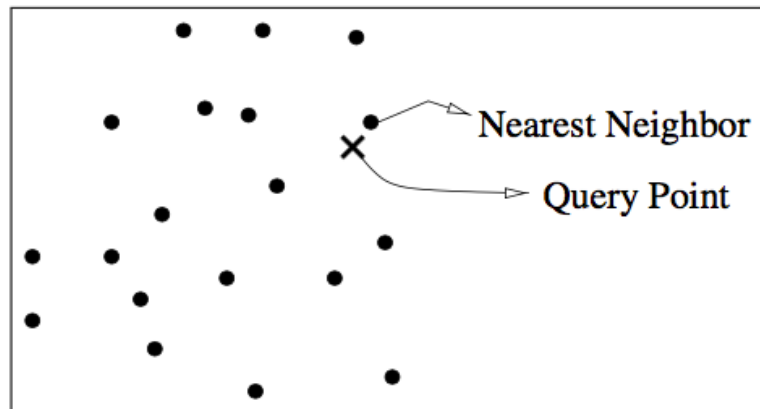


Fig. 1. Query point and its nearest neighbor.

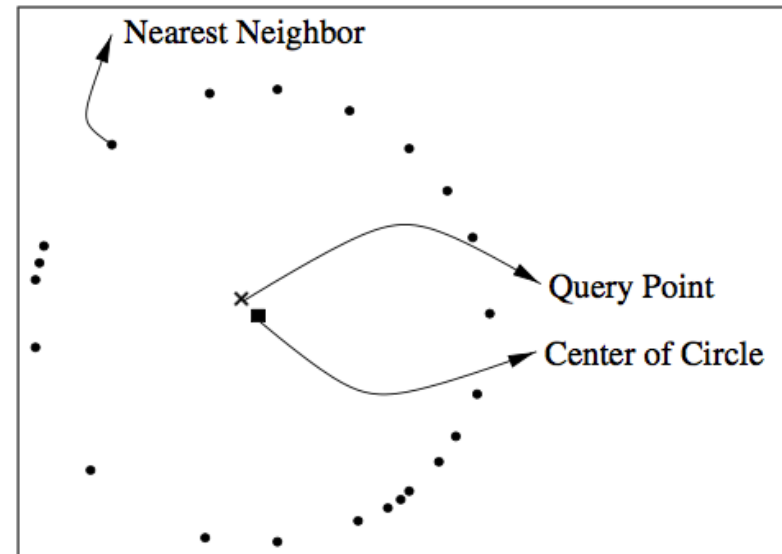
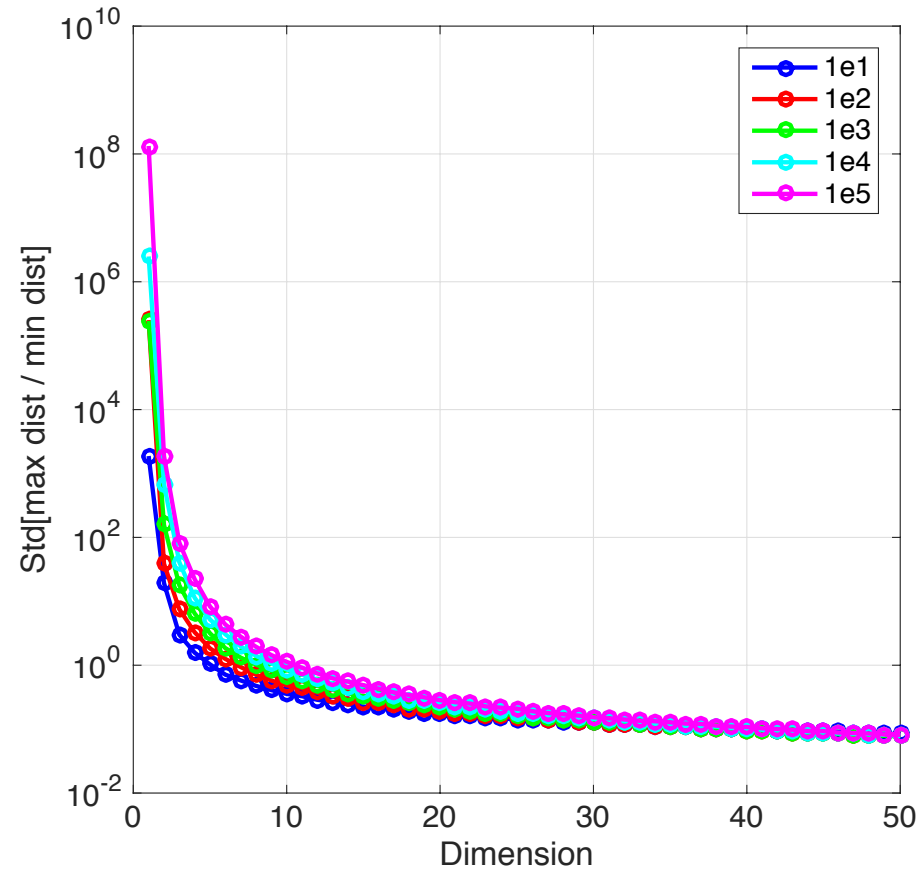
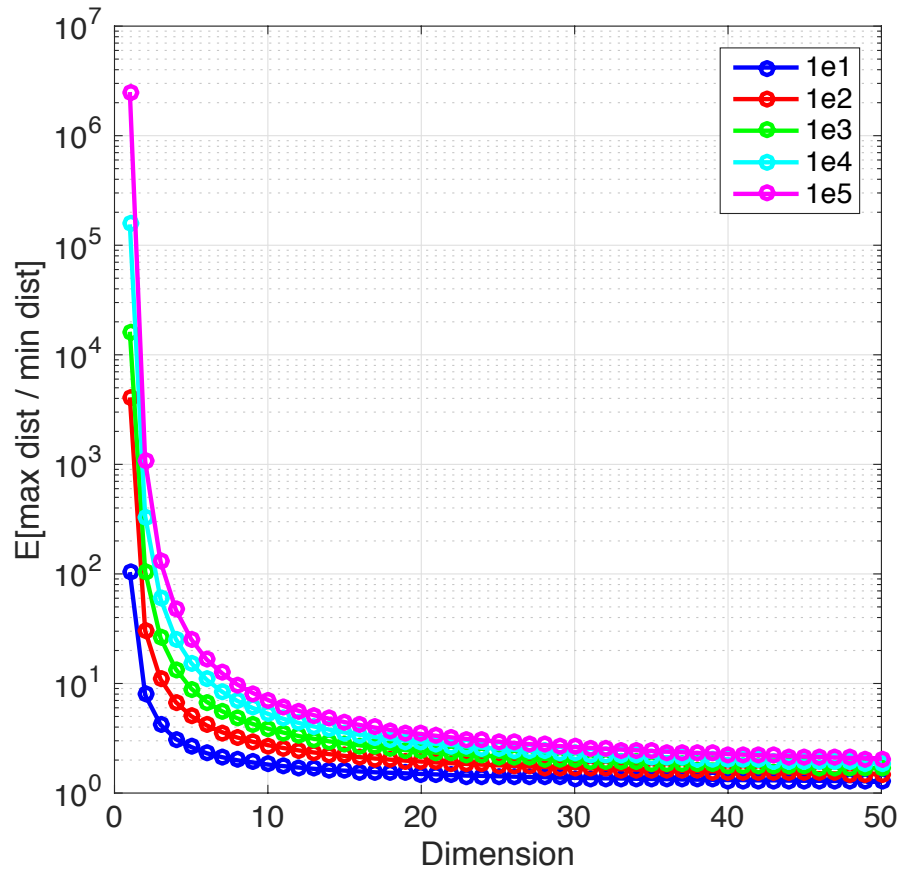


Fig. 2. Another query point and its nearest neighbor.

# When Is "Nearest Neighbor" Meaningful?





# Structure-exploiting methods

## STRUCTURE

$$f(\mathbf{x}) \approx f_1(x_1) + \cdots + f_m(x_m)$$

$$f(\mathbf{x}) \approx \sum_{k=1}^r f_{k,1}(x_1) \cdots f_{k,m}(x_m)$$

$$f(\mathbf{x}) \approx \sum_{k=1}^p a_k \phi_k(\mathbf{x}), \quad \|\mathbf{a}\|_0 \ll p$$

## METHODS

Sparse grids [Bungartz & Griebel (2004)],  
HDMR [Sobol (2003)], ANOVA [Hoeffding  
(1948)], QMC [Niederreiter (1992)], ...

Separation of variables [Beylkin &  
Mohlenkamp (2005)], Tensor-train [Oseledets  
(2011)], Adaptive cross approximation  
[Bebendorff (2011)], Proper generalized  
decomposition [Chinesta et al. (2011)], ...

Compressed sensing [Donoho (2006),  
Candès & Wakin (2008)], ...

John W. Tukey

# EXPLORATORY DATA ANALYSIS



"Even more understanding is *lost* if we consider each thing we can do to data *only* in terms of some set of very restrictive assumptions under which that thing is best possible—assumptions we *know* we *CANNOT* check in practice."

**The best way to fight the **curse** is to reduce the dimension.**

**But what is *dimension reduction*?**

- physical reasoning
- dimensional analysis [Barrenblatt (1996)]
- correlation-based reduction [Jolliffe (2002)]
- global sensitivity analysis [Saltelli et al. (2008)]

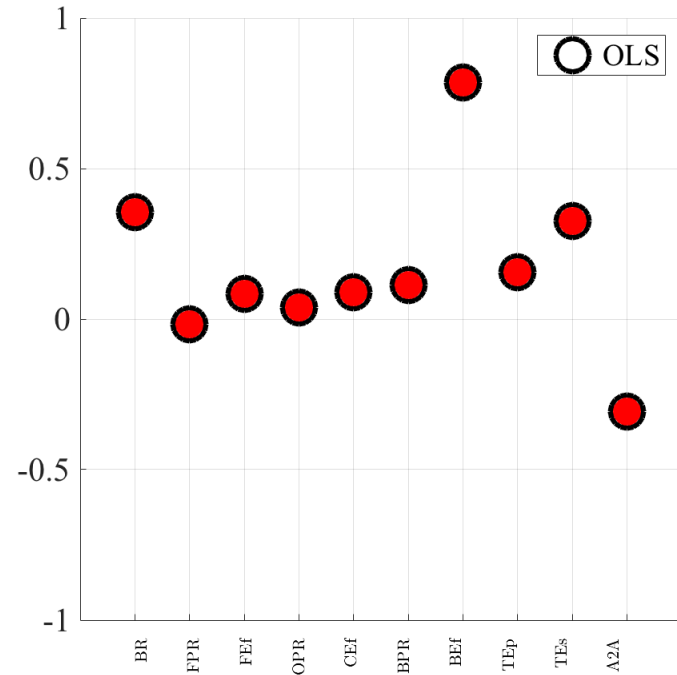
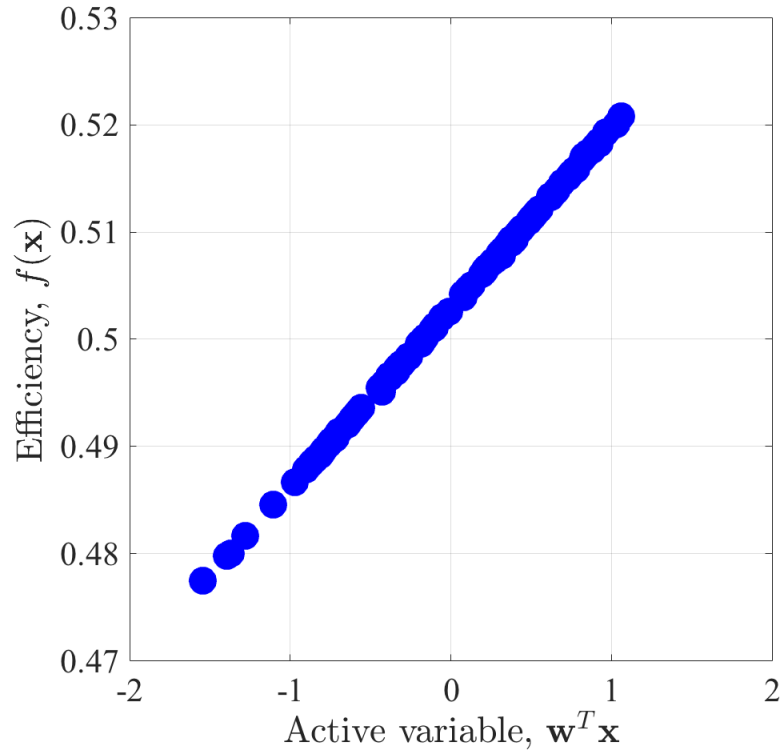


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# Design a jet nozzle under uncertainty

(DARPA SEQUOIA project)



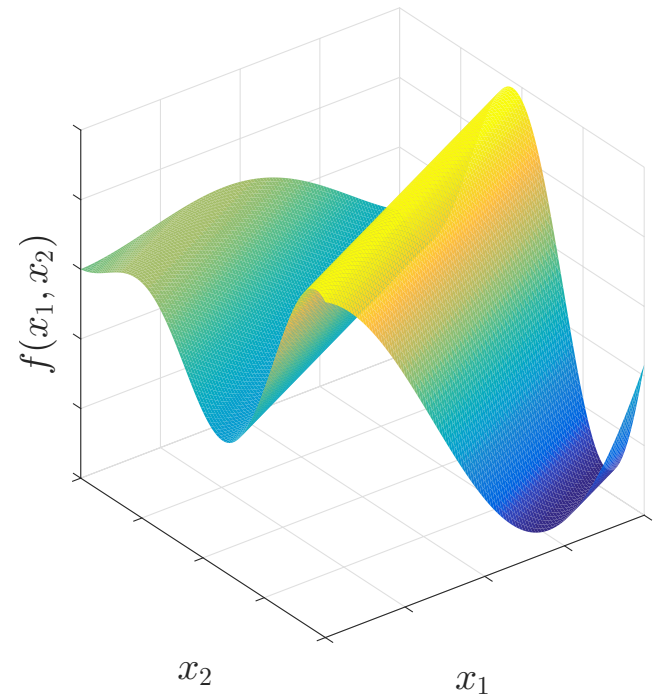
10-parameter engine performance model  
(See animation at <https://youtu.be/Fek2HstkFVc>)

# Ridge approximations

$$f(\mathbf{x}) \approx g(\mathbf{U}^T \mathbf{x})$$

where

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{"big"} \downarrow \\ \mathbf{U}^T : \mathbb{R}^m \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^n \\ \text{"small"} \downarrow \\ g : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \end{array}$$



# Ridge approximations

$$f(\mathbf{x}) \approx g(\mathbf{U}^T \mathbf{x})$$

A subset of related literature

**Approximation theory:**

Mayer et al. (2015), Pinkus (2015), Diaconis and Shahshahani (1984), Donoho and Johnstone (1989)

**Compressed sensing:**

Fornasier et al. (2012), Cohen et al. (2012), Tyagi and Cevher (2014)

**Statistical regression:**

Friedman and Stuetzle (1981), Ichimura (1993), Hristache et al. (2001), Xia et al. (2002)

**Uncertainty quantification & computational science:**

Tipireddy and Ghanem (2014); Lei et al. (2015); Stoyanov and Webster (2015); Tripathy, Bilonis, and Gonzalez (2016); Li, Lin, and Li (2016); ...

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**RIDGE FUNCTIONS**

ALLAN PINKUS

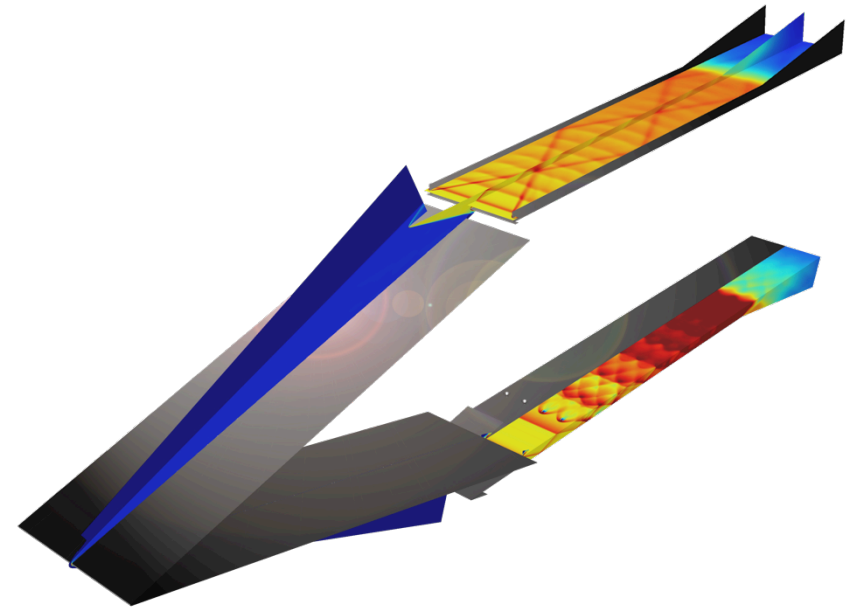
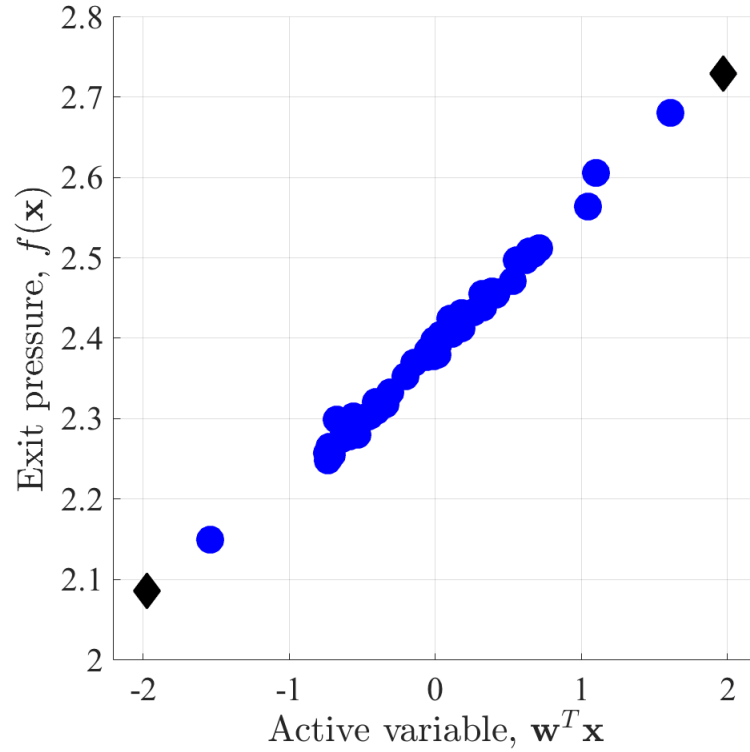


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**Do these structures arise in *real* models?**

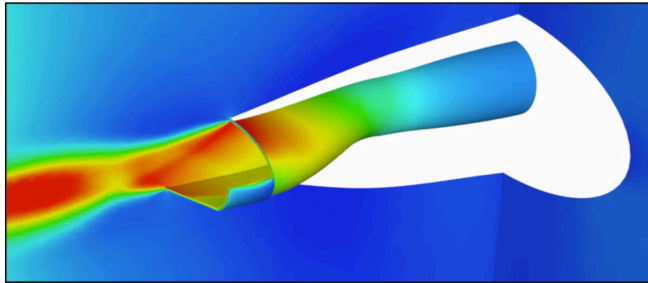


# Evidence of 1d ridge structures across science and engineering models

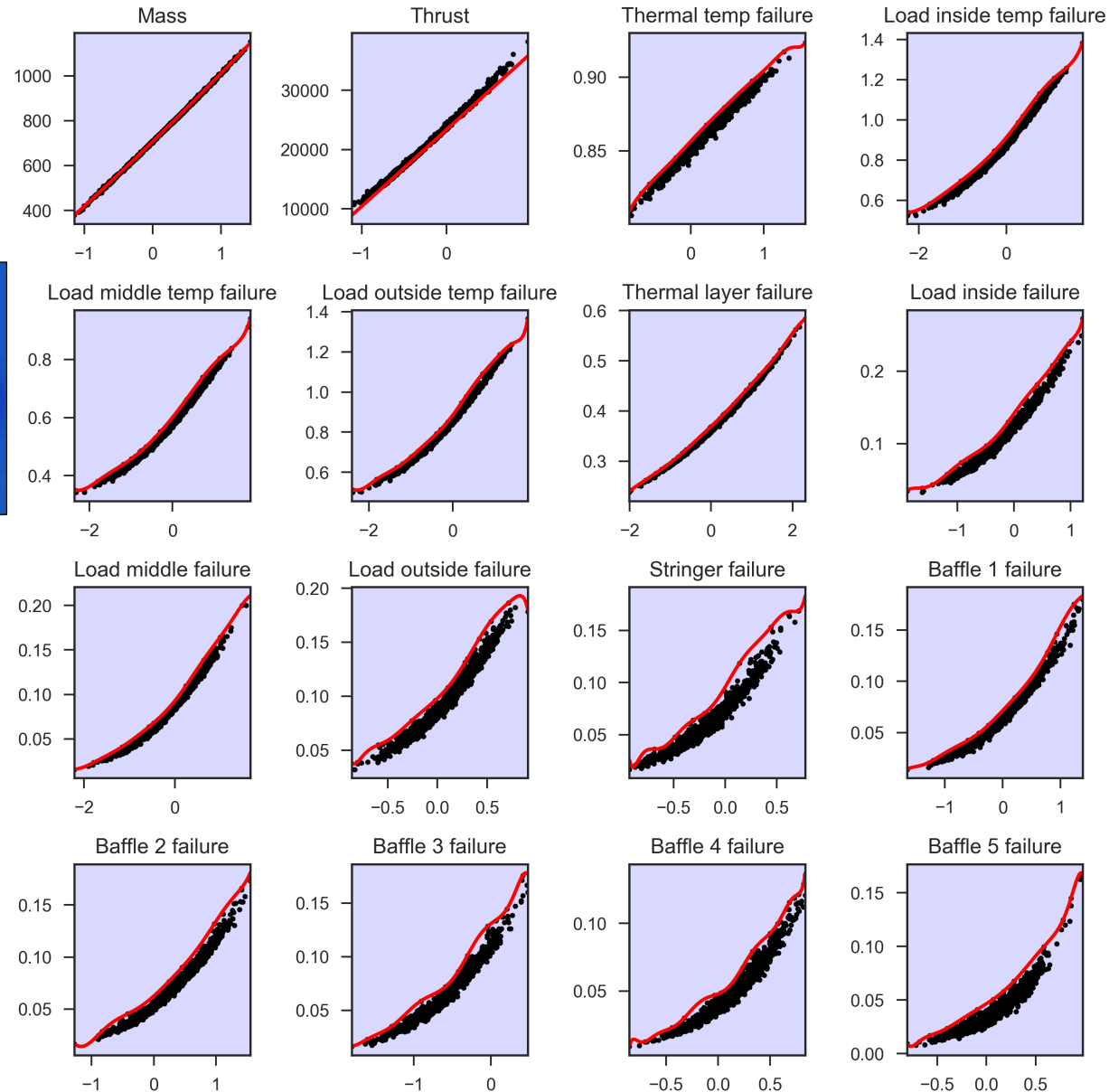


Hypersonic scramjet models

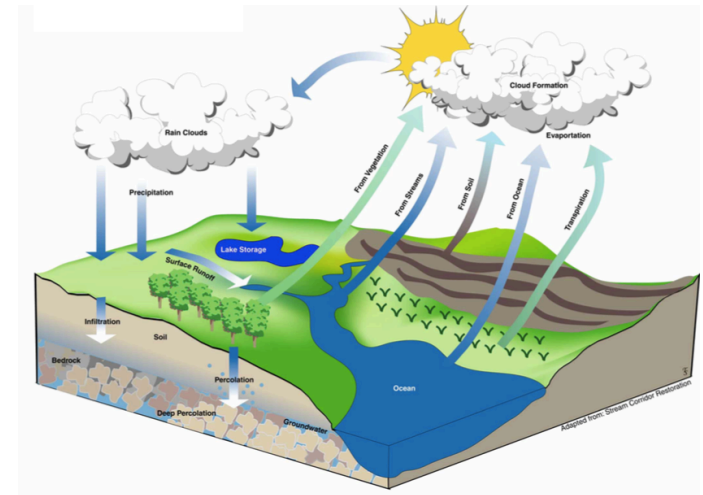
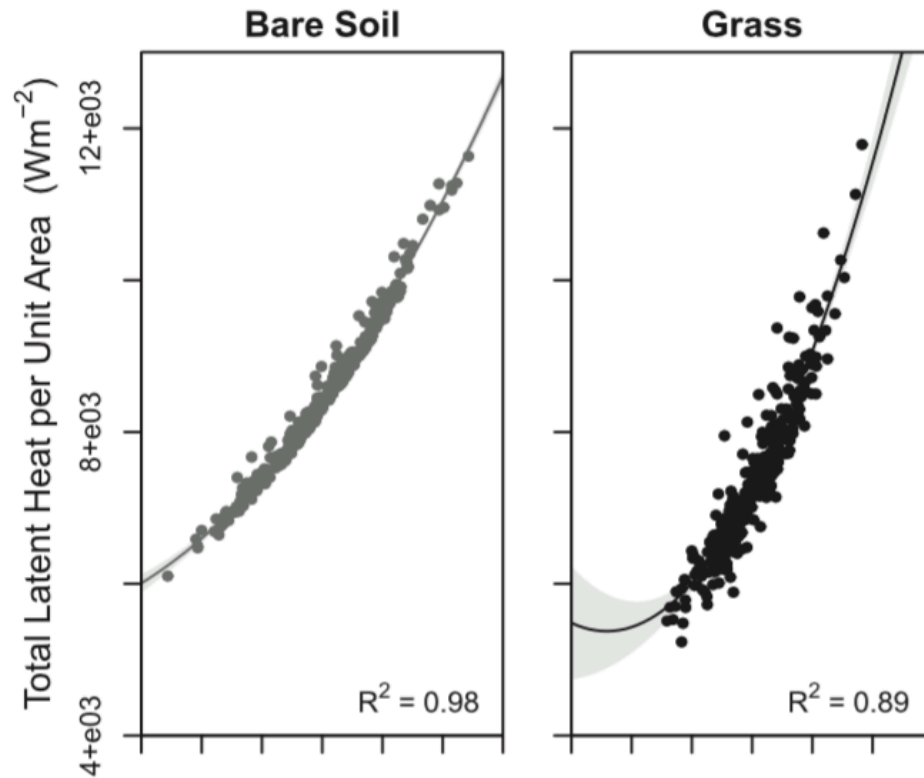
# Evidence of 1d ridge structures across science and engineering models



Integrated jet nozzle models

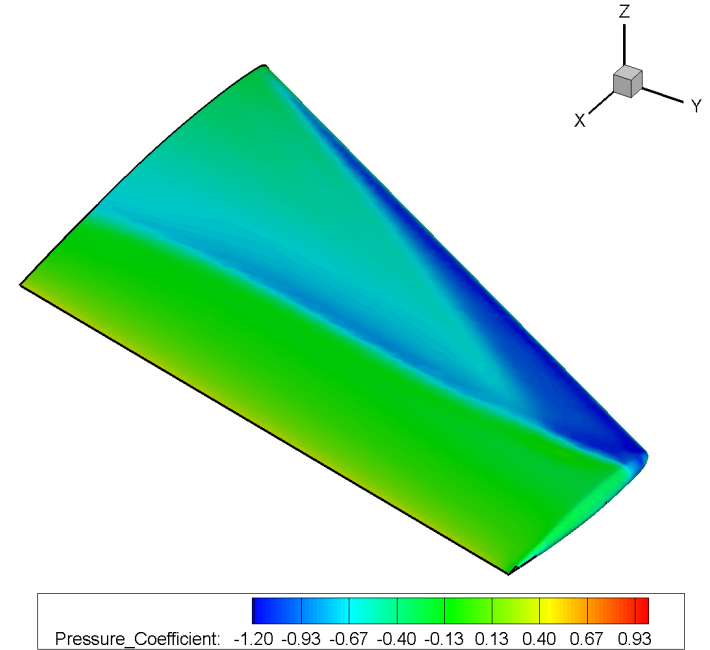
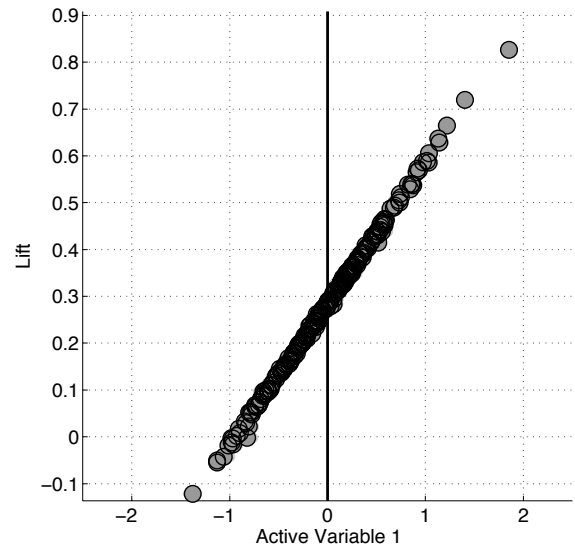
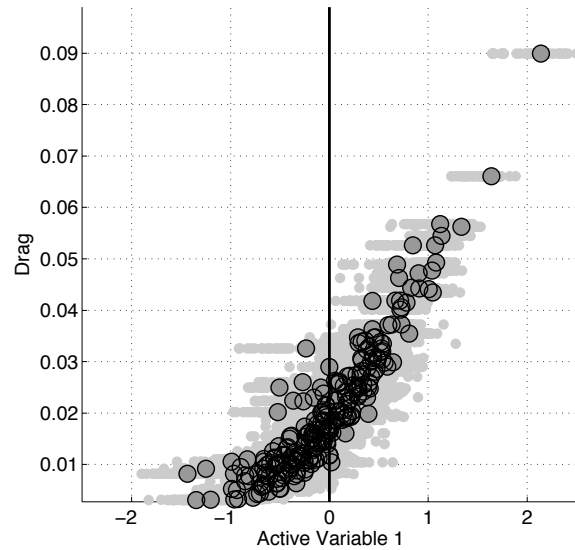


# Evidence of 1d ridge structures across science and engineering models



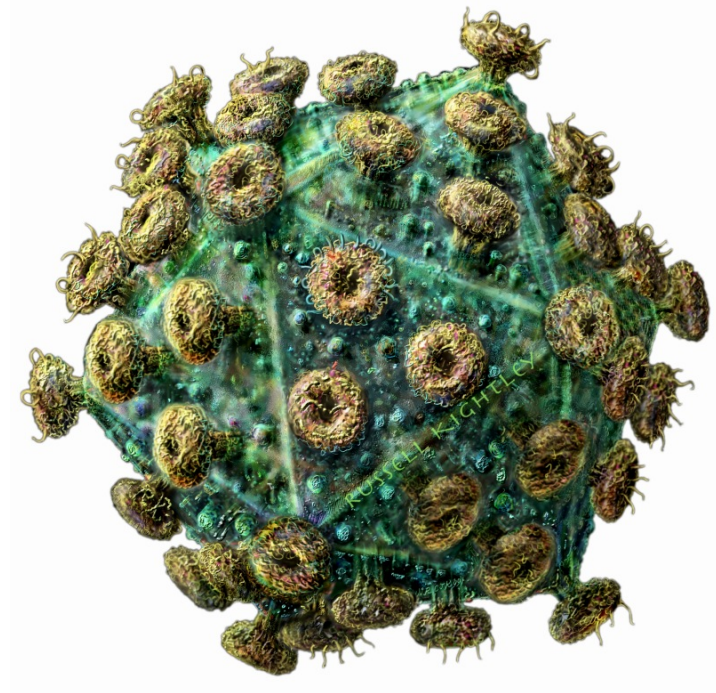
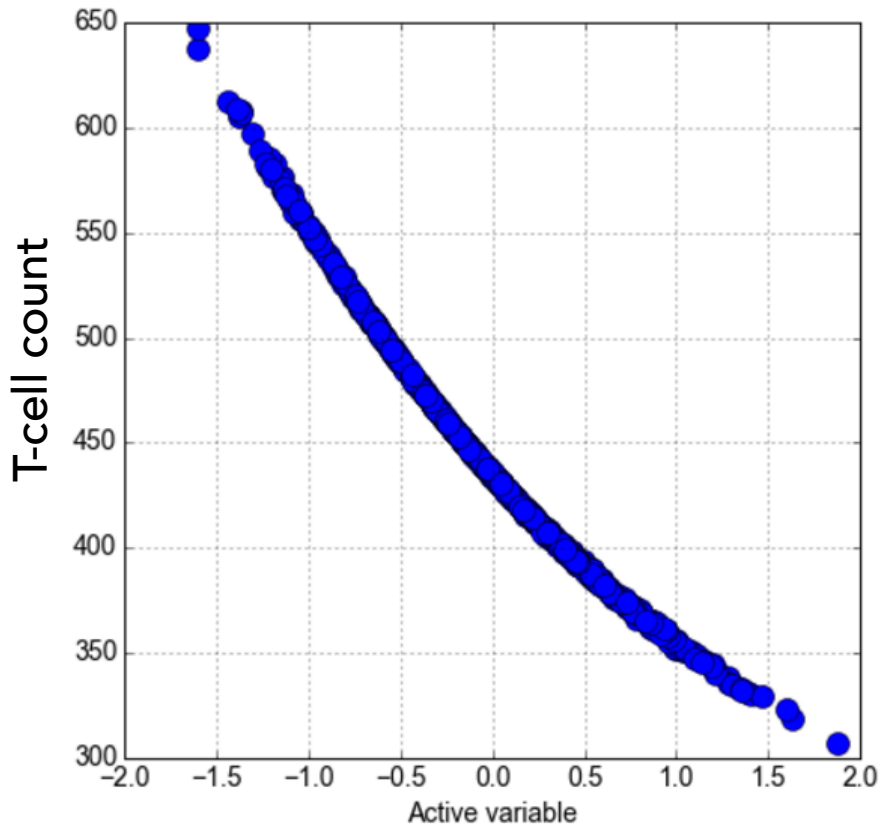
Integrated hydrologic models

# Evidence of 1d ridge structures across science and engineering models



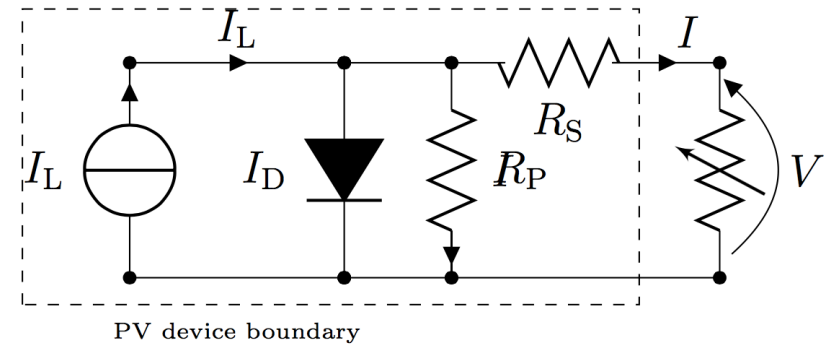
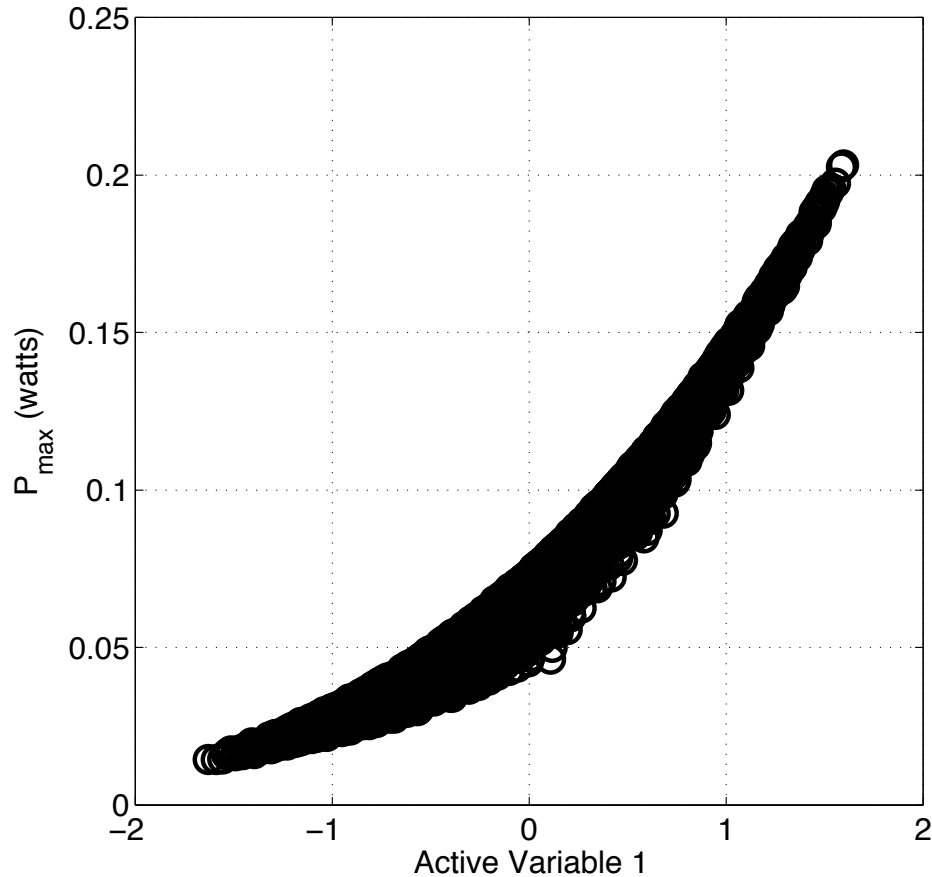
Aerospace vehicle geometries

# Evidence of 1d ridge structures across science and engineering models



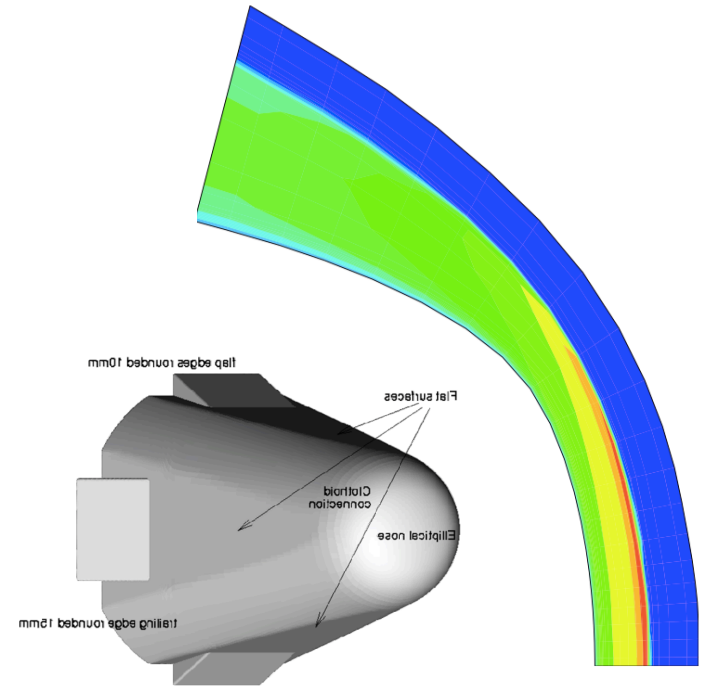
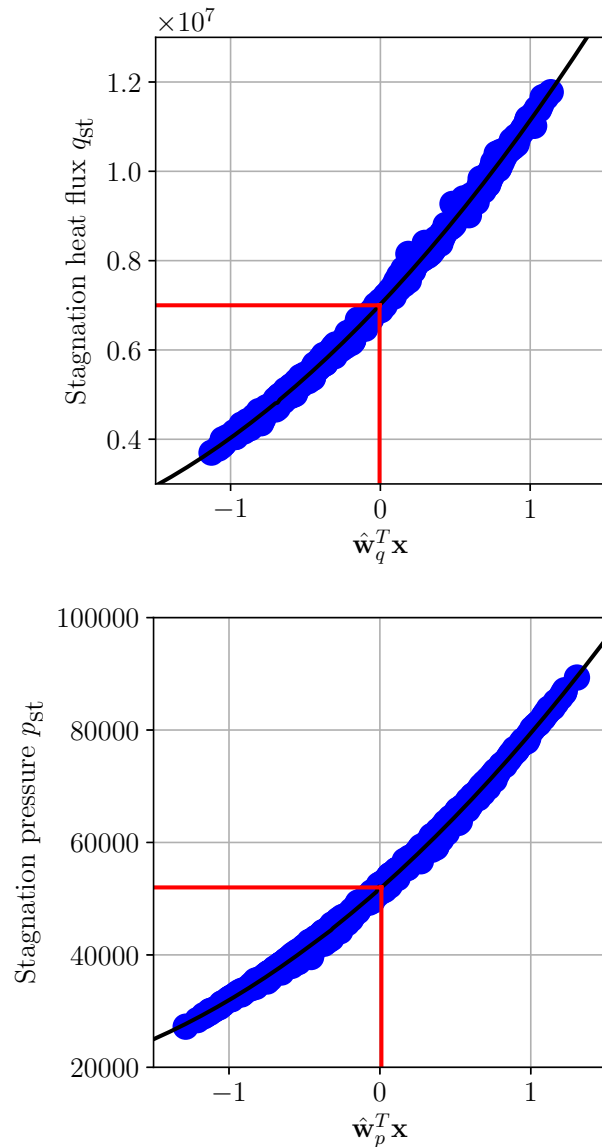
In-host HIV dynamical models

# Evidence of 1d ridge structures across science and engineering models



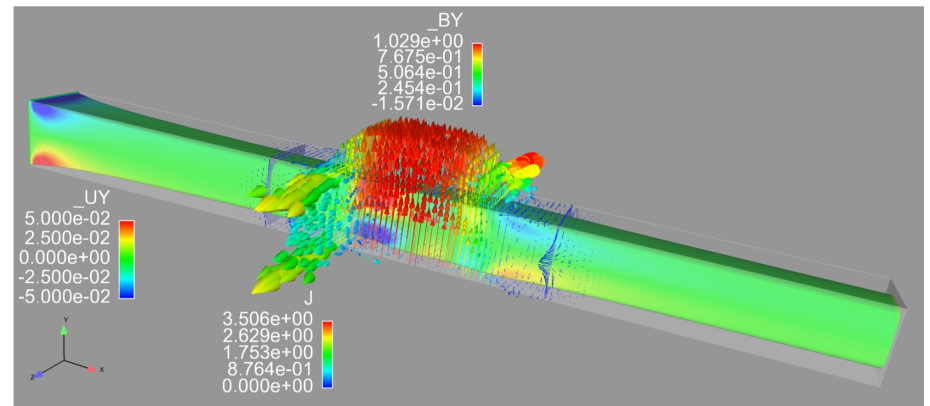
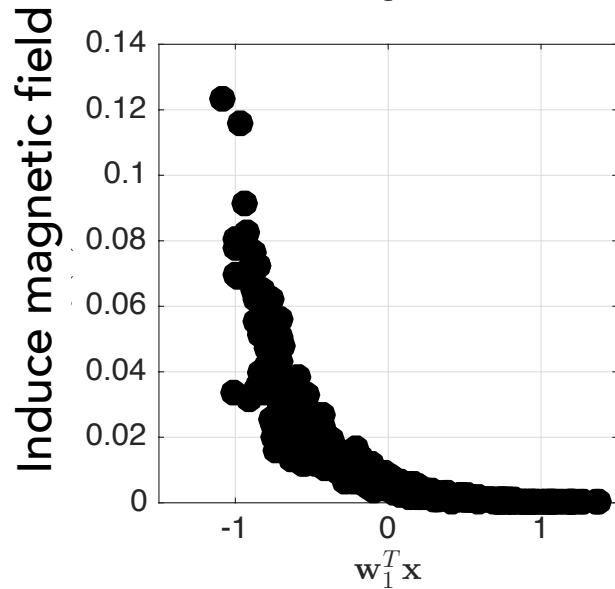
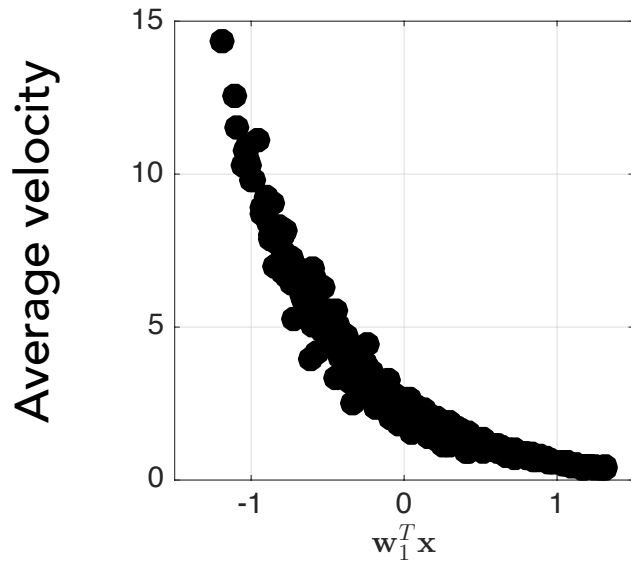
Solar cell circuit models

# Evidence of 1d ridge structures across science and engineering models



Atmospheric reentry vehicle model

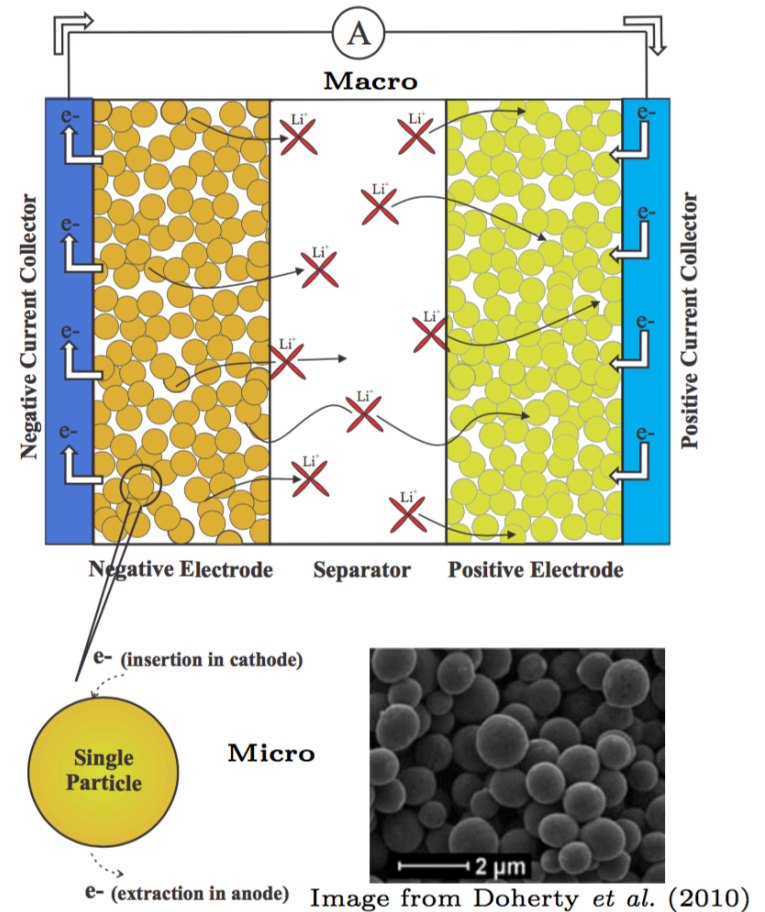
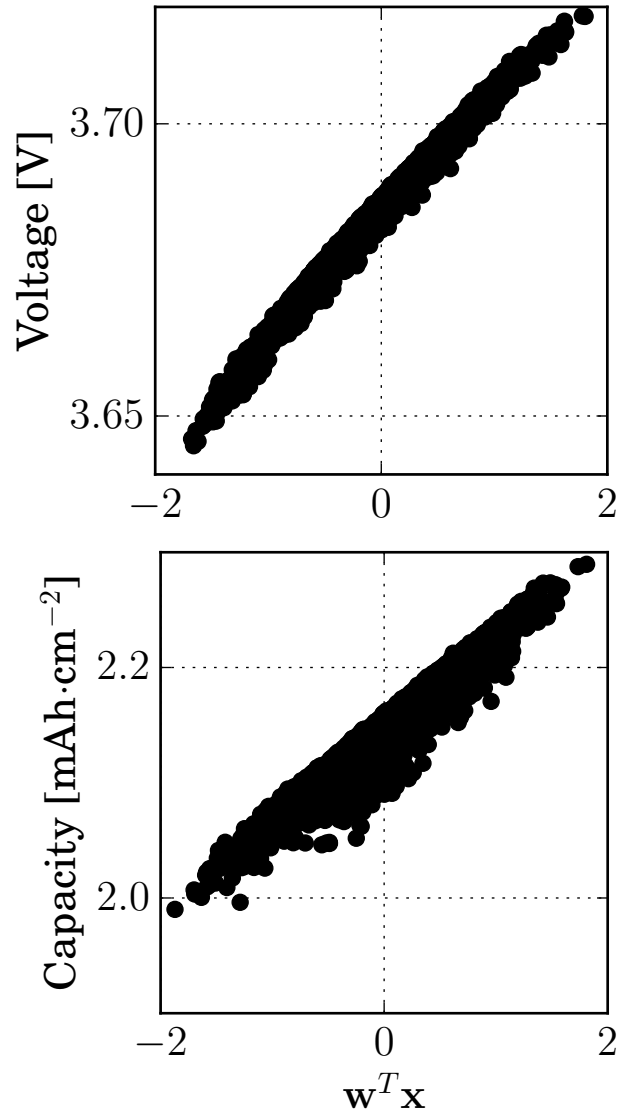
# Evidence of 1d ridge structures across science and engineering models



Magnetohydrodynamics generator model

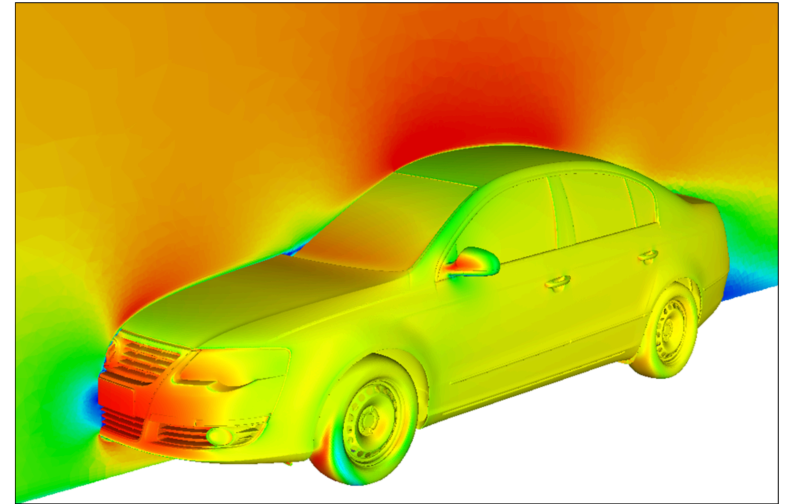
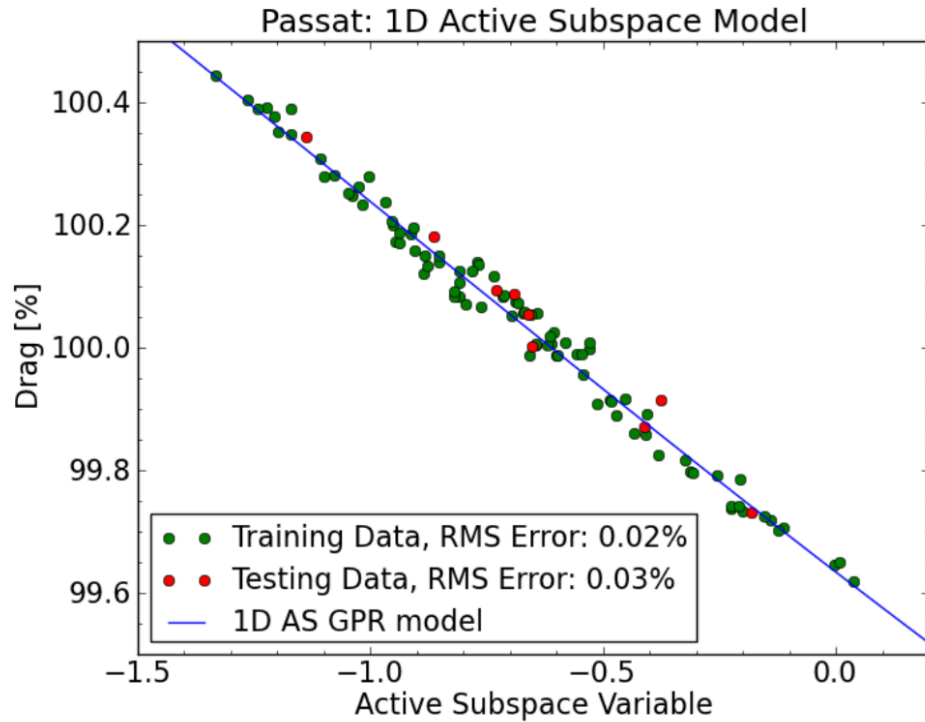


# Evidence of 1d ridge structures across science and engineering models



Lithium ion battery model

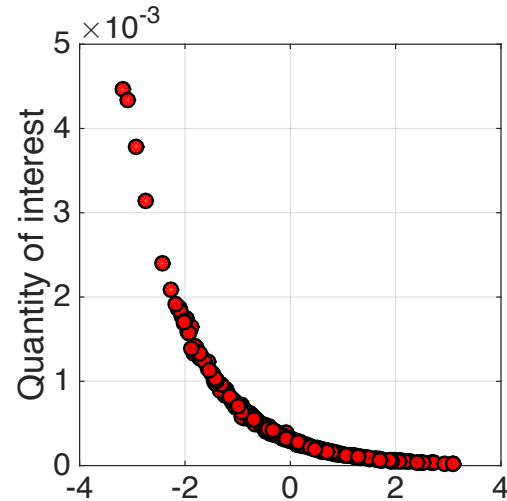
# Evidence of 1d ridge structures across science and engineering models



Automobile geometries

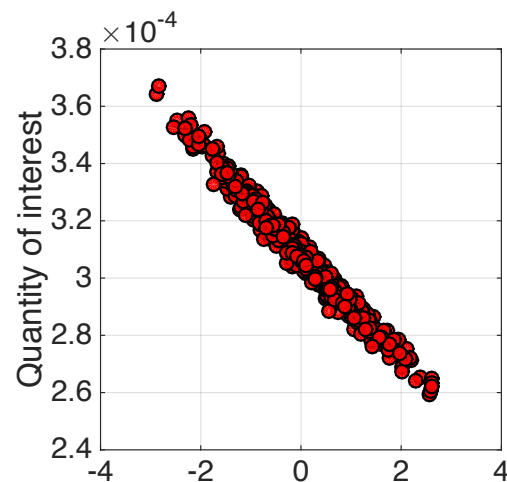
# Evidence of 1d ridge structures across science and engineering models

Long length scale



$$\begin{aligned} -\nabla \cdot (a \nabla u) &= 1, \quad \mathbf{s} \in \mathcal{D} \\ u &= 0, \quad \mathbf{s} \in \Gamma_1 \\ -\mathbf{n} \cdot a \nabla u &= 0, \quad \mathbf{s} \in \Gamma_2 \end{aligned}$$

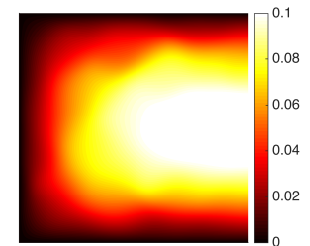
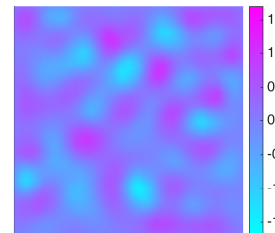
Short length scale



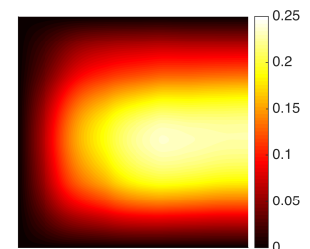
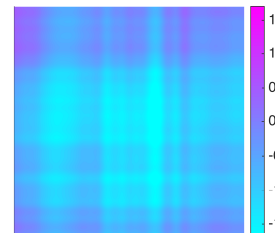
Input field

Solution

Short corr



Long corr



$$f(\mathbf{x})$$

# Jupyter notebooks:

github.com/paulcon/as-data-sets

 paulcon / as-data-sets

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 72 commits

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 paulcon committed on GitHub Merge pull request #28 from ryan-kelley-howard/master ...

Latest commit da61ac5 10 days ago

 Atacamac	Title, author, and reference changes	11 days ago
 Ebola	Title, author, and reference changes	11 days ago
 HIV	Title, author, and reference changes	11 days ago
 HyShotII	Title, author, and reference changes	11 days ago
 Hydrology	Title, author, and reference changes	11 days ago

**What about the math?**

# Ridge approximations

What is the approximation error?

What is  $U$ ?

What is  $g$ ?

$$f(\mathbf{x}) \approx g(\mathbf{U}^T \mathbf{x})$$

The diagram shows the equation  $f(\mathbf{x}) \approx g(\mathbf{U}^T \mathbf{x})$ . The approximation symbol  $\approx$  is enclosed in a green box, with a green arrow pointing to it from the text 'What is the approximation error?'. The function  $g$  is enclosed in a red box, with a red arrow pointing to it from the text 'What is  $g$ ?'. The matrix  $U$  is enclosed in a blue box, with a blue arrow pointing to it from the text 'What is  $U$ ?'. The input vector  $\mathbf{x}$  is not boxed.

# Ridge approximations

$$f(\mathbf{x}) \approx \boxed{g}(\mathbf{U}^T \mathbf{x})$$

What is  $g$ ?

Use the conditional average:

$$\mu(\mathbf{y}) = \int f(\mathbf{U}\mathbf{y} + \mathbf{V}\mathbf{z}) \pi(\mathbf{z}|\mathbf{y}) d\mathbf{z}$$

subspace coordinates

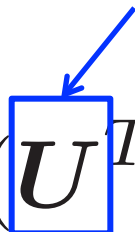
complement subspace and coordinates

conditional density

$\mu(\mathbf{U}^T \mathbf{x})$  is the **best**  $L_2$  **approximation** [Pinkus (2015)]

# Ridge approximations

What is  $\mathbf{U}$ ?

$$f(\mathbf{x}) \approx g(\mathbf{U}^T \mathbf{x})$$




# Define the active subspace

The function, its gradient vector, and a given weight function:

$$f = f(\mathbf{x}), \quad \mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^m, \quad \nabla f(\mathbf{x}) \in \mathbb{R}^m, \quad \rho : \mathbb{R}^m \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_+$$

The average outer product of the gradient and its eigendecomposition,

$$\mathbf{C} = \int \nabla f(\mathbf{x}) \nabla f(\mathbf{x})^T \rho(\mathbf{x}) \, d\mathbf{x} = \mathbf{W} \mathbf{\Lambda} \mathbf{W}^T$$

Some relevant literature

**Statistical regression:** Samarov (1993), Hristache et al. (2001)

**Machine learning:** Mukerjee, Wu, and Xiao (2010); Fukumizu and Leng (2014)

**Detection and estimation theory:** van Trees (2001)

# Define the active subspace

The function, its gradient vector, and a given weight function:

$$f = f(\mathbf{x}), \quad \mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^m, \quad \nabla f(\mathbf{x}) \in \mathbb{R}^m, \quad \rho : \mathbb{R}^m \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_+$$

The average outer product of the gradient and its eigendecomposition:

$$\mathbf{C} = \int \nabla f(\mathbf{x}) \nabla f(\mathbf{x})^T \rho(\mathbf{x}) \, d\mathbf{x} = \mathbf{W} \mathbf{\Lambda} \mathbf{W}^T$$

Eigenvalues measure ridge structure with eigenvectors:

The diagram illustrates the interpretation of the eigenvalue  $\lambda_i$  in the equation  $\lambda_i = \int (\mathbf{w}_i^T \nabla f(\mathbf{x}))^2 \rho(\mathbf{x}) \, d\mathbf{x}$ . A blue arrow points from the label "eigenvalue" to  $\lambda_i$ . A red bracket is placed under the integrand  $(\mathbf{w}_i^T \nabla f(\mathbf{x}))^2 \rho(\mathbf{x})$ , with the text "average, squared, directional derivative along eigenvector" positioned below it.

$$\lambda_i = \int (\mathbf{w}_i^T \nabla f(\mathbf{x}))^2 \rho(\mathbf{x}) \, d\mathbf{x}, \quad i = 1, \dots, m$$

eigenvalue

average, squared, directional derivative along eigenvector

# Eigenvalues control the approximation error

conditional average

Poincaré constant

$$\left\| f(\mathbf{x}) - \mu(\mathbf{W}_1^T \mathbf{x}) \right\|_{L^2(\rho)} \leq C \underbrace{(\lambda_{n+1} + \cdots + \lambda_m)}_{\text{eigenvalues associated with inactive subspace}}^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

active subspace

eigenvalues associated with inactive subspace

# Estimate the active subspace with Monte Carlo

(1) Draw samples:  $\mathbf{x}_j \sim \rho(\mathbf{x})$

(2) Compute:  $f_j = f(\mathbf{x}_j)$  and  $\nabla f_j = \nabla f(\mathbf{x}_j)$

(3) Approximate with Monte Carlo, and compute eigendecomposition

$$\mathbf{C} \approx \frac{1}{N} \sum_{j=1}^N \nabla f_j \nabla f_j^T = \hat{\mathbf{W}} \hat{\Lambda} \hat{\mathbf{W}}^T$$

Equivalent to SVD of samples of the gradient

$$\frac{1}{\sqrt{N}} [\nabla f_1 \quad \cdots \quad \nabla f_N] = \hat{\mathbf{W}} \sqrt{\hat{\Lambda}} \hat{\mathbf{V}}^T$$

Called an **active subspace method** in T. Russi's 2010 Ph.D. thesis,  
*Uncertainty Quantification with Experimental Data in Complex System Models*

## Remember the problem to solve



Low-rank approximation of the collection of gradients:

$$\frac{1}{\sqrt{N}} \begin{bmatrix} \nabla f_1 & \cdots & \nabla f_N \end{bmatrix} \approx \hat{\mathbf{W}}_1 \sqrt{\hat{\Lambda}_1} \hat{\mathbf{V}}_1^T$$



Low-dimensional linear approximation of the gradient:

$$\text{span}(\hat{\mathbf{W}}_1) \approx \{ \nabla f(\mathbf{x}) : \mathbf{x} \in \text{supp } \rho(\mathbf{x}) \}$$



**Approximate** a function of many variables by a function of a few linear combinations of the variables:

$$f(\mathbf{x}) \approx g\left(\hat{\mathbf{W}}_1^T \mathbf{x}\right)$$

# How many gradient samples?

number of samples  $\searrow$

bound on gradient  $\downarrow$

$$N = \Omega \left( \frac{L^2 \lambda_1}{\lambda_k^2 \varepsilon^2} \log(m) \right) \Rightarrow \overbrace{|\lambda_k - \hat{\lambda}_k| \leq \lambda_k \varepsilon}^{\text{eigenvalue error (w.h.p.)}}$$

$\uparrow$  dimension

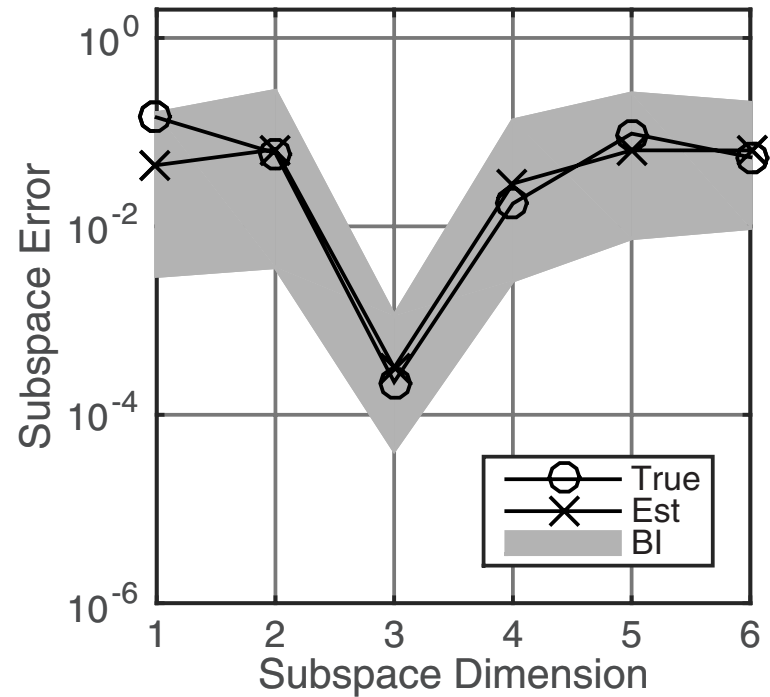
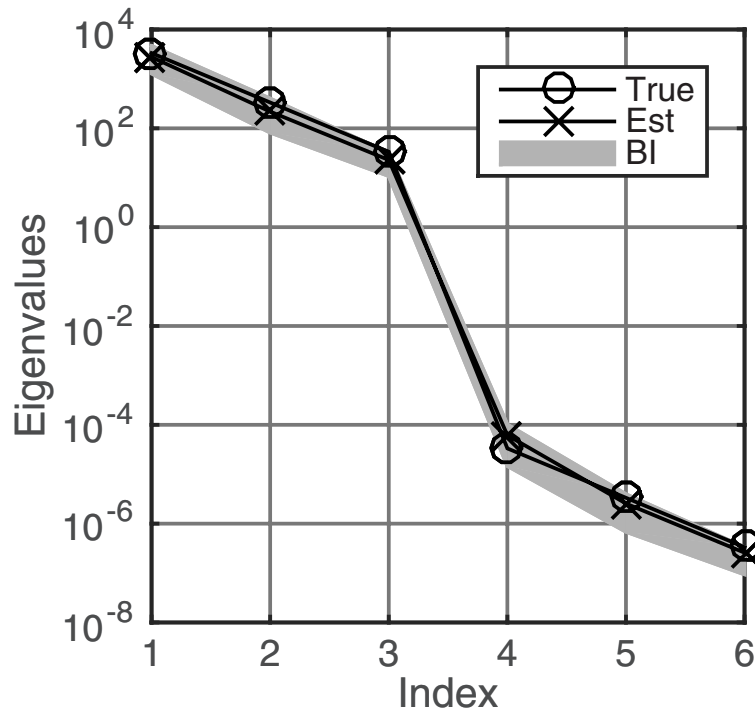
number of samples  $\searrow$

bound on gradient  $\downarrow$

$$N = \Omega \left( \frac{L^2}{\lambda_1 \varepsilon^2} \log(m) \right) \Rightarrow \underbrace{\text{dist}(\mathbf{W}_1, \hat{\mathbf{W}}_1) \leq \frac{4\lambda_1 \varepsilon}{\lambda_n - \lambda_{n+1}}}_{\text{subspace error (w.h.p.)}}$$

$\uparrow$  dimension

## In practice, bootstrap



Eigenvalue estimates and subspace error estimates **with bootstrap intervals** from quadratic function of 10 variables

# Effect of estimated eigenvectors?

Recall the subspace error:

$$\varepsilon = \text{dist}(\mathbf{W}_1, \hat{\mathbf{W}}_1) \propto \frac{\mathcal{O}(\text{eigval. error})}{\lambda_n - \lambda_{n+1}}$$

$$\begin{aligned} & \left\| f(\mathbf{x}) - \mu(\hat{\mathbf{W}}_1^T \mathbf{x}) \right\|_{L^2(\rho)} \\ & \leq C \left( \underbrace{\varepsilon}_{\text{Subspace error}} \underbrace{(\lambda_1 + \cdots + \lambda_n)^{\frac{1}{2}}}_{\text{Eigenvalues for active variables}} + \underbrace{(\lambda_{n+1} + \cdots + \lambda_m)^{\frac{1}{2}}}_{\text{Eigenvalues for inactive variables}} \right) \end{aligned}$$



Is the active subspace **optimal**?

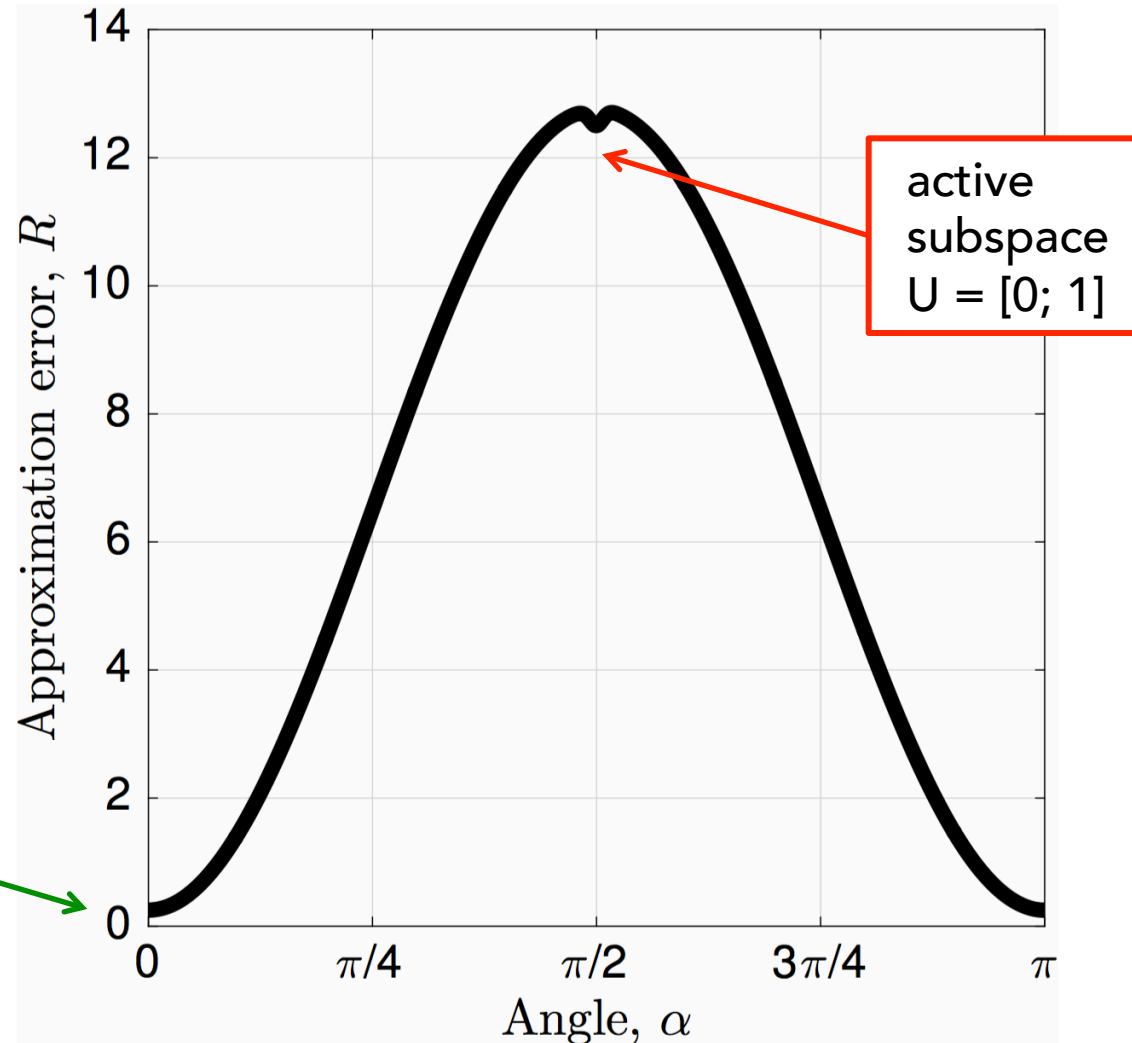
(No.)

## An example where it doesn't work

$$f(x_1, x_2) = 5x_1 + \sin(10\pi x_2)$$

$$\begin{aligned} C &= \left\langle \nabla f, \nabla f \right\rangle \\ &= \begin{bmatrix} 25 & 0 \\ 0 & 526 \end{bmatrix} \end{aligned}$$

inactive  
subspace  
 $U = [1; 0]$



# Ridge approximations

What is  $U$ ?

$$f(\mathbf{x}) \approx g(\mathbf{U}^T \mathbf{x})$$

Define the error function:

best approximation

$$R(\mathbf{U}) = \frac{1}{2} \int (f(\mathbf{x}) - \mu(\mathbf{U}^T \mathbf{x}))^2 \rho(\mathbf{x}) d\mathbf{x}$$

Minimize the error:

$$\underset{\mathbf{U}}{\text{minimize}} \ R(\mathbf{U}) \quad \text{subject to} \ \mathbf{U} \in \mathbb{G}(n, m)$$

Grassmann manifold

# The active subspace is nearly stationary

- Assume (1) Lipschitz continuous function
- (2) Gaussian density function

gradient on the Grassmann manifold

Lipschitz constant

dimensions

active subspace

Frobenius norm

eigenvalues associated with inactive subspace

$$\|\bar{\nabla} R(\mathbf{W}_1)\|_F \leq L \left( 2m^{\frac{1}{2}} + (m - n)^{\frac{1}{2}} \right) (\lambda_{n+1} + \cdots + \lambda_m)^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

# Estimate the optimal subspace with discrete least squares

(1) Choose points:  $\mathbf{x}_j \sim \rho(\mathbf{x})$

(2) Compute:  $f_j = f(\mathbf{x}_j)$

(3) Minimize the misfit

polynomials  $\rightarrow$  minimize  $g \in \mathbb{P}_p(\mathbb{R}^n)$

subspaces  $\rightarrow$   $\mathbf{U} \in \mathbb{G}(n, m)$

$$\sum_{j=1}^N \left( f_j - \underset{\substack{\text{polynomial} \\ \text{subspace}}}{g(\mathbf{U}^T \mathbf{x}_j)} \right)^2$$

# Two contenders for the least squares problem

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{minimize} \\ g \in \mathbb{P}_p(\mathbb{R}^n) \\ \mathbf{U} \in \mathbb{G}(n, m) \end{array} \sum_{j=1}^N \left( f_j - g(\mathbf{U}^T \mathbf{x}_j) \right)^2$$

## Variable projection

Use pseudoinverse of Vandermonde matrix to express optimal polynomial coefficients

Compute the derivative of the pseudoinverse of the Vandermonde matrix [Golub & Pereyra (1973)] on the Grassmann manifold [Edelman et al. (1998)]

Run Newton on loss function

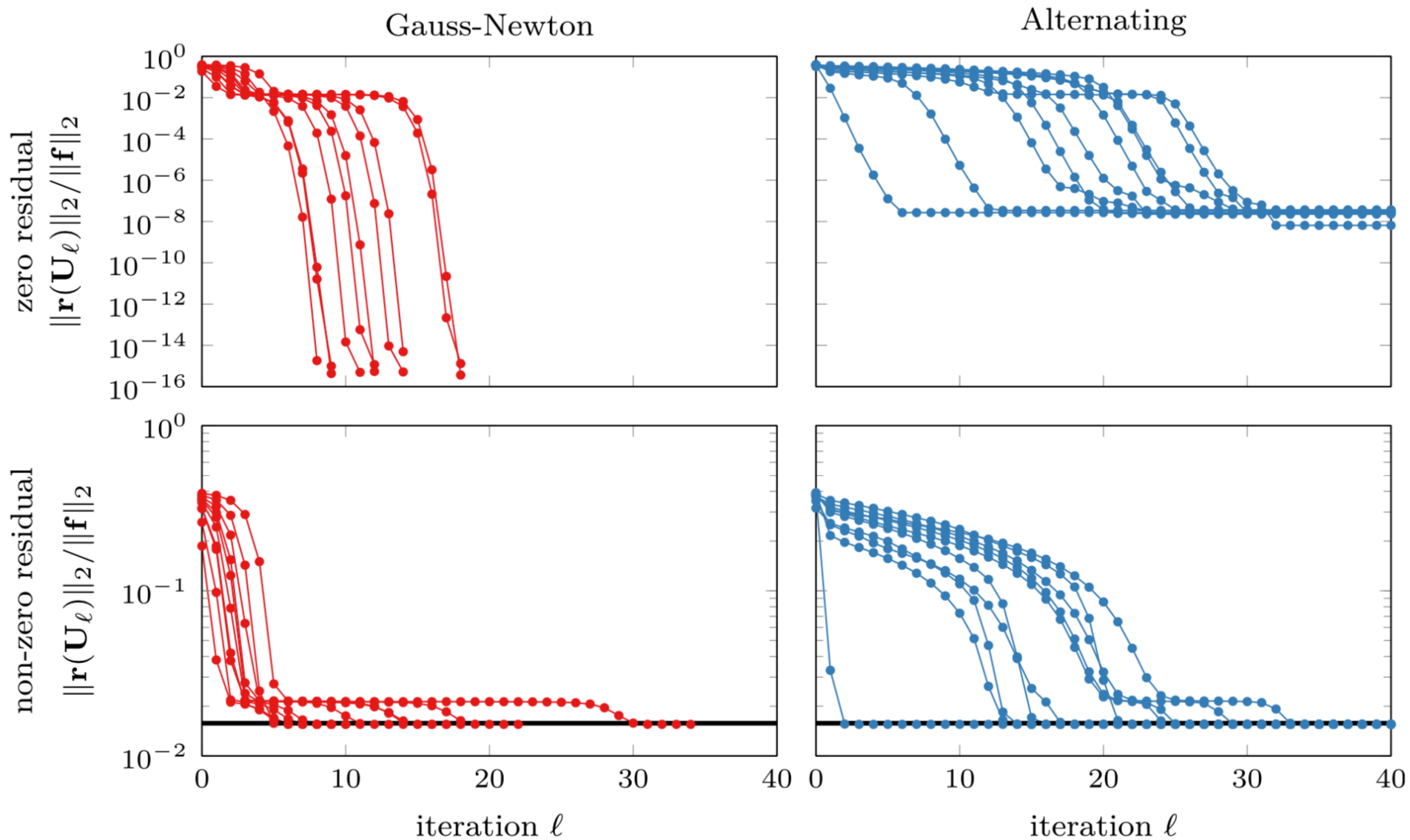
## Alternating minimization

Given subspace, fit polynomial

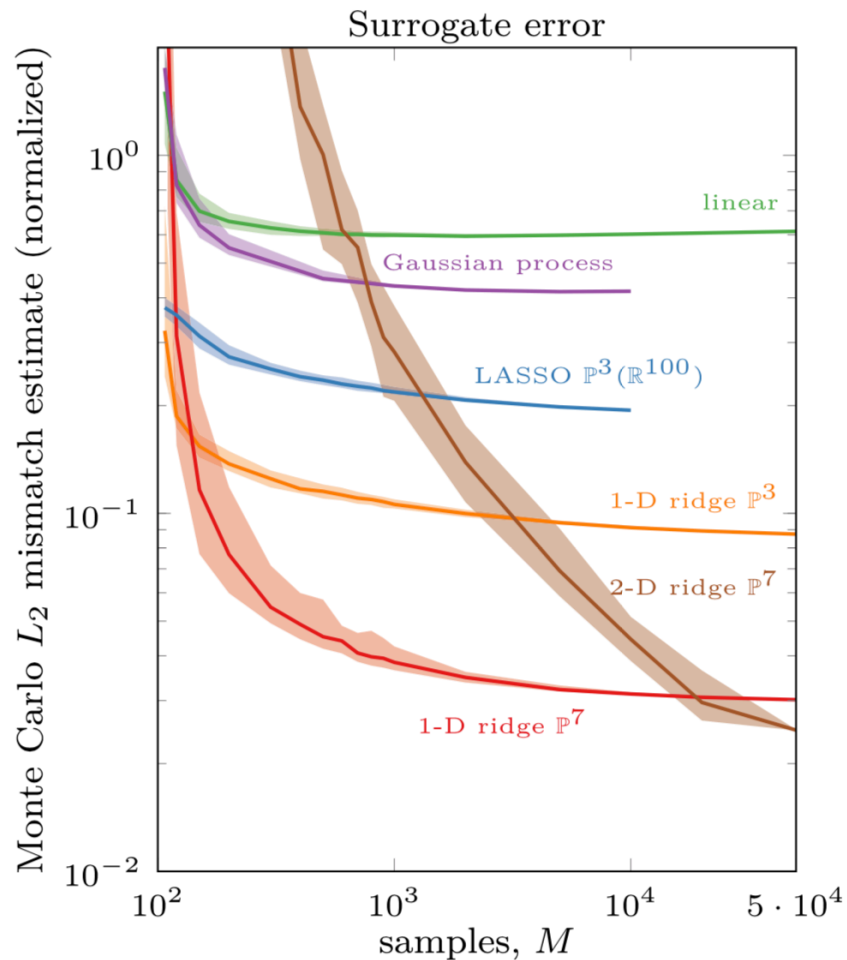
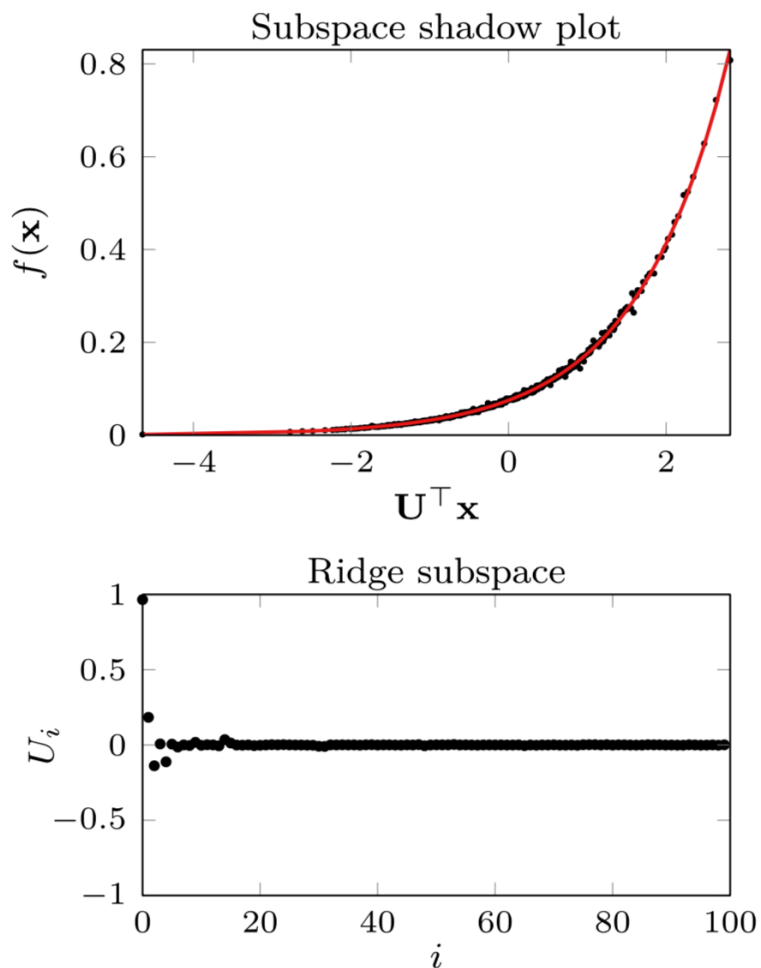
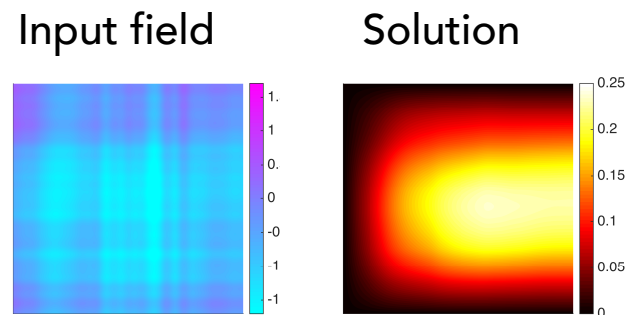
Given polynomial coefficients, minimize over subspace

Repeat

$$f(\mathbf{x}) = (\mathbf{e}_1^\top \mathbf{x})^2 + (\mathbf{1}^\top \mathbf{x}/10)^3 + 1; \quad \mathcal{D} = [-1, 1]^{10}$$



$$\begin{aligned}
-\nabla \cdot (a \nabla u) &= 1, \quad \mathbf{s} \in \mathcal{D} \\
u &= 0, \quad \mathbf{s} \in \Gamma_1 \\
-\mathbf{n} \cdot a \nabla u &= 0, \quad \mathbf{s} \in \Gamma_2
\end{aligned}$$





# SUMMARY :: Why I like ridge structure

## (1) Exploitable

+ for dimension reduction, not just cheap surrogate

## (2) Insights

+ which variables are *important*

## (3) Discoverable / checkable

+ eigenvalues

+ non-residual metrics:  $\mathbb{E}[\text{Var}[f \mid \mathbf{U}^T \mathbf{x}]]$

+ **plots** in 1 and 2d

# TAKE HOMES

The best way to fight the curse of dimensionality is to reduce the dimension!

There are many notions of *important subspaces*; they arise in several applications

Important subspaces are discoverable and exploitable for answering science questions

# My group is busy!



**Jeff Hokanson**  
(postdoc)

Ridge approximations  
in DUU

Lipschitz matrix for  
dimension reduction

[#jeffneedsajob](#)



**Izzy Aguiar**  
(MS 2018)

Dynamic active  
subspaces for  
parameterized ODEs



**Zach Grey**  
(PhD 2019)

Manifold extensions of  
active subspaces

Shape design



**Andrew Glaws**  
(PhD 2018)

Sufficient dimension  
reduction for CS&E

Energy applications

# QUESTIONS?

Are there other options for important directions?

What is the **trade-off** between discovering the low-dimensional structure vs. solving the original problem?

Why are these structures so pervasive?

What if my model doesn't fit your setup?

(no gradients, multiple outputs, correlated inputs, ...)

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@DrPaulynomial

Active Subspaces  
SIAM (2015)



Active Subspaces  
*Emerging Ideas for Dimension  
Reduction in Parameter Studies*

Paul G. Constantine