Nonrelativistic Conformal Field Theory and nuclear reactions

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25th European Conference on Few-Body Problem in Physics
August 3, 2023

Plan

- Nonrelativistic conformal symmetry
- Nonrelativistic CFTs
- Fermions at unitarity
- Neutrons and “UnNuclear Physics”

Refs.: Y. Nishida, DTS , PRD 76, 086004 (2007)
H.-W. Hammer, DTS PNAS 118 (2021) e2108716118
S.D. Chowdhury, R. Mishra, DTS to appear

Schrödinger group

- Symmetries of the free Schrödinger equation

$$i\frac{\partial\psi}{\partial t} = -\frac{1}{2m}\nabla^2\psi$$

- Phase rotation M $\psi \to e^{i\alpha}\psi$
- space and time translations $\mathbf{P}, H$; rotations J_{ij}
- Galilean boosts $\mathbf{K}$ $\psi(t,\mathbf{x}) \to e^{im\mathbf{v}\cdot\mathbf{x}-\frac{i}{2}mv^2t}\,\psi(t,\mathbf{x}-\mathbf{v}t)$
- Dilatation D $\psi(t,\mathbf{x}) \to \lambda^{3/2}\psi(\lambda^2 t, \lambda\mathbf{x})$

“Proper conformal transformation”

$$C : \psi(t, \mathbf{x}) \to \frac{1}{(1+\alpha t)^{3/2}} \exp\left(\frac{i}{2}\frac{m\alpha x^2}{1+\alpha t}\right)\psi\left(\frac{t}{1+\alpha t}, \frac{\mathbf{x}}{1+\alpha t}\right)$$

Schrödinger algebra

$X \setminus Y$	P_j	K_j	D	C	H
P_i	0	$-i\delta_{ij}M$	$-iP_i$	$-iK_i$	0
K_i	$i\delta_{ij}M$	0	iK_i	0	iP_i
D	iP_j	$-iK_j$	0	$-2iC$	$2iH$
C	iK_j	0	$2iC$	0	iD
H	0	$-iP_j$	$-2iH$	$-iD$	0

Nonrelativistic CFTs

Y. Nishida, DTS, 2007

- are QFTs with Schrödinger symmetry
- Fundamental notions:
  - local operators $O(\vec{x})$, characterized by charge (mass) and dimension   example: ψ $N_\psi = 1,\ \Delta_\psi = \frac{3}{2}$
  - primary operators: not time or spatial derivatives of another local operator $[K_i, O(\vec{0})] = [C, O(\vec{0})] = 0$
- Constraints from conformal invariance:

$$\langle T O(t,\vec{x}) O^\dagger(0,0) \rangle = \frac{c}{t^{\Delta_O}} \exp\left(\frac{i m_O x^2}{2t} \right)$$

Example of NRCFTs

- Free particles
- nonrelativistic anyons (two spatial dimensions)
- Spin-1/2 fermions at unitarity

Unitarity fermions: QM

- Wave function of m spin-up and n spin-down fermions $\psi(\mathbf{x}_1, \ldots, \mathbf{x}_m; \mathbf{y}_1, \ldots, \mathbf{y}_n)$
- ψ antisymmetric under exchanging two $\mathbf{x}$'s or $\mathbf{y}$'s
- When one spin-up and one spin-down fermions approach each other:

$$\psi(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y}) = \frac{C}{|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{y}|} + O(|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{y}|) + \cdots$$

- $H = -\frac{1}{2} \sum_a \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \mathbf{x}_a^2} - \frac{1}{2} \sum_a \frac{\partial^2}{\partial \mathbf{y}_a^2}$

What are the local operators?

- First example: annihilation operator in second quantized formulation of QM
- $\langle 0 | \hat{\psi}(\vec{x}) | \Psi_{1-\mathrm{body}} | 0 \rangle = \Psi(\vec{x})$
- This is a charge-1 operator, dimension=3/2

Charge-2 local operator

- Second-quantized formulation of QM:

$$\langle 0 | \psi_\uparrow(\mathbf{x})\psi_\downarrow(\mathbf{y}) | \Psi_{2-\text{body}}\rangle = \Psi(\mathbf{x},\mathbf{y})$$

- Limit $\mathbf{y} \to \mathbf{x}$ does not exist:

$$\langle 0 | \psi_\uparrow(\mathbf{x})\psi_\downarrow(\mathbf{x}) | \Psi\rangle = \Psi(\mathbf{x},\mathbf{x}) = \infty$$

- but one can define

$$O_2(\mathbf{x}) = \lim_{\mathbf{y}\to\mathbf{x}} |\mathbf{x}-\mathbf{y}|\, \psi_\uparrow(\mathbf{x})\psi_\downarrow(\mathbf{y})$$

- then

$$\langle 0 | O_2(\mathbf{x}) | \Psi\rangle = \lim_{\mathbf{y}\to\mathbf{x}} |\mathbf{x}-\mathbf{y}|\, \Psi(\mathbf{x},\mathbf{y}) = \text{finite}$$

Dimension of O_2

- $O_2(\mathbf{x}) = \lim_{\mathbf{y}\to\mathbf{x}} |\mathbf{x}-\mathbf{y}|\psi_\uparrow(\mathbf{x})\psi_\downarrow(\mathbf{y})$
- $\Delta[O_2] = 2\Delta[\psi] - 1 = 2$
- cf free theory: $\Delta[\psi\psi] = 3$

Charge-3 operator

- Need to know short distance behavior of $\Psi(\mathbf{x}_1, \mathbf{x}_2; \mathbf{y})$
- 3-body problem solved by Efimov ~ 1970

$$\Psi(\mathbf{x}_1, \mathbf{x}_2; \mathbf{y}) \sim R^{-0.2273} f(\alpha, \hat{\rho}, \hat{r})$$

$$R^2 = |\mathbf{x}_1 - \mathbf{x}_2|^2 + |\mathbf{x}_1 - \mathbf{y}|^2 + |\mathbf{x}_2 - \mathbf{y}|^2$$

$\alpha, \hat{\rho}, \hat{r}$ = 5 hyperangles

- Charge-3 operator

$$O_3(\mathbf{x}) \sim \lim_{\mathbf{x}_2 \to \mathbf{x}} \lim_{\mathbf{y} \to \mathbf{x}} R^{0.2273} \psi_\uparrow(\mathbf{x}) \psi_\uparrow(\mathbf{x}_2) \psi_\downarrow(\mathbf{y})$$

- $\Delta[O_3] = 4.2727$ cf free theory: $[\psi\psi\nabla\psi] = \frac{11}{2}$

Charge-4 operator

- Dimension can only be obtained numerically
- Nishida and DTS 2007: equal to ground state energy of 4 unitary fermion in harmonic trap
- $\Delta[O_4] = 5.0 \pm 0.1$ (cf. free theory: 8)

Two point functions

- One can compute two-point functions by inserting a complete set of states

$$\langle 0 | O(t,\mathbf{x}) O^\dagger(0) | 0 \rangle = \sum_n \langle 0 | O(0) | n \rangle e^{-iE_n t + i\mathbf{P}_n \cdot \mathbf{x}} \langle n | O^\dagger(0) | 0 \rangle$$

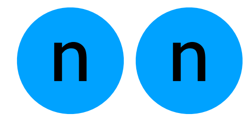
- Result

$$\langle O(t,\mathbf{x}) O^\dagger(0,\mathbf{0}) \rangle = \frac{C}{t^{\Delta_O}} \exp\left(\frac{iM_O x^2}{2t} \right)$$

- In momentum space

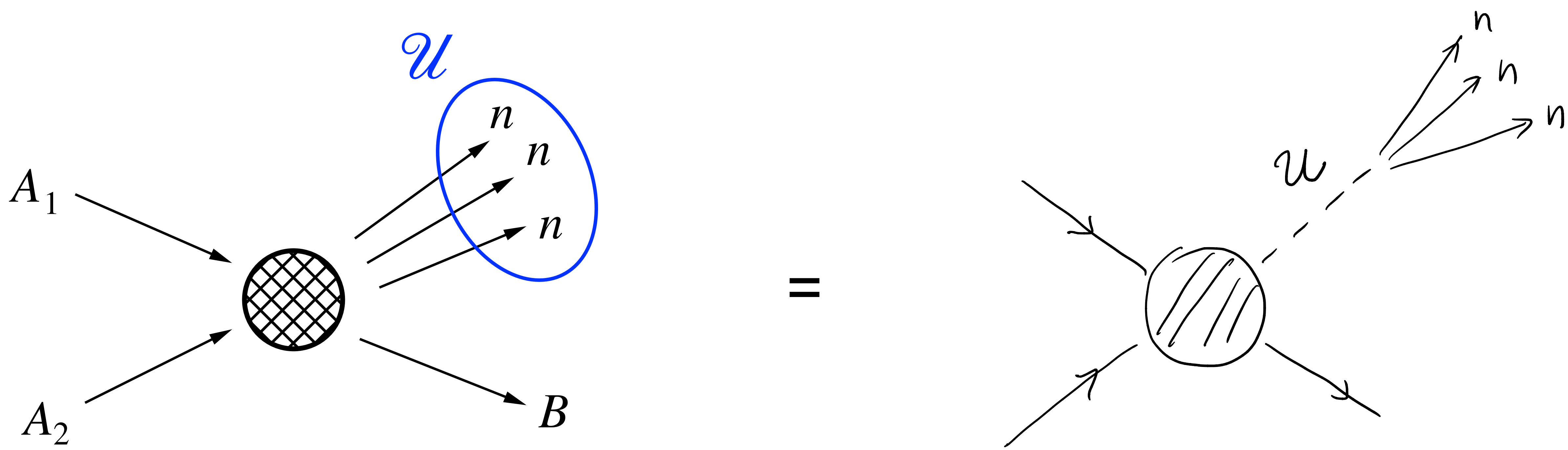
$$\langle O O^\dagger \rangle(\omega, \mathbf{p}) \sim \left(\frac{\mathbf{p}^2}{2M_O} - \omega \right)^{\Delta_O - 5/2}$$

NRCFT in real world: neutrons



- $a \approx -19$ fm, $r_0 \approx 2.8$ fm
- NRCFT in energy range between $\hbar^2/ma^2 \sim 0.1$ MeV and $\hbar^2/mr_0^2 \sim 5$ MeV
- Consequence: power-law behavior in processes with final state neutrons
- “Unnuclear Physics” Hammer, DTS 2021

"UnNuclear physics"

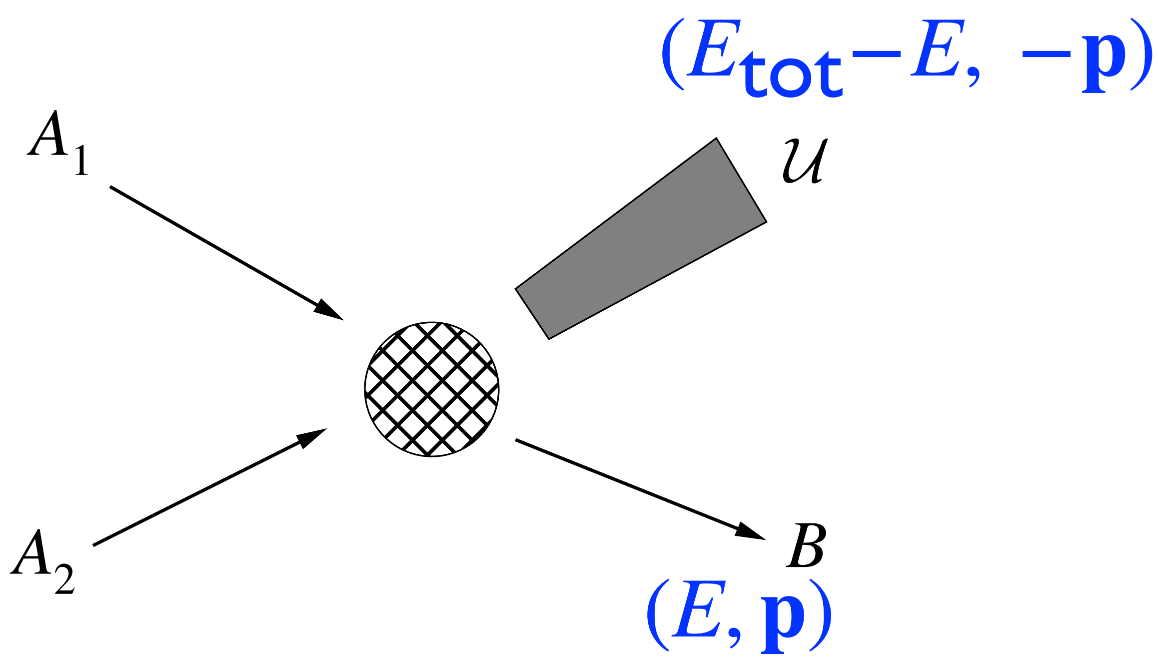


$$P(A_1 + A_2 \to B + 3n) = P(A_1 + A_2 \to B + \mathcal{U})P(\mathcal{U} \to 3n)$$

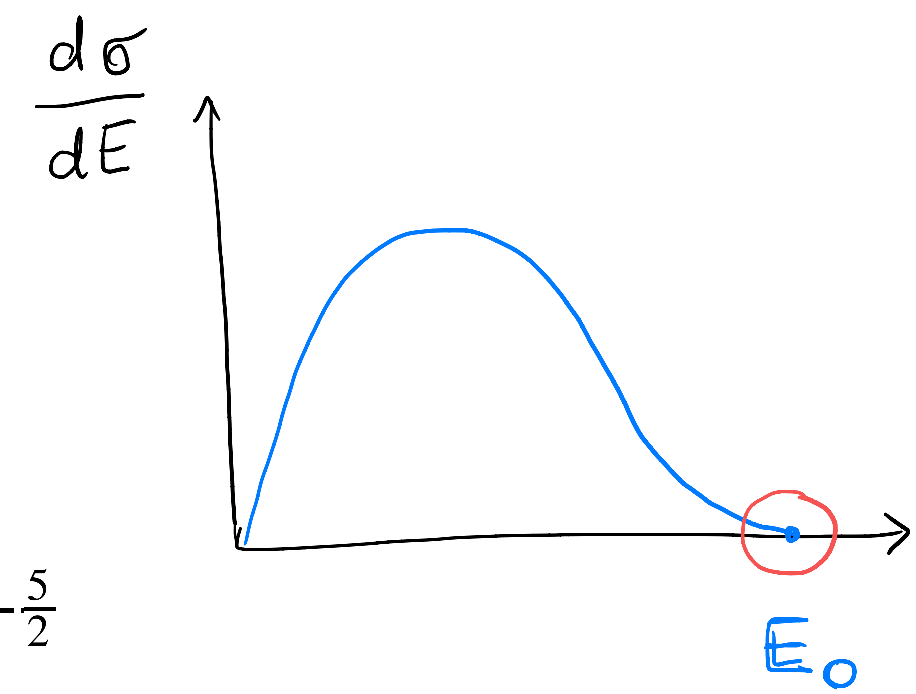
when energy scale of primary reaction is larger than $\mathcal{U} \to 3n$

$\mathcal{U}$ = "unnucleus" = field in NRCFT

Rates of unnuclear processes



$$E_{\rm tot} = E + E_{\mathcal{U}}$$



- $$\frac{d\sigma}{dE} \sim |\mathcal{M}|^2 \sqrt{E} \times \underbrace{\mathrm{Im}\, G_{\mathcal{U}}(E_{\rm tot} - E, \mathbf{p})}$$

  $$\to (E_0 - E)^{\Delta - \frac{5}{2}}$$

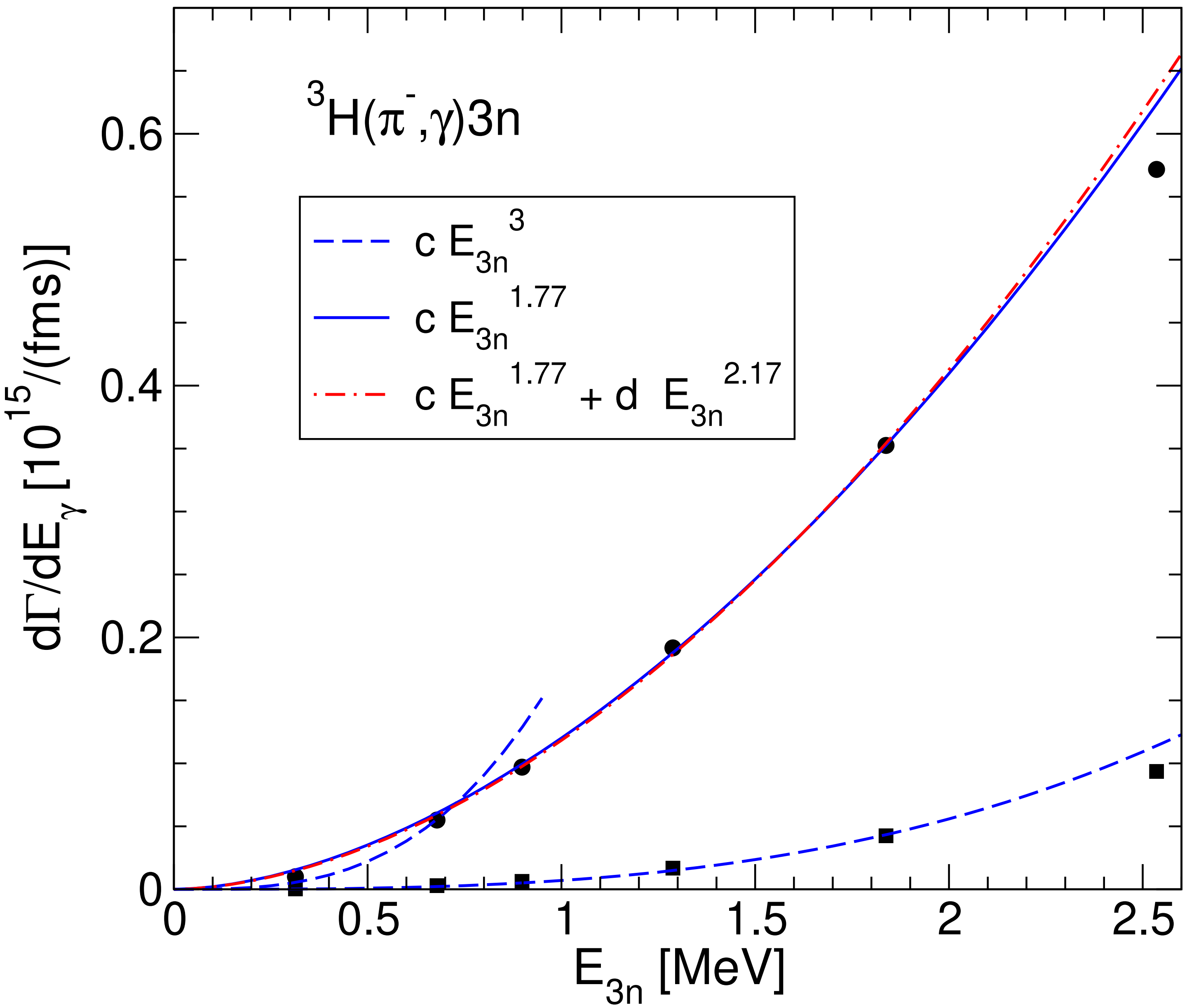
- Near end point: $\dfrac{d\sigma}{dE} \sim (E_0 - E)^{\Delta - \frac{5}{2}}$, Δ= dimension of $\mathcal{U}$

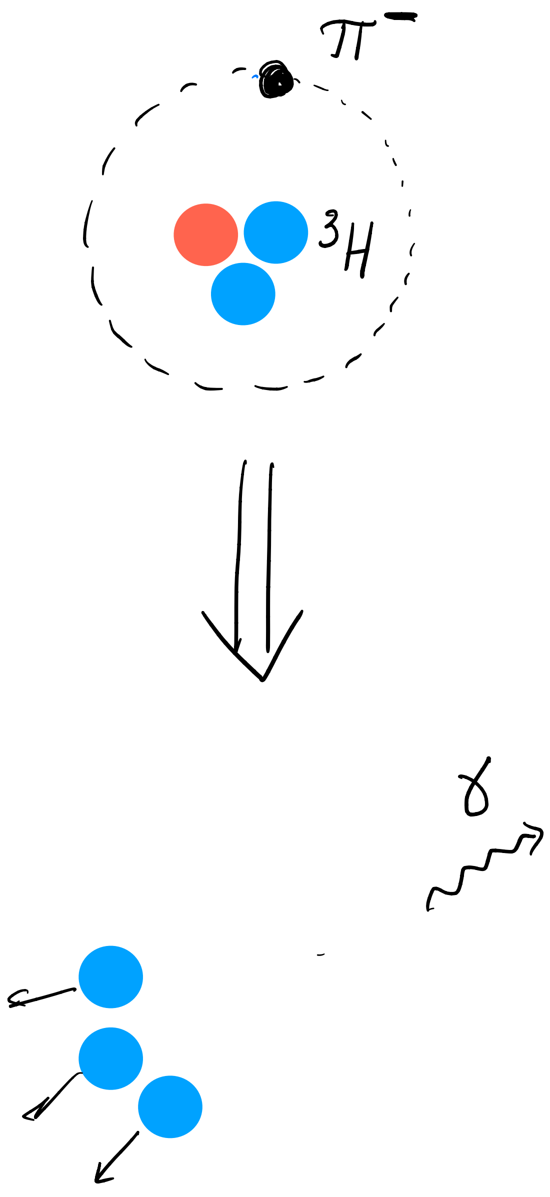
Nuclear reactions

- $$\frac{d\sigma}{dE} \sim (E_0 - E)^{\alpha} \qquad \alpha = \Delta - \frac{5}{2}$$

	Δ	α	
• $^3H + {}^3H \rightarrow {}^4He + 2n$	2	-0.5	Watson-Migdal 1950's
• $^7Li + {}^7Li \rightarrow {}^{11}C + 3n$	4.27	1.77	
• $^4He + {}^8He \rightarrow {}^8Be + 4n$	5.0	2.5	

Comparison with “experiment”





$$\pi^{-} + {}^{3}\mathrm{H} \rightarrow \gamma + 3n$$

Golak et al. PRC 98, 054001 (2018)

Width of hypothetical multi-neutron resonances

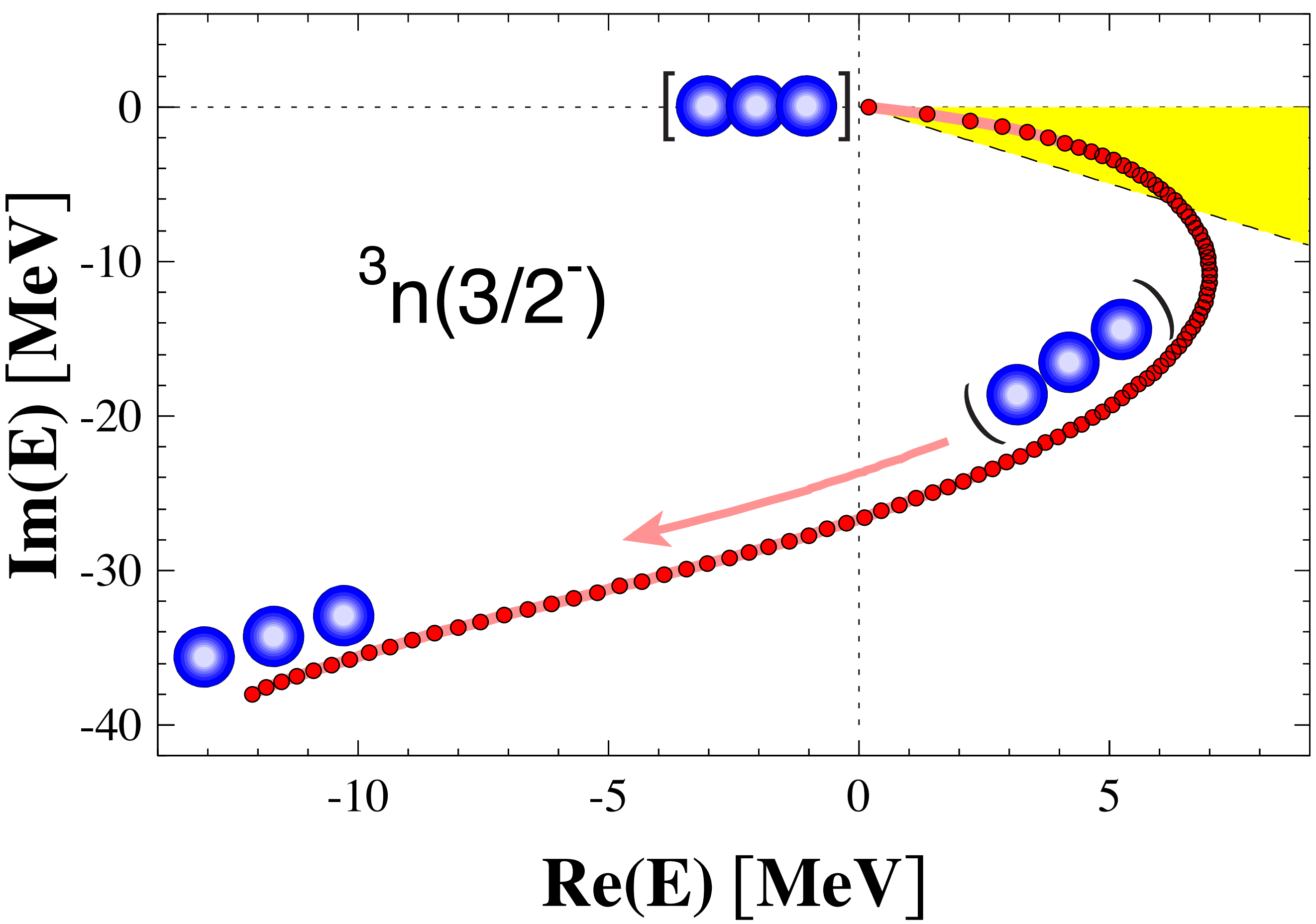
- Suppose we have a multi-neutron resonance with $\hbar^2/ma^2 \ll \mathrm{Re}\, E \ll \hbar^2/mr_0^2$
- Then the width will scale as

$$\Gamma \sim E^{\Delta-5/2} = \begin{cases} E^{1.77} & N=3 \\ E^{2.5} & N=4 \end{cases}$$

DTS, M.A. Stephanov, H.-U. Yee, PRA 106(2022) L050801

Hemmdan, PRC 66 (2002) 054001

"3n resonances close to the physical region will not exist"

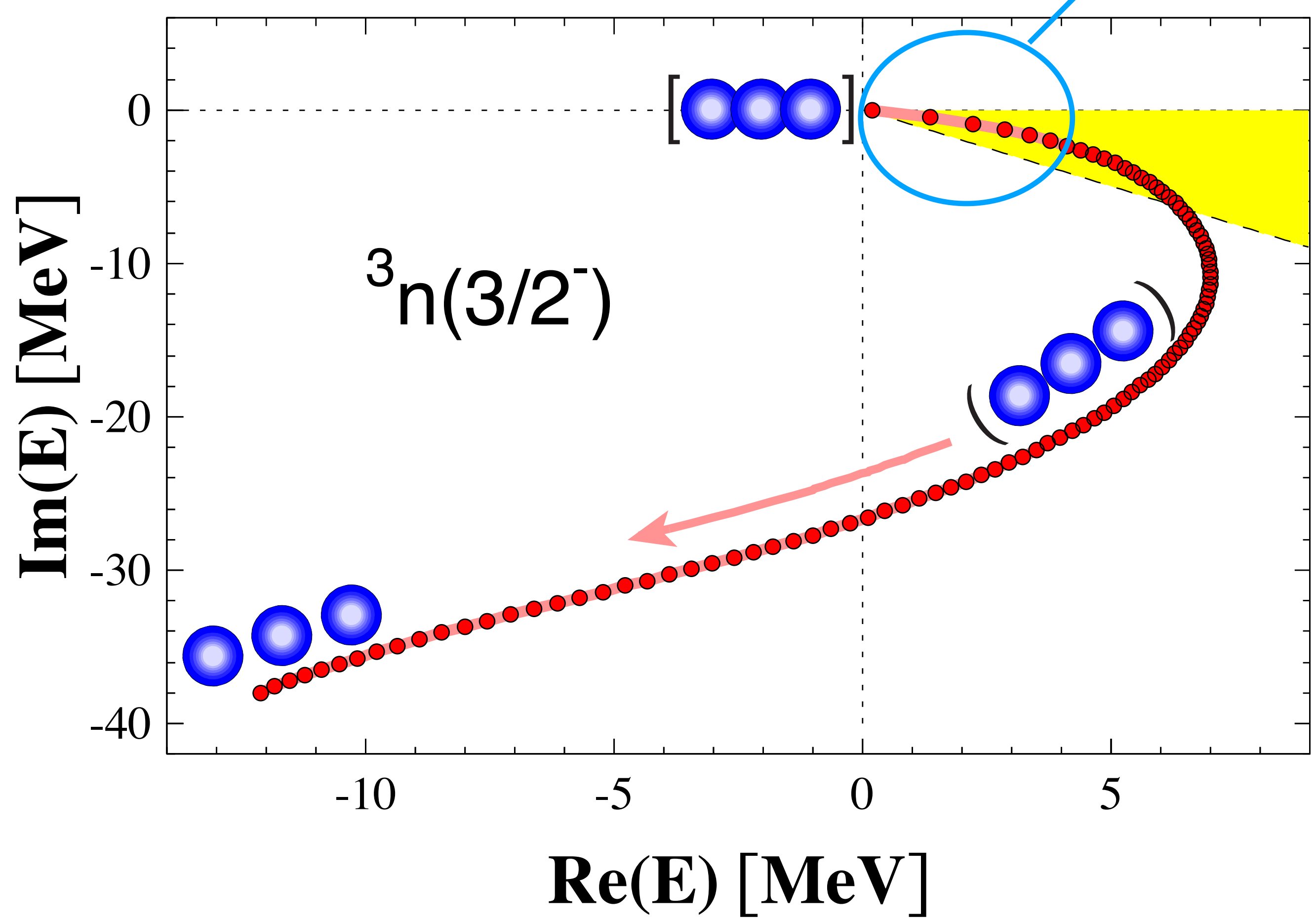


(from F.M. Marqués's talk)

Hemmdan, PRC 66 (2002) 054001

$\Gamma \sim E^{1.77}$

"3n resonances close to the physical region will not exist"



(from F.M. Marqués's talk)

Away from conformality

- Finite scattering length and effective range can be treated as perturbation away from NRCFT

$$L = L_{\mathrm{CFT}} + \frac{1}{a} O_2^\dagger O_2 - r_0 O_2^\dagger \left(i\partial_t + \tfrac{1}{4}\nabla^2 \right) O_2$$

- Contribution to $\langle O_3 O_3^\dagger \rangle$ can be computed using conformal perturbation theory
  S.D. Chowdhury, R. Mishra, DTS to be published

- Gives the corrections to the conformal behavior as one approaches the two ends of the energy conformal window

$$\frac{d\sigma}{dE} \sim \omega^{\Delta-5/2} \left(1 + \frac{c_1}{a_0\sqrt{m\omega}} + c_2 r_0 \sqrt{m\omega} \right) \qquad c_2 = 0$$

Conformal perturbation theory

- $\langle O_3(x) O_3^\dagger(0) \rangle = \frac{1}{Z} \int \mathscr{D}\psi \, e^{iS_{\mathrm{CFT}} + \frac{1}{a}\int_y O_2^\dagger(y) O_2(y)}$

$$= \langle O_3(x) O_3^\dagger(0) \rangle_{a=0} + \frac{1}{a} \int dy \, \langle O_3(x) O_2^\dagger(y) O_2(y) O_3^\dagger(0) \rangle$$

New approach to two-neutron halo nuclei

- Borromean two-neutron halo nuclei (Ann),
  $A = {}^4$He, ^{9}Li, ^{20}C, $\ldots$

- Small two-neutron separation energy

  $B({}^6\text{He}) = 0.975$ MeV
  $B({}^{11}\text{Li}) = 0.369$ MeV
  $B({}^{22}\text{C}) < 0.18$ MeV? Hammer Ji Phillips 2017

- EFT based on smallness of B and neutron virtual energy

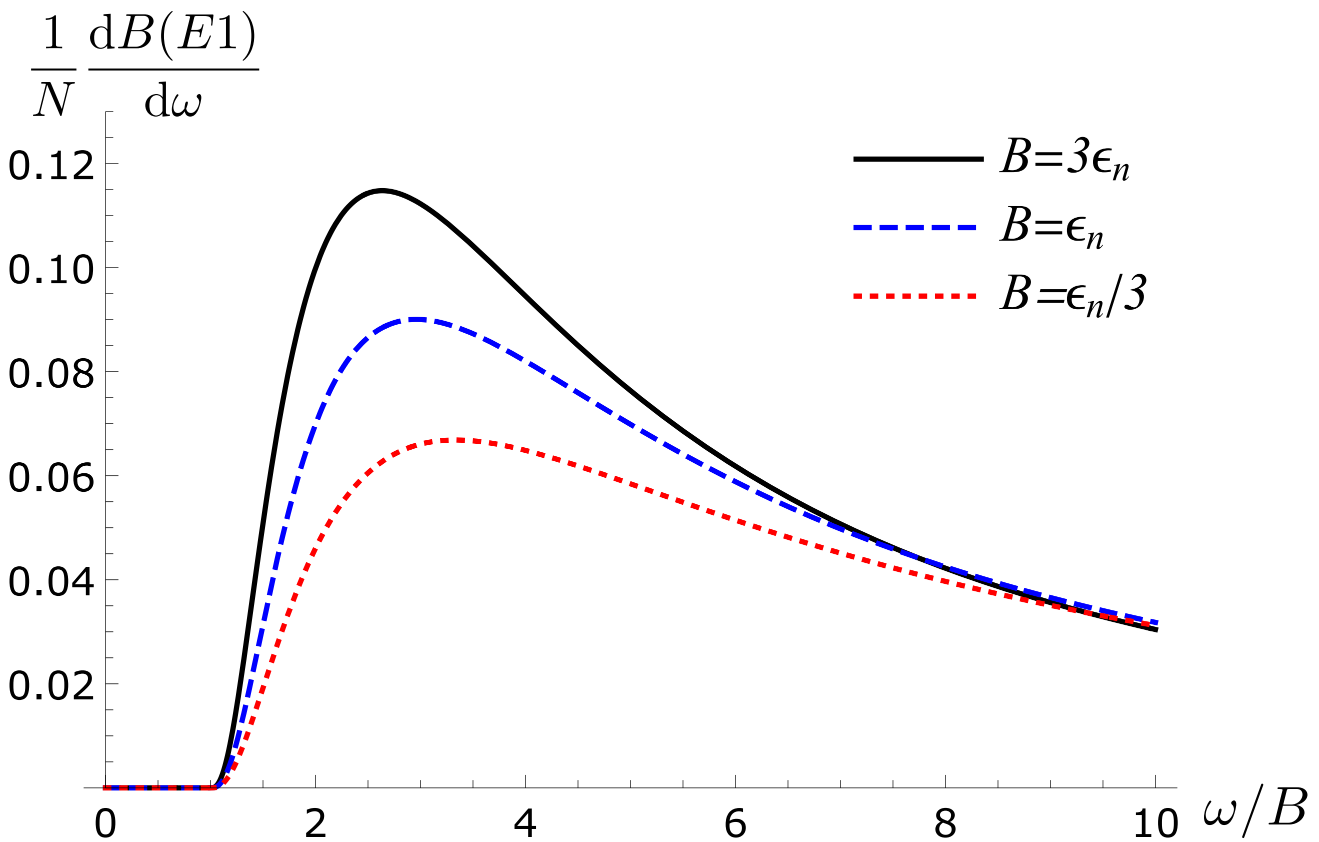
EFT of weakly-bound two-neutron halo nuclei

- Add two fields to the NRCFT of neutron: core ϕ, halo nucleus h
- Interaction: $h^\dagger O_2 \phi + O_2^\dagger \phi^\dagger h$
  - dimension: $\frac{3}{2} + \frac{3}{2} + 2 = 5$: marginal
  - leading-order EFT renormalizable;
  - Universal result for (charge radius)/(matter radius), E1 dipole strength function Hongo and DTS, PRL 2022

$$\frac{\mathrm{d}B(E1)}{\mathrm{d}\omega} = \frac{3}{4\pi} Z^2 e^2 \frac{12g^2}{\pi} \frac{A^{1/2}}{(A+2)^{5/2}} \frac{(\omega - B)^2}{\omega^4} \times f_{E1}\left(\frac{1}{-a\sqrt{\omega - B}}\right), \quad (29)$$

where

$$f_{E1}(x) = 1 - \frac{8}{3}x(1+x^2)^{3/2} + 4x^2\left(1 + \frac{2}{3}x^2\right). \quad (30)$$



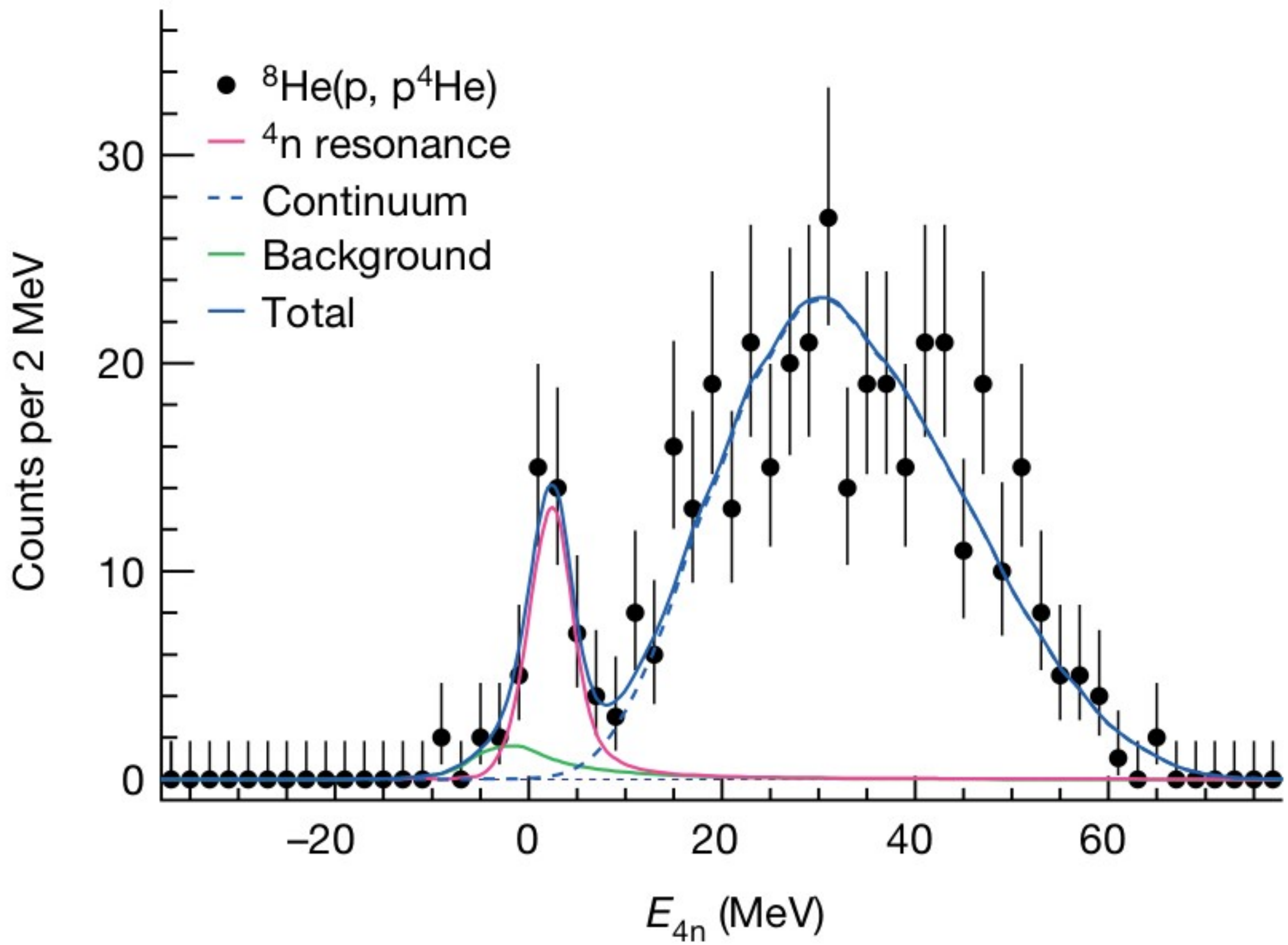
Conclusion

- NR conformal field theories have Schrödinger symmetry
- Example: fermions at unitarity
- Approximately realized by neutrons in nuclear physics
- Leads to a power-law behavior of differential cross sections of certain processes near threshold
- Nonrelativistic conformal perturbation theory: the full power of the formalism still to be explored

Thank you

Four-neutron production

$^{8}He(p,p^{4}He)4n$



(From Maytal Duer's talk)

Four-neutron production

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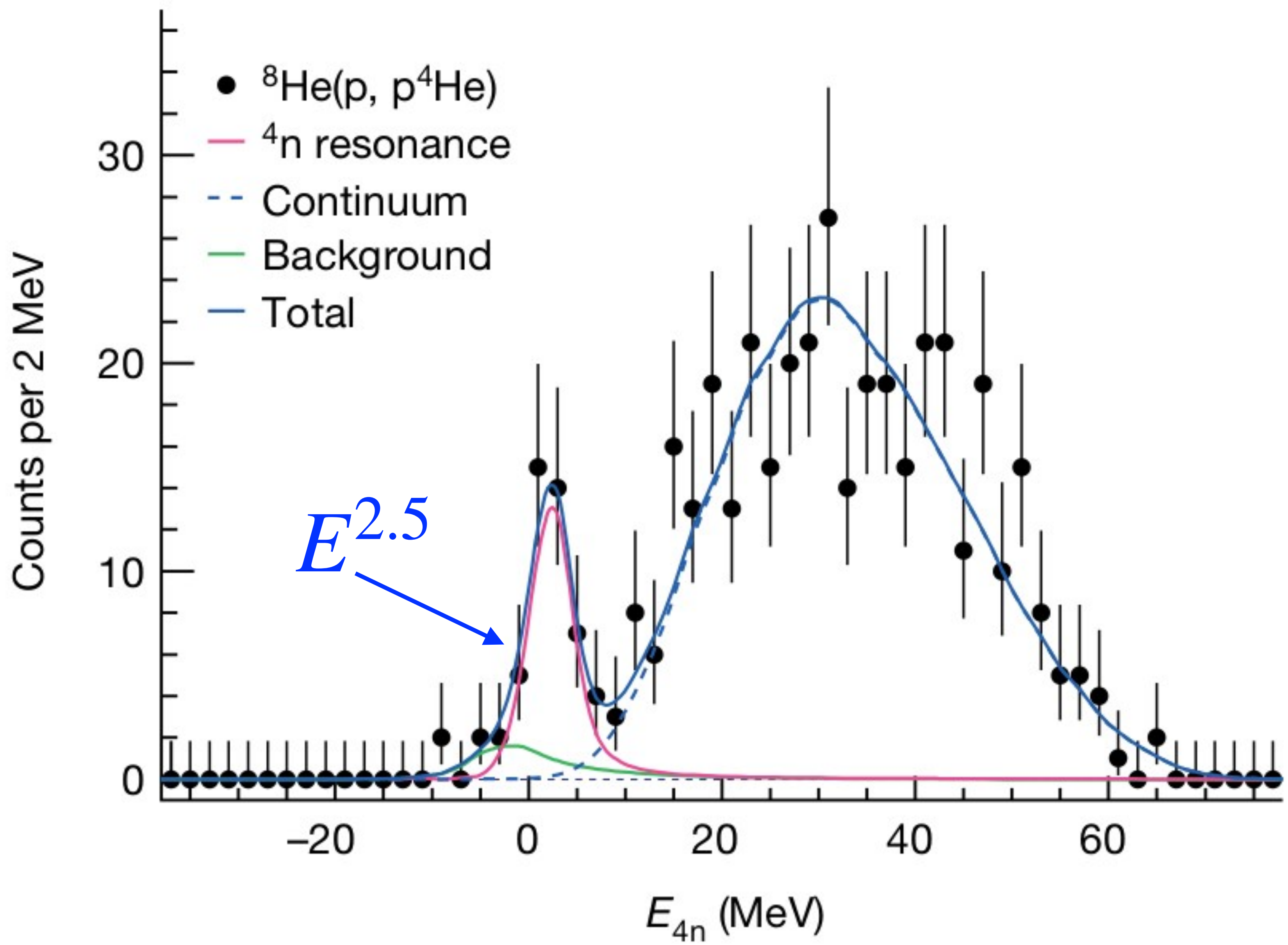

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