A unified Casson-Lin invariant for the real forms of SL(2)

Nathan Dunfield (University of Illinois)

Joint with Jake Rasmussen

Based on arXiv:2209.03382

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$$\mathrm{SL}_2\mathbb{C} = \left\{ \left(\begin{array}{cc} a & b \\ c & d \end{array} \right) \ \middle| \ a, b, c, d \in \mathbb{C}, \ \mathrm{det} = 1 \right\}$$

$$\mathrm{SU}_2 = \left\{ \left(\begin{array}{cc} a & b \\ -\overline{b} & \overline{a} \end{array} \right) \ \left| \ |a|^2 + |b|^2 = 1 \right\}$$

 $SL_2\mathbb{R}$

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Hyperbolic geometry [Thurston, ...] $SL_2\mathbb{C} = \left\{ \left(\begin{array}{c} a & b \\ c & d \end{array} \right) \mid a, b, c, d \in \mathbb{C}, \text{ det} = 1 \right\}$ $\approx \text{lsom}^+(\mathbb{H}^3)$

Gauge Theory [Casson, Floer, ...]

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$$\approx Isom^+(S^2) = SO_3.$$

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 SU_2 and $SL_2\mathbb{R}$ are the real forms of SL_2

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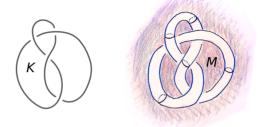
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A rep $\rho : \pi_1(M) \to SL_2\mathbb{C}$ is reducible when it preserves a line in \mathbb{C}^2 . The subset of **irred** reps is $X_G^{\theta, irr}(M)$. **Setting:** K a knot in S^3 , $M = S^3 \setminus v(K)$, $\mu \in \pi_1(M)$ a meridian, $G = SU_2$ or $SL_2\mathbb{R}$.

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 $h^{\theta}_{\mathrm{SU}_2}(M) = \text{signed count of } X^{\theta, \mathrm{irr}}_{\mathrm{SU}_2}(M)$

Moreover, $h_{SU_2}^{\theta}(M) = -\frac{1}{2}\sigma_K(e^{i2\theta})$, which is constant outside of D_M .

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Cor. If *M* is small with σ_K nonconstant, then there is an irred $\rho: \pi_1 M \to SL_2 \mathbb{R}$.

Pf. As σ_K is nonconst., so is $h^{\theta}_{SU_2}(M)$ $\implies h^{\theta}_{SL_2\mathbb{R}}(M)$ nonconstant \implies some θ_0 with $h^{\theta_0}_{SL_2\mathbb{R}}(M) \neq 0$ $\implies X^{\theta_0, irr}_{SL_2\mathbb{R}}(M)$ is nonempty. [Lin, Herald, Heusner-Kroll '90s] For $\theta \notin D_M$, can define

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Compare:

[Kronheimer-Mrowka] A nontrivial *K* has an irred $\rho: \pi_1 M \rightarrow SU_2$.

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Motivation: L-space conjecture, orderability of 3-manifold groups, translation extension locus [Culler-D].

Let $\Sigma_n(K)$ be the *n*-fold cyclic cover of S^3 branched over *K*.

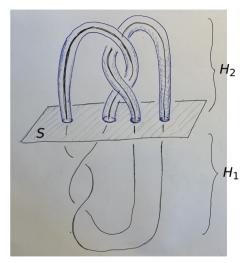
Cor. If *K* is a small knot with nonconstant σ_K then $\pi_1(\Sigma_n(K))$ is left-orderable for all $n \ge \pi/w_K$, where w_K depends on D_M .

Cor. If *K* is 2-bridge with $\sigma_K(-1) \neq 0$, then either $\pi_1(M(\alpha))$ is left-orderable for all $\alpha \in (-\infty, 1)$ or for all $\alpha \in (-1, \infty)$. **Motivation:** L-space conjecture, orderability of 3-manifold groups, translation extension locus [Culler-D].

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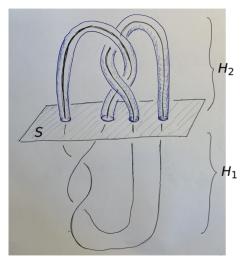
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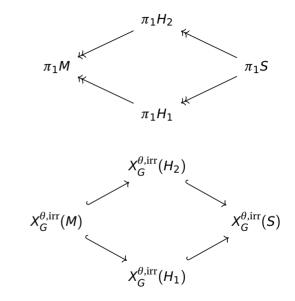
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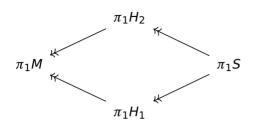
S is a 2-sphere minus 2n disks H_i are genus-n handlebodies

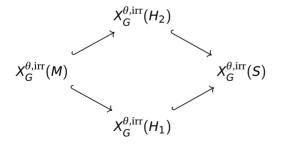
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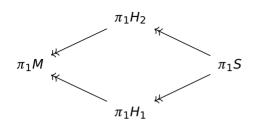


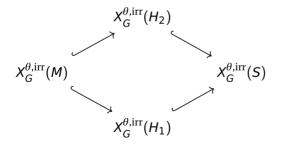


 $X_G^{\theta,\text{irr}}(S)$ is a smooth (4n-6)-manifold with $X_G^{\theta,\text{irr}}(H_i)$ submflds of dim 2n-3.

 $X_G^{\theta,\mathrm{irr}}(M) = X_G^{\theta,\mathrm{irr}}(H_1) \cap X_G^{\theta,\mathrm{irr}}(H_2).$ Everything has nat'l orientations, so define $h_G^{\theta}(M)$ to be the algebraic intersection number of the $X_G^{\theta,\mathrm{irr}}(H_i).$

Important: Even for $G = SU_2$, these manifolds are all noncpt. But $X_G^{\theta, irr}(M)$ is cpt when $\theta \notin D_M$ and M small.





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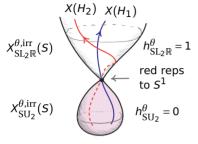
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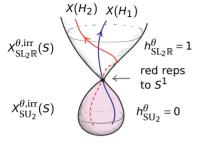
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Unification: look at inside $X_{SL_2\mathbb{C}}^{\theta,irr}(S)$.

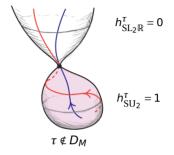


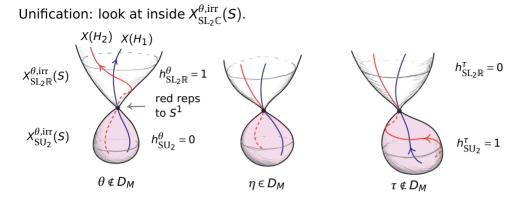


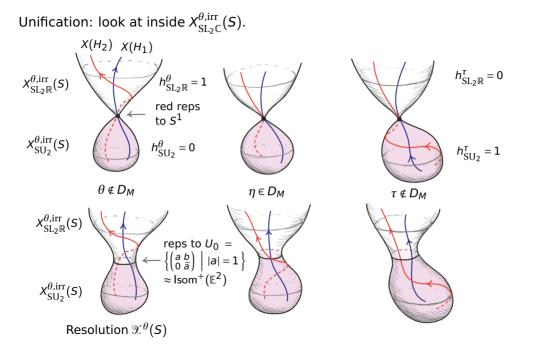
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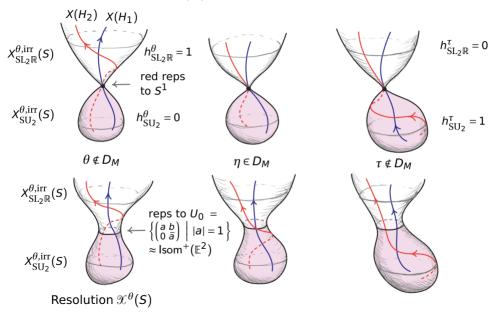


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Moral: in resolved picture h(M) is the alg $\cap \#$ of red and blue for **all** angles.