

Differentiable programming for experiment design optimization in precision physics experiments

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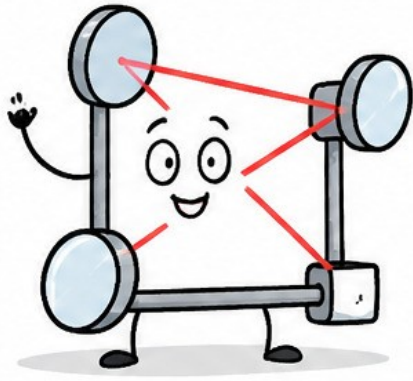
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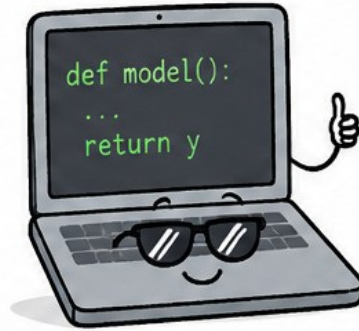
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How does it work



Physical model



Computer code



Gradients



Optimisation

Differentiable programming

- can be applied to algebraic functions and to the computer programs;
- it is based on the simultaneous computation of a value and a related derivative;
- it does not provide explicit formula of the derivative.

```
In [1]: def f(x):  
        return 64 *(1-x) *(1-2*x)^2 *(1-8*x+8*x*x)^2
```

but also

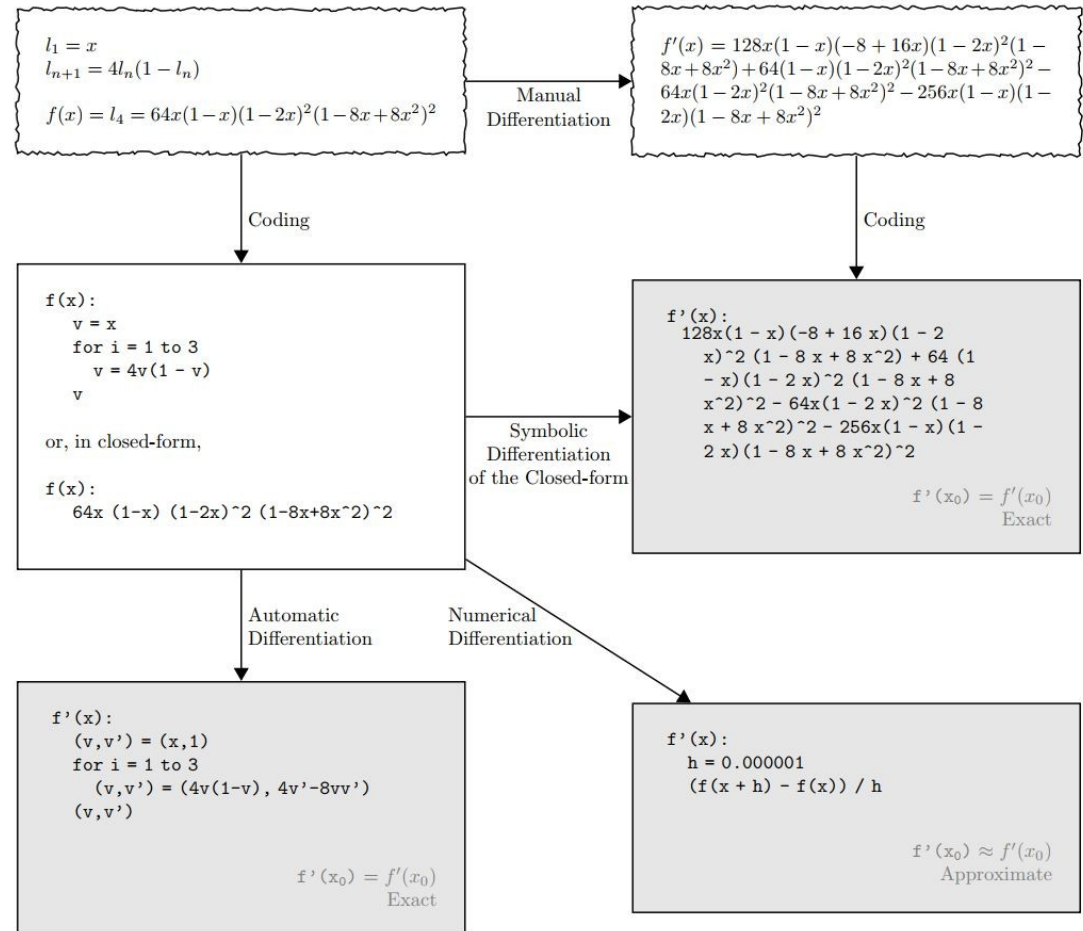
```
In [2]: def f(x,n):  
        if n == 1:  
            return x  
        else:  
            v = x  
            for i in range(1,n):  
                v = 4*v*(1-v)  
            return v
```

Differentiable programming

- automatic differentiation
- algorithmic differentiation
- autodiff
- algodiff
- autograd
- AD

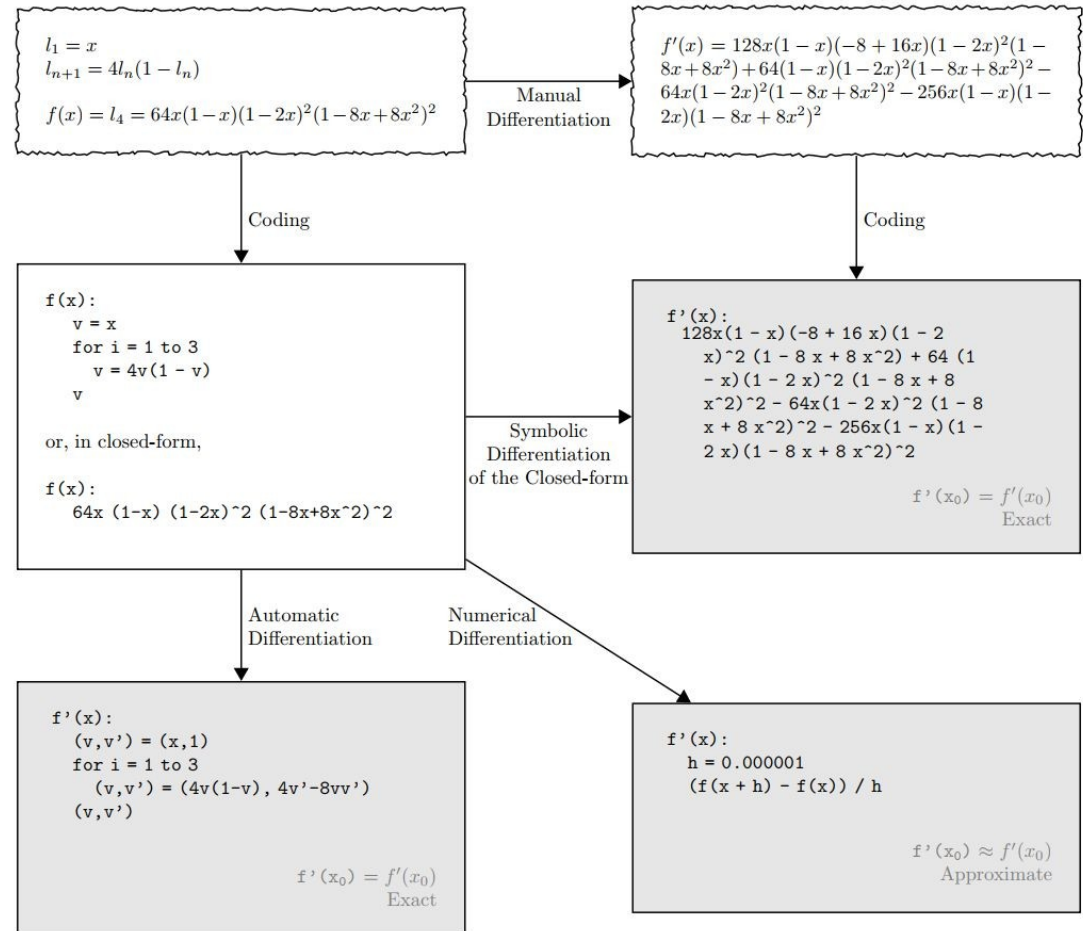
various names come from different communities as the idea is old.

Baydin, Pearlmutter, Radul, Siskind. 2018. "Automatic Differentiation in Machine Learning: a Survey." Journal of Machine Learning Research (JMLR)



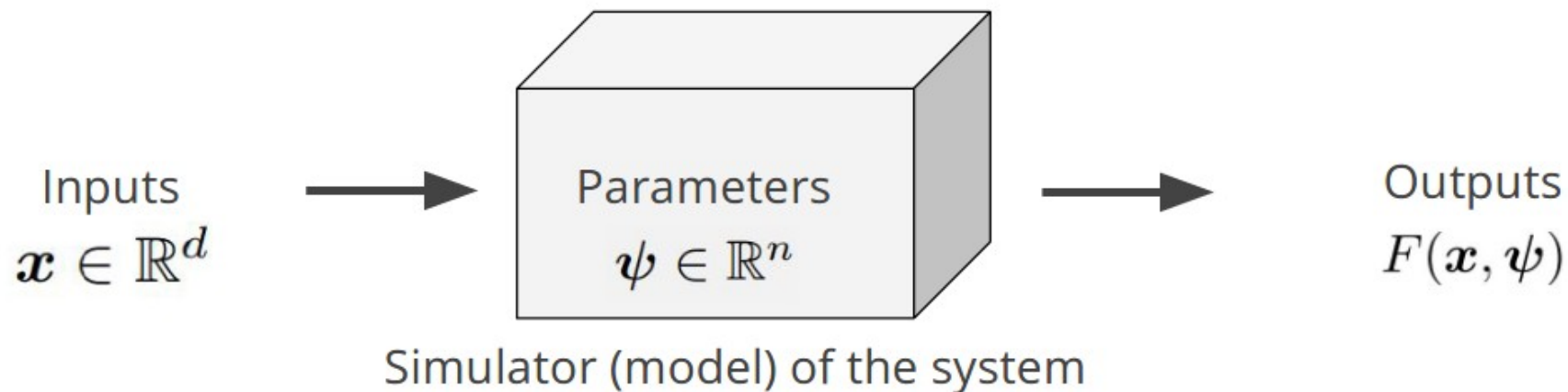
Differentiable programming

- manual
- symbolic differentiation
- numerical differentiation
- automatic differentiation



Baydin, Pearlmutter, Radul, Siskind. 2018. "Automatic Differentiation in Machine Learning: a Survey." Journal of Machine Learning Research (JMLR)

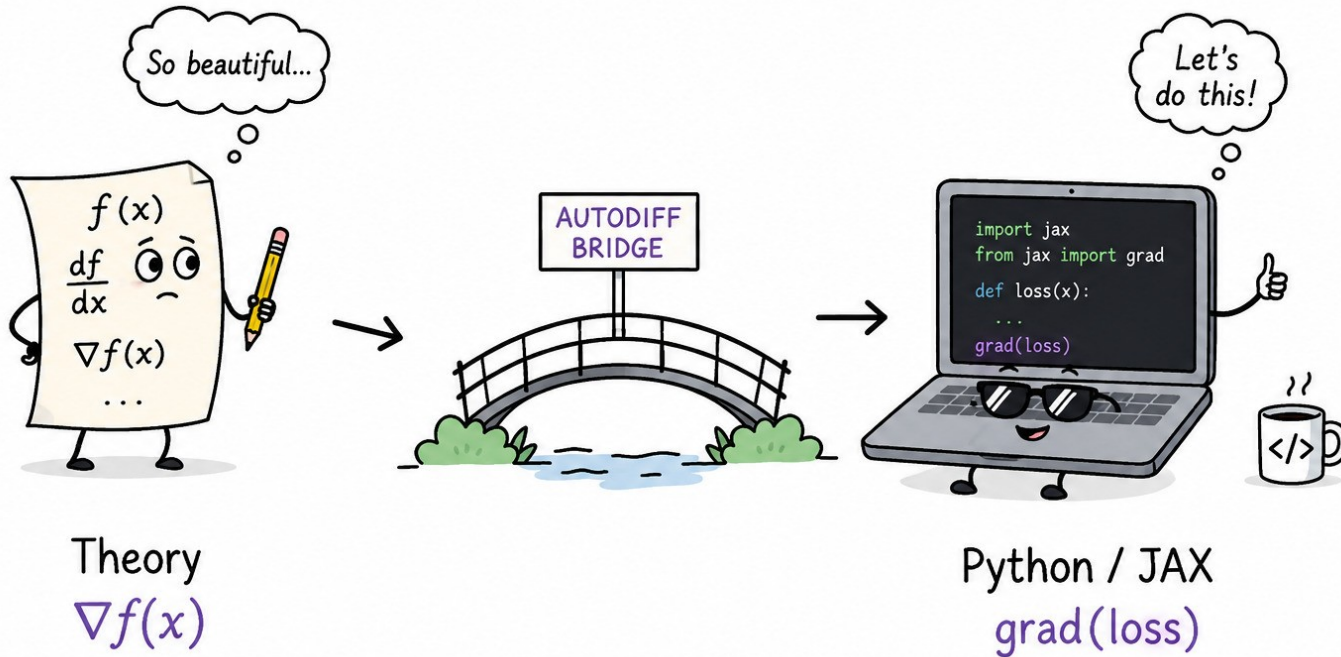
Design optimization



$$\psi^* = \arg \min_{\psi} \sum_{\mathbf{x}} \mathcal{R}(F(\mathbf{x}, \psi))$$

Can be efficiently found by gradient-based optimization if $\nabla_{\psi} \mathcal{R}$ is available

In practice



```
def objective(v):
    """A smooth non-convex 2D objective with minimum at (1, 1)."""
    x, y = v
    return 20 * (1.0 - x) ** 2 + 100.0 * (y - x**2) ** 2
```

a function to search for its minimum

```
value_and_grad = jax.value_and_grad(objective)

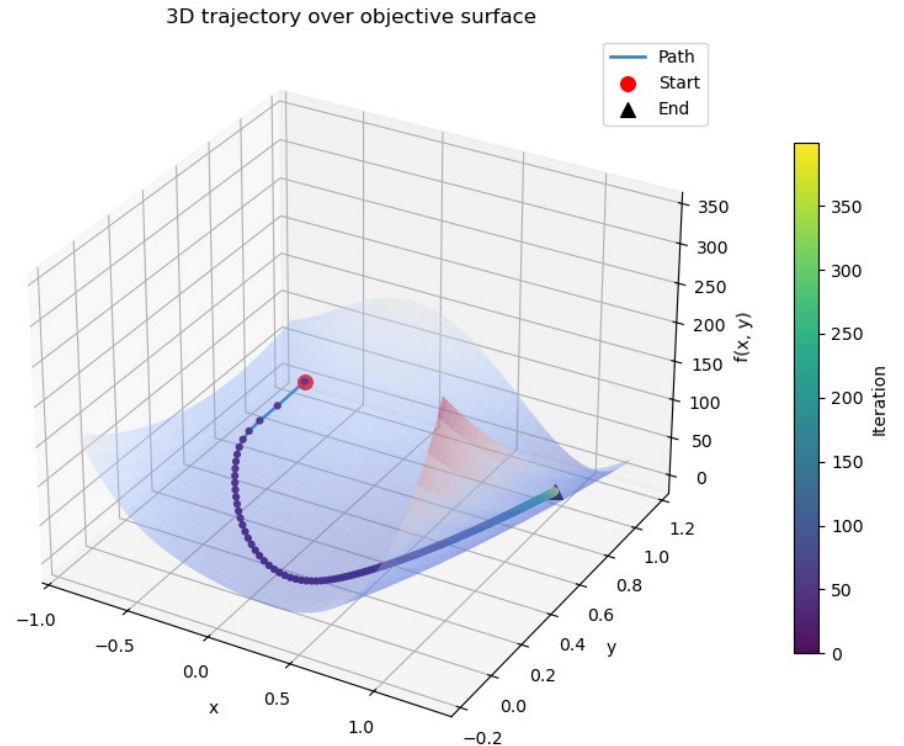
# lax.scan requires a step function with signature (carry, x_t) -> (carry, y_t).
# Here:
# - carry is the current parameter vector x_curr
# - x_t is unused (we pass xs=None, so scan just repeats 'length=steps' times)
# - y_t stores diagnostics per iteration: objective value and updated parameters
def _step(x_curr, _):
    value, grad = value_and_grad(x_curr)
    x_next = x_curr - lr * grad
    return x_next, (value, x_next)

# We wrap scan in a tiny lambda so x_init remains the runtime input, while
# 'steps' stays captured as a static Python integer for compilation.
run_optimization = jax.jit(
    lambda x_init: jax.lax.scan(_step, x_init, xs=None, length=steps)
)
x_opt, (history, trajectory) = run_optimization(x)
```

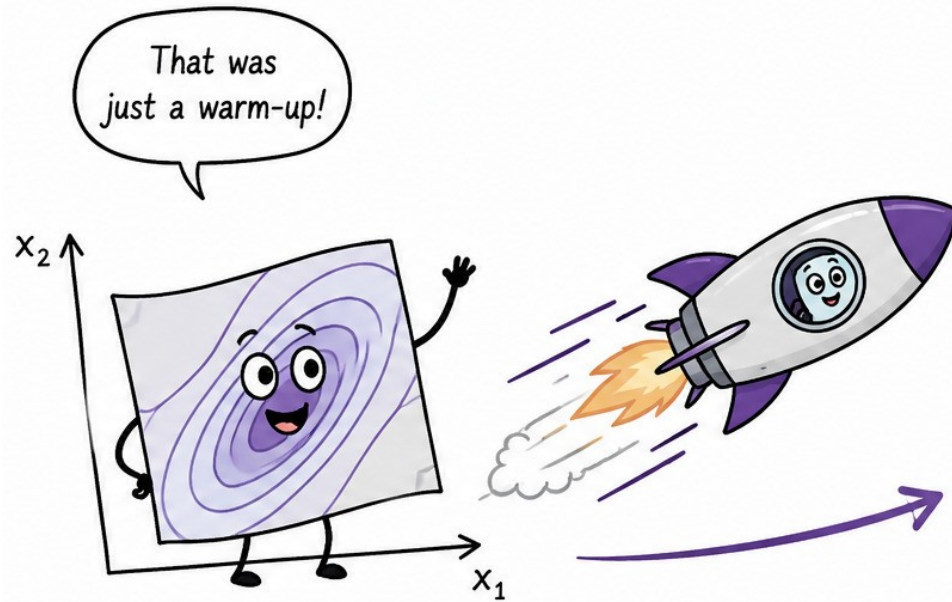
the search algorithm

Interactive

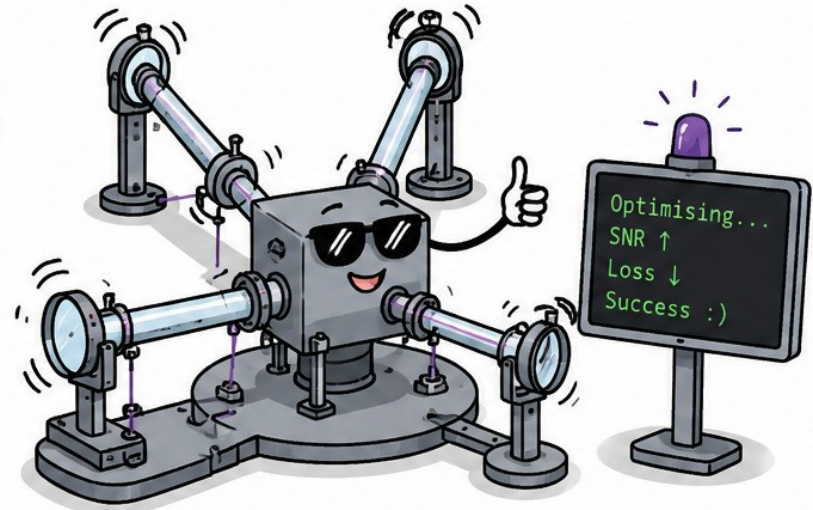
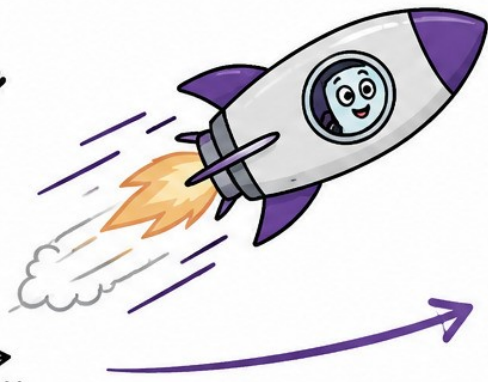
```
$ python back_propagation_examples/jax_backprop_example.py
```



More interesting example

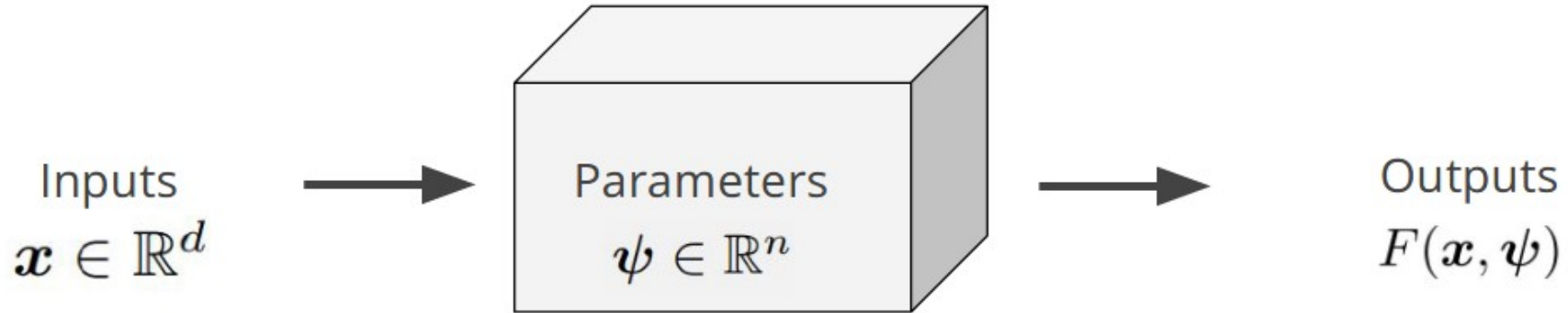


Toy problem



Real application: GW detector model

Optimisation on a real model

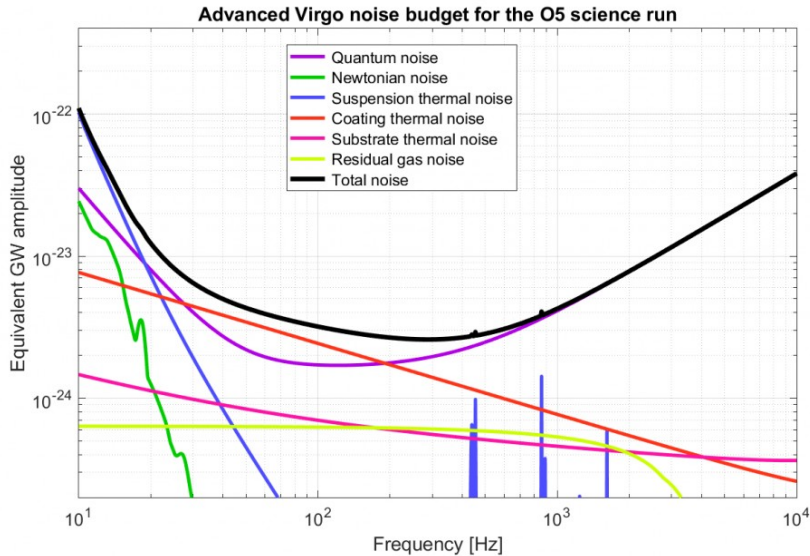


Numerical modeling of quantum noise in gravitational wave detectors *Greta Tosti*

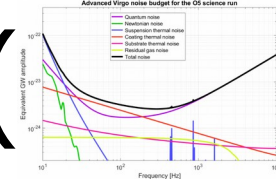
09:20 - 09:40

why not to try?

Model + loss function



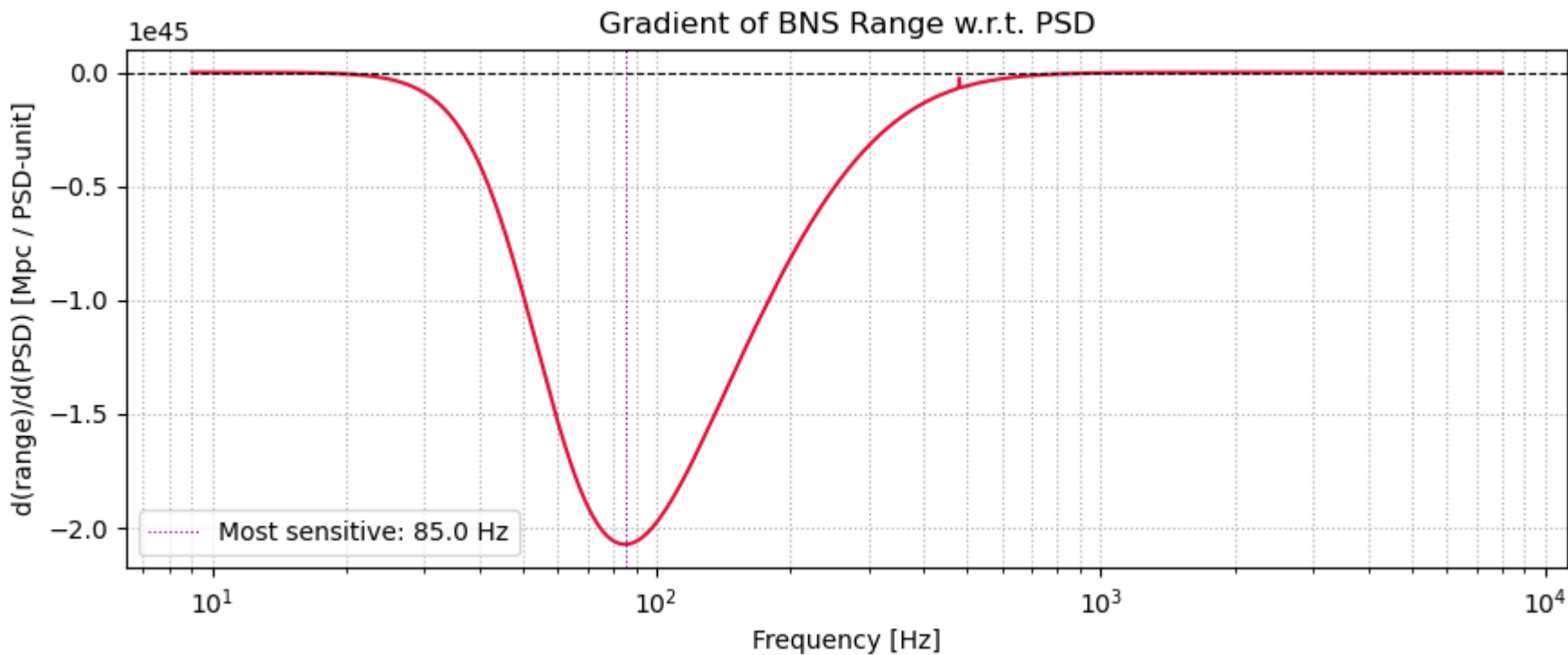
+ inspiral_range.range (PSD)
= a number

if only we could compute ∇_{ψ}  + inspiral_range.range (PSD)

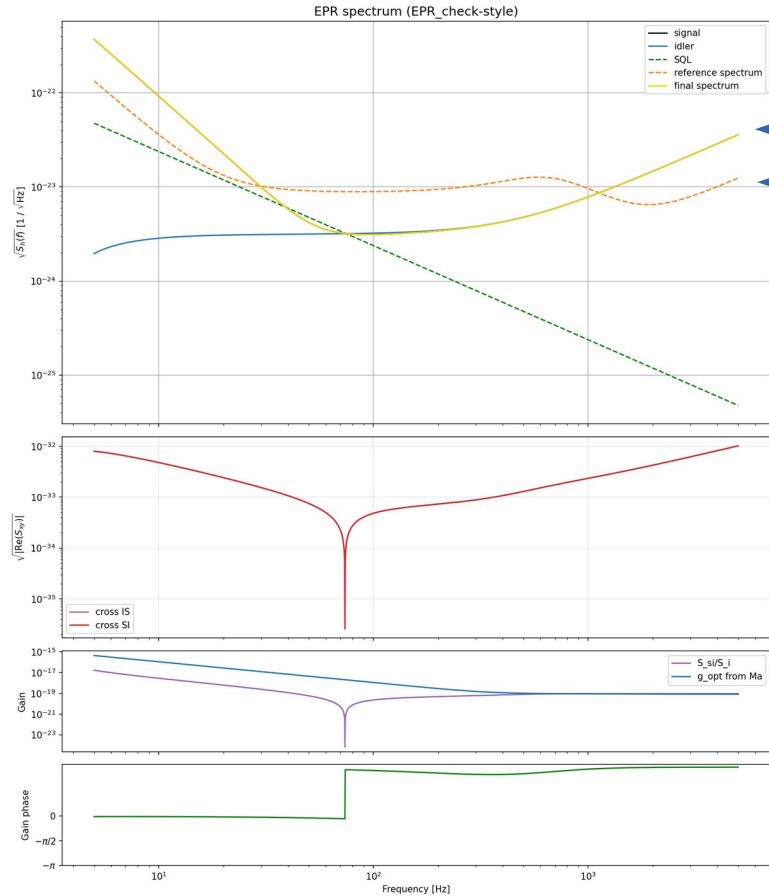
Auto-diff first outcome

know your loss function better

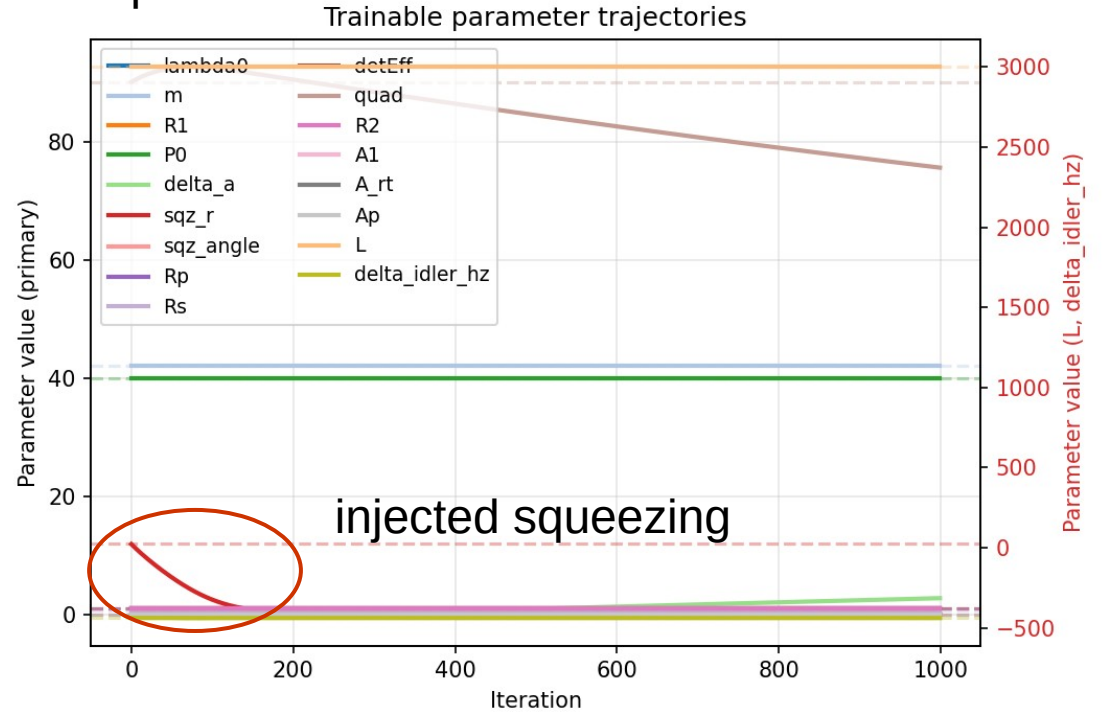
```
grad_psd_fn = jax.jit(jax.grad(lambda p: bns_range(freq, p)))  
grad_psd = grad_psd_fn(psd)  
plt.loglog(freq, grad_psd, color="crimson")
```



Optimisation



← optimised point
← initial point



The start and the end

Initial point:

```
lambda0 = 1.064 *  
  m = 42 *  
  R1 = 0.986 *  
  L = 2999.8 *  
  P0 = 40 *  
  delta_a = 0 *  
  sqz_r = 12 *  
  sqz_angle = 0 *  
  Rp = 0.95 *  
  Rs = 0.6 *  
  Lrec = 11.958  
  detEff = 1 *  
  quad = 90 *  
  R2 = 1 *  
  A1 = 0 *  
  A_rt = 0 *  
  Ap = 0 *  
  delta_idler_hz = -438.28 *
```

Optimized point:

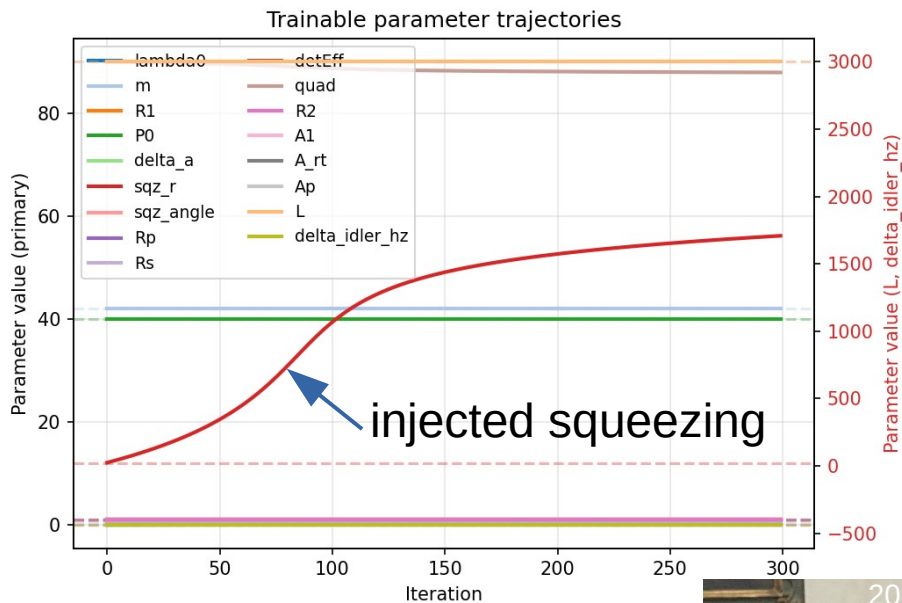
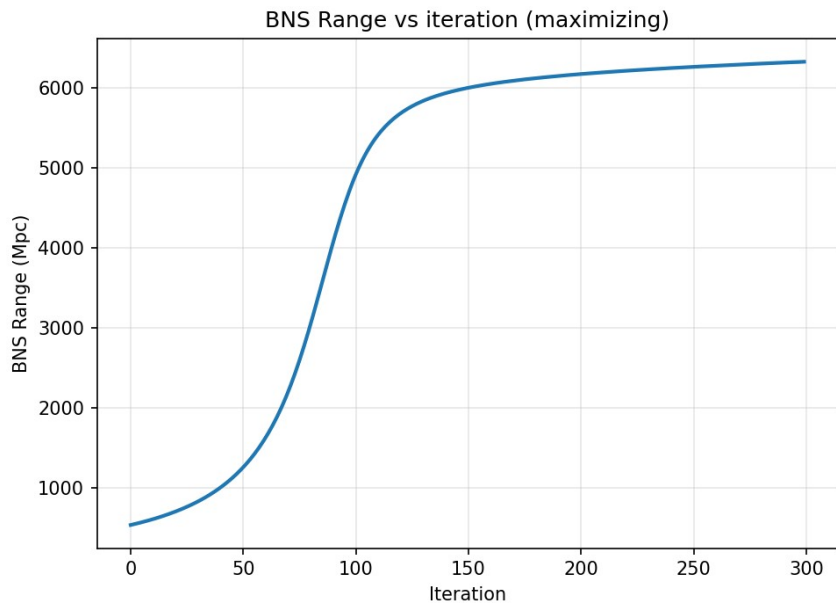
```
lambda0 = 1.064 *  
  m = 42 *  
  R1 = 0.986 *  
  L = 2999.8 *  
  P0 = 40 *  
  delta_a = 2.716026 *  
  sqz_r = 3.9508612e-19 *  
  sqz_angle = 0 *  
  Rp = 0.95 *  
  Rs = 0.6 *  
  Lrec = 11.958  
  detEff = 1 *  
  quad = 75.589533 *  
  R2 = 1 *  
  A1 = 0 *  
  A_rt = 0 *  
  Ap = 0 *  
  delta_idler_hz = -438.28 *
```

More information

- much more details in the [lecture](#): *Differentiable programming and design optimization* by Atılım Güneş Baydin (University of Oxford)
pay attention to the multi-dimensional optimization aspect!
- entry level implementation explanation - [Saupin Guillaume Blog](#)

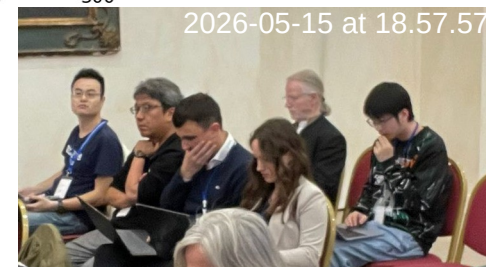
Thank you for your attention

Plot-twist: “double-check your model”



still do not trust it! :-)

16/05/2026



The start and the end

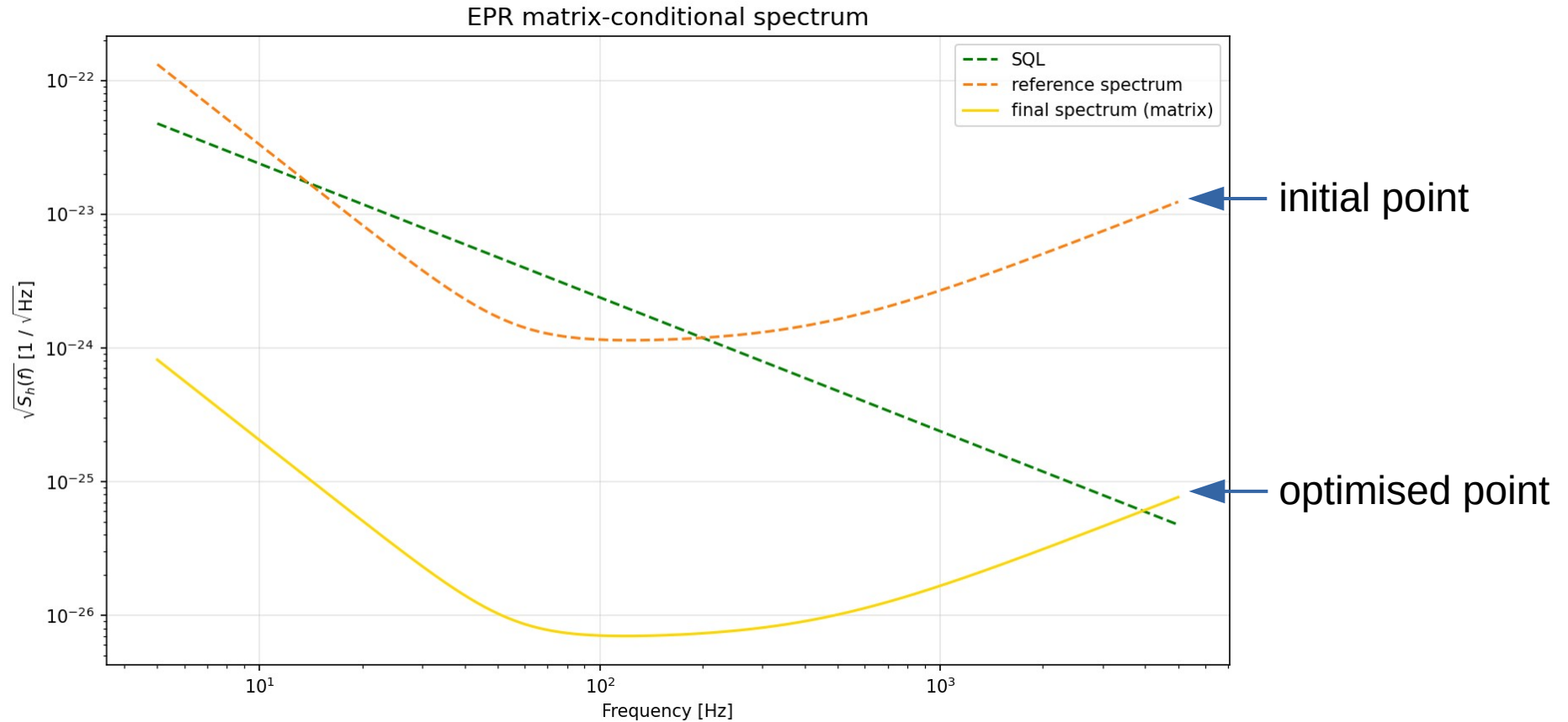
Initial point:

```
lambda0 = 1.064 *  
  m = 42 *  
  R1 = 0.986 *  
  L = 2999.8 *  
  P0 = 40 *  
delta_a = 0 *  
  sqz_r = 12 *  
sqz_angle = 0 *  
  Rp = 0.95 *  
  Rs = 0.6 *  
  Lrec = 11.958  
detEff = 1 *  
  quad = 90 *  
  R2 = 1 *  
  A1 = 0 *  
  A_rt = 0 *  
  Ap = 0 *  
delta_idler_hz = -438.28 *
```

Optimized point:

```
lambda0 = 1.064 *  
  m = 42 *  
  R1 = 0.986 *  
  L = 2999.8 *  
  P0 = 40 *  
delta_a = 0.39445022 *  
  sqz_r = 56.188894 *  
sqz_angle = 0 *  
  Rp = 0.95 *  
  Rs = 0.6 *  
  Lrec = 11.958  
detEff = 1 *  
  quad = 87.925427 *  
  R2 = 1 *  
  A1 = 0 *  
  A_rt = 0 *  
  Ap = 0 *  
delta_idler_hz = -438.28 *
```

The start and the end



Thank you for your attention

Gradient history

