BEYOND MATRIX COMPLETION

ANKUR MOITRA

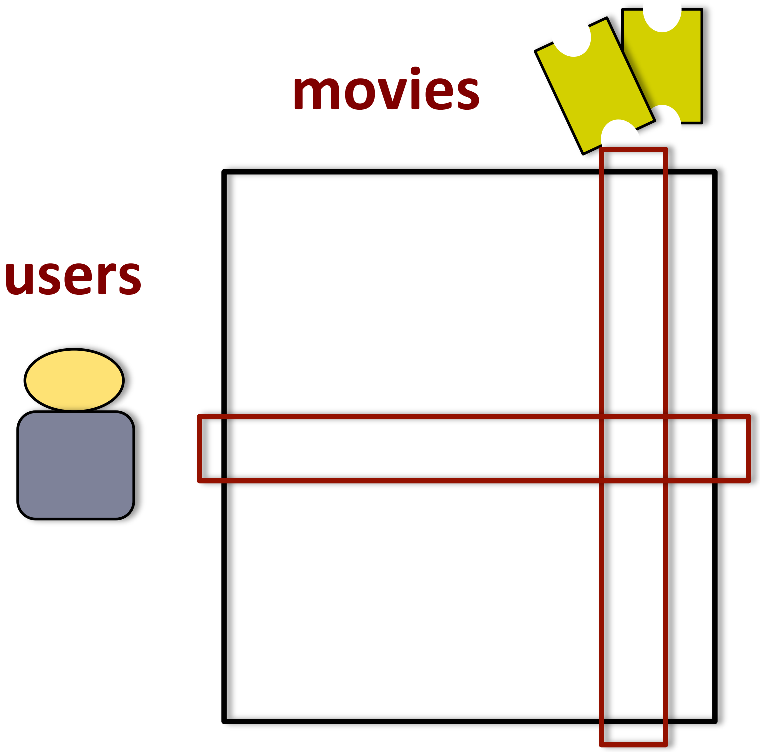
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Based on joint work with Boaz Barak (Harvard)

Part I:

Recommendation systems and partially observed matrices

THE NETFLIX PROBLEM



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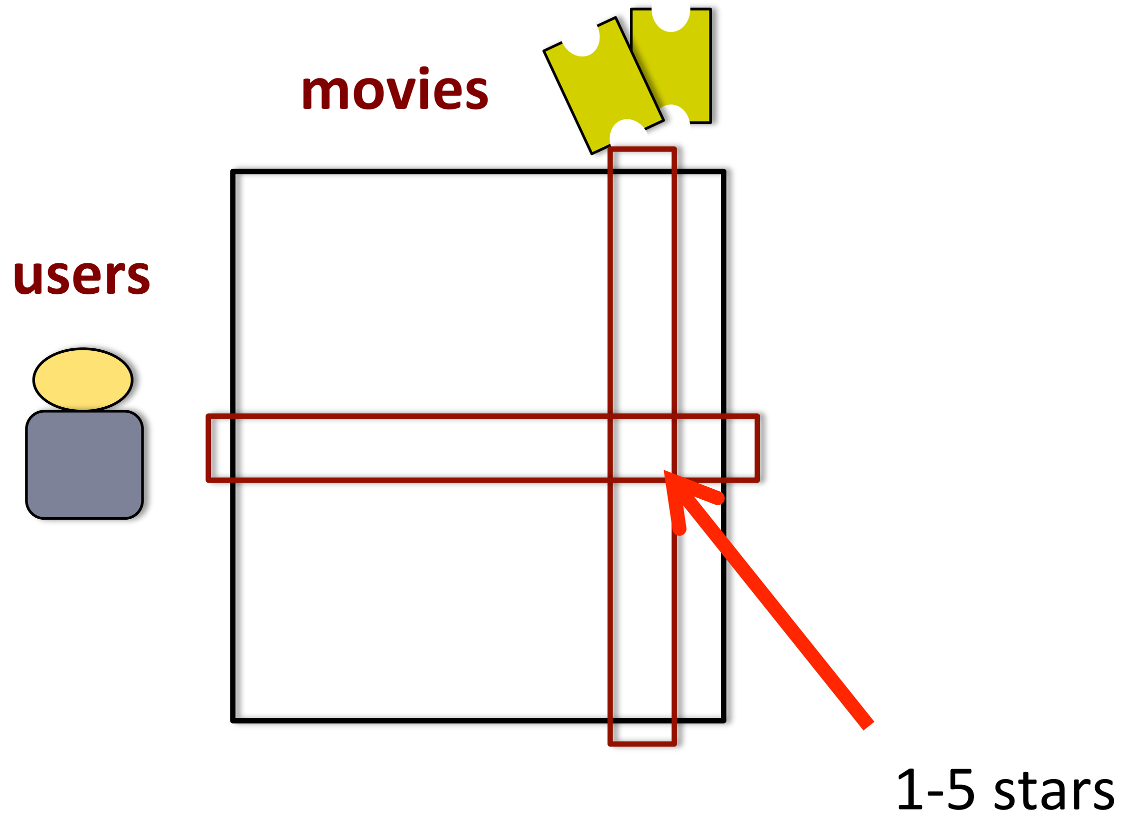

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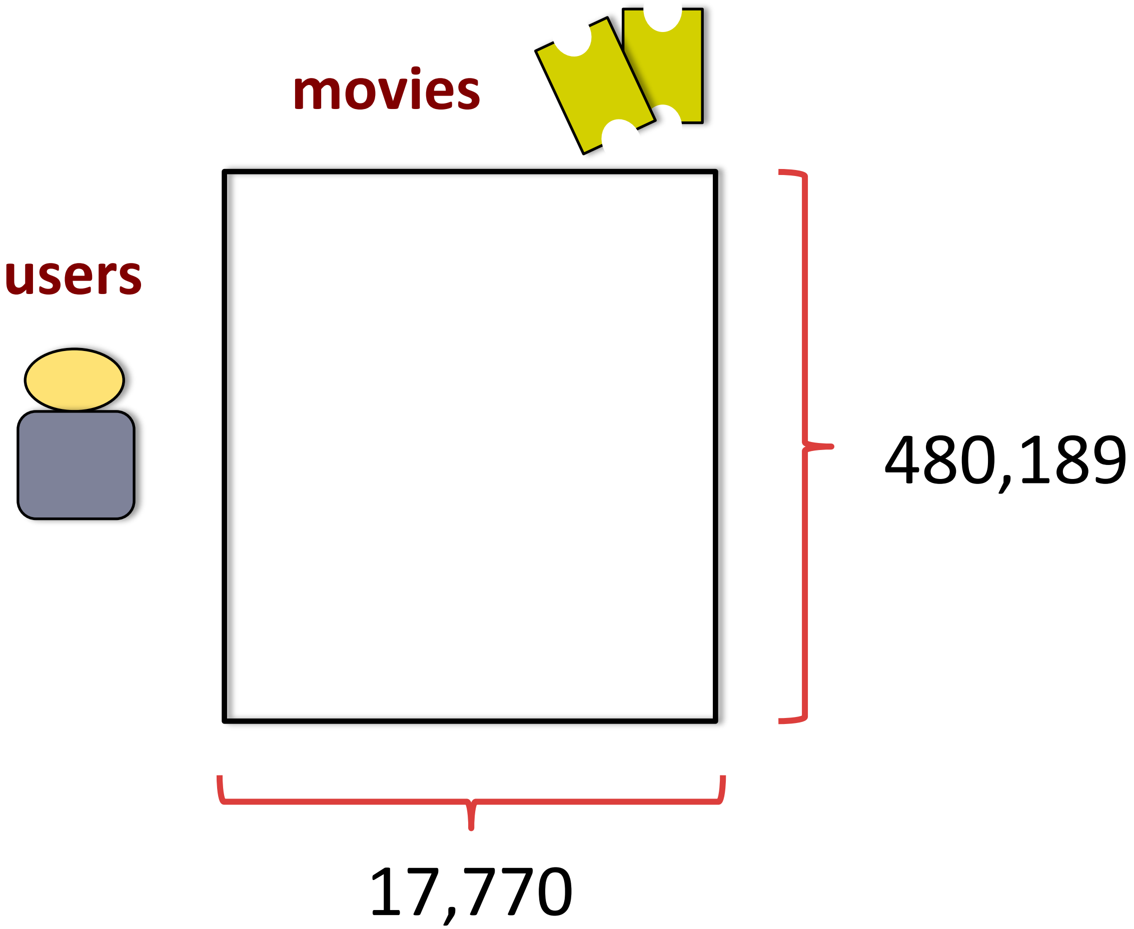

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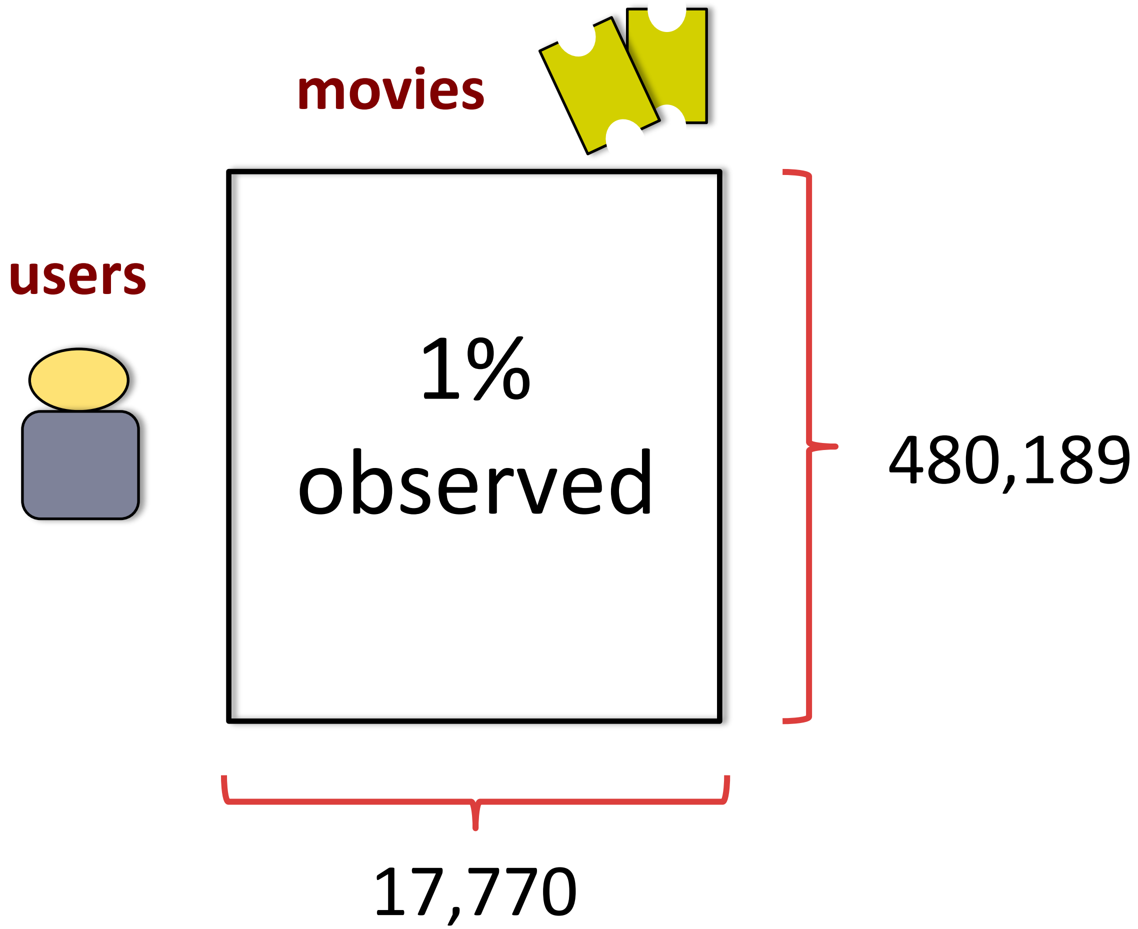

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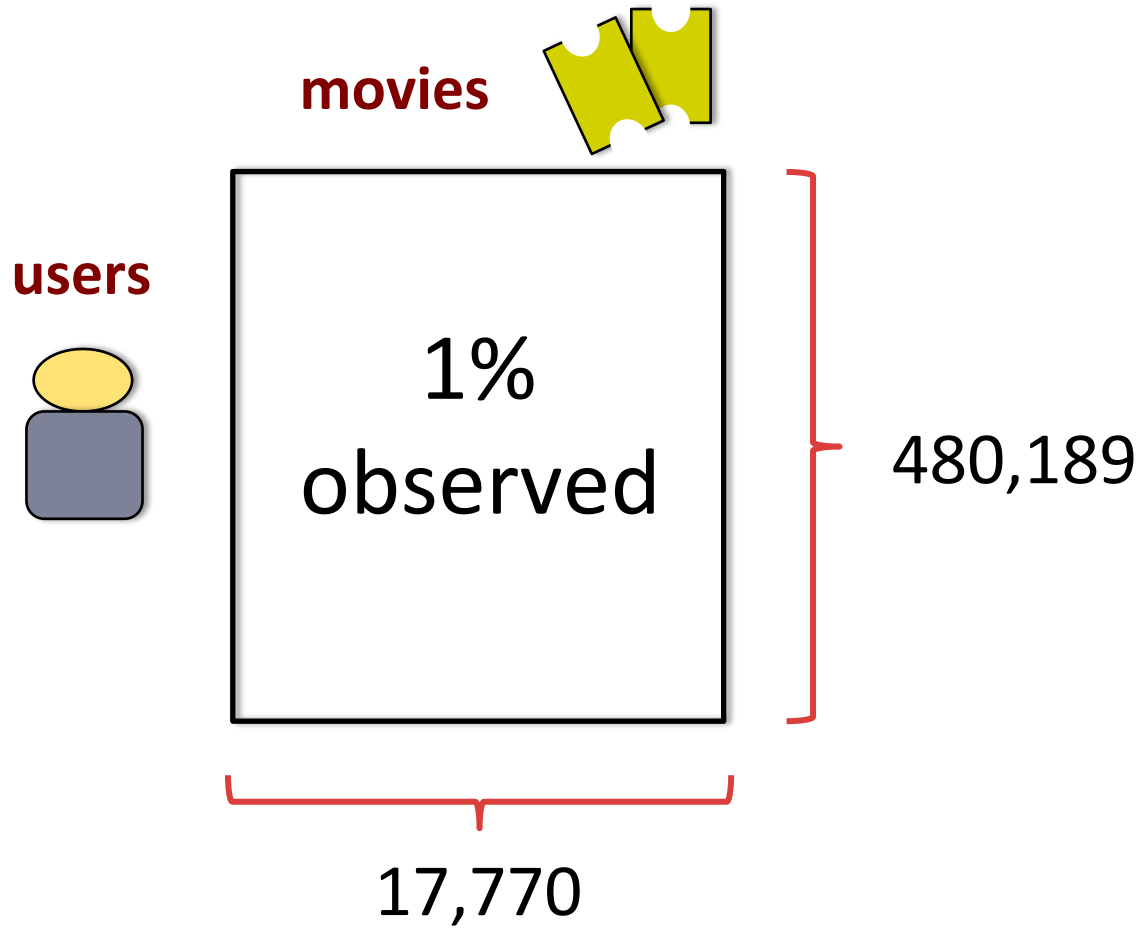

Can we (approximately) fill-in the missing entries?

MATRIX COMPLETION

Let M be an unknown, approximately low-rank matrix

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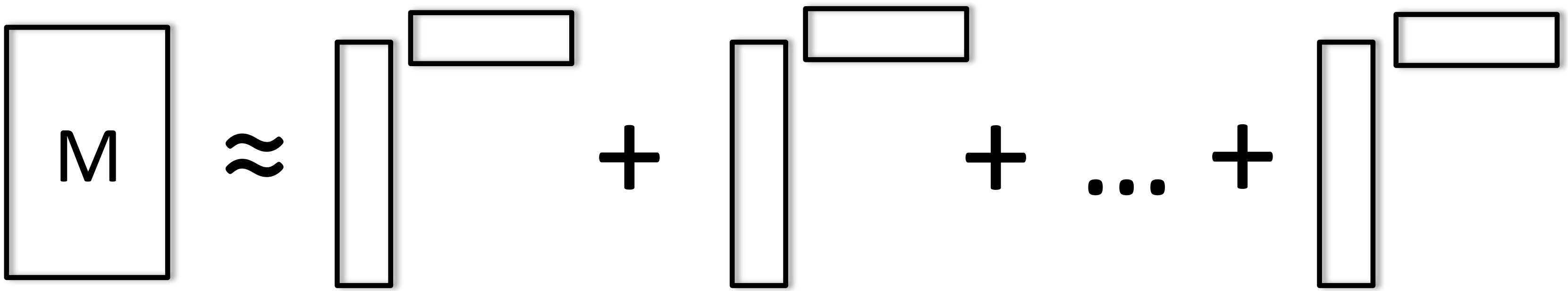

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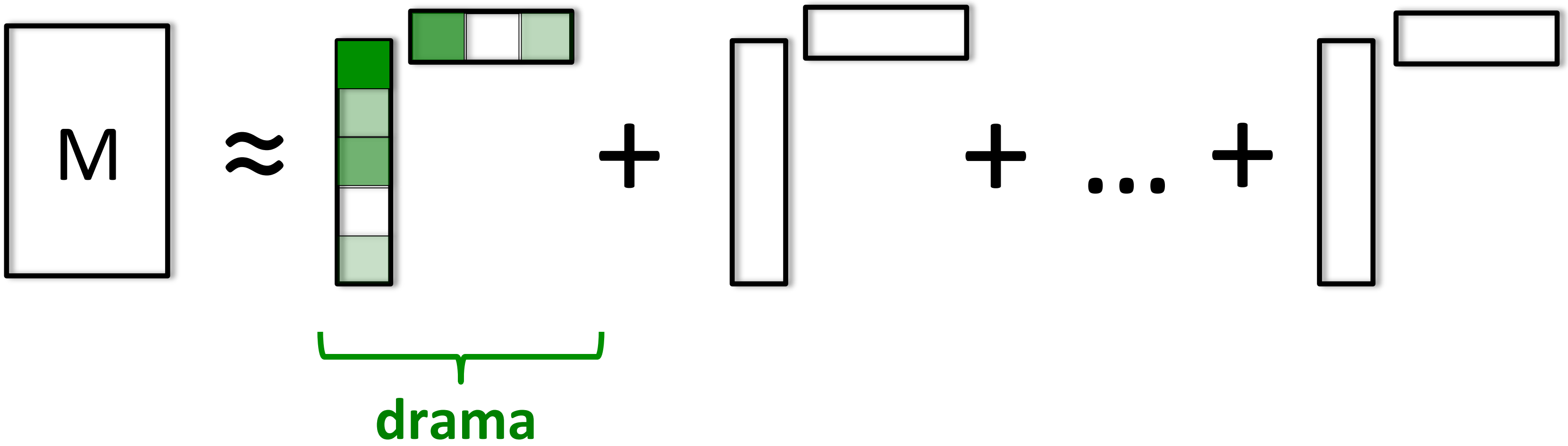

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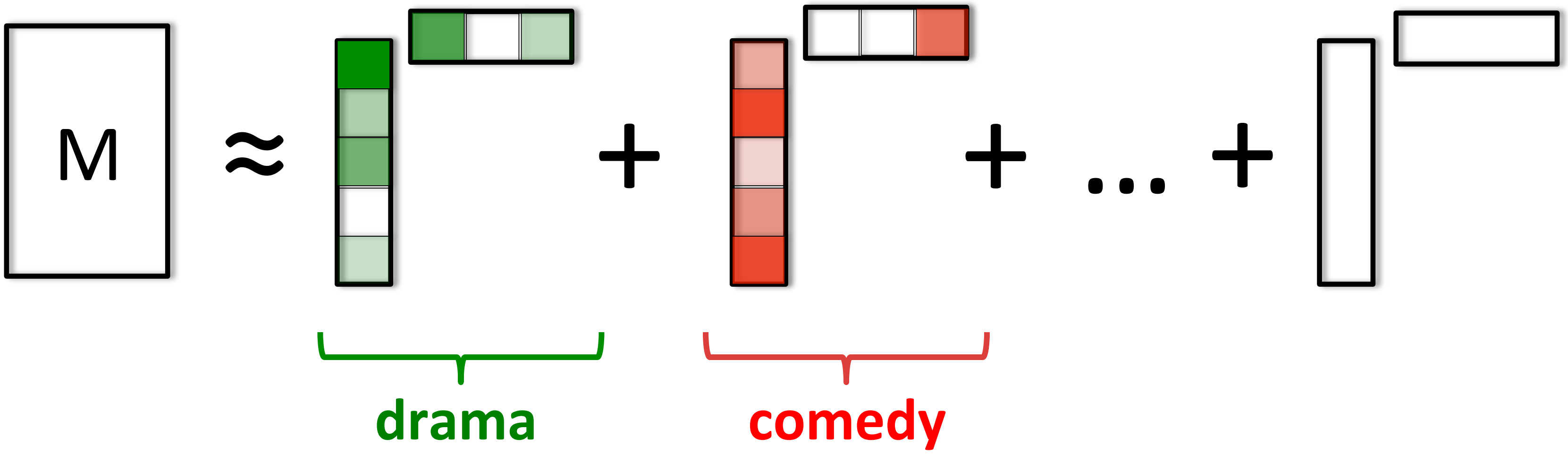

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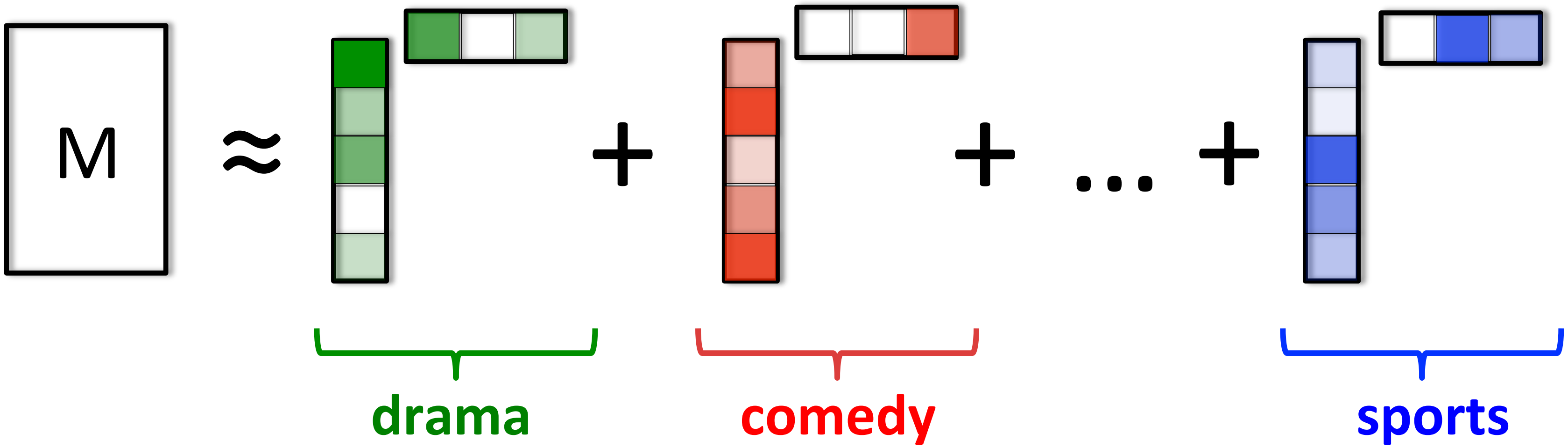

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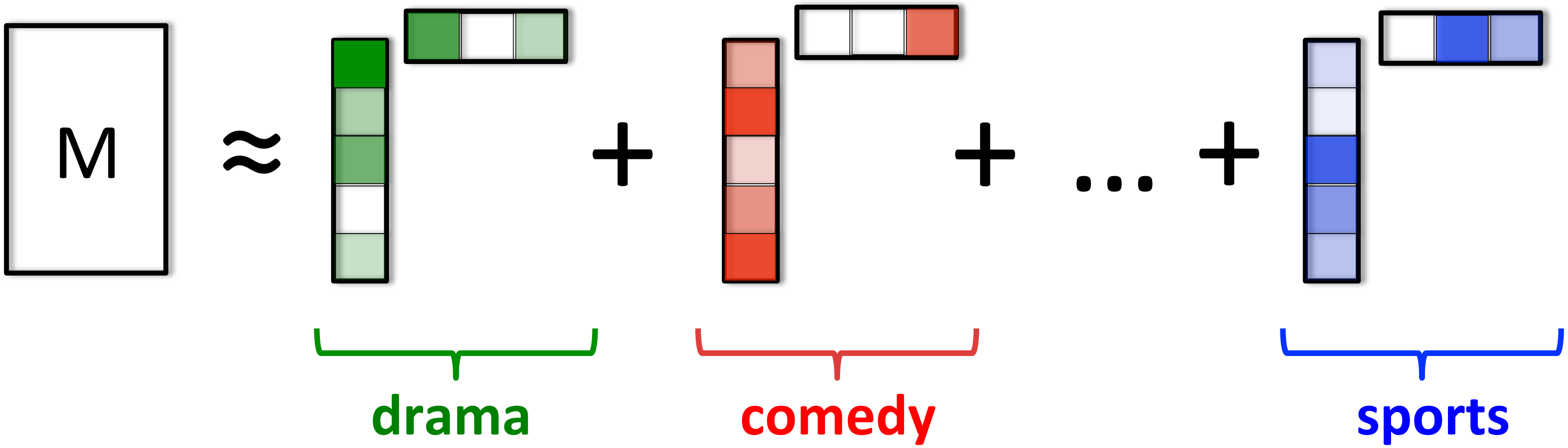

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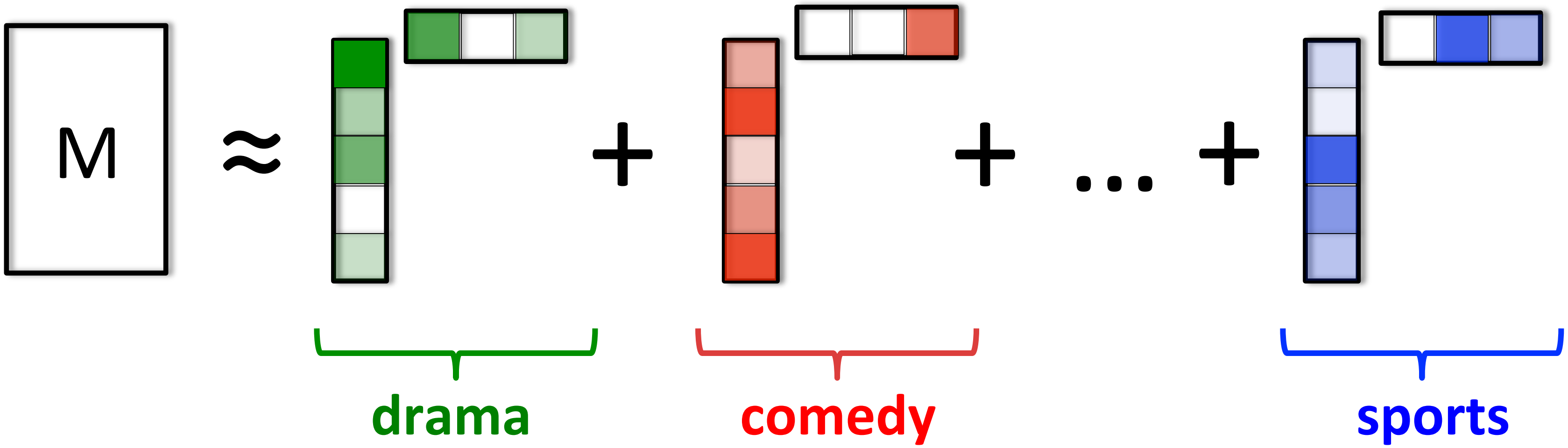

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Is there an efficient algorithm to recover M?

MATRIX COMPLETION

The natural formulation is **non-convex**, and **NP-hard**

$$\min \operatorname{rank}(X) \;\; \text{s.t.} \;\; \frac{1}{|\Omega|} \sum_{(i,j)\in\Omega} |X_{i,j} - M_{i,j}| \leq \eta$$

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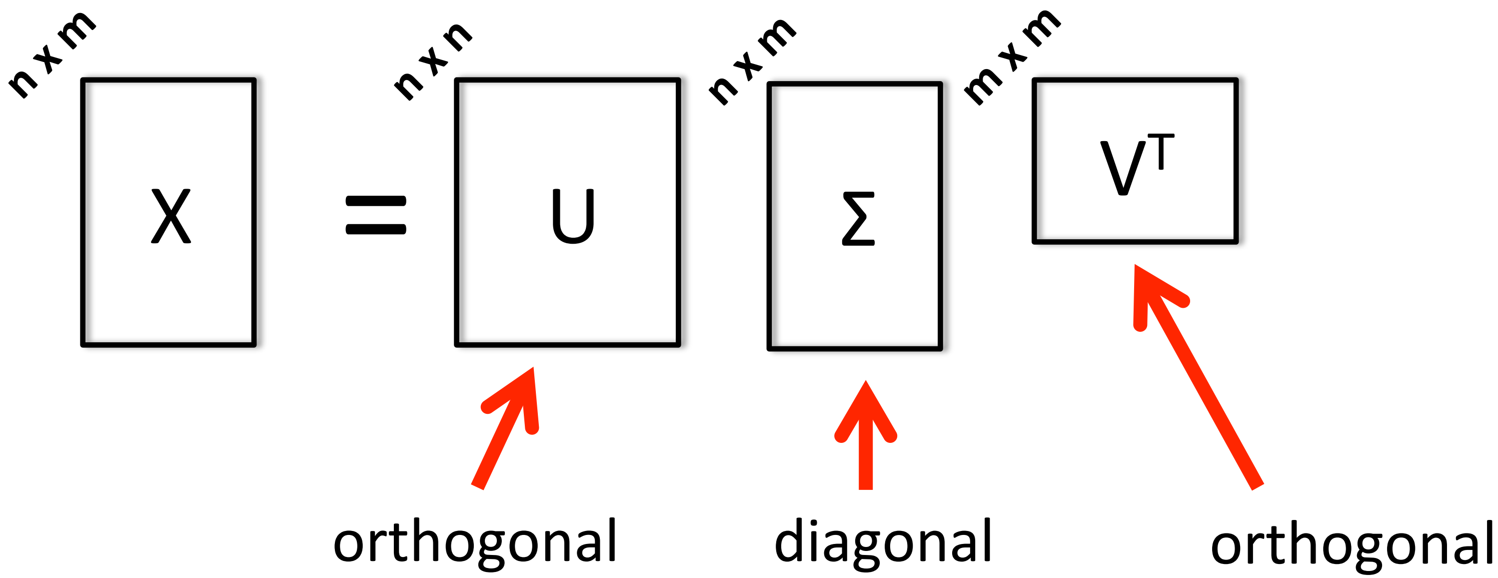
There is a powerful, convex relaxation…

THE NUCLEAR NORM

Consider the **singular value decomposition** of X:



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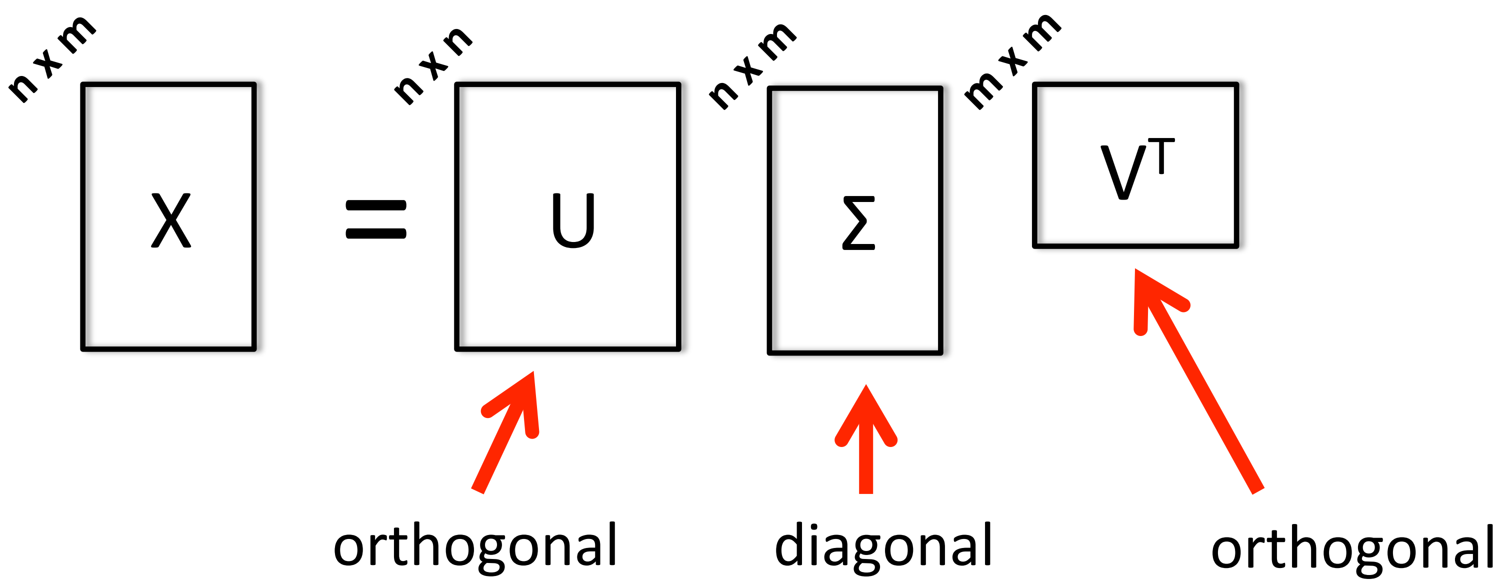

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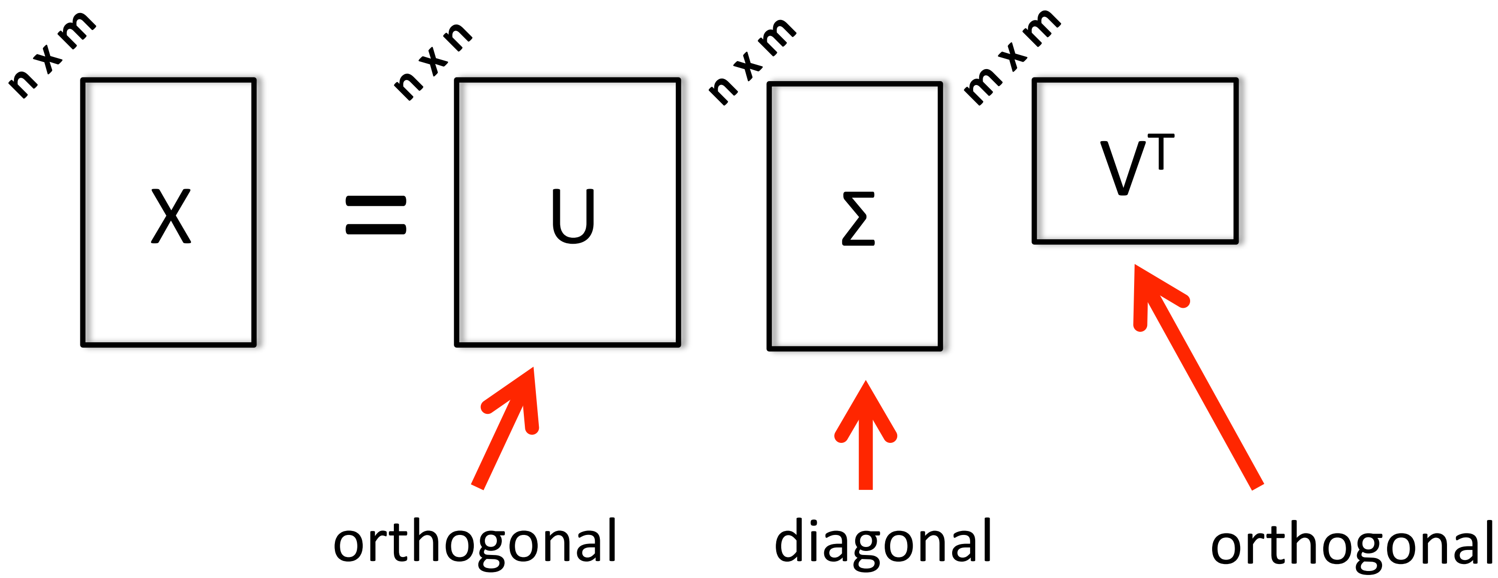

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Then rank(X) = r, and $||X||_* = \sigma_1 + \sigma_2 + \ldots + \sigma_r$ (**nuclear norm**)

This yields a convex relaxation, that can be solved efficiently:

$$\min \|X\|_* \text{ s.t. } \frac{1}{|\Omega|} \sum_{(i,j)\in\Omega} |X_{i,j} - M_{i,j}| \leq \eta \quad \textbf{(P)}$$

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Many other approaches, e.g. **alternating minimization**:

[Keshavan, Montanari, Oh], [Jain, Netrapalli, Sanghavi], [Hardt], …

Part II:

Higher order structure?

TENSOR PREDICTION

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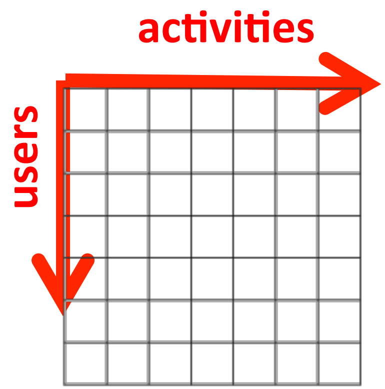

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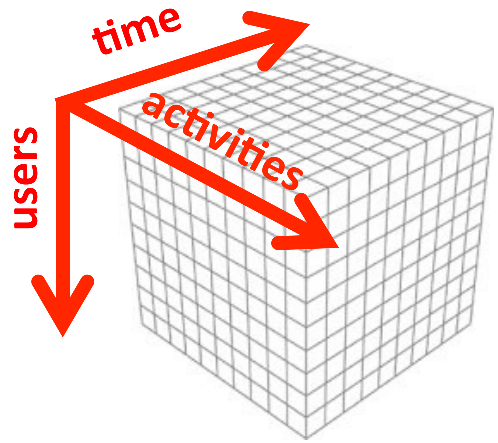

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time: season, time of day, weekday/weekend, etc

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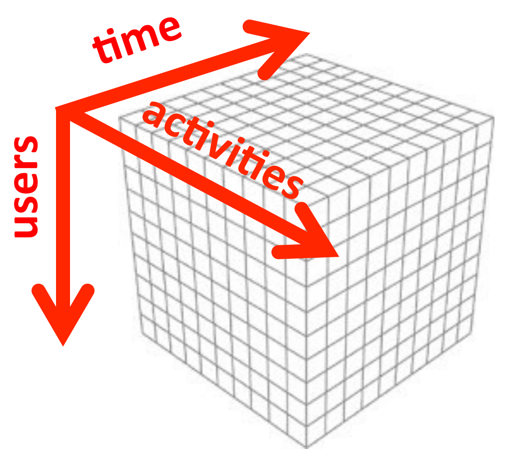

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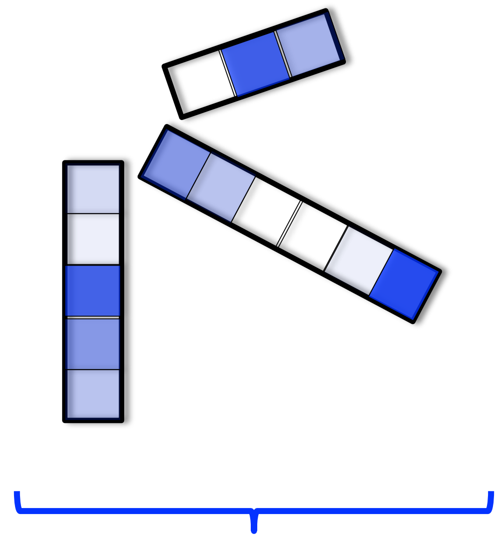

snow sports

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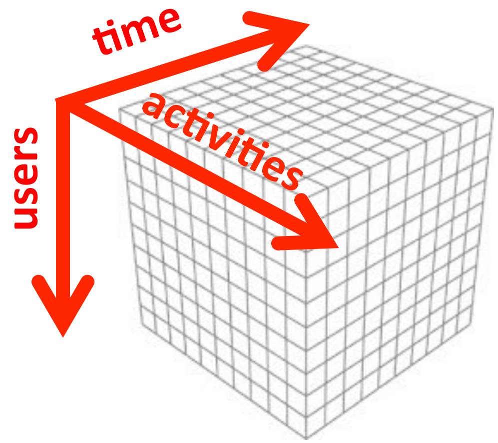

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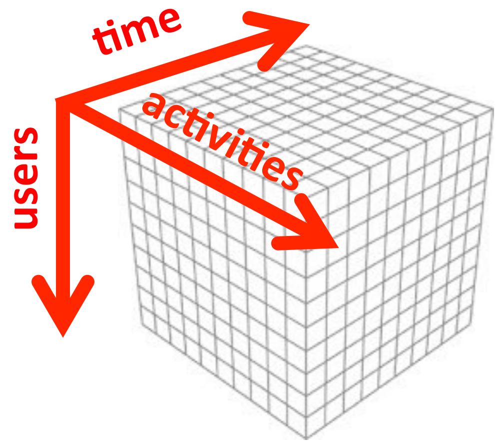

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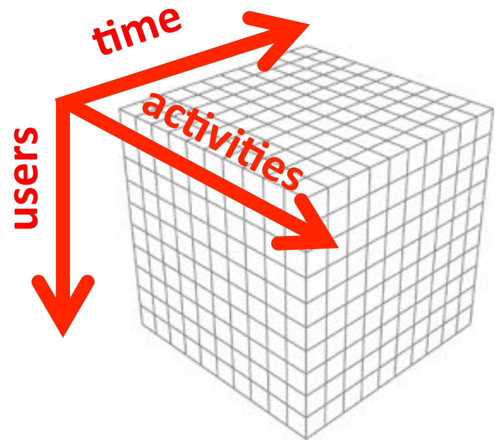

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Can we (approximately) fill-in the missing entries?

More attributes lead to better recommendations, but more complex objects…

THE TROUBLE WITH TENSORS

Natural approach (suggested by many authors):

$$\min \|X\|_* \text{ s.t. } \frac{1}{|\Omega|}\sum_{(i,j,k)\in\Omega} |X_{i,j,k} - T_{i,j,k}| \leq \eta \quad \textbf{(P)}$$

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tensor nuclear norm

The tensor nuclear norm is **NP-hard** to compute!

[Gurvits], [Liu], [Harrow, Montanaro]

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Table I. Tractability of Tensor Problems

Problem	**Complexity**
Bivariate Matrix Functions over $\mathbb{R}$, $\mathbb{C}$	Undecidable (Proposition 12.2)
Bilinear System over $\mathbb{R}$, $\mathbb{C}$	NP-hard (Theorems 2.6, 3.7, 3.8)
Eigenvalue over $\mathbb{R}$	NP-hard (Theorem 1.3)
Approximating Eigenvector over $\mathbb{R}$	NP-hard (Theorem 1.5)
Symmetric Eigenvalue over $\mathbb{R}$	NP-hard (Theorem 9.3)
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Singular Value over $\mathbb{R}$, $\mathbb{C}$	NP-hard (Theorem 1.7)
Symmetric Singular Value over $\mathbb{R}$	NP-hard (Theorem 10.2)
Approximating Singular Vector over $\mathbb{R}$, $\mathbb{C}$	NP-hard (Theorem 6.3)
Spectral Norm over $\mathbb{R}$	NP-hard (Theorem 1.10)
Symmetric Spectral Norm over $\mathbb{R}$	NP-hard (Theorem 10.2)
Approximating Spectral Norm over $\mathbb{R}$	NP-hard (Theorem 1.11)
Nonnegative Definiteness	NP-hard (Theorem 11.2)
Best Rank-1 Approximation	NP-hard (Theorem 1.13)
Best Symmetric Rank-1 Approximation	NP-hard (Theorem 10.2)
Rank over $\mathbb{R}$ or $\mathbb{C}$	NP-hard (Theorem 8.2)
Enumerating Eigenvectors over $\mathbb{R}$	#P-hard (Corollary 1.16)
Combinatorial Hyperdeterminant	NP-, #P-, VNP-hard (Theorems 4.1 , 4.2, Corollary 4.3)
Geometric Hyperdeterminant	Conjectures 1.9, 13.1
Symmetric Rank	Conjecture 13.2
Bilinear Programming	Conjecture 13.4
Bilinear Least Squares	Conjecture 13.5

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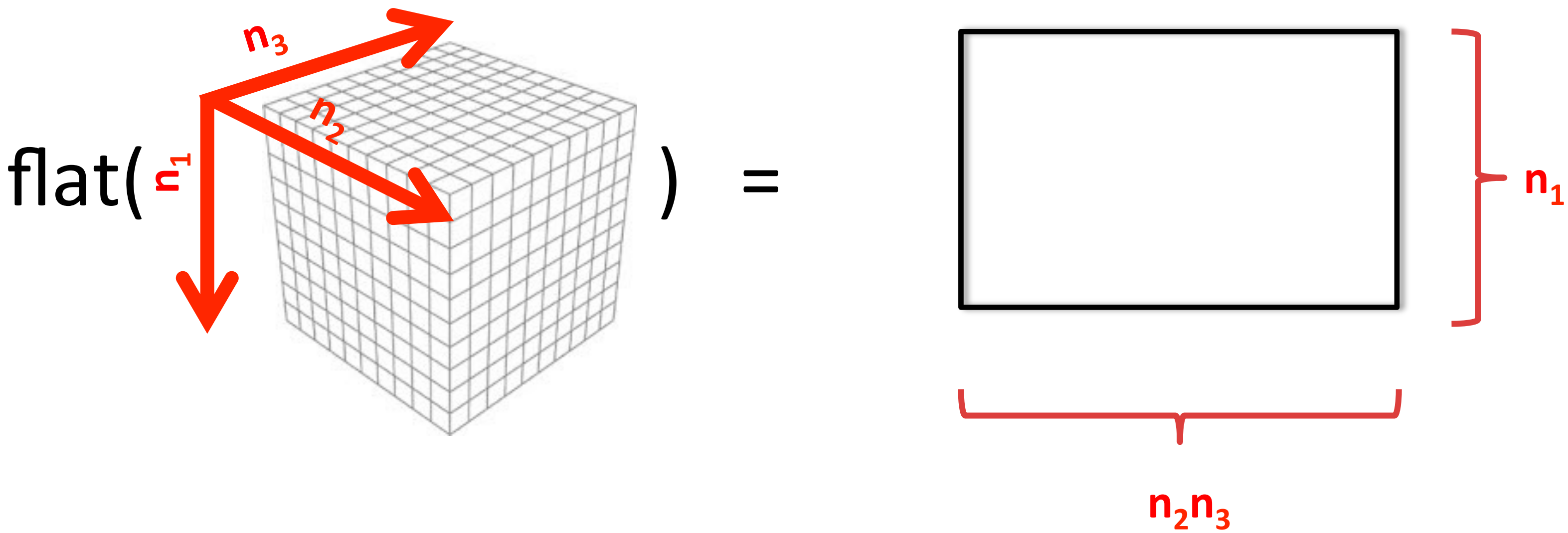

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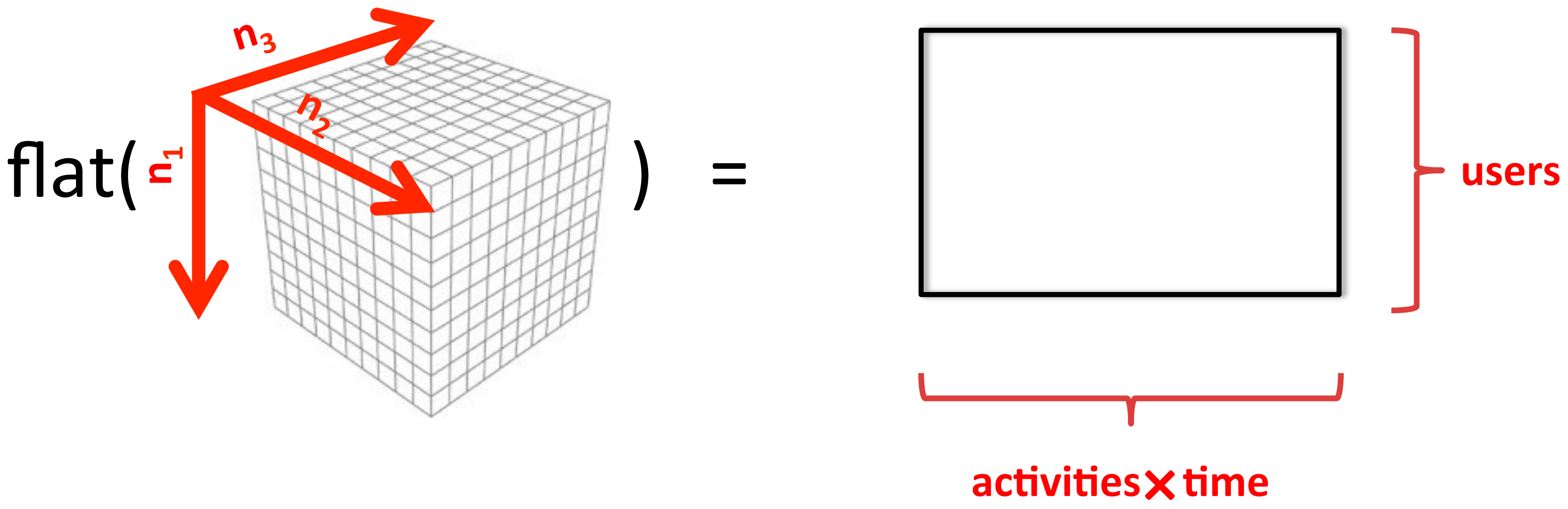

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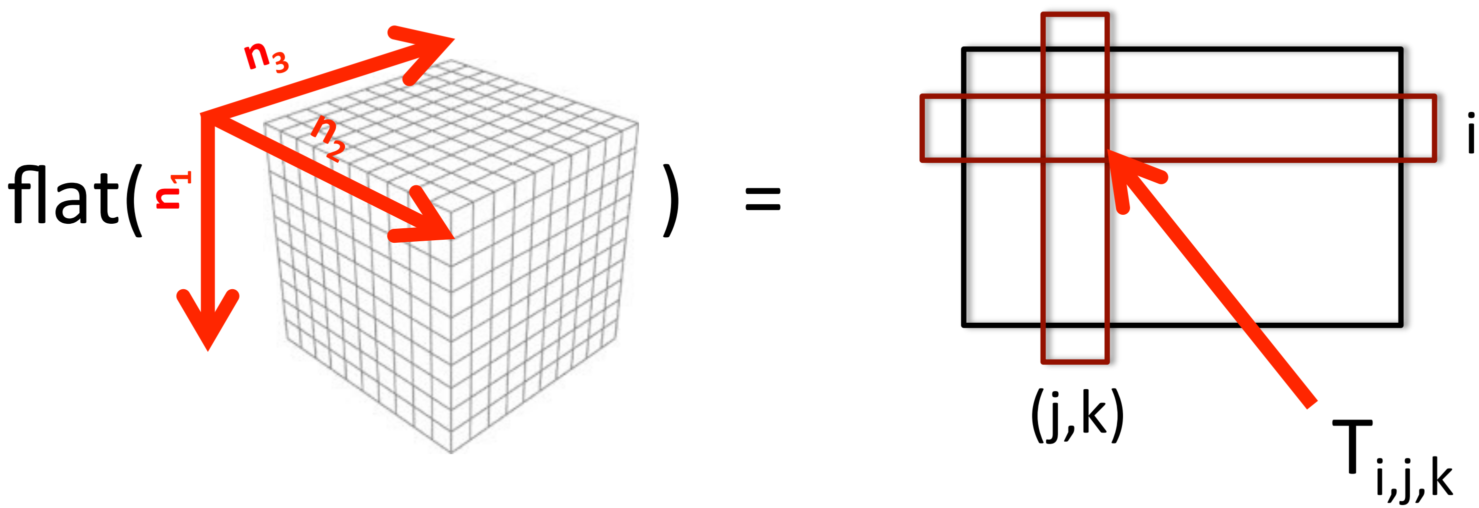

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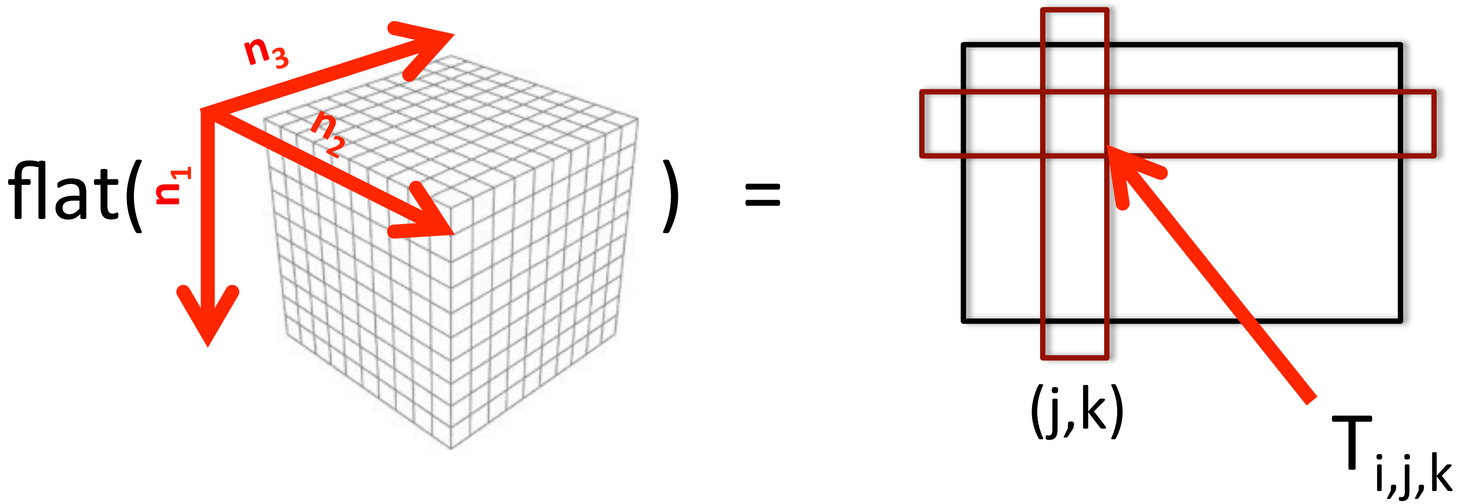

This is a **rearrangement** of the entries, into a matrix, that does not increase its **rank**

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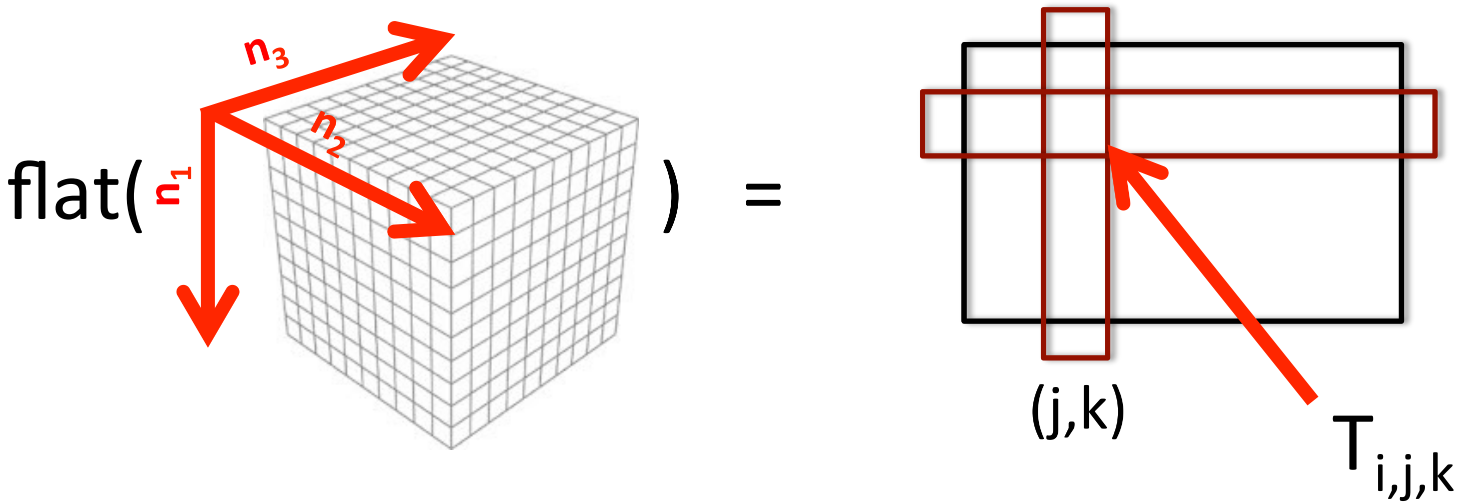

$$\text{flat}\left(\sum_{i=1}^{r} a_i \otimes b_i \otimes c_i\right) = \sum_{i=1}^{r} a_i \otimes \underbrace{\text{vec}(b_i c_i^T)}_{n_2 n_3\text{-dimensional vector}}$$

Let $n_1 = n_2 = n_3 = n$

We would need $\widetilde{O}(n^2 r)$ observations to fill-in flat(T)

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There are many other variants of **flattening**, but with comparable guarantees

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Can we beat flattening?

Can we make better predictions than we do by treating each **activity x time** as unrelated?

Part III:

Nearly optimal algorithms for tensor prediction

OUR RESULTS

$$T = \sum_{i=1}^{r} \sigma_i \, a_i \otimes b_i \otimes c_i + \textbf{noise}$$

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Theorem: Suppose $var(T_{i,j,k}) \geq r$. Then there is an efficient algorithm that outputs X which satisfies:

$$X_{i,j,k} = (1 \pm o(1)) T_{i,j,k}$$

for a 1-o(1) fraction of entries, provided $m = \widetilde{\Omega}(n^{3/2} r)$

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This variance bound holds for **random** tensors, but also tensors where the factors (a_i's, b_i's, c_i's) have **large inner-product**

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Even for $r = n^{3/2-\delta}$ (**highly overcomplete**), we only need to observe an o(1) fraction of the entries to predict almost everything

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Tensor prediction with m observations → Refute random 3-SAT with m clauses

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Corollary [informal]: Any algorithm for solving tensor prediction, in the sum-of-squares hierarchy that uses $m=n^{3/2-\delta}r$ observations must run in exponential time

Part IV:

Our techniques: connections to random CSPs

Can we distinguish between low-rank and random?

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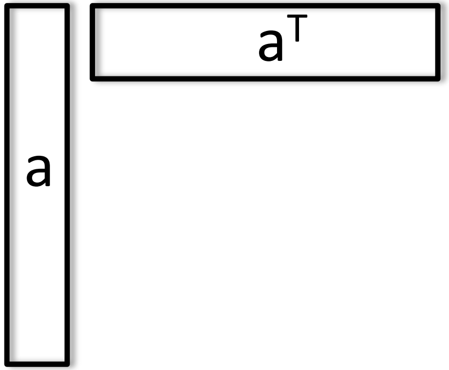
Case #1: Approximately low-rank



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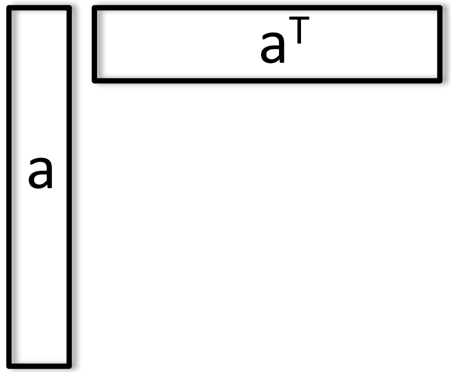

+ **noise**

For each $(i,j) \in \Omega$

$$M_{i,j} = \begin{cases} a_i a_j & \text{w/ probability } 3/4 \\ \text{random } \pm 1 & \text{w/ probability } 1/4 \end{cases}$$

where each $a_i = \pm 1$

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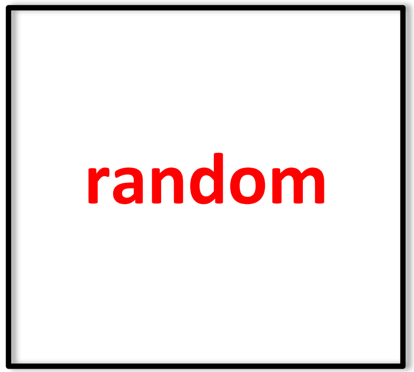
Case #2: Random



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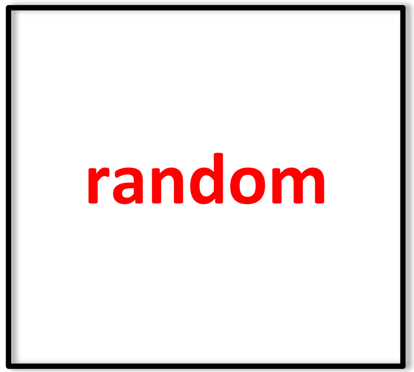

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In **Case #1** the entries are (somewhat) predictable, but in **Case #2** they are completely **unpredictable**

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The community working on **refuting random CSPs**

AN INTERPRETATION

We can interpret:

$$(i_1, j_1; \boldsymbol{\sigma_1}), (i_2, j_2; \boldsymbol{\sigma_2}), \ldots, (i_m, j_m; \boldsymbol{\sigma_m})$$

← ±1 r.v.

as a random 2-XOR formula ψ

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as a random 2-XOR formula ψ (and vice-versa)

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STRONG REFUTATION

We will say that an algorithm **strongly refutes*** random 2-XOR with m clauses if:

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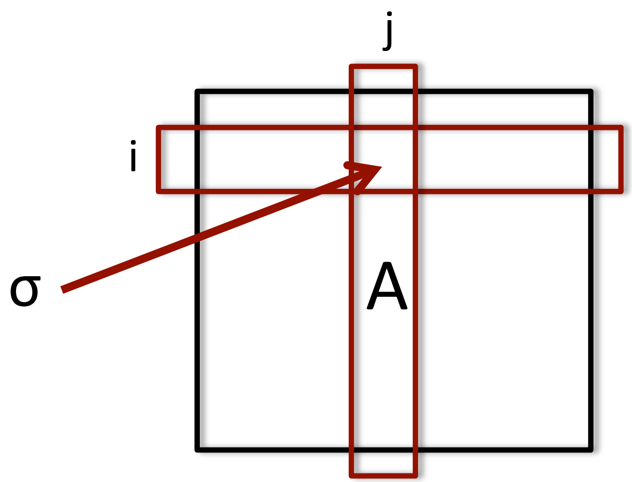
(2) With high probability (for random ψ with m clauses):

$$val(\psi) = \frac{1}{2} + o(1)$$

Lemma: If $(i_1, j_1; \sigma_1), \ldots, (i_m, j_m; \sigma_m) \leftrightarrow \psi$ then



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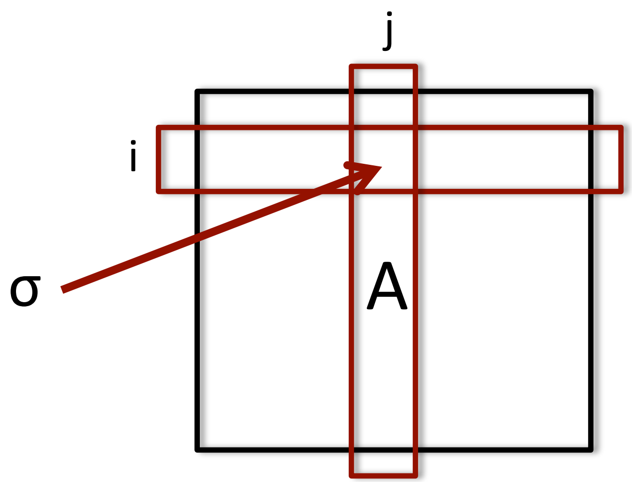

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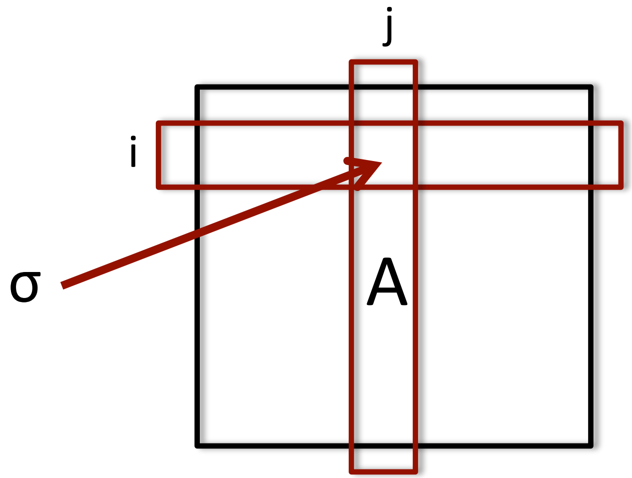

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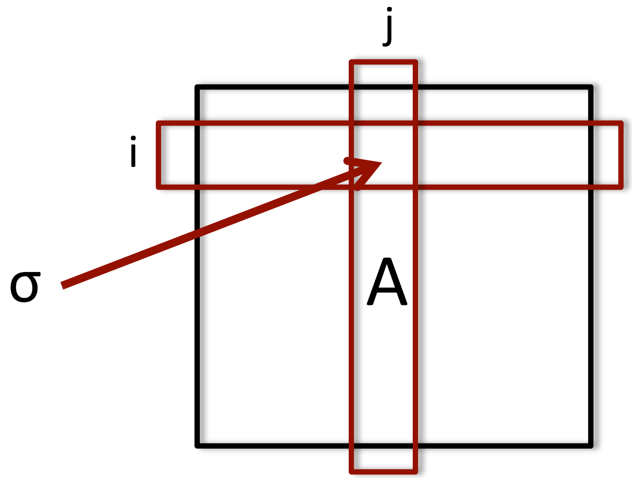

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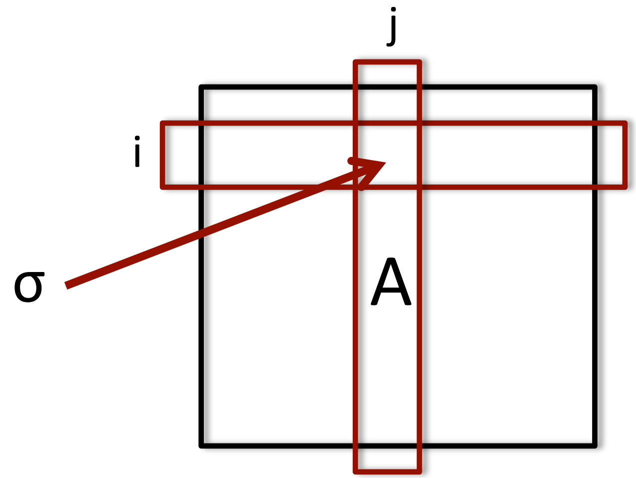

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This solves the strong refutation problem…

There are two very different communities that (essentially) attacked this same distinguishing problem:

The community working on **matrix completion**

The community working on **refuting random CSPs**

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Noisy matrix completion with m observations → **Strongly refute*** random 2-XOR/2-SAT with m clauses

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*Want an algorithm that certifies a formula is far from satisfiable

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[Coja-Oghlan, Goerdt, Lanka]

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Embedding in SOS

[Coja-Oghlan, Goerdt, Lanka]

We then embed this algorithm into the **sixth** level of the sum-of-squares hierarchy, to get a relaxation for tensor prediction

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GENERALIZATION BOUNDS

Suppose we are given $|\Omega| = m$ noisy observations $T_{i,j,k} \pm \eta$, and the factors of T are C-incoherent:

Theorem: There is an efficient algorithm that with prob 1-δ, outputs X with

$$\frac{1}{n^3} \sum_{i,j,k} |X_{i,j,k} - T_{i,j,k}| \leq C^3 r \sqrt{\frac{n^{3/2} \log^4 n}{m}} + 2C^3 r \sqrt{\frac{\ln(2/\delta)}{m}} + 2\eta$$

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This comes from giving an efficiently computable norm $\|\cdot\|_K$ whose Rademacher complexity is asymptotically smaller than the trivial bound whenever $m=\Omega(n^{3/2}\log^4 n)$

SUMMARY

New Algorithm:

We gave an algorithm for 3rd-order tensor prediction that uses $m = n^{3/2} r \log^4 n$ observations

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A Phase Transition:

Even for n^{δ} rounds of the powerful sum-of-squares hierarchy, no norm solves tensor prediction with $m = n^{3/2-\delta} r$ observations

Epilogue:

New directions in linear inverse problems

Robust PCA [Candes et al.], [Chandrasekaran et al.], …

Can we recover a low rank matrix from sparse corruptions?

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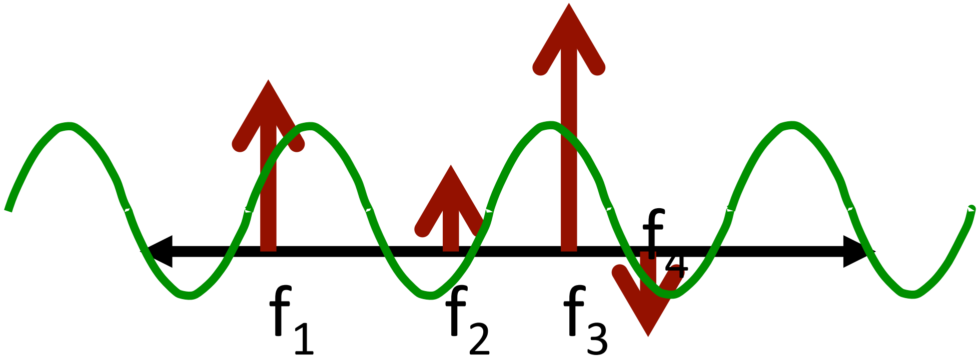
Superresolution, compressed sensing off-the-grid

[Candes, Fernandez-Granda], [Tang et al.], …

Can we recover well-separated points from low-frequency measurements?



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Where else are there computational vs statistical tradeoffs?

New Direction: Explore computational vs. statistical tradeoffs through the powerful **sum-of-squares** hierarchy