

Effective field theories for gravity—Further reading

The QFT approach to GR was initiated by Weinberg, in two seminal papers [1, 2]. It was eventually completed by Deser [3], and by Boulware and Deser [4]. Feynman’s gravity lectures [5] also take this approach. In modern QFT terms, it is spelled out in Weinberg’s QFT textbook [6]. For a pedagogical review of the method, see my lecture notes [7].

General effective field theory ideas and methods are described in many excellent reviews—see for instance Polchinski’s [8] and Rothstein’s [9]. The first concrete application of these techniques to GR is probably that of Donoghue [10], who computed the leading quantum corrections to the Newtonian potential.

The cosmological constant problem is reviewed extensively in the classic review by Weinberg [11], who also proposed an anthropic solution [12].

For massive gravity, the original Fierz-Pauli theory was constructed in [13]. The vDVZ discontinuity was pointed out by van Dam and Veltman [14], and by Zakharov [15]. The Vainshtein effect was proposed in [16]. The general problem with the sixth mode in the non-linear theory was pointed out by Boulware and Deser in [17]. The modern approach based on the Stückelberg fields was initiated in [18]. It was used in [19] to understand the Boulware-Deser sixth mode problem in effective field theory terms. This problem was recently solved by de Rham and Gabadadze in [20], which also pointed out the relation between the improved theory of massive gravity and the galileon. This gave rise to a lot of activity on the subject, part of which is reviewed in detail by Hinterbichler [21]. The methods that worked for massive gravity have also been extended to ‘bi-metric’ and ‘multi-metric’ theories—see e.g. [22].

Models that are closely related to massive gravity, but which we did not discuss in class, are DGP and the galileon. The DGP model was introduced in [23]. Its self-accelerating cosmological solution was studied in [24, 25]. The 4D effective theory for the brane-bending mode was derived in [26], and further analyzed in [27], where many of its remarkable properties were pointed out. It was then generalized to the galileon effective field theory in [28]. The superluminality problem for these theories was pointed out—along with some associated S -matrix analyticity problems—in [29], and discussed further for the galileon in [28, 30, 31].

For a partial summary of and introduction to the subject of infrared modifications of gravity see also my ICTP lecture notes [32].

The EFT approach to gravitational wave emission was initiated by Goldberger and Rothstein in [33]. They later extended it to dissipative phenomena in [34], and, together with Porto, to spin effects in [35]. For a pedagogical review, see Goldberger’s lecture notes [36].

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