# Spin physics at small $x^{-1}$

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## Three pillars of EIC Physics

To understand our physical world, we have to understand QCD!

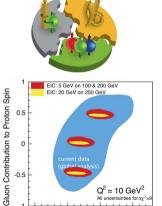


- How does the spin of proton arise? (Spin puzzle)
- What are the emergent properties of dense gluon system?
- How does proton mass arise? Mass gap: million dollar question.

EICs: keys to unlocking these mysteries! Many opportunities will be in front of us!



# **Understanding Nucleon Spin**



0.175

0.20

Quark Contribution to Proton Spin

0.225

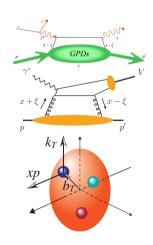
#### Jaffe-Manohar decomposition

$$\frac{1}{2} = \underbrace{\frac{1}{2}\Delta\Sigma + L_q}_{\text{Quark}} + \underbrace{\Delta G + L_g}_{\text{Gluon}}$$

- Quark spin  $\Delta\Sigma$  is only 30% of proton spin.  $g_1(x, Q^2) = \frac{1}{2} \sum e_q^2 \left[ \Delta q + \Delta \bar{q} \right]$  [EMC, 1988]
- Spin Puzzle: contradicts with the quark model.
- The rest of the proton spin must come from the gluon spin  $\Delta G$ , quark and gluon OAM  $L_{q,g}$ .
- EIC will help determine  $\Delta G$  precisely.



### Exclusive DIS (DVCS and DVVP)



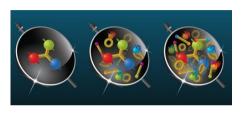
#### Ji Sum Rule:

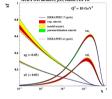
$$\begin{split} &\frac{1}{2} = J_q + J_g \\ &J_q = \frac{1}{2}\Delta\Sigma + L_q = \frac{1}{2}\int dxx \left(H_q + E_q\right) \;, \\ &J_g = \frac{1}{4}\int dx \left(H_g + E_g\right) . \end{split}$$

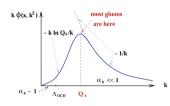
- Allows us to access to spacial distributions (related to GPDs via FT) of quarks and gluon in the nucleon.
- Obtain the information about the orbital motions indirectly.



## Saturation Physics (Color Glass Condensate) at High Energy





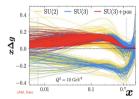


- Gluon density grows rapidly as x gets small.
- Many gluons with fixed size packed in a confined hadron, gluons overlap and recombine ⇒ Non-linear QCD dynamics (BK/JIMWLK) ⇒ ultra-dense gluonic matter
- Multiple Scattering (MV model) + Small-x (high energy) evolution
- Small-*x* UGD ~ Gluon TMD: [Bomhof, Mulders, Pijlman, 06] Link and [Dominguez, Marquet, Xiao, Yuan, 11] Link; Small-*x* evolution + Sudakov [Mueller, Xiao, Yuan, 13]



## Quark and Gluon Helicity at Small x





#### Why Small-x Helicity Matters

- Small-x:  $\Delta q(x)$ ,  $\Delta G(x)$  are expected to increase, yet they are not well determined.
- Do gluons carry significant spin at small x? Need theory for small-x helicity
- BER papers and Infrared Evolution Equations (IREE) [Bartels, Ermolaev, Ryskin, 1996; etc] Helicity evolution resummation parameter is double-logarithmic  $\alpha \ln^2 \frac{1}{x}$  instead of  $\alpha \ln \frac{1}{x}$ . (The 2nd  $\ln x$  arises due to transverse momentum integral).



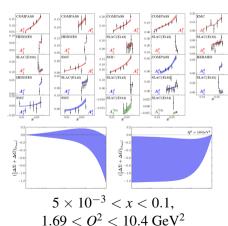
# Light-Cone Operator Treatment (LCOT) by Kovchegov et al

#### Recent Progress: New small x evolution equation for helicity

- Identify sub-Eikonal line operator def. for the quark and gluon helicity distribution.
- **Formulation of helicity evolution equations** including  $q \rightarrow g$  and  $g \rightarrow q$  transitions
- **Exact analytic solution** in large- $N_c$  and  $N_f$  limit, Resum Double-log:  $\alpha_s \ln^2(1/x)$
- [Kovchegov, Pitonyak, Sievert, Cougoulic, Santiago, Tawabutr, Tarasov, Adamiak, Melnitchouk, Sato, Borden, Li, Manley, Baldonado, Becker, 15-25]
- Power-law growth:  $\Delta\Sigma \sim \Delta G \sim g_1(x) \sim x^{-\lambda}$  with  $\lambda = 3.661 \sqrt{\frac{\alpha_s N_c}{2\pi}}$ .
- Compared with BER results:  $\lambda = 3.664\sqrt{\frac{\alpha_s N_c}{2\pi}}$ , which differs in the 3rd decimal point. At 4-loop:  $\Delta \gamma_{GG}^{BER/Kov}(\omega) = \frac{4\bar{\alpha}_s}{\omega} + \frac{8\bar{\alpha}_s^2}{\omega^3} + \frac{56\bar{\alpha}_s^3}{\omega^5} + \frac{504(496)\bar{\alpha}_s^4}{\omega^3} + \cdots$



# JAMsmallx Results: Experimental Evidence for Small-x Spin



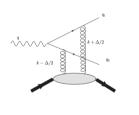
#### How much spin is there at small x?

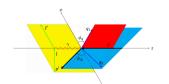
- [JAMsmallx Collaboration, Adamiak, et al, 23]
- 226 polarized DIS and SIDIS data points from COMPASS, HERMES, etc with  $\chi^2/N_{pts} = 1.03$
- Running-coupling large- $N_c \& N_f$  evolution
- Total helicity contribution becomes negative at small-x. Large uncertainties, need better constraints

$$\int_{10^{-5}}^{0.1} dx \left(\frac{1}{2}\Delta\Sigma + \Delta G\right)(x) = -0.64 \pm 0.60$$

## Gluon and Quark OAMs at the EIC

Wigner Distribution [Hatta, Xiao, Yuan, 16] Directly probing the gluon OAM at the EIC. [Ji, Yuan, Zhao, 16; Hatta, Nakagawa, Xiao, Yuan, Zhao, 16]





Measurement of single longitudinal target-spin asymmetry (two minijets diffractive production)

$$A_{\sin(\phi_q-\phi_\Delta)} \propto L_g$$

- Double spin asymmetry: [Bhattacharya, Boussarie, Hatta, 22]
- First measurement of the gluon OAM in the proton Jaffe-Manohar spin sum rule!
- Quark OAM studies: [Bhatttacharya, Metz, Zhou, 17; Engelhardt, 17] [Bhattacharya, Zheng, Zhou, 24]  $ep \rightarrow ep\pi^0$  exclusive.



# Small-x Evolution of Gluon GPD $E_g$

### Evolution Equation for spin flip GPD $E_g(x)$ from **dipole S-matrix** approach

$$\partial_Y \mathcal{E}(k_\perp) = rac{ar{lpha}_s}{\pi} \int rac{d^2 k_\perp'}{(k_\perp - k_\perp')^2} \left[ \mathcal{E}(k_\perp') - rac{k_\perp^2}{2 k_\perp'^2} \mathcal{E}(k_\perp) 
ight] - 4 \pi^2 lpha_s^2 \mathcal{F}_{1,1}(k_\perp) \mathcal{E}(k_\perp).$$

#### Results and Impact

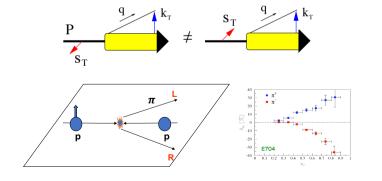
- Ji sum rule:  $J_g = \frac{1}{2} \int_0^1 dx \, x [H_g + E_g]$  with  $x E_g = \int d^2 k_\perp \mathcal{E}(k_\perp)$ .
- [Hatta & Zhou, 22]  $E_g$  has identical small-x behavior to BFKL pomeron:  $xE_g(x) \sim xH_g(x) \sim xG(x) \propto \left(\frac{1}{x}\right)^{\bar{\alpha}_s 4 \ln 2}$ .
- **Saturation**:  $E_g/H_g$  ratio is expected to saturate to a constant at very small-x.
- Impact: Possible significant small-x contribution to nucleon spin sum rule from  $E_g$ .



# Sivers function and Single Spin Asymmetry in $p^{\uparrow}p \rightarrow \pi + X$

[Sivers, 90] correlation between proton  $\vec{S}_T$  and parton  $\vec{k}_{\perp}$ 

$$\hat{f}_{a/p\uparrow}(x,k_{\perp}) = f_{a/p}(x,k_{\perp}) - \frac{k_{\perp}}{M_p} f_{1T}^{\perp a}(x,k_{\perp}) \vec{S}_T \cdot (\hat{\vec{P}} \times \hat{k}_{\perp}).$$



- Need novel mechanism beyond collinear framework: Sivers function describes the transverse momentum distribution correlated with the transverse polarization vector of the nucleon.
- $A_N = \frac{\sigma_{\uparrow} \sigma_{\downarrow}}{\sigma_{\uparrow} + \sigma_{\downarrow}} \text{ implies}$  u and d anisotropy.

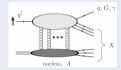


# Sivers effect in pp/pA collisions and Forward Single Spin Asymmetry $A_N$

### Single spin asymmetry

- [STAR Collaboration, 20]  $A_N$  for forward  $\pi^0$  in pp, pAl, and pAu at  $\sqrt{s_{NN}} = 200$  GeV.
- [Boer, Dumitru, Hayashigaki, 06]
  - Single transverse-spin asymmetries in forward pion production
  - Application to RHIC processes
- [Hatta, Xiao, Yoshida, Yuan, 16] SSA in forward *pA* collisions at small-*x*
- [Kovchegov, Santiago, 20] Lensing mechanism + Small-*x* mechanism (Multiple scattering and Evolution)

#### Small-x Effects



- [Kovchegov, Sievert, 12] Odderon and New mechanism for SSA
- [Zhou, 14; Boer, Echevarria, Mulders, Zhou, 2017; Yao, Hagiwara, Hatta, 18] Gluon Siyers and the Odderon
- [Dong, Zheng, Zhou, 18; Kovchegov, Santiago, 21] Quark Sivers, odderon and evolution



### The Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen Paradox

- **The EPR Paper** [Phys. Rev. 47, 777 (1935)]
  - Can Quantum-Mechanical Description of Physical Reality be Considered Complete?
  - Challenge to Copenhagen orthodox interpretation
- Quantum Entanglement
  - The quintessential phenomenon of QM introduced by Schrödinger in response to the EPR paper.
  - Non-local correlations between particles
  - Violates local realism assumptions
- Einstein's famous phrase: "God does not play dice"
  - To which Bohr replied: "Einstein, stop telling God what to do"
- The EPR paradox revealed the profound nature of quantum entanglement!



Einstein, Podolsky, and Rosen
"Spooky action at a distance"





Schrödinger, Bohr and Einstein in 1925

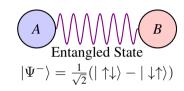
#### Bell's Theorem

#### Quantum Indeterminacy

- Realism: Quantum indeterminacy reflects our ignorance of hidden variables; outcomes are determined but unknown.
- Copenhagen: Indeterminacy is fundamental; outcomes are truly probabilistic until measured.
- **Agnosticism:** The reality behind quantum events is unknowable; only predictive power of the theory matters.

#### ■ Bell Nonlocality [Bell, 1964]

- Bell inequality: It makes an observable difference for Realism vs Copenhagen, and eliminates Agnostic view.
- Decisive evidence supporting QM (Copenhagen).
- **CHSH Inequality** [Clauser et al., 1969]
  - Generalized Bell inequality
  - Foundation for quantum information theory



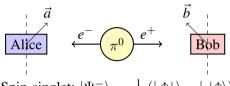


John Stewart Bell



## **EPRB** Experiment: Testing Bell Nonlocality

### Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen-Bohm Experiment



Spin-singlet: 
$$|\Psi^{-}\rangle = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}(|\uparrow\downarrow\rangle - |\downarrow\uparrow\rangle)$$

**Correlation:** 
$$E(\vec{a}, \vec{b}) = \langle A(\vec{a}) \cdot B(\vec{b}) \rangle$$

#### **Bell CHSH Inequality:**

$$\mathbb{B}_{HT} = |E(a,b) - E(a,b') + E(a',b) + E(a',b')| \le 2$$

$$\mathbb{B}_{OM} = |\cos \theta_{ab} - \cos \theta_{ab'} + \cos \theta_{a'b} + \cos \theta_{a'b'}| \le 2\sqrt{2}$$

### Local Hidden Variable Theory

- Pre-existing density  $P(\lambda)$  for  $\lambda$
- $\blacksquare E(\vec{a},\vec{b}) = \int P(\lambda) A(\vec{a},\lambda) B(\vec{b},\lambda) d\lambda$
- Local realism:  $\mathbb{B}_{HT} \leq 2$

#### Quantum Mechanics

- No predetermined values
- $E(\vec{a}, \vec{b}) = -\vec{a} \cdot \vec{b} = -\cos \theta_{ab}$
- Nonlocality:  $2 < \mathbb{B}_{QM} \le 2\sqrt{2}$ Proof:  $\alpha \cos \theta + \beta \sin \theta < \sqrt{\alpha^2 + \beta^2}$

QM violates Bell inequality  $\Rightarrow$  Nature is nonlocal!

# Concurrence: Measuring the Degree of Entanglement

### **Time Reversal Operation flips spins:**

- $|\psi\rangle = \alpha|00\rangle + \beta|01\rangle + \gamma|10\rangle + \delta|11\rangle$
- [Wootters, 98] flip spins with  $\hat{T} = -i\sigma^y \hat{K}$  (Anti-Unitary)
- $|\tilde{\psi}\rangle = \delta^*|00\rangle \gamma^*|01\rangle \beta^*|10\rangle + \alpha^*|11\rangle$ , the spin-flipped complex conjugate.
- $C(|\psi\rangle) = 2|\alpha\delta \beta\gamma|$  measures overlap with time-reversed state.
- $\mathbb{C} = 0$ : Separable (no entanglement)
- $\bullet$  0 <  $\mathcal{C}$  < 1: Partially entangled
- $\mathbb{C} = 1$ : Maximally entangled

C = invariance under time reversal

#### **Concurrence in general:**

[Hill, Wootters, 97; Wootters, 98]

- Define:  $\tilde{\rho} = (\sigma_y \otimes \sigma_y) \rho^* (\sigma_y \otimes \sigma_y)$
- Compute:  $\mathcal{R} = \sqrt{\sqrt{\rho}\tilde{\rho}\sqrt{\rho}}$
- Eigenvalues of  $\mathcal{R}$ :  $\{\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \lambda_3, \lambda_4\}$  (descending order)

$$C(\rho) = \max\{0, \lambda_1 - \lambda_2 - \lambda_3 - \lambda_4\}$$

**Example - Werner State:** 

$$\rho_W = p|\Psi^-\rangle\langle\Psi^-| + \frac{1-p}{4}\mathbb{1}_4$$

- p = 1: Pure Bell state
- $\mathcal{C}(\rho_W) = \max\{0, \frac{3p-1}{2}\}$
- Entangled when p > 1/3



# Spin Density Matrix: Physical Interpretation

### The most general two-qubit density matrix:

$$\rho = \frac{1}{4} \left( \mathbb{1}_4 + B_i^+ \sigma^i \otimes \mathbb{1}_2 + B_j^- \mathbb{1}_2 \otimes \sigma^j + C_{ij} \sigma^i \otimes \sigma^j \right)$$

#### **Physical Quantities:**

$$\blacksquare B_i^+ = \operatorname{Tr} \rho(\sigma_i \otimes \mathbb{1}_2)$$

$$\blacksquare B_j^- = \operatorname{Tr} \rho(\mathbb{1}_2 \otimes \sigma_j)$$

$$C_{ij} = \operatorname{Tr} \rho(\sigma_i \otimes \sigma_j)$$

Spin correlation /NB: Not [C]

#### **Special Case:**

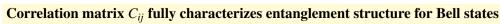
For Bell states: 
$$B_i^+ = B_j^- = 0$$
 (No individual spin polarization)

### DIICO OCC IO MOLE

Bell States & Correlation Matrices:	
Correlation Matrix	
$C_{ij} = \operatorname{diag}(-1, -1, -1)$	
$C_{ij} = \operatorname{diag}(1, 1, -1)$	
$C_{ij} = \operatorname{diag}(1, -1, 1)$	
$C_{ij} = \operatorname{diag}(-1, 1, 1)$	

#### For singlet state:

 $C_{ii} = -\delta_{ii}$  means spins are always anti-parallel.



## **Entanglement and Bell Nonlocality Conditions**

$$\rho_{\alpha\alpha',\beta\beta'} = \frac{1}{4} \left( \mathbb{1}_{\alpha\alpha',\beta\beta'} + C_{ii}\sigma^i_{\alpha\beta} \otimes \sigma^i_{\alpha'\beta'} \right)$$
 with Anti-correlation:  $C_{xx}, C_{yy}, C_{zz} < 0$ 

- Def:  $D = (C_{xx} + C_{yy} + C_{zz})/3 = \text{tr}C/3$
- D = -1: Perfect anti-correlation

Four eigen values of  $\mathcal{R}=\rho$  (since  $\tilde{\rho}=\rho$ )

$$\lambda_1 = \frac{1}{4}(1 - C_{xx} - C_{yy} - C_{zz}),$$
  
$$\lambda_2 = \frac{1}{4}(1 + C_{xx} + C_{yy} - C_{zz}),$$

$$\lambda_3 = \frac{1}{4}(1 + C_{xx} - C_{yy} + C_{zz}),$$

$$\lambda_4 = \frac{1}{4}(1 - C_{xx} + C_{yy} + C_{zz}).$$

### **Entanglement Condition**

• Concurrence  $C[\rho] = \frac{1}{2}(-3D - 1) > 0$ :

$$D<-rac{1}{3}$$

#### **Bell Nonlocality Condition**

■ For CHSH violation  $\mathbb{B} > 2$ : [Horodecki, et al, 95]

$$D < -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \approx -0.707$$



**Hierarchy:** Bell Nonlocality ⊂ Entanglement ⊂ All Quantum States

## First Observation of Quark Entanglement at the LHC

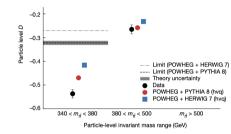
[ATLAS (Nature 2024):] First observation of entanglement in quarks at the highest-energy. **Entanglement Marker:** 

$$D = \operatorname{tr}[C]/3 = -3\langle \cos \phi \rangle$$

where  $\phi$  is the angle between charged leptons in their parent top/antitop rest frames

## **Key Features:**

- Spin transferred to decay products
- Measured near  $t\bar{t}$  threshold
- From atomic physics to high-energy collisions: A new frontier!
- CMS, STAR, BES-III more to come.



 $\sqrt{s} = 13 \text{ TeV}, 140 \text{ fb}^{-1} \text{ data } (2015-2018)$ 

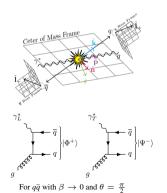
**Measured:** D < -1/3 (Entanglement criterion)  $D = -0.547 \pm 0.002$  (stat.)  $\pm 0.021$  (syst.)

• Observed:  $> 5\sigma$  from no entanglemen

■ Yet, Bell Nonlocality: 
$$D < -1/\sqrt{2}$$

## Quark Pair Production in Photon-Gluon Fusion: Longitudinal case

[Qi, Guo, Xiao] ightharpoonup arXiv:2506.12889v1 [hep-ph] **Photon-Gluon Fusion Process**  $\gamma_{\lambda=\pm,0}^*+g o q+\bar{q}$ 



### **Longitudinal photons contribution:**

$$C_{ij} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -\chi_1 & -\chi_2 \\ 0 & -\chi_2 & \chi_1 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$1 - 2z^2 + z^2\beta^2$$

with

$$\chi_1 = \frac{1 - 2z^2 + z^2 \beta^2}{1 - z^2 \beta^2}, \quad \chi_2 = \sqrt{1 - \chi_1^2}.$$

•  $\rho_L$  is given by a pure state  $= |\Psi\rangle \langle \Psi|$ , with

$$|\Psi\rangle = \frac{1}{2}(\sqrt{1+\chi_1},i\sqrt{1-\chi_1},i\sqrt{1-\chi_1},\sqrt{1+\chi_1}).$$

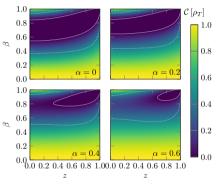
- Near Threshold :  $|\Phi^+\rangle$ ; High Energy:  $|\Phi^+\rangle$ .
- $q\bar{q}$  has spin 1 with nonzero OAM and  $\mathcal{C}[\rho_L] \equiv 1!$

**Always Maximally Entangled! Very Special!** 



### Quark Pair Production in Photon-Gluon Fusion: Transverse case

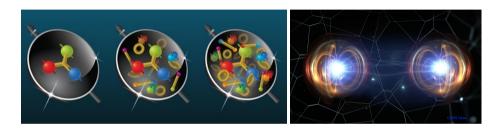
[Qi, Guo, Xiao] ightharpoonup arXiv:2506.12889v1 [hep-ph] Transverse photons: similar to  $gg \rightarrow q\bar{q}$  channel.



- Density plots of the concurrence for transverse photon as functions of  $\beta$  and  $z = \cos \theta$  at given  $\alpha \equiv Q^2/\hat{s}$ .
- Solid lines (entanglement ( $C[\rho_T] = 0$ )) and dashed lines (Bell nonlocality).
- Near Threshold ( $\beta \to 0$ ): Maximally entangled singlet  $\Psi^-$
- High Energy ( $\beta \to 1$ ) with  $\theta = \pi/2$ : Maximally entangled triplet  $\Phi^-$ .
- Low background and Maximal signal. Better to have *LT* separation! (Also UPC)
- Diffractive production also see [Fucilla and Hatta, 2509.05267].
- Possible measurements:  $b\bar{b}$  or  $c\bar{c}$  or hyperon  $\Lambda\bar{\Lambda}$ .



## **Summary and Outlook**



- Spin physics at small *x* has become the high energy frontier of nucleon structure study.
- Small-*x* limit allows us to better understand spin puzzle and other spin effects.
- EIC offers the ideal facility for measuring Entanglement and Bell Nonlocality.
- New opportunities to explore the interplay of quantum information phenomena and high energy and hadronic physics in the years to come.

# Top Quark Weak Decay and Spin Transfer (Backup 1)

### Top Quark Decay: Choose its rest frame

$$t \to W^+ b \to \ell^+ \nu_\ell b, \, \bar{t} \to W^- \bar{b} \to \ell^- \bar{\nu}_\ell \bar{b}$$

### **Decay Spin Density Matrix:**

$$\Gamma_{\pm} = \frac{\mathbb{1}_2 + \kappa_{\pm} \vec{\sigma}_t \cdot \hat{l}_{\pm}}{2}$$

**Parity Violating Angular Distribution:** 

$$\frac{d\Gamma}{d\cos\theta} \propto 1 + \kappa_{\pm}\cos\theta$$

- **Spin-momentum correlation**
- $\kappa_{\pm} = \pm 1$  ( $t\bar{t}$ ) spin analyzing power
- $\sigma_{l+l_{-}} \propto \operatorname{tr}[\Gamma_{+} \otimes \Gamma_{-} \rho] \operatorname{NB} \operatorname{tr}[\sigma^{i} \sigma^{j}] = 2\delta^{ij}$

### **Entanglement:** Lepton Correlation

$$\frac{d^2\sigma}{\sigma d\Omega_+ d\Omega_-} = \frac{1}{(4\pi)^2} \left[ 1 - \hat{l}_+ \cdot C \cdot \hat{l}_- \right]$$

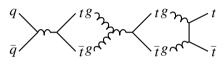
$$\cos \varphi \rangle = -\frac{1}{3}D = -\frac{1}{9}\text{Tr}(C)$$

- Extract D = Tr(C)/3 parameter directly
- **Quantum Tomography**: all elements of  $\rho$  can be measured. [Bernreuther, Heisler, Si, 15; ATLAS, 1612.07004; CMS, 1907.03729]

# Theory vs Experiment: Top Quark Entanglement (Backup 2)

Quantum State Tomography  $\rho_{\alpha\alpha',\beta\beta'} = R_{\alpha\alpha',\beta\beta'}/\text{tr}R$  [Afik, de Nova, 2022] **Near Threshold** ( $\beta \rightarrow 0$ ):

#### Top quark pair production



$$R_{lphalpha',etaeta'} = rac{1}{N}\sum \mathcal{M}^*_{t_lphaar{t}_{lpha'}} \mathcal{M}_{t_etaar{t}_{eta'}}$$

- Measured  $D \approx -0.54$  near threshold
- Gluon fusion dominance at LHC.
- Angular momentum conservation
- **Statistical mixture** of  $q\bar{q}$  and gg

- $\mathbf{q}\bar{q}$ : Separable state ( $\mathcal{C}=0$ ), since  $t\bar{t}$ spin  $(\pm 1)$  is equally mixed along beam.
- $\blacksquare$  gg: Maximally entangled singlet  $\Psi^-$

### High Energy ( $\beta \to 1$ ) with $\theta = \pi/2$ :

■ Both channels: Maximally entangled triplet  $\Psi^+$  along  $\hat{n}$  with nonzero OAM.

#### **Mixed State at LHC**

$$\rho = w_{q\bar{q}}\rho_{q\bar{q}} + w_{gg}\rho_{gg}$$

