

# GSTDMB 2010: DYNAMICAL MODELLING FOR BIOLOGY AND MEDICINE

## Lecture 2.1 Multi-variable differential equation models

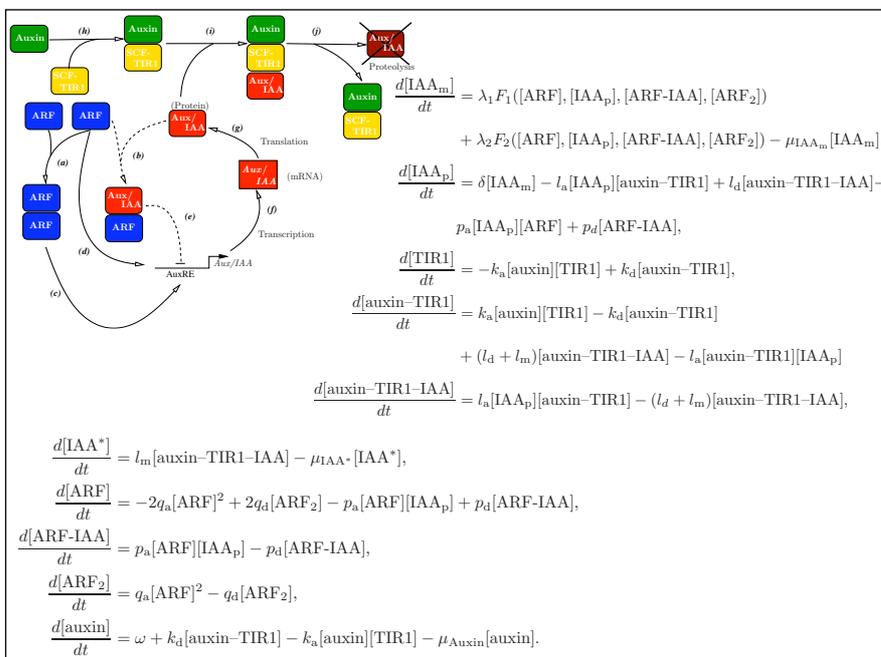
Markus Owen

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### Recap...

- We have introduced simple ordinary differential equation (ODE) models for single state variables.
- **Steady states** and their **stability** are crucial determinant of system dynamics.
- Changes in number or stability of steady states are called **bifurcations**.
- For 1<sup>st</sup> order **autonomous** ODEs, the **phase-line diagram** can tell us most of the qualitative information we'd like to know about the system dynamics:
  - if you can sketch the graph, you can sketch the dynamics...
  - steady states, stability AND qualitative solution behaviour (fast, slow, increasing, decreasing, etc), bifurcations.
  - solutions cannot oscillate
- For 1<sup>st</sup> order **non-autonomous** ODEs (e.g. circadian models with time dependent parameters) solutions can oscillate (driven by e.g. day-night cycle)
- We used MATLAB to help sketch phase-line diagrams and simulate ODEs
- **Next, models with more than one state variable:** more complex dynamics possible, analysis more difficult, often resort to computer simulation

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## Signalling networks

- Central dogma of molecular biology:
  - DNA transcribed to RNA (regulated by transcription factors ),
  - RNA is translated into Protein.
- Proteins interact, can regulate translation, RNA stability, and transcription.
- RNA can also modulate transcription.
- Signalling networks: interactions between these elements, typically complex and extensive.
- Fundamental approach: decompose into modules that are sufficiently separate from other pathways to be considered on their own.
- Mathematical models: prediction of network behaviour with given topology and interactions.
- Ideas don't just apply to "gene networks", but to many kinds of network: Physiological models, metabolic networks, ecological networks, epidemiology...

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## The law of Mass Action (1)

- The law of mass action states that the rate of a chemical reaction is proportional to the product of the concentrations of the reactants.
- It is based on the assumptions of i) a well stirred solution and ii) low molecular concentrations, where the probability of diffusing molecules to get close enough, for a reaction to occur, is proportional to the concentrations.
- A rate parameter is used to define the 'probability' of a reaction to occur if two molecules approach each other.
- The mass action formalism has been validated in many experimental settings.



- The reaction rate is  $k_f (S_1^{n_1} \cdot S_2^{n_2} \dots)$
- The rate of change of a species depends on the rate of reaction and **the net change in the number of molecules** of that species.
- In reality, all reactions should be broken down into bimolecular steps.

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## The law of Mass Action (2)

- Consider a simple example:  $A + B \xrightleftharpoons[k_b]{k_f} C$ .
- This is two reactions.
- The forward reaction has reactants  $A$  and  $B$ , and rate  $k_f[A][B]$ . It consumes one molecule of  $A$  and  $B$ , and produces one molecule of  $C$ .
- The reverse reaction has a single reactant  $C$ , and rate  $k_b[C]$ . It consumes one molecule of  $C$ , and produces one molecule of  $A$  and  $B$ .

$$\frac{d[A]}{dt} = -k_f[A][B] + k_b[C]$$

$$\frac{d[B]}{dt} = -k_f[A][B] + k_b[C]$$

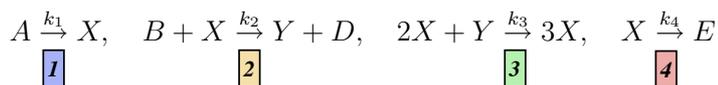
$$\frac{d[C]}{dt} = +k_f[A][B] - k_b[C]$$

↑            ↑  
Forward    Reverse

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## The law of Mass Action (3)

- Another example, the “Brusselator”:



- We assume the concentrations of substrates  $A$  and  $B$  are constant.
- $E$  is a product. We are interested in the dynamics of  $X$  and  $Y$ .
- $x = [X]$ ,  $y = [Y]$ , the concentrations of  $X$  and  $Y$ .
- **3** has rate  $k_3 x^2 y$  which produces one molecule of  $X$  and consumes one of  $Y$ .

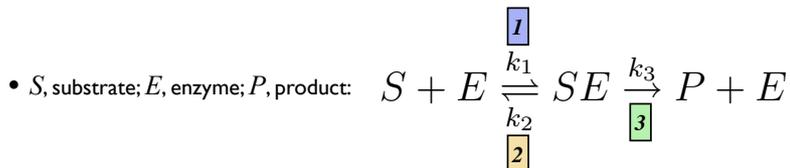
$$\frac{dx}{dt} = k_1 A - (k_2 B + k_4) x + k_3 x^2 y,$$

$$\frac{dy}{dt} = k_2 B x - k_3 x^2 y.$$

- This system is a famous example which can have oscillatory solutions.

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## Michaelis-Menten enzyme kinetics



- Three reactions, + law of mass action:

$$\frac{d[S]}{dt} = -k_1 [S][E] + k_2 [SE]$$

$$\frac{d[E]}{dt} = -k_1 [S][E] + k_2 [SE] + k_3 [SE]$$

$$\frac{d[SE]}{dt} = k_1 [S][E] - k_2 [SE] - k_3 [SE]$$

$$\frac{d[P]}{dt} = k_3 [SE]$$

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## Michaelis-Menten kinetics $S + E \xrightleftharpoons[k_2]{k_1} SE \xrightarrow{k_3} P + E$

- Constant total enzyme:  $[E] + [SE] = E_0$
- Substrate assumed in excess,  $d[S]/dt = 0$
- $[SE]$  assumed to be at **quasi-steady state**

$$0 \frac{d[SE]}{dt} = k_1 [S][E] - k_2 [SE] - k_3 [SE]$$

- A bit more algebra, using the definition:  $K = k_1 / (k_2 + k_3)$

$$[SE] = K [S][E] = K [S](E_0 - [SE])$$

$$[SE] (1 + K[S]) = K E_0 [S]$$

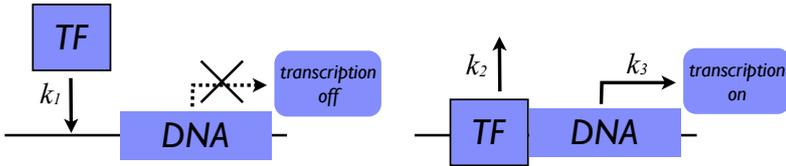
$$[SE] = \frac{K E_0 [S]}{1 + K[S]} = \frac{E_0 [S]}{(1/K + [S])}$$

Finally:  $\frac{d[P]}{dt} = \frac{V_{max} [S]}{K_m + [S]} \quad V_{max} = k_3 E_0$   
 $K_m = 1/K.$

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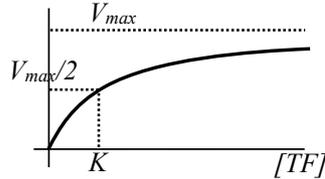
## Transcriptional/translational activation

- TF binds to DNA, this complex activates production of protein P.



- Assuming TF binding is fast enables use of Michaelis-Menten approach.
- DNA acts as enzyme,  $[DNA] + [TF-DNA] = 1$

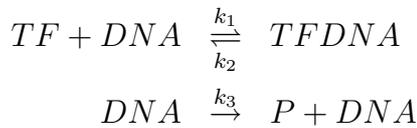
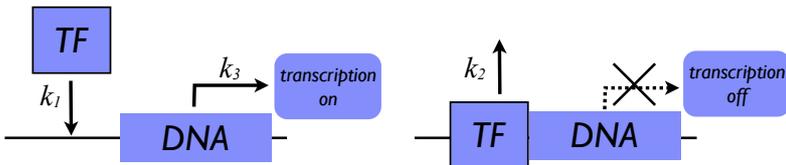
$$\frac{d[P]}{dt} = V_{max} \frac{[TF]}{K + [TF]}$$



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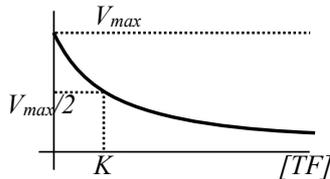
## Transcriptional/translational repression

- TF binds to DNA, blocking production of protein P.



- This time, synthesis is a decreasing function of TF concentration:

$$\frac{d[P]}{dt} = \frac{V_{max}K}{K + [TF]}$$



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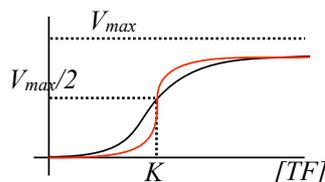
## Hill functions

- With the previous expression, the response to changes in substrate (TF) concentration is weak.
- Cooperativity can lead to sharper responses.
- Suppose  $n$  molecules of substrate bind to the DNA:



- After some mass action and some algebra...

$$\frac{d[P]}{dt} = V_{max} \frac{[TF]^n}{K^n + [TF]^n}$$



- Larger  $n \rightarrow$  steeper switch
- Same idea for repression

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## Multiple Transcription Factors?

- What about multiple transcription factors?
- What if some are activating and some repressing?
- Basically need to catalogue all the relevant states and the contribution of each to transcription rate.
- Write down ODEs and simplify using Michaelis-Menten approach.
- E.g. Lac-operon:  $[I]$  activates and  $[R]$  represses:

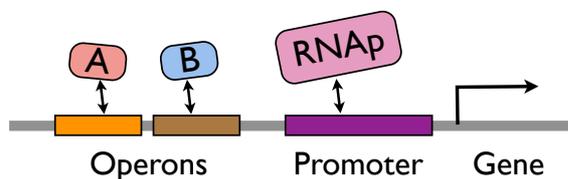
$$\frac{dP}{dt} = \frac{V_{max}(1 + k_2[I] + k_3[R][I])}{1 + k_1[R] + k_2[I] + k_3[R][I]}$$

- or use the Shea-Ackers approach...

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## Shea-Ackers (1)

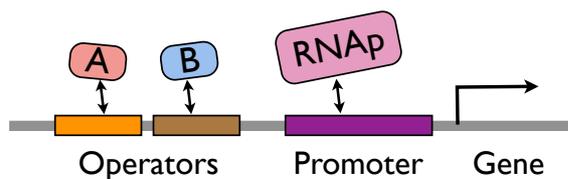
- Method originally developed for the lysis/lysogeny switch in Lambda phage
- Two time scales:
  - Slow: Transcription/Translation/Degradation
  - Fast: Binding/unbinding of TFs to gene – thermal equilibrium
- Possible cases: TF, TF+RNAP, RNAP - probability associated with each
- Enumerate all cases, compute probability of bound RNAP
- Transcription rate is proportional to promoter occupancy



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## Shea-Ackers (2)

- Example: two transcription factors, A and B
- Enumerate all possibilities - binding/unbinding of A,B and RNAP
- The "partition function"  $Z$  contain  $2^3 = 8$  terms



$$Z = \sum_{ijk} [A]^i [B]^j [R]^k \delta_{ijk} = Z_{on} + Z_{off}$$

$\uparrow$                        $\uparrow$   
 RNAP bound    RNAP unbound

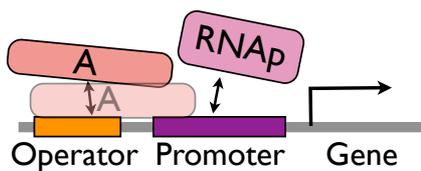
- $i, j, k = 0$  (unbound) or  $1$  (bound)
- $\delta_{ijk}$  related to binding energy,  $\delta_{000} = 1$

Transcription rate proportional to:  $\frac{Z_{on}}{Z_{on} + Z_{off}}$

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## Shea-Ackers: simple example

- The *trp* operon of *E. coli* is regulated by the TrpR repressor protein *A*.
- Tryptophan binds the TrpR repressor enabling TrpR to bind the *trp* operator.
- This prevents transcription: the *trp* operator overlaps the RNAP binding site. *A* and *R* cannot be simultaneously bound:



[A]	[RNAP]	Rate
0	0	1
1	0	$\delta_{10}A$
0	1	$\delta_{01}R$
1	1	-

$$Z = [A]^0 [R]^0 \delta_{00} + [A]^1 [R]^0 \delta_{10} + [A]^0 [R]^1 \delta_{01}$$

- Only the last term corresponds to a transcriptionally active state, so  $T \propto \frac{\delta_{01}[R]}{1 + \delta_{10}[A] + \delta_{01}[R]}$
- For constant RNAP (*R*) this is like a decreasing Hill function of order *I*.

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## Lac-operon revisited

- Write down ODEs and simplify using Michaelis-Menten approach.
- E.g. Lac-operon:  $[I]$  activates and  $[R]$  represses:

$$\frac{dP}{dt} = \frac{V_{max}(1 + k_2[I] + k_3[R][I])}{1 + k_1[R] + k_2[I] + k_3[R][I]}$$

- or use the Shea-Ackers approach... assuming  $[RNAP]$  is constant yields the same form as above

[I]	[R]	[RNAP]	Rate
0	0	0	1
1	0	0	$\delta_{100}[I]$
0	1	0	$\delta_{010}[R]$
0	0	1	$\delta_{001}[RNAP]$
1	1	0	$\delta_{110}[I][R]$
1	0	1	$\delta_{101}[I][RNAP]$
0	1	1	$\delta_{011}[R][RNAP]$
1	1	1	$\delta_{111}[I][R][RNAP]$

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## Two-gene repressor network

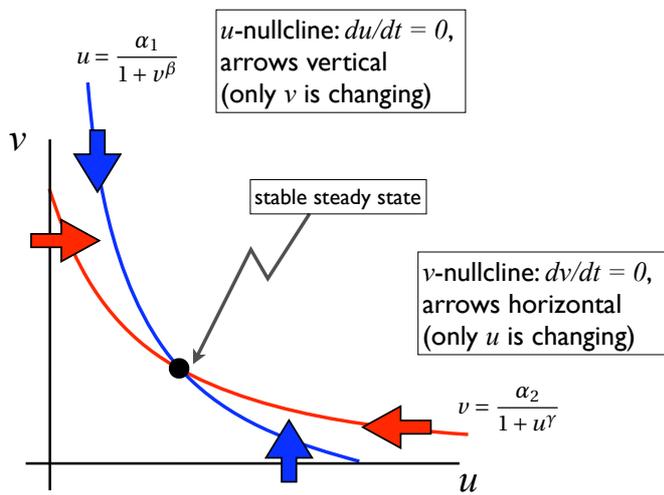
$$\frac{du}{dt} = \frac{\alpha_1}{1 + v^\beta} - u$$

$$\frac{dv}{dt} = \frac{\alpha_2}{1 + u^\gamma} - v$$

- Can behave as a bistable switch, depending on Hill coefficients
- **Phase-plane analysis** very useful
- Nullclines are curves on which one variable is not changing
  - *u*-nullcline:  $du/dt = 0$ , here  $u = \frac{\alpha_1}{1 + v^\beta}$
  - *v*-nullcline:  $dv/dt = 0$ , here  $v = \frac{\alpha_2}{1 + u^\gamma}$
- Steady states where nullclines cross
- Stability requires more maths - linear algebra, eigenvalues, etc ...

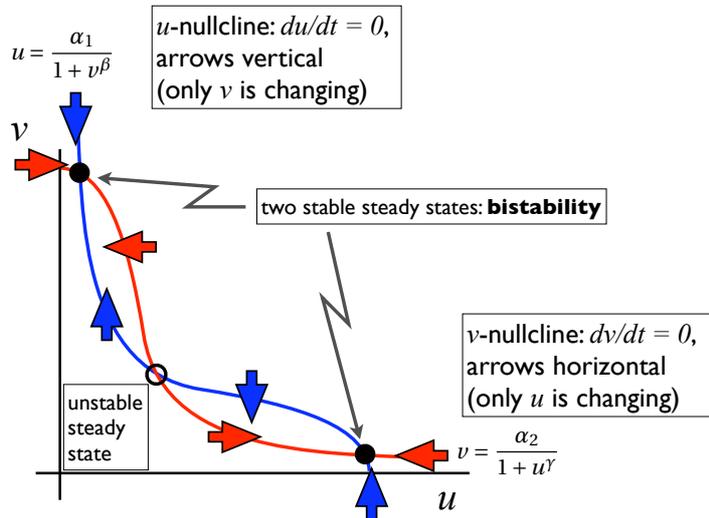
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Two-gene repressor network:  $\beta = \gamma = 1$



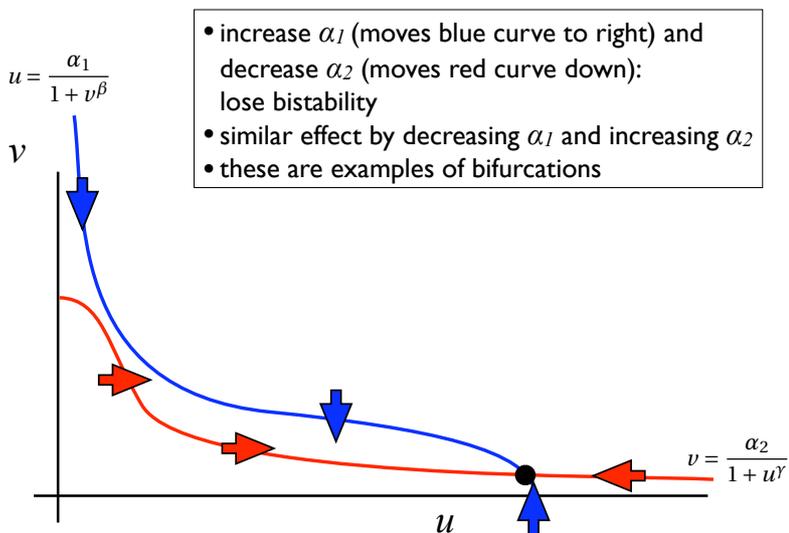
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Two-gene repressor network:  $\beta, \gamma > 1$



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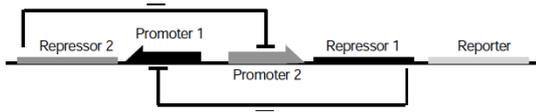
Two-gene repressor network:  $\beta, \gamma > 1$



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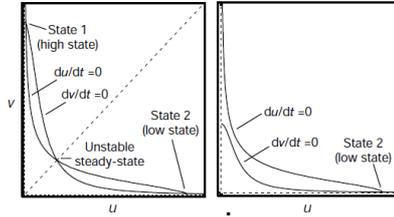
## A synthetic toggle switch

Regulatory logic:



$$\frac{du}{dt} = -\delta_1 u + \frac{\alpha_1}{1 + v^m}$$

$$\frac{dv}{dt} = -\delta_2 v + \frac{\alpha_2}{1 + u^n}$$

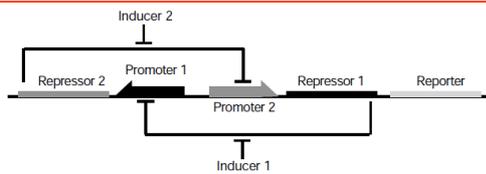


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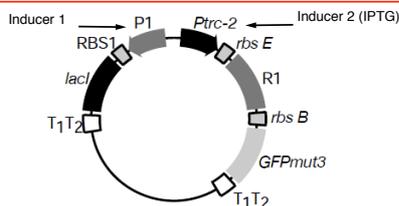
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## A synthetic toggle switch

External inducers:



Implementation:



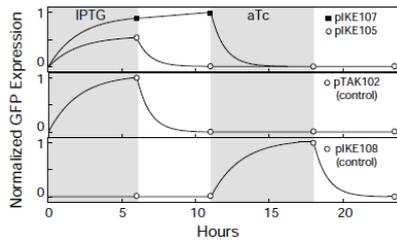
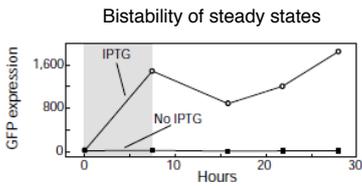
Gardner, T.S., Cantor, C.R. & Collins, J.J. (2000). *Nature* **403**, 339–342.

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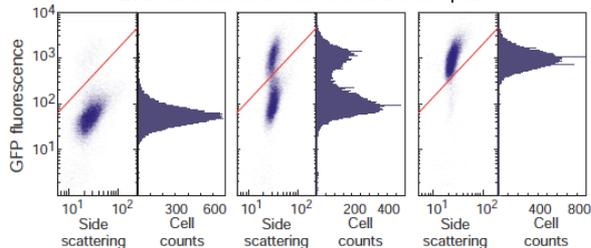
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## A synthetic toggle switch

Induced switching



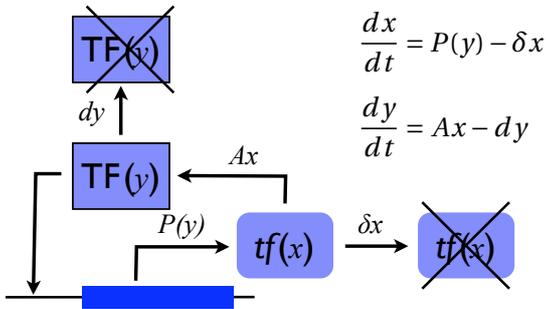
Bimodal behaviour near the bifurcation point



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## Transcriptional regulation revisited



- Protein synthesis requires transcription and translation.
- Phase plane analysis quite straightforward.

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## Transcriptional regulation revisited

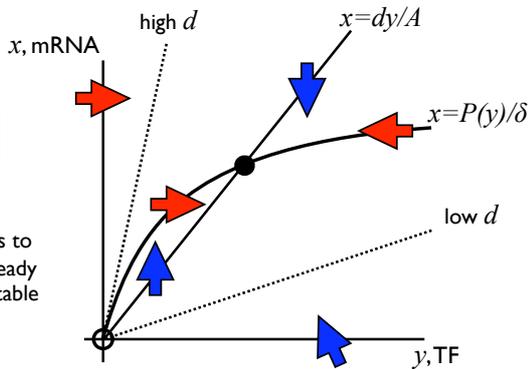
$$\frac{dx}{dt} = P(y) - \delta x$$

$$\frac{dy}{dt} = Ax - dy$$

- $x$ -Nullcline is:  $x = P(y)/\delta$  and  $y$ -nullcline is  $x = dy/A$
- Easier to think of  $y$  as a function of  $x$ , otherwise we have  $y = P^{-1}(\delta x)$  where  $P^{-1}$  is the inverse function...

$$P(y) = Ay/(h+y)$$

- Increasing  $d$  or  $\delta$  leads to loss of the nonzero steady state,  $(0,0)$  becomes stable



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## Transcriptional regulation revisited

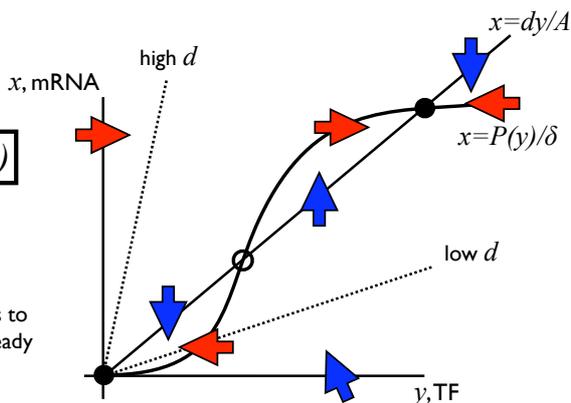
$$\frac{dx}{dt} = P(y) - \delta x$$

$$\frac{dy}{dt} = Ax - dy$$

- $x$ -Nullcline is:  $x = P(y)/\delta$  and  $y$ -nullcline is  $x = dy/A$
- Easier to think of  $y$  as a function of  $x$ , otherwise we have  $y = P^{-1}(\delta x)$  where  $P^{-1}$  is the inverse function...

$$P(y) = Ay^2/(h^2 + y^2)$$

- Bistability again ...
- Increasing  $d$  or  $\delta$  leads to loss of the nonzero steady states.



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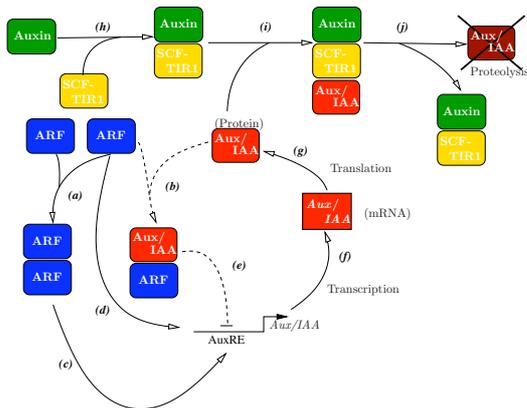


## Discussion

- Mathematical models can encode our knowledge about signalling networks.
- Gene transcription, mRNA translation, protein interactions, decay, etc. can be described using differential equations.
- There are different approaches to combining multiple transcription factors.
- Simple and complex models can be used to test hypotheses.
- Mathematical analysis of relatively simple models can be done using **phase-plane** methods.
- Mutual repression can lead to bistability - but we have also seen that cooperative positive autoregulation can lead to bistability.
- Other simple motifs can be analysed in considerable detail.
- Complex signalling networks often require a more computational approach.
- Network topology *may* be more important than parameter values.
- Similar modelling and analysis techniques apply to other areas of biology and medicine.

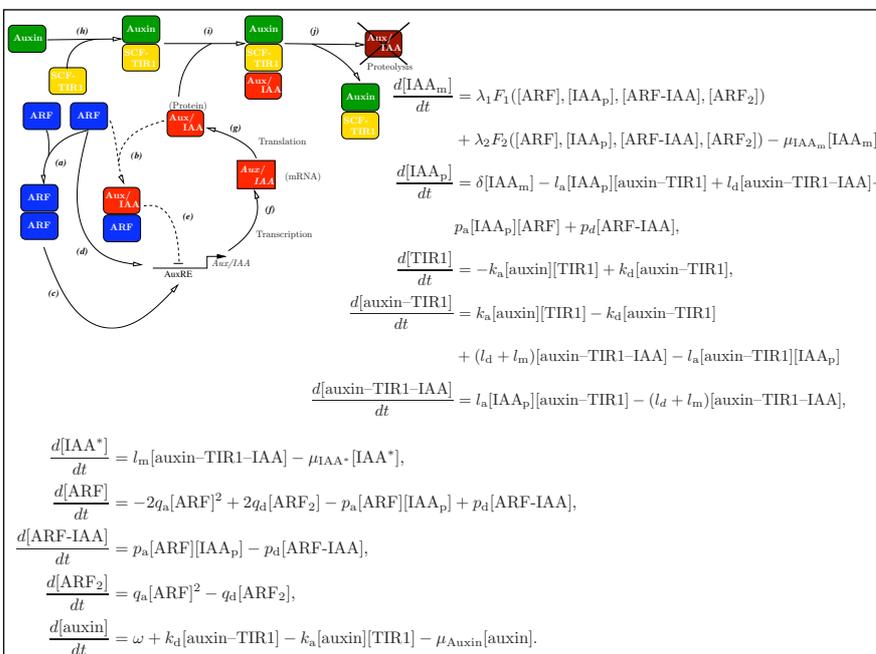
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## ODE Example - Auxin signalling



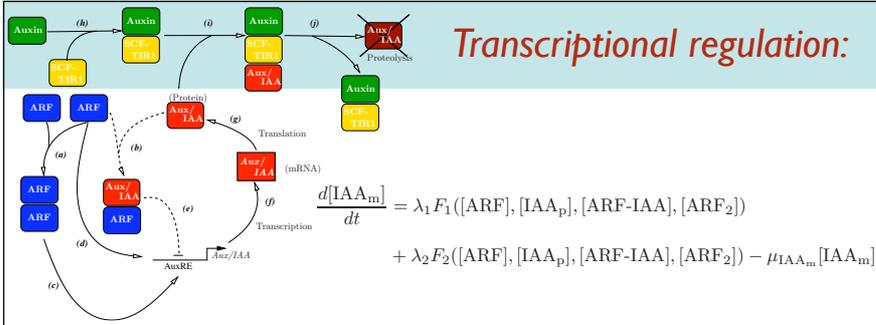
- Auxin is a plant hormone, which stimulates degradation of Aux/IAs.
- Aux/IAs repress their own transcription.
- Hence Auxin stimulates Aux/IAA transcription.

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## Transcriptional regulation:



$$\frac{d[\text{IAA}_m]}{dt} = \lambda_1 F_1([\text{ARF}], [\text{IAA}_p], [\text{ARF-IAA}], [\text{ARF}_2]) + \lambda_2 F_2([\text{ARF}], [\text{IAA}_p], [\text{ARF-IAA}], [\text{ARF}_2]) - \mu_{\text{IAA}_m} [\text{IAA}_m]$$

$$F_1([\text{ARF}], [\text{IAA}_p], [\text{ARF-IAA}], [\text{ARF}_2]) = \frac{[\text{ARF}]}{\theta_{\text{ARF}}} \frac{1}{1 + \frac{[\text{ARF}]}{\theta_{\text{ARF}}} + \frac{[\text{ARF}_2]}{\theta_{\text{ARF}_2}} + \frac{[\text{ARF-IAA}]}{\theta_{\text{ARF-IAA}}} + \frac{[\text{ARF}][\text{IAA}_p]}{\psi_{\text{ARF-IAA}}} + \frac{[\text{ARF}]^2}{\psi_{\text{ARF}}}}$$

$$F_2([\text{ARF}], [\text{IAA}_p], [\text{ARF-IAA}], [\text{ARF}_2]) = \frac{\frac{[\text{ARF}_2]}{\theta_{\text{ARF}_2}} + \frac{[\text{ARF}]^2}{\psi_{\text{ARF}}}}{1 + \frac{[\text{ARF}]}{\theta_{\text{ARF}}} + \frac{[\text{ARF}_2]}{\theta_{\text{ARF}_2}} + \frac{[\text{ARF-IAA}]}{\theta_{\text{ARF-IAA}}} + \frac{[\text{ARF}][\text{IAA}_p]}{\psi_{\text{ARF-IAA}}} + \frac{[\text{ARF}]^2}{\psi_{\text{ARF}}}}$$