Do Observations Prefer Thawing Quintessence?

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In light of recent observations by the Dark Energy Spectroscopic Instrument (DESI), we study evidence for thawing quintessence over a cosmological constant as dark energy, with emphasis on the effect of the choice of priors. Working with a parametrization for the equation of state parameter motivated by the theory, we analyse the DESI BAO data jointly with Planck 2018 and Pantheon+ supernovae data. I will show that a preference for thawing quintessence compared to a bare cosmological constant arises only if we use priors which are heavily informed by the data itself. Extending the priors to physically better motivated ranges, the evidence for thawing quintessence disappears.

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