

# Materials Informatics for Catalyst Stability & Functionality Steven B. Torrisi



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# About Me

# Sustainable Energy Development

#### Computational Materials Science

#### Catalyst Discovery, Optimization, and Understanding

supporting

Credit: Top, A. Singh, Left, IMASC, Right, LBNL, Bottom, J.S. Lim

# Scientific Directions During my Ph.D.



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#### **2D Materials**



Carr, Massat, **Torrisi** et al. *PRB* (2018)



Larson, Chen, **Torrisi** *et al*. PRB (2020)



Tritsaris, Carr, Zhu, Xie, Torrisi et al. 2D Mat. (2020)

Rhone, Chen, Desai, **Torrisi** et al. Sci. Rep. (2020)

#### Photoelectrocatalyst Discovery



Torrisi, Singh, Montoya, Biswas, Persson, NPJ 2D Materials & Applications 2020

#### Scientific Software Development



Sumner, **Torrisi**, Brickner, Brickner (Under Review, *eLife*)



Gerber, **Torrisi**, et al. (In prep.)

#### ML-Based X-Ray Characterization

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**Torrisi**, *et al.*, NPJ Computational Materials (2020)

Marcella, Lim, Plonka... **et al.** (In prep.)

#### Machine-Learned Interatomic Potential Fitting

Vandermause, Torrisi, et al. NPJ Computational Materials (2020)



Torrisi, et al. (In prep)

1<sup>st</sup> author (*et al.*") (In prep.

# My Practicum: Discovery of Two-Dimensional CO<sub>2</sub> Reduction Photocatalysts

In collaboration with...





Dr. Tathagata Biswas Prof. Arunima Singh Arizona State University



Dr. Joseph Montoya Toyota Research Institute



Prof. Kristin Persson UC Berkeley



# Energy-Relevant Materials Catalysts Materials which facilitate a useful chemical reaction



Left: Jin Soo Lim, Right: Arunima Singh





#### 

# Killer App: "Artificial Leaves"

Fuel Generation From  $CO_2 e.g.$   $CO_2 + 2 H_2 \rightarrow CH_3OH$  $CO_2 + 4 H_2 \rightarrow CH_4 + 2H_2O$ 



Photo credit: MIT News Office

# **Density Functional Theory, Briefly**

The physical laws for a large part of physics and the whole of chemistry are completely known ... "approximate practical methods of applying quantum mechanics should be developed"

50+ years later: Solve with functional of electron density ρ instead of all electrons Ψ



"Quantum Mechanics of Many-Electron Systems," P.AM. Dirac 1929

# **DFT-Accessible Properties**



# CO<sub>2</sub> Reduction & Artificial Photosynthesis



#### Central Challenges:

- CO<sub>2</sub> very stable
- Complex reaction pathway
- Hard to find reactive and stable materials

## Many Reaction Products of Interest



## Reduction to CO



## Reduction to CO



## Reduction to CO



# Previous Work: Discovery of Photocatalysts

#### Computational Discovery of Photocatalyst Compounds

40+ New Photocatalysts (all 'bulk')

A. Singh, J. Montoya, J. Gregoire, K. Persson, *Nat. Comm. 2019*  SiAs

ZnTe





# Could alternate structures do better?







Larger Surface Area



Better Excited e<sup>-</sup> Properties



# "Two-Dimensional" Structures





Materials in a sheet of atoms one atom, or layer thick 3D = "Bulk" 2D= "Monolayer" Better Light Absorption



Larger Surface Area



Better Excited e<sup>-</sup> Properties



# 1. Feasibility: For bulk structures, determine if two-dimensional phases can exist.



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- 2. Suitability: For the resultant 2D phases, predict their catalytic properties.



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# Feasibility via Stability



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Thermodynamics

#### Rank candidate structures by energy Compare $\Delta E_F$ vs. bulk





Heuristic Cutoff Energy (From literature<sup>1</sup>):

 $\Delta E_{f/atom} \leq 200 \text{ meV}$ 

[1] B.C. Revard, W.W. Tipton, A. Yesypenko, R.G. Hennig, PRB 93 (2016) <sup>36</sup>

# **Stability Screening: Thermodynamics**



288 Candidate 2D Forms Of Compounds

#### 36 Unique 2D Structures

# Thermodynamically Stable Forms



# **Stability Screening: Dynamics**



#### Thermodynamics

**Kinetics** 

# **Stability Screening: Dynamics**



Thermodynamics

Only a small amount of thermal energy required

Dynamic Instability

# **Stability Screening: Dynamics**

Only a small amount of thermal energy required



Dynamic Instability

# Vibrations for Dynamic Instability

# Phonon Spectra ✓ Easy to check for dynamic instability

 $D(\vec{q})\vec{u}_{n\vec{q}} = \omega_n^2(\vec{q})\vec{u}_{n\vec{q}}$ (1)  $\omega_n^2 > 0: Stable$  $\omega_n^2 < 0: Unstable$ 



http://henriquemiranda.github.io, Materials Project, ZnTe (mp-2176)





Frequency (cm<sup>-1</sup>)

-50



Μ

Κ

Г

<sup>46</sup> Unstable Phonon Mode from Yang et al. Comp. Mat. Sci. 95 (2014)

http://henriquemiranda.github.io, Materials Project, ZnTe (mp-2176)

# **Dynamical Stability Found!**



 Feasibility: For bulk structures, determine if two-dimensional phases can exist.
Suitability: For the resultant 2D phases, evaluate their catalytic properties.



# Catalytic Suitability in Three Steps



Light Absorption
Sufficiently Energetic e<sup>-</sup>
<u>3. Reactant Binding</u>

# Light Absorption in Materials

# Atoms : Crystals Orbitals : Bands



# Light Absorption in Materials

# Atoms : Crystals Orbitals : Bands

#### For solar light harvesting... Band gap size should correspond to visible light energy (Direct gap preferrable)







# **Band Gaps Lie In Visible Spectrum**



Boxed: Direct Gap Note: Computed using HSE06 functional

# Excited Electrons must be high-energy!





Boxed: Direct Gap Note: Computed using HSE06 functional

# Band Edges Facilitate CO<sub>2</sub> Reduction



Excited states are *above* reaction energies

> → they may participate in reactions

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# Calculation of "Theoretical Overpotential"

• Compute binding energies of reactants on 'basal plane' (top of monolayer)

- Account for contributions to free energy
- Compare reaction pathway; determine 'in the dark' bias voltage to induce reaction



# **Basal Plane Binding Energies**

- This is "in the dark"; no illumination present
- Height of barrier: positive binding energy
- May change when excited electrons present
- **Detailed evaluation** of mechanism would be study in its own right



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# Next Steps: Improving Reactivity

- Model reactivity of surface edges
- Preliminary results vacancies on surface bind stronger
- Explore role of different dopants



# Conclusions

#### Thermodynamics Dynamic Stability



S.B. Torrisi, A. Singh, J. Montoya, T. Biswas, K.A. Persson, NPJ 2D Mat. & Appl. 2020 64

# Acknowledgements







Urban Axes 2019

# Summer 2018

# <image>

# The Materials Project







