# **Collective Behavior of Cells:** Learning from Planar Cell Polarity



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# Collective Behavior of Cells: Learning from Planar Cell Polarity

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# **Polarity Of Epithelial Cells**



**PCP:** Coordinated polarization of thousands of epithelial cells along the plane orthogonal to apical-basal axis

# **Compass In A Cell**



# **PCP In Fly Wing**





Proximal  $\leftarrow$  Distal Vang, Pk Fz, Dsh, Dgo

### The Molecular Regulations Of PCP





#### PMID: 20107923, 23672397, 15662015, 16258926

#### **PCP As Phase Transition**



#### Homogeneous/Disordered

Non-Homogeneous/Ordered

#### Key Features:

It is a collective phenomenon.

- involves both local and global

interactions

It is *like* phase transition.

- possibly has critical threshold

# **The PCP Model**



- Spin -1 = Protein complex 1
- Spin +1 = Protein complex 2

# **The PCP Model**





 $m_1 > 0 \quad m_2 < 0$ 

# **The PCP Model**



Randomly pick a cell Randomly pick any two edges Swap the spins Calculate  $\Delta h$ Accept the swap with  $P = min(e^{-\Delta h}, 1)$ 

# **Aligned Cells & Clusters**



A, B & C: Aligned cells

A is a **Cluster** aligned cells of *s* =1

BC is a **Cluster** of *s* =2

# **Cooperativity in Alignment**



$$f_U = \frac{m^b}{c^b + m^b}$$

#### **Emergence of Clusters of Aligned Cells**



#### **Percolation of Cell Clusters**



$$P = \frac{C}{L \times L}$$

P: Relative size of the largest cluster

#### **Percolation of Cell Clusters**



$$\chi = \frac{\sum_{s} n_{s} . s^{2}}{\sum_{s} n_{s} . s}$$

 $\chi$ : Avg. size of the other cluster

#### **Universality: Getting Rid of the Clutter**

Scaling in random percolation:

$$P \sim (p - p_c)^{\beta}$$

$$\chi \sim |p - p_c|^{-\gamma}$$

Finite-size scaling ansatz:

$$P = L^{-\beta/\nu} F[(p - p_c)L^{1/\nu}]$$

$$\chi = L^{\gamma/\nu} G[(p - p_c) L^{1/\nu}]$$

*p*: occupancy probability

## **Universality: Getting Rid of the Clutter**

Finite-size scaling ansatz:

$$P = L^{-\beta/\nu} F[(p - p_c)L^{1/\nu}]$$
$$\chi = L^{\gamma/\nu} G[(p - p_c)L^{1/\nu}]$$

*p*: occupancy probability

$$P = L^{-\beta/\nu} F\left[ (f_A - f_{Ac}) L^{1/\nu} \right]$$

$$\chi = L^{\gamma/\nu} G\left[ (f_A - f_{Ac}) L^{1/\nu} \right]$$

 $f_{\rm A}$ : fraction of cells aligned

# Behavior w.r.t $f_A$



#### **PCP Model ≅ 2D Random Percolation**



Critical index	PCP Model	2D Percolation
1/v	0.75(8)	0.75
β/ν	0.125(15)	0.104
γ/ν	1.7208(5)	1.785

PhysRevE.100.032408

#### **PCP Model** $\cong$ **2D Random Percolation**



# The Case of Unequal m<sub>1</sub>, m<sub>2</sub>



# The Molecular Cues of PCP



Fi

# **Directional model: External Field Specify Direction**





arXiv:2308.10508

## **Directional model: External Field Specify Direction**





Cell-Cell & within cell interactions

$$b = m_1 \sum_{\substack{\text{all n} \\ \text{pairs}}} S_{\alpha,p} \times S_{\beta,q} + m_2 \sum_{\alpha=1}^N \sum_{\substack{\text{all 6} \\ \text{pairs}}} S_{\alpha,a} \times S_{\alpha,b}$$

Interaction with external field

$$\Delta g = m_3 \left( d_a S_{\alpha,a} + d_b S_{\alpha,b} \right)$$

Total change in energy

$$\Delta \mathcal{E} = \Delta h + \Delta g$$

$$m_1 > 0$$
  $m_2, m_3 < 0$   $|d_a| = |d_b| = d$ 

arXiv:2308.10508

### **Alignment of Cells in Right Direction**



 $|m_1| = |m_2| = m$ 

#### **Emergence of Clusters of Aligned Cells**



 $|m_1| = |m_2| = m = 0.5$ 

#### **Percolation of Cell Clusters**



 $|m_1| = |m_2| = m$ 

### **Alignment of Cells in Right Direction**



 $|m_1| = |m_2| = m$ 

# **Power of Collective Against Mutations**

Mutated cells can not sense global cue



#### **Role of Percolation Transition**



Percolation threshold in absence of any directional cue,  $|m_1| = |m_2| = m = 2.1254$ 

#### **Role of Percolation Transition**



$$SSD_{m} = \sum_{|m_{3}|=0}^{10} \left( f_{U}^{WT,|m_{3}|} - f_{U}^{mut,|m_{3}|} \right)^{2}$$

#### **Cases of Extreme Mutations**



m

#### **Robust With A Gradient Of Global Clue**





#### **Robust With A Gradient Of Global Clue**



#### **Transient Global Clue Is Sufficient**



#### **Thresholds in Other PCP Models**



bioRxiv 2021.11.30.468750





PCP as a critical phenomenon: The toy model based only on elementary rules of fly wing PCP

shows that this PCP is possibly a Percolation transition.

Universality & Simplicity: Even though this model is energy-based and involves several rules,

it belongs to the class of simple 2D random percolation.

**Percolation makes PCP robust**: Local interactions beyond a critical threshold makes the system robust to failure.

Percolation allow weak global cue: Beyond the percolation threshold of local interactions, a

weak global cue (possibly too week to detect) is good enough for collective alignment.