

Three-manifold mutations detected by Heegaard Floer homology

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Given an orientation-preserving self-diffeomorphism φ of a closed, orientable surface S with genus at least two and an embedding f of S into a three-manifold M , we construct a mutant manifold by cutting M along $f(S)$ and regluing by $f\varphi f^{-1}$. We will consider whether there exist nontrivial gluings such that for any embedding, the manifold M and its mutant have isomorphic Heegaard Floer homology. In particular, we will demonstrate that if φ is not isotopic to the identity map, then there exists an embedding of S into a three-manifold M such that the rank of the nontorsion summands of $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ of M differs from that of its mutant. We will also show that if the gluing map is isotopic to neither the identity nor the genus-two hyperelliptic involution, then there exists an embedding of S into a three-manifold M such that the total rank of $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ of M differs from that of its mutant.

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1 Introduction

In 2001, Ozsváth and Szabó introduced Heegaard Floer homology, a topological invariant that assigns a collection of abelian groups to each closed, oriented three-manifold equipped with a Spin^c -structure [25]. Given a topological invariant, it is natural to ask which topological operations it detects. In this paper, we will consider whether or not Heegaard Floer homology detects *mutation*, the operation of cutting a three-manifold along an embedded surface and regluing by a surface diffeomorphism. In particular, we will show that the version of Heegaard Floer homology denoted by $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ can detect mutation by any nontrivial diffeomorphisms of a closed, orientable surface of genus greater than one.

In order to make this statement more precise, we introduce the following terminology and notation. Let $g \geq 2$ be a natural number and let S_g be a genus- g , closed, connected, orientable, smooth surface. By a *manifold–surface pair*, we will mean a pair (M, f) where M is a closed, connected, oriented, smooth three-manifold and $f: S_g \rightarrow M$ is a smooth embedding of S_g into M such that $f(S_g)$ separates M . To an orientation-preserving diffeomorphism $\varphi: S_g \rightarrow S_g$ and a manifold–surface pair (M, f) , we

associate the *mutant manifold* M_f^φ that results from cutting M along $f(S_g)$ and regluing by $f\varphi f^{-1}$. The mutant manifold M_f^φ inherits an orientation from M . Finally, we will denote the nontorsion summands of $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ in the following way:

$$\widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M, \mathfrak{s}) := \bigoplus_{c_1(\mathfrak{s}) \neq 0} \widehat{\text{HF}}(M, \mathfrak{s}).$$

Here, $c_1(\mathfrak{s})$ is the first Chern class of the Spin^c -structure \mathfrak{s} .

Theorem 1.1 *Let φ be an orientation-preserving self-diffeomorphism of S_g that is not isotopic to the identity map. Then there exists a manifold–surface pair (M, f) such that*

$$\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M, \mathfrak{s}) \neq \text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M_f^\varphi, \mathfrak{s}).$$

Our proof of this result begins with a reformulation of the theorem statement. In [Section 2](#), we use Ivanov and Long’s results about subgroups of mapping class groups to show that [Theorem 1.1](#) is equivalent to the statement that a particular subgroup of the mapping class group $\text{Mod}(S_g)$ contains neither the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution nor any pseudo-Anosov elements. In [Section 3](#), we show that the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution is not an element of this subgroup by giving an example of a mutation by this map that changes the rank of $\widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}$. In [Section 4](#), we use the fact that $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ detects the Thurston seminorm on homology to establish the existence of mutations by pseudo-Anosov maps that change the rank of $\widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}$. This step uses work of Ozsváth and Szabó [\[23\]](#), Ni [\[22\]](#) and Hedden and Ni [\[12\]](#). We conclude the proof of [Theorem 1.1](#) in [Section 5](#).

Then in [Section 6](#), we use similar techniques to show that the total rank of $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ can detect mutations by noncentral mapping classes:

Theorem 1.2 *Let $[\varphi] \in \text{Mod}(S_g)$ be a mapping class that is isomorphic to neither the identity nor the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution. Then there exists a manifold–surface pair (M, f) such that*

$$\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}(M) \neq \text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}(M_f^\varphi).$$

The question of whether the total rank of $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ is preserved by mutation along a separating surface by the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution remains open.

The effect of mutating by the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution has been considered for invariants related to $\widehat{\text{HF}}$. In particular, Ozsváth and Szabó showed that the Heegaard Floer knot invariant $\widehat{\text{HFK}}$ can detect knot genus, which can be changed by mutations of this form [\[23, Theorem 1.2\]](#). Conversely, Moore and Starkston produced computational

evidence that the total rank of $\widehat{\text{HFK}}$ in each δ -grading is preserved by mutation by the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution [21]. Finally, Ruberman showed that the instanton Floer homology with $\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z}$ coefficients of an oriented homology 3-sphere is preserved by mutations of this form [26, Theorem 1].¹

The results of this paper also fit into the growing body of work on group actions on triangulated categories. See Section 7 for a more detailed discussion.

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2 Theorem reformulation

Let $\text{Mod}(S_g)$ be the mapping class group of S_g . In this section, we will reformulate Theorem 1.1 as a statement about the triviality of a normal subgroup of $\text{Mod}(S_g)$.

Definition 2.1 A mapping class $[\varphi] \in \text{Mod}(S_g)$ is $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible if for all manifold-surface pairs (M, f) we have that

$$\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M, \mathfrak{s}) = \text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M_f^\varphi, \mathfrak{s}).$$

The $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible mapping classes are well defined, because mutating by isotopic diffeomorphisms results in diffeomorphic mutant manifolds. Moreover, they form a normal subgroup.

Proposition 2.2 The $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible mapping classes form a normal subgroup of the mapping class group $\text{Mod}(S_g)$.

Proof The mapping class of the identity map is $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible, because mutating by any of its representatives preserves the diffeomorphism class of the manifold. We will

¹In private communication, Ruberman indicated that there is an issue with the signs in [26] due to a particular moduli space not being orientable. However, this is not relevant when one considers $\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z}$ coefficients.

show that mutations by products, inverses and conjugates of $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible mapping classes preserve the rank of $\widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}$.

Let (M, f) be a manifold–surface pair and let M_1 and M_2 be the closures of the two connected components of $M \setminus f(S_g)$. Finally, let α and β be arbitrary orientation-preserving self-diffeomorphisms of S_g . The mutant manifold M_f^α can be made into a manifold–surface pair by composing the embedding $f: S_g \mapsto M_1$ with the inclusion of M_1 into M_f^α . Let (N, h) denote this pair. Mutating (N, h) by β gives the mutant N_h^β which is constructed by using $(f\alpha)\beta f^{-1}$ to glue M_1 to M_2 . Thus, N_h^β is diffeomorphic to $M_f^{\alpha\beta}$ by construction, and we can view mutation by a composite map as a sequence of mutations.

Let $[\varphi]$ and $[\tau]$ be $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible mapping classes. It follows that mutating by either φ or τ preserves the rank of $\widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}$. Thus, if we view mutating (M, f) by the composition $\varphi\tau$ as a mutation by φ followed by a mutation by τ , we find that

$$\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M, \mathfrak{s}) = \text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M_f^\varphi, \mathfrak{s}) = \text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M_f^{\varphi\tau}, \mathfrak{s}).$$

Therefore, the product $[\varphi][\tau] = [\varphi\tau]$ is $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible.

Mutating (M, f) by the composite map $\varphi^{-1}\varphi$ does not change its diffeomorphism class. Furthermore, if we view this mutation sequentially, the second mutation preserves the rank of $\widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}$. Thus, we have that

$$\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M, \mathfrak{s}) = \text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M_f^{\varphi^{-1}\varphi}, \mathfrak{s}) = \text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M_f^{\varphi^{-1}}, \mathfrak{s}).$$

Therefore, the inverse mapping class $[\varphi]^{-1} = [\varphi^{-1}]$ is $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible.

Let $[\psi] \in \text{Mod}(S_g)$ be an arbitrary mapping class. Composing f with ψ gives a new embedding $f\psi: S_g \rightarrow M$. Mutating the manifold–surface pair $(M, f\psi)$ by φ gives the mutant manifold $M_{f\psi}^\varphi$. This mutant is constructed by using $(f\psi)\varphi(f\psi)^{-1}$ to glue M_1 to M_2 . In a similar manner, the mutant $M_f^{\psi\varphi\psi^{-1}}$ is constructed by using $f(\psi\varphi\psi^{-1})f^{-1}$ to glue M_1 to M_2 and is thus diffeomorphic to $M_{f\psi}^\varphi$. Moreover, the rank of $\widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M_{f\psi}^\varphi)$ is the same as that of M , because $[\varphi]$ is $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible. Thus, we have that

$$\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M, \mathfrak{s}) = \text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M_{f\psi}^\varphi, \mathfrak{s}) = \text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M_f^{\psi\varphi\psi^{-1}}, \mathfrak{s}).$$

Therefore, the conjugate $[\psi][\varphi][\psi]^{-1} = [\psi\varphi\psi^{-1}]$ is $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible. It follows that the $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible mapping classes form a normal subgroup of $\text{Mod}(S_g)$. \square

Theorem 1.1 is equivalent to the statement that the normal subgroup of $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible mapping classes is trivial. Reformulating the theorem statement in this way allows us to leverage the group structure of $\text{Mod}(S_g)$. We begin by recalling a few definitions from the theory of mapping class groups.

The *Torelli group* is the normal subgroup consisting of those mapping classes whose representatives induce the identity map on homology and is denoted by $\mathcal{I}(S_g)$. If $g = 2$, then $\text{Mod}(S_g)$ has a unique order two element that acts by $-\text{id}$ on $H_1(S_2; \mathbb{Z})$. See Farb and Margalit [5, Section 7.4]. This element is called the *genus-2 hyperelliptic involution*. A subgroup $G \leq \text{Mod}(S_g)$ is called *irreducible* if for any simple closed curve C on S_g there exists an element $[\varphi] \in G$ such that $\varphi(C)$ is not isotopic to C .

We are now ready to state and prove the following proposition:

Proposition 2.3 *If a normal subgroup $G \triangleleft \text{Mod}(S_g)$ contains no pseudo-Anosov elements of the Torelli group, then it is either the trivial subgroup or the order two subgroup generated by the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution.*

Proof Let $G \triangleleft \text{Mod}(S_g)$ be a normal subgroup of the mapping class group that contains no pseudo-Anosov elements of the Torelli group. Also let $H = G \cap \mathcal{I}(S_g)$ be the intersection of G with the Torelli group. Thus, H is a normal subgroup that contains no pseudo-Anosov elements.

It follows from a theorem of Ivanov that H is either finite or reducible [14, Theorem 1]. Furthermore, the Torelli group is torsion free and thus H must be either trivial or infinite and reducible [14, Corollary 1.5]. However, Ivanov also showed [14, Corollary 7.13] that there are no infinite, reducible, normal subgroups of $\text{Mod}(S_g)$. Therefore, H must be trivial.

Long showed that if the intersection of two normal subgroups of $\text{Mod}(S_g)$ is trivial, then one of those groups must either be central or trivial [19, Lemma 2.1]. The Torelli group is neither central nor trivial, so we must conclude that G is either central or trivial. If $g \geq 3$, then the center of $\text{Mod}(S_g)$ is trivial [5, Theorem 3.10] and thus G must also be trivial. In the genus-2 case, things are only slightly more complicated. The center of $\text{Mod}(S_2)$ is the order two subgroup generated by the hyperelliptic involution [5, Section 3.4]. Therefore, G is either trivial or the order two subgroup generated by the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution. \square

By combining Proposition 2.2 and Proposition 2.3, we see that Theorem 1.1 is equivalent to the statement that neither the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution nor any pseudo-Anosov elements of the Torelli group are $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible. In the next two sections, we will consider mutations by these two types of mapping classes.

3 Genus-two hyperelliptic involution

In this section, we will show that mutating by the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution can change the rank of the nontorsion summands of $\widehat{\text{HF}}$. To accomplish this, we will

consider the seminorm on $H_2(M; \mathbb{R})$ defined by Thurston in [29]. This is a useful invariant to consider, because it is detected by $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ and is much easier to compute. See Ozsváth and Szabó [23], Ni [22] and Hedden and Ni [12].

Proposition 3.1 *The genus-2 hyperelliptic involution is not $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible.*

Proof We consider the pair of mutant knots that form the basis of Moore and Starkston's examples of mutations by the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution [21]. Let K and K^τ be the knots denoted respectively by 14_{22185}^n and 14_{22589}^n in Knotscape notation [21, Figure 2]. These two knots are related by a mutation of S^3 by the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution [21, Figure 3]. From the computations of $\widehat{\text{HFK}}$ in Table 1 of [21], we see that K has genus two and K^τ has genus one.

Now, let M and M^τ be the results of 0-surgery on K and K^τ respectively. Because the mutation of S^3 that transforms K into K^τ involves a surface that is disjoint from the knot, there is a corresponding surface in M . Moreover, mutating M along that corresponding surface by the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution will result in a manifold diffeomorphic to M^τ .

A Mayer-Vietoris argument shows that both $H_2(M; \mathbb{R})$ and $H_2(M^\tau; \mathbb{R})$ are isomorphic to \mathbb{R} . Furthermore, it follows from the work of Gabai that the genera of the knots K and K^τ determine the Thurston seminorm on these homology groups [7, Corollary 8.3]. In particular, the seminorm is constantly zero on $H_2(M^\tau; \mathbb{R})$ and nonzero on $H_2(M; \mathbb{R})$. This implies that $\widehat{\text{HF}}(M^\tau)$ is supported entirely in the Spin^c -structure whose first Chern class is zero and $\widehat{\text{HF}}(M)$ is nontrivial in at least one Spin^c -structure with nonzero first Chern class by Hedden and Ni [12, Theorem 2.2]. \square

4 Pseudo-Anosov gluings

In this section, we examine mutations by pseudo-Anosov elements of the Torelli group. In particular, we will show that mutating by any such element will change the Thurston seminorm of some three-manifold.

Proposition 4.1 *Let $[\varphi] \in \mathcal{I}(S_g)$ be a pseudo-Anosov element of the Torelli group. Then there exists a natural number N and a manifold-surface pair (M, f) such that $M = S^1 \times S^2$ and the mutant manifold $M_f^{\varphi^N}$ has a homology class with nonzero Thurston seminorm.*

In order to determine the effect of mutation on the Thurston seminorm, we must first establish a relationship between the homology of a three-manifold and that of its mutants. In the case of mutation by elements of the Torelli group, this is achieved by the following lemma.

Lemma 4.2 *If $[\psi] \in \mathcal{I}(S_g)$ is an element of the Torelli group and (M, f) is a manifold–surface pair, then M and its mutant M_f^ψ have isomorphic homology groups*

$$H_i(M) \cong H_i(M_f^\psi) \quad \text{for all } i.$$

Proof Because M and its mutant M_f^ψ are closed three-manifolds, it suffices to show that the first homology groups are isomorphic. In order to do this, we decompose M into two open sets that overlap in a tubular neighborhood of the separating surface $f(S_g)$. A comparison of the Mayer–Vietoris sequence coming from this decomposition to that coming from a similar decomposition of the mutant M_f^ψ shows that the first homology groups are indeed isomorphic. \square

Our inquiry will focus on mutating $S^1 \times S^2$ along Heegaard surfaces. We proceed by considering the relationship between the complexity of the Heegaard splittings of a three-manifold and the minimal genera of its homology classes.

4.1 Homology and Hempel distance

A genus- g *Heegaard splitting* is a decomposition of a three-manifold into two genus- g handlebodies glued together along their boundaries. Such a splitting is determined by two handlebodies with parametrized boundaries. A handlebody with parametrized boundary is in turn determined by the curves on the boundary that bound disks in the handlebody.

Definition 4.3 For a genus- g handlebody X with boundary parametrized by a map to S_g , let \mathcal{V}_X be the set of isotopy classes of essential simple closed curves in S_g whose preimages bound disks in X . We will refer to the elements of \mathcal{V}_X as *compression curves* of X .

Given two genus- g handlebodies X and Y with boundaries parametrized respectively by maps a and b to S_g , we can construct a three-manifold M by using $b^{-1}a$: $\partial X \rightarrow \partial Y$ to glue X to Y . We will write $(S_g, \mathcal{V}_X, \mathcal{V}_Y)$ for the corresponding Heegaard splitting of M .

The compression curves of a genus- g handlebody can be viewed as points in the curve complex, $C(S_g)$. See Harvey [11]. The *curve complex* is a simplicial complex with 0–simplices corresponding to isotopy classes of essential closed curves and n –simplices corresponding to $(n+1)$ –tuples of isotopy classes that can be realized disjointly. There is a natural distance function d on the 0–simplices of the curve complex given by viewing the 1–skeleton as a graph with edge length one. Applying this distance function to the sets of compression curves in a Heegaard splitting can provide information about the minimal genera of homology classes.

Lemma 4.4 *If $(S_g, \mathcal{V}_X, \mathcal{V}_Y)$ is a Heegaard splitting of a manifold M and the distance $d(\mathcal{V}_X, \mathcal{V}_Y)$ is greater than two, then M is irreducible and has no essential tori.*

Proof Haken showed that if M were reducible, then \mathcal{V}_X and \mathcal{V}_Y would have a point in common and thus $d(\mathcal{V}_X, \mathcal{V}_Y)$ would be zero [8, page 84]. Furthermore, Hempel demonstrated [13, Corollary 3.7] that if M had an essential torus, then $d(\mathcal{V}_X, \mathcal{V}_Y)$ would be ≤ 2 . Thus, $d(\mathcal{V}_X, \mathcal{V}_Y) > 2$ implies that M is irreducible and has no essential tori. \square

The distance between the sets of compression curves in a Heegaard splitting is called the *Hempel distance* of that splitting. Combining this language with the definition of Thurston's seminorm gives the following corollary to Lemma 4.4.

Corollary 4.5 *If a three-manifold M has a Heegaard splitting with Hempel distance greater than two, then the Thurston seminorm is in fact a norm on $H_2(M; \mathbb{R})$.*

Now that we have established a relationship between Hempel distance and the Thurston norm, we turn our attention to the effect of mutating by a pseudo-Anosov map on the Hempel distance of a Heegaard splitting.

4.2 Effects of pseudo-Anosov mutations

Each pseudo-Anosov map $\varphi: S_g \rightarrow S_g$ has two associated projective measured laminations on S_g called its *stable* and *unstable laminations*. See Casson and Bleiler [4, Theorem 5.5]. Furthermore, a set of compression curves can be viewed as a subset of $\text{PML}(S_g)$, the space of projective measured laminations on S_g , by simply applying the counting measure to each curve. See Hamenstädt [10, Section 2]. We will use $\overline{\mathcal{V}_H}$ to denote the closure of \mathcal{V}_H in $\text{PML}(S_g)$. Hempel showed that repeatedly twisting by a pseudo-Anosov map can increase the Hempel distance of a Heegaard splitting:

Theorem 4.6 (Hempel [13, page 640]; see also Abrams and Schleimer [1, Section 2]) *Let X and Y be genus- g handlebodies with their boundaries parametrized by maps to S_g and let $\varphi: S_g \rightarrow S_g$ be a pseudo-Anosov map with stable lamination s and unstable lamination u . If s and u are not in $\overline{\mathcal{V}_X} \cup \overline{\mathcal{V}_Y}$, then the distance between \mathcal{V}_X and $\varphi^n(\mathcal{V}_Y)$ tends to infinity:*

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} d(\mathcal{V}_X, \varphi^n(\mathcal{V}_Y)) = \infty.$$

It is worth noting that $(S_g, \mathcal{V}_X, \varphi^n(\mathcal{V}_Y))$ is the Heegaard splitting of the mutant manifold that results from mutating $X \cup Y$ by φ^n along the Heegaard surface ∂X . We would like to use Hempel's theorem to make statements about mutations of $S^1 \times S^2$ by pseudo-Anosov maps. However, we must first verify that $S^1 \times S^2$ admits Heegaard splittings of the appropriate form.

Lemma 4.7 *Let $\varphi: S_g \rightarrow S_g$ be a pseudo-Anosov map with stable lamination s and unstable lamination u . Then there exists a genus- g Heegaard splitting $(S_g, \mathcal{V}_X, \mathcal{V}_Y)$ of $S^1 \times S^2$ such that s and u are not in $\overline{\mathcal{V}_X} \cup \overline{\mathcal{V}_Y}$.*

Proof For an arbitrary handlebody X , the stable lamination s is in $\overline{\mathcal{V}_X}$ if and only if the unstable lamination u is also in $\overline{\mathcal{V}_X}$ by Biringer, Johnson and Minsky [3, Theorem 1.1]. Thus, it is enough to find a Heegaard splitting of $S^1 \times S^2$ such that s is not in the closure of either set of compression curves.

Let $(S_g, \mathcal{V}_X, \mathcal{V}_Y)$ be a genus- g Heegaard splitting of $S^1 \times S^2$. The union $\overline{\mathcal{V}_X} \cup \overline{\mathcal{V}_Y}$ is nowhere dense in $\text{PML}(S_g)$ by Masur [20, Theorem 1.2]. Furthermore, the stable laminations of pseudo-Anosov elements of $\text{Mod}(S_g)$ form a dense subset of $\text{PML}(S_g)$. See Farb and Margalit [6, Theorem 6.19]. Thus, there exists a pseudo-Anosov map $\psi: S_g \rightarrow S_g$ with stable lamination t such that t is not in $\overline{\mathcal{V}_X} \cup \overline{\mathcal{V}_Y}$ and t is not equal to s or u .

We will now show that translating the set \mathcal{V}_X by a high power of ψ will move it away from s . In particular, we show that the set of natural numbers n for which $s \in \overline{\psi^n(\mathcal{V}_X)}$ is either empty or bounded above. Suppose there exists a $k \in \mathbb{N}$ such that $s \in \overline{\psi^k(\mathcal{V}_X)}$. By Theorem 4.6, the distance $d(\psi^k(\mathcal{V}_X), \psi^{k+\ell}(\mathcal{V}_X))$ goes to infinity as ℓ grows. Therefore, it is enough to show that if s is an element of $\overline{\psi^{k+\ell}(\mathcal{V}_X)}$, then the sets $\psi^k(\mathcal{V}_X)$ and $\psi^{k+\ell}(\mathcal{V}_X)$ must be close together in the curve complex.

Suppose s is an element of $\overline{\psi^{k+\ell}(\mathcal{V}_X)}$. Let (a_i) and (b_i) be sequences of points in $\psi^k(\mathcal{V}_X)$ and $\psi^{k+\ell}(\mathcal{V}_X)$ respectively that converge to s in $\text{PML}(S_g)$. It follows from work of Klarreich that the sequences (a_i) and (b_i) converge to the same point in the Gromov boundary of the curve complex $C(S_g)$ [15]. See also Abrams and Schleimer [1, Theorem 8.4] and Hamenstädt [9, Theorem 1]. This in turn implies that the Hempel distance between $\psi^k(\mathcal{V}_X)$ and $\psi^{k+\ell}(\mathcal{V}_X)$ is bounded above by a constant which depends only on the genus g [1, Lemma 9.2].

Therefore, the set of n for which $s \in \overline{\psi^n(\mathcal{V}_X)}$ is either empty or bounded above. By a similar argument, the corresponding results holds for \mathcal{V}_Y . Thus, there exists an N such that s is not in $\overline{\psi^N(\mathcal{V}_X)} \cup \overline{\psi^N(\mathcal{V}_Y)}$. By construction, $(S_g, \psi^N(\mathcal{V}_X), \psi^N(\mathcal{V}_Y))$ is a Heegaard splitting for $S^1 \times S^2$. \square

4.3 Proof of Proposition 4.1

Proposition 4.1 *Let $[\varphi] \in \mathcal{I}(S_g)$ be a pseudo-Anosov element of the Torelli group. Then there exists a natural number N and a manifold–surface pair (M, f) such that $M = S^1 \times S^2$ and the mutant manifold $M_f^{\varphi^N}$ has a homology class with nonzero Thurston seminorm.*

Proof Let $s, u \in \text{PML}(S_g)$ be respectively the stable and unstable laminations of φ . Also, let $(S_g, \mathcal{V}_X, \mathcal{V}_Y)$ be a genus- g Heegaard splitting of $S^1 \times S^2$ such that s and u are not in $\overline{\mathcal{V}_X} \cup \overline{\mathcal{V}_Y}$. The existence of such a splitting is guaranteed by Lemma 4.7. Finally, let (M, f) be the manifold–surface pair where $M = S^1 \times S^2$ and f is the embedding of S_g as the Heegaard surface ∂X from the splitting $(S_g, \mathcal{V}_X, \mathcal{V}_Y)$.

By Theorem 4.6, we have that

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} d(\mathcal{V}_X, \varphi^n(\mathcal{V}_Y)) = \infty.$$

Thus, there is a natural number N such that $d(\mathcal{V}_X, \varphi^N(\mathcal{V}_Y)) > 2$. Furthermore, $(S_g, \mathcal{V}_X, \varphi^N(\mathcal{V}_Y))$ is a Heegaard splitting for the mutant $M_f^{\varphi^N}$. This implies that $M_f^{\varphi^N}$ is irreducible and has no essential tori (Lemma 4.4).

A simple calculation shows that the $H_2(M; \mathbb{Z}) = H_2(S^1 \times S^2; \mathbb{Z}) \cong \mathbb{Z}$. It follows that $H_2(M_f^{\varphi^N}; \mathbb{Z}) \cong \mathbb{Z}$, because $[\varphi]$ is in the Torelli group (Lemma 4.2). Let ω be a nonzero element of $H_2(M_f^{\varphi^N}; \mathbb{Z}) \cong \mathbb{Z}$ and let $F \subseteq M_f^{\varphi^N}$ be a surface that represents ω . Because $M_f^{\varphi^N}$ is irreducible and has no essential tori, the genus of F must be at least 2. It follows that the Thurston seminorm of $\omega = [F] \in H_2(M_f^{\varphi^N}; \mathbb{R})$ is nonzero. \square

5 Proof of Theorem 1.1

Theorem 1.1 *Let φ be an orientation-preserving self-diffeomorphism of S_g that is not isotopic to the identity map. Then there exists a manifold–surface pair (M, f) such that*

$$\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M, \mathfrak{s}) \neq \text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M_f^\varphi, \mathfrak{s}).$$

Proof Let $G \triangleleft \text{Mod}(S_g)$ be the set of $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible mapping classes. We begin by showing that G contains no pseudo-Anosov element of the Torelli group. Let $[\varphi] \in \mathcal{I}(S_g)$ be a pseudo-Anosov element of the Torelli group. Also let (M, f) be a manifold–surface pair such that $M = S^1 \times S^2$ and for some $N \in \mathbb{N}$ the mutant manifold $M_f^{\varphi^N}$ has a homology class with nonzero Thurston seminorm. The existence of such a pair is guaranteed by Proposition 4.1.

A simple computation shows that the Heegaard Floer homology of $M = S^1 \times S^2$ is isomorphic to $\mathbb{Z} \oplus \mathbb{Z}$ and is supported entirely in the Spin^c -structure whose first Chern class is zero. See Ozsváth and Szabó [24, Section 3]. Thus, the rank of the nontorsion summands of $\widehat{\text{HF}}(M)$ is zero:

$$\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M, \mathfrak{s}) = 0.$$

By construction $M_f^{\varphi^N}$ has a homology class with nonzero Thurston seminorm. It follows from work of Hedden and Ni that $\widehat{\text{HF}}(M_f^{\varphi^N})$ is nontrivial in at least one Spin^c -structure with nonzero first Chern class [12, Theorem 2.2]. In particular, the rank of the nontorsion summands is positive:

$$\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M_f^{\varphi^N}, \mathfrak{s}) > 0.$$

Therefore

$$\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M, \mathfrak{s}) \neq \text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M_f^{\varphi^N}, \mathfrak{s}).$$

Thus, the mapping class $[\varphi^N] = [\varphi]^N$ is not $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible. Because the $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible mapping classes form a subgroup of $\text{Mod}(S_g)$, we concluded that $[\varphi]$ is also not $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible (Proposition 2.2). Therefore, no pseudo-Anosov element of the Torelli group is an element of G .

Furthermore, we showed in Proposition 2.2 and Proposition 3.1 respectively that G is normal and does not contain the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution. Hence, G is trivial by Proposition 2.3. □

6 Total rank detects mutation

Theorem 1.2 *Let $[\varphi] \in \text{Mod}(S_g)$ be a mapping class that is isomorphic to neither the identity nor the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution. Then there exists a manifold–surface pair (M, f) such that*

$$\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}(M) \neq \text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}(M_f^\varphi).$$

Proof Let G be the set of mapping classes such that $[\varphi] \in G$ if and only if $\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}(M)$ is equal to $\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}(M_f^\varphi)$ for all manifold–surface pairs (M, f) . The set G , like the set of $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ -invisible mapping classes, is a normal subgroup of $\text{Mod}(S_g)$. This follows from the proof of Proposition 2.2 with the appropriate notation changes. Thus, it suffices to show that G contains no pseudo-Anosov elements of the Torelli group (Proposition 2.3).

Let $[\varphi] \in \mathcal{I}(S_g)$ be a pseudo-Anosov element of the Torelli group. Also let (M, f) be a manifold–surface pair such that $M = S^1 \times S^2$ and for some $N \in \mathbb{N}$ the mutant manifold $M_f^{\varphi^N}$ has a homology class with nonzero Thurston seminorm. The existence of such a pair is guaranteed by Proposition 4.1.

Let T be the result of 0–surgery on the trefoil. Hedden and Ni showed that T and M are the only closed, orientable, irreducible three-manifolds with nonzero first Betti number and $\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}} = 2$ [12, Theorem 1.1]. In the proof of Proposition 4.1, we showed

that the mutant $M_f^{\varphi^N}$ is closed, orientable and irreducible, and its first Betti number is nonzero. Thus, it is enough to show that $M_f^{\varphi^N}$ is not diffeomorphic to either T or M .

A Mayer–Vietoris argument shows that $H_2(T; \mathbb{R}) \cong \mathbb{R}$. The Thurston seminorm is constantly zero on $H_2(T; \mathbb{R})$, because the trefoil is a genus-1 knot by Gabai [7, Corollary 8.3]. The homology group $H_2(M; \mathbb{Z}) = H_2(S^1 \times S^2; \mathbb{Z})$ is isomorphic to \mathbb{Z} and is generated by the homology class of a sphere. Thus, the Thurston seminorm of any homology class in $H_2(S^1 \times S^2; \mathbb{R})$ is zero. Therefore, the Thurston seminorm differentiates $M_f^{\varphi^N}$ from both T and $S^1 \times S^2$. \square

7 Implications

There are two ways to interpret [Theorem 1.1](#) and [Theorem 1.2](#) as statements about actions of mapping class groups of surfaces on categories. The first uses bordered Heegaard Floer homology and results in a statement about an action on a category of \mathcal{A}_∞ -modules. The second uses the definition of $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ and results in a statement about an action on a Fukaya category.

7.1 Bordered Heegaard Floer homology

In [16] and [18], Lipshitz, Ozsváth and Thurston developed a variant of Heegaard Floer homology for three-manifolds with parametrized boundary called *bordered Heegaard Floer homology*. These bordered invariants are related to $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ by pairing theorems [16, Theorem 1.3] and [18, Theorem 11]. The pairing theorems provide a method for computing $\widehat{\text{HF}}(M)$ by cutting M along separating surfaces and computing the bordered Heegaard Floer homology of the resulting components. By applying this method to manifold–surface pairs and their mutants, we can use [Theorem 1.1](#) to infer information about the bordered Heegaard Floer homology of mapping cylinders of surface diffeomorphisms.

Let $\text{Mod}_0(S_g)$ denote the *strongly based mapping class group* of S_g that is the isotopy classes of diffeomorphisms that fix a given disk in S_g . There is a canonical projection

$$p: \text{Mod}_0(S_g) \rightarrow \text{Mod}(S_g)$$

given by quotienting out by the copy of $\pi_1(S_g)$ that corresponds to pushing the disk around closed curves in S_g as well as by the Dehn twist around the boundary of the disk. Following [18, Section 8], we assign to each strongly based mapping class $[\varphi] \in \text{Mod}_0(S_g)$ the bimodule $\widehat{\text{CFDA}}(\varphi, 0)$ associated to its mapping cylinder. By considering [Theorem 1.1](#) from the perspective of bordered Heegaard Floer homology, we get the following result about these bimodules.

Corollary 7.1 *If $[\varphi] \in \text{Mod}_0(S_g)$ is a strongly based mapping class such that $[\varphi]$ is not in the kernel of p , then the action of $[\varphi]$ on the category of $\mathcal{G}(Z)$ -graded $\mathcal{A}(Z)$ -modules given by tensoring with $\widehat{\text{CFDA}}(\varphi, 0)$ is not the trivial action.*

Proof Let $[\varphi] \in \text{Mod}_0(S_g)$ such that $[\varphi]$ is not in the kernel of p . Also, let (M, f) be a manifold–surface pair such that the rank of $\widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M)$ differs from that of $\widehat{\text{HF}}_{\text{NT}}(M_f^\varphi)$. The existence of such a pair is guaranteed by [Theorem 1.1](#). Finally, let M_1 and M_2 be the connected components of $M \setminus f(S_g)$.

The Heegaard Floer homology of M can be computed from the bordered invariants of M_1 and M_2 as follows:

$$\widehat{\text{HF}}(M) \cong H_*(\widehat{\text{CFA}}(M_1) \tilde{\otimes} \widehat{\text{CFD}}(M_2)),$$

where $\tilde{\otimes}$ is the \mathcal{A}_∞ -tensor product.

Similarly, decomposing the mutant manifold M_f^φ as the union $M_1 \cup C_\varphi \cup M_2$, where C_φ is the mapping cylinder of φ , corresponds to the following module decomposition of $\widehat{\text{HF}}(M_f^\varphi)$:

$$\widehat{\text{HF}}(M_f^\varphi) \cong H_*(\widehat{\text{CFA}}(M_1) \tilde{\otimes} \widehat{\text{CFDA}}(\varphi, 0) \tilde{\otimes} \widehat{\text{CFD}}(M_2)).$$

Thus, the difference between $\widehat{\text{HF}}(M)$ and $\widehat{\text{HF}}(M_f^\varphi)$ must result from the effect of tensoring with $\widehat{\text{CFDA}}(\varphi, 0)$. Therefore, the action of $[\varphi]$ on $\mathcal{A}(Z)$ -modules given by tensoring with $\widehat{\text{CFDA}}(\varphi, 0)$ must not be the trivial action. \square

A similar reformulation of [Theorem 1.2](#) gives the following result about the action of $\text{Mod}_0(S_g)$ on the category of ungraded $\mathcal{A}(Z)$ -modules.

Corollary 7.2 *If $[\varphi] \in \text{Mod}_0(S_g)$ is a strongly based mapping class such that $p([\varphi])$ is neither the identity nor the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution, then the action of $[\varphi]$ on the category of ungraded $\mathcal{A}(Z)$ -modules given by tensoring with $\widehat{\text{CFDA}}(\varphi, 0)$ is not the trivial action.*

These results are closely related to work of Lipshitz, Ozsváth and Thurston. In [\[17\]](#), they showed that the action of a nontrivial strongly based mapping class $[\varphi]$ on the ungraded $\mathcal{A}(Z)$ -modules given by tensoring with $\widehat{\text{CFDA}}(\varphi, \pm(g-1))$ is not the trivial action.

7.2 Fukaya categories

When viewed from another perspective, the work of Lipshitz, Ozsváth and Thurston shows that the strongly based mapping class group $\text{Mod}_0(S_g)$ acts freely on a version of the Fukaya category of S_g with a disk removed as well as on a version of the Fukaya category of the $(2g - 1)$ -fold symmetric product $\text{Sym}^{2g-1}(S_g - D)$. See Auroux [2].

Theorem 1.2 is also related to mapping class group actions on Fukaya categories. In particular, the chain complex that underlies $\widehat{\text{HF}}$ of a three-manifold with a genus- g Heegaard splitting corresponds to a morphism group in the Fukaya category of the g -fold symmetric product of S_g with a point removed. Furthermore, the action of the based mapping class group of S_g on the symmetric product $\text{Sym}^g(S_g - z)$ induces a strict action on the Fukaya category $\text{Fuk}(\text{Sym}^g(S_g - z))$. See Seidel [27, Section 10b].

Corollary 7.3 *If $[\varphi] \in \text{Mod}(S_g - z)$ is a based mapping class such that the corresponding element of $\text{Mod}(S_g)$ is neither the identity nor the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution, then the action of $[\varphi]$ on the Fukaya category $\text{Fuk}(\text{Sym}^g(S_g - z))$ is not the trivial action. In particular, the map induced by φ on $\text{Sym}^g(S_g - z)$ is not Hamiltonian isotopic to the identity.*

Proof Let $[\varphi] \in \text{Mod}(S_g - z)$ be a based mapping class such that the corresponding element of $\text{Mod}(S_g)$ is neither the identity nor the genus-2 hyperelliptic involution. Also, let (M, f) be a manifold–surface pair such that $f(S_g)$ is a Heegaard surface and

$$\text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}(M) \neq \text{rk } \widehat{\text{HF}}(M_f^\varphi).$$

The existence of such a manifold is guaranteed by the fact that the proof of **Theorem 1.2** only uses manifold–surface pairs where the embedded surface is a Heegaard surface. Finally, let T_α and T_β be the corresponding Heegaard tori in $\text{Sym}^g(S_g - z)$.

The action of $[\varphi]$ on $\text{Fuk}(\text{Sym}^g(S_g - z))$ sends T_β to $T_{\varphi(\beta)}$, the Heegaard torus that results from translating the curves of β by φ . Furthermore, T_α and $T_{\varphi(\beta)}$ are the Heegaard tori of a splitting of the mutant manifold M_f^φ . It then follows from the definitions that

$$\widehat{\text{CF}}(M) = \text{Mor}(T_\alpha, T_\beta) \quad \text{and} \quad \widehat{\text{CF}}(M_f^\varphi) = \text{Mor}(T_\alpha, T_{\varphi(\beta)}).$$

Since $\widehat{\text{HF}}(M)$ and $\widehat{\text{HF}}(M_f^\varphi)$ do not have the same rank, we concluded that their underlying chain complexes $\widehat{\text{CF}}(M)$ and $\widehat{\text{CF}}(M_f^\varphi)$ are not quasi-isomorphic. Thus, the morphism groups $\text{Mor}(T_\alpha, T_\beta)$ and $\text{Mor}(T_\alpha, T_{\varphi(\beta)})$ are not quasi-isomorphic. Therefore, T_β is not isomorphic to $T_{\varphi(\beta)}$. \square

It should also be possible to reformulate [Theorem 1.1](#) as a statement about an action of the based mapping class group of S_g on a version of the Fukaya category of $\text{Sym}^g(S_g - z)$. Such a reformulation would likely require working with grading data like that described by Sheridan [\[28\]](#). We will return to this in a future paper.

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