

Growth of PdCoO₂ films with controlled termination by molecular-beam epitaxy and determination of their electronic structure by angle-resolved photoemission spectroscopy

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ABSTRACT

Utilizing the powerful combination of molecular-beam epitaxy (MBE) and angle-resolved photoemission spectroscopy (ARPES), we produce and study the effect of different terminating layers on the electronic structure of the metallic delafossite PdCoO₂. Attempts to introduce unpaired electrons and synthesize new antiferromagnetic metals akin to the isostructural compound PdCrO₂ have been made by replacing cobalt with iron in PdCoO₂ films grown by MBE. Using ARPES, we observe similar bulk bands in these PdCoO₂ films with Pd-, CoO₂-, and FeO₂-termination. Nevertheless, Pd- and CoO₂-terminated films show a reduced intensity of surface states. Additionally, we are able to epitaxially stabilize PdFe_xCo_{1-x}O₂ films that show an anomaly in the derivative of the electrical resistance with respect to temperature at 20 K, but do not display pronounced magnetic order.

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Metallic oxides with the delafossite structure, shown in Fig. 1(a), have drawn significant attention in recent years due to their unique structural and electronic properties. Examples include PtCoO₂, which has the highest conductivity per carrier of all materials, and PdCoO₂, which has the longest mean free path (exceeding 20 μm at 4 K) among all known metals.^{1–3} The in-plane electrical conductivity of PdCoO₂ at room temperature, which is about four times higher than that of palladium metal itself, has been argued to arise from electron-phonon scattering mainly occurring

within a single, closed, highly dispersive band of primarily palladium character at the Fermi level (E_F).^{1,4–8} The large spin-splitting of the surface state arising from the CoO₂ termination, in combination with the layered structure of PdCoO₂-based heterostructures makes this system ideal to study itinerant surface electrons driven by inversion-symmetry breaking.⁹ As for the magnetic properties of delafossites, PdCrO₂ is the only highly conducting delafossite material that orders magnetically; it orders antiferromagnetically (AFM) at around 37 K. Focusing on the electronic structure, the single band

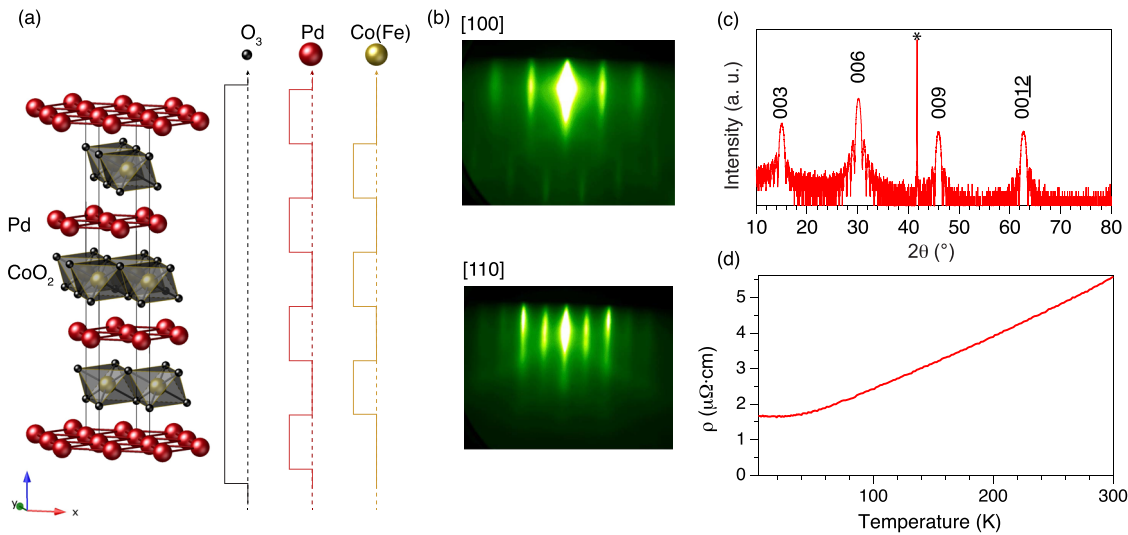


FIG. 1. Structural and electrical characterization of PdCoO₂ thin films grown by MBE on (001) Al₂O₃ substrates. (a) Crystal structure of PdCoO₂ and the shutter timing diagram used for the growth of PdCoO₂. (b) *In-situ* RHEED pattern of PdCoO₂ thin film with a CoO₂ termination viewed along the azimuths indicated. (c) X-ray diffraction of a 12.3 nm thick PdCoO₂ thin film. (d) Resistivity vs temperature of a 52.1 nm thick PdCoO₂ film. * = 006 peak of (001) Al₂O₃ substrate peak.

at the Fermi level with palladium character forms a reconstruction driven by the AFM order from the adjacent CrO₂ layer.^{10–14} Comparing AFM PdCrO₂ with nonmagnetic PdCoO₂, the spins from Cr³⁺ interacting inside the CrO₂ layer with the palladium monolayers on either side of the CrO₂ layer play a critical role in the magnetic state of PdCrO₂.¹³

Angle-resolved photoemission spectroscopy (ARPES) is the premiere experimental tool to directly observe electronic structure in quantum materials. The combination of oxide molecular-beam epitaxy (MBE) with ARPES allows us to customize and study the electronic structure of correlated oxides. This setup has enabled understanding of how strain,^{15,16} thickness,^{17–19} heterostructuring,^{20,21} interfaces,^{22,23} and terminations^{24–29} can influence the electronic structure of thin films.

Due to the limited size of delafossite single crystals, the desire to explore the potential of metallic delafossites in electronic³⁰ and spintronic devices,³¹ together with the exciting opportunities that can be explored in delafossite heterostructures, metallic delafossites are being grown in thin-film form by reactive sputtering,³² pulsed-laser deposition (PLD),^{30,33–36} and MBE.^{37,38} Unfortunately, the transport properties of these films (so far) pale in comparison to the single crystals. Differences between the Fermi surface of the so-called Pd-terminated PdCoO₂ with CoO₂-terminated PdCoO₂ have recently been reported for epitaxial films of PdCoO₂ grown by PLD.³⁹ The claims of this prior study would be strengthened by improved evidence of surface termination control.

In this work, we describe an improved synthetic strategy for the growth of PdCoO₂ films with control of surface termination by MBE. Harnessing the ultra-high vacuum connection between our MBE and ARPES, we then study the electronic structure of Pd-terminated and CoO₂-terminated PdCoO₂. We find that our PdCoO₂ films exhibit similar bulk bands derived from palladium states but weak surface states compared to those in PdCoO₂ single

crystals. Having succeeded in engineering the surface termination in PdCoO₂ over large areas, we then progress to investigate terminations of PdCoO₂ where we deliberately add unpaired electrons and study the resulting electronic structure by ARPES. Although we are able to epitaxially stabilize a variety of surface terminations involving iron substituting for cobalt in PdCoO₂, we do not see evidence of magnetic order.

Building upon our previous work,³⁸ thin films of PdCoO₂ were synthesized by MBE in a Veeco GEN10 MBE system on (001) sapphire substrates. Details of the film growth are provided in the [supplementary material](#). Figure 1(a) shows the shutter timing diagram used to supply fluxes of the individual molecular beams to the substrate to form PdCoO₂. After growth, films were cooled down to 300 °C in the same ozone background pressure (around 5×10^{-6} Torr) in which they were grown and transferred under ultra-high vacuum conditions into an adjacent ARPES chamber. The reflection high-energy electron diffraction (RHEED) patterns acquired after deposition and the x-ray diffraction θ - 2θ scans indicate the growth of single-phase PdCoO₂ films as shown in Figs. 1(b) and 1(c). The structure was characterized by a Panalytical Empyrean x-ray diffractometer utilizing Cu K α radiation. Electrical transport measured by a Quantum Design Physical Property Measurement System (PPMS) using a four-point van der Pauw geometry is shown in Fig. 1(d). The residual resistivity ratio (RRR = ρ_{300K}/ρ_{4K}) of this PdCoO₂ sample with a thickness of 52.1 nm is 3.3 in its as-grown state (i.e., no *ex-situ* postanneal). For comparison, the highest RRR previously achieved by MBE for a film in its as-grown state was 2.2 for a 10 nm thick PdCoO₂ film.³⁸ After an *ex-situ* anneal, films grown by MBE can reach a RRR of around 8 for a 50 nm thick PdCoO₂ film.³⁷ While these are the highest reported RRR values for films, PdCoO₂ single crystals can exhibit RRR as high as 400.¹ The resistivity of epitaxial PdCoO₂ films and single crystals are comparable at room temperature;

the huge difference in resistivity emerges upon cooling. One likely defect responsible for this difference is the in-plane rotation twins present in all epitaxial delafossite films to date. The presence of 180° in-plane rotation twins in PdCoO₂ film grown on (001) Al₂O₃ substrates manifest in the x-ray ϕ scan and scanning transmission electron microscopy images shown in Ref. 38, as well as the atomic force microscopy images shown in the [supplementary material](#) (Fig. S3).

In situ ARPES measurements are performed to study the effects of termination on the electronic structure of the PdCoO₂ films. Our lab-based ARPES system photoexcites electrons with a Scienta omicron VUV 5000 helium discharge lamp using He-I photons at 21.2 eV and He-II photons at 40.4 eV. The emitted electrons are detected with a VG Scienta R4000 electron analyzer. The ARPES is vacuum-connected to the MBE growth chamber via an ultra-high vacuum transfer chamber.

We first compare the Fermi surface of Pd-terminated and CoO₂-terminated PdCoO₂ films in Figs. 2(a) and 2(b), respectively. The sharp hexagonal pocket centered at Γ [illustrated in red in Figs. 2(a) and 2(b)] is observed in both Pd- and CoO₂-terminated PdCoO₂ films. Two smaller hexagonal pockets inside the bulk state pocket illustrated in green and blue are observed in the CoO₂-terminated PdCoO₂ film, in agreement with previous reports of splitting of the CoO₂ surface state driven by spin-orbit coupling.^{40,41} For Pd-terminated PdCoO₂, we do not observe pronounced palladium surface states at E_F . Below E_F , however, there is some spectral weight possibly from the palladium surface state as described in Ref. 41. At He-II photon energy (40.4 eV), we observe stronger spectral weight below E_F , as illustrated in Fig. S5 of the [supplementary material](#). This intensity below E_F might be related to the palladium surface state, but at this higher energy, still no palladium surface state appears at E_F .

In Figs. 3(a) and 3(c), we further compare the dispersion cut along the Γ -K direction of Pd- and CoO₂-terminated PdCoO₂, respectively. The fitted Fermi velocities (v_F s) of the PdCoO₂ bulk state of Pd- and CoO₂-terminated films are all around 4.5 eV $\text{\AA}$, as shown in Table I, in agreement with previous results measured on PdCoO₂ single crystals by ARPES.^{9,13} Despite the invisible palladium surface state at E_F , two spin-split surface states from the CoO₂ termination show up at E_F . These are indicated by blue and green circles in Fig. 3(c). From the momentum dispersion curves (MDCs) comparison of Pd- and CoO₂-terminated samples in Fig. 3(e), it is easier to observe the CoO₂ surface states at E_F (indicated by the blue arrows) and very little of the palladium surface state is observed below E_F (indicated by the red arrow). The Fermi velocities of the CoO₂ surface states are 0.75 eV $\text{\AA}$ (blue) and 0.5 eV $\text{\AA}$ (green), respectively. This is roughly 10% of that of the bulk state, in agreement with the previous study of PdCoO₂ single crystals.^{9,42} Dispersion along the K-M-K direction of Pd- and CoO₂-terminated PdCoO₂ films are shown in Figs. 3(f) and 3(h). Both terminations of the PdCoO₂ films show a split band at the M point 0.75 eV below E_F and 1.75 eV below E_F , as observed in PdCoO₂ single crystals.⁴¹ Interestingly, a hole band below E_F at the M point driven by the palladium surface state (as shown in Ref. 41) is not seen in our Pd-terminated films.

Comparing the electronic structure observed for our epitaxial PdCoO₂ thin films to that reported for PdCoO₂ single crystals with different terminations, our PdCoO₂ films have similar bulk state features to those of PdCoO₂ single crystals, but the surface states of our PdCoO₂ films are weaker or even disappear at E_F . Note that the alternating layers of Pd⁺ and CoO₂⁻ along the c -axis of PdCoO₂ are not charge neutral. Doping of the surface by electrons arising from electronic reconstruction (i.e., no structural surface reconstruction) would generate the surface states observed on bulk single crystals.

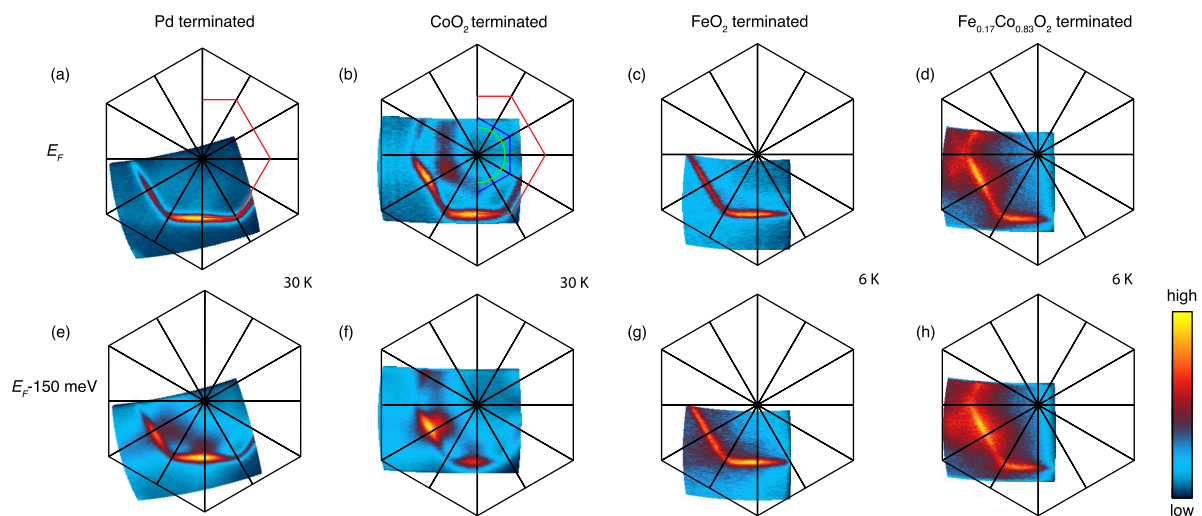


FIG. 2. Photoemission intensity maps at the Fermi energy ± 5 meV of (a) a Pd-terminated 18 nm thick PdCoO₂ film, (b) CoO₂-terminated 12 nm thick PdCoO₂ film, (c) a FeO₂-terminated 13 nm thick PdCoO₂ film, and (d) a Fe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂-terminated 13 nm thick PdCoO₂ thin film. The PdCoO₂ bulk state is illustrated by the incomplete red hexagon in (a) and (b). The surface states of CoO₂ are exhibited in the incomplete blue hexagon and green circle in (b). (e)–(h) The same as (a)–(d) but taken at 150 meV below the Fermi energy. (a), (b), (e), (f) were taken at 30 K; (c), (d), (g), (h) were taken at 6 K. All data were measured using a photon energy of 21.2 eV.

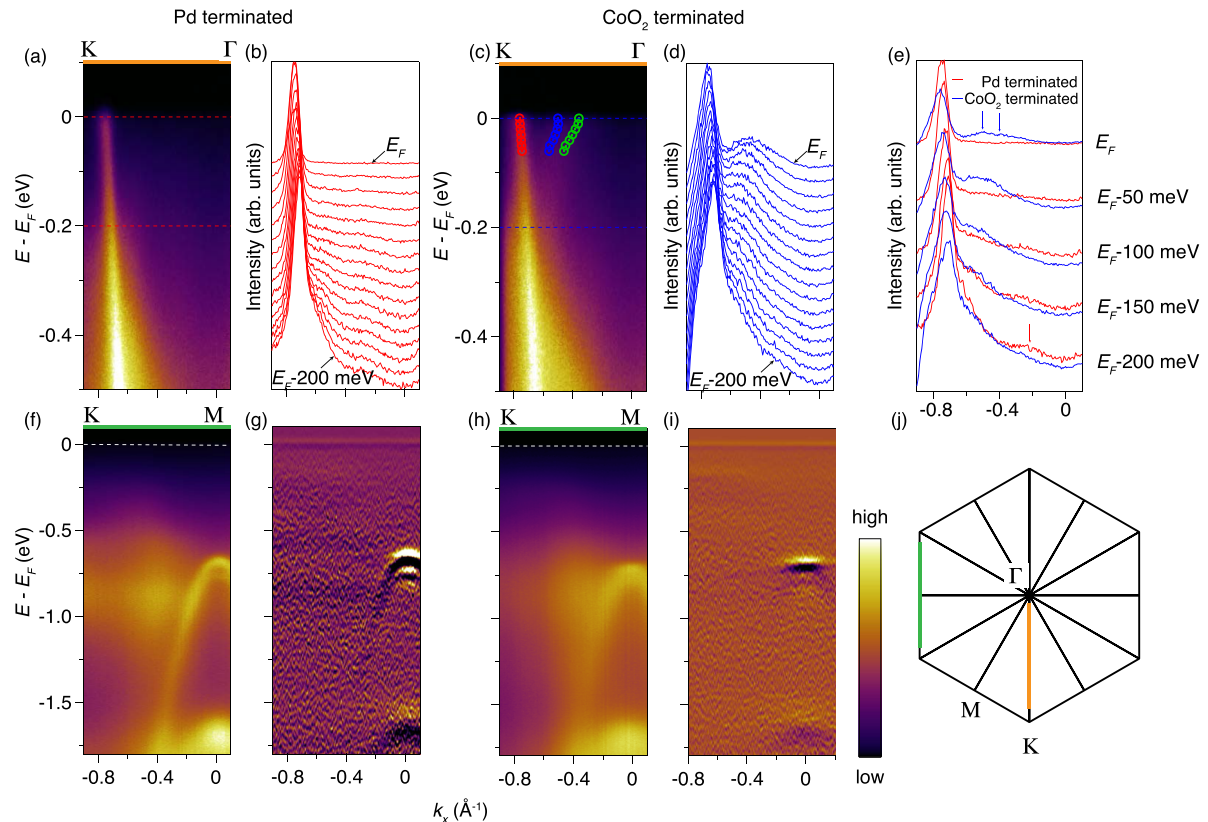


FIG. 3. Photoemission intensity distribution of Pd- and CoO_2 -terminated PdCoO_2 films measured at a photon energy of 21.2 eV at 30 K. (a). Photoemission intensity distributions across Γ -K along the orange cut illustrated in (j) of the Pd-terminated PdCoO_2 film in Fig. 2(a). (b). Momentum dispersion curves (MDCs) at E_F to $E_F - 0.2$ eV illustrated by the red dash lines in (a). (c) and (d) The same as (a) and (b), but taken from the CoO_2 -terminated PdCoO_2 film in Fig. 2(b). The red, blue, and green circles in (c) indicate fitted peak positions of the PdCoO_2 bulk state and surface states from the MDC near E_F . Fitting details are shown in Fig. S6 of the [supplementary material](#). (e). MDC comparison of the cut along the Γ -K direction at various energies. The blue arrows on the top indicate the extra peaks in the CoO_2 -terminated PdCoO_2 film. The red arrow below E_F indicates the weak palladium surface state peak in the Pd-terminated PdCoO_2 film. (f) Photoemission spectra along K-M-K of the Pd-terminated PdCoO_2 film and its second derivative with respect to energy (g). (h) and (i) The same as (f) and (g), but taken from the same CoO_2 -terminated PdCoO_2 film.

Ways in which the surfaces of our films differ from the single crystals provide routes to different or no surface states. For ARPES measurements of cleaved (001)-oriented PdCoO_2 single crystals, the polar surface exposed after cleaving may drive an electronic reconstruction of the surface or alternatively a mixture of termination regions, some of which are terminated by palladium and some of which are terminated by CoO_2 , to alleviate the polar surface charge. To synthesize PdCoO_2 films, we use shuttered MBE growth to provide a full layer of palladium or CoO_2 as the terminating surface. This difference in the surface reconstruction structure of epitaxial PdCoO_2 films might result in a different electronic reconstruction from that

of cleaved PdCoO_2 single crystals. We show the reconstruction of our films in low-energy electron diffraction (LEED) with different terminations in Fig. S4 of the [supplementary material](#). Additional differences exist between our PdCoO_2 films and PdCoO_2 single crystals. For example, PdCoO_2 films grown on (001) Al_2O_3 substrates are known to have a high density of 180° in-plane rotation twins.³⁸ Furthermore, our films might contain oxygen vacancies to neutralize the surface polar effect. These may also play a role in the differences observed in the surface states between PdCoO_2 single crystals and our epitaxial films. In particular, the palladium surface state is very reactive; it can be essentially destroyed by temperature cycling of ARPES measurements.⁴² Prior ARPES results of a PdCoO_2 film grown by PLD,³⁹ where the palladium termination is confirmed by the absence of a CoO_2 surface state in the electronic structure, does not show the PdCoO_2 bulk state. In contrast, our Pd-terminated films show a strong PdCoO_2 bulk state without a CoO_2 surface state, but are missing the palladium surface state. One possible reason for this is the difference in sample quality, particularly of the sample surface and the ability of MBE to control the termination

TABLE I. Fermi velocities of the bulk states of PdCoO_2 from fitting the ARPES spectra of PdCoO_2 films.

Fermi Velocity	Pd	CoO_2	FeO_2	$\text{Fe}_{0.17}\text{Co}_{0.83}\text{O}_2$
v_F (eV $\text{\AA}$)	4.72 ± 0.15	4.32 ± 0.25	4.69 ± 0.07	4.43 ± 0.09

of the PdCoO₂ film. We note that our MBE and ARPES measurements are made immediately following film growth and that the ultra-high vacuum connection between our MBE and ARPES systems enables us to investigate the electronic structure of the pristine growth surface.

With the goal of introducing magnetic order into the surface of PdCoO₂, we attempt to replace the cobalt in the CoO₂ surface termination with a different transition metal. The low spin state ($S = 0$) of the d^6 electron configuration of Co³⁺ in octahedral coordination underlies the lack of magnetic order in PdCoO₂. In contrast, PdCrO₂ is known to order antiferromagnetically at 37 K due to the unpaired spins ($S = 3/2$) arising from Cr³⁺ with its d^3 electron configuration.^{10,11} Considering what other transition metals are stable in the 3+ oxidation state under the highly oxidizing conditions needed to stabilize PdCoO₂ led us to attempt to substitute Fe³⁺ for Co³⁺. Other known iron-containing delafossites, such as the semiconductors AgFeO₂ and CuFeO₂ with bandgap larger than 1 eV, are known to exhibit magnetic phase transitions.^{43–46} Combining magnetic FeO₂ with conducting palladium might create a new metallic delafossite with interesting magnetic properties. Note that PdFeO₂ is neither a known compound nor has it been suggested to form in the delafossite structure by prior crystal chemistry based suggestions of delafossites^{47,48} nor first-principles suggestions for new delafossites.^{49,50}

Our attempts to terminate PdCoO₂ with a monolayer of FeO₂ were successful. To do so, we used epitaxial stabilization, a process in which lattice misfit strain energies and interfacial energies are exploited to favor a desired metastable phase over the equilibrium phase.^{51–56} ARPES measurements reveal the FeO₂-terminated PdCoO₂ film to have a similar bulk band to PdCoO₂, but there is no

extra surface state at the Fermi surface nor a reconstruction driven by AFM order like in PdCrO₂. In addition, we synthesized Pd(Co, Fe)O₂ films containing a solid solution of iron and cobalt in each CoO₂ layer of the Pd(Co,Fe)O₂ film. Electrical transport measurements on a series of 13 nm thick PdFe_xCo_{1–x}O₂ films with varying x ($0 < x \leq 0.2$) all show a drop in resistance at low temperature. Other than the dip shown in $d\rho/dT$ at low temperature, which is different from other known delafossites, no pronounced magnetic order is observed by magnetic susceptibility measurement down to 3 K. This behavior is in contrast to what is seen for PdCrO₂. Turning to the electronic structure of the PdFe_xCo_{1–x}O₂ films revealed by ARPES, a similar bulk band to PdCoO₂ is observed. No reconstruction appears at the Fermi surface nor is any temperature dependence of the electronic structure of PdFe_xCo_{1–x}O₂ seen.

We added a full monolayer of FeO₂ to a Pd-terminated PdCoO₂ film in an attempt to vary the termination of PdCoO₂ by introducing unpaired electrons (spin) from Fe³⁺. As ARPES is a surface sensitive measurement, if the unpaired electrons from Fe³⁺ with its d^5 configuration in the surface FeO₂ layer interact within the FeO₂ layer and with the adjacent palladium layer like the CrO₂ layer does in the AFM metal PdCrO₂,¹³ we expect to see distinct features arise in the Fermi surface of the FeO₂-terminated PdCoO₂ film. The well crystallized FeO₂ termination determined by RHEED is shown in Fig. 5(a). Unfortunately, no difference is observed in the ARPES other than the similar PdCoO₂ bulk state appearing at the Fermi surface in the FeO₂-terminated PdCoO₂ film, as shown in Figs. 2(c) and 2(g). No reconstruction of the Fermi surface was seen at low temperature. The bulk band was also free of any temperature-dependent feature when we analyzed the MDCs in the Γ -K direction shown in Fig. 4(e). Thus, our epitaxial FeO₂ layer on the surface of PdCoO₂

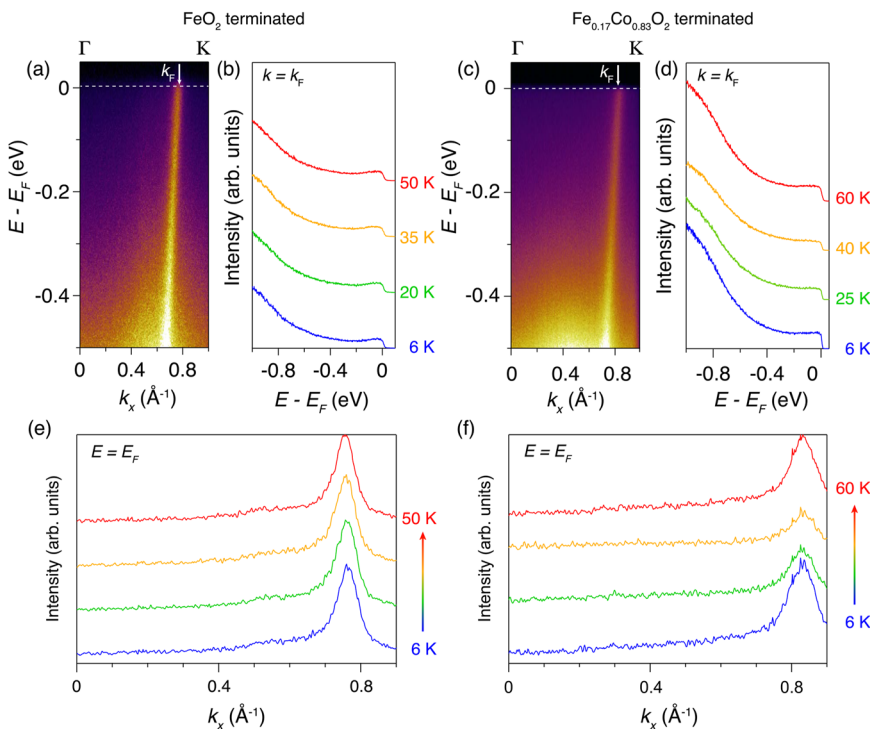


FIG. 4. Photoemission intensity distribution of FeO₂- and Fe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂-terminated PdCoO₂ films and their temperature dependence. (a) Photoemission intensity distributions across Γ -K along the orange cut illustrated in Fig. 3(j) of the FeO₂-terminated PdCoO₂ film in Fig. 2(c). (b) Temperature dependence of the energy dispersion curves (EDCs) of k_F illustrated in (a). (c) and (d) The same as (a) and (b), but are taken from the Fe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂-terminated PdCoO₂ film in Fig. 2(d). (e) Temperature dependence of the momentum dispersion curves (MDCs) at E_F for the FeO₂-terminated film. (f) The same as (e), but for the Fe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂-terminated PdCoO₂ film.

film does not appear to create a spin interaction with the underlying palladium layer. On the other hand, PdFeO_2 is a metastable phase and we can only stabilize one formula unit of PdFeO_2 . It is possible that the FeO_2 termination is insulating due to oxygen vacancies to neutralize its otherwise polar surface and preventing it from contributing to the electronic structure. The photoemission intensity data we collect include the film beneath the FeO_2 layer, which is PdCoO_2 itself.

In addition to replacing the entire CoO_2 monolayer with an FeO_2 monolayer, we also investigated the partial replacement of cobalt with iron hoping that the presence of iron in multiple layers of the $\text{Pd}(\text{Co},\text{Fe})\text{O}_2$ structure would enhance the chance of spin interaction between the Fe^{3+} and the adjacent palladium layer. In Figs. 2(d) and 2(h), one can observe that the band of the $\text{PdFe}_{0.17}\text{Co}_{0.83}\text{O}_2$ film still has similar features to the bulk state of PdCoO_2 , but with significant noise. Meanwhile, similar to the FeO_2 -terminated PdCoO_2 film, no temperature dependence of the bulk band of $\text{Pd}(\text{Co},\text{Fe})\text{O}_2$ is seen at E_F [see Figs. 4(c)–4(f)]. We compared the Fermi velocity (v_F) of the $\text{PdFe}_{0.17}\text{Co}_{0.83}\text{O}_2$ film with the other three different terminations of PdCoO_2 films in Table I, and within experimental error, they all have the same v_F value as that of PdCoO_2 single crystals.⁴¹ Thus, the partial replacement of cobalt by iron in each CoO_2 layer does not bring any ordered spin interaction between the $(\text{Co},\text{Fe})\text{O}_2$ layers nor do we observe any evidence of interaction with the electrons of $\text{Pd}(\text{Co},\text{Fe})\text{O}_2$, which contribute to the bulk band of PdCoO_2 . The noise observed in the Fermi surface of the $\text{PdFe}_{0.17}\text{Co}_{0.83}\text{O}_2$ film might come from the increased disorder accompanying the replacement of cobalt by iron. With the d^5 configuration of Fe^{3+} and the d^6 configuration of Co^{3+} , the $\text{Fe}_{0.17}\text{Co}_{0.83}\text{O}_2$ layer should, in principle, have a $d^{5.83}$ configuration

resulting in unfilled d electron bands. Nonetheless, no new conducting band is seen at E_F as shown in Fig. 4. On the other hand, a hole doping scenario in which 0.17 electrons move from the palladium layer to the $\text{Fe}_{0.17}\text{Co}_{0.83}\text{O}_2$ layer would leave the $\text{Fe}_{0.17}\text{Co}_{0.83}\text{O}_2$ layer in an insulating state. Such a scenario would require hole doping of 0.17 holes on the palladium layer. A comparison of the momentum at E_F (k_F) shown in Fig. S7 of the supplementary material, reveals no pronounced difference between the k_F s of a PdCoO_2 film and a $\text{Fe}_{0.17}\text{Co}_{0.83}\text{O}_2$ film.

Further characterization of the $\text{PdFe}_x\text{Co}_{1-x}\text{O}_2$ films is shown in Fig. 5. The maximum percentage of iron that we are able to incorporate into epitaxial $\text{PdFe}_x\text{Co}_{1-x}\text{O}_2$ films while retaining a single phase is $x = 20\%$. RHEED of a single-phase, 13 nm thick $\text{PdFe}_{0.2}\text{Co}_{0.8}\text{O}_2$ film is shown in Fig. 5(a). The fringes in the x-ray diffraction θ - 2θ scans of the $\text{PdFe}_x\text{Co}_{1-x}\text{O}_2$ films indicate the high structural quality of these films. Electrical transport measurement on the $\text{PdFe}_x\text{Co}_{1-x}\text{O}_2$ films is shown in Fig. 5(d). Note that the PdCoO_2 film shown in this comparison has a thickness of 13 nm, a quarter of the thickness of the PdCoO_2 film in Fig. 1(d). The upturn in resistivity of the pure PdCoO_2 film (0% Fe) seen in Fig. 5(d) below 20 K likely originates from localization in the ultrathin film. As more cobalt is replaced by iron, the absolute resistivity of the iron-doped PdCoO_2 film keeps increasing. Interestingly, instead of showing an upturn at low temperature like is seen in the pure PdCoO_2 film, the Fe-doped PdCoO_2 films show a drop at low temperature in electrical resistivity. Moreover, as the iron content (x) of the $\text{PdFe}_x\text{Co}_{1-x}\text{O}_2$ film is increased, a more pronounced drop in resistivity is seen. Derivatives of the resistivity as a function of temperature of these $\text{PdFe}_x\text{Co}_{1-x}\text{O}_2$ films are shown in Fig. 5(e). Strikingly, a dip at about 20 K is observed in the temperature derivatives of all iron-doped

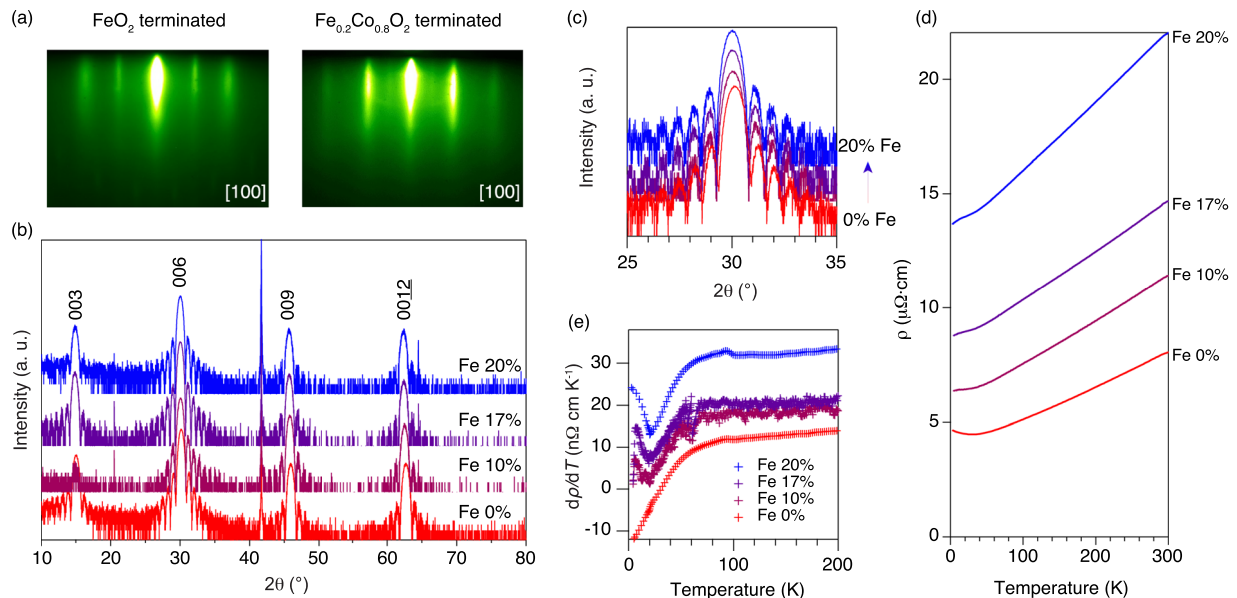


FIG. 5. Structural and electrical characterization of 13 nm thick $\text{PdFe}_x\text{Co}_{1-x}\text{O}_2$ thin films grown on (001) Al_2O_3 substrates. (a). *In-situ* RHEED pattern of a FeO_2 -terminated PdCoO_2 thin film and a $\text{PdFe}_{0.2}\text{Co}_{0.8}\text{O}_2$ thin film terminated with the $\text{Fe}_{0.2}\text{Co}_{0.8}\text{O}_2$ layer. (b). X-ray diffraction of a series of $\text{PdFe}_x\text{Co}_{1-x}\text{O}_2$ thin films with x ranging from 0 to 0.2. (c). Close-up of the 006 reflection in (b). (d). Resistivity vs temperature of the $\text{PdFe}_x\text{Co}_{1-x}\text{O}_2$ thin films shown in (b). (e). Derivative of the film resistivity with respect to temperature as a function of temperature of these same $\text{PdFe}_x\text{Co}_{1-x}\text{O}_2$ thin films. * = 006 peak of the (001) Al_2O_3 substrate.

PdCoO₂ films, which is opposite to the dp/dT in PdCrO₂ where a peak shows up at T_N driven by AFM order.¹⁰ The amplitude of the dip observed for PdFe_xCo_{1-x}O₂ increases with larger iron concentration.

A comparison of the temperature dependence of the Hall coefficient (R_H) between a PdCoO₂ film and a PdFe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂ film is shown in Fig. 6(a). The R_H measurements are consistent with electrons acting as the carriers in both PdCoO₂ and PdFe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂ films. The magnitude of R_H in the PdCoO₂ film is in agreement with prior reports from PdCoO₂ single crystals.⁵⁷ In contrast to Ref. 39, we do not observe an anomalous Hall effect in our PdCoO₂ films at low temperature. Hall resistivities of the PdCoO₂ film and the PdFe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂ film are shown in Fig. S9 of the [supplementary material](#). The PdFe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂ film exhibits a larger R_H than does the pure PdCoO₂ film, which could be a result of carriers being trapped by iron-induced structural defects. For the PdCoO₂ film, the temperature dependence of R_H at low temperature becomes flat while for the iron-doped PdCoO₂ film the R_H starts increasing below 20 K, which is the same temperature at which the change in dp/dT is observed in Fig. 5. One possibility for the observed resistivity anomaly at low temperature is that it is driven by iron disorder, since it is independent of the iron concentration. One scenario explaining why the R_H difference between of PdCoO₂ film and the PdFe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂ film does not reflect on the band structure is that the electrons from iron do not interact with the electrons from palladium. Instead, iron clusters just trap the electrons from the PdCoO₂. Within this scenario, it is possible that iron disorder clusters in PdFe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂ films are revealed by AFM in the [supplementary material](#) (Fig. S3). In Figs. 6(c) and 6(d), the magnetoresistance of the same PdCoO₂ film and PdFe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂ film shows distinct

magnetic dependences. The overall scale of magnetoresistance in the PdCoO₂ film is much smaller than that observed in PdCoO₂ single crystals.⁵⁸ The temperature dependence of the magnetoresistance of the PdFe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂ film shows weak-localization-like behavior, which may arise from the magnetic disorder resulting from the addition of iron. The temperature dependence of the magnetic susceptibility of the PdFe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂ thin film shows no transition or difference between the zero-field-cooled (ZFC) and field-cooled (FC) curves as shown in the [supplementary material](#) (Fig. S10). The observed behavior is in contrast to the splitting that is expected when AFM order is observed, such as in PdCrO₂.¹¹ Thus, the replacement of cobalt by iron does not appear to result in any spin order. Instead, only signs of magnetic disorder are seen.

In summary, we have synthesized high-quality PdCoO₂ films by MBE and harnessed the atomic layer control afforded by MBE to tune the termination of these films to study the resulting electronic structure by ARPES. On comparing the Pd-terminated and CoO₂-terminated PdCoO₂ films with those of PdCoO₂ single crystals, though the resistivity of our PdCoO₂ films are far higher than that of single crystals at low temperature, we find the PdCoO₂ bulk states in our films show features similar to those of PdCoO₂ single crystals, while the palladium surface state and CoO₂ surface state are not as strong as those of the PdCoO₂ single crystals. This difference might arise due to different electronic reconstructions. We also studied FeO₂-terminated PdCoO₂ films and find that the only remaining PdCoO₂ bulk state in the electronic structure is similar to that of PdCoO₂. In addition, we have successfully synthesized PdFe_xCo_{1-x}O₂ films. From the electric transport measurements, the addition of iron further increases the resistivity of PdCoO₂ films at room temperature. Meanwhile, we see different behavior at low

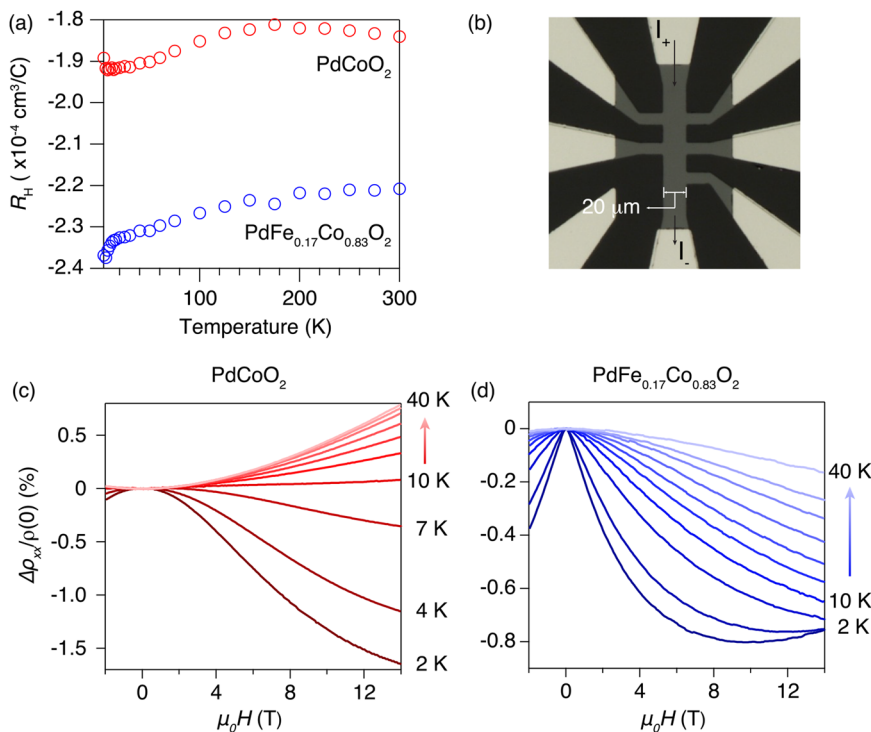


FIG. 6. (a) Hall coefficient of a 13.5 nm thick PdCoO₂ film and a 13.1 nm thick PdFe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂ film. (b) Geometry of the Hall bar. The dimension of the channel is 20 μm . (c) and (d) $\Delta\rho/\rho(0)$ vs magnetic field of the same PdCoO₂ and the PdFe_{0.17}Co_{0.83}O₂ films, respectively.

temperature compared to pure PdCoO_2 films, but no magnetic ordering akin to what happens in PdCrO_2 is seen in our $\text{PdFe}_x\text{Co}_{1-x}\text{O}_2$ films. The electronic structure of a $\text{PdFe}_{0.17}\text{Co}_{0.83}\text{O}_2$ film shows a bulk state similar to that seen in pure PdCoO_2 films. Although we do not induce new spin order in delafossite films by replacing cobalt by iron in $\text{PdFe}_x\text{Co}_{1-x}\text{O}_2$ with x up to 0.2 or a pure FeO_2 terminating monolayer, our work invites further exploration of ways in which the electronic structure of delafossites can be perturbed by exploiting the ability of MBE to control atomic layering in combination with ARPES to measure its impact.

See the [supplementary material](#) for the growth methods of the $\text{PdFe}_x\text{Co}_{1-x}\text{O}_2$ ($0 \leq x \leq 0.2$) films and additional characterization by AFM, LEED, ARPES, and XPS, as well as the results of Hall effect and magnetization measurements.

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AUTHOR DECLARATIONS

Conflict of Interest

The authors have no conflicts to disclose.

Author Contributions

Qi Song: Conceptualization (equal); Data curation (equal); Formal analysis (equal); Writing – original draft (equal). **Brendan D. Faeth:** Data curation (supporting). **Hanjong Paik:** Data curation (supporting). **Phil D. C. King:** Writing – review & editing (supporting). **Kyle M. Shen:** Resources (equal). **Darrell G. Schlom:** Conceptualization (equal); Data curation (supporting); Funding acquisition (lead); Project administration (equal); Resources (equal); Writing – review & editing (equal). **Jiaxin Sun:** Data curation (equal); Writing – review & editing (supporting). **Christopher T. Parzyck:** Formal analysis (supporting); Writing – review & editing (equal). **Ludi Miao:** Data curation (equal); Writing – review & editing (supporting). **Qing Xu:** Data curation (supporting). **Felix V.E. Hensling:**

Data curation (supporting). **Matthew R. Barone:** Data curation (supporting); Formal analysis (supporting); Writing – review & editing (supporting). **Cheng Hu:** Data curation (supporting). **Jinkwon Kim:** Data curation (supporting).

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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