Main Story Video

Theory behind cold fusion

Cold fusion makes a comeback

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By Ed Yeates

SALT LAKE CITY -- That controversial table-top experiment dubbed cold fusion simply won't die. In fact, it isn't even fading away.

This week, international scientists are presenting their latest evidence that appears to be pumping new life into this questionable source of clean energy.

Twenty years ago, the international press gathered at the University of Utah for an experiment that was supposed to revolutionize the way we produce energy.

"Basically, we have established a sustained nuclear fusion reaction by means which are considerably simpler than conventional techniques," Dr. Stanley Pons, a university chemist, explained in 1989.

Using a palladium electrode inside a glass tube, Drs. Stanley Pons and Martin Fleishmann believed they had found a new way to produce low-energy nuclear reaction -- an environmentally clean reaction that could produce an unlimited source of energy.

"We have tried really hard to prove ourselves wrong all the way down the line," Fleischmann told reporters.

But in the weeks that followed, Fleishmann's words would be brutally challenged. The scientific community came down hard. Physicists could find no signatures of enough neutrons to prove a nuclear reaction. Most scientists called the experiment a fiasco.

But now, 20 years later, at the American Chemical Society meeting in Salt Lake, international scientists say fiasco it was not! In fact, they're presenting their own new evidence.

"Taking all the data together, we have compelling evidence that nuclear reactions are stimulated by an electro-chemical process," explained Dr. Pamela Moiser-Boss, of the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center-Pacific.

Steve Krivit, editor of New Energy Times, said, "It was predicted that this would die, that this field would die in weeks, within months of its announcement at the University of Utah. It hasn't."

Physicists and other researchers remain skeptical, but these scientists say: look again. This may not fit conventional wisdom or even traditional theories. It might not even be cold fusion, but this anomaly in a jar deserves more mainstream attention, more funding and more research, now more than ever.

Experiments are now being published in numerous journals. The Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center Pacific in San Diego has had its research in 20 peer-review journals, with two more accepted for publication later this year.

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History of Cold Fusion
It was March 1989 when University of Utah professor Stanley Pons and his British partner Martin Fleishmann announced a breakthrough with cold fusion.

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Do you believe cold fusion will someday be a real source of energy?

1. Yes
2. No