conditions. The surrounding metal atoms produce a regular array that is able to support waves of various kinds. These waves can be based on vibration of the atoms (phonons), vibration of the electrons, standing waves of electromagnetic energy, or a wave resulting from conversion of the deuterium nuclei to a wave. In addition, the high density of electrons can neutralize some of the positive charge on the deuterium nuclei allowing a process called tunneling, i.e.. allowing passage through the barrier rather than over it. The mechanism of this neutralization process is proposed to involve a novel coherent wave structure that can occur between electrons under certain conditions. All of these wave processes have been observed in the past under various conventional conditions, but applying them to the cold fusion phenomenon has been a subject of debate and general rejection.

While the debate based on wave action has been underway, people have proposed other mechanisms. These include the presence of neutrons within the lattice. Normally, neutrons are unstable outside of the nucleus, decomposing into a proton, an electron, and a neutrino. Presumably, this reaction can be reversed so that neutrons might be created in a lattice containing many free electrons and protons. Having no charge, the neutron could then interact with various atoms in the lattice to produce energy. These neutrons might also be hidden in the lattice by being attached to other nuclei in a stabilized form, to be released when conditions were right. Several particles normally not detected in nature also have been proposed to trigger fusion and other nuclear reactions.

While search for a suitable mechanism has been underway, an understanding of the environment that triggers the mechanism has been sought, the so-called nuclear-active-environment. Initially, this environment was thought to exist in the bulk of the palladium cathode used in the Pons-Fleischmann method to produce cold fusion. It is now agreed that the nuclear reactions only occur in the surface region. Recent arguments suggest that this surface layer does not even require palladium for it to be nuclear-active. Nuclear reactions have now been produced in a variety of materials using many methods. The only common feature found in all of these methods is the presence of nano-sized particles of material on the active surface. If this observation is correct, four conditions seem required to produce the nuclear reactions. First, the particle must have a critical small size; second, it must contain a critical concentration of deuterium or hydrogen; third, it must be constructed of certain atoms; and fourth, it must be exposed to a source of energy. This energy can take the form of a sufficiently high temperature, a significant high flux of hydrogen through the particle, application of energetic electrons or charged particles, or application of laser light of the proper frequency. Until, the importance of these factors is understood, the effect will continue to be difficult to replicate.

Technical Introduction to LENR-CANR

Edmund Storms

At low energies, the Coulomb barrier prevents nuclei from coming together and fusing to form a single nucleus. To initiate a nuclear reaction, several methods are used. Nuclear reactions are normally initiated by pushing two atoms together with enough force to overcome the Coulomb barrier by brute force, or by using neutrons which penetrate the nuclei without seeing a barrier. (Neutrons have no electrical charge, so the Coulomb barrier does not stop them.) These forces are normally provided by high-temperature plasma or by accelerating ions to high energies. In contrast, LENR describes the mechanism and conditions that cause a variety of nuclear reactions to take place with relatively low activation energy. These unique conditions reduce the need for excessive energy. The normal method forces the nuclei together, while the new method encourages them to come together. The challenge has been to understand the unique characteristics of the necessary solid structure such that this structure could be generated at will.

Because the proposed method is unique, at odds with current nuclear theory, and is still difficult to reproduce, support for studies in many countries, but not all, has been very limited. Nevertheless, considerable information has accumulated over the last 13 years since Profs. Stanley Pons and Martin Fleischmann showed the world the possibilities inherent in this phenomenon. Much understanding is buried in conference proceedings and reports that are not available to a serious student. This information will, as time permits, be made available on this site. Students of the subject are also encouraged to use this site to interact with other people in the field and provide objective critiques of the work published here.

PHENOMENA DISCUSSED IN SOME OF THE PAPERS

At least 10 ways have been demonstrated to produce anomalous heat and/or anomalous elemental synthesis. A few of these methods will be described here. For course, not all of the claims are worthy of belief nor are they accepted by many people. Nevertheless, the claims will be described without qualifications in order to provide the reader with the latest understanding.

The most studied method involves the use of an electrolytic cell containing a LiOD electrolyte and a palladium cathode. Current passing through such a cell generates D+ ions at the cathode, with a very high effective pressure. These ions enter the palladium and, if all conditions are correct, join in a fusion reaction that produces He-4. Initially palladium wire and plate were used, but these were found to form microcracks, which allowed the required high concentration of deuterium to escape. Later work shows that the actual nuclear reaction occurs on the surface within a very thin layer of deposited impurities. Therefore, control of this impurity layer is very important, but rather difficult. The use of palladium is also not important because gold and platinum appear to be better metals on which to deposit the impurity layer. This method is found, on rare occasions, to generate tritium within the electrolyte and transmutation products on the cathode surface. Different nuclear reactions are seen when light water (H_2O) is used instead of D_2O, although the amount of anomalous energy is less when H_2O is used. These observations have been duplicated hundreds of times in dozens of laboratories.

Application of deuterium gas to finely divided palladium, and perhaps other metals, has been found to generate anomalous energy along with helium-4. Both palladium-black as well as palladium deposited as nanocrystals on carbon have shown similar anomalous behavior. In both cases the material must be suitably purified. Palladium deposited on carbon can and must be heated to above 200/260°C for the effect to be seen. When deuterium is caused to diffuse through a palladium membrane on which is deposited a thin layer of various compounds, isotopes that were not previously present are generated with isotopic ratios unlike those occurring naturally.

A plasma discharge under H_2O or D_2O between various materials generates many elements that were not previously present. When the electrodes are carbon and the plasma is formed in H_2O, the main anomalous element is iron. This experiment is relatively easy to duplicate.

Several complex oxides, including several superconductors, can dissolve D_2 when heated. When a potential is applied across a sheet of such material, the D+ ions are caused to move and anomalous heat is generated.

If deuterium ions, having a modest energy, are caused to bombard various metals, tritium as well as other elements not previously present are generated. These ions can be generated in a pulsed plasma or as a beam.

When water, either light or heavy, is subjected to intense acoustic waves, collapse of the generated bubbles on the surrounding solid walls can generate nuclear reactions. This process is different from the fusion reaction claimed to occur within a bubble just before it disappears within the liquid because neutrons are not produced in the former case, but are produced in the latter case. This method has been applied to various metals in heavy water using an acoustic transducer and in light water using a rotating vane which generates similar acoustic waves...

HOW TO EXPLAIN THE CLAIMS

A major problem in deciding which model might be correct is the absence of any direct information about the nature of the nuclear-active-environment. At this time, two important features seem to be important, the size of the nanodomain in which the reactions occur and the presence of a deuterium flux through this domain. The domain can apparently be made of any material in which hydrogen or deuterium can dissolve. Until the nature of the nuclear-active-state (NAS) is known, no theory will properly explain the effect and replication of the claims will remain difficult.

When fusion is initiated using conventional methods, significant tritium and neutrons are produced. In addition, when other elements are generated, they tend to be radioactive. This is in direct contrast to the experience using low energy methods. These products are almost completely absent and, instead, helium-4 is produced. When radiation is detected, it has a very low energy. This contrasting behavior, as well as the amount of anomalous energy, has made the claims hard to explain using conventional models. This difficulty has been amplified by a failure of many skeptics to recognize the contrasting effect of the environment, a plasma being used in the older studies and a solid lattice of periodic atoms being present as the new environment.

Over 500 models and their variations have been proposed, some of which are very novel and some are variations on conventional ideas. Most models attempt to explain the nuclear reaction once the required environment has been created, without addressing what that unique environment might be like. These models involve conversion of a proton (deuteron) to a neutron (dineutron), creation of an electron structure that is able to neutralize the barrier, conversion of deuterium to a wave which interacts without charge, and the presence of otherwise overlooked neutrons and/or novel particles. Many of the models will have to be abandoned or seriously modified once the nature of the nuclear active environment is understood.