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### Cold Fusion: A Cold Hoax

On March 23, 1989, two scientists, Stanley Pons and Martin Fleischmann, from the University of Utah claimed that they had created excess heat in an experiment that they believed was due to a nuclear reaction. After their announcement, Pons and Fleischmann requested that the US Department of Energy fund their project to explore this new discovery, and the department did fund their research. Cold Fusion refers to the process called nuclear fusion, which is the method of smashing atoms together at high speeds and temperatures to create new elements. But this process requires huge amounts of energy and a huge apparatus, because, for example, the temperature required to achieve nuclear fusion is millions of degrees Celsius. Thus, Cold Fusion claimed to achieve this phenomenon at room temperature; it was cold relative to the usual temperature. After experimenting, Pons and Fleischmann still said that they created excess heat in their experiments. They reported their findings to the press, and they received high praise initially from the American Chemical Society. But later, when the American Physical Society tried to duplicate the experiment, it failed several times. When asked how they did it, Pons and Fleischmann only stated that it was a “secret”. After more failed attempts, the scientific community was infuriated, and dismissed their claim to Cold Fusion for lack of evidence and poor duplications of the experiment. So today the reason for their false claim is still a mystery.