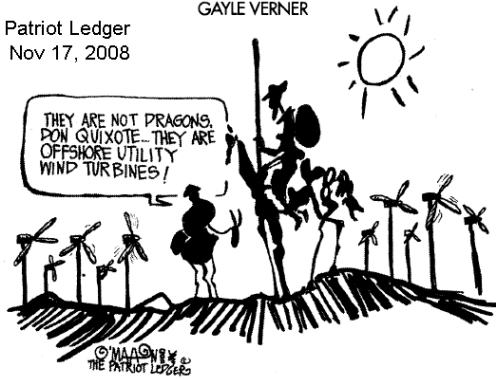


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## Cold fusion: And the heat goes on

**T**here isn't a day that goes by where we don't hear the national angst over alternative energy; it's predominately either wind or solar, end of discussion.

What about the other energy – from sea water?

We used to call it cold fusion, but it's been so unfairly disparaged over the years that you have to be careful who you tell.

Simply put, it's energy from fusing the heavy hydrogen atoms found in the ocean with a piece of precious metal and a jolt of electricity; ultimately, you get more heat out than you put in.

The result?

Another clean energy source – at room temperature.

One day this kind of energy-from-water could substitute for all the Earth's oil reserves.

The harnessing and perfecting of this process continues to this day, making way for higher-efficient water boilers, alternative energy systems for cars and even potable water.

In 1989, Stanley Pons and Martin Fleischmann, two electrochemists from Utah and England, discovered it, publicizing a primitive version of the process.

At first, the pair received thunderous applause.

Problem was, few could reproduce it. For a variety of reasons, including pending patents, they released partial details of their experiments to the world. It was like an incomplete recipe for a cake – not to mention a recipe for disaster when the media turned on them.

It "simply can't exist," detractors told the world, claiming it flies in the face of conventional physics where fusion supposedly can only occur in the multi-million degree sun.

The "fraud" word circulated, unfairly, sticking like gum to an old shoe.

Bottom line? The scientists rolled up their sleeves.

Growing vigilant over accuracy

and slaving over their experiments, the cold fusioners defended both the scientific process and their work to mob-like, powerful, reactionary scientists who just didn't "get it."

Early in August, I attended the International Conference on Cold Fusion-14 in Washington, D.C.

More than 180 attended, including a number of prestigious scientists from the most highly acclaimed laboratories around the world.

Not too shabby for a technology that "doesn't exist."

So far, these scientists have designed devices and systems to better measure and control workable reactions.

They have shown higher, robust levels of power than ever, ultra clean, non-radioactive energy production with no CO<sub>2</sub> generation.

And there have been thousands of publications showing positive results, from some of the finest scientific minds on the planet.

Why do these people remain resilient? Because they know something's there.

Trying to decrease

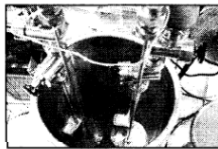
everyone's carbon footprint isn't easy, providing you believe in the concept. Yet, most still struggle financially, receiving no, or very little, to conduct their craft.

Undeterred, they convert their garages and eke out makeshift labs within labs, and use closet-like space in corners of academic institutions as long as the administrators aren't reminded of their existence.

Cold fusion is real and respectable and continues to be examined by respectable people who have steadfastly advanced the technology.

Given its progress, it deserves to be included in the national energy debate.

*Gayle Verner works in cold fusion research and publishing. A former People magazine correspondent, she lives in Wellesley.*



■ In 1989, Stanley Pons and Martin Fleischmann introduced the idea of "cold fusion."