Lindley, D., *The Embarrassment of Cold Fusion.* Nature (London), 1990. **344**: p. 375.

This paper is available from:

http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v344/n6265/pdf/344375a0.pdf

A copy is also available here:

http://newenergytimes.com/v2/inthenews/1990/Nature-Embarassment.shtml

Here are some selected quotes from the paper:

The variable and transient claims of experimental evidence for cold fusion made a moving target which attracted too much enthusiasm and too little derision.

THOSE readers who consider that this journal has published too much on 'cold fusion' should be grateful for what they have been spared. . . .

The tidy summary of their paper is therefore that during a five-week period which came some time after the press announcement of Pons and Fleischmann on 23 March last year, cold fusion cells which may or may not have been producing excess heat certainly produced no anomalous nuclear emissions. . . .

Pons and Fleischmann must be given credit for declaring from the outset that the amount of excess heat they saw was too great, by orders of magnitude, to be consistent even with the levels of nuclear emission that they described in their preliminary note. . . .

. . . [W]hat was reprehensible a year ago has now become absurd.

Still there are whispers of a hundred-page manuscript, replete with facts and figures, which the world will soon see. Most of the world, sadly for Pons and Fleischmann, is unlikely to care, except perhaps out of historical curiosity and a desire that the tale be neatly ended. . . .

All cold fusion theories put forward so far can be demolished one way or another, but it takes some effort. Although cold fusion was, in terms of 'ordinary' physics, absurd, it was not obviously so; it contravened no fundamental laws of nature. This made it easy for advocates of cold fusion to insinuate that some arcane but genuine phenomenon of quantummechanical solid-state physics might provide a credible theoretical foundation, and likewise made it impossible for sceptical physicists to give any clear and general proof that cold fusion could not work; all they could do was rebut one daft idea after another, and even that required a good deal of patient explanation. . . .

. . . Perhaps science has become too polite. Lord Kelvin dismissed the whole of geology because his calculations proved that the Sun could be no more than a few million years old; Ernest Rutherford is still remembered for his declaration that talk of practical atomic energy was "moonshine" - but the stature of neither man has been noticeably diminished by their errors,

which were as magnificent as their achievements. Kelvin and Rutherford had a common-sense confidence in the robustness of their judgements which the critics of cold fusion conspicuously lacked. Would a measure of unrestrained mockery, even a little unqualified vituperation, have speeded cold fusion's demise?