

Survival-mediated capture and fusion cross sections for heavy-element synthesis

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The cross section for producing a heavy evaporation residue σ_{EVR} in a fusion reaction can be written as a product of three nonseparable factors, i.e., the capture cross section, the fusion probability P_{CN} , and the survival probability W_{sur} . Each of these factors is dependent on the spin. However, one must remember that the W_{sur} term is zero or very small for higher spin values, thus effectively limiting the capture and fusion terms. For a series of ~ 287 reactions leading to heavy evaporation residues with $Z_{\text{CN}} \leq 110$, we point out the implications of this fact for capture cross sections for heavy element formation reactions. From a comparison of calculated and measured evaporation residue cross sections we deduce values of the fusion probability P_{CN} for some of these reactions.

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I. INTRODUCTION

As shown in Eq. (1), the cross section for producing a heavy evaporation residue in a complete fusion reaction can be written as a nonseparable product of three factors, which express the capture cross section, the fusion probability, and the survival probability:

$$\sigma_{\text{EVR}}(E) = \frac{\pi h^2}{2\mu E} \sum_{\ell=0}^{\infty} (2\ell + 1) T(E, \ell) P_{\text{CN}}(E, \ell) W_{\text{sur}}(E, \ell). \quad (1)$$

One expects the survival probability to depend sensitively on the spin ℓ with low or zero fission barriers for higher ℓ values. By this we mean that many partial waves result in capture, but the higher partial waves result in non-surviving events. Thus, in the product of terms in Eq. (1), only those terms with a high survival rate, i.e., low spin, are relevant. We show, in Fig. 1, the calculated spin dependence of the capture cross section for the reaction of ${}^3\text{He} + {}^{233}\text{U}$ and the calculated spin dependence of the evaporation residue cross section for the $5n$ channel [1,2]. The surviving spins are restricted due to angular momentum effects and thus the spin distributions in the capture cross sections are significantly different from those of the evaporation residues.

In this paper, we examine the impact of the restrictions on spin placed by the survival probabilities upon the effective capture and fusion cross sections for heavy-element formation. By the term “effective” capture cross section, we mean the capture events resulting in non-zero survival probabilities. We do this in the context of a compilation of a large number of evaporation residue cross sections for heavy-element formation. By using a simple formulation of the spin dependence of the capture cross sections and modern calculations of the survival probability of heavy evaporation residues, we attempt to deduce the impact of this spin restriction upon the synthesis of heavy nuclei. A preliminary account of this work has been presented elsewhere [2]. In Ref. [2], we introduced the concept of survival-mediated

cross sections and showed some examples of these effects. In this work, we show the full details of the calculations and draw some new conclusions, regarding P_{CN} , from the calculations.

II. METHODOLOGY

As explained in Ref. [2], the formalism for calculating the survival, against fission, of a highly excited nucleus is relatively well understood [3]. One starts with a single particle model [4] of the level density in which one allows the level density parameter to be a function of the excitation energy. Masses and shell corrections are taken from [5]. The deformation dependent collective enhancement of the level density is taken from [6]. The decay widths for decay by neutron, charged particle, and γ -emission are calculated with standard formulas. Corrections for Kramers effects [7] are made to the fission widths. The fission barrier heights are calculated using liquid drop barriers and excitation energy dependent shell corrections.

The uncertainties in these calculations of W_{sur} are discussed in Refs. [2,8,9]. Fission barrier heights are known to within 0.5–1.0 MeV [9]. A change of fission barrier height by 1 MeV in each neutron evaporation step can cause an order of magnitude uncertainty in the $4n$ channel. To minimize sensitivity to this factor in this paper, we have restricted our attention to nuclei with $Z \leq 110$, where the barrier heights are better known. In the same vein, we have not treated reactions where the compound nucleus emits six or more neutrons.

As explained in Ref. [2], we began with the compilation of Düllmann of evaluated evaporation residue cross sections for reactions that produce heavy nuclei [10]. This compilation involves a large number of reactions producing nuclei from $Z = 80$ to $Z = 122$, although we have limited our calculations to cases where $Z_{\text{CN}} \leq 110$ and the number of emitted neutrons is five or fewer. We have only treated those cases where the experimental data are published in the open refereed literature. For each reaction (projectile, target, and beam energy) we

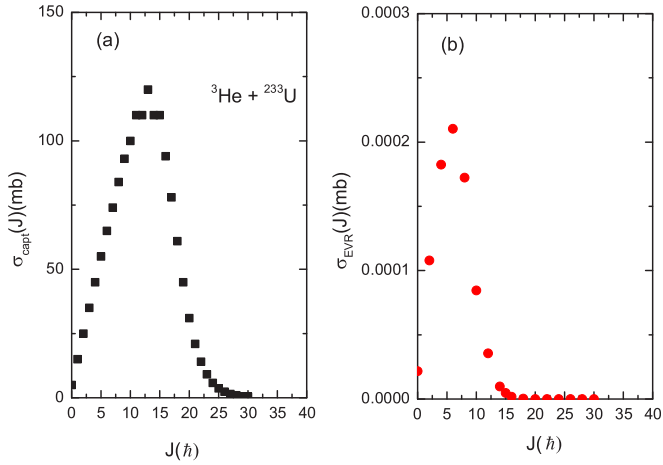


FIG. 1. Spin dependence of the (a) calculated capture cross section and (b) evaporation residue formation cross section for ${}^3\text{He} + {}^{233}\text{U}$ (from [1,2]).

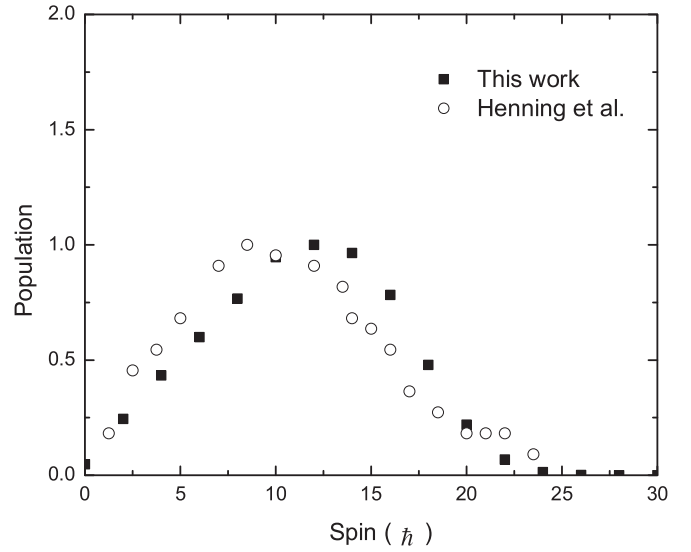


FIG. 2. Spin dependence of calculated and measured evaporation residue formation cross sections for the ${}^{176}\text{Yb}({}^{48}\text{Ca}, 4n){}^{220}\text{Th}$ reaction (from [2]).

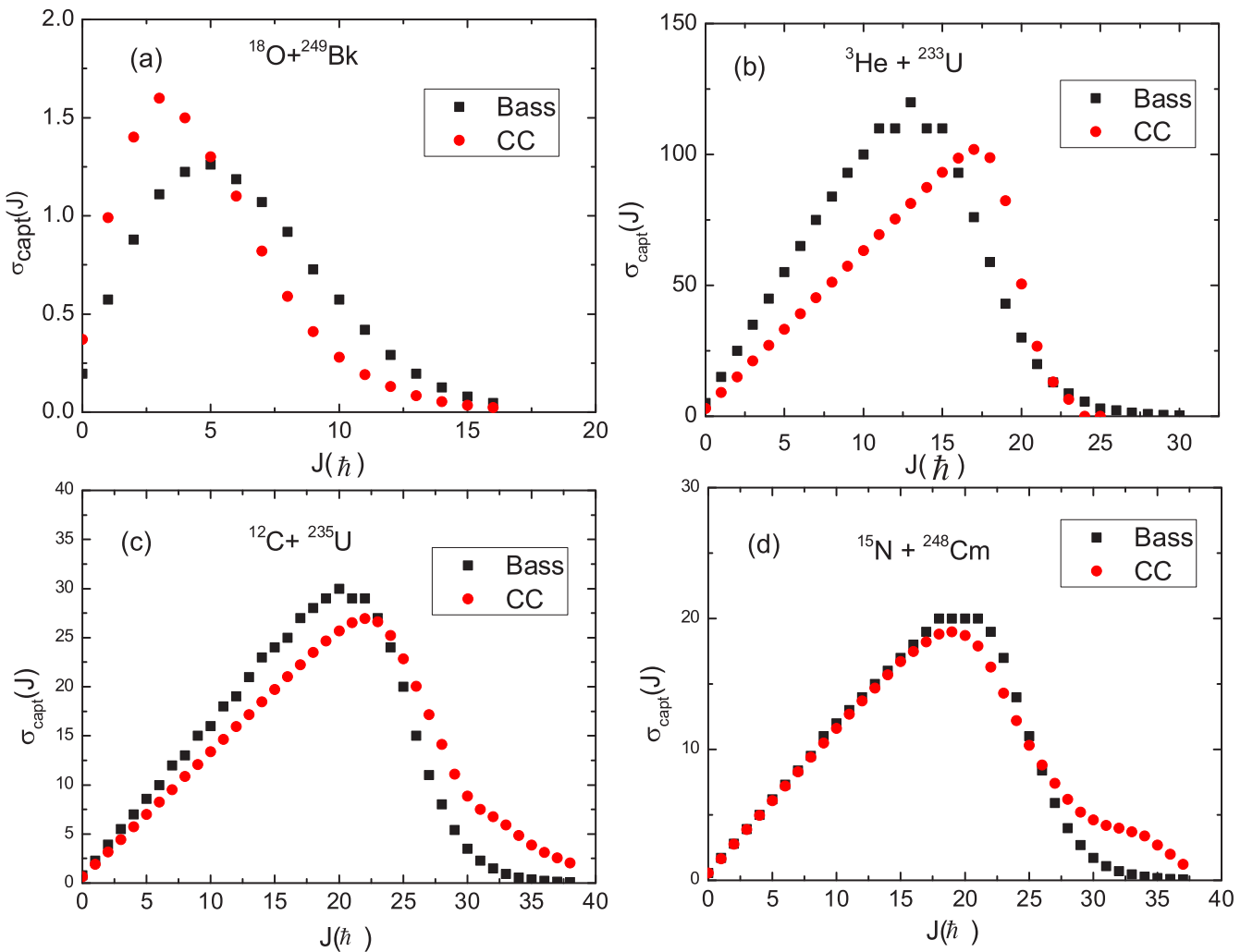


FIG. 3. A comparison of the calculated capture product spin distributions using the Bass model and coupled channels (CC) calculations for a representative set of reactions: (a) 91 MeV ${}^{18}\text{O} + {}^{249}\text{Bk}$, (b) 44.7 MeV ${}^3\text{He} + {}^{233}\text{U}$, (c) 71 MeV ${}^{12}\text{C} + {}^{235}\text{U}$, and (d) 88 MeV ${}^{15}\text{N} + {}^{248}\text{Cm}$.

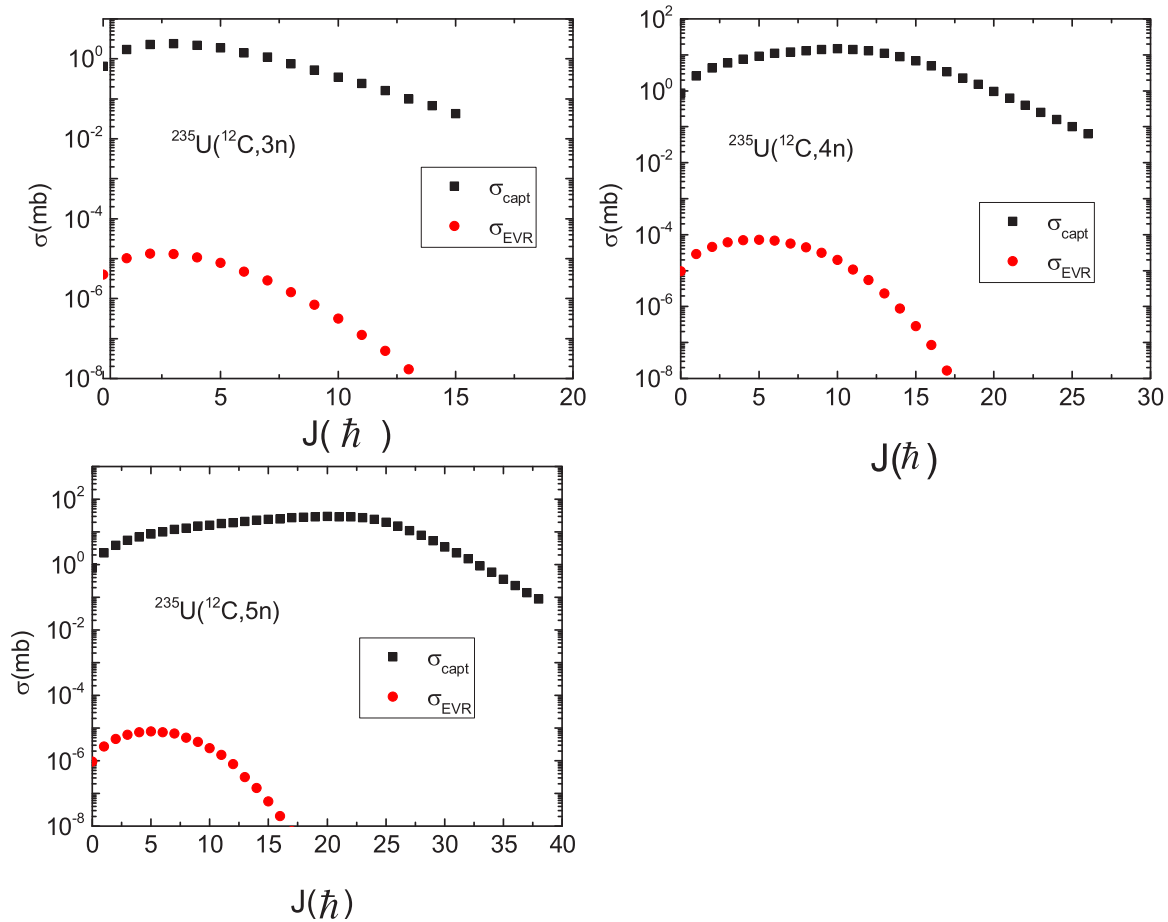


FIG. 4. Spin dependence of calculated capture and evaporation residue cross sections for the $^{235}\text{U}(^{12}\text{C}, 3n-5n)$ reactions [18].

calculate the spin dependent capture cross sections using the Bass model [11,12]. The Bass model is a semi-empirical model of fusion that uses an empirical nucleus-nucleus potential derived from an analysis of a wide range of experimental fusion cross sections. It should be applicable over a wide range of system masses and energies and offers a simple method of calculating a large number of cross sections. The predictive power of this model is expected for most systems to be comparable to experimental accuracy. At low energies, at or below the interaction barrier, the transmission probability is calculated using a parabolic potential [13] with a curvature of $\hbar\omega$ of 3 MeV. For some cases, this procedure fails and a full coupled channels calculation is employed to get the capture cross section and its spin dependence [3,14,15]. The input parameters for these calculations are taken from [3]. The survival probability is calculated using the formalism(s) of [3] for each value of the angular momentum, ℓ . If we assume P_{CN} is 1, then, according to Eq. (1), we can estimate the evaporation residue formation cross section. If the calculated evaporation residue cross section is significantly greater than the measured cross section for this reaction, we have evidence that P_{CN} is less than 1.

To check the validity of this procedure, we calculated the evaporation residue (EVR) spin distribution for the reaction $^{176}\text{Yb}(^{48}\text{Ca}, 4n)^{220}\text{Th}$ and compared it to the measured spin distribution of Henning *et al.* [16] (Fig. 2) for the same

reaction [2]. The measured and calculated spin distributions for this reaction are in general agreement. A similar agreement between calculated and measured spin distributions for the $^{208}\text{Pb}(^{48}\text{Ca}, 2n)^{254}\text{No}$ reaction was found in Ref. [6] using a calculation model similar to that employed in this work. Further measurements of the spin distributions for the survivors of fusion reactions leading to heavy nuclei would be useful in this regard.

Sensitivity of calculations to the choice of calculation models

We have chosen the Bass model [12] to calculate most of the capture cross sections in this work because of the simplicity of the model and its established [12] predictive power. What if we had used the computationally more complex coupled channels method to do these calculations? We show, in Fig. 3, a comparison of the calculated spin distributions of the capture products using the Bass model and coupled channels calculations for a representative set of reactions. While there are differences in the calculated spin distributions using the two methods, there are no qualitative differences.

The issue of the uncertainties in the calculated spin distributions of the survivors of the fission-particle emission competition is more complex [9]. From the point of view of this work, we show, in Fig. 2, the reasonable agreement between the calculated and measured spin distributions for a known case of a heavy-element synthesis reaction. A similar result was found

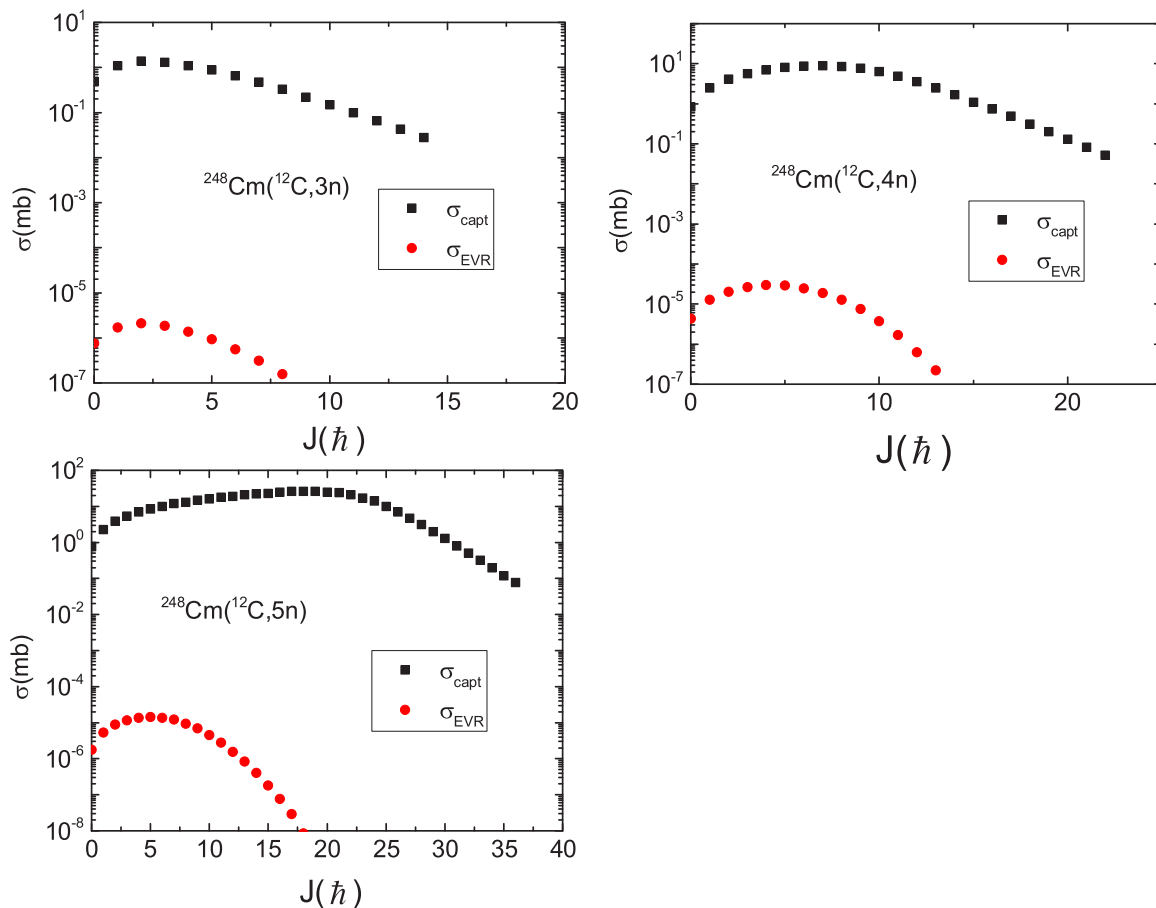


FIG. 5. Spin dependence of calculated capture and evaporation residue cross sections for the $^{248}\text{Cm}(^{12}\text{C}, 3n-5n)$ reactions [19].

for the $^{48}\text{Ca} + ^{208}\text{Pb}$ reaction [6]. Loveland [9] made a detailed examination of the strengths and weaknesses of models such as [3] and has placed limits on how well these models work.

III. RESULTS

For each reaction studied, we tabulated the A and Z of the projectile, the target nucleus and the compound nucleus, and the bombarding energy corresponding to the peak of the excitation function. We also tabulated the calculated mean spin for the capture process and the mean spin of the calculated evaporation residues, and the measured evaporation residue cross section. These tables are found in the Supplemental Material [17].

IV. DISCUSSION

As stated above, we calculated the spin dependent capture cross sections and the spin dependent evaporation residue cross sections for 287 reactions. Statistical summaries of these calculations can be found in the Supplemental Material. In this section, we discuss these calculational results, sorting them by $Z_1 Z_2$ product.

A. $Z_1 Z_2 \leq 750$

There are 68 cases where $Z_1 Z_2 \leq 750$. Review of these data shows certain straightforward trends. As one goes from

a $3n$ to a $4n$ to a $5n$ reaction, the excitation energy of the fissioning system increases, and the mean spin of the captured system increases significantly. As a consequence, the surviving evaporation residues show a spin distribution that is an increasingly smaller subset of the products of the capture process. In Figs. 4 and 5 we show typical plots of the spin dependent capture cross sections and the spin dependent evaporation residue cross sections for some cases of $3n$, $4n$, and $5n$ reactions [18,19] that demonstrate this effect. A further consequence of this behavior comes in evaluating the terms in Eq. (1). In evaluating these terms (capture, fusion, and survival) one must use the spin restricted values of each term—which are quite different than the non-spin-restricted values. Consider the $5n$ capture cross sections shown in Figs. 4 and 5. Much of the capture distribution does not survive fission and must be excluded in using Eq. (1). Similarly, calculations of P_{CN} should be spin restricted to be relevant for heavy-element synthesis.

On average, we found that P_{CN} was 1 for this group of reactions; i.e., the calculated evaporation residue cross section agreed with the measured cross section within experimental error. (This conclusion was based upon studying the $3n$ reactions, where these types of calculations should be most reliable.) A general sampling of some typical cases for $Z_{\text{CN}} = 94-98$, $101-103$, and 104 and 105 is shown in Fig. 6 [2].

The surviving evaporation residues have a most probable spin of $\sim 5\hbar$. The capture reactions have average spins of

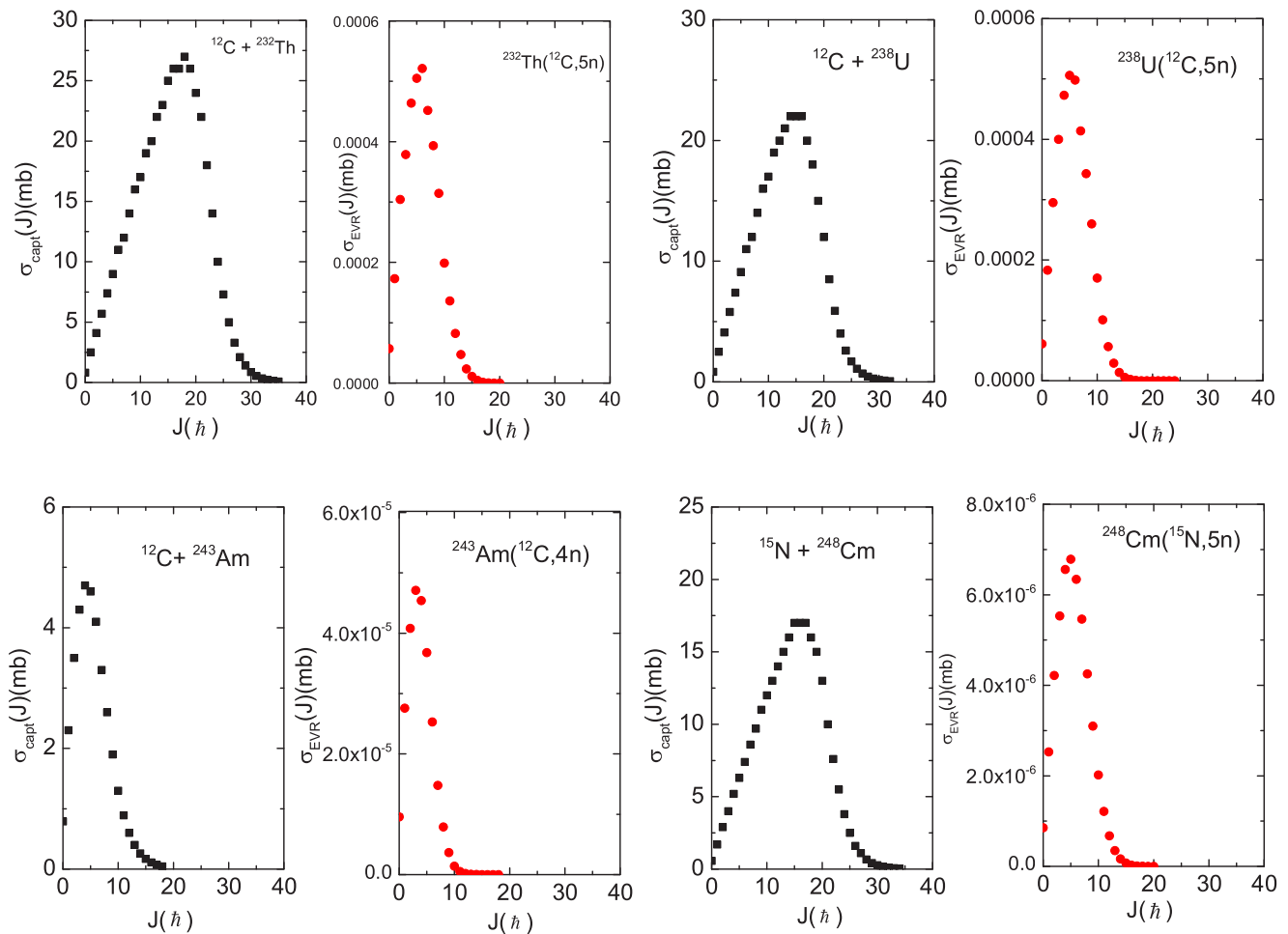


FIG. 6. Spin dependence of calculated capture cross sections and EVR cross sections for the reactions of $^{12}\text{C} + ^{232}\text{Th}$, ^{243}Am , ^{249}Cf and the reaction of ^{15}N with ^{248}Cm [18,20–22], where the laboratory frame beam energies were 70, 73, 70, and 86 MeV, respectively (from [2]).

$10\hbar$ – $20\hbar$. The evaporation residue cross sections are significantly less than the capture cross sections, due to the fission of the completely fused system. Capture cross sections for these hot fusion reactions are typically 100–300 mb while the evaporation residue cross sections are in the nano- to microbarn range. Almost all of the reactions with $Z_1Z_2 \leq 750$ are “hot” fusion reactions. For the few cases of “cold” fusion reactions, the mean spin of the capturing system is about $20\hbar$ while the surviving EVRs have $J \sim 6.7\hbar$.

As discussed in Ref. [2], it is sometimes assumed that the relevant capture cross sections and P_{CN} factors can be evaluated for $J = 0$. This assumption is not supported by the data shown in Fig. 6.

B. $750 \leq Z_1Z_2 \leq 1000$

There are 37 cases in this category. Most of these reactions are sub-barrier reactions with small (nanobarn) cross sections. Apart from the few cases of cold fusion reactions, one observes a smaller difference between the spin dependent capture and evaporation residue cross sections. The ratio of the mean spin of the EVR distribution relative to the capture distribution is 0.60 compared to 0.52 for the previous group. A sampling

of these cases is shown in Fig. 7 [2]. The mean spin of the surviving evaporation residues is less than that of the capture products. The evaporation residue cross sections are orders of magnitude less than the capture cross sections due to the effect of fission de-excitation. There are no cases of $3n$ reactions involving actinide nuclei or $1n$ reactions involving Pb or Bi target nuclei, so no conclusions about P_{CN} for this group are possible.

C. $1000 \leq Z_1Z_2 \leq 1500$

There are 69 cases in this category and they are almost exclusively hot fusion reactions. The clear case of a cold fusion reaction is the $^{207}\text{Pb}(^{40}\text{Ar}, 1n)$ reaction [26], where the calculated mean spin of the surviving evaporation residues is $21.6\hbar$ while the calculated mean spin of the capture products is $48\hbar$. A sampling of the calculated spin distributions for some randomly selected hot fusion cases is shown in Fig. 8. One notices that the survivor distributions are a tiny fraction of the initial capture distributions and are, in fact, remarkably similar for all these reactions. While the calculated values of P_{CN} for this group are consistent with $P_{\text{CN}} = 1$, the dispersion of these values is unusually large and suggests that the estimation of P_{CN} from these calculations is not straightforward.

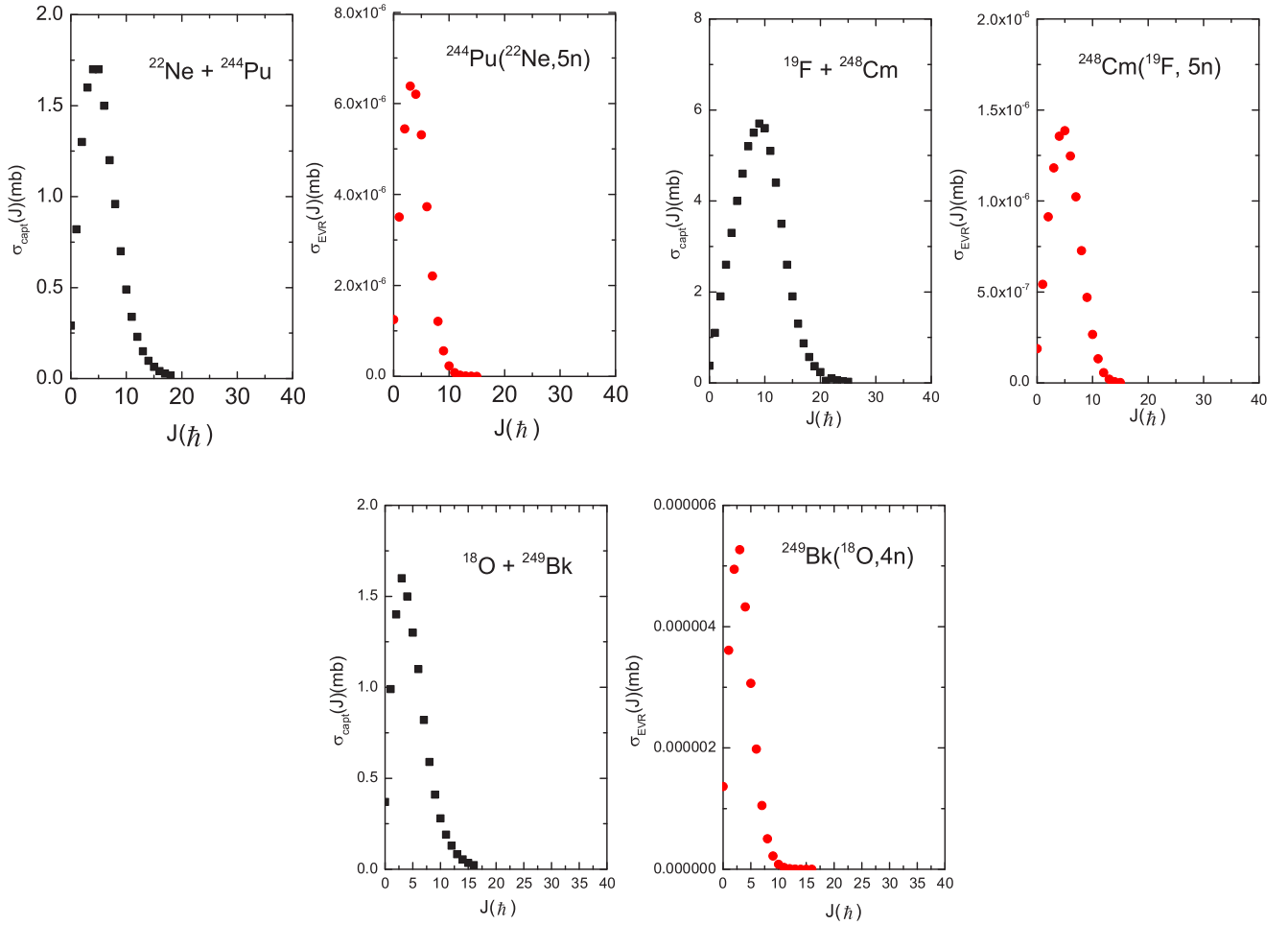


FIG. 7. Spin dependence of calculated capture cross sections and EVR cross sections for the reactions of $^{22}\text{Ne} + ^{244}\text{Pu}$, $^{19}\text{F} + ^{248}\text{Cm}$, and $^{18}\text{O} + ^{249}\text{Bk}$ [23–25], where the laboratory frame beam energies were 114, 106, and 93 MeV, respectively (from [2]).

D. $Z_1 Z_2 \geq 1500$

There are 113 cases of reactions in this category. The reactions range from $1n$ to $5n$ reactions with several examples of progressions like $^{208}\text{Pb}(^{48}\text{Ca}, 1n-4n)$ [31] to $^{209}\text{Bi}(^{48}\text{Ca}, 1n-4n)$ [32,33]. In these reactions, the mean spin in the capture cross section distributions increases from $\sim 10\hbar$ to $\sim 45\hbar$ while the mean spin of the surviving nuclei is $\sim 5\hbar$. Similar patterns are observed for symmetric reactions such as $^{100}\text{Mo}(^{100}\text{Mo}, 1n-5n)$ [33] and ^{50}Ti -based reactions [34,35]. Use of a ^{86}Kr projectile [36] in $^{121-123}\text{Sb}(^{86}\text{Kr}, 3n-5n)$ produces high spin capture products ($J \sim 60\hbar$) but the surviving nuclei are of lower spin ($6\hbar-7\hbar$). The oft studied $^{124}\text{Sn} + ^{96}\text{Zr}$ reaction [36] has a mean surviving spin of $\sim 6\hbar$ while the capture products show mean spins up to $73\hbar$. The average EVR spin of the 113 cases in this category is $5.8\hbar \pm 1.1\hbar$, despite large changes in the mean spin of the capture products. For the $1n$ out reactions, the mean EVR spin is $6.0\hbar \pm 1.1\hbar$.

In this group, there are a number of cases of $1n$ reactions, where the uncertainties in the deduced P_{CN} values should be minimal. Also, it is generally thought that systems with $Z_1 Z_2 \geq 1600$ should show significant amounts of quasi-fission, making $P_{\text{CN}} \leq 1$ [37]. In Fig. 9, we show the deduced values of P_{CN} for $1n$ reactions in this group as a function

of the traditional scaling variable $Z_1 Z_2$. It should be noted that to the extent the techniques used in this paper to deduce P_{CN} are correct, this plot includes a substantial number of new “measurements” of P_{CN} not available from mass angle correlations, i.e., cases where $P_{\text{CN}} \leq 0.01$. The scatter in the data for a given $Z_1 Z_2$ value reflects intrinsic uncertainty in our method of deducing P_{CN} and inadequacies in the use of a single variable like $Z_1 Z_2$ to predict P_{CN} . (In Fig. 10, we also show the use of an alternate scaling variable, x_{eff} [38] to sort out P_{CN} values, but with no substantial improvement in correlating P_{CN} . At any given value of x_{eff} , P_{CN} is undetermined within a factor of 10–100.)

These new data allow one to test some semi-empirical prescriptions of P_{CN} . For Pb and Bi based reactions, Zagrebaev and Greiner [39] have proposed that

$$P_{\text{CN}}(E, \ell) = \frac{P_{\text{CN}}^0(Z_1 Z_2)}{1 + \exp\left(\frac{E_B^* - E_{\text{int}}^*(\ell)}{\Delta}\right)}, \quad (2)$$

where E_B^* is the excitation energy of the compound nucleus at the Bass barrier and $E_{\text{int}}^* = E + Q - E_{\text{rot}}(\ell)$, where Q is the fusion Q value, $E_{\text{rot}}(\ell)$ is the rotational energy, and

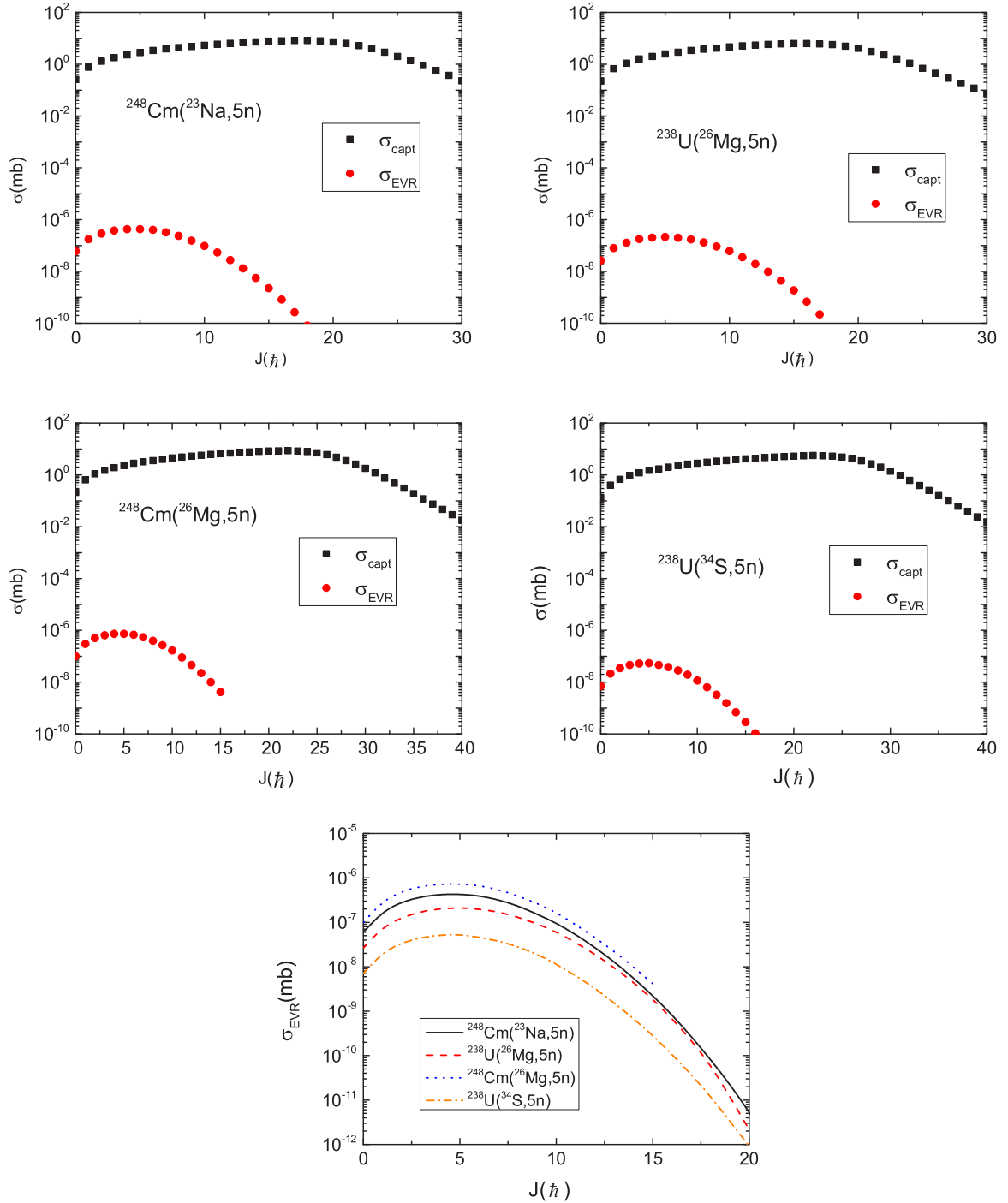


FIG. 8. Spin dependence of calculated capture cross sections and evaporation residue cross sections [27–30] where $1000 \leq Z_1 Z_2 \leq 1500$ and the laboratory frame beam energies were 130, 139, 144, and 188 MeV, respectively.

$\Delta = 4$ MeV. Here

$$P_{\text{CN}}^0 = \frac{1}{1 + \exp\left(\frac{Z_1 Z_2 - \zeta}{\tau}\right)}, \quad (3)$$

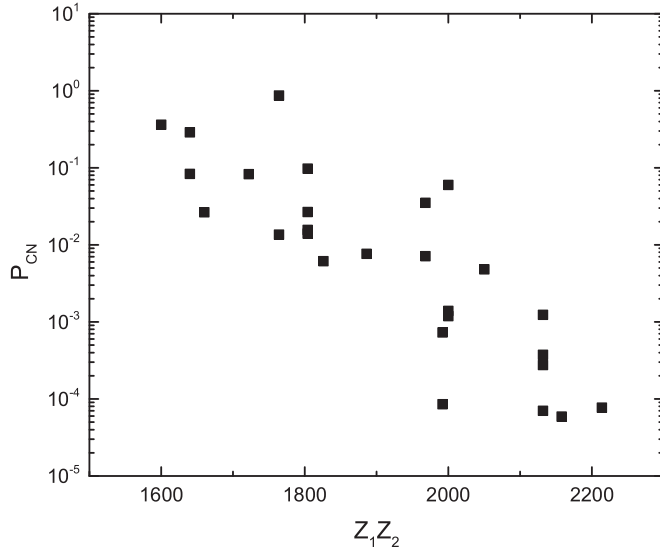
where $\zeta = 1760$ and $\tau = 45$.

To compare our measured P_{CN} values with estimates of this model, we define a comparison metric [40], the theory evaluation factor (tef).

For each data point, we define

$$\text{tef}_i = \log\left(\frac{\sigma_{\text{theory}}}{\sigma_{\text{expt}}}\right), \quad (4)$$

where σ_{theory} and σ_{expt} are the calculated and measured values of the P_{CN} factors. Then, the average theory evaluation factor

FIG. 9. Deduced P_{CN} values for $1n$ reactions with $Z_1Z_2 \geq 1500$.

is given by

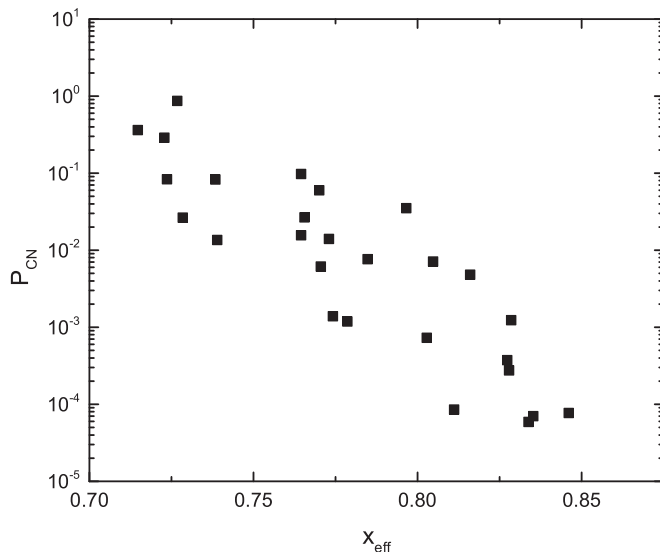
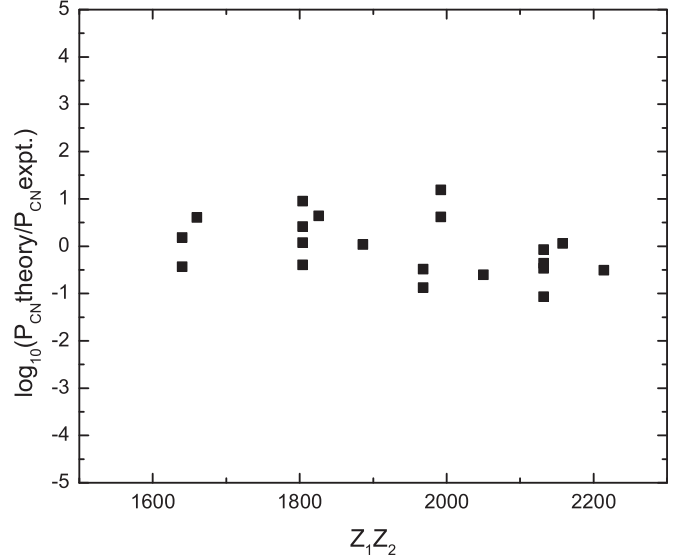
$$\overline{\text{tef}} = \frac{1}{N_d} \sum_{i=1}^{N_d} \text{tef}_i, \quad (5)$$

where N_d is the number of data points.

In Fig. 11, we show the tef values for the comparison of the experimental and calculated values of P_{CN} [39] as a function of the scaling variable Z_1Z_2 . The average tef value is -0.02 , indicating the theoretical description of the P_{CN} factors for Pb and Bi based reactions is very good.

V. CONCLUSIONS

What have we learned from this study?

FIG. 10. Deduced P_{CN} values for $1n$ reactions with $Z_1Z_2 \geq 1500$ as a function of x_{eff} .FIG. 11. Comparison of the calculated [39] and measured values of P_{CN} for $1n$ reactions with $Z_1Z_2 \geq 1500$ as a function of Z_1Z_2 .

- (i) The survival-mediated capture cross sections for a series of 287 heavy-element synthesis reactions have a mean associated spin of $\sim 5\hbar$ even though the capture cross sections have mean spins ranging from $10\hbar$ to $70\hbar$.
- (ii) In estimating heavy-element production cross sections, both the capture cross sections and the P_{CN} factors must be spin mediated, which in the case of the capture cross sections results in orders of magnitude lower cross sections.
- (iii) These concerns about the effect of spin mediation are more acute in hot fusion reactions compared to cold fusion reactions.
- (iv) By comparing the measured and deduced values of the EVR cross sections for reactions where $Z_1Z_2 \geq 1500$, we have been able to deduce a set of new values of P_{CN} for $1n$ reactions for situations where ordinary measurements of P_{CN} are not possible.
- (v) The semi-empirical estimates of Zagrebaev and Greiner for P_{CN} in Pb and Bi based reactions appear to describe our P_{CN} data quite well.

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APPENDIX

The Supplemental Material is a vital part of this study, containing a heretofore unpublished compilation of experimental data and calculations for the ~ 287 reactions studied in this work. To be sure that this material is properly cited as part of this paper, we compile the 91 references cited only in the Supplemental Material as part of the reference list of this paper. This list includes the following references: [41–130].

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