A classification of $S^3$-bundles over $S^4$

Diarmuid Crowley, Christine M. Escher

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Abstract

We classify the total spaces of bundles over the four sphere with fiber a three sphere up to orientation preserving and reversing homotopy equivalence, homeomorphism and diffeomorphism. These total spaces have been of interest to both topologists and geometers. It has recently been shown by Grove and Ziller [GZ] that each of these total spaces admits metrics with nonnegative sectional curvature.

1 Introduction

For almost fifty years, 3-sphere bundles over the 4-sphere have been of interest to both topologists and geometers. In 1956, Milnor [M] proved that all $S^3$-bundles over $S^4$ with Euler class $e = \pm 1$ are homeomorphic to $S^7$. He also showed that some of these bundles are not diffeomorphic to $S^7$ and thereby exhibited the first examples of exotic spheres. Shortly thereafter, in 1962, Eells and Kuiper [EK] classified all such bundles with Euler class $e = \pm 1$ up to diffeomorphism and showed that 15 of the 27 seven dimensional exotic spheres can be described as $S^3$-bundles over $S^4$.

In 1974 Gromoll and Meyer [GM] constructed a metric with non-negative sectional curvature on one of these sphere bundles, exhibiting the first example of an exotic sphere with non-negative curvature. Very recently Grove and Ziller [GZ] showed that the total space of every $S^3$-bundle over $S^4$ admits a metric with non-negative sectional curvature. Motivated by these examples they asked for a classification of these manifolds up to homotopy equivalence, homeomorphism and diffeomorphism (see problem 5.2 in [GZ]). Although partial classifications in various categories appear in [JW2], [S], [T] and [Wi], it seems that the complete classification has not been carried out. It is the purpose of this article to do this.

We consider fiber bundles over the 4-sphere $S^4$ with total space $M$, fiber the 3-sphere $S^3$ and structure group $SO(4)$. Equivalence classes of such bundles are in one-to-one correspondence with $\pi_3(SO(4)) \cong \mathbb{Z} \oplus \mathbb{Z}$. Following James and Whitehead [JW2], we choose generators $\rho$ and $\sigma$ of $\pi_3(SO(4))$ such that

$$\rho(u) v = u v u^{-1}, \quad \sigma(u) v = u v;$$

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where $u$ and $v$ denote the quaternions with norm 1, i.e. we have have identified $S^3$ with the unit quaternions. With this choice of generators a pair of integers $(m, n)$ gives the element $m \rho + n \sigma \in \pi_3(SO(4))$ and thus determines both a vector bundle $\xi_{m,n}$ and the corresponding sphere bundle $\pi_{m,n} : M_{m,n} := S(\xi_{m,n}) \to S^4$.

**Remark 1.1.** The definition we use is different from the one given by Milnor in [M]. He uses two integers $(k, l)$ corresponding to a different choice of generators of $\pi_3(SO(4)) \cong \mathbb{Z} \oplus \mathbb{Z}$. The two pairs $(m, n)$ and $(k, l)$ are related by $k + l = n$, $l = -m$.

Note that a change of orientation in the fiber leads to $M_{m,n} \cong M_{m+n,-n}$ whereas a change of orientation in the base leads to $M_{m,n} \cong M_{-m,-n}$. Hence we now always assume that $n \geq 0$. We can also exclude the case of $n = 0$ as $M_{m,0}$ is diffeomorphic or homeomorphic to $M_{m',0}$ only when $m' = \pm m$. This follows from the topological invariance of the rational Pontrjagin classes and the fact that $M_{m,n}$ is diffeomorphic to $M_{-m-n,n}$ for any $m$ and $n$. James and Whitehead [JW2] proved that $M_{m,0}$ is homotopic to $M_{m',0}$ if and only if $m' \equiv \pm m \mod 12$. Lastly, each $M_{m,0}$ has an orientation reversing self-diffeomorphism. Hence we now always assume that $n > 0$.

The first level of classification of the manifolds $M_{m,n}$ is up to homotopy equivalence. In a remarkable paper [JW2], James and Whitehead succeeded in classifying the pairs of manifolds $(M_{m,n}, S^3)$ up to homotopy equivalence except for the case $n = 2$. A few years later Sasao [S] undertook the homotopy classification of the total spaces $M_{m,n}$. Let $M(Z_n, 3)$ denote the Moore space formed by attaching a 4-disc to a 3-sphere with a degree $n$ map of the 3-sphere. Each $M_{m,n}$ has the homotopy type of $M(Z_n, 3)$ with a 7-cell attached. Sasao computed both $\pi_6(M(Z_n, 3))$ and the action of $[M(Z_n, 3), M(Z_n, 3)]$ on $\pi_6(M(Z_n, 3))$. In principle, this should allow for a complete homotopy classification though Sasao did not do the computation. We deduce the homotopy classification as a consequence of the homeomorphism classification and thus avoid the homotopy theory completely.

**Theorem 1.1.** Let $n, n' > 0$.

1. The manifolds $M_{m',n'}$ and $M_{m,n}$ are orientation preserving homotopy equivalent if and only if $n = n'$ and $m' \equiv \alpha m \mod (n, 12)$ where $\alpha^2 \equiv 1 \mod (n, 12)$.

2. Orientation reversing homotopy equivalences between any $M_{m',n'}$ and $M_{m,n}$ can only exist when $n = 2^k p_1^{i_1} \ldots p_k^{i_k}$, $p_i$ prime, $p_i \equiv 1 \mod 4$ and $\epsilon = 0, 1$. Furthermore if $n$ is of this form with $\epsilon = 0$, then the single oriented homotopy type admits an orientation reversing self homotopy equivalence; if $\epsilon = 1$, $M_{m',n'}$ is orientation reversing homotopy equivalent to $M_{m,n}$ if and only if $m' + m \equiv 0 \mod 2$.

Here $(n, 12)$ denotes the greatest common divisor of $n$ and 12. Notice that since $H^4(M_{m,n}, \mathbb{Z}) \cong \mathbb{Z}_n$ and we assumed $n$ to be nonnegative, necessarily $n = n'$ if $M_{m,n}$ and $M_{m',n'}$ are homotopy equivalent.

**Remark 1.2.** Comparing Theorem 1.1 with [JW2] (for $n > 2$, $(M_{m,n}, S^3)$ is homotopy equivalent to $(M_{m',n'}, S^3)$ if and only if $m' \equiv \pm m \mod (n, 12)$) one concludes that the
homotopy classification of the manifold pairs \((M_{m,n}, S^3)\) differs from the homotopy classification of the total spaces \(M_{m,n}\) if and only if \(n\) is divisible by 12. In this case the congruence \(\alpha^2 \equiv 1 \mod (n, 12)\) has two nontrivial solutions, namely \(\alpha \equiv \pm 5 \mod 12\).

The next level, the homeomorphism classification, was first studied by Tamura \([1]\), who constructed explicit homeomorphisms between \(M_{m,n}\) and \(M_{m',n}\) if \(m \equiv \pm m' \mod n\). These homeomorphisms were constructed with the aid of specific foliations of the total spaces. However, as handlebody theory developed, general techniques for classifying highly connected manifolds became available and Wall (\([Wa1]\)) was able to classify \((s-1)\) connected \((2s+1)\) manifolds except when \(s = 3, 7\). Wilkens \([Wi]\) then extended the techniques of Wall to complete the cases \(s = 3, 7\) except for an occasional \(\mathbb{Z}_2\)-ambiguity. We complete Wilkens’ classification in the case of \(S^3\)-bundles over \(S^4\) using two topological invariants. The first invariant was used by Wilkens and is the characteristic class of Spin manifolds, \(\frac{p_1}{2}\), which is defined as the generator of \(H^4(B_{spin}; \mathbb{Z})\) that has the same sign as the first Pontrjagin class \(p_1\). We stress that the division by two occurs universally in \(H^1(B_{spin}; \mathbb{Z})\) so that \(\frac{p_1}{2}\) \((M_{m,n})\) should not be thought of as \(p_1(M_{m,n})/2\) which does not make sense in the presence of 2-torsion. Pulling back a preferred generator of \(H^4(S^4; \mathbb{Z})\) to \(H^4(M_{m,n}; \mathbb{Z})\) yields a canonical identification of \(H^4(M_{m,n}; \mathbb{Z})\) with \(\mathbb{Z}_n\) and hence we identify \(\frac{p_1}{2}\)(\(M_{m,n}\)) with an element of \(\mathbb{Z}_n\). The second invariant is the topological Eells-Kuiper invariant \(s_1(M_{m,n}) := 28\mu(M_{m,n}) \in \mathbb{Q}/\mathbb{Z}\) which was used in \([KS]\) where it is shown (Theorem 2.5) to be an invariant of topological spin manifolds. We now recall the definition of the \(\mu\) invariant from \([EK]\).

Assume that \(M = M^7\) is a closed, smooth spin manifold such that \(M\) is a spin boundary, i.e. \(M = \partial W^8\), where \(W^8\) is a closed, smooth spin manifold. In addition, we require \((W, M)\) to satisfy the \(\mu\)-condition which is automatic when \(M\) is a rational homology sphere, see \([EK]\). The \(\mu\)-condition allows the pullback of the Pontrjagin classes of \(W\) to \(H^*(W, M)\). Then the \(\mu\)-invariant is defined as

\[
\mu(M^7) \equiv \frac{1}{2^7 \cdot 7} \left\{ p_1^2(W) - 4 \sigma[W] \right\} \mod 1
\]

(1)

Here \(\sigma[W]\) stands for the signature of \(W\). The most important feature of the \(\mu\)-invariant is that it is an invariant of the diffeomorphism type of \(M\) whereas \(s_1 := 28\mu\) is an invariant of the homeomorphism type of \(M\), see \([KS]\). Calculating these invariants for the total spaces \(M_{m,n}\) we obtain

\[
\frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m,n}) \equiv 2m \mod n; \quad s_1(M_{m,n}) \equiv \frac{1}{8n} \left( 4m(m + n) + n(n - 1) \right) \mod 1.
\]

**Theorem 1.2.** The following are equivalent.

1. \(M_{m',n}\) is orientation preserving [reversing] PL-homeomorphic to \(M_{m,n}\).
2. \(M_{m',n}\) is orientation preserving [reversing] homeomorphic to \(M_{m,n}\).
3. \(\frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m',n}) = \alpha \frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m,n})\) and \(s_1(M_{m',n}) = s_1(M_{m,n})\) where \(\alpha^2 \equiv 1 \mod n\).
   \[ \frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m',n}) = \alpha \frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m,n}) \text{ and } s_1(M_{m',n}) = -s_1(M_{m,n}) \text{ where } \alpha^2 \equiv -1 \mod n. \]
Combining the congruences we obtain the following version of Theorem 1.2.

**Corollary 1.3.** Let \( n = 2^a q \), \( q \) odd.

1. \( M_{m',n} \) is orientation preserving homeomorphic to \( M_{m,n} \) if and only if the following condition holds.
   - \( a = 0 \): \( m' \equiv \alpha m \mod n \) where \( \alpha^2 \equiv 1 \mod n \).
   - \( a = 2 \) and \( m \) odd, or \( a > 2 \) and \( m \) even: \( m' \equiv \alpha m \mod \frac{n}{2} \) where \( \alpha^2 \equiv 1 \mod \frac{n}{2} \).
   - \( a = 1 \), or \( a = 2 \) and \( m \) even, or \( a > 2 \) and \( m \) odd: \( m' \equiv \alpha m \mod n \) where \( \alpha \equiv \pm 1 \mod 2^a \) and \( \alpha^2 \equiv 1 \mod n \).

2. \( M_{m',n} \) is orientation reversing homeomorphic to \( M_{m,n} \) if and only if the following condition holds.
   - \( n = p_1^{i_1} \cdots p_k^{i_k} \), \( p_i \equiv 1 \mod 4 \) and \( m' \equiv \alpha m \mod n \) where \( \alpha^2 \equiv -1 \mod n \) or
   - \( n = 2p_1^{i_1} \cdots p_k^{i_k} \), \( p_i \equiv 1 \mod 4 \) and \( m' \equiv \alpha (m + \frac{n}{2}) \mod n \) where \( \alpha^2 \equiv -1 \mod n \).

The following corollary of the proof of Theorem 1.2 generalizes a result of Kitchloo and Shankar [KiSh].

**Corollary 1.4.** Any 2-connected 7-manifold \( M \) with \( H^4(M; \mathbb{Z}) \cong \mathbb{Z}_n \) and linking form isomorphic to \( l : \mathbb{Z}_n \times \mathbb{Z}_n \longrightarrow \mathbb{Q}/\mathbb{Z}, (r, s) \mapsto \frac{rs}{n} \) is homeomorphic to the total space of a 3-sphere bundle over the 4-sphere.

The diffeomorphism classification of the manifolds \( M_{m,n} \) follows the pattern that Eells and Kuiper discovered in the case \( n = 1 \) for Milnor’s exotic spheres. That is, \( M_{m',n} \) and \( M_{m,n} \) are diffeomorphic if and only if they are homeomorphic and their \( \mu \) invariants coincide.

**Theorem 1.5.** The total space \( M_{m',n} \) is orientation preserving [reversing] diffeomorphic to \( M_{m,n} \) if and only if the following conditions hold.

\[
\frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m',n}) = \alpha \frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m,n}) \quad \text{and} \quad \mu(M_{m',n}) = \mu(M_{m,n}) \quad \text{where} \quad \alpha^2 \equiv 1 \mod n.
\]

\[
[\frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m',n}) = \alpha \frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m,n}) \quad \text{and} \quad \mu(M_{m',n}) = -\mu(M_{m,n}) \quad \text{where} \quad \alpha^2 \equiv -1 \mod n.]
\]

Using the definition of \( \frac{p_1}{2} \) and \( \mu \) we describe Theorem 1.5 in terms of congruences as follows.

**Corollary 1.6.** The total space \( M_{m',n} \) is orientation preserving [reversing] diffeomorphic to \( M_{m,n} \) if and only if the following conditions hold.

\[
m' (n + m') \equiv m (n + m) \mod 56n \quad \text{and} \quad 2m' \equiv 2 \alpha m \mod n \quad \text{where} \quad \alpha^2 \equiv 1 \mod n.
\]

\[
[m' (n + m') \equiv -m (n + m) \mod 56n \quad \text{and} \quad 2m' \equiv 2 \alpha m \mod n \quad \text{where} \quad \alpha^2 \equiv -1 \mod n.]
\]
Smooth surgery theory (see [MM]) implies that there are exactly 28 different smooth manifolds homeomorphic to \( M_{m,n} \). A natural question to ask is which manifolds homeomorphic to \( M_{m,n} \) may be represented by manifolds \( M'_{m,n} \). In section 4 we answer this question for special cases of \( n \). We see that in some cases all 28 differentiable structures are realized by \( S^3 \)-bundles over \( S^4 \). We also discuss the case \( n = 10 \) which includes the seven dimensional Berger manifolds as shown in [KiSh].

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2 Outline of proof

2.1 A note on orientation

Whereas classifications arising from the use of surgery theory are naturally given up to orientation preserving maps, geometers often require classifications irrespective of orientation. For our sphere bundles there are diffeomorphisms that reverse the orientation: of the fiber; of the base; or of both the fiber and the base. These diffeomorphisms give rise to orientation reversing diffeomorphisms from \( M_{m,n} \) to \( M_{m+n,-n} \) and from \( M_{m,n} \) to \( M_{m,-n} \) respectively, as well as orientation preserving diffeomorphisms between \( M_{m,n} \) and \( M_{-m-n,n} \). Hence it is sufficient to work with \( n \geq 0 \); this is the convention established by James and Whitehead, [JW2]. We now fix a generator \( \iota_4 \) of \( H^4(S^4; \mathbb{Z}) \) and use the same notation for the images of \( \iota_4 \) under the isomorphisms \( H^4(S^4; \mathbb{Z}) \cong H_4(S^4; \mathbb{Z}) \cong \pi_4(S^4) \). Using this generator of \( \pi_4(S^4) \), we orient the fiber \( S^3 \) with \( \iota_3 \in \pi_3(S^3) \) such that \( \partial(\iota_3) = n\iota_4 \) and \( n > 0 \). With this convention \( M_{m,n} \) is an oriented manifold. From now on all manifolds shall be smooth, compact and oriented and maps shall be orientation preserving unless explicitly noted. Thus “\( M' \) and \( M \) are homeomorphic” shall usually mean that \( M' \) and \( M \) are orientation preserving homeomorphic and orientation reversing maps will be considered explicitly as maps from \( M' \) to \( -M \).

2.2 Structure of proof

We wish to emphasize that our classification does not first solve the problem of homotopy equivalence and then proceed to the finer relations of homeomorphism and diffeomorphism. Instead, we start by completing the \( PL \)-homeomorphism classification of Wilkens. We are then able to descend to give a homotopy classification by explicitly exhibiting the entire normal invariant set of any \( M_{m,n} \) as fiber homotopy equivalences.

**Proposition 2.1.** For all \( j \in \mathbb{Z} \) there exist fiber homotopy equivalences \( f_j : M_{m+12j,n} \rightarrow M_{m,n} \) with normal invariant \( j \in \mathbb{Z}_n \).

It follows from a simple application of surgery theory that a given seven dimensional manifold \( M' \) is homotopy equivalent to \( M_{m,n} \) if and only if \( M \) is homeomorphic to
$M_{m+12j,n}$ for some $j$. Given the homeomorphism classification of the bundles this is enough to yield the homotopy classification.

3 Homeomorphism classification

The elementary algebraic topology of our manifolds is determined by the Euler number of the bundle $e(\xi_{m,n}) = n$. From now on we use $H^i(M)$ to denote the $i$-th cohomology group of $M$ with integer coefficients.

$$
H^0(M_{m,n}) \cong H^7(M_{m,n}) \cong \mathbb{Z} \\
H^4(M_{m,n}) \cong \mathbb{Z}_n \\
H^i(M_{m,n}) \cong 0 \text{ for all } i \neq 0, 4, 7.
$$

One sees from the Serre spectral sequence of the fibration $S^3 \hookrightarrow M_{m,n} \xrightarrow{\pi} S^4$ that $\pi^*: H^4(S^4) \to H^4(M_{m,n})$ is a surjection. Let $\kappa_4 := \pi^*(i_4)$ and use $\kappa_4$ to identify $H^4(M_{m,n})$ with $\mathbb{Z}_n$. The bundle structure ensures that the linking form of $M_{m,n}$, $lk(M_{m,n})$, is isomorphic to the standard form, $l$, for all $m \in \mathbb{Z}$. Thus,

$$
lk(M_{m,n}) : H^4(M_{m,n}) \cong \mathbb{Z}_n \times H^4(M_{m,n}) \cong \mathbb{Z}_n \\
(r, s) \mapsto l(r, s) = \frac{rs}{n}.
$$

To see this, note that the linking form $lk(M_{m,n})$ is induced from the intersection form of any coboundary $W$. For sphere bundles we may choose $W = W_{m,n}$ to be the associated disk bundle, $D^4 \hookrightarrow W_{m,n} \xrightarrow{\pi_W} S^4$, $\partial W_{m,n} = M_{m,n}$. The long exact sequence of the pair $(W_{m,n}, M_{m,n})$ yields

$$0 \to H^4(W_{m,n}, M_{m,n}) \xrightarrow{j_*} H^4(W_{m,n}) \xrightarrow{i^*} H^4(M_{m,n}) \to 0.
$$

Let $x = i^*_W t_4 \in H^4(W_{m,n}) \cong \mathbb{Z}$ and let $y$ be a generator of $H^4(W_{m,n}, M_{m,n}) \cong \mathbb{Z}$ such that $j^*(y) = nx$. Since $\kappa_4 = i^*(x)$, the self linking number of the class $\kappa_4$ is defined as follows,

$$lk(\kappa_4, \kappa_4) = \frac{1}{n} \langle y \cup x, [W_{m,n}, M_{m,n}] \rangle = 1.
$$

Bilinearity is now enough to ensure that $lk(M_{m,n}) = l$. Note that the linking form $lk(M_{m,n})$ may be computed in a variety of ways. See for example [KiSi] for a different method.

We now describe the invariants required for our classification in some detail.

3.1 The invariants $\mu$ and $s_1$

The invariant $\mu(M_{m,n}) \equiv \mu(W, M_{m,n}) \mod 1$ is computed for any spin coboundary $W$ which satisfies the $\mu$-condition. We choose $W = W_{m,n}$ as above and note that the pair
(\(W_{m,n}, M_{m,n}\)) satisfies the \(\mu\)-condition. This coboundary was already used in \([M]\) and \([T]\) and we use it to obtain for the \(\mu\)-invariant of the total spaces \(M_{m,n}\)

\[
\mu(M_{m,n}) \equiv \frac{1}{2^{5} \cdot 7} \left\{ p_{1}^{2}(W_{m,n}) - 4 \sigma[W_{m,n}] \right\} \mod 1, \tag{2}
\]

where \(\sigma[W_{m,n}]\) is the signature of the quadratic form given by

\[
H^{4}(W_{m,n}, \partial W_{m,n}) \longrightarrow Q \quad \quad v \longrightarrow \langle v \cup v, [W_{m,n}, \partial W_{m,n}] \rangle.
\]

and \((p_{1}(W_{m,n}))^{2}\) is the characteristic number

\[
\langle (j^{*})^{-1} p_{1}(W_{m,n}) \cup p_{1}(W_{m,n}), [W_{m,n}, \partial W_{m,n}] \rangle
\]

where \(j^{*} : H^{4}(W_{m,n}, \partial W_{m,n}; Q) \longrightarrow H^{4}(W_{m,n}; Q)\). As \(n > 0\) we obtain for the signature \(\sigma(W_{m,n}) = 1\). Furthermore, we chose \(y\) such that \(j^{*}(y) = nx\). Hence \((j^{*})^{-1}(x) = \frac{1}{n} y\). Finally, it is well known (see \([M]\)) that \(p_{1}(W_{m,n}) = 2(n + 2m)x\) and thus

\[
\langle (j^{*})^{-1} p_{1}(W_{m,n}) \cup p_{1}(W_{m,n}), [W_{m,n}, \partial W_{m,n}] \rangle = \langle \frac{1}{n} 2(n + 2m)x \cup 2(n + 2m)x, [W_{m,n}, \partial W_{m,n}] \rangle = \frac{4(n + 2m)^{2}}{n}. \tag{3}
\]

Hence

\[
\mu(M_{m,n}) \equiv \frac{1}{2^{5} \cdot 7 \cdot n} \left\{ (n + 2m)^{2} - n \right\} \mod 1
\]

and therefore

\[
s_{1}(M_{m,n}) = 28 \mu(M_{m,n}) \equiv \frac{1}{8n} \left\{ (n + 2m)^{2} - n \right\} \mod 1 \equiv \frac{m^{2}}{2n} + \frac{m}{2} + \frac{n - 1}{8} \mod 1. \tag{4}
\]

As noted above, it is proven in \([KS]\) that \(s_{1}\) is an invariant of topological spin manifolds.

We would like to point out that there are mistakes in the literature in calculations of the \(\mu\)-invariant for the manifolds \(M_{m,n}\). In particular, an incorrect formula for the \(\mu\)-invariant \([D, \text{p. 67}]\) is applied to prove \([D, \text{Theorem 2.1}]\). In fact, the statement \([D, \text{Theorem 2.1}]\) is true under use of the true \(\mu\)-invariant as W. Ziller pointed out to us. However, Ziller tells us that the proof of \([Ma, \text{Theorem A}]\) does not work with the true \(\mu\)-invariant. We do not know if \([Ma, \text{Theorem A}]\) is true.

3.2 The invariant \(\frac{p_{1}}{2}\)

Since the total spaces \(M_{m,n}\) are 2-connected they all have unique spin structures and we work with spin characteristic classes for simplicity. The Hopf bundle \(\pi_{0,1} : \xi_{0,1} \longrightarrow S^{4}\) defines a generator of \(\pi_{4}(BSpin)\) but \(p_{1}(\xi_{0,1}) = \pm 2 \in H^{4}(S^{4})\). It follows that half the first Pontrjagin class, \(\frac{p_{1}}{2}\), is a generator of \(H^{4}(BSpin)\) and thus is always integral. Moreover,
\( p_1 \) is a topological invariant since the canonical map \( H^4(BSpin) \to H^4(BTop) \) is an injection. We refer the reader to [KS, Lemma 6.5] for a discussion of this map. In [M] Milnor showed how to compute \( p_1 \) for the manifolds \( M_{m,n} \). One first observes that the stable tangent bundle of a sphere bundle is a pullback of bundles over the base space. As we shall need the corresponding fact for the stable normal bundle we give both results now. Let \( \tau_B \) denote the stable tangent bundle of the base space \( B \) and let \( \nu_B \) denote the corresponding stable normal bundle.

**Fact 3.1.** Let \( S(\psi) \) be the sphere bundle associated to a vector bundle \( \psi \) over a manifold \( B \) and let \( -\psi \) denote the stable inverse of \( \psi \). Then

\[
\nu_{S(\psi)} = \pi^*_\psi(\nu_B \oplus -\psi) \quad \text{and} \quad \tau_{S(\psi)} = \pi^*_\psi(\tau_B \oplus \psi).
\]

Recalling that \( p_1(\xi_{m,n}) = 2(n+2m)\iota_4 \) we obtain that

\[
\frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m,n}) = \frac{p_1}{2}(\tau_{M_{m,n}}) = \frac{p_1}{2}(\pi^*(\tau_{S(\psi)} \oplus \xi_{m,n})) = \pi^*(\frac{p_1}{2}(\xi_{m,n})) = \pi^*((n+2m)\iota_4) = 2m\kappa_4 \in \mathbb{Z}_n.
\]

The characteristic class \( \frac{p_1}{2} \) is identical to the invariant \( \hat{\beta} \) defined in [W] as the obstruction to the tangent bundle being trivial over the 4-skeleton. Wilkens’ full invariant for a 2-connected 7-manifold with torsion fourth cohomology group is the triple \((H^4(M), lk(M), \frac{p_1}{2}(M))\) where \( lk(M) \) denotes the linking form of \( M \) on \( H^4(M) \). He denoted such a triple abstractly as \((G, l, \beta)\) and defined two triples \((G, l, \beta)\) and \((G', l', \beta')\) to be the same invariant if there is an isomorphism \( h : G \to G' \) preserving the linking form and sending \( \beta \) to \( \beta' \). For \( M = M_{m,n} \) we have identified \( H^4(M_{m,n}) \) with \( \mathbb{Z}_n \) by taking \( \pi^*\iota_4 = \kappa_4 \) as a generator of \( H^4(M_{m,n}) \). With this identification the linking form becomes \( lk(M_{m,n}) = l \) where \( l(r,s) = \frac{r^n}{n} \). Hence when we speak of the invariant \( \frac{p_1}{2} \) we interpret it as part of the Wilkens triple \((\mathbb{Z}_n, l, \frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m,n}) = 2m)\). Note that the automorphisms of \( \mathbb{Z}_n \) which preserve the linking form \( l \) can be described as elements of the set \( A^+(n) := \{ \alpha \in \mathbb{Z}_n : \alpha^2 = 1 \} \). Therefore we say that \( M_{m',n} \) and \( M_{m,n} \) have the same \( \frac{p_1}{2} \) when there is an \( \alpha \in A^+(n) \) such that \( \frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m',n}) = \alpha\frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m,n}) \in \mathbb{Z}_n \). In the orientation reversing case the invariant \( \frac{p_1}{2} \) is unchanged but for the linking form we obtain \( lk(-M_{m,n}) = -lk(M_{m,n}) = -l \). We must therefore consider the automorphisms of \( \mathbb{Z}_n \) which send \( l \) to \( -l \). These form the set \( A^-(n) := \{ \alpha \in \mathbb{Z}_n : \alpha^2 = -1 \} \). Thus we say that two manifolds \( M_{m',n} \) and \( -M_{m,n} \) have the same \( \frac{p_1}{2} \) when there exists an \( \alpha \in A^-(n) \) such that \( \frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m',n}) = \alpha\frac{p_1}{2}(M_{m,n}) \in \mathbb{Z}_n \). Elementary considerations in number theory lead to the following lemma describing the automorphisms \( \alpha \), see for example [I, Theorem 5.2].

**Lemma 3.2.** (a) The congruence \( \alpha^2 \equiv 1 \mod n \) has \( 2^{r+u} \) solutions, where \( r \) is the number of distinct odd prime divisors of \( n \) and \( u \) is 0, 1 or 2 according to 4 does not divide \( n \), \( 2^2 \) exactly divides \( n \) or \( 8 \) divides \( n \).

(b) The congruence \( \alpha^2 \equiv -1 \mod n \) is solvable if and only if \( n = p_1^{i_1} \ldots p_k^{i_k} \), \( p_i \equiv 1 \mod 4, p_i \) prime or \( n = 2p_1^{i_1} \ldots p_k^{i_k} \), \( p_i \equiv 1 \mod 4, p_i \) prime. In this case one has \( 2^k \) solutions.
3.3 Orientation Preserving Homeomorphism

Let \( G^* \) be the torsion subgroup of \( G \). Then Wilkens called a symmetric bilinear form \( b : G^* \times G^* \to \mathbb{Q}/\mathbb{Z} \) irreducible if it cannot be written as the proper sum of two bilinear forms and he defined \( M \) to be indecomposable if \( H^4(M) \) is finite and \( \text{lk}(M) \) is irreducible or if \( H^4(M) \cong \mathbb{Z} \). Wall ([Wa2]) had already proven that finite irreducible forms only exist for \( G \cong \mathbb{Z}_{p^a} \) or \( \mathbb{Z}_{2^a} \oplus \mathbb{Z}_{2^b} \) for \( p \) prime. Modulo a \( \mathbb{Z}_2 \) ambiguity in some cases Wilkens showed that the triple \((H^4(M), \text{lk}(M), \frac{\mathbb{Q}}{2}(M))\) classifies indecomposable 2-connected 7-manifolds up to oriented diffeomorphism and connected sum with an exotic 7-sphere. In the case of \( M = M_{m,n} \) we obtain \( H^4(M_{m,n}) \cong \mathbb{Z}_n \cong \bigoplus_{i=1}^n \mathbb{Z}_{q_i^{e_i}} \) where \( n = \prod_{i=1}^n q_i^{e_i} \) is the prime decomposition of \( n \). Then any automorphism of \( H^4(M_{m,n}) \) must preserve the decomposition into irreducible forms, there being no nontrivial homomorphisms between cyclic groups of coprime orders. Hence any homeomorphism \( h : M_{m',n} \to M_{m,n} \) must preserve the decompositions of \( M_{m',n} \) and \( M_{m,n} \) into indecomposable manifolds. It follows that \( \frac{\mathbb{Q}}{2}(M_{m,n}) = (\mathbb{Z}_n, l, 2m) \) classifies the total spaces \( M_{m,n} \) up to an occasional \( \mathbb{Z}_2 \) ambiguity.

A homeomorphism of manifolds \( f : M' \to M \) is called an almost diffeomorphism if there is an exotic sphere \( \Sigma \) such that \( f : M' \to M \notin \Sigma \) is a diffeomorphism. As \( PL/O \) is 6-connected, general smoothing theory implies that the manifolds \( M_{m,n} \) are almost-diffeomorphic if and only if they are \( PL \)-homeomorphic ([MM]). Below we show that Wilkens’ ambiguous cases have distinct values for \( s_1 \). It follows that manifolds \( M_{m',n} \) and \( M_{m,n} \) are \( PL \)-homeomorphic if and only if they have the same invariants \( \frac{\mathbb{Q}}{2}(M) \) and \( s_1 \). But these are topological invariants and so \( M_{m',n} \) and \( M_{m,n} \) are homeomorphic if and only if they are \( PL \)-homeomorphic.

**Remark 3.1.** When \( n \) is even, \( H^4(M_{m,n}; \mathbb{Z}_2) \cong \mathbb{Z}_2 \) and thus Kirby-Siebenmann theory guarantees that there is a pair of non-concordant \( PL \)-structures on \( M_{m,n} \). The above argument shows that these \( PL \) structures are \( PL \)-homeomorphic.

Let \( n = 2^a q \) with \( q \) odd. It follows directly from Wilkens that \( \frac{\mathbb{Q}}{2}(M) \) classifies the manifolds \( M_{m,n} \) in the following circumstances: \( n \) odd or \( n = 4q \) and \( m \) odd or \( n = 2^a q \), \( a > 2 \) and \( m \) even. However, there remained a \( \mathbb{Z}_2 \) ambiguity in the cases: \( n = 2q \) with any \( m \), \( n = 4q \) with \( m \) even and \( a > 2 \) with \( m \) odd. We now complete the orientation preserving homeomorphism classification by showing that the invariant \( s_1 \) distinguishes manifolds \( M_{m,n} \) with the same \( \frac{\mathbb{Q}}{2}(M) \) invariant in the remaining cases. Let \( m' = m - \frac{n}{2} \). Then \( \frac{\mathbb{Q}}{2}(M_{m',n}) = \frac{\mathbb{Q}}{2}(M_{m,n}) \) and

\[
\begin{align*}
s_1(M_{m,n}) - s_1(M_{m',n}) &\equiv \frac{m - m'}{2} + \frac{m^2 - m'^2}{2n} \mod 1 \\
&\equiv \frac{m}{2} + \frac{n}{2} \mod 1 \\
&\equiv \frac{m}{2} + \frac{2^a q}{8} \mod 1 \neq 0 \mod 1 \quad (6)
\end{align*}
\]

for the cases of \( a = 1 \) or \( a = 2 \) and \( m \) even or \( a > 2 \) and \( m \) odd. We have thus proven Theorem [L2] in the orientation preserving case. Now, Wilkens showed that every \( \frac{\mathbb{Q}}{2}(M) \)
of a 2-connected 7-manifold must be divisible by two and since \( \frac{p}{2}(M_{m,n}) = 2m \), \( S^3 \)-bundles over \( S^4 \) realize every Wilkens triple \((H^4(M),lk(M),\frac{p}{2}(M))\) with linking form \( lk(M) = l,l(r,s) = \frac{r}{n} \). Moreover, we have just seen that each of Wilkens’ ambiguous cases is realized by such a bundle. It follows then from Wilkens’ classification that any 2-connected 7-manifold with linking form \( l \) is almost diffeomorphic, and hence homeomorphic, to an \( S^3 \)-bundle over \( S^4 \). This is precisely the statement of Corollary 1.3. We now proceed to demonstrate the algebraic formulation of Theorem 1.2 given in Corollary 1.3.

The first two cases of the orientation preserving homeomorphism condition of Corollary 1.3 immediately follow from the fact that in those cases the invariant \( \frac{p}{2} \) is enough to classify the manifolds. For the last case we have to prove that the conditions \( \frac{p}{2}(M_{m',n}) = \alpha \frac{p}{2}(M_{m,n}) \) and \( s_1(M_{m',n}) = s_1(M_{m,n}) \) where \( \alpha^2 \equiv 1 \) mod \( n \) are equivalent to the conditions \( m' \equiv \alpha m \) mod \( n \) and \( \alpha \equiv \pm 1 \) mod \( 2^a \) where \( \alpha^2 \equiv 1 \) mod \( n \). Let \( \alpha^2 = kn + 1 \) for some \( k \in \mathbb{Z} \) and let \( m' \equiv \alpha m + \epsilon \frac{n}{2} \) mod \( n \) where \( \epsilon = 0,1 \). Then we calculate the difference of the \( s_1 \) invariants:

\[
s_1(M_{m,n}) - s_1(M_{m',n}) \equiv \frac{\alpha m - m}{2} + \frac{\alpha n}{4} + \frac{(\alpha m + \alpha n)^2}{2n} - \frac{m^2}{2n} \mod 1
\]

\[
\equiv \frac{km^2}{2} + \frac{\alpha n}{8} + \frac{\alpha mn}{2} \mod 1.
\]

Now if \( m' \equiv \alpha m \) mod \( n \) and \( \alpha \equiv \pm 1 \) mod \( 2^a \) where \( \alpha^2 \equiv 1 \) mod \( n \), then the \( \frac{p}{2} \) invariants must be the same. But the \( s_1 \) invariants also must coincide as \( \alpha \equiv \pm 1 \) mod \( 2^a \) implies that \( k \) is even and the \( \frac{p}{2} \) condition implies that \( \epsilon = 0 \). For the converse we argue case by case. In the first case of \( a = 1 \) we need to show that \( m' \equiv \alpha m \) mod \( 2q \) where \( \alpha \equiv 1 \) mod \( 2 \). But here \( 0 \equiv s_1(M_{m,n}) - s_1(M_{m',n}) \equiv \frac{km^2}{2} + \frac{3\alpha q}{2} + \frac{\alpha mn}{2} \mod 1 \) which implies that \( \epsilon = 0 \) and hence \( m' \equiv \alpha m \) mod \( 2q \). Also \( \alpha^2 \equiv 1 \) mod \( 2q \) reduces modulo 2 to \( \alpha^2 \equiv 1 \) mod 2 and hence \( \alpha \equiv 1 \) mod 2. In the second case of \( a = 2, m \) even we need to show that \( m' \equiv \alpha m \) mod \( 4q \) and \( \alpha \equiv \pm 1 \) mod \( 4 \). Again \( 0 \equiv \frac{km^2}{2} + \frac{3\alpha q}{2} + \frac{\alpha mn}{2} \equiv \frac{3\alpha q}{2} \mod 1 \) implies that \( \epsilon = 0 \) and hence \( m' \equiv \alpha m \) mod \( 4q \). Also \( \alpha^2 \equiv 1 \) mod \( 4q \) reduces modulo 4 to \( \alpha^2 \equiv 1 \) mod 4 and hence \( \alpha \equiv \pm 1 \) mod 4. For the last case of \( a > 2, m \) odd we need to show that \( m' \equiv \pm \alpha m \) mod \( 2^a q \) and \( \alpha \equiv 1 \) mod \( 2^a \). Again \( 0 \equiv \frac{km^2}{2} + \frac{3\alpha q}{2} + \frac{\alpha mn}{2} \equiv \frac{km^2}{2} + \frac{\alpha mn}{2} \equiv \frac{km^2}{2} + \frac{\alpha m}{2} \equiv \frac{k+\epsilon}{2} \mod 1 \) as \( m \) is odd. By Lemma 3.2 we know that there are 4 possible cases for \( \alpha \) after reduction modulo \( 2^a \), namely \( \alpha \equiv 1, 2^{a-1} - 1, 2^{a-1} + 1, 2^a - 1 \) mod \( 2^a \), \( a > 2 \).

For \( \alpha \equiv 2^{a-1} - 1, 2^{a-1} + 1 \) mod \( 2^a \) we obtain that \( k \) must be odd as \( \alpha^2 \equiv 1 \) mod \( n \). Hence \( \epsilon \) must be odd as well by the \( s_1 \) condition. But then we obtain that \( m' \equiv \pm m \) mod \( 2^a \) and hence \( m' \equiv \bar{\alpha} m \) mod \( n \) with \( \bar{\alpha} \equiv \pm 1 \) mod \( 2^a \). In the case \( \alpha \equiv 1, 2^a - 1 \) mod \( 2^a \) we obtain that \( k \) must be even and hence \( \epsilon = 0 \) by the \( s_1 \) condition. Again we conclude that

\[
m' \equiv \alpha m \mod n \text{ and } \alpha^2 \equiv \pm 1 \mod 2^a.
\]

### 3.4 Orientation Reversing Homeomorphism

There is an orientation reversing homeomorphism between manifolds \( M \) and \( M' \) exactly when there is an orientation preserving homeomorphism between \( M \) and \( -M' \). Since the linking form of \( -M_{m,n} \) is \( -l \) we now seek automorphisms of \( \mathbb{Z}_n \) which send \( l \) to \( -l \). Such automorphisms \( \alpha \) are precisely the elements of \( A^{-}(n) \subset \mathbb{Z}_n \). Now \( \frac{p}{2} \) is unchanged.
under changes of orientation whereas \( s_1(-M) = -s_1(M) \). We conclude that \( M_{m',n} \) is orientation reversing homeomorphic to \( M_{m,n} \) if and only if \( s_1(M_{m',n}) = -s_1(M_{m,n}) \) and \( \frac{p_2}{2}(M_{m',n}) = \alpha \frac{p_2}{2}(M_{m,n}) \) for some \( \alpha \in A^{-}(n) \). Applying Lemma 3.2 shows that \( A^{-}(n) \) is nonempty only if \( n = 2^a q \) where \( a = 0 \) or \( 1 \) and \( q \) is a product of powers of primes which are congruent to 1 mod 4. When \( a = 0 \), \( \frac{p_2}{2} \) alone classifies the manifolds \( M_{m,n} \) and \( M_{m',n} \) is ambiguous and we resort to \( s_1 \) to settle the issue. Assume that \( \frac{p_2}{2}(M_{m',n}) = \alpha \frac{p_2}{2}(M_{m,n}) \) so that \( m' \equiv \alpha m + \epsilon q \mod n \) where \( \epsilon = 0 \) or \( 1 \). One calculates

\[
s_1(M_{m',n}) + s_1(M_{m,n}) = \frac{\epsilon}{2} + \frac{\epsilon^2}{4} + \frac{1}{4} \mod 1.
\]

Thus \( s_1(M_{m',n}) \equiv -s_1(M_{m,n}) \mod 1 \) if and only if \( \epsilon = 1 \) and the orientation reversing case of Theorem 1.2 follows.

4 Diffeomorphism classification

From section 3.3 we know that the manifolds \( M_{m,n} \) and \( M_{m',n} \) are PL-homeomorphic if and only if they are almost diffeomorphic. In [EK] it is shown that the invariant \( \mu \) is additive with respect to connected sums and that it distinguishes all exotic 7-spheres. Combining these facts with the PL-homeomorphism classification we obtain that the total spaces \( M_{m,n} \) and \( M_{m',n} \) are diffeomorphic if and only if they are PL-homeomorphic and their \( \mu \)-invariants coincide. Hence they are diffeomorphic if and only if they have the same invariants \( \frac{p_2}{2} \) and \( \mu \).

Smooth surgery theory (see [MM]) implies that there are exactly 28 different smooth manifolds homeomorphic to \( M_{m,n} \). A natural question to ask is which manifolds homeomorphic to \( M_{m,n} \) may be represented by total spaces of \( S^3 \)-bundles over \( S^4 \), i.e. by manifolds \( M_{m',n} \). In order to answer this question for some examples of small \( n \) we introduce the following integer valued functions.

**Definition 4.1.**

1. Let \( \text{Hom}^+(n) \) [\( \text{Hom}(n) \)] be the number of orientation preserving [orientation preserving and reversing] homeomorphism types of the total space of an \( S^3 \)-bundle over \( S^4 \) with Euler class \( n \).

2. Let \( \text{Diff}^+(m,n) \) [\( \text{Diff}(m,n) \)] be the number of distinct orientation preserving [orientation preserving and reversing] classes of smooth manifolds represented by \( S^3 \)-bundles over \( S^4 \) in each homeomorphism class of \( M_{m,n} \).

Using the congruences of Theorems 1.1 and 1.2 we obtain the following results for a selection of values of \( n \) with \( n \leq 16 \). Note that in this range orientation reversing homeomorphism and diffeomorphisms only exist for \( n = 1, 2, 5, 10, 13 \).

- \( \text{Hom}^+(1) = 1 \) and \( \text{Diff}^+(m,1) = 16 \); \( \text{Hom}(1) = 1 \) and \( \text{Diff}(m,1) = 11 \);
• Hom$^+(2) = 2$ and Diff$^+(m, 2) = 8$ in each homeomorphism class;
  Hom(2) = 1 and Diff(m, 2) = 13 in each homeomorphism class;

• Hom$^+(5) = 3$ and Diff$^+(m, 5) = 16$ in each homeomorphism class;
  Hom(5) = 2 and Diff(m, 5) = 12 for $m \equiv 0 \text{ mod } 5$;
  Diff(m, 5) = 24 for $m \not\equiv 0 \text{ mod } 5$;

• Hom$^+(10) = 6$ and Diff$^+(m, 10) = 8$ in each homeomorphism class;
  Hom(10) = 3 and Diff(m, 10) = 14 in each homeomorphism class;

• Hom$^+(7) = 4$ and Diff$^+(m, 7) = 4$ for $m \equiv 0 \text{ mod } 7$;
  Diff$^+(m, 7) = 28$ for $m \not\equiv 0 \text{ mod } 7$;

• Hom$^+(14) = 8$ and Diff$^+(m, 14) = 2$ for $m \equiv 0 \text{ mod } 14$ and
  Diff$^+(m, 14) = 14$ for all others;

• Hom$^+(4) = 3$ and Diff$^+(m, 4) = 4$ for $m \equiv 0 \text{ mod } 4$;
  Diff$^+(m, 4) = 8$ for $m \equiv 2 \text{ mod } 4$;
  Diff$^+(m, 4) = 16$ for $m \equiv \pm 1 \text{ mod } 4$;

• Hom$^+(8) = 4$ and Diff$^+(m, 8) = 8$ for $m \equiv 0 \text{ or } 4 \text{ mod } 8$ and
  Diff$^+(m, 8) = 16$ for $m \equiv \pm 1, \pm 3 \text{ mod } 8$;

• Hom$^+(12) = 6$ and Diff$^+(m, 12) = 4$ for $m \equiv 0, \pm 4 \text{ mod } 12$;
  Diff$^+(m, 12) = 8$ for $m \equiv \pm 2, 6 \text{ mod } 12$;
  Diff$^+(m, 12) = 16$ for $m \equiv \pm 1 \text{ or } \pm 5 \text{ mod } 12$ and
  for $m \equiv \pm 3 \text{ mod } 12$;

• Hom$^+(16) = 7$ and Diff$^+(m, 16) = 4$ for $m \equiv \pm 4 \text{ mod } 16$;
  Diff$^+(m, 16) = 8$ for $m \equiv 0 \text{ or } 8 \text{ mod } 16$;
  Diff$^+(m, 16) = 16$ for $m \equiv \pm 2 \text{ or } \pm 6 \text{ mod } 16$ and
  for $m \equiv \pm 1, \pm 3, \pm 5, \pm 7 \text{ mod } 16$.

5 Classification up to homotopy equivalence

In order to use surgery theory to classify these manifolds we recall the following definitions
based on the work of Sullivan, see [MM] for a detailed description. Let $M$ be a Cat-
manifold, where Cat stands for the piecewise linear (PL), topological (Top), or smooth
(O) category. Then $S^\text{Cat}(M)$, the Cat-structure set of $M$, consists of pairs $(L, f)$ where
$L$ is a Cat-manifold and $f : L \to M$ is a simple homotopy equivalence. Two objects
$(L_1, f_1)$ and $(L_2, f_2)$ represent the same element in $S^\text{Cat}(M)$ if there exist an h-cobordism
W with \(\partial W = L_1 \cup L_2\) and a homotopy equivalence \(F : W \to M\). Moreover we denote by \(\mathcal{N}^{\text{Cat}}(M)\) the set of equivalence classes of normal cobordisms. Here two normal maps (or surgery problems)

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\nu_{L_1} & \xrightarrow{f_1} & \nu_1 \\
\downarrow & & \downarrow \\
L_1 & \xrightarrow{f_1} & M
\end{array}
\quad \text{and} \quad
\begin{array}{ccc}
\nu_{L_2} & \xrightarrow{f_2} & \nu_2 \\
\downarrow & & \downarrow \\
L_2 & \xrightarrow{f_2} & M
\end{array}
\]

are normally cobordant if there exists a cobordism \(W\) with \(\partial W = L_1 \cup L_2\) and

\[
\begin{array}{ccc}
\nu_W & \xrightarrow{F} & \nu \times I \\
\downarrow & & \downarrow \\
W & \xrightarrow{F} & M \times I
\end{array}
\]

such that \(F|L_1 = f_1, F|\nu_{L_1} = \hat{f}_1, F|L_2 = f_2, F|\nu_{L_2} = b \circ \hat{f}_2\) where \(b : \nu_2 \to \nu_1\) is a bundle isomorphism. Let

\[
L_n = \begin{cases} 
\mathbb{Z}, & \text{if } n = 4k; \\
\mathbb{Z}_2, & \text{if } n = 4k + 2; \\
0, & \text{otherwise.}
\end{cases}
\]

The following two facts are well-known, see [MN].

1. \(\mathcal{N}^{\text{Cat}}(M) \cong [M, G/\text{Cat}]\).
2. There is an exact sequence of sets, the surgery exact sequence:

\[
\cdots \to \mathcal{N}^{\text{Cat}}(M^n \times I, \partial) \xrightarrow{s} L_{n+1} \to S^{\text{Cat}}(M^n) \to \mathcal{N}^{\text{Cat}}(M^n) \to L_n.
\]

A natural set of homotopy equivalences between sphere bundles is the set of fiber homotopy equivalences of the associated spherical fibrations. The transition from vector bundles to spherical fibrations is encoded in the \(J\)-homomorphism, \(J_{n,k} : \pi_n(SO(k)) \to \pi_{n+k}(S^k)\), see [MN], pp 502-4 for a standard definition. If \(\zeta\) and \(\xi\) are rank \(k\) vector bundles over \(S^n\), \(\zeta, \xi \in \pi_{n-1}(SO(k))\), then \(S(\xi \oplus \epsilon)\) is fiber homotopically equivalent to \(S(\xi)\) if and only if \(J_{n-1,k}(\zeta) = J_{n-1,k}(\xi)\). Here \(S(\xi)\) denotes the sphere bundle of \(\xi\) and \(\epsilon\) is a trivial bundle. In fact, it is easy to see that one has fiber homotopy equivalence even without stabilization.

**Lemma 5.1.** There exist fiber homotopy equivalences \(f_j : M_{m+12j,n} \to M_{m,n}\) for all \(j \in \mathbb{Z}\).

**Proof.** For our manifolds \(n = 4\) and \(k = 4\) and the \(J\)-homomorphism becomes \(J_{3,4} : \mathbb{Z} \oplus \mathbb{Z} \cong \pi_3(SO(4)) \to \pi_7(S^4) \cong \mathbb{Z} \oplus \mathbb{Z}_{12}\). Moreover the projection of \(J_{3,4}\) onto the free summand is given by taking the Euler number of the corresponding bundle. Hence \(J_{3,4}(\xi_{m+12j,n}) = J_{3,4}(\xi_{m,n})\) from which it follows that \(S(\xi_{m+12j,n}) = M_{m+12j,n}\) and \(S(\xi_{m,n}) = M_{m,n}\) are fiber homotopy equivalent. \(\Box\)

We now give a general result which allows one to identify the normal invariant defined by any fiber homotopy equivalence of sphere bundles.
**Lemma 5.2.** Let $\zeta$ and $\xi$ be vector bundles over a simply connected closed smooth manifold $B$ and let $f : S(\zeta) \to S(\xi)$ be a fiber homotopy equivalence of sphere bundles over $B$. Then $f$ defines an element $[f]$ in $\mathcal{N}^O(B)$ and also, as a homotopy equivalence, an element $\{f\}$ of $\mathcal{S}^O(S(\xi))$. Let $\pi^*_\xi : \mathcal{N}^O(B) \to \mathcal{N}^O(S(\xi))$ be the map induced by $\pi^*_\xi : S(\xi) \to B$ and let $\eta^O$ be the map from the structure set to the normal invariant set. Then,

$$\eta^O(\{f\}) = \pi^*_\xi([f]).$$

**Proof.** The proof requires translating between alternate definitions of the elements of the set of normal invariants of $S(\xi)$. See [MM, Chapter 1] for a detailed definition of the normal invariant set. We begin with the homotopy equivalence $f$ which defines a class $\{f\}$ in the structure set of $S(\xi)$ and therefore a normal invariant, $\eta^O(\{f\})$, of $S(\xi)$. This normal invariant is the pullback of the stable normal bundle of $S(\xi)$, $\nu_{S(\xi)}$, along a homotopy inverse of $f$, denoted by $g$. Identifying $f^*g^*(\nu_{S(\xi)})$ with $\nu_{S(\xi)}$ yields the following description of $\eta^O(\{f\})$.

$$\eta^O(\{f\}) = \left( \begin{array}{c} \nu_{S(\xi)} \xymatrix{ \xymatrix{ \sim \ar[r] & f^*g^*(\nu_{S(\xi)}) \ar[d] & g^*\nu_{S(\xi)} \ar[l] } \ar[d] & \xymatrix{ S(\zeta) \ar[r] & S(\xi) } } \end{array} \right)$$

If we choose $g$ to be a fiber homotopy equivalence itself then $f^*g^* = id$ as all bundles involved are pullbacks (recall Fact 3.1). Moreover, $g^*\pi^*_\xi = \pi^*_\xi$. We shall need explicit coordinates to compare normal invariants. Recall that for any pair of vector bundles $\phi$ and $\psi$, $\pi^*_\psi(\phi) = \{(v, w)|\pi_\psi(v) = \pi_\phi(w)\} \subset S(\psi) \times \phi$. With these coordinates,

$$\eta^O(\{f\}) = \left( \begin{array}{c} \pi^*_\xi(\nu_B \oplus -\zeta) \xymatrix{ \xymatrix{ \xymatrix{ \sim \ar[r] & \pi^*_\xi(\nu_B \oplus -\zeta) \ar[d] & g^*\pi^*_\xi(\nu_B \oplus -\zeta) \ar[l] } \ar[d] & \xymatrix{ S(\zeta) \ar[r] & S(\xi) } } \end{array} \right)$$

with $z \in S(\zeta)_b, y \in \nu_b, z' = -\zeta_b$ and $b \in B$.

Next we turn to the element $[f] \in \mathcal{N}^O(B)$ which is the class of fiber homotopy equivalences between $\zeta$ and $\xi$ containing the fiberwise cone on $f$, $f' : \zeta \to \xi$. The element $\pi^*_\xi([f])$ is the pullback of this fiber homotopy equivalence class over $S(\xi)$.

$$\pi^*_\xi(\zeta) \xymatrix{ \xymatrix{ \xymatrix{ \pi^*_\xi(\zeta) \ar[r] & \pi^*_\xi(\xi) \ar[d] & \pi^*_\xi(f') \ar[l] } \ar[d] & \xymatrix{ S(\zeta) \ar[r] & S(\xi) } } }$$

, $\pi^*_\xi(f') : (x, z) \mapsto (x, f'(z))$

It remains to convert the fiber homotopy equivalence $\pi^*_\xi f'$ into a degree one normal map. To do this we give a more general version of the path from a fiber homotopy equivalence to a normal invariant than found in [MM].
Lemma 5.3. Let $h : \phi \rightarrow \psi$ be a fiber homotopy equivalence of vector bundles over a manifold $M$, let $s : M \rightarrow \psi$ be a section of $\pi_\psi$ such that $h$ is transverse to $s(M)$ and let $N := h^{-1}(s(M))$ be the inverse image of $s(M)$. Then the normal invariant of $M$ associated to $h$ is

$$
\eta^O(h) = \left( \nu_N \cong (\pi_\phi|_N)^*(\psi \oplus \nu_M \oplus -\phi) \rightarrow \psi \oplus \nu_M \oplus \phi \right)
$$

where $h(w) = s(m), v \in \psi_m, y \in \nu_M, w' \in -\phi_m, w \in N \subset \phi$ and $m \in M$.

Proof of Lemma 5.3 Let $s_t$ be the path of sections $s_t(m) = t s(m)$ from $s$ to the zero section and let $s_{[0,1]}$ be the corresponding section of $\pi_\psi \times id_{[0,1]}$. Deform $h \times id : \phi \times [0,1] \rightarrow \psi \times [0,1]$ to $H$ so that $H$ is transverse to $s_{[0,1]}(M \times [0,1])$ and so that $H|_{\phi \times (1-t,1]} = (h \times id)|_{\phi \times (1-t,1]}$. Then $H^{-1}(s_{[0,1]}(M \times [0,1]))$ is a normal cobordism between $H^{-1}(s_1(B))$ and $H^{-1}(s_0(B))$. The latter is the usual definition of the normal invariant associated to $h$ (see [MM, Theorem 2.23]) while the former is the one we give above. To check that the normal data are correct one observes that $\nu_N = \nu_{N \rightarrow \phi} \oplus \pi_\phi|_N(\nu_\phi)$. The first of these bundles is $(\pi_\phi|_N)^*\psi$ by transversality and the fact that $\psi$ is the normal bundle to any section of $\psi$. The second bundle is computed by [3.3]. All bundle maps are the canonical maps associated to pullbacks. \qed

We now complete the proof of Lemma 5.2. Consider the fiber homotopy equivalence $\pi_\xi f' : \pi_\xi(\zeta) \rightarrow \pi_\xi(\xi)$ and the diagonal section $s : S(\xi) \rightarrow \pi_\xi(\xi), s(x) = (x, x)$. In general, given a map of manifolds $F : N \rightarrow M, F \times id_M$ is transverse to the diagonal in $M \times M$ with inverse image the graph of $F$. We have a fiberwise version of this situation so that $\pi_\xi f'$ is transverse to $s(S(\xi))$ with inverse image $N := \pi_\xi f'^{-1}(s(S(\xi))) = \{(x, z)|x = f(z)\} \subset \pi_\xi \zeta$. As $f'$ is length preserving $|x| = |z| = 1$ for all $(x, z) \in N$. Hence we identify $S(\zeta)$ and $N$ via the embedding $i : S(\zeta) \hookrightarrow \pi_\xi \zeta, i(z) = (f(z), z)$. The bundle projection $\pi_\xi^*(\zeta) \rightarrow S(\xi)$ restricted to $N$ takes pairs $(f(z), z)$ to $f(z)$ and we therefore identify it with $f : S(\zeta) \rightarrow S(\xi)$. Applying observation 5.3 and the fact that $g^* \pi_\xi^* = \pi_\xi^*$ we obtain a degree one normal map with domain

$$
\nu_S(\zeta) = f^*(\pi_\xi^* \zeta \oplus \phi_S(\xi) \oplus -\pi_\xi^* \zeta) = f^* \pi_\xi^*(\zeta \oplus \nu_S(\xi) \oplus -\xi \oplus -\zeta) = \pi_\xi^*(\nu_S(\xi) \oplus -\zeta) \oplus \pi_\xi^*(\xi \oplus -\zeta).
$$

The degree one normal map itself is given as follows.

$$
\eta^O(\{\pi_\xi f'\}) = \left( \pi_\xi^*(\nu_S(\xi) \oplus -\zeta \oplus \xi \oplus -\xi) \rightarrow \pi_\xi^*(\nu_S(\xi) \oplus -\zeta \oplus \xi \oplus -\xi) \right)
$$

Since the factor $\xi \oplus -\xi$ is a trivial summand onto which we map with the identity, we can ignore it. Comparing equalities (7) and (8), we see that $\eta^O(\{\pi_\xi f'\}) = \eta^O([f])$. Finally note that the definition of $f'$ implies that $\eta^O(\{\pi_\xi f'\}) = \pi_\xi^*([f]). \qed$
Remark 5.1. In our case the base space of the sphere bundles is four dimensional. Note that we do not use any surgery theory on this four dimensional base space. We only describe the set of normal invariants.

Corollary 5.4. The fiber homotopy equivalences $f_j : M_{m+12j,n} \to M_{m,n}$ have normal invariant $j \in N^O(M_{m,n}) \cong \mathbb{Z}_n$.

Proof. Note that $N^O(S^4) = \pi_4(G/O)$ and the homotopy exact sequence for the fibration $G/O \to BO \to BG$ at $\pi_4$ is $0 \to \mathbb{Z} \to \mathbb{Z} \to \mathbb{Z}_{24} \to 0$. Thus the value of $[f_j]$ in $[S^4, G/O]$ may be computed simply by taking the difference of the stable bundles $\xi_{m+12j,n} \oplus \varepsilon$ and $\xi_{m,n} \oplus \varepsilon$ in $\pi_4(BO)$ and then dividing by 24. But one computes that this is precisely $(n+2(m+12j)-(n+2m))/24 = j$. The map $\pi^*_j : \mathbb{Z} \cong [S^4, G/O] \to [M_{m,n}, G/O] \cong \mathbb{Z}_n$ is identical with the map on cohomology $\pi_4^* : H^4(S^4) \to H^4(M_{m,n})$ and thus $\pi^*_j[f_j] = j \in \mathbb{Z}_n = [M_{m,n}, G/O] = N^O(M_{m,n})$. $\square$

Proof of Theorem 1.3 Let $\Theta^7$ denote the group of exotic seven spheres. Since $\mu$ is additive with respect to connected sums and distinguishes all homotopy 7-spheres, the action of $\Theta^7$ on $N^O(M_{m,n})$, $\Sigma \cdot [f : M \to M_{m,n}] = [f : M^\# \Sigma \to M_{m,n}]$, is free. The quotient under this action defines the map $\eta^O$ to the smooth normal invariants.

$$0 \longrightarrow \Theta^7 \longrightarrow S^O(M_{m,n}) \overset{\eta^O}{\longrightarrow} N^O(M_{m,n}) \longrightarrow 0.$$ 

We see that all normal invariants of $M_{m,n}$ are normally bordant to homotopy equivalences and distinct elements of the structure set with the same normal invariants differ only by a connected sum with an exotic 7-sphere in the domain. But we have constructed the normal invariant set in Lemma 5.2. It follows that a given seven dimensional manifold $M$ is homotopy equivalent to $M_{m,n}$ if and only if $M$ is homeomorphic to $M_{m+12j,n}$ for some $j$. Moreover, in Theorem 1.3 we gave conditions on $m$ and $m'$ for a classification up to almost diffeomorphism. It remains to check that applying Theorem 1.2 yields the relation given in Theorem 1.3 and we do this now.

Case $n = 2^0 q$, $q$ odd and $\frac{m}{2}$ classifies.

$$M_{m',n} \cong M_{m,n} \iff M_{m',n} \cong M_{m+12j,n} \text{ for some } j.$$ 

$$\iff \alpha m' \equiv m + 12j \mod n \text{ for some } j \text{ and some } \alpha \in A^+(n).$$ 

$$\iff \alpha m' \equiv m \mod (n,12) \text{ for some } \alpha \in A^+(n).$$ 

$$\iff \alpha m' \equiv m \mod (n,12) \text{ for some } \alpha \in A^+(n,12)).$$ 

Case $n = 2^a q$ where $a = 2$ and $m$ odd or $a > 2$ and $m$ even, $\frac{m}{2}$ classifies and $M_{m+\epsilon,\frac{n}{2}} \cong M_{m,n}$ for $\epsilon = 0,1$.

$$M_{m',n} \cong M_{m,n} \iff M_{m',n} \cong M_{m+12j+\frac{\epsilon}{2},n} \text{ for some } j \text{ and for } \epsilon = 0,1.$$ 

$$\iff \alpha m' \equiv m + 12j + \epsilon \frac{n}{2} \mod \frac{n}{2} \text{ for some } j, \epsilon = 0,1 \text{ and } \alpha \in A^+(n).$$ 

$$\iff \alpha m' \equiv m + 12j \mod n \text{ for some } \alpha \in A^+(n).$$ 

$$\iff \alpha m' \equiv m \mod (n,12) \text{ for some } \alpha \in A^+(n,12)).$$ 

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Moreover \( \alpha M \in \text{orientation reversing case}, \) Case \( n \in 2^a q, a = 1 \) or \( a = 2 \) and \( m \) even or \( a > 2 \) and \( m \) odd.

\[
M_{m',n} \simeq M_{m,n} \iff M_{m',n} \cong M_{m+12j,n} \text{ for some } j.
\]

\[
\alpha m' \equiv m + 12 j \mod n \text{ for some } j \text{ and } \alpha \in A^+(n), \alpha \equiv \pm 1 \mod 2^a.
\]

\[
\Rightarrow \alpha m' \equiv m \mod (n, 12) \text{ for some } \alpha \in A^+(n).
\]

\[
\Leftrightarrow \alpha m' \equiv m \mod (n, 12) \text{ for some } \alpha \in A^+(n).
\]

To reverse the third implication we must show that if \( \alpha m' \equiv m + 12 j \mod n \) for some \( \alpha \in A^+(n) \) then \( \bar{\alpha} \) and \( \bar{j} \) can be chosen so that \( \bar{\alpha} m' \equiv m + 12 \bar{j} \mod n \) and \( \bar{\alpha} \equiv \pm 1 \mod 2^a \). This is evident for \( a = 1, 2 \) so we assume that \( a > 2 \) and \( \alpha \not\equiv \pm 1 \mod 2^a \). But now \( \frac{a}{2} \equiv 12 k \mod n \) for some \( k \) and, since \( m \) is odd, \( (\alpha + \frac{a}{2})m' \equiv m + 12 (j + k) \mod n \).

Moreover \( (\alpha + \frac{a}{2})^2 \equiv 1 \mod n \), hence \( \bar{\alpha} = \alpha + \frac{a}{2} \) and \( \bar{j} = j + k \) suffice.

In the orientation reversing case, \( M_{m',n} \simeq -M_{m,n} \) if and only if \( M_{m',n} \cong M_{m+12j,n} \) for some \( j \). But we know from Theorem \[1.6\] that this only happens when \( n = 2^i p_1^{i_1} \ldots p_k^{i_k}, \)

\[ p_i \equiv 1 \mod 4 \text{ and } \epsilon = 0, 1. \] When \( \epsilon = 0 \) there is only one oriented homotopy type and it admits an orientation reversing homotopy equivalence by Theorem \[1.2\]. When \( \epsilon = 1 \) there are two oriented homotopy types and these are orientation reversing homotopy equivalent again by Theorem \[1.2\]. This concludes the proof of Theorem \[1.5\].

6 Remarks on the classification

6.1 The integer 4 is not favorable

The significance of orientation in the classification is strikingly illustrated by the pair of manifolds \( M_{-1,2} \) and \( M_{0,2} \). The first is the total space of the unit tangent bundle of \( S^4 \) and the second is the total space of “twice” the Hopf fibration. It follows from Theorem \[1.3\] that these bundles are orientation reversing diffeomorphic, a fact well known to geometers, see for example [Ri, p.192, example g], but by Theorem \[1.1\] they are not orientation preserving homotopy equivalent. Notice this situation implies that the oriented homotopy types represented by \( M_{-1,2} \) and \( M_{0,2} \) do not admit orientation reversing homotopy equivalences. If they did then they would be orientation preserving homotopy equivalent. James and Whitehead ([JW2, p.151]) called an integer \( k \) favorable when the existence of an orientation reversing homotopy equivalence between \((k - 1)\)-sphere bundles over \( S^K \) with Euler number 2 implies the existence of an orientation preserving homotopy equivalence between the bundles. We have thus shown that 4 is not favorable.

6.2 The total spaces \( M_{m,n} \) versus the pairs \((M_{m,n}, S^3)\)

We noted above that the homotopy classification of the total spaces and the homotopy classification of the pairs differ if and only if \( (n, 12) = 12 \). For example, \( M_{1,12} \) and \( M_{5,12} \) are homeomorphic but the pairs \((M_{1,12}, S^3)\) and \((M_{5,12}, S^3)\) are not homotopy equivalent. Algebraically, the homeomorphism takes a fiber to five times a fiber and thus pays no respect to the bundle structures of domain and range. In [JW0, Theorem 3.7] James and Whitehead give connectivity conditions under which maps of bundle-like spaces are
homotopic to maps of bundle fiber pairs. This example shows that their results are sharp.

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