

A BULLETIN FROM
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Is It Alive? And, If So, Should It Be?

BY TOM BROWN

A major confrontational vote is scheduled in a week when the world's top scientists meet at the International Congress of Scientific Processes. The vote concerns the work of Dr. Sheila Kloe Staal, whose experiments at Stanford University in California have drawn intense scrutiny — and fierce controversy.

Dr. Staal began work in 2085 trying to analyze all the elements in the organic matter of mammals. Once analyzed, she then led a team of scientists who took the same elements as piecemeal commodities and combined, then re-combined them over and over until “life” resulted.

“One does not think of a living animal as the combination of elemental matter, chemicals, and electricity — but that is, we are now proving, precisely what ‘life’ is truly about,” Dr. Staal wrote in one scientific journal three years ago. That was about the time her work became a cause célèbre for some — a seismic outrage for others.

“It is critical that science understand life,” Dr. Yin Yin Lee, of North Korea, who is the current president of the International Congress of Scientific Processes. “However, it is wrong — wrong! -- for science to try to create life.”

Dr. Lee was instrumental in the worldwide banning of cloning in 2079. Now, his target is a fellow scientist whose work is much less well known to the world population.

The imminent vote by the International Congress will ask Dr. Staal to surrender her research to the Congress archives and to promise to forsake any further experimentation, anywhere — or be banned by her esteemed peers in the worldwide organization. Dr. Lee, and those aligned with his point of view, allege that the “life forms” created by Dr. Staal are spurious science at best.

According to reports from those who have worked closely with Dr. Staal, most of her experiments in recent years were total failures — until last April.

Then, sources say, Dr. Staal’s team was actually able to create a “gelious” form which accepted an electric charge and then maintained “a pulse” for several days via sustained chemical reactions. During that time, the reports indicate, the “man-made geliousness” actually moved in response to heat and cold — without ever being touched directly.

“My God, it’s alive!” Dr Staal was unofficially quoted by one of her students when the gelious matter quivered repeatedly to changes in temperature.

Stanford University, last May, took the unusual move of placing security guards around Dr. Staal’s laboratory and limiting access to all but a handful of key Staal assistants. Neither Dr. Staal nor the university has made any public comment about this subject since May 29. In fact, Dr. Staal has not been seen publicly since last summer.

However, in an equally unusual move, the International Congress of Scientific Processes has summoned Dr. Staal and her key deputies to attend its annual meeting in Reykjavik, Iceland, next week. A personal emissary from Dr. Lee delivered the summons to an assistant of Dr. Staal; no one as yet has been able to confirm if she plans to attend. |<

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