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News in Brief

Bubble-fusion engineer sues other scientists

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Posted by: **Upinder Fotadar** | 23 Apr, 2008

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Posted by: **Upinder Fotadar** | 23 Apr, 2008

This comment has been removed by the moderator

Posted by: **Pearl Tomsat** | 23 Apr, 2008

SORRY FOR THE ERRORS IN MY EARLIER POSTS. PLEASE IGNORE THE TWO ABOVE POSTS BY ME. THESE ERRORS HAVE HOPEFULLY BEEN RECTIFIED: The drama conjoined to Rusi Taleyarkhan continues to unfold and clearly is being blown out of proportions. Moreover, in my opinion it is highly unlikely that a person of Taleyarkhan's background would fudge his data. As to why

some people are not able to reproduce his results does not necessarily throw doubt on Taleyarkhan's credibility as a scientist. Only further study of this data will unravel the truth. If indeed it is proven that Taleyarkhan's data is fallacious the most likely cause could be experimental error or overlook. Dr. Upinder Fotadar Research Scientist, Basic Sciences Division, New York University, 345 East, 24th Street, New York, NY 10010. Phone: 212-998-9578 E-mail: uf4@nyu.edu

Posted by: **Upinder Fotadar** | 23 Apr, 2008

What some people don't seem to be aware of (deliberately?...I wonder) is that Dr. Taleyarkhan's bubble fusion experiment HAS had positive results from independent parties. Mr. Steve Krivit, an investigative journalist of the New Energy Times, had looked into Dr. Taleyarkhan's case in great detail, and had published his findings in July of 2007 (it is available on the web: newenergytimes.com/news/2007/NET23.htm#bubble). Very interesting reading. Really put things in perspective. In light of all that was reported in Mr. Krivit's article, I just couldn't believe that Dr. TALEYARKHAN is the one being harassed. As an editor in the 21st Century Science & Technology magazine puts it, these "investigations for misconduct" are nothing but a series of "witch hunts." Apparently, the detractors who are claiming scientific fraud had been attempting to replicate Dr. Taleyarkhan's experiment using wrong/faulty equipment, and following the wrong procedures. In fact, many of the detractors are scientists who are not even remotely proficient in Dr. Taleyarkhan's field of study. What dictates that such people have the authority to claim fraud when they themselves lack the background necessary to give them that privilege?

Posted by: **Pearl Tomsat** | 23 Apr, 2008

This is a slippery slope. Allowing scientists to sue those who disagree with their work could lead to difficulties down the line. Putting scientists on the chopping block for questioning results could provide precedents that would restrict scientific discussion and maybe cause issues for reviewers in journals, not to mention that whistleblowers involved in actual cases of misconduct could find themselves on the defensive after taking a huge risk to start with. The man may have been wronged, I don't understand the data myself. But this is not the way to handle it. The science should be proving who is right and who is wrong, not the courts.

Posted by: **A Grad** | 23 Apr, 2008

This isn't just a case of one scientist disagreeing with another, or a few scientists questioning another scientist's results. Dr. Taleyarkhan's contributions to the science world extend FAR beyond simply bubble fusion. I think he is familiar with the process of scientific review, discussion, disagreements, etc. This here, in my opinion, is a case of deliberate attempts to malign a fellow researcher for reasons that go beyond professional jealousy, concerns of inaccurate results, etc. I think this sets a precedent for other impetuous whistleblowers to take the proper steps and follow the proper protocol BEFORE going out and screaming "misconduct!" to the world like a bunch of amateur crooks pulling a fast one on their victims. Keep in mind that, after the FIRST allegations of misconduct were made, Dr. Taleyarkhan had been found NOT GUILTY of any wrongdoings. But think about it: that means that the detractors will look bad. From reports on the case, it seems that the primary detractors from Purdue had seen to it that Congress members received a nasty note demanding that the case be reopened. By pushing the right buttons with Congress, they got their way. Only this time, they had Congress itself pressure Purdue (being a public institution) to find something wrong--anything, just as long as the detractors won't look bad. The science HAS proven who is right and who is wrong--and Dr. Taleyarkhan had been proven right. The courts--swayed by the detractors themselves--are the ones who have been calling the shots all along--and in my opinion, Dr. Taleyarkhan is more than justified in retaliating in this manner. In fact, I was wondering WHEN he would finally take these necessary steps to give these guys their comeuppance.

Posted by: **Randy Starline** | 24 Apr, 2008

I'm curious why Taleyarkhan is called an "engineer" in this newsbyte. He is a Professor and scientist. Is this part of the campaign against him? Why would Nature want to take side on this before the jury is out?

Posted by: **Pierre Carbonnelle** | 25 Apr, 2008

Taleyarkhan is a professor in a department of nuclear engineering, and his degrees are in mechanical and nuclear engineering.

Posted by: **Emmanuel Wirfel** | 25 Apr, 2008

This comment has been removed by the moderator

Posted by: **Pierre Carbonnelle** | 25 Apr, 2008

The area of research in which Dr. Talyarkhan is active seems to belong to protoscience. How does protoscience differ from pseudoscience? Methods of validation in protoscience are the same as in science. Should protoscience reports, for example, submitted by PhD researchers, be published in scientific journals? I think they should. A schematic illustration of evolution of protoscience toward accepted science can be seen in the Introduction of my own protoscience report: <http://pages.csam.montclair.edu/~kowalski/cf/336cat.html>

Posted by: **Ludwik Kowalski** | 25 Apr, 2008

Just because results are not easily reproducible is no reason to consider them as fallacious or faked. Some years ago, as an organic chemist, I worked out a prep. for a certain type of compound. For some reason the prep. method never worked for anyone else. I have no idea what I was doing that noone else could replicate... It is sad when a scientist has to go to court to try to protect his reputation. Unfortunaately, it takes many good reviews on anything to correct one bad one. I'm afraid the detractors have probably caused irreparable damage already. Dean L. Sinclair (Ph.D)

Posted by: **Dean Sinclair** | 25 Apr, 2008

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Posted by: **Anon ymous** | 25 Apr, 2008

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Posted by: **Marshall Charmichale** | 25 Apr, 2008

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Posted by: **Pearl Tomsat** | 25 Apr, 2008

Indeed, "Pierre Carbonelle." [with regard to your point about how Dr. Taleyarkhan is only referred to as an "engineer," when he is also a Professor and Scientist.] It is also very suspicious that the journalist of this story kept the names of the so-called "faculty" detractors at Purdue a mystery in this article.

Posted by: **Pearl Tomsat** | 25 Apr, 2008

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Posted by: **Brian Josephson** | 26 Apr, 2008

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Posted by: **Mensur Omerbashich** | 26 Apr, 2008

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Posted by: **Brian Josephson** | 28 Apr, 2008

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Posted by: **Upinder Fotadar** | 28 Apr, 2008

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Posted by: **Upinder Fotadar** | 28 Apr, 2008

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Posted by: **Alexandr Talyzin** | 29 Apr, 2008

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Posted by: **Emmanuel Wirfel** | 02 May, 2008
