

Cryogenics: today's imagination tomorrow's disaster

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There has been a new talk. A talk of something very unique. If achieved, it could fundamentally change the lives of everyone on planet earth. From those who have already left us, to our very own selves. What such talk is this you may ask? Cryogenics, the blanket to every mad scientist's idea: that they'll one day, just one day, live forever. Although cryogenics may fill a void in one's imagination.

As long as we are alive, such an idea will never come to pass. Though cryogenics has taken in many famous patients. Patients such as Ted Williams, or celebrities like Simon Cowell or Larry King (NHPR-Molly Donahue) who are taking steps to live forever. These celebrities don't reflect even a slight percentage of the amount of people in America that would ever favor cryogenics. That goes to show you, how such a study like this, is just another figment of someone's imagination. Cryogenics originates from the greek word kryos, which refers to frost or something cold.

(Googledefinition) It's combined with the word genetics, which is also the study of inherited characteristics. So overall cryogenics can be defined as the study of how cold and/or frosty temperatures affects human characteristics. Cryogenics has been used by very famous people. But why just famous actors, celebrities, and baseball players? Infact today where can we identify a random friend, relative, or neighbor who has ever mentioned freezing themselves? Nownere? None? One? Of Course, because the price to be " frozen" is way beyond the average budget of a middle class American, \$10, 000 - \$12, 000is the average cost for a normal whole body preservation to be exact.(Alcor Website).

Or you can have a prestigious Alcor special for \$200, 000. Dont worry its the special.(lo9-George Dvorsky) Although such prices may be nothing for celebrities and the elites. As long as prices stay so high, I don't think cryogenics will ever have a stable future in the science. While some aspects of cryogenics may seem pleasing to elites, there is no guaranteed return for a \$150, 000 investment until this project is actually deemed successful.

In Fact it is said that of the 60 recorded cryogenic cases since 1993. (NYT- Philip Hilts) Nobody really knows how many bodies have been frozen. With such a misty visualization of what's going on in the field of cryogenics, is it really safe to make such a large investment in a field that we know so little of? Bodies have been said to be also kept frozen indefinitely-or until the company that "cares" for them goes bankrupt, in which cases they are thawed or buried. (NYT- Philip Hilts)There certainly wasn't much "care" if a \$150, 000 investment turns into buried cash. Until we actually make some scientific breakthrough, the field of cryogenics will always remain a figment in one's imagination.

Because according to Phillip Holt of the New York Times "In some ways, nature is ahead of research." Human power has no control over nature, no power of reality, and no power over science, so even if big names continue to make investments in cryogenics, there's not been one proven case of a successful revival. Let's let that marinate. Historically the field of cryogenics has never been fundamentally successful in its research. In 1999 a Boris Rubinsky experiment showed stagnant progress in the field of cryogenics. Rubinsky was trying to pump rat tails with a c***tail of cryoprotective chemicals.

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(Discover- Elizabeth Svoboda) But the studies showed that there were nine rats tested frozen for two hours and then thawed out. Of the nine rats, eight survived for several hours, and the other survived for five hours.(Discover- Elizabeth Svoboda) If cryogenic studies are being done through rats with data that does not support its use. Until something is done, can the public really put their trust in laboratory work being done on rats? Especially where data shows that the longest period of life was five days after being thawed out? Cryogenic institutes have also taken lawsuits. One of cryogenics most famous faces is our very own superstar Ted Williams.

But just recently in 2002 John and Samuel Williams, nephews to Ted Williams, made news when they were filing a lawsuit against Alcor. They were arguing the fact that Alcor did not have proper legal permission to freeze their uncle. (Discover- Elizabeth Svoboda) So at the end of the day we have to face reality. Do rat and frog studies justify cryogenic use? Is there enough evidence for us to take such risks? Are you ready to make a thousand dollar investment in a field that is taking lawsuits? Are you ready to take the chance...

? Ken Storey of Carleton University said it best. " They're trying to take a thousand steps at once." (Discover- Elizabeth Svoboda) He said in a statement about the field of cryogenics. Cryogenics may be something that is possible down the line, far, far down the line. It could possibly help doctors increase transplant numbers, and do other great things if it actually succeeds.

But overall since the promise of eternal life is not promising to everybody, until the field of Cryogenics revives someone from the dead I'm surely not jumping at the idea just yet, and I wouldn't expect you to do so either.