



## Group claims human cloning success - Friday 27 December 2002

A chemist who belongs to a sect that believes life on Earth was created by extraterrestrials today claimed to have produced the world's first human clone, a baby girl.

The 7lb (3.2 kilogram) baby was born yesterday by caesarean section, said Brigitte Boisselier, head of Clonaid, the company that claimed success in the project. She would not say where the baby was born; she did say the birth was at 11:55 a.m. local time.

Even before the announcement, other scientists expressed doubt that her group could clone a human.

Dr Boisselier, who spoke at a news conference, said the baby, dubbed "Eve" by the scientists, is a clone of the 31-year-old American woman who donated the DNA for the cloning process, had the resulting embryo implanted and then gestated the baby.

If confirmed, that would make the child an exact genetic duplicate of her mother.

Dr Boisselier said the mother had resorted to cloning because her mate was infertile.

"It is very important to remember that we are talking about a baby," she said. "The baby is very healthy. She is fine, she doing fine. The parents are happy. I hope that you remember them when you talk about this baby, not like a monster, like some results of something that is disgusting."

Dr Boisselier did not immediately present DNA evidence showing a genetic match between mother and daughter, however. That omission leaves her claim scientifically unsupported.

The group expects four more babies to be born in the next several weeks, another from North America, one from Europe and two from Asia. Two of the couples are using preserved cells taken from their own children before their deaths, and one is a lesbian couple, she claimed.

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"I do believe that it is the choice of every parent to choose the child they want, even if they don't have any infertility problem," Dr Boisselier said.

(Source : <http://www.theguardian.com/science/2002/dec/27/genetics.science>)