

What is life? Follow the bits

The debate over the definition of life is getting messier and messier, but one of the pioneers on the biochemical frontier is suggesting a method to tell whether scientists are actually looking at a new form of life: Follow the bits of information that are contained in the chemistry. “How many heritable ‘bits’ of information are involved, and where did they come from?” Scripps Research Institute biologist Gerald Joyce asks in an [essay published today by the journal PLoS Biology](#). “A genetic system that contains more bits than the number that were required to initiate its operation might reasonably be considered a new form of life.”

View the original article here: [What is life? Follow the bits – MSNBC Cosmiclog](#)