Science takes time - Families take time!

Kirsti Baird Hultberg

The ESST Programme

University of Oslo

Supervisor: Ingunn Moser, University of Oslo.

November 2000
Abstract

Who has time to have a family?

Scientists are the «heroes» of our time.

Science takes time - Families take time.

Who gives time?

My case-study consists of interviews with scientific workers of both sexes. They are asked how they juggle the time required in the production of scientific knowledge and family life. My findings indicate that it is women, who give of their time.
Preface

I would like to express my gratitude to BiO for their help in giving me access to the Institute. It has been extremely important for me in acquiring the necessary information about how those who work there, organise their work in relation to their private lives. I would also like to thank my informants for giving of their time inspite of their often tight schedules, and especially thank Professor Hans Prydz for his generosity and prompt response in giving me access and putting me in contact with his staff.

I also wish to thank Jorunn Solheim at AFI for her advice and encouragement, as well as for introducing me to much relevant literature.

At last I would like to thank my supervisor Ingunn Moser for her co-operation and for useful criticism during the process of writing this thesis.
Content

1. Introduction
   1.1 My scientist grandfather - a personal anecdote
   1.2 A room of one’s own
   1.3 Professional achievement for women?
   1.4 Accountability and Science
   1.5 From fact finding to the study of processes
   1.6 Context as an important ingredient of scientific processes
   1.7 Women’s entry into working life and science
4.2 Limitations of my qualitative approach.................................25
4.3 The interviews........................................................................25
4.4 How the interviews were performed........................................26
4.5 The informants interviewed....................................................27

5. Description of the Biotechnology center in Oslo..............28

5.1 The lab...................................................................................28
5.2 The organisation of the lab......................................................29
5.3 Genetechology as a business within contemporary society...........30
5.4 Pros. and cons. in genetechology............................................31

6. Analysis.................................................................32
6.1 Presentation of the material.................................................32
   6.1.1 The scientists own situation.............................................32
   6.1.2 Presentation of the informants and how they organise their lives at home and at work........................................32
   6.1.3 The male informants.......................................................36
   6.1.4 The female informants....................................................37
   6.1.5 Shaping of a scientist / Acquiring a lifestyle.........................38
   6.1.6 The laboratory a lifestyle...............................................39
   6.1.7 The explicit goals for the work at BiO................................39
6.2 Time and priorities.............................................................41
   6.2.1 Time disposition and the power to decide..........................41
   6.2.2 Care-taking takes time....................................................42
   6.2.3 Time in relation to policies for families..............................43
   6.2.4 BiO’s family policy?.......................................................44
   6.2.5 Families - a handicap?....................................................45
   6.2.6 Time enough...............................................................46
   6.2.7 Mythification...............................................................47
6.3 The role of the scientist.......................................................48
6.3.1 Identity as a scientist.................................................................48
6.3.2 Multiple roles..............................................................................50
6.3.3 Attitudes and values in relation to time and work.........................51
6.3.4 A search for new stories...............................................................52
6.4 Women and science........................................................................53
  6.4.1 The study of gender issues in relation to production of scientific knowledge....53
  6.4.2 Reluctance to take leading positions..............................................53
  6.4.3 Emotions and anxiety.................................................................54
  6.4.4 At this point of time what do women want?.................................55
  6.4.5 Women as leaders.................................................................57
  6.4.6 Science without care-taking responsibilities is not a problem..........58
6.5 Different countries - different organisation of work..........................59
6.6 Do care-taking responsibilities make a difference to science?.............60

7. Conclusion.................................................................62
Summing up.....................................................................................62
Provisions for the future.................................................................63

Word count of the body of the dissertation; 19510


**Literature:**


**Bateson, Gregory.** (1972 ). «Steps to an Ecology of mind». New York: Ballantine books

**Beavoir, Simone de.** (1949). «The Second Sex». Norsk utg.PAX 2000


Freeman, C. and Soete, L. (1974/1997) «The Economics of Industrial Innovation». London: Pinter


Norsk utg.(1974), Oslo: Dreyers Forlag


Hoffmann, Lynn. (1988). «A constructist position for family therapy». The Irish journal for Phsychology, 9, no.1


Shiva, Vandana. (1999). From an open meeting at Folkets hus, 13/10/99 in Oslo. «Genetechnology in a North - South perspective»


Other sources: (verbal & cuttings)

BiO annual report (1999)


Gyldendal konversasjons leksikon (1935). Oslo: Gyldendal Norske Forlag

Shiva, Vandana, 9/9/00. «Benefits of Globalisation». BBC World


Wahlgren, Mats. (1999). From an open meeting at Folkets hus, 13/10/99 in Oslo. «Genetotechnology in a North - South perspective»

(*1) - The Guardian, June 2000

(*2) - Universitas, 9 / 2 /00

(*3) - Universitas, 8 / 3 /00