

## **RESERACH ABSTRACT**

Based on interviews, participant observations and extensive literature analysis, this thesis traces the self-fashioning of an international techno-scientific subculture: the DIYbio network. Starting from the narrative formation of the figure of the bio-hacker, this work follows the composition of the trope of recombinant DNA as a widely available and domestic technology modeled on the myth of the personal computer revolution. It then moves from the foundation in 2008 of the DIYbio network, to the establishment of the firsts 'community laboratories', tracing the contingent orchestration of a diverse set of people, sites, tools and events, into a four-year community building effort.

Due to its recent emergence, in the science studies only a limited number of research initiatives engage with the DIYbio network. Such works, mainly in the form of dissertations chapters and short articles are analytically rich but empirically insubstantial as each focuses only on specific aspect of the network sub-culture (Aguiton, 2010; Delfanti, 2010; Roosth, 2010; Meyer, 2012a). This thesis recognizes the emergence of the DIYbio network as a cultural phenomenon in itself and addresses the gap in the literature by tracing how DNA did become hackable and biology personal. Following Donna Haraway's effort to critically address the politics of technoscience as a practice of "turning tropes into worlds" (1994, p.59), the overarching topic of this research focuses on how the trope of the biohacker became a world, and what type of world. The aim of this research is, therefore, to explore how members of the DIYbio network and biohackers define themselves, construct their identities and organize their work, as well as to situate the discourses and practices of DIYbio members in a context where governments and industries are intensifying their effort to make the coming century of biology into a reality.

## **SHORT CAREER SUMMARY**

I am a research student at the Sociology Department of the London School of Economics and visitor at the Social Science, Health & Medicine Department at King's College. My research interests lies within the field of science and technology studies, in particular in respect to the novel questions posed by the convergence of digital and biological practices and the modes of participation in contemporary life sciences.

My doctoral research focuses on how a group of so called 'DIYbiologists' or 'biohackers' have come to think and practice life sciences as a 'personal technology'. A technology that should be available to all. The methods used in this research include laboratory ethnography, media studies, visual anthropology and discourse analysis.

I have received a Master in Biology, Ecology and Conservation (University of Lausanne, Switzerland) and research experience both in the field (conservation biology, evolutionary ecology) and in the laboratory (microbiology, genetics and evolutionary biology). For the last several years, I have also worked as an co-ordinator of scientific culture in several public participation projects in biomedical and lifesciences for the public laboratory, L'Eprouvette (Test tube) part of the Sciences and Society Interface at the University of Lausanne. In 2008, I have successfully designed and implemented a four hour workshop for young adults and adults on Synthetic Biology.

Besides my research, in the last six years I have been content programmer at the cinema Oblo in Lausanne, Switzerland, engaging in a variety of projects including independent films and documentary screenings, retrospectives and interdisciplinary festivals organization. This have familiarized my with film making, in particular ethnographic documentary but also experimental representation of scientific subjects. In 2010, I have produced a first short film whose most recent screening was at the Film Forum Festival in Tokyo, May 2012.