

Tomorrow Belongs to Me

Artist Jacqueline Donachie worked with geneticist Dr Darren Monckton to undertake a series of filmed interviews with key scientists whose work had helped to prove the theory of 'anticipation' in relation to certain inherited genetic disorders. This extract features Stephanie Sherman of the University of Hawaii, Honolulu.

SS: We didn't listen to the families in the beginning about the normal transmitting males. So we were very stuck on the idea of the X-linked inheritance pattern. So when we asked about the mother – “Do you have any other relatives in your family that have developmental delay or retardation?” And they would say: “Well on my father's side there's a child that, you know, I have a cousin on my father's side,” and we would say: “No, no, no, no, this is an X-linked disorder, tell me about your mother's side.” Because we know it only goes through the women and it's expressed in the sons of the women. And they'd say: “Well no really, on my father's side I have quite a few.” And we would say: “No, no, no.” So really until we started seeing this pattern over and over again that there was truly these males that were not expressing a gene that we knew was a mutation on their X chromosome we began to slowly listen to the families and in fact hang our heads low and go back to those families and say: “OK, now please tell me about your father's side.”

[End of transcript]

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