

Preface

Editorial Note

Dear Reader,

In this first issue of the 5th volume of JUnQ, we chose *Family & Career in Science* as a topic because we wondered, if it is possible to undertake a successful career in science on the one hand while having a family on the other. Especially as a young researcher who still needs to make a name for himself in science, there is a lot of pressure from the academic society and one would think (at least I do) that these young researchers do not have any time to have a family. But in fact, this is not what reality looks like. Most professors I know or that I have visited lectures from during my studies – male or female – all have a family and children. One of the supervisors of my doctoral thesis is a young researcher himself who has a wife and a little son and his wife is also working a very ambitious job with a tight schedule. So the question is not really *if* but *how* this is feasible in particular as a woman but also as a man. I say this because at least in the natural sciences, most professors are still male. This might in parts be due to the fact that many women feel they have to choose between family and career and that it seems not possible to combine both in a successful way. Moreover, it is not a rarity that university professors – male or female – live apart from their families during the week because their partner has to work in a different city and is often also engaged in an academic career him- or herself. This addressed spatial distance can easily reach from Mainz to Hamburg as in the case of Prof. Till Opatz who is a professor for Organic Chemistry at the Johannes Gutenberg-University Mainz (JGU). We interviewed him and asked him a lot of questions concerning this and other aspects of his long-distance relationship to his family during the week (page IV). Prof. Katharina Landfester – a director of the Max-Planck-Institute for Polymer Research in Mainz – told us in a very detailed and also very private way about how she and her husband succeed to combine both worlds without having the additional spatial separation but both being engaged in academia (page VI). But even if husband and wife work within a close distance, the question of everyday childcare remains. In order to get an insight into the current situation at JGU Mainz, we spoke to Stefanie Schmidberger from the Family Service Center and received a tonne of information not only about childcare facilities themselves but more importantly also about other aspects that are vital for an all-encompassing childcare for working parents (page II).

In our *Views on Life the Universe and Everything* section, we come from single parents to single authors – Natascha and Michael Gaster together with Jorge S. Burns wrote about the fact that there are less and less publications exclusively written by one author (page 1). They investigate what is causing this development and reflect about whether or not single-author papers should be evaluated by different metrics than multi-author papers. Raphaël Lévy from the University of Liverpool gives suggestions in letter form to a fictive group member about where to publish the next paper, thereby making it clear that today's publishing system might need some further maintenance (page 3).

Last but not least, I would like to mention that several editorial board members took part in a short video called "Lazy Muscles", which was produced by David Peter and with which he participated in the web video contest "Super Fast" in the frame of of the web video contest *Fast Forward Science* initialized by the initiative *Wissenschaft im Dialog*. The task was to produce a short video in 48 h after proclamation of the topic "FAIL in science". The idea for the video came from a recently published article in JUnQ by Prof. R. Zentel from JGU Mainz called "Smectic LC-Elastomers with NO Shape Change at the Phase Transition". We didn't expect anything from the contest but in the end, we actually won the first prize! We would like to thank David Peter again for the initiation of the whole thing and if you are interested in seeing dancing mesogens and azo dyes, you are most welcome to have a look at the video itself!¹



—Kristina Klinker

¹https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h_U6Ixcjpwk