

# **Naturally Obsessed: the making of a Scientist**

## **NOTES FROM PAST DISCUSSIONS**

**Brookhaven National Laboratories, Brookhaven, New York**

**Date: October 10, 2009**

**Program: A regular Friday lunchtime seminar, arranged by Lisa Miller, a staff scientist**

**Discussion moderated Richard Rifkind and Carole Rifkind**

**Attendees: About 70 – 25% college and graduate students, plus department heads; staff and visiting scientists, technicians and administrators. Mona Rowe, head of Public Affairs., Kendra Snyder, staff writer**

### **How the film portrays science**

“This is an incredible portrayal of my world, my community, I want to take it home and show it to my family so they can understand what it’s like”

“Everyone here cares passionately about their work it’s gratifying when someone else cares about it enough to make a movie about it”

”Science is a fringe profession, you’ve brought it to center stage”

“It shows the real life of graduate students, the ups, the downs, the ups - if you’re lucky and stay at it long enough.”

“It shows that science isn’t just memorizing, it’s the principle, the process, the personalities, not the fact.”

“The boss doesn’t tell you what to do, and if you are the kind of person who waits for the boss to tell you what to do, you’re probably not going to make it. You see it in graduate students, usually those who fail can’t make the big transition to independence.”

“I think the film is for graduate students, who are depressed by the pressures of grad school and overwhelmed by how the toughness of it, but who can be encouraged when they see that ‘it’s not just about me’, other students are struggling in the same way. I was almost in tears the whole time. (This quote from a student who returned to grad school after a serious depression)