

Abstract for the STS Conference Graz 2015
“CRITICAL ISSUES IN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY STUDIES”
May 11-12, 2015

For session 3: EMERGING CONFIGURATIONS OF BIOMEDICAL TECHNOLOGIES

“*The goal is to have a baby and you put all other things aside*” -
Ethical frames in the decision-making about embryos among Hungarian IVF patients

Lilla Vicsek

Associate Professor
Institute of Sociology and Social Policy,
Corvinus University of Budapest
1093, Budapest, Közraktár u. 4-6. Hungary
e-mail: lilla.vicsek@uni-corvinus.hu

Since the first baby has been born as a result of in vitro fertilization (IVF) in 1978, millions of babies have been born worldwide with this method. There are great differences between countries in the techno-political culture of IVF. A relevant aspect of a society's IVF culture is how the embryo is viewed, and what ethical frameworks are used in the decision-making with about embryos. In an era where delegated biopolitics characterizes many societies, there is a range of decisions that patients can make, - or regarding which they at least have some say in - which concern the fate of their embryos. Most previous research on how the embryo is viewed and the ethics involved, focused on countries where debates on the moral status of the embryos featured prominently in the public sphere. The current research investigates this issue in Hungary, where there is basically an absence of such a public debate. As part of the *Infertility and the practice of assisted reproductive technologies* research project, which is supported by the Hungarian Scientific Research Fund and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, I focus especially on what ethical frames emerge and how in IVF patients' accounts of their decision-making on non-transferred embryos. Semi-structured interviews were applied to examine the research questions. Preliminary research results indicate that although interviewed patients relied on other ethical frames as well, the dominant ethical framework in their accounts was the therapeutical ethics frame.