

Natalie

INTERVIEWS

Natalia Chernyshova
Host of new program "The Contemporary Woman"

This program was in the process of development for a long time. It's history is partly the history of my own career. I was working for the Moscow directorate, mainly as a journalist and observer of popular science, human behavior, morality, and "taboo" subjects, on a program entitled "Search for Truth."

There was also a program for a long time entitled "Moscovite Women." It was only about a year and a half ago that they asked me to host this new program on national television.

We belong to the literary and drama section of the department of artistic and public affairs. That is a good place for us, a good context for women's problems.

It is difficult to find the right tone. A lot is written about the economic double burden of women, 85% of women and more than 70% of men believe in traditional family values, and traditional women's roles. But at the same most of our women work outside the home and have a double burden. How much grief! Much of the writing is of high literary value but reflects little or no consciousness of the situation. I am an example myself, I have grown sons, I am the head of this department, and still I must provide for my family every day.

The program deals with different roles of women. When we began, we were women's approach to their roles, changes in dress and behavior, etc. We were surprised by many letters from women saying you don't understand us, we want you to create you to create models for women. We want the program to be democratic, show us women in many different roles. So now we have discussions, interviews, documentaries, from history, medicine, women from many different walks of life. We have found out that 80% of women want to work even if they don't have to. So we must deal with how women adjust to their different roles in the family and in society.

We need to learn respect for other opinions. Nobody will liberate us from motherhood. We have to be honest even if it is sad. Sixty percent of women have received higher education, but only 11% are in leading positions, and only one is in the Politburo. The program tries to reveal what women think, the pain they feel, an inside view from the woman's perspective.

Yes, there are some informal organizations of women, including some extremist groups, but I don't know them. Others are just now being created.

One program is called "Sketches and Meditations." It tries to reveal the real facts of women's life, for the first time in public.

Before we shoot we prepare a technical plan, budget, crews, technicians. We have two directors, one woman and one man, plus one editor, but I am the final authority on what goes on the program. The only effect of perestroika so far has been that our broadcast time has increased--still not enough. We get no special privileges, -- but we are not discriminated against. There are too many new programs and we are being crowded by them. Our program should be once a month, but our crew and budget can only afford one program every month and a half. We get approximately thirty letters a week.

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