

Report of the 2010 Joseph B. Gittler Award Committee

Otis B. Grant
Reza Hasmath
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Rose Brewer, Co-Chair
Kathleen Ferraro, Co-Chair

The committee received three nominations for the award. Barbara Todish self nominated. Kathleen Ferraro nominated Ellen Pence and David Wagner nominated Wendy Chapkis. The committee felt that both Dr. Pence and Dr. Chapkis were deserving nominees, but the majority ranked Dr. Pence as their first choice. Four members ranked Dr. Pence as number one, one member ranked Dr. Chapkis first, and we were unable to contact one member to obtain her vote. This was due to extending the deadline to July 1 to increase the pool of nominees. By this time people were traveling for the summer. This committee concurs with last year's committee that few nominations are generated for this award and future committees will need to actively solicit nominations. Pushing the deadline into the summer creates communication challenges.

Dr. Ellen Pence has spent the last 30 years applying her sociological training to the ethical solution of the problem of domestic violence. She is the co-founder of the Duluth Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP) that developed the power and control model of domestic violence that is used in all 50 states and 17 countries. She is also the founder and director of Praxis International, providing research and training to end violence in the lives of women and children. Her applied work employs institutional ethnography to help make institutions accountable to the women they serve.

As Dr. Marjorie DeVault wrote in her support of Dr. Pence's nomination, "Ellen Pence has been a long-time activist and advocate in domestic violence work, and also a scholar seeking to make sense of the dilemmas she faced in her activism. Since completing her doctoral study of domestic violence case processing, she has returned to advocacy work at Praxis, International in Duluth, MN, where she has found wonderfully creative ways of introducing the tools of institutional ethnography to community partners and has packaged and disseminated that distinctive mode of inquiry as the 'safety audit.' Ellen's work on the community audit process is especially impressive because she has successfully involved not only domestic violence advocates, but also a range of institutional actors such as police, probation officers, judges, and so on. Her principled, analytic approach, combined with her ability to make friends across differences, has allowed her to mobilize entire communities in order to increase women's safety. She has developed her scholarly work in ways that allow those communities to work together, productively, toward more ethical practice in their various positions."

Over the past few years, Dr. Pence has served as the Director of Research for the NIJ study of the Impact of Criminal Justice System Intervention on Native American Battered women; the

State of Michigan's study on Racial Disparity in Child Welfare Use of Foster Care; the Western Australia Study on Effectiveness of Child Protection and Domestic Violence Interventions in Protecting Battered Mothers and numerous studies using the Praxis Safety and Accountability Audit method. She is the author of *Coordinated Community Response to Domestic Violence* (with M. Shepard) and *Education Groups for Men Who Batter* (with M. Paymar). She has also published numerous book chapters and journal articles, all developing her analysis of domestic violence.

She has recently participated in development of a documentary, *Power and Control: Domestic Violence in America*. Her work is cited in newspapers, magazines, newsletters, and journal articles. Typing her name into Google Scholar pulled up 8,180 hits. Claire Renzetti, SSSP Past-President, is publishing a special issue of *Violence Against Women* dedicated to Ellen.

Ellen Pence has been an active member of SSSP for many years and won the Dorothy E. Smith Scholar Activist Award from the Institutional Ethnography division in 2008. On February 6, 2010, the city of Duluth proclaimed Ellen Pence Day and honored her for her many years of work on domestic violence.

Her latest project, the St. Paul Blueprint for Safety, was completed last April and will serve as a prototype for other communities trying to improve their coordinated response to domestic violence. We feel Ellen exemplifies all the qualities the Gittler award was created to recognize and honor and are pleased we had the opportunity to select her for the award.