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IE Newsletter

Institutional Ethnography Division of the Society
for the Study of Social Problems

From the Division Chair: Nicola Waters

Hi fellow IERs,

I am not sure how it happened but we find ourselves at the end of another year! 2019 will mark the end of my term as division chair and I am thrilled to welcome LaNysha Adams as the new chair-elect. LaNysha brings a wealth of experience and enthusiasm and I am already enjoying working with her as she transitions into the position. I continue to hear exciting things from people conducting institutional ethnographies all over the world in a growing number of disciplines and topic areas. SSSP Conference planning is well underway and I hope to see many of you in New York in August. With this year's theme **illuminating the SOCIAL in Social Problems** we have lots of opportunity to showcase our division's work. Don't forget the call for abstracts closes January 31, 2019. I highly encourage you to submit as it is a great venue to share and get feedback on your work. We will also be hosting an IE workshop in conjunction with the conference. For those of you who have not attended previously this is a great opportunity for experienced and novice IEers to mix, mingle and learn from each other. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

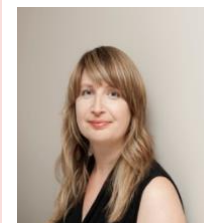
I wish all a wonderful holiday season and a healthy and productive 2019.

Nicola Waters

Remembering Philadelphia

George W. Smith Student Paper Award Winner

This year's winner of the George W. Smith Student Paper Award is Alison Fisher a doctoral candidate from York University. The title of the paper she delivered in Montreal is: "The 'Equity Work' of the Activist Educator: Critical Re-imagining of Schools."



Congratulations Alison!

Paper Abstract: In this paper, I begin with the everyday experiences of activist teachers in the classroom, to make visible how changing socio-historical conditions in Ontario, Canada (i.e. declining birth rates) combined with particular manifestations of managerial and risk discourses applied to educational governance in the province of Ontario, have (re)organize(d) a teacher's workday and their approach to curriculum in particular. From 2016- 2018, I conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with approximately 19 school staff, the majority of whom are engaged in equity activism within schools. In this paper, I explore how specific discourses of student achievement, measurement, safety, and risk are impacting teachers' approaches to curriculum and shaping the limited resources that are available to classroom teachers to engage in complicated and intersectional approaches to gender and sexual equity in schools. With a particular focus on activist educators, I illustrate their strategic and deliberate engagements with counter hegemonic (critical race, feminist, queer, etc.) discourses, which challenge the predominance of specific neoliberal governance technologies. I argue that the curricular approaches of activist teachers in schools, creates, extends and maintains important pedagogical spaces for youth and staff to engage with the "democratic progressive" (Carlson, 2005) possibilities of schools despite the predominant constraints of a neoliberal imaginary of schooling.

Reflections On the Philadelphia Meeting

By Jayne Malenfant

This year's conference in Philadelphia was exciting and thought-provoking. It was the second SSSP I have attended, with last year's in Montréal being my first time presenting at a large academic conference. Philly was a vibrant city that provided opportunities to meet new institutional ethnographers and to get to know others much better. After spending much of the year in a small bubble of, often, isolated work, SSSP has already found a concrete place in my academic heart for a supportive and engaging community of scholars who support, push and question one another. Within the I.E.Division, there were many topics that

approached difficult and urgent social problems with care, attention and activism. Discussions with other scholars at times confirmed ideas of how I work with I.E. in my own research, and at other times challenged and shifted how I have been imagining my work. I was grateful to sit on the committee for the Dorothy E. Smith Award for Scholar Activism and was blown away by the complex and necessary work of award winner Alison Fisher. I left Philadelphia with new friends and new ideas to bring to my scholarship, and am certain that next year's meeting in New York will be an opportunity to explore the work of scholars in this division further.

Special Open Lecture by Dorothy Smith

The Social and Behavioural Health Sciences, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto hosted a special lecture by Dorothy Smith



Dr. Dorothy Smith



Dr. Daniel Grace

On November 5, 2018, SBHS hosted an open lecture and dialogue with Dr. Dorothy E. Smith. One hundred and ninety-six people registered for this special event that was sponsored by SBHS and the Dean's office at the DLSPH. Opening remarks were provided by Dr. Daniel Grace and Dr. Eric Mykhalovskiy to help contextualize Dr. Smith's body of scholarship and her ongoing impact on public health research. Dr. Smith's dynamic lecture reviewed core elements of IE and the development of this critical research tradition. Discussant reflections were provided by Dr. Fiona Webster which were followed by a vibrant exchange of comments and questions by the audience. After the event, Dr. Grace hosted a dinner with Dr. Smith for a small group of graduate students who are applying IE in their doctoral and postdoctoral research. A video of Dr. Smith's lecture is available on the Dalla Lana School of Public Health YouTube page:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOO9fLT9r-Q&t=4648s>

Call for IE Division Awards

George W. Smith Graduate Student Paper Competition
Deadline January 31, 2019

The **Institutional Ethnography Division** solicits papers for its 2019 George W. Smith Graduate Student Paper Competition. To be considered, papers should advance institutional ethnography scholarship either

methodologically or through a substantive contribution. For an overview of institutional ethnography and the purposes of the IE Division, see <https://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/pageid/1236/m/464>. Authors must be currently enrolled graduate students or have graduated within the last 12 months. Submissions are to be 25 pages long or less, excluding notes, references and tables, and be submitted in Word-compatible format, in 12-point Times New Roman font. An electronic letter from the student's supervisor attesting to the lead author's student status must accompany the submission. The recipient will receive a monetary prize of \$100, a plaque of recognition, student membership, conference registration, and an opportunity to present the winning paper at the (2019) SSSP meetings. The winner of the 2019 paper will be invited to sit on the adjudicating panel for the 2020 paper submissions. Please note that any paper submitted for consideration for the George W. Smith Graduate Student Paper Award must also be submitted to be presented at the 2019 meeting of the SSSP. Send submission to ALL the following members of the 2019 review committee:

Alison Fisher Alison_Fisher@edu.yorku.ca

Naomi Nichols (committee chair) naomi.nichols@mcgill.ca

Christina Weber christina.d.weber@ndsu.edu

Please be aware that a paper submission may only be submitted to one division

Dorothy E. Smith Award for Scholar Activism

Deadline: April 1, 2019

The [Institutional Ethnography Division](#) is pleased to solicit nominations for the 2019 Dorothy E. Smith Award for Scholar-Activism. This award recognizes the activities of an individual or group who has made substantial contributions to institutional ethnographic scholar-activism in either a single project or some longer trajectory of work. The contributions may involve IE research conducted and used for activist ends, or it may involve activist efforts that have drawn upon or contributed to IE scholarship. The award committee invites members of the Division to send a one-page statement describing the contributions of the nominee to: Matthew Strang at matthew.strang@gmail.com
Alison Fisher at Alison_Fisher@edu.yorku.ca
Jayne Malenfant jayne.malenfant@mail.mcgill.ca

Members News and Notes

Dorothy Smith's fascinating and informative conversation with Grainne Kearney, a participant at the annual workshop she convenes with **Susan Turner** in Toronto, and colleagues was published in *Social Theory and Health*. The full citation is: "Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology of Discovery—in Conversation with Dorothy Smith," Aug. 2017, 6: 292-396. Others in the conversation were Michael K. Corman, Gerard J. Gormley, Nigel D. Hart, and Jennifer L. Johnston.

Daniel Grace was named *Canada Research Chair in Sexual and Gender Minority Health*. For more information please consult: <http://www.dlsph.utoronto.ca/2018/11/three-dlsph-faculty-receive-canada-research-chairs/>

Marie L. Campbell and **Janet M. Rankin** published an article in 2017: “Nurses and Electronic Health Records in a Canadian Hospital: Examining the Social Organisation and Programmed Use of Digitised Nursing Knowledge,” *Sociology of Health & Illness* 39: 365–379. doi: 10.1111/1467-9566.12489

Naomi Nichols and **Jessica Braimoh** published an article: 2018. “Community Safety, Housing Precariousness and Processes of Exclusion: An Institutional Ethnography from the Standpoints of Youth in an ‘Unsafe’ Urban Neighborhood,” *Critical Sociology* 44:157-p172.

Charlotte Ross and her colleagues published a paper: Charlotte A. Ross, Sonya L. Jakubec, Nicole S. Berry, and Victoria Smye, 2018. “‘A Two Glass of Wine Shift’: Dominant Discourses and the Social Organization of Nurses’ Substance Use,” *Global Qualitative Nursing Research* 5: 1–12. DOI: 10.1177/2333393618810655

Lauren Eastwood’s new book *Negotiating the Environment: Civil Society, Globalisation and the UN* published by Routledge, UK, in November 2018 was reviewed by **Marie Campbell**:

Years of attendance at UN sessions where Lauren Eastwood participated as a member of a non-governmental organization or as a researcher, or both, have gone into the making of this remarkable book. It introduces readers to the carefully structured actualities of negotiating UN policy that focuses on saving the planet from human-caused and increasingly lethal environmental degradation. While the worthiness of the policy goal is broadly recognized, its specificities, as Eastwood makes clear, are highly contested: “negotiating the environment” therefore brings participants with different commitments into tense, sometimes conflictual, confrontation. Eastwood’s research uses ethnography to interrogate how the workings of environment policy negotiations continue to fail in advancing strong climate-positive action. While her ethnographic observations introduce readers to the sites and struggles, Eastwood’s story-telling is not simply a strategy for popularizing a complex topic, although that is an added benefit. In her hands, ethnography is integral to her use of the approach to social analysis called institutional ethnography. For instance, the conversations she overheard among civil society participants heading out on a bus toward UN conference venues become data for her analysis. They highlight for Eastwood an easily overlooked aspect of negotiation - civil society members strategizing to more effectively represent their local concerns while participating within the constraints of the UN’s official practices. How do those rules and their integration into standard work processes transpose negotiators’ differences into formally agreed-to policy texts? The book illuminates the politics of the policy processes by explicating how different views and commitments are coordinated through

the production of institutional texts that become agreements, with associated winners and losers in particular policy matters. As an argument, Eastwood's findings are not the expression of a theory; they account for what actually happens. The book needs to be read by everyone who studies or works on behalf of the environment.

Institutional Ethnography Forum

Several members of the IE Division gave talks at the Institutional Ethnography Forum held at McGill University and organized by **Naomi Nichols**. On December 4, 2018, **Dorothy Smith, Lauren Eastwood,** and **Marjorie DeVault** sat on a public panel to address "Forty Years of Sociology for People." The next day, on December 5, 2018, **Hayes Tang** and **Naomi Nichols** addressed "Institutional Ethnographies of Higher Education in Hong Kong and Canada."

IE Papers Published in 2018

A regular feature of the Fall *IE Newsletter* is to compile a list of recent publications involving IE for our members. If you know of any papers, articles or books that you would like to see posted here in future issues, please contact Gina Petonito at petonig@miamioh.edu.

Aksnes, Siri Yde, 2017. "Rethinking Vocational Rehabilitation through Institutional Ethnography," *Journal of Comparative Social Work*, 12:100-122. DOI 10.31265/jcsw.v12i2.151.

Drexler, Olivia, 2018. Disability and Queerness: Exploration of Disability and Sexuality in Autoethnography and Institutional Ethnography, *Michigan Sociological Review*. 32:133-147.

Heitman, Trond, 2017. "Social work in the public services in Brazil - disclosing ruling relations in a local context," *Journal of Comparative Social Work*, 12:123-146. DOI 10.31265/jcsw.v12i2.152

Kearney, G.P., J.L. Johnston, N.D. Hart, M.K. Corman, and G.J. Gormley. 2018. "Protocol: Exploring the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) using Institutional Ethnography." *International Journal of Educational Research*, 88: 42-47.

Parson, Laura, 2018. "An Institutional Ethnography of Higher Education: The Experiences of Undergraduate Women Majoring in Math and Physics," *Journal of Ethnographic & Qualitative Research* 13: 18-33.

Welcome New Members

Five new members have joined the IE Division since the publication of our last newsletter. Welcome all!

Freedden Blume Oeur
Leigha Comer
Tara Patricia Cookson
Marylin Dobson
Theresa Rocha Beardall

In Memoriam: Remembering Lisa Watt

It is with great sadness that we share news of the death of one of our



division members. Dr. Lai Han Lisa Watt was a well-liked and respected member of our IE network. Lisa was a passionate scholar and a dedicated mother to her daughter Lok-Yi who became the focus of Lisa's doctoral work: "Her Life Rests on Your Shoulders": Doing Worry as Emotion

Work in the Care of Children With Diabetes.

A tribute to Lisa along with information about donating to a fund set up for Lok-Yi can be found here.

<https://socialwork.mcmaster.ca/news/remembering-lisa-watt>

Call for Papers



Below are the IE sponsored or co-sponsored sessions calling for papers for the 2019 SSSP Meetings in New York. All papers must be submitted by midnight, January 31, 2019 to be considered for inclusion in the program. To submit, please consult:

<https://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/755/fuseaction/ssspsession2.publicView>

Session 7: CRITICAL DIALOGUE: Community-Based Ethnographies-THEMATIC

Co-sponsors: Community Research and Development; Institutional Ethnography; Social Problems Theory

Organizer: Colin Hastings, colinjh@yorku.ca

Session 16: Health Work and Institutional Ethnography

Co-sponsors: Conflict, Social Action, and Change; Institutional Ethnography

Organizer: Matthew J. P. Strang, matthew.strang@gmail.com

Session 33: Disability and Labor

Co-sponsors: Disability; Institutional Ethnography; Labor Studies

Co-Organizers: Jennifer D. Brooks, jdbro100@sy.edu

Doron Dorfman, ddorfman@stanford.edu

Alison Fisher, alison_fisher@edu.yorku.ca

Session 78: Sexual Policies and Health

Co-Sponsors: Health, Health Policy, and Health Services; Institutional Ethnography

Co-Organizers: Jayne Malenfant, jayne.malenfant@mail.mcgill.ca

Emily Allen Paine, e.paine@utexas.edu

Session 81: CRITICAL DIALOGUE: Writing the Social-THEMATIC

Sponsor: Institutional Ethnography

Organizer: Naomi Nichols, naomi.nichols@mcgill.ca

Session 82: Illuminating the Social Through Institutional Ethnography-THEMATIC

Sponsor: Institutional Ethnography

Organizer: Marjorie DeVault, mdevault@maxwell.syr.edu

Session 83: New Directions in Institutional Ethnography

Sponsor: Institutional Ethnography

Organizer: Gina Petonito, petonig@miamioh.edu

Session 84: CRITICAL DIALOGUE: Turning It Upside Down: The Power of Race, Culture, and Ethnicity in Youth and Emerging Adulthood

Co-Sponsors: Institutional Ethnography; Racial and Ethnic Minorities; Youth, Aging, and the Life Course

Co-Organizers: Lauren Eastwood, eastwole@plattsburgh.edu

Saher Selod, saher.selod@simmons.edu

Session 85: The Social Organisation of Knowledge

Co-sponsors: Institutional Ethnography; Social Problems Theory

Organizer: Christina D. Weber, christina.d.weber@ndse.edu

Session 86: Reflexivity and the Self in Institutional Ethnography

Co-sponsors: Institutional Ethnography; Sport, Leisure, and the Body

Organizer: Jessica Braimoh, briamoja@mcmaster.ca

Future Meetings

2019 Annual Meeting

Illuminating the SOCIAL in Social Problems

August 9-11, 2019

Roosevelt Hotel

New York City, NY

2020 Annual Meeting

Program Theme: TBD

August 7-9, 2020

Park Central Hotel

San Francisco, CA

2021 Annual Meeting

Program Theme: TBD

August 6-8, 2021

Swissôtel Chicago

Chicago, IL