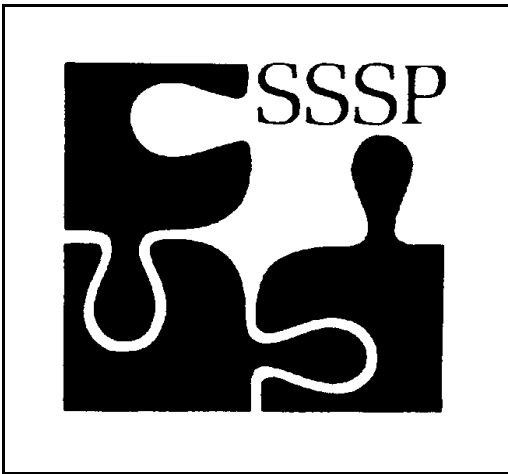


IE NEWSLETTER

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

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Marjorie DeVault
Division Chair
Department of Sociology
Syracuse University
Syracuse, New York, USA

Send correspondence to:
Gillian Walker
Correspondence and Copy Editor
gawalker@telus.net

Send photos and other images to:
Cheryl Zurawski
Production and Picture Editor
cdz@arialassociates.com

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FROM THE DIVISION CHAIR

Marjorie DeVault

The annual meeting is still six months away, but it's a busy time of year for conference organizing. Our session leaders are hard at work, and I'm sure we'll have our usual lively program in San Francisco. I'd like to call your attention again to our session on *The Footprint of Scholarship*, which is being organized by Lauren Eastwood and Susan Turner. I asked them to use the session to produce a forum in which we could continue the discussion we began at last year's business meeting. You may recall that we took up the possibility of proposing a resolution that would call attention to the energy (and other) implications of scholarly travel, and that we had a lively but ultimately inconclusive exchange about air and other modes of travel, annual conferences as a primary means of scholarly exchange, individual and collective responses to environmental crisis, the possibilities offered by new technologies, and so on. Clearly, we were not ready to propose a resolution, but it seemed equally clear that at least some of us were eager to continue that conversation. I believe the organizers are planning an interactive format for the session, so I hope you'll plan to attend, and please do bring your own thoughts and experiences, along with your IE analytic lens.

Speaking of new technology and innovative ways of sharing ideas, there are a couple of relevant items in this newsletter. The editors have begun a process of identifying websites offering information about ongoing projects that draw on institutional ethnography (please see page 10). There are lots of good resources out there on the web (along with a quite a bit of misinformation and some that's difficult to evaluate), and the good ones that we've been producing seem especially useful for a scholarly community like ours, which is spread out over several countries. (As an aside, I must apologize for the state of my own website, which is sorely in need of updating. I do hope to get to that soon). Web dissemination does raise new questions, however.

(continued)

(Division Chair's message continued)

For example, you may have noticed that last year's graduate student prize-winning paper (by Naomi Nichols) is not available on the SSSP website, as the papers have been in the past. That's due to a new Publications Committee policy, which was developed out of concern that posting papers on the SSSP's website might constitute 'publication' and prevent authors submitting them elsewhere. (This has put a hold on my hope to post even more of our conference papers.) We will continue to monitor this issue and think about how best to disseminate ongoing work.

In a related item, Janet Rankin reports (on page 7) a teleconferencing strategy used by the IE Working Group at Calgary. That sounds like fun! Indeed, just a few minutes ago I concluded a most productive Skype visit with Syracuse doctoral student Li-Fang Liang, who is back home in Taiwan writing up her IE study of migrant carework. Much more satisfying than email! And I recall that our newsletter co-editor, Cheryl Zurawski, joined the IE community via video linkup from Regina with Alison Griffith's class at York University. So, there are lots of possibilities – let us know how you are using them. Come to think of it, does anyone want to blog (or tweet?) from the conference for those who can't make it to San Francisco?

Finally, and most sadly, I must add a note of deep personal sadness and a tribute to John McKendy, whose tragic early death is a loss for all of us. Thanks so much to Adele Mueller and the students at St. Thomas University in New Brunswick for their piece that follows this opening message.

Editor's Note: *The call for papers for the 2009 awards competitions appears as a mini-poster on page 12. Please feel free to print off copies and post or distribute, as you deem appropriate. (GW).*

'I'm very careful about that': Remembering and introducing John McKendy

By Adele Mueller



John's daughter, Laura, provided this photograph and the one on page 5 for the newsletter.

Our colleague and friend, John McKendy, died on October 30, 2008. He was 59 years old.

I never did get around to asking John how he first came across institutional ethnography; it just seemed a natural bond. But he did write about the circumstances that drew him to it. Participating as a researcher in a counseling group for men who had abused women, he experienced a moment of disjuncture when he saw that they didn't fit his image of 'women abusers'. "But my surprise wasn't simple, it was recursive: I was surprised, but even more surprised by my surprise. Now where did *that* come from?...I'd just caught myself participating in something I hadn't realized was going on at all: the violent transformation of an
(continued)

(John McKendy tribute continued)

actual, local occurrence into an abstract framework that had its home in some distant and disconnected site. An ideological circle.”¹

To John’s commitment to giving the highest standards of education to students of St. Thomas University, to his parenting of an extended family of ‘children’, to his social activism into which he drew students and, yes, some of us colleagues, to his carpentry work for the people of Burundi in West Africa, to the Alternatives to Violence Project² work he would be doing there now, to his rich life as a Quaker, to his dedication to his family, to all these accomplishments listed in the many memorials to this extraordinary man, now add his commitment to knowing through the methods of institutional ethnography.

And it’s through this commitment that I want to remember John with those who knew him and to introduce him to the rest of the institutional ethnography community. Throughout his research, John continued to be dedicated to listening very carefully to the voices of the men whose ways of speaking, of seeing themselves, and, to a large extent, of acting, are fenced in by the ideological circle of the ‘family violence’ discourse. In *Ideological Practices and the Management of Emotions* (1992) he saw that the demand of the ‘family violence’ discourse that the members of counseling groups “recognize themselves as fully rational, autonomous and self-possessed agents” (p. 61) silenced their attempts to speak from the ground

of their actual lives and “in effect blocked them from beginning the painful process of examining their anger, and the feelings of shame, fear, frustration and disappointment that may have undergirded it” (p. 77-78). In *The Class Politics of Domestic Violence* (1997), John began to search for alternative ways for these men to speak, drawing from work just beginning at that time in peacemaking criminology and restorative justice. “This would focus attention on a ‘cycle of violence’ which the dominant discourse tends to ignore: the cycle of interpersonal and societal violence” (p. 151).

More recently John had taken his research and activist practices into a regional prison, now adding critical discourse analysis and narrative interviewing to his research toolbox. As always, he sought to understand ever more concretely how power reaches deeply into the lives of the most powerless to further subjugate them.

In *‘I’m very careful about that’: Narrative and Agency of Men in Prison* (2006), John listened carefully, and those who have read the transcripts of these interviews marvel at the patient silence of the interviewer as he listened for the gaps, the pauses, the false starts, the silences of the men struggling to claim a space in which to speak between the dominant discourse of asocial individualism and the stories of their lives. John was to have been back at that prison for a much anticipated (by the men in prison as well as the people who work there) Alternatives to Violence workshop just two days after his death.

John McKendy cultivated a presentation of ordinariness in his appearance and manner as suited the rest of his life, but there was nothing ordinary about the life of his mind. He was always seeking new intellectual tools, moving on to new courses, developing new projects, undertaking new research. As a consequence, much written work of great value got left behind. Last fall he told me he didn’t
(continued)

1. These lines are from John’s writing in the book on ideological practices we worked on before I began teaching at St. Thomas in 2002.

2. AVP is a Quaker program based on the work of Ghandi and Martin Luther King. Click below to watch a short video of John McKendy (pronounced MAC-Kin-DEE) talking about AVP at the New Brunswick Social Forum in September 2008, including its history and what goes on in the workshops, as well as his own AVP work in the Dorchester prison and in Burundi. <http://nbsf-fsnb.org/?q=node/13>

(John McKendy tribute continued)

“feel inspired” to get published a paper I knew had been all but ready for publication a year and a half earlier; he was working on something new (my memory is that it was in narrative studies). And so his published work is only a hint of his contributions to institutional ethnography.

But you will be hearing more of John McKendy. His students will continue to enter your graduate programs for a time: this year three of them will delight you with the level of their preparedness in institutional ethnography and their familiarity with Dorothy’s writings and yours as well. This group will come with added skills in discourse and narrative analyses, thanks to new courses John was just beginning to teach.

It is perhaps his students who knew John best among members of the St. Thomas community, for in his inimitable teaching style he made himself remarkably open and vulnerable to them. And so I invited a few of the students he’d introduced to institutional ethnography to write about their experiences in his classes.

Like most of his students, I was instantly drawn to John’s kind, approachable, and unassuming nature. His immediately apparent enthusiasm for teaching students was exceeded only by his enthusiasm for learning from us. John had a way of making everyone feel valued and capable, and this, in combination with his genuine excitement for the work of his students, pushed many of us to do some of our best work.

John was always looking for new and interesting ways to teach, but it was through his gentle understanding, his modesty and integrity, and his unwavering commitment to social justice that John reached his students. Through both his actions and his words John could touch even the most uninterested pupils and instill in them a passion and commitment to the underlying values of equality and justice that he taught us are the foundations of sociology.

He taught me, and many others, to leave nothing unexamined, to question and to challenge the way things are, and to never be afraid to envision a better way. Not only did John inspire me academically, but he inspired me personally, and I will always be grateful to have had the chance to know and work with such a wonderful and sincerely special human being.³

From last year’s Research Strategies course, John passed on to his colleagues the wonderful honors and professional programs class of 2009. They meet to talk about the magic that he worked in the classroom. Here’s some of what they talked about: I’ve selected from their longer document.

There is no way getting around this one, John’s classes were challenging, and his focus on institutional ethnography, critical discourse analysis, and narrative interviewing took that challenge to new heights. These are “ways of seeing the world”, he told us, and he incorporated them into all of his classes. What attracted John to IE and Dorothy Smith has become clear to us – it’s the centrality of people’s lived experience. John believed that everyone is a valuable person – “everyone has a story” – and he taught us that it is through people’s stories and experiences, researched and researcher, that we can come to sociological understanding. John was not overly fond of the term ‘society’ because it obscured people’s experience. He felt that narratives were valuable because they connect into the social world in real and grounded ways. He believed that the stories he encouraged us to tell about our individual lives would be central to what we chose as our honors thesis topics, and for most of us he was right.

We all agree that one of the most powerful learning moments from John came in his

³ Stacey Pineau (Honours Class of 2008) developed her own moment of disjuncture in the service-learning component of John’s Inequality in Society course into an institutional ethnography honours thesis which he supervised.

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*Classical Sociological Theory course. The very first power point screen showed a simple quote, “There is no birds-eye view”, with a picture of Dorothy Smith next to it. He asked us to keep thinking about that line and what it means for sociological theorizing, and for some of us it centres our plans for academic or professional careers.*⁴

John left a long career of written work in his office. A few of us who have collaborated on IE, discourse analysis, and narrative studies projects with him would like to organize those files. I’ll look for the article that conceptualizes teaching IE in the context of the service learning courses he had taught for years. Tim Diamond and I read it – and gave back our scribbled-on copies, of course – when Tim was Visiting Gerontology Chair here two years ago. Marj DeVault has asked about making his course outlines available for us all. And the book on ideological practices Dorothy teamed us up to write two years before I’d heard of St. Thomas – sadly, once I came here to teach, the book fell behind. But it still exists on ‘floppies’ and hard drives and in file cabinets. That book, co-authored with John, of course, just may renew our collective interest in the mode of investigation of ideological circles practiced by some of the early group of institutional ethnography students. In John’s hands it was a method for staying close to objects of power. And that was just one of the many things John was very careful about.⁵

Adele Mueller teaches in the Sociology Department of St. Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick, where John taught for more than 30 years.

4. Written by Stephanie Mazerolle, Victoria Jakobson, Karolyn Martin, Kyle Chamberlain, Jennie Donovan, Gillan Hennessey-MacFarlane, Kelly Breau, Chris Jones, Tania D’Alusio-Tyler. Stacy Dicks, Chelsea Organ, Dan Duvall wanted to but were unable to participate.

5. ‘I’m very careful about that’ is a quotation from one of the men whom John interviewed in prison. It’s in the title of the article based on that work.

Author’s Note: Many thanks to my St. Thomas colleague, Michelle LaFrance, for excellent advice, and to Tim Diamond for reading messy early drafts, and to Gillian Walker who whipped them up into this readable shape.

Editor’s Note: Our work on the effects of the ideological circle of “Family Violence” brought John and me together and we used each other’s work in our teaching. In this context it is a particularly bitter irony for me that the life of this gentle and giving man should be ended by an act of family violence. (GW)

References

“Service Learning and a ‘Sociology for People’”, forthcoming

“I’m very careful about that” Narrative and agency of men in prison”, *Discourse & Society*, 17 (4) 2006, 473-502.

“The Class Politics of Domestic Violence”, *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 24 (3), September, 1997, 13-155.

“Ideological Practices and the Management of Emotions: The Case of Wife Abusers”, *Critical Sociology*, 19 (2), 1992, 61-80.



John McKendy in Burundi.

Preview of the Congress

The Canadian Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences holds its annual conference of academic associations at Carleton University in Ottawa this year from May 23-31. Sessions have been accepted and scheduled but some opportunities for paper submission still exist. Session highlights follows.

Tuesday, May 26

9:00-10:30 am

Title: Institutional Ethnography and the Managerial State

Organizers: Alison I. Griffith and Dorothy E. Smith

Chair and Discussant: TBA

Sponsor: Canadian Sociological Association

This session invites papers from institutional ethnographers focusing on the everyday work of professionals at the interface between public institutions reorganized by or reorganizing in what is known as the new public management (NPM) or 'the managerial state' (Clarke & Newton) and the everyday lives of clients/patients/and others served. We'd like to bring together ethnographies of different institutional settings, such as schools, universities, hospitals, social welfare, child protection, and other institutions providing public services. *Paper proposals are still being accepted for this session. Please send abstracts to agriffith@edu.yorku.ca and desmith@uvic.ca*

10:00 am

Title: Standardizing Diversity: 'Cookie Cutter' Programs in Diverse Communities

Organizers: Roz Stooke, Suzanne Smythe, Pamela McKenzie

Sponsor: Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies

The recent proliferation of neighbourhood programs for young children and the adults who care for them can be viewed as part of a policy trend since the early 1990s that seeks to prepare children to succeed in the 'new knowledge economy'. Our presentation synthesizes findings from three observational studies of community-based

educational initiatives for young children. The first study (McKenzie & Stooke) examined social activities in programs for children from birth to age three and their caregivers; the second study (Smythe) examined initiatives that aim to facilitate four and five-year-old children's transitions from home and community-based educational settings to formal school settings; the third study (Stooke) examined a public library program designed to support the needs of developing readers to practice reading aloud to a more expert reader. We seek to demonstrate that actions carried out by program staff in diverse settings for purposes unique to their programs were shaped by and simultaneously shaped and maintained broader forms of social organization.

3:00-4:00 pm

Title: Governance in Education

Sponsor: Canadian Association of Foundations of Education

Discussant: Lindsay Kerr

Papers will be given by organizer Alison Griffith, Naomi Nichols, Mandy Frake-Mistak and Theresa Shanahan.

Wednesday, May 27

1:30 pm

Title: Using Institutional Ethnography and the Sociology of Dorothy E. Smith for Research in Education and the Professions

Organizer: Suzanne Forgang Miller

Chair: Linda Muzzin

Discussant: Dorothy E. Smith

Sponsor: Canadian Sociological Association

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(Preview of the Congress continued)

This session invites papers that utilize institutional ethnography and the sociology of Dorothy E. Smith as methods of inquiry for research at the intersections of educational and professional settings. Of interest is work that uses IE to unpack/uncover how settings operate textually in different ways, and how texts get picked up in different sites; for example, in educational policy development sites by decision-makers, versus educational work sites by teachers, administrators, and/or others in and around schools. Papers may explore how practitioners within settings deploy IE as transformative praxis, or activist scholarship. Papers may suggest various large/small ways in which IE serves as self-reflexive practice, to resist the 'institutional capture' of the ruling relations and/or to further equity. Suzanne will present a paper on "Professionals acquiring graduate degrees: Navigating between different textual landscapes", and Lindsay Kerr will present a paper titled "Pathways to success: Caring or counting?" *Paper proposals are still being accepted for this session. Please send abstracts to: s.miller@utoronto.ca*

The doctor is in: Calgary IE'ers convene a consultation with Dr. Tim Diamond

By Janet Rankin, University of Calgary

Dear Dr. Diamond,

Mostly I am very committed to IE, however I find myself attracted to other research approaches. Are there ways to integrate or blend IE with other approaches? Do you know of any examples or ways that IE studies are nested as a part of multi-methods programs of work? How can I reconcile my wandering eye and maintain theoretical/methodological consistency?

Thanks,

Commitment Issues in Calgary (CIC)

Dr. Tim Diamond answered this question during a teleconference with the 'IE Working Group' in January in Calgary. The consultation with Dr. Diamond was informal and loosely organized around a 'Dear Doctor' format. Dr. Diamond was at his home in New York State when he talked with sixteen IE researchers at our monthly meeting at the University of Calgary. Regular participants include ten IE'ers from Calgary and six researchers who phone in from Newfoundland, Ottawa, Toronto, Vancouver Island and New York.

Emphasizing how IE must always be able to respond to the question: "Where are the people?" the discussion focused on the radical turn that materially positions IE in a way that is fundamentally different from other qualitative approaches. Dr. Diamond suggested that at the start of an IE project, researchers enter a "dialogic conversation" with themselves to keep grounded in the actual issues that generated the research interest.

This was exemplified when one of the participants described her interest in "exploring the lives of older workers with a focus on the health and safety needs". Dr. Diamond's questions began to unpick the category off 'older workers' as he led the conversation back to the actual details about the researcher's father-in-law who started work in the service industry when he was well into retirement. The meetings are conducted from the Calgary campus and participants can join by phone. During the meeting Dr. Diamond declared "this is really weird, talking on the phone from New York to IE'ers in Canada, but it's really good!" As we concluded our session he left to attend a party to celebrate the inauguration of President Obama.

This IE Working Group plans to continue monthly meetings and anticipate inviting other IE guests every other month. Are there any other doctors in the house?

IE Research Training Seminar for the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy

By Susan Turner and Dorothy E. Smith

Ellen Pence, Dorothy E. Smith, and Susan Turner conducted a two-day research training seminar for members of the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy Department of Economic and Community Development October 30-31, 2008. We were invited to provide the foundation for the potential use of IE in the Institute's Sustainability of Communities Project (SOC) led by Dr. Carla Robinson and conducted with Research Associate Yesim Sungu-Eryilmaz.

The SOC project will investigate the situation of African-American families, communities and neighbourhoods in the southeastern U.S. that are being displaced from their land due to soaring land prices, high-end development, private speculation and government redevelopment projects. The project aims to examine particular planning processes and policies and how they incorporate community concerns about development.

We had been asked, over the course of the two days, to teach institutional ethnography to the Lincoln Institute participants (one of whom was present only through speaker-phone) – a demanding objective. To begin with, Dorothy outlined the conceptual foundations of Institutional Ethnography with an emphasis on its practical use in research; Susan then provided a basic introduction to her graphical mapping technique and its uses in investigating policy processes and working with community groups to develop a course of action; then Ellen Pence described her audit process, involving those at work within an institutional regime and oriented to making change from within. That was the first day.

The next day, all the participants worked together to apply the mapping technique to a specific major city government redevelopment project taking place in Atlanta, Ga. and discussed a number of potential research projects and how the Institute could proceed on them.

Apart from formalized sessions, we talked informally. Susan and Dorothy had a chance after the formal meetings were over to spend a particularly productive evening with Dr. Robinson. We are looking forward to learning more of her work with the Lincoln Institute taking up the standpoint of African-American communities threatened by loss of their land.

We should add our appreciation of the support of the Centre for Women's Studies in Education at OISE in accommodating our seminar.

Publications

A revised version of **Naomi Nichols'** paper, which was awarded the 2008 George W. Smith Graduate Student Paper Award, has now been published. Here is the reference:

Nichols, Naomi. (2008). "Gimme Shelter! Investigating the Social Service Interface from the Standpoint of Youth". *Journal of Youth Studies*, 11(6), 685-699.

Lauri Grace sends word that her PhD thesis (dissertation) has now been published. Her PhD

project was the basis for the paper that won the 2006 George W. Smith Graduate Student Paper Award. Details are:

Grace, L. 2008, "Vocational Education in Australia: The Power of Institutional Language", VDM Verlag Dr. Muller, Saarbrucken Germany.
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(Publications continued)

The back cover reads, in part: “Grace proposes a new way of understanding a text-based regulatory system that reshapes educational practice and connects it to government agendas. This book should be useful to anyone interested in Australian education and government policy, or those exploring competency based training and quality compliance more generally.”

Eric Mykhalovskiy’s paper: “Beyond Decision Making: Class, Community Organizations, and the Healthwork of People Living with HIV/AIDS. Contributions from Institutional Ethnographic Research” was published in *Medical Anthropology* in May 2008. The abstract reads, in part: “The consolidation of antiretroviral therapy as the primary biomedical response to HIV infection in the global North has occasioned a growing interest in the health decision making of people living with HIV (PHAs). This interest is burdened by the weight of a behaviorist theoretical orientation that limits decision making to individual acts of rational choice. This paper offers an alternative way to understand how PHAs come to take (or not take) biomedical treatments. Drawing on institutional ethnographic research conducted in Toronto, Canada, it explores how the “healthwork” of coming to take

(or not take) treatments is organized by extended relations of biomedical knowledge. The paper focuses on aspects of the knowledge relations of coming to take pharmaceutical medications that transcend the conceptual and relational terrain of rational decision-making perspectives.”

Paul Luken notes that he has a ‘nano-publication’: “Institutional Ethnography.” 2008. pp. 498-500 in *Encyclopedia of Social Problems*. V.N. Parillo (ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

And finally, a book announcement from **Nancy Naples**:

“The Sexuality of Migration: Border Crossing and Mexican Immigrant Men” by Lionel Cantú, edited by Nancy A. Naples and Salvador Vidal-Ortiz (New York University Press, February 2009). “The Sexuality of Migration” is an innovative study of the experiences of Mexican men who have sex with men and who have migrated to the United States. Cantú situates his analysis within the history of Mexican immigration and offers a broad understanding of diverse migratory experiences ranging from recent gay asylum seekers to an assessment of gay tourism in Mexico.

“The Sexuality of Migration” complicates a fixed notion of

sexual identity and explores the complex factors that influence immigration and migration experiences.

Lionel Cantú, Jr., was Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Santa Cruz, with an affiliation in Latin American/Latino Studies. Nancy A. Naples is Professor of Sociology and Women’s Studies, University of Connecticut. Salvador Vidal-Ortiz is Assistant Professor of Sociology at American University.

Other IE projects

Dr. Roz Stooke of the Faculty of Education at the University of Western Ontario (UWO) draws our attention to three ongoing studies that may be of interest to readers. “Doing Early Learning” is an observational study funded by SSHRC that investigates social interaction in programs for very young children and their caregivers in two Canadian provinces. Co-researchers Pam McKenzie (Faculty of Information and Media Studies, UWO) and Roz Stooke employed IE to investigate the social organization of work carried out by parents, children and program staff in a variety of program settings, including public libraries, parent resource centres and other community spaces. The study is described in two refereed journal articles,

(Other IE projects continued)

Producing Storytime (McKenzie & Stooke, 2007), and *Leisure and Work in Library and Community Programs for Young Children* (Stooke & McKenzie, in press). They are currently planning a book together with Dr. Suzanne Smythe. Roz is also supporting two IE studies at the Faculty of Education, UWO, both of which are nearing completion:

Suzanne Smythe is completing a SSHRC funded post-doctoral study that investigates the social organization of parents' work during the kindergarten year.

"The Social Organization of Kindergarten Transitions" maps the experiences of parents in the six months before and after their children start kindergarten. Whereas kindergarten transition and school readiness is often presented as a 'one size fits all' process, the research suggests that families are differently positioned within each of these work processes, and working families, families with children with special needs, and families without access to powerful social networks for 'doing school' are most likely to incur significant material costs and make radical adaptations to their family life routines to accommodate kindergarten transitions. These emerging conclusions support the premise that "the closer alignment of some individuals or households

than others with the coordinative logics of others institutions may themselves be primary mechanisms for the reproduction of inequalities" (DeVault, p. 295). The research is pursuing the role of parent social and information networks as engines of privilege in schools (Lareau, 2003) and as strategies for accessing scarce educational and child care resources.

Holly Parkinson, has been researching the social organization of teachers' work in early primary classrooms. Inspired by Ann Manicom's study of primary teachers' work, Holly's study discusses the role played by mandated literacy assessments in the intensification of teachers' work.

New members

Welcome to new members who joined the IE Division since our last edition.

Deanna Adams
Sarah Aktepy
Jean Balestrery
Debbie Entrekin
Laura Fairley
Ali Gabriel
Jessica Hausauer
Mary Hollowell
Julia Kirst
Karen Melon
Suzanne Smythe
Christine Torrence
Sarah Whetstone

Website resources

Editor's Note: This newsletter provides a chance to share information and resources: publications and presentations, conferences and workshops. Thanks to past editor, Paul Luken, for suggesting we also share technological resources. Let us know if you have a website that would be of interest to members; send us details and some information about the work you are doing. Susan M. Turner sets the ball rolling for us with her useful account of the RWMC Project:

The Rural Women Making Change (RWMC) research alliance website (www.rwmc.uoguelph.ca) is the work of several co-researchers and collaborators. Some are institutional ethnographers. Many are not. Many work in rural and community organizations and some in government and, together, they are doing institutional ethnography. The website displays the people and the products of their collaboration that are being put to work in many sites for the benefit of rural women and girls.

The RWMC website is one means to meet three of our goals: assemble a body of ethnographic knowledge on rural women's organizations and policies that affect them;

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(Website resources continued)

contribute to scholarly work on everyday practices that concern women in rural communities; and consolidate community and scholarly research and new knowledge and make it accessible to those interested in it and who can use it in multiple sites.

The project premises a relationship between the sustainability of rural communities and women's capacity to enter into the rural economy in a meaningful and supported way. Institutional ethnography is an approach for identifying aspects of policy processes, mapping their relations and organization and showing how they are consequential for the issues and problems identified by people in their everyday lives.

The Rural Women Making Change team adopted institutional ethnography as an overall method of inquiry for its six projects. We use focus groups, interviews, and some

surveys to learn about the experiences and conditions that rural women face in particular areas. Each team's work expands from people's knowledge of their everyday lives, to examining how governing and institutional processes shape the everyday conditions in which people live and work. Rural women's everyday conditions and issues are complex. Thus RWMC teams use different strategies aimed at multiple institutions and policies affecting the everyday lives of rural women and girls in Canada.

Institutional ethnography founder Dorothy Smith worked with the RWMC team and her work appears under the Municipalities project team page on the website. RWMC ethnography has taken place in several sites. Our view is that we are all hooked into governing relations that shape our everyday lives with particular outcomes, and it is these we must understand in order to change them. Institutional ethnographies each look different. We've explored the workings of such

institutions as agricultural policy development, rural economic development, auto industry training and employment programs, migrant worker programs, and rural transportation planning.

RWMC was funded by Canada's Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council for 2005-2009 to support the knowledge and research efforts of Canadian rural women's organizations, academics and policy advocates working together to address gaps in Canada's policy efforts, to harness the research efforts of a network of scholars, NGOs and statutory agencies, and produce new policy knowledge and forms of policy, community and academic action. RWMC aims to recognize the efforts of rural women and girls, their NGOs and their advocates in government in making change, and to collaboratively create new knowledge relations and forms of change to improve the lives and working conditions of rural women and girls in Canada.

2009 awards competitions
(please turn to final page for mini-poster)

2009 awards competitions

The call for papers for the 2009 George W. Smith Graduate Student Paper Competition and call for nominations for the 2009 Dorothy E. Smith Award for Scholar Activism have been issued.

George W. Smith Graduate Student Paper Competition

The Institutional Ethnography Division solicits papers for its 2009 George W. Smith Graduate Student Paper Competition. Papers should advance institutional ethnography scholarship either methodologically or through a substantive contribution. Authors must be currently enrolled graduate students or have completed their degrees since September 2008. Prizes include a \$100 cash award, registrations fees and an opportunity to present the paper at the 2009 SSSP meetings, and a ticket to the SSSP awards banquet. Students who submit papers should be prepared to attend the conference. Send one copy each to: Paul Luken (pluken@bellsouth.net) and Naomi Nichols (Naomi_Nichols@edu.yorku.ca).

Dorothy E. Smith Award for Scholar Activism

The Institutional Ethnography Division is pleased to solicit nominations for the 2009 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 which have drawn upon or contributed to IE scholarship. The award committee invites members of the division to send one-page statements describing the contributions of nominees to Liza McCoy (mccoy@ucalgary.ca). The honoree will be recognized with a certificate at the Institutional Ethnography business meeting during the Annual Meeting in San Francisco.

The deadline for submissions for both of the above competitions is May 1, 2009.