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On the Inside

-Workshop of Interest

-Call for Distinguished Contribution
Award

-Members News & Notes

-Welcome New Members!

-SSSP Meeting, Chicago, 2025

IE Newsletter

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

Dear SSSP IE division,

To write this newsletter introduction, I looked back at what I had written for my first newsletter. I can hardly believe it has been two years since I became chair of our division. I know so much is happening at the moment, and so for this newsletter, I'd like to take an opportunity to share some words of thanks.

I sincerely appreciate the support from many individuals in our division over the past two years. I was not able to attend the previous conference in Montreal, and many people stepped up to help run the business meeting, organize a meaningful awards ceremony, and make sure IE was well represented during SSSP meetings. As well, so many of our division members have started new initiatives (journals, working groups, etc.) to bring IE to new disciplines and places, and support and encourage one another. Thank you.

Exciting news, Hans-Peter de Ruiter will be our next chair! Thank you, Hans, for stepping up. You will do a great job.

As you all know, I have been in more communication lately regarding the SSSP meeting in Chicago. Please stay tuned, and I will do my best to keep everyone updated. One update is that the [workshop is now virtual and free!](#) I would encourage you all to attend.

I hope to keep in touch with you all, and I wish you all the best.
Sincerely,
Katie

Workshop Of Interest

The Research for Social Change Lab, in association with Trent Graduate Studies, is hosting a two-day **Activist Scholar Open School on April 28th and 29th at Traill College in Peterborough, ON from 9:30 AM until 4:30 PM.** This Open School will consist of a keynote panel each morning with Institutional Ethnography heavy weights, Viviane Namaste, Alexander McClelland, Colin Hastings, Eric Mykhalovskiy, Mitchell McLarnon and Jayne Malenfant. The afternoons will consist of small group concurrent working sessions as well as student presentations. Lunch and snacks will be provided.

[For more information and to register, click here:](#)

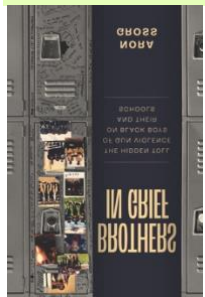
Call Distinguished Contribution Award

Deadline: June 13, 2025

The Institutional Ethnography Division is pleased to solicit nominations for the 2025 Distinguished Contribution Award. This award recognizes the contributions of an individual or group who has made considerable contributions to institutional ethnography itself. These contributions may take many forms: publishing, mentoring, organizing, extending or any combination of activities that enhanced the development of institutional ethnography.

IE Division members are invited to send a one-to-two-page statement to Paul Luken (pluken@bellsouth.net). Your application will be reviewed by the Distinguished Contribution Award Committee that consists of Suzanne Vaughan, Eric Mykhalovskiy, and Paul Luken.

Members' News and Notes



Nora Gross' new book, [*Brothers in Grief: The Hidden Toll of Gun Violence on Black Boys and Their Schools*](#), has recently been recognized as a finalist for the C. Wright Mills Award from the Society for the Study of Social Problems and was named a 2025 Outstanding Book by the Society of Professors of Education. You can hear more about the book in an interview with the [New Books Network](#): (You can also purchase the book at a 30% discount with the code UCPNEW directly from the University of Chicago Press.)

The Winter 2025 issue of Contexts features an article by Gross drawing on her fieldwork at a Philadelphia high school and highlighting many key themes from the book about Black boys' hidden grief in the aftermath of neighborhood gun violence. Find the article [here](#) and podcast [here](#).

Derron Wallace is on research leave as a Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Gina Petonito just took a dissertation client from a draft to a defended dissertation in three weeks. If anyone wishes to know how she did it, just email! gpetonito@gmail.com

Welcome New Members

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

Ami Olson Campbell
Snehalatha Gantia
Melissa Gorz
Aisha Khan
Colby Kopf
Angela LaScala-Gruenewald
Additti Munshi
Doriane E. Paso

SSSP 2025 75th Annual Meeting

Insurgent Sociology in a Time of Crisis

Chicago, Illinois
August 8-10, 2025



Photo by [Ricky Beron](#) on [Unsplash](#)

IE Sessions

Friday, August 8

Time: 8:30 AM - 10:10 AM
Session 005: **CRITICAL DIALOGUE: Institutional Ethnographies of Family Welfare**
Room: Chicago Room
Sponsor: Family, Aging and Youth, Institutional Ethnography

Organizer &

Presider & Discussant: Hans-Peter de Ruiter, Minnesota State University

Description: This session explores the application of Institutional Ethnography (IE) in examining the intersections of family, aging, and youth within welfare systems. Through critical dialogue, scholars will share research that unpacks how institutional processes shape the lived experiences of families across the lifespan. Topics may include the medicalization of childhood through cultural texts, the interplay of parenting, precarity, and gender transformations, ethical lessons from National Socialist-era healthcare practices, textually mediated helping relationships in public social services, and the overarching question of who takes responsibility for care in family and societal structures. By centering the perspectives of those directly affected, this session highlights how IE can reveal hidden power structures and opportunities for transformative change in family welfare.

Papers:

“Ethical and Professional Dilemmas Facing Social Workers in Eldercare,”
Chris R. Wellin, Illinois State University

“Lessons from National Socialist-era Healthcare for Ethical Practices Today: An Archival Institutional Ethnography,” Hans-Peter de Ruiter, Minnesota State University

“Medicalizing Childhood: A Discourse Analysis of Children’s Books about Doctors and Hospitals,” Wendy Simonds, Georgia State University

“Textually Mediated Helping Relationships in Public Social Services,” Hagit Sinai-Glazer, Tel Aviv University

“Who Cares?” Brenda Solomon, University of Vermont

Time: 12:30 PM - 2:10 PM

Institutional Ethnography Divisional Meeting

Room: Marshfield Room

Time: 2:30 pm -4:10pm

Session 023: **CRITICAL DIALOGUE: Using IE to Explore Intersecting Crises: Climate, Social Justice, Housing, and Health**

Room: Hancock Parlor

Sponsor: Institutional Ethnography

Organizers,

Presiders: TBD

Description: This session features institutional ethnographies of intersecting social and environmental crises.

Papers:

“Ideologies of Growth: Fueling/Organizing Climate and Social Justice Crises,”
Lauren Eastwood, SUNY Plattsburgh

“Producing the Crisis of Opioid Use Disorder: The Transformation of Opioid Use into a Medical Affliction,” Leigha Comer, Western University and
Graham George Macdonald, University of Toronto, Humber River Health

“Refugee Experience in the Upper Midwest United States of America: An Institutional Ethnography,” Doriane E. Paso, North Dakota State University

Saturday, August 9

Time: 8:30 AM - 10:10 AM

Session 035: **CRITICAL DIALOGUE: Teaching Social Problems through Institutional Ethnography**

Room: Chicago Room

Sponsor: Institutional Ethnography, Teaching Social Problems

Organizers: Elizabeth L. Brule, Queen's University
Morena Tartari, Northumbria University

Presider &

Discussant: Elizabeth L. Brule, Queen's University

Description: This session focuses on using Institutional Ethnography (IE) to explore social problems and social change with academic and non-academic audiences. Institutional Ethnographers who are teaching/imparting what they have learned from their IE research to academic and non-academic audiences are invited to submit their contributions to this session.

Presentations can focus on how to guide, through IE, academic and non-academic audience in understanding how everyday experiences are shaped by institutional and social forces, in discussing the impact of IE research, and in highlighting the potential of IE to uncover hidden power dynamics, policies, and organizational practices. This aim is to discuss how to help these audiences and communities critically examine institutions while engaging with the possibilities of impact that IE offers.

Papers:

“‘I Swear I Was Playing it Right in Practice’: Student Health and the Discourse of ‘Preparation’ in Post-secondary Music Education,” Jeffrey Sabo and Christine Guptill, University of Ottawa

“A Comprehensive Literature Review of an Institutional Ethnography of Graduate Student Enrollment and Retention,” Doriane E. Paso, Fredricka R. Saunders, Isaac Mensah, Laura J. Parson, Emily C. Schubert, Abby Griffin and Francisca Nyarko, North Dakota State University

“Navigating Academia and Motherhood: An Institutional Ethnography of International Graduate Student Mothers,” Fredricka R. Saunders, North Dakota State University

“Queering Institutional Ethnography: Designing a Conceptual Framework for Equity,” Kelley A. Larson, North Dakota State University

“Selecting a Standpoint in Institutional Ethnography: Accounting for Multiple Social Identities,” Dara Gordon, University of Toronto

“Teaching Institutional Ethnography through Autoethnography,” Laura J. Parson, North Dakota State University

Time: 10:30 AM - 12:10 PM

Session 042: **CRITICAL DIALOGUE: Intersecting Technological, Healthcare, and Social Relations**

Room: Chicago Room

Sponsors: Environment and Technology
Institutional Ethnography

Organizers,

Presiders &

Discussants: Laura J. Parson, North Dakota State University
Alex Megelas, Concordia University

Description:

Exploring intersecting technological, healthcare and social relations through institutional ethnography, ethnography, and qualitative methods.

Papers:

“A Hundred Years of Teaching Experience Confronts Generative AI Unprovoked,” Patricia Lengermann and Gillian Niebrugge-Brantley, The George Washington University

“Algorithmic Scores as Boundary Objects: Risk Assessments and the Uses of Professional Authority in US Pretrial Hearings,” Sino V. Esthappan, Northwestern University

“Impact of Communication Technology on Social Interaction in a University Environment: An Ethnography Study,” Adetola A. Ajayi, University of West Georgia
“McDonaldization and Artificial Intelligence,” J. Michael Ryan, Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú

“What Counts as the ‘Good’ Paramedic: A Qualitative Content Analysis of Recruitment Material in Canada,” Morgan R. King-Roskamp and Michael K. Corman, University of the Fraser Valley

“‘I Still Can Feel the Sickness’: Withdrawal Experiences of People on Methadone Maintenance Treatment,” David Frank, Alexander S. Bennett, Luther Elliott and Charles M. Cleland, New York University, Beth E. Meyerson, Harm Reduction Research Lab, University of Arizona, Suzan M. Walters, New York University, Danielle M. Russell, Kirby Institute, University of New South Wales, Sydney, Caty Simon, North Carolina Survivors Union and Joy D. Scheidell, University of Central Florida

Sunday, August 10

Time: 8:30 AM - 10:10 PM

Session 064: New Directions in Institutional Ethnography

Room: Indiana Room

Sponsors: Institutional Ethnography

Organizers,

Presider &

Discussant: Katherine E. Koralesky, University of British Columbia

Description: This session features papers that are using Institutional Ethnography in new ways.

Papers:

“Exceptional Spaces: Diverse Learning Environments in a Public High School,”
Karlyn J. Gorski, The University of Chicago

"Exploring the Experiences of Charge Nurses: An Institutional Ethnography,"
Emily C. Schubert, North Dakota State University

"Health Work Undertaken by Women Living with Autoimmune Diseases: Emergent
Institutional Mapping," Dara Gordon, University of Toronto

"Spare Parts: The Anatomy of Living Organ Donation," Matthew Strang, York
University

"The Work of Learning Institutional Ethnography: An Autoethnographic Account of
Coming to Institutional Ethnography as an Undergraduate Student," Morgan R. King-
Roskamp, University of the Fraser Valley

Time: 2:30 PM - 4:10 PM

Session 86: CRITICAL DIALOGUE: The Everyday Work of Abolition

Room: Kimball Room

Sponsors: Community, Research and Practice, Institutional Ethnography

Organizers: Keisha M. Muia, Portland State University
Jayne Malenfant, McGill University

Presider &

Discussant: Jayne Malenfant, McGill University

Description: This session will explore abolition and focus on institutional
ethnography and other critical approaches to research and action.

Papers:

"Abolitionist Struggle in Practice: The Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee
and the Fight to End Prison Slavery in Minnesota," Isabella Irtifa, University of
Minnesota Twin Cities

"Creating Spaces Where We Can Breathe: Abolitionist-decolonial Environmental
Justice Praxis," Ki'Amber Thompson, University of California, Santa Cruz

"Humanizing, Relational, and Everyday Approaches to Advocacy and Abolitionist
Praxis," Libby Vigil, The University of New Mexico

"Prairieland Solidarity Committee: The Early Days of an Abolitionist Organization
against a Texas Immigrant Prison," Luis A. Romero, Texas Christian University

"The Everyday Work of Abolition as a Determinant of Health," Colin Hastings,
University of Waterloo, Jeffrey Ansloos and Rosalind Hampton, Ontario Institute for
Studies in Education

“They’re Not from Here: Homelessness as a Contestation of Community Identity for Mid-size Cities,” Erin Dej, Wilfrid Laurier University