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*IE Newsletter*

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

### From the Division Chair: LaNysha Adams

Hello Institutional Ethnographers:

To say this year has been tough is an understatement of a lifetime. One thing that is for sure: it has challenged us and pushed most of us out of rock-solid comfort zones. With loss, however, comes greater opportunities for freedom. As we know, freedom isn't free - it always comes at cost; just look around at the impact of so much loss from 2020 alone. Be that as it may, I encourage all of us to err on the side of optimism using the adversity we faced to strengthen us for a better tomorrow. We will need it for 2021!

Even though we are not meeting in-person at the Annual Meeting, I encourage you to participate virtually. I'm planning a "Success Sips" session, where we sit with our favorite beverage and toast each other from afar. The IE Workshop is scheduled to occur at an irresistibly affordable cost and will be dynamic and interactive. Hopefully, Season 1 of our IE podcast will be launched by then, too! I'm excited to report that we will continue our monthly membership meetings where we feature an IE researcher and discuss all things IE, highlighting happenings within and beyond SSSP.

I was recently asked what my vision is for IE. My vision for IE scholarship is to see a typology of IE across disciplines, emphasizing that IE is way more than a methodology or even a social ontology. I'd love folks on the ground to know IE exists as a way to effect transformational change. In September, the Australian Sociological Association titled an IE session as "connecting the dots between personal crises and systematic injustices." This is exactly what we do as IE'ers, but its real power lies in the change that can be made after the dots are connected. I want to connect with, honor, and uplift institutional ethnographers as we continue to grow as a field. What is your vision for IE?

Onwards and upwards,

LaNysha

## Call for IE Division Awards

### George W. Smith Graduate Student Paper Competition Deadline January 15, 2021

The [Institutional Ethnography Division](#) solicits papers for its 2021 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 and PDF formats, following the latest APA guidelines. 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 2021 SSSP meetings. The winner of the 2021 paper will be invited to sit on the adjudicating panel for the 2022 paper submissions. Please note that any paper submitted for consideration for the George W. Smith Graduate Student Paper Award must also be submitted through the SSSP [Call for Papers](#) to be presented at the 2021 meeting of the SSSP.

Send submission to the review committee chair and IE division chair:

June Jeon (Committee Chair) [jjeon24@wisc.edu](mailto:jjeon24@wisc.edu) and  
LaNysha Adams (IE Division Chair) [lanysa@edlinguist.com](mailto:lanysa@edlinguist.com).

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

### Dorothy E. Smith Award for Scholar Activism Deadline: March 31, 2021

The [Institutional Ethnography Division](#) is pleased to solicit nominations for the 2021 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 of the nominee to committee chair, Marjorie DeVault [mdevault@maxwell.syr.edu](mailto:mdevault@maxwell.syr.edu) by the deadline.

## Members' News and Notes

**Jayne Malenfant, Naomi Nichols** and **Kaitlin Schwan** published an article in 2019 titled, Chasing funding to "eat our own tail": The invisible emotional work of making social change, *Canadian Journal of Nonprofit & Social Economy Research / Revue canadienne de recherche sur les OSBL et l'économie sociale*. Autumn 2019, Vol. 10, p40-54. DOI: 10.29173/cjnser.2019v10n2a307.

**Naomi Nichols'** September 2020 talk on Institutional Ethnography for The Australian Sociological Association is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7C6yovK59o&feature=youtu.be&fbclid=IwAR0i0tPFFwkT6zoPJXHrs-QnmeTHPDeD9sj885rWJVgMy0evpHgLkaBdB5c>

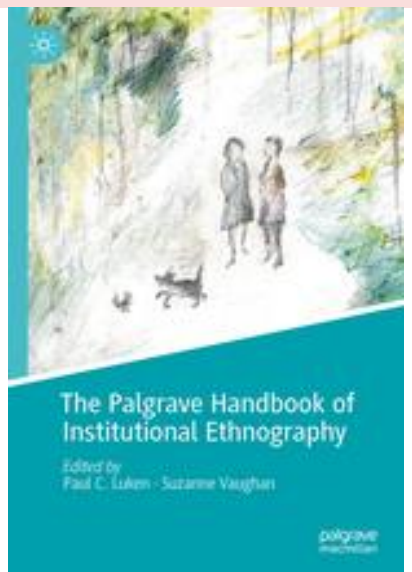
**Nicole K. Dalmer** published an article in 2020 titled: "Unsettling Knowledge Synthesis Methods Using Institutional Ethnography: Reflections on the Scoping Review as a Critical Knowledge Synthesis Tool," *Qualitative Health Research*, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732320949167>

**Fiona Webster** published a book in 2020 titled: *The social organization of best practice: An institutional ethnography of physicians' work*, Palgrave MacMillan.

As one phase of an I.E. research project on technology and the classroom, **Aron Rosenberg** (Montréal) has spent 2020 completely offline. January 1, 2021 at 3 pm EST, Aron will be livestreaming a performance piece on Twitter @Osher.

**Gina Petonito** recently launched her company Writing Your Way. She can help edit your academic and non-academic writing and is planning on launching an online program that will train students to approach self-editing with confidence. Contact her at [gpetonito@gmail.com](mailto:gpetonito@gmail.com) for more information.

**Paul C. Luken** and **Suzanne Vaughan** edited a volume titled *The Palgrave Handbook of Institutional Ethnography*. The online version will be available sometime in December while the hardcopy version will be available in early 2021.



This project began at an informal dinner in Toronto, Canada during the International Sociological Association World Congress of Sociology in 2018. As we began this project, IE colleagues from SSSP and ISA encouraged and supported us as we assembled the institutional ethnographic work included in this volume. Paul and I learned immeasurably from the authors about the potential of institutional ethnography to show us "how things happen as they do": about the diversity of institutional ethnographic work done in various countries; about the struggles many have faced in maintaining epistemological and ontological commitments as they incorporate other methods or frameworks; about how transnational/global relations organize education, environmental policies and practices, and indigenous and human rights; about how public sector management regimes across different countries and service arenas organized frontline work; and about activists

efforts to bring about change within their communities. The volume includes a number of chapters by members of the IE section of SSSP.

In this volume some twenty-seven chapters written by thirty-eight contributors address the theoretical richness of institutional ethnography as a mode of inquiry and touch upon the debates inside and outside our field. Here scholars and social activists from Canada, Australia, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Taiwan, the U.K. and the United States, in sociology and other fields including: geography, politics, education, social work, linguistics, health and medical care, child family studies environmental studies, and other social-service related fields use the ontological insights of institutional ethnography to uncover the social relations shaping the everyday world in which we live

Here is a little about the organization of the handbook. Although we recognize that many of the chapters overlap with other sections, the handbook chapters are organized into six sections. Part 1 focuses on the historical and ontological roots of the alternative sociology the in

on-going work of Dorothy E. Smith and others. Part 2 is organized around the ways in which institutional ethnographers are developing new research strategies and exploring new challenges as they investigate institutional relations. Part 3 includes chapters whose beginning point is in the local, but move ethnographically to explicate global/transnational ruling relations. Part 4 is about making change in communities. In this section activists/authors discuss the ways in which they use Ellen Pence's Institutional Analysis (Pence and Sadusky, 2005, 2006) and/or George Smith's Political Activist as Ethnographer (Smith, G.1990) to transform people's lives. In Part 5 although authors in this section are inspired by Griffith and Smith's *Under New Public Management* (2014), many of these chapters written by a new generation of researchers have taken up their investigations in very different settings and entirely new geographical locations. The final section, Part 6, bringing together new approaches and perspectives, includes chapters whose authors have begun to experiment with incorporating other theoretical frameworks with similar epistemological and ontological commitments into their investigations of the social. A word about the cover is warranted here. The handbook is dedicated to the memory of Alison I. Griffith, our first president of the ISA Working Group of Institutional Ethnography. The cover, titled "Walking the Ravines of Toronto," is a drawing by Herbert Hughes, who we asked to produce a sketch of two women walking through a ravine. It is inspired from a quote by Dorothy Smith about the early days of developing a project on mothering work and schooling with Alison. The quote comes from a chapter Dorothy wrote on "Institutional Ethnography" in Tim May's edited volume, *Qualitative Research in Action* (2002) where she discusses the dialogic nature of inquiry into the social. The chapter ends with further elaboration of terms she uses throughout the chapter. The RAVINES IN TORONTO is one of the terms in the glossary. Here is the quote:

"On long walks through the RAVINES IN TORONTO we shared stories of our mothering work, of our children's struggles, of our fear of interfering, of pushing teaches too hard, of not pushing them not hard enough. Our explorations opened up the social relations and organization of schooling as those in relation to which women's work as mothers is done (p. 24)."

We look forward to the publication of the Handbook and hope that its contents enliven discussion among seasoned IEs and those new to field.

The 2008 ISA Forum of Sociology, Barcelona, Spain where Suzanne and Paul gathered ISA member signatures to establish the Thematic Group on Institutional Ethnography.



## Congratulations Doctor!

Cynthia Puddu completed her PhD thesis in Health Promotion and Sociobehaviour Sciences, University of Alberta, in 2020, an institutional ethnography titled *The Social Organization of Youth Homelessness in Edmonton, Alberta*.

## Institutional Ethnography Book Series

### **Institutional Ethnography: Studies in the Social Organization of Knowledge** New Book Series with University of Toronto Press

We live in a world of accelerated interconnection. What we experience as immediate and local experiences and events are connected in myriad ways with activities, technologies, and forms of knowledge that people, not known to us, engage in elsewhere and at other times. Institutional ethnography is an approach to social research that explores this ineluctable translocal nature of our contemporary existence.

Institutional ethnography is particularly committed to critical inquiry of ruling relations, conceptualized as that complex of activities and discourses reaching across government, the corporate sector, the mass media, and the professions, among other sites, through which our lives are governed. To explore ruling relations, institutional ethnographers treat language, discourse, and knowledge as social practices and use forms of writing and analysis that preserve the active presence of the experiencing subject. Institutional ethnographic studies explore how ruling relations take shape as people's translocally coordinated activities and explore how such relations are created and operate, how they affect people's day-to-day lives, and how they can be transformed.

**Institutional Ethnography: Studies in the Social Organization of Knowledge** is the first book series to curate book manuscripts that showcase research excellence and innovation in the field. The series will be a unique contribution to contemporary knowledge about how ruling relations are organized in our present. It will build on traditions of engaged scholarship to serve as a focal point for scholarly discourse that connects insights about and critiques of the various forms of intersecting knowledge, technologies and practice through which societies are governed. Taken as a whole, the series will critique relations of exclusion, marginalization and oppression, and contribute new perspectives about how they can be altered in pursuit of better futures.

The series will publish books that engage in institutional ethnography in a range of ways. Institutional ethnographic studies reporting original research written by senior scholars as well as emerging researchers (including those who have conducted innovative institutional ethnographic Ph.D. research) will be a central thread of the series. Manuscripts by scholars whose work is informed by institutional ethnography will also be included. The series will also consider manuscripts that explore theoretical and methodological issues related to institutional ethnographic inquiry. The series will also consider edited collections with a coherent analytic through line.

#### Series Editor

Eric Mykhalovskiy, Sociology, York University, Canada

#### Editorial Board Members

Marjorie DeVault (Sociology (Emerita), Syracuse University, USA)  
Liza McCoy Sociology, University of Calgary, Canada  
Frank Wang Social Work, National Cheng Chi University, Taiwan  
Debra Talbot Education, University of Sydney

For more information:

Eric Mykhalovskiy ([ericm@yorku.ca](mailto:ericm@yorku.ca))

Jodi Lewchuk, Acquisitions Editor, University of Toronto Press ([jlewchuk@utorontopress.com](mailto:jlewchuk@utorontopress.com))

## Recent IE Books and Papers Published

A regular feature of the Fall *IE Newsletter* is to compile a sampling 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 [gpetonito@gmail.com](mailto:gpetonito@gmail.com).

Emily Billo, (2020) Gendering indigenous subjects: An institutional ethnography of corporate social responsibility in Ecuador, *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, Vol. 27, p1134-1154. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2019.1650723>

Allyson Ion, (2019) Keeping secrets, disclosing health information: An institutional ethnography of the social organisation of perinatal care for women living with HIV in Canada, *Culture, Health & Sexuality*, Vol. 22, p. 429-443. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2019.1604996>

Michelle LaFrance, (2019) *Institutional Ethnography: A Theory of Practice for Writing Studies Researchers*, Utah State University Press.

Rebecca W. B. Lund and Ann Christin E. Nilsen, (2019) *Institutional Ethnography in the Nordic Region*, Taylor & Francis Group.

Honggen Xian and Bin Dai, 2020, When truth is power: Institutional ethnography of a think tank, *International Journal of Tourism Research*, Vol. 22: 438-450. DOI: 10.1002/jtr.2347.

## Call for Papers

**Morena Tartari** (University of Antwerp, Belgium), and **May-Linda Magnussen** (Agder University, Norway). announce a call for papers of the ESA IE Research Stream (RS04) that they are coordinating. Here the link to the list of ESA 2021 Research Streams.

<https://www.europeansociology.org/about-esa-2021-barcelona/programme>

It should be updated by ESA 2021 organizers with the description of the IE RS.

The Call for Papers is planned to be issued by the end of the year 2020.

The ESA 2021 Conference will take place either with the full physical co-presence of all attendees, or wholly online, or in some hybrid mode combining these two possibilities. The aim of this RS is to share, discuss, develop and advance the application of IE. The RS will provide a platform for Europe-based researchers, scholars, social activists and students who utilize IE in their research. This stream is also for networking and exchanging experiences with IE scholars outside Europe who will be interested in joining the sessions.

The coordinators will do everything possible to organize virtual sessions that allow colleagues from outside Europe to participate in.

## Welcome New Members

Twelve new members have joined the Institutional Ethnography Division since the publication of our last newsletter. Welcome all!

Helen Hudson  
Shiv Issar  
Sandra Portocarrero  
Zakariah Rittenhouse  
Yasmin Tehrani  
Robert A. Williams

Patricia R. Woods  
Lee Yeates  
Kevin Ah-Sen  
Cansu E. Dedeoglu  
Cath Jenkins  
Zoe Sullivan

## IE Virtual Reading and Study Group

Institutional ethnography, an intuitive awakening of the rebel in us. We're scientists, academics, professionals, practitioners. In and beyond our everyday roles, we're curious, we observe, we care. Institutional ethnography is the sociology we choose to explore and understand the social. We come together to create a space for learning, understanding, conversing institutional ethnography. We do *IE Perspective* to read, ask, discuss all about institutional ethnography theory and practice. We have a **Facebook group** to organize our meetups and keep in touch. But *IE Perspective* is not another Facebook group to join. *IE Perspective* is a virtual reading club-and-study group, everyone participates. We have **IE Perspective s.log**®, a sound blog you can find at podcast networks to listen to sound-recordings of our chats. We also have a (currently) members-only **YouTube channel** for the video-recordings of our conversations. *IE Perspective* started in September 2020; it's new, dynamic. Our concept is simple; we share a passion and we get to know each other. We have agreed principles for doing *IE Perspective*. We survey a convenient date and time, and we meet every six weeks or so. A member of the group chooses the text we read, which we use to bring about our conversation. We also discuss our projects, ideas, challenges, plans. We come from around the world. And, it's amazing to see people having their breakfast or a break at work, joining from their (home-)office, just finished work, or before going to bed spending time together to learn and help others learn.

**www:** [ieperspective.weebly.com](http://ieperspective.weebly.com)

**s.log (or sound blog):** [ieperspectives.log.com](http://ieperspectives.log.com)

**twitter:** @IEPerspective

**facebook:** [ie.perspective](https://www.facebook.com/ie.perspective)

**email:** [the.ie.perspective@gmail.com](mailto:the.ie.perspective@gmail.com)

## Call for Papers



Below are the IE sponsored or co-sponsored sessions calling for papers for the 2021 SSSP formerly held in Chicago. Please note, the conference will be completely virtual. All papers must be submitted by midnight, January 15, 2021 to be considered for inclusion in the program. To submit, please consult:

<https://www.sssp1.org/index.cfm/m/838/fuseaction/ssspsession2.publicView>

### **Revolutionizing Sociology in *The Palgrave Handbook of Institutional Ethnography*-THEMATIC**

Sponsor: Institutional Ethnography

Organizers: Paul C. Luken and Suzanne Vaughan

### **New Directions in the Social Organization of Knowledge**

Sponsor: Institutional Ethnography

Organizers: Lauren E. Eastwood and Naomi Nichols

### **CRITICAL DIALOGUE: Women and Justice: Rehabilitation, Resistance, Reflexivity and the Self in Institutional Spaces**

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

Organizers: Ebonie L. Cunningham Stringer and Jayne Malenfant

### **CRITICAL DIALOGUE: COVID-19 and the Politics of Education**

Co-sponsors: Disability, Educational Problems, and Institutional Ethnography

Organizers: Kyla Walters, Heather Sue McDonald Rosen, and Rashmee Karnad-Jani

### **Reflexivity and the Self in Institutional Spaces**

Co-sponsors: Gender and Institutional Ethnography

Organizer: Órla Meadhbh Murray

### **Institutional Ethnography and the Epistemologies of the Global South-THEMATIC**

Co-sponsors: Institutional Ethnography and Social Problems Theory

Organizer: Henry Parada

### **Health Services and Health Policies: Transforming Institutions**

Co-sponsors: Institutional Ethnography and Society and Mental Health

Organizers: Cathy Ringham and Janet Rankin

### **CRITICAL DIALOGUE: Institutional Ethnography as an Alternative Revolutionary Sociology around the World-THEMATIC**

Sponsor: Institutional Ethnography

Organizers: Ann Christin Nilsen and LaNysha T. Adams

### **Institutional Ethnography in Support of Decolonization-THEMATIC**

Sponsor: Institutional Ethnography

Organizer: Cheryl Zurawski



## **Future Meetings**

### **2022 Annual Meeting**

Program Theme: TBD

August 5-7, 2022

Omni Los Angeles Hotel at California Plaza

Los Angeles, CA

### **2023 Annual Meeting**

Program Theme: TBD

August 18-20, 2023

Philadelphia 201 Hotel

Philadelphia, PA