

# Institutional Ethnography

Newsletter of the International Sociological Association Working Group 06

## Table of Contents

From the Co-Presidents	2
From the Newsletter Editor	3
ISA XX World Congress of Sociology	4
Dorothy in the Nordics	5
Interview with Pei-Ru Liao	7
Interview with Jeanine Gallagher	11
Introducing Leigha Comer's Dissertation	13
Mentorship Seminars	14
Interest Groups & Regional News	15
New Publications, Books, Films	18
Board of Directors/Contact Information	20

## From the Co-Presidents

**Liza McCoy:** 2022 was the year we lost Dorothy Smith. I am glad that she lived to see the publication of her latest book, *Simply Institutional Ethnography* (University of Toronto Press, 2022; co-authored with the late Alison Griffith). The book was launched with a Zoom seminar in May, moderated by IE book series editor Eric Mykhalovskiy and featuring excellent comments by Marj DeVault, Susan Turner, Adriana Suárez Delucchi, and Frank Wang, as well as Dorothy herself. You can [watch the seminar on You-Tube](#). I recommend it.

**Frank T.Y. Wang:** I also feel comforted that we had a chance to tell Dorothy how her work has influenced our lives, both intellectually and personally, in the book launch event. I still remember her first appearance in Taiwan. My graduate student told me that she almost cried when she saw Dorothy because her presence sent out a strong message that you can age gracefully as a feminist scholar. Dorothy brought light and hope to many of us as a scholar and critical thinker. I believe she will continue to live in every occasion when we adopt IE in our everyday work.

**Liza:** I am also glad that Dorothy was able to see the final version of the documentary video that Elizabeth Cameron and I made, *Dorothy Smith: Discovering a Sociology for People*. It was a joy working with Elizabeth and Dorothy on the video, along with Dorothy's granddaughter Calla Rowan Smith and institutional ethnographer Katie Korelesky, who also appear in it. This 22-minute video is [available online](#) for use in classes and for anyone interested in Dorothy's life and work.

**Frank:** I want to thank Liza for making this documentary, which provides a comprehensive portrait of Dorothy's life. This is extremely helpful for those who did not have a chance to know Dorothy in person. We are racing with time. There are things that you won't have a second chance to do. And this documentary is one of them. Thank you, Liza!

**Liza:** In the video, Dorothy remarks that she loves learning and discoveries, not just her own, but other people's. There has been much learning and discovery going on in the IE community this past year, and you can read about some of it in the pages that follow: new publications, newly defended dissertations, vibrant mentorship seminars, active regional associations. I am impressed by the work people are doing, and I look forward to learning about more new IE research at the ISA XX Congress this coming summer.

**Frank:** Yes, Dorothy kept encouraging us to try new ways of doing IE and move beyond what has been done in IE. In her preface for the IE book in Taiwan, she said, "You will be and probably have been making such innovations in Taiwan. I hope to hear of them and to learn more as your work and thinking goes forward from this excellent basis." She encouraged us to make a jump and be creative. With her words in my mind, I look forward to learning about our jumps in IE at the ISA XX Congress.

Best wishes to you all in 2023! Happy Chinese New Year!



## From the Newsletter Editor

### Rebecca Lund, WG06 Vice President

Thank you to everyone who sent in material. We extend warm encouragement to all WG06 members to share information about your new publications, career milestones, and IE activities in your regions. Consider writing a short piece about your research in progress, or some other topic, or volunteering to take part in a "Getting to Know Our Members" interview or writing a short "Reflection Piece." The next newsletter will come out in Spring 2023. This is your newsletter, and your contributions make it a vibrant and useful vehicle of communication in the international IE network.

Dorothy Smith's passing earlier this year is significant to our research community and of course warrants reflection as to how we might honor and think with her work in the future. For this issue I was kindly given permission to translate a short piece written by Professor Emerita Karin Widerberg, "Dorothy in the Nordics." The issue also includes a very interesting interview with Dr. Pei-Ru Liao, by Frank Wang, about the work of translating *Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People* into Chinese.

The "Getting to Know Our Members" interview in this issue features Jeanine Gallagher, who recently finalized her PhD at the Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia, and has worked for many years with education policy and the implementation of inclusive education practices.

The "Introducing my PhD Dissertation" section features the work of Leigha Comer, who introduces us to her PhD dissertation, *The Social Organization of Opioid Use for Chronic Pain in Canada*, defended at York University in Toronto, Canada. If you or one of your students would like to introduce their recently-completed dissertation, please get in touch with me.

The issue contains an update from the WG06 coordinators on the World Congress of Sociology.

In addition, you can read about the WG06 mentoring seminars and see updates from some of the regional networks and special interest groups.



## ISA XX World Congress of Sociology: Updates

[The XX ISA World Congress of Sociology](#) will be held in **Melbourne, Australia, from June 24-July 1, 2023**. It will be in hybrid format, with both in-person and online sessions. Our WG06 Institutional Ethnography program coordinators are Adriana Suárez Delucchi ([adriana.suarez@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:adriana.suarez@bristol.ac.uk)) and Lauren Eastwood ([eastwole@plattsburgh.edu](mailto:eastwole@plattsburgh.edu)).

Here are the 13 WG06 sessions, with their session organizers.

1. **Using Institutional Ethnography to Understand Justice and Power**  
Elizabeth Ablett, Exeter University, United Kingdom
2. **The Politics of Institutional Ethnography: Representation, Reflexivity and Method**  
Órla Murray, Imperial College London, United Kingdom
3. **Different Perspectives on the Sociology of Knowledge**  
Rebecca Lund, University of Oslo, Norway
4. **Exploring Intersections: Institutional Ethnography, Environment, and Development**  
Adriana Suárez Delucchi, University of Bristol, United Kingdom
5. **Institutional Ethnography in Healthcare and Healthcare Education**  
Caroline Cupit, University of Leicester, United Kingdom; Gráinne Kearney, Queen's University Belfast, United Kingdom
6. **Doing Institutional Ethnography: Issues and Innovations I**  
Liza McCoy, Department of Sociology, Calgary, AB, Canada; Frank T.Y. Wang, National Chengchi University, Taiwan
7. **Doing Institutional Ethnography: Issues and Innovations II**  
Liza McCoy, Department of Sociology, Calgary, AB, Canada; Frank T.Y. Wang, National Chengchi University, Taiwan
8. **The Legacy of Dorothy E. Smith: What is the Future of IE?**  
Liza McCoy, Department of Sociology, Calgary, AB, Canada; Lauren Eastwood, Käte Hamburger Kolleg/Centre for Global Cooperation Research, University of Duisberg-Essen, Germany
9. **Institutional Ethnography in Educational Settings**  
Josefine Jahreie, Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway; Rebecca Lund, University of Oslo, Norway
10. **Understanding the Sociological Interplay of Emotions**  
Debra Talbot, University of Sydney, Australia; Mariana Nobile, FLACSO Argentina, Argentina
11. **Using Institutional Ethnography in Socio-Legal Studies**  
Morena Tartari, University of Padua, Italy; Gary Barron, Lethbridge College, Canada
12. **Various Approaches to Ethnography/Institutional Ethnography**  
Atinder Kaur, Panjab University, Chandigarh, India
13. **Where Is the Frontline? Using IE to Explore Opportunities for Activism**  
Nerida Spina, Queensland University of Technology, Australia; Debra Talbot, University of Sydney, Australia; Sophie Hickey, Charles Darwin University, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

**Remember that the conference Registration Deadline is March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2023!**

# ***Dorothy in the Nordics***

**By Karin Widerberg**

Translated by Rebecca Lund from the original Norwegian text "Dorothy hos oss i Norden":  
<https://doi.org/10.18261/nost.6.4.5>

I read *The Everyday World as Problematic* (1987) in 1989. It knocked me out. Institutional Ethnography (IE) was exactly what I, without knowing it, had been searching for as a Marxist and Feminist. Through a critique of traditional sociological foundations, principles and inquiry, the book made me understand why I felt alienated as a sociologist. More than that, IE offered an alternative way of doing sociology, an approach where the purpose was to produce knowledge *for* people, not *about* people. "A method of inquiry" – as Dorothy Smith named it – based on re-interpretations of classic sociology to explicate ruling relations in everyday activities and relations. Smith encouraged sociologists to not give up on *Telling the truth after postmodernism* (Smith, 1999). This was what I needed to begin a transformation of myself and my discipline. In the beginning I was alone, and I worked my way through Dorothy Smith's articles and books. Then I began teaching IE, supervising interested students, and using IE in my own research. Every time I learned something new. In this way my understanding of IE developed and deepened enough to make it "my own." If I could see the light, others should also be able to ...

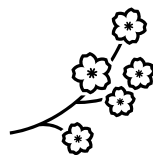


Dorothy Smith, around the time of the publication of *The Everyday World as Problematic* (photo: L. McCoy)

As research leader (1988-1991) at the Centre for Women's Research (now the Centre for Gender Research) at the University of Oslo – and later (from 1992) as Professor at the Institute for Sociology and Human Geography, also at the University of Oslo – I had good opportunities to launch IE through research courses and seminars. Dorothy was invited, and came, many times. The last PhD course we organized together was in Oslo, 2011. After the course had ended Dorothy spent several days at her hotel meeting and commenting on PhD projects and answering questions. She was 86 years old, with an incredible intellectual sharpness, energy and curiosity.

Students and PhD students were enthusiastic – unlike my colleagues – but also worried about the reactions from the disciplinary environment if they chose to use IE in their projects. Would IE be understood and accepted by the PhD committee and opponents? These concerns were not unfounded; my colleagues' initial response to IE was skepticism and critique, perceiving it as a variation of "problem-oriented empiricism" (the key approach of the "golden age" in Norwegian sociology) – grassroots, from below, from within. The same arguments and critiques were put forward every time, year after year, and I thought to myself, after one of Dorothy's many brilliant lectures, "How does she manage to cope with this?!" The walls of the discipline seemed impenetrable and safely guarded. Standing up against "male-stream" and "main-stream" sociology is definitely a political act, and I suspect that is what kept Dorothy going. She was motivated by intellectual battles and they made her develop her own thinking. I realized we needed more people who could join the struggle for developing the kind of knowledge IE studies offered. Therefore, in connection to the above-mentioned PhD course in 2011, I took initiative to establishing a Nordic network for IE researchers. The network has a home page, a mailing list and a Facebook page through which meetings, seminars, courses and publications are announced. Since 2011 the network has been coordinated by different people at different Norwegian universities. This is to ensure that the network does not stagnate, but keeps fresh and alive, as well as reflecting and inspiring local IE activities.

Today the Nordic IE research environment is large, and thanks to this we can work from within our disciplines to challenge our disciplinary walls and habits. We have academic positions, we teach and do research, we supervise and publish. We have even developed IE books for teaching purposes, in both Norwegian and English: Widerberg (Ed.) 2015. *I hjertet av velferdsstaten. En invitasjon til institusjonell etnografi* and Lund & Nilsen (Eds.) 2019. *Institutional Ethnography in the Nordic Region*. Dorothy has been with us in all this work, and when she could not visit us, we visited her. I was awaiting her reactions to my article "Academic Star Wars. Pierre Bourdieu and Dorothy E. Smith on Academic Work," published in Leulforsrud & Sohlberg (Eds.) 2021. *Constructing Social Research Objects* when I received the news of her passing. I can imagine her critical comments, but I think she would have appreciated the political intention of spreading IE to the disciples of another sociological star. I am deeply grateful for all she has given us; we will honor her work by celebrating the type of knowledge and discovery that IE promotes.



# ***Translating Dorothy Smith to Chinese***

## ***An interview with Dr. Pei-Ru Liao***

**By Frank T.Y. Wang**



**Dr. Pei-Ru Liao** is an Associate Professor in the Centre for General Education of National Ping-Tung University of Science and Technology. She has recently translated Dorothy Smith's book, *Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People* (2005), into Chinese. This book will be published in December 2022 by Chuliu Book Co. This is the third book of IE that has been translated into Chinese. The following is an interview with her by **Frank Wang** about her experience of translating the book.

***How did you first encounter IE? In what ways you have applied IE in your research or teaching in Taiwan?***

I first read about IE and Dorothy Smith's notion of "women's standpoint" when I was doing gender studies in a postgraduate school in the UK, but not until I came back to Taiwan did I get to know more about IE. When I started my first teaching job at a medical university in Taiwan, I helped my colleagues to organise a workshop in which Dorothy Smith was invited to lecture on Institutional Ethnography. I was honoured to be the interpreter of the workshop, so I got to know Institutional Ethnography more deeply.

I began applying IE in my research after getting more involved in the front-line practices of the Gender Equity Education Act in Taiwan. The complaints from front-line workers who work in the education or welfare system opened up a new perspective for me, so I started to problematise the institution they are working with or within. IE has been helpful for me to examine and analyse how the prevention programmes for gender-based violence have been institutionalised across the education system, the welfare system, the healthcare system, etc. For example, IE helps me to explore how the state agenda of gender equality is being practised, in a narrow sense, as "preventions of gender-based violence" incorporated with a protectionist approach that reflects patriarchal controls from the central government and lessens the agency of the third sector in the civil society. At the same time, the institutionalisation of gender equality policies accredits an NPO [non-profit organisations]-scholars complex that legitimates scholars' discursive power to build up the institution and limits NPOs' power to provide innovative services.

***Translation is a time-consuming task that seldom receives due academic credit. What motivated you to translate this book?***

I have a BA in Foreign Languages and Literature, so, unlike most Taiwanese students, when I started reading feminist theories and Marxism, I read them in English. What I found troubling when I became a lecturer at the university was that most Taiwanese students have no choice but to study theories of feminism and gender studies in a language they might not be familiar with. Students are facing barriers from languages while struggling to make out what the theories are about. This is an institutional problem of the higher education system in Taiwan because translating theoretical works from foreign languages to the local language would not grant the translator academic credits. The translation would not help me get a tenure-track job, but research papers published in top-ranking journals, usually in English, are essential when being assessed for a tenure-track position.

As an educator, I do believe it is part of my duty to translate Smith's classics into Chinese, which could help students grasp the essence of IE. I think a thorough understanding of IE opens a window for students to feminist knowledge production that resists oppression from the ruling class (let me borrow Marxist terms here). Also, in the last decade, I have been invited to supervise domestic violence prevention programmes outsourced to NPOs and shared IE with social workers who struggled to understand why they felt suffocated under the government's tight control over their everyday work. I can see how IE is helpful for workers to pinpoint their positions in the institutional complex, and I believe the translation of IE could bring more tools for these workers to form their knowledge and let them be experts who could speak up about their experiences (instead of being ruled and undermined by scholars' discursive power).

***How would you describe the process of translating the book? Were there any unexpected difficulties?***

I enjoyed translating the book because being a translator or an interpreter was once a dream for me. However, translation is always a challenging job. It is not words that I have been translating. It is a culture, a history, a feminist classic that I have been translating. I could feel the contradictions throughout the process because IE is such an exquisite theory that focuses on local contexts and people's everyday life, whereas translating a book is a textual practice where certain socio-cultural particularities would be omitted or twisted to fit in a different linguistic context.

Also, one of the most challenging parts for me is that my academic background leads me to read sociology and feminist theories in English, so I am not familiar with technical terms in Chinese. Having read texts in English for most of my academic training, I needed to become more familiar with the institutional discourse of sociological terms in Chinese. I soon realised that the translation of an academic book is also a translation from an institution (i.e. Anglophone academia) to another institution (i.e. Chinese-speaking academia).

It took me ten years to finish the translation because the institution of higher education in Taiwan does not recognise the efforts of translating an academic book. Therefore, I had to carefully balance my time spent translating the book and writing research papers on IE. This is a difficulty that can be



interpreted through the lens of IE, so I tend to see this as an institutional problem that could be solved someday in the future.

***Translation work can be a unique way of reaching a deeper understanding of the author in question. Did translating this book further your understanding of her thinking?***

Apart from being an interpreter in the workshop, I did not have any personal contact with Dorothy Smith, so she had always been a “textual figure” for me. As a postgrad student of gender studies, I understood Dorothy’s notion of women’s standpoint as the spirit of feminist knowledge production. However, it wasn’t until the translation work that I fully realised that the notion of women’s standpoint stemmed from the second-wave women’s movement that publicised women’s “private experiences” (e.g. experiences of gender-based violence). I’m impressed by the origin of IE partly because my research interests in the institutionalisation of gender-based violence programmes in Taiwan led me to critically examine the agenda of feminism and gender equality in the last few decades. What I know about Dorothy through IE is how she cares about people, the particularities of people’s everyday world, how institutions can objectify people as subjects, and about her reflections on feminist theories and activism as an institution.

I didn’t see Dorothy’s close connections with Marxism when I was a student, but throughout the process of translation, I saw how Dorothy appropriated Marxism in a feminist way, and that did evoke my interest in Marxist feminism. I love how she engages the readers in her everyday world, which is a way of reminding the readers about the importance of not staying in the textual territories. One of my favourites when I learned more about Dorothy Smith as a “textual figure” is her writing style. Instead of keeping the book in an academic tone, she kept drawing the readers into her lived actualities. We, as readers, are constantly reminded that she’s got a rabbit biting her collections of Mead, she was reading a mystery novel, she’s got a grandson and granddaughter, and so on. We could even see how naughty her granddaughter had been when we struggled to make out Dorothy’s conceptualisations of languages and their coordinating roles. I think her writing style is experimental, is of female experiences/feminist spirit, and is a superb example of IE.

***Dorothy’s books are known for being difficult to comprehend. In your experience, what were the most difficult words, terms, or concepts to translate? Why? What strategies did you use to solve the problem of translation?***

I remember there were many discussions on how terms should be translated into Chinese in a study group of IE organised by Frank. I did struggle with technical terms because I had to keep up with the institutional discourse of Chinese translations of sociological terms, and the discussions in the study group were constructive for me. For example, we discussed how Marxist terms should be translated into Chinese. In the early stage of translating IE, Taiwanese scholars translated “ruling relations” into *tong-zhi guan-xi*, which implicates a top-down power ruling over people, but a sociologist in the study group suggested that the term could be translated into *zhi-li guan-xi*, which is closer to the meaning of governing people’s lives. When doing the translation, I kept going back to the notes taken in the study group and figured out the best term to use in the translation.

In addition to the fruitful discussion in the study group, I encountered many challenges when translating the concepts of “objectifying,” “textual coordination,” “textual realities,” “people’s lived actualities,” etc. What troubled me during the process of translation was that I insisted on using common and straightforward terms instead of using intricate words or inventing new terms because I’d like to stick to the spirit of IE, originating in people’s everyday lived actualities, and one of my motives to do the translation is to help front-line workers to comprehend IE. Technically speaking, chapters 2-5 contain more terms from sociology or linguistics, so I could check for Chinese words that have been translated and used in academia. From chapter 6 on, more technical terms of IE emerged, so I identified specific technical terms, such as “investigatory devices,” “circuits of accountability,” “regulatory frameworks,” etc. I allowed myself to use words that might not be familiar to ordinary people, whereas I tried to keep the sentences as simple as possible to decrease the barriers to reading.

**Do you have plans to translate more books by Dorothy? If yes, what would be your preferred book?**

I am very fond of translation work and would love to translate more feminist works into Chinese. If I could translate Dorothy’s work, I’d definitely go for something classic—*The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology* (1987) because this book is the foundation of IE and paves the way for feminist knowledge production. A translation of her early work could help us contextualise IE in Taiwanese academia.



## ***Meeting our members***

**Jeanine Gallagher, Queensland University of Technology, Australia**

Interviewed by Rebecca Lund



*Jeanine recently completed her PhD in Education at Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane. Alongside her continued work in academia as teacher and researcher, she is part of a team supporting the implementation of inclusive education practices in schools across Queensland, and national education policy development.*

***Rebecca: Tell us about yourself and your work.***

**Jeanine:** My professional work has always been in education, firstly as a teacher, then school leadership and then as a senior role in "the office." Over the years the focus of my roles has been and continues to be students with diverse learning needs broadly, but more specifically students with disability. I started my teaching career teaching in a specialist education school for students with physical disability, but after a few years moved to working with students with disability in their local school. Since then, I have worked within an inclusive education framework, or more accurately worked towards implementing inclusive education practices in the schools in which I worked as a teacher and school leader, and then as part of a team supporting many schools.

Like many post-graduate students, when I commenced my doctoral thesis, I ended up taking on a variety of "sessional" (casual) and part-time roles within the university, which I continue to maintain. The university roles include research assistant and teaching in teacher education programs, as well as coordinating professional learning for schools across the state of Queensland.

***Rebecca: How have you been able to use IE research in the education policy context?***

**Jeanine:** My research work is directly connected to the work I do with schools across Queensland, and the work I do at a national educational policy level. It is a privilege to be able to use my learnings from my research to support schools to implement the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD), an inaugural national funding policy for students with disability. The context of schooling in Australia meant there was inconsistency in terms of which students with disability were provided with additional funding across schooling systems. The funding mechanisms were inequitable and confusing, and it was anticipated that the NCCD would remedy this

situation. Of course, the implementation of a new national policy comes with new issues and problems.

My PhD [research project](#) commenced when the NCCD was first being implemented in schools by teachers and school leaders. I wanted to know how a new national policy for students with disability would change the work of teachers, support workers and school leaders. What I found was a complex intersection of education policy and disability frameworks. The NCCD created new work for people at every layer of the schooling system and beyond, including a global services firm that had been contracted by the Australian Government to design the policy and develop supporting resources for schools.

As a result of my project, I have been able support the professional learning programs for school teams to implement the NCCD policy with the aim of making sure students (not documents) remain at the centre of teachers' work.

***Rebecca: How did you learn about IE and what attracted you to IE?***

**Jeanine:** I learnt about IE from one of my master's thesis supervisors, who had recently attended a seminar that included a brief introduction to IE. She suggested that I read a bit more about it, so I did, and the more I read the more I was hooked. It was from this initial start that I met other academics and students alike who were also interested in IE. I knew when I commenced my PhD, I wanted to pursue an IE inquiry.

I loved the idea of understanding how things happen, not getting bogged down in the why: why people do things (and in education, my experience was this can lead to a culture of blame). Understanding how things happen for people in their everyday lives, for me, was an interesting and accessible way to investigate a problematic. Furthermore, the positioning of people being experts of their own daily activities, to me, is a respectful and collaborative way to build new knowledge and understanding.

***Rebecca: As a relatively new member of the ISA community what are you hoping to gain from membership? ISA is coming to Australia in 2023! What are your hopes for the conference?***

**Jeanine:** I am looking forward to engaging with new ideas, having my thinking challenged and that mental tussle that comes with learning new things. Very importantly, new ideas (maybe not new, *new* ideas, but quite possibly new to me) are put forward by people, so the opportunity to talk, share and learn with and from others is an exciting prospect. I'm also looking forward to making new friends and connecting with IE community.



## ***Introducing My PhD Dissertation:*** **Leigha Comer, York University, Canada**



*Leigha recently completed her PhD in Sociology at York University and is now a postdoctoral scholar at Western University in London, Ontario. Her research investigates the organization of chronic pain care and the experiences of people with chronic pain as they navigate health care systems. At Western University, she is joining Dr. Fiona Webster in an institutional ethnographic study of patient engagement in chronic pain research.*

My dissertation is an institutional ethnographic study of the social organization of opioid use for chronic pain management in Ontario, Canada. Within the context of the contemporary “opioid crisis,” people with chronic pain have found their access to prescription opioids increasingly restricted as physicians rapidly taper patients’ doses, adopt no narcotics policies, and bar people with chronic pain who use opioids from their practices. These changes in physicians’ work of prescribing opioids have had significant impacts on the lives of people with chronic pain who no longer have access to the opioids they need for pain management.

To explicate these abrupt changes in patients’ access to opioids, I conducted interviews with people with chronic pain and with health care practitioners, as well as analyses of texts including prescribing guidelines. I found that physicians have changed their opioid prescribing practices since the late aughts as the medical profession has come to be targeted as primarily responsible for increases in opioid-related harms in North America. While previous panics around drug use targeted people who use drugs and attempted to change their behaviour, recent shifts in medico-legal conceptions of opioids have meant that opioid users have emerged in the public imaginary as the blameless victims of unscrupulous physicians.

As a result, strategies to resolve the “epidemic” of opioid-related harms have focused on changing physicians’ prescribing practices through new forms of opioid pharmacovigilance. Of particular note is the introduction of Ontario’s Narcotics Monitoring System in 2012 and its use by the state and the provincial medical regulatory college as a means of surveillance, coercion, and punishment to alter physicians’ opioid prescribing. Equally impactful has been the development of new prescribing guidelines intended to support the authority of the medical profession as singularly capable of regulating opioid use.

In response to modes of surveillance and punishment used by the state, its agents, and their licensing college, physicians have responded by adopting work practices that demonstrate their compliance

with and accountability to these regimes of ruling. These include tapering patients' doses and refusing to prescribe opioids to any patients "tainted" by social determinants of health such as poverty or racialization. As such, while people with chronic pain are not directly targeted by interventions to end the opioid crisis, they are nonetheless impacted by these policies as physicians change their opioid prescribing practices in response to heightened surveillance and risk of penalties such as losing their license to practice or public shaming.

## WG06 Mentorship Seminars

The WG06 Mentorship Seminar has been meeting via Zoom since October 2021 to discuss IE projects in all phases of implementation. There are currently 43 members on the mentorship distribution, and approximately 20-25 people attend the monthly zoom gathering. The meetings have been held on the third Wednesday every month from 9 to 10:30am Mountain Standard Time (UTC-7). **However, we are considering changing the week day from January 2023 and would like input on when people are available.**

Regularly attending facilitators include Janet Rankin as lead, Adriana Suárez Delucchi, and Suzanne Vaughan. Those who have attended the seminar over the last several months include researchers who are in the early stages of learning IE, graduate students who are planning and/or writing dissertations, as well as seasoned IEers who are writing research articles or putting together funding grants. WG06 or ISA membership is not a requirement.

Although the seminars are informal, they are built around core IE "topics" that we (the facilitators) may place onto the seminar agenda. We also invite participants to suggest topics they would like to discuss. Occasionally, we invite guests to discuss their IE journey and research for part of the seminar with time for questions and discussion. In addition, we ask participants to indicate in the chat if they would like to establish further 1:1 contact with those people present, and we also facilitate introductions to other members of the IE community who may share topical or methodological areas of interest. We have started to invite guest speakers to talk about their work and generate discussion. Guest speakers to date have included: Liza McCoy, Marj DeVault, David Peacock, Ann Christin Nilsen and Órla Murray.

If you would like to join the mailing list and participate in these seminars, and/or have input on available monthly week days, please contact Janet Rankin [jmrankin@ucalgary.edu.qa].

*"Mentee meetings are a terrific resource for IE novices, especially people who lack a local community of IE practitioners. Discussions are a rich source of both practical advice, for example, about the nuts and bolts of doing interviews, as well as stimulating insights about the theoretical underpinnings and the development of IE. The mentors do a great job of creating a welcoming and encouraging environment!"* Seminar member

## Special Interest Groups

### SHIE Network

The [SHIE](#) network [**Studying Healthcare using Institutional Ethnography**] has been meeting since August 2021. We hold quarterly symposia which involve two sessions—timings allow access across time-zones. Our next symposium day is planned for 14 Feb 2023. Details are circulated to members of the SHIE network ([sign up here](#)).

Carolin Cupit is currently working on the PACFiND study ([PATient-centred Care for Fibromyalgia: New pathway Design](#)), funded by [Versus Arthritis](#)—with [Catherine Pope](#) (lead), and [Teresa Finlay](#) at University of Oxford. She is bringing IE's analytic tools to the project, exploring the work of innovators developing new ("biopsychosocial") models of care for people with fibromyalgia in the UK.

## Regional News

### UK and Ireland IE network launch!

On Friday, 21 October 2022, Gráinne Kearney, Órla Meadhbh Murray, Liz Ablett and Adriana Suárez Delucchi launched the UK and Ireland Institutional Ethnography Network at Queen's University Belfast. This has been a long-standing effort originally started by Órla in 2014 when she was based at the University of Edinburgh, where she did her PhD.

Gráinne, medical doctor and clinical academic based at Queen's University Belfast, was instrumental in helping our collective get funding from the Queen's Agility Fund, which made this launch possible, including our **website**: <https://www.institutionalethnographynetwork.org/> and **Twitter account**: @IEN\_UK\_IRE. The website will go live in December 2022.

The day was divided into two events: In the morning we had a roundtable discussion with several academics and PhD students based at Queens. We discussed what IE is, how we have used it in our different disciplines: Medicine, Sociology, Politics and Geography, and how we translate our IE research for these different audiences. The emphasis was placed on the crucial contribution of IE as a method for interdisciplinary research.

In the afternoon, we held the online launching of the Network through the event: **"Building Academic Communities in a Changing World"** where we were joined by guest speaker Professor May-Linda Magnussen from the University of Agder (Norway) who shared the experiences of the Nordic IE Network including their experiences both in setting up and in maintaining the Nordic IE network.

We enjoyed a fruitful discussion where we shared the challenges, as well as opportunities, when doing research for social change in the context currently experienced in the UK and Ireland where increasing

neoliberal and austerity-driven policies are undermining the National Health Service (NHS), the Education sector, as well as the areas of Social Care and Social Work, amongst others.

The aims of the UK and Ireland Network are to:

1. Provide a space to meet, share interests and challenges, as well as develop a strong community of IERs in the UK, Ireland, and beyond;
2. Host a website where we can share resources, publications, and news, particularly linking to our events, IE workshops, funding opportunities, and mentorship seminars that can benefit the community;
3. Encourage a space for debate and IE research that bears in mind the particularities of our geographical, social, political and economic context.



The organisers at Queen's University Belfast. From left to right: Liz Ablett, Gráinne Kearney, Órla Murray (top); Adriana Suárez (bottom).



## Nordics

In August 2023 the Nordic Sociological Association is hosting an in-person conference [“Myths and Realities of the Nordic Welfare State”](#) in Reykjavik, Iceland. There will be an IE panel and sessions. Sessions topics and names will be specified based on abstract submissions. We strongly encourage early stage researchers and PhD students to submit work in progress. Sessions will be in English and as such invite international participation. Deadline for [abstract submission](#) is **March 15, 2023**.

Majken Jul Sørensen (PI), Rebecca Lund, Marjo Kuronen and Satu Heikkinen were in November 2021 awarded a NOS-HS grant from the Joint Committee of Nordic Research Councils to organize and facilitate three exploratory Nordic workshops about: Everyday resistances in the Nordic welfare state - Exploring the methodological potential of institutional ethnography. We explore the potential of bringing together resistance studies, welfare state user research and institutional ethnography. The first workshop took place in Karlstad, Sweden, in August 2022, and included 30 academics from across the Nordic countries. Our second workshop will take place online February 9-10, 2023, where Naomi Nichols will be guest speaker.

November 9-11, 2022 Steen Baagøe Nielsen, Aske Stigemo, Carsten Juul Jensen and Rebecca Lund organized the first IE PhD course in Denmark, “Institutional Ethnography: Everyday Life and Welfare Work” at Roskilde University. 16 PhD students participated. The majority of these were Danish, exploring many different themes, and coming from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds, ranging from political science, organization studies, health studies, gender studies, and education studies, to mention some. This is very exciting since it is a sign that IE is finally catching on in Denmark 😊

February 3-5, 2023 the annual Sociological Winter Seminar will be taking place in Norway. Here Ann-Torill Tørrisplass and Guro Wisth Øydgard from Nord University will host the Institutional Ethnography Session. Nord University will also be taking over the Nordic network coordination in 2023.

At the University of Agder, the research group on Institutional Ethnography has organized several activities this autumn. The interest in IE is growing at the university, and on September 15, we organized a seminar with presentations of new PhDs as a collaboration between the Department of Sociology and Social Work and the Department of Psychosocial Health. After lunch the same day, we continued with a seminar with Adriana Suarez Delucchi from the University of Bristol. The theme for the seminar was *How institutional ethnography can be used to explore natural resource planning, management and governance between the state and local communities*. Adriana was at the University of Agder for a week, and also had seminars with people from the Department of Global Development and Planning and PhDs connected to a project called Resilient. Also, a joint volume in Norwegian about institutional ethnography as practice, edited by May-Linda Magnussen and Ann Christin Nilsen, is in progress.



## New Publications

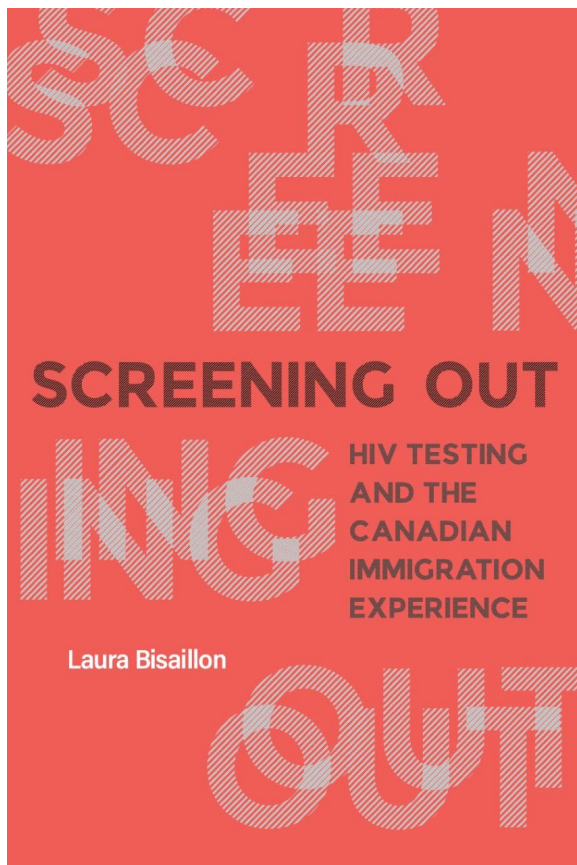
Cupit, C. (2022) Public health in the making: Dietary innovators and their on-the-job sociology. *Social Science & Medicine*, 305: 115001. doi:[10.1016/j.socscimed.2022.115001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2022.115001).

Haaland, H., Lund, R., Magnussen, M-L. & Wallewik, H. (2022) Professorkvalifiserings affective økonomi: styring, følelser og motstand. I Aarseth & Owesen (red.) *Kjønn i Akademia: På Vei mot BALANSE?* Oslo: Fagbokforlaget. [The affective economy of professorship qualifications: ruling, feelings and resistance]. <https://doi.org/10.55669/oa160809>

**Please inform us of any publication and dissertations, so we can include them in the next newsletter.**

## New Book by Laura Bisailon

Bisailon, L. (2022). *Screening Out: HIV Testing and the Canadian Immigration Experience*. University of British Columbia Press.



Following the sequence of events in the application process of a sub-Saharan African woman in her interactions with an immigration doctor, this book is an institutional ethnography of the Canadian immigration process from the perspective of the very people to whom the exclusionary health policy is directed. Bisailon demonstrates that mandatory HIV screening triggers institutional practices that are highly problematic not only for would-be immigrants, refugees, and refugee applicants, but also for those bureaucrats, doctors, lawyers, and other actors whose work tethers them to the immigration system. This book produces a vital corrective to state claims about the functioning – and the professional and administrative practices supporting – mandatory HIV testing and medical examination, showing how and where things need to change.

## Film by Laura Bisailon

Bisailon (2020) also directed a film based on the same research as the book above: *[The Unmaking of Medical Inadmissibility](#)*. If the late Stephen Hawking had wanted to settle in Canada, he would likely have been denied. This is because he was disabled. Federal immigration law is designed to exclude people with chronic illness and developmental or genetic difference from permanently settling on health grounds, referred to as medical inadmissibility, with some exceptions. Medical inadmissibility is a state decision-making process involving professional and bureaucratic practices organized to detect, diagnose, and exclude such persons because of assumptions made about them. Lived experience with the immigration system's health-based discrimination was the impetus for this film and is its starting point. In this 20-minute animated documentary, we meet Martha, Winnie, Stella, and Yvonne. As prospective immigrants to Canada tagged "abnormal" (to use the state's term), we come nose-to-nose with what their struggles look and feel like from their perspectives as people socially constructed as risky and undesirable because of their bodily condition. Canadians know woefully little about their immigration system, and this film has educational and legal reform aims. This film is narrated in English. It is available in subtitled French, Farsi, and Spanish. Its script is translated into 12 languages.



### About the author and film director:

**[Laura Bisailon](#)** is a political sociologist and associate professor at the University of Toronto. Her career is dedicated to social research, services, care, and activism. She studies the social organization of knowledge about migration, minoritization, the body, and the state, as documented in [podcast](#), [film](#), [vodcast](#) and [website](#). She has held research fellowships at the Brocher Foundation (Geneva), the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences (Amsterdam), and a Visiting Professorship at the University of Bucharest (Romania). The research on which her 2022 book 2020 film are based was awarded a Governor General's Gold Medal. She is fluently bilingual in English and French.

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