Thematic Group on Institutional Ethnography—TG06

ISA

Inaugural Edition

This is the inaugural issue of the Thematic Group on Institutional Ethnography newsletter, and we are celebrating! First, we would like to thank all those ISA members who supported the formation of TG06. Also, ISA Executive Secretary Izabela Barlinska has been extremely helpful in guiding us through all the steps of formalizing our Group. We hope that you enjoy this issue and will respond with comments and suggestions for future newsletters.
– Paul Luken.

Inside this issue:

Special points of interest:

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Registration Grants

All members of the ISA in good standing who will play an active role either in the Forum of Sociology as session organizers, session chairs or paper-presenters are eligible for Forum registration grants. A letter of application should be sent before January 31, 2012, to Paul Luken, Programme Coordinator for TG06, at pluken@westga.edu. One can apply for a grant to only one RC/WG/TG. Multiple applications will not be considered. The Board will review all applications and recommend the allocation of available funds. A list of the selected individuals will be announced by mid-March 2012, so that all successful applicants can register to the Forum before April 10, 2012, the deadline for early registration.

Call for Abstracts - ISA Forum of Sociology

We are soliciting abstracts for the Second ISA Forum of Sociology, Buenos Aires, Wednesday, August 1, 2012 - Saturday, August 4, 2012. The deadline for submissions is Thursday, December 15, 2011 at 11:59pm (EST). The abstract text cannot contain more than 300 words. To submit an abstract, first read over the six Institutional Ethnography sessions described below and then go to the online submission site:

http://isaconf.confex.com/isaconf/forum2012/cfp.cgi

Session A: Puzzles and challenges in institutional ethnography research

Organiser and Chair: Barbara Comber, Queensland Institute of Technology, Australia, Barbara.Comber@qut.edu.au

Because institutional ethnography is committed to a process of 'discovery' it has a significant element of uncertainty. This can be particularly challenging when it comes to writing thesis proposals, funding applications and research articles for bodies and journals that have expectations for research design which suggest predictability and replicability. A further challenge is the need to start with people's experience in the everyday embodied world of practice, but to undertake an analysis which is informed by translocal understandings of the ways in which institutions are organised.

Given that institutional ethnography begins with a problematic that is substantively political, the challenge is to represent the research as open-ended whilst at the same time foregrounding the underlying social justice intent. These challenges are significant in a period where universities, and indeed university researchers themselves, are increasingly subject to audits, reviews and benchmarking to attest to the quality of their research.

These conditions create new ethical and practical puzzles for researchers trying to build sustainable and just research agenda. This session invites researchers to explore how to continue to make the space for institutional ethnography within the broader repositioning of university research as just another commodity for measurement and accountability regimes.

Session B: The social organization of knowledge

Organiser and Chair: Paul Luken, University of West Georgia, United States, pluken@westga.edu

Institutional ethnography (IE) investigations of the social organization of knowledge, regardless of their topical concerns, as well as theoretical discussions of institutional ethnography's approach to the study of ideology, will be presented at this session. Institutional ethnography includes a focus on ideological practice or, more specifically, ideology as practice. IE investigations discover how ideology operates in specific settings, how it shapes work practices, how it is incorporated in particular social relations, and how it produces actual consequences in people's everyday lives.

These investigations differ from other studies in the sociology of knowledge in many respects, but it is the requirement that the point of departure for research be the experiences of particular people and the conditions under which they work that fundamentally separates this sociology of knowledge from other prominent

theoretical approaches. It is from this standpoint in the everyday world, which includes the sociologist, that knowledge is explored as it is socially organized. Furthermore, the aim of institutional ethnography, as Smith has asserted, "is to reorganize the social relations of knowledge of the social so that people can take up knowledge as an extension of our ordinary knowledge of the local actualities of our lives." Papers addressing these concerns are welcome.

Session C: New directions in institutional ethnography research

Organiser: Alison Griffith, York University, Canada, agriffith@edu.york.ca

Session chair: Naomi Nichols, York University, Canada, Naomi_Nichols@edu.york.ca

Institutional ethnography (IE) frames research across diverse topic areas. Current research explores front line work in the public sector (schooling, teaching, nursing, paramedical work, the criminal justice system, homeless shelters, group home workers), which is being managerially re-formed to facilitate stronger governance measures.

A second theme in IE research addresses the work of people who coordinate (successfully or not) their everyday / everynight work with the institutions that reach into their lives, but whose everyday lives are made with, yet outside, institutions (mothering work for schooling, young people living in homeless shelters, parents' educational work with their children).

A third research theme addresses the private sector (the textual organization of the 'good employee', the ideological framing of family housing). In a recent talk, Dorothy Smith (Fredericton NB, 2011) reminded the audience of the political and gendered social organization that shaped the problematic of IE. She asked: Which women are still invisible and what is the social organization that maintains their silence?

This session is oriented to IE research in areas of the social that have not been fully explored, have been neglected, or that require a rethinking of our research on gender, institutional coordination, or the political grounding of IE.

Session D: Researching and working in the community

Organiser: Naomi Nichols, York University, Canada, Naomi_Nichols@edu.york.ca

Session chair: Alison Griffith, York University, Canada, agriffith@edu.york.ca

Institutional ethnography (IE) is useful to researchers who do community-situated or community-referenced research. An investigation that begins with participants' experiential knowledge lends itself to an emergent, community-driven, social-justice oriented research agenda. Illuminating how people's local experiences are situated in a broader field of social action, IE can also effectively inform community development or social change work.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS CONT'D

Further, a revelation of the specific institutional practices, which systemically disadvantage particular groups of people, may not be findings community-based agencies are equipped to work with. This session invites papers that explore the strategic use of IE in community settings; the tensions and/or possibilities, which characterize research and work in the community; or the social organization of community-based research.

Session E: Transnational ruling relations

Organiser: Paul Luken, University of West Georgia, United States, pluken@westga.edu

Session chair: Lois Andre-Bechely, California State University, United States, loisab@calstatela.edu

The institutional ethnography approach to the study of contemporary ruling relations draws our attention to all sorts of texts (forms, photographs, newspaper and journal articles, films, and so on), and this is certainly the case for those relations that operate beyond national boundaries. Transnational ruling relations are textually mediated. They are socially organized and organizing. They are not confined to any particular people or places; rather, as they are reliant upon their textual base, they cross boundaries. They shape experiences internationally with respect to environmental, educational, economic, familial, and health care practices, among others. They regulate the movement of people and products across borders.

These ruling relations are most explicit with respect to those large scale organizations whose activities transcend national boundaries, such as transnational corporations and international non-governmental organizations, and in multi-national political or professional organizations. Yet, these social relations are also evident in our everyday worlds- in the foods that we eat, the clothing that we wear, the music that we listen to, and the language that we speak. Papers that use institutional ethnography to explore transnational ruling relations and their consequences in our everyday lives are requested for this session.

Session F: Social justice and institutional ethnography

Organiser and Chair: Suzanne Vaughan, Arizona State University, United States, svaughan@asu.edu

This session focuses on institutional ethnography (IE) as a skill activists can use to uncover the invisible forms of ruling relevant to contemporary struggles for social justice. As Smith (2006) notes IE provides a tool for exploring how the relevant dimensions of the ruling relations are put together, what kinds of institutional changes will be effective and how to arrive at them. Since George Smith's 1990 seminal article in Social Problems on "Political Activism as Ethnographer," those using institutional ethnography have worked with communities to address numerous justice issues. This session welcomes work which examines IE's potential for locating institutional sites of change accessible to those working for justice.

IE as Conversation: An Interview with Alison Griffith, President

Interview conducted with Alison Griffith during the annual meeting of the Society for the Study of Social Problems, Las Vegas, Nevada, USA, August 20, 2011. Special thanks to Faith Payne for transcribing.

Paul Luken: I was introduced to institutional ethnography, or what we now call institutional ethnography, through some of the early writings of Dorothy Smith, stuff that she had written in the early 1980s, and she mentions working with you right away. So from the very beginning this work was a joint project. It wasn't just Dorothy alone. In some of her writings she describes the early, formative period of institutional ethnography, but I don't think I've ever seen an account from your perspective. So I wonder if you might reflect a little bit about those times. I don't know if you want to start with the conversations in the ravines of Toronto or before. [In her early writings Dorothy Smith mentions these conversations with Alison Griffith.] What were you doing?

Alison Griffith: Well, it was the height of the women's movement, and so conversation and collaboration were the order of the day. We were all in consciousness raising groups of one kind or another and women's conversations had become much more political than they ever had been before. It was during the first years of the women's movement that I met Dorothy. There was a sense that speaking, that conversation was really important. In part because when we started, we didn't know how to speak from our experience. So this was a part of a shift in consciousness for women who called themselves feminists; or who said, "I would like to be a feminist, but," and then they'd give all kinds of reasons. It was a real time of turmoil in terms of how women saw themselves.

I'd gone to Simon Fraser University as a mature student. While I was doing my bachelor's degree, feminism was rampant on the university campus and I really liked what I was hearing. There were a few women who had written about and were asked to speak about feminism and that was how I heard about Dorothy. Meredith Kimball, a feminist psychologist would be talking here. Dorothy Smith would be talking there. I gave some talks in different places using very traditional academic work such as "fear of achievement". It was less than satisfying, but it was all we had.

Around that time, there were a series of talks at the University of British Columbia. There were 3 or 4, I think it was 4 women professors involved – one from English whose name has gone out of my mind, Helga

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Jacobson from Anthropology, Meredith Kimball from Psychology and Dorothy Smith from Sociology. When I heard Dorothy talk – she was putting forward kind of a new way of thinking about women's lives. She was a Marxist so that was interesting, but she was also putting forward this new thinking in the social organization of knowledge. I certainly didn't understand all of what she was saying. I had done my BA in psychology and there's no such thing as the social organization of knowledge in psychology, at least at that time. Everything was a fact in psychology. Dorothy was putting forward another way of seeing and knowing. Her work was very intriguing.

During this period of my life – I was 25 or 26 or 27, I had two children, and I had been a single parent for a while – I had no money. I thought: Well I had done my bachelor's degree while I was on social welfare and student loans. Maybe I could pull together enough money to do my master's degree, too. But I have to do something that will bring in money. Maybe I'll go to medical school.

I had to take sciences, so I went to the University of British Columbia; I also took courses in women's studies. In one place I was an expert – women's studies. In the other place, the science courses, I was an incompetent boob. I couldn't figure out the logic of physics. And math was just beyond me. About a quarter of the way through the year, I thought: I can't do this. It doesn't matter how good a doctor I would be: I can't do this. So I went and talked to one of the women's studies faculty, Meredith Kimball, and she said, "Well, you should transfer into sociology/anthropology. There are several feminists on faculty there." And that was how I started working with Dorothy and a number of other feminists. I managed with student loans, a teaching assistantship, a scholarship and my parents – my poor parents who helped in numerous and immeasurable ways.

At this time I was in a consciousness-raising group with feminists who were social workers, psychiatrists, community workers, and nurses. Marie Campbell and Gillian Walker, who later worked with Dorothy, were part of the group. We would talk about the kind of feminist theorizing that was going on and Dorothy Smith's work kept coming up. But her work was so different from the education I'd had in psychology. During the year that I shifted from sciences to sociology/anthropology, I was working on a paper on ideology. I just couldn't get it. I would work the argument all through and I'd get caught in social constructionism, and ideology would become what anybody said. Then I'd think about it in Marxist terms, and then ideology became the ideas that were imposed. In the end, I wrote a passable paper, but I realized I was going to have to find out more how the world of theory worked in sociology/anthropology. I took courses and tried to figure out how to do this new way of thinking. Then I applied to the masters program and was accepted.

In the masters program there was a course called Social Organization of Knowledge. This was actually, I think, an undergraduate course that Dorothy was teaching, a fourth year course. And there was a graduate course that Dorothy taught called Women in Sociology, or something like that. It was the first Women's Studies course taught at UBC. I sat in on the undergrad course and enrolled in the graduate course. There was a group of us that had come to work with Dorothy – Roxana Ng, Marie Campbell, Gillian Walker, Marguerite Cassin, and Nancy Jackson.   We listened very hard as Dorothy talked about things like "disjunctures" and "ruling relations."   I remember the room; it was a lovely classroom. One whole wall was a window and there was a tree outside.   It was a beautiful tree. And there's Dorothy up at the front and she kept referring to the outside. Well usually what you do in a class is you try to ignore the outside because it's a distraction. If you look outside, you drift away from the line of argument. But she kept referring to the

outside. She kept saying: "I look outside and I see this tree and I realize it's not in discourse. It's there, outside the window." And she would interrupt the line of argument in her lectures to talk about things   going on in her everyday world outside the classroom: "Oh, yes, I have to remember to go and get certain things from the store" – orange juice, toilet paper, the ordinary, everyday activities of our lives. She brought together the outside of our daily lives and the inside of the university as we sat there learning. It was in that class that I began to see how outside and inside were socially constructed in the academic discourse.

Dorothy was just building her social organization of knowledge then. She taught a graduate course and I – you wouldn't know this now because I talk everywhere – but I didn't say a word in that class for a year except when I had to give a class presentation. My head was fighting between psychology as I learned it, feminism as I was living it, some of the academic framing I was reading, and this new way of thinking. It rendered me silent. I had no way of speaking. My brain hurt that year. You know, it's a muscle, right, and it had to work really hard.

There were a number of us working with Dorothy, learning this new way of doing social science. We were talking to each other as well as taking classes from Dorothy. We had long hair then and we would put it in a bun just like Dorothy's, and we'd sit around and use the words: "the everyday world," "actual activities," "social relations." Sometimes we weren't sure what they meant, but we thought if we would use them enough something would happen. We also had different levels of understanding. Nancy Jackson had worked with Dorothy before and had a really good sense of Dorothy's work. And so between Dorothy's lectures and classes and whenever we could catch her in the hallway, and this group of women graduate students, we taught each other what was then called the social organization of knowledge.

All of us were active in feminist groups and community groups. When it came time for me to do my thesis, I knew it would be community based. I was at a meeting and spoke to a woman who was working with Portuguese women. I said, "That sounds really interesting. Can I come and talk to your about this?" And I ended up doing interviews with women in the Portuguese community in Vancouver which then became a thesis on the construction of the category "immigrant."

When Dorothy went to OISE [Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto], which was about 1979 or so, we only had ourselves because there was nobody else in the faculty in the department of sociology/anthropology who knew this work. We were not a traditional consciousness-raising group; we were a learning group. I'm sure that if those women hadn't been at UBC at that time and willing to talk endlessly about Dorothy's work, their work, and my work, I would have not been able to complete my Master's thesis. This way of doing sociology was so new, even after a year or so of working in the area, and the other conceptual frameworks available to us as graduate students were so convincing. Our conversations reminded us of the conceptual frame of the social organization of knowledge / institutional ethnography and allowed us to move our analytic work forward.

The following year many of us followed Dorothy to OISE – sort of like a little group of ducklings in line behind the mama duck. We were accepted into the PhD program at OISE, started taking classes with Dorothy, working as TAs [teaching assistants], and doing research projects. Dorothy had research projects that she would put together and then we would work on them. There were a number of women from other parts of Canada, and Adele Mueller who came to OISE from the US. When new people came into the

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program, we kind of grabbed hold of them if they were interested in institutional ethnography or social organization of knowledge – it was still that. We became the "Smithites."

Well, faculty members with cadres of graduate students are in a difficult position. There were about 10 or 15 of us. Dorothy had about 25 graduate students at one point, doing masters and PhDs. She was just run off her feet. If the graduate students were taking a course with Mary O'Brien, they would also take Dorothy's course, or Margaret Eichler's course. There was this circulation of students through the feminist professors' courses and they were all overwhelmed. At the same time, OISE was an exciting place to be for all of us.

We felt a need to keep the conversation going that had started in Vancouver. We were all "mature" students so the traditional hierarchies of the university tended to be ignored. We made sure that Dorothy was part of the ongoing conversation and Dorothy was always open to this. It was a social and academic, intellectual kind of conversation. And that need for a conversation has informed my work as a graduate student supervisor. I get my graduate students to talk to each other. They can't get everything from me. They have got to talk to each other. Academic work was and is a collaborative, conversational process.

Dorothy and I were both single parents and our children were fairly close in age. When I started working on my dissertation topic, it was lovely to be able to talk to Dorothy about something that she and I shared. We would go for walks on Sundays through the ravines in Toronto. None of our children were having an easy time in school. And so there were always questions we asked each other: What's going on? How do we do it? Trying to bring our way of thinking to the work of what our children were doing in school. When we did the mothering for schooling work later, we were amazed at how much we did not know, which became part of what informed the book [Mothering for Schooling]. Many mothers don't know what's going on. Even if you're educated and all the rest of it, mothers often don't really know how school is put together. I think that's different now. Mothers know more about school than they used to. Well, they have to because so much supplementary educational work has descended on them. For Dorothy and I, while we weren't able to answer the questions we were asking, during that time of walking the ravines of Toronto, we became friends. And have stayed friends all this time. Our collaborative work is still grounded in talking things over, and then trying to figure out what problematic for research is embedded in that talk.

After I graduated with my PhD in 1984, Dorothy and I had put together a proposal for funding. There were no academic jobs so I was the research person. It was easier then to get salaries from SSHRC [Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada] and I had a salary for those three years.

Research with Dorothy is always a reflexive, reflective process. We always say we interviewed each other before we started the mothering project. And we needed to find the hard questions before we went out. When you actually have to tell somebody else what you really do as a mother, it's very hard. In our less than perfect lives, we were less than perfect mothers. We didn't see then what we later came to call "the mothering discourse." It was hidden from us in our interviews with each other, and also in the interviews with mothers. It was later on in the project that the issue of discourse came into view. I was doing an interview with a mother who did everything right. I went back to Dorothy and said: "I did everything wrong." We laughed, had dinner, had wine and in reviewing why I was wrong, we discovered the mothering discourse. We were moving in and out of experience in the mothering work – into the interviews, out into

the conceptions of discourse and the ongoing construction of social class that were embedded in the work that the mothers told us about.

Dorothy's theorizing and her development of the social ontology of institutional ethnography is theoretically informed. And she has – she's so brilliant – she has the ability to stay in this place where the everyday informs her theorizing, so that she can really think in relation to what she's trying to move forward. That's a very important skill to develop if you're trying to do this work so that you're not constantly sliding off the architecture of IE and leaving experience behind. I mean, she talks about text-reader relation. Well when you are reading a text, you move into the text as you understand it and read it and you kind of take it on and it becomes part of your consciousness, and in that sense it transforms your consciousness. But in IE, you can't put all of your consciousness in the text-reader relation. You have to link your transforming consciousness to your critical analysis. You have to see what the person that you're reading is constructing as the social world. We recently talked about ANT theory [actor-network theory]. It constructs a social world in which objects in the world have agency. But computers don't act in and of themselves. Humans make them, have to turn them on, and program them to do something. You have to be able to see that objectification while at the same time you're reading it, almost as if you have a split screen in your head. And sometimes the split screen is out of phase, it fails, and you have to pull yourself back into the IE frame. So it's reading , almost, on two levels: read from within the frame of the text, yet pull from the text-reader conversation that which will inform your analysis. I think when you're doing a research project with someone like Dorothy you're always reflecting. What's happening and how are we thinking about this now? So it's again this notion that conversation and collaboration moves all through our work.

PL: Right. May I ask you – I think this is a related question. You realized early on that what Dorothy had to say was radically different from what others were going to have to say. Therefore, for you to somewhat align yourself with her orientation, that was going to be a big leap for you.

AG: Yes.

PL: Ok. The other question has to do with being at OISE. So how did that work? How does this radically different sociology mesh with an established educational institution?

AG: OISE was at that time the only graduate program – there may have been one other – in education in Canada. There were lots of graduate programs that would award a Masters degree, but not a PhD. OISE was in Toronto, which is the largest city in Canada, and it was different from traditional education faculties. OISE had deliberately set itself up as something more than a school of education. Education was written as broadly as possible so you could take different approaches to social issues. The feminist faculty were very powerful and the hiring was done to increase diversity as it was understood then. And they also wanted the best people. When Dorothy was hired, she had very few publications, but everybody knew about her publications. She says people would make copies of her drafts of her work and pass them around: she was quite well known. There was a sense at OISE of the possibility for thinking differently. That would not be a description I would give of many of the other education faculties in Canada or in the US. There are certain times in certain places where there are possibilities for shifts and changes in how people think about things. OISE was that way then.

When you read Dorothy's work, it begins to illuminate things that you couldn't see before. It was what we used to call "an ah-ha moment." Dorothy would give a talk and the feminist issues surrounding her talk and my interest would suddenly be clearer, like: "Aha! That's what that is!" And so women came to work

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with her from a number of different disciplines: nursing, social work, sociology. Most of the women did not come from education, but we would've gone anywhere, even into education, to work with Dorothy. And so we needed education to be more than schools or administration. We needed education to be written in this broad sense and that was possible at OISE.

PL: Now um I think of institutional ethnography as, if you will, a Canadian contribution to intellectual life. Do you feel the same way? I should say that I think this way because when I first met people who were doing institutional ethnography, this whole network of people that developed, they mostly were Canadian students of Dorothy's.

AG: It's a Canadian thing in that it was possible to do that work there then. It's also that Canada doesn't have the history of intellectual oppression that the US has with the McCarthy era and so on. Marx was kind of left wing, but he wasn't out of the ballpark – so people would take up Marx. People were teaching Marx. While I was at University of British Columbia, we brought in someone from Simon Frazer who was a Marxist scholar who taught us a course on Marxist economics. When we were at OISE, we brought in someone else who taught us about finance capital. So there was a possibility for thinking more broadly here than there was in the US. The US was still, even in the early 70s and into the 80s, still feeling the effects of the anti-communist regime.

The other thing is that it's much more permissible to talk about social justice in Canadian universities. And the universities are not as ethnically and racially defined as American universities are. And we have no private universities. Universities are funded through public dollars. Those who want a private education, or the top students who are given scholarships, go to the US or the UK. So there's a civil society issue that is playing out here.

PL: Obviously, institutional ethnography, what we now call institutional ethnography has certainly busted the borders of Canada.

AG: That is nice.

PL: It is nice. It is amazing that people scattered all over have discovered this work in one form or another and are picking it up and trying to do it. What do you see as some of the possibilities for this expansion? Do you have any ideas about how this might be transformative in other ways?

AG: Well, I'm really pleased that the ISA thematic group has come up because there are people working in different countries who wouldn't come to SSSP [Society for the Study of Social Problems] in the United States, or to the Scholarly Congresses in Canada. They might go to the ISA where there's an international range of possibilities. And there are lots of people now in Switzerland, a few in England, Taiwan, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, Australia, and New Zealand. I like the possibility of bringing this kind of socially progressive analytic framework to places where they are looking for analytic alternatives. More and more people are interested, so I think that there are lovely possibilities for international collaboration, and I'd like to see more international collaboration. I can't seem to get those funded in Canada, but there might be ways of building some collaboration, like networks and so on where the conversation that is institutional ethnography can become a broader conversation. And that would be great!

PL: Well, maybe this newsletter can contribute to that as well. As president of the new thematic group, I

wonder what you think of in terms of the prospects for this group if you have any goals for it in the short term.

AG: I think there are network pieces that I am interested in building. When I come to a meeting like this. I have graduate students come up to me and talk about their work. I do consultations with three or four every time I come to this meeting. They just want to talk about their work because they don't have anybody to talk with about their work, to sort out certain things. A couple of them, I ended up on their committees. I'm on a committee at the University in Regina and I've just come off a committee at Purdue University because Geri Ferris finished her dissertation. I'd rather not be on examining committees because it is a lot of unpaid work that is not recognized by my university. But I want to build more of this IE network, extending the conversation internationally. That I'm most interested in.

I don't know how long that's going to take. I know that the economics of travel and so on are such that people have a hard time getting places. The ISA is cheap for students so maybe we can build that part of it. And I think that it isn't just the ISA, there's something about getting people involved so they don't just come and present their work. There's got to be a conversation built up. The conversation might be a digital conversation, it might be a newsletter, it might be a meeting with graduate students at the ISA, or something like that, I don't know. But it's more collaboration, conversation, teaching, and so on to build the network. I think that's the only way we're going to do it.

I'm actually looking forward to this. At the World Congress in Yokohama, for example, Frank Wang will be able to bring a contingent from Taiwan because it's in the neighborhood. It's this thing of being in the neighborhood that the international meetings allow, that I really think is most beautiful.

PL: We're having our first meeting in Buenos Aires: It might be in an area where there are not a lot of people who are doing institutional ethnography right now. I can't think of many people in South America who are doing institutional ethnography at this time.

AG: If they know anything about it, and you never know what people might know, they will be interested because it will fit with the kinds of issues that they have. To do institutional ethnography you really have to be familiar with other critical thinking. It's like collaboration. The work that Freire did on critical pedagogy has been, not directly, but conceptually, very useful when thinking about working from the ground up, and what it means to teach – it's sort of like Ellen Pence's work, her institutional analysis. While IE has a lot of differences from Freire's critical pedagogy, you can bring it in and make use of it and people will say, "Oh yeah. I can see those connections." So people can recognize that there are similarities across institutional boundaries, across academic boundaries. Institutional ethnography is located in the tradition of social science and justice, a tradition of political work, a tradition of constructivism, and a tradition of learning from each other. And so if you can make those connections people then can say, "Oh yes, this is telling me something different and I can use it to do some social justice work."

PL: Well, thank you very much

AG: You're welcome.

OBJECTIVES

To develop international contacts among sociologists and social activists interested in institutional ethnography as a mode of inquiry; to encourage the worldwide exchange of research findings, methodological advances and theoretical developments relevant to institutional ethnography; to promote international meetings and research collaboration by scholars and social activists using institutional ethnography.

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