**CARING TO INCLUDE: A RELATIONAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIAL CAREGIVERS.**

**Anna Przednowek, PhD Candidate, School of Social Work, Carleton University**

**Objectives:** This research project examines the everyday lives of adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) and their familial carers. More particularly, I use a relational approach (Muir & Goldblatt, 2013), to explore how practices, policies and relations of care shape the everyday experiences and struggles of these two groups. This inquiry is pertinent and timely due to rapid change to social policies affecting these populations in Canada and across post-welfare states in the Americas and Europe (Green, 2007). This project is situated in the Ontario context where in the last forty years, deinstitutionalization and cost constraining policy directions have reconfigured the care of people with IDD. Scholars are calling for research that explores the experiences and struggles of people with IDD and their supporting family members, whose perspectives have been neglected in both care and critical disability literature (Kelly, 2013).

**Method:** This study draws on ethnographic approaches by observing daily life during "home visits" with people with IDD and their familial carers, and examining their relations through the analytical frameworks of an ethic of care, feminist political economy and critical disability (Smith, 1987; Davis & Craven, 2013). The research "home visits" will be held with 20 people with IDD and their carers in two Ontario regions. At the "home visits", I will conduct semi-structured interviews to understand participants’ experiences and struggles. I will also facilitate arts-based eco-mapping activities to link participants’ everyday lives and activities, to trace how families and individuals with IDD are situated within their environment (Hartman, 1995), and to identify sites of resistance and joy. During the analysis stage I will build thick descriptions of these social relations while searching for pattern regularities in the policy context, field notes, interview and eco-mapping data, and connect these to larger theoretical frameworks (Baines, 2006, Creswell, 2005). This will allow for triangulation in the analysis and ensure rigor (Patton, 1999).

**Results:** This abstract is being submitted for the Data Blitz component of the RSIGConference is based on a research project conceptualization to be carried out during Spring 2017. A dissemination of results will take place at a later date.

**Discussion/Conclusion:** The current project will contribute to an understanding of the broader restructuring of the social welfare state in Canada and the impact on everyday life and care of persons with IDD and their familial care providers. By exploring how care relations are mediated by political, economic and social factors, including policies, practices and relations, I hope to promote the inclusion of both people with IDD and their carers, while also bringing IDD related issues into conversations in critical disability studies and feminist care theory.

**Correspondence:** Anna Przednowek, School of Social Work, Carleton University anna.przednowek@carleton.ca

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