



The affective ethics of participatory video: an exploration of inter-personal encounters

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Abstract

This paper develops a geographical understanding of ethics by drawing from the author's experiences during a participatory video (PV) project in Barbados. This project framed and informed a partial understanding of the ethical geographies of Caribbean sugar at large (Richardson-Ngwenya, 2009). Taking inspiration from interactions with sugar workers in Barbados, I engage here with ethics at the level of the inter-personal. Dealing with a key question that emerges from a geographical or embedded approach to ethics (Meskell and Pels, 2005), the paper addresses how we can understand ethics through inter-personal interactions. I conclude by reflecting on the apparent problem of translating the singularity of encounters into more general ethical statements (cf. Barnett, 2005). Instead of treating this as a problem, I argue that inter-personal ethics of encounter are not, in actuality, singular events but are inter-connected and mediated events within a network of wider interactions, both transpersonal and transnational. I explore how, in this case of participatory video, ethical relations are affective, not only in the proximate spaces of group interaction but also across great spatio-temporal distances.



Introduction

We should locate ethics not in a Kantian, law-like universal nor in the postmodernist “moral self” whose ethical relation to the elusive other we can only take on trust, but in concrete practices of interaction with others. (Meskell and Pels, 2005, 8-9)



Figure 1. Sugar cane farmers in Barbados appearing in their own video

In April 2007, after six weeks of conventional interviews in the field, I met with a group of sugar workers in Barbados to conduct a participatory video (PV) workshop. This fieldwork was part of larger research project exploring the ethical geographies of Caribbean sugar in the context of the European Union (EU) Sugar Reform (Richardson-Ngwenya, 2009).² Taking a geographical approach to ethics entailed critical attention to situated historical relations (Richardson-Ngwenya, forthcoming 2012) and to the embeddedness of Caribbean sugar production in particular socio-natural environments (Richardson-Ngwenya, 2010a, 2010b).

In this paper, I engage with a postmodern and feminist understanding of ethics (Diprose, 2002, 1994; Gatens, 1995), elaborated in the following section. This approach eschews the modernist notion of ethics as rules dictating ‘shoulds’ and ‘oughts’ (Bauman, 1993) or as judgements that follow from knowledge and the capacity to reason (Colebrook, 2005). Instead, postmodern feminists attempt to ground an understanding of ethics in specific experiences and concrete encounters (Gatens, 1995). A key idea is that ethics are articulated as lived relations and this calls upon geographers to explore inter-personal and “concrete interactions” (see

²The Commonwealth Caribbean sugar industries have historically been dependent on special trading arrangements, with 85% of export quantities and 94% of export revenues generated via these arrangements (Mitchell, 2005, 9). The most significant special trading deal was the EU-African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Sugar Protocol, an agreement between the EU and 18 ACP countries, which came into effect in 1975. The Sugar Protocol provided guaranteed duty-free access to the EU market at a fixed preferential price for agreed quotas of sugar. In 2007, having cut these preferential prices by 36%, the EU announced the termination of this Protocol.

opening quote, Meskell and Pels, 2005); that is, specific spatial relations, practices and experiences. For myself, a key question emerged from this approach to ethics: *how* are ethics articulated through inter-personal experiences? Or, how does the ‘ethical’ emerge in our spaces of encounter?

Drawing inspiration from my own interactions with a group of sugar workers in Barbados, I engage these questions by exploring ethics at the level of the inter-personal, finding the concept of affect (Massumi, 2002) useful in this regard. Research material and experiences generated through the *Barbados Sugar Workers’ Video Project* (hereafter referred to as the BSWVP) form the empirical substance of the discussion (see Figure 1; www.vimeo.com/16089820). An empirical approach involved a process of learning and theorising on the basis of specific encounters that were mediated through this participatory video (PV) project. Particular experiences led me to highlight the conceptual significance of affective, inter-personal encounters for theorising ethical geographies at large.

The first section of this paper outlines the key concepts and disciplinary context, engaging with ethical philosophy and recent geographical explorations of affect (Popke, 2009; McCormack, 2003). The PV process is then described, before the paper develops an understanding of ethics by drawing from my own experiences during the BSWVP. The PV project framed interactions with particular sugar workers and (as I realised much later) unavoidably and integrally informed my partial understanding of the ethical geographies of Caribbean sugar, discussed in more detail elsewhere (Richardson-Ngwenya, forthcoming 2012, 2010a, 2010b, 2009). Here, I reflect on how my experience of encounters whilst undertaking the PV project performed and informed an understanding of ethical geographies. Finally, a key problematic of approaching ethical geographies in terms of interpersonal encounters – the apparent problem of singularity – is addressed.

Encountering Ethical Geographies

Geography as a discipline has long been occupied with ethical issues, particularly those pertaining to land and environment. Radical geographers of the 1970s called for a reorientation of the discipline toward issues of social justice and exclusion (Smith, 1984; Smith, 1977; Harvey, 1973). Then, under the influence of postmodernism, feminism and the discourses of globalisation, there followed a spate of geographical studies focussing specifically on the ethics of responsibility and care, as opposed to justice (see Jackson et al., 2009; Massey, 2004; McDowell, 2004; Silk, 2004, 2000, 1998; Popke, 2003; Smith, 2000; Corbridge, 1998, 1994, 1993). The general presumption/problematic common to geographical studies of care and responsibility is that obligations to persons at a distance are derived from intimate place-bound social relationships of care, extended across distance (Barnett and Land, 2007, 1066). Recent critics highlight that Geography’s ongoing concern with the dialectical relationship between the local and the global has limited our conceptualisation of ethics and has facilitated a neatly coincidental mapping of ethical concepts onto this dualistic spatial imaginary. Barnett and Land (2007) have

been particularly notable in recognising the implications of geographical categories for how we engage with moral philosophy:

The justice/care pair is easily mapped onto the universal/particular pair, and in turn onto the impartiality/partiality pair. In turn, it is easy for Geographers to suppose that the universal and the particular map onto spatial relations of distance and extension on the one hand, place and proximity on the other. (Barnett and Land, 2007, 1066)

In other words, the recurrent assumption is that distance or space is a problem, that care/responsibility functions at the local or proximal scale and is based on partiality, whereas justice functions as a generalized, impartial and placeless concept. The more recent relational turn (Castree, 2003) in Geography has instead engaged with ontologies that call into question how we can understand and engage with the spaces of response-ability and the ethical (Whatmore, 1997).

Relational approaches highlight the importance of undecidability, plurality, interactivity, mediation and embodied affects (Davies, 2006; Roe, 2006; Barnett, 2005; McCormack, 2003; Weiss, 1999) and are indebted to the earlier work of feminist scholars (Strathern, 2005; Haraway, 1988), who articulated the concept of situated knowledges as a critique of universalistic epistemology. Remembering that from the perspective of modernist philosophies of the subject, ethics are construed as inhering in and being consequent of knowledge (that is, truth arrived at through reason³), the feminist practice of situating partial knowledges has had significant implications for ethical philosophy (Gatens, 1995; Diprose, 1994). As Roslyn Diprose conveys in *The Bodies of Women* (1994), partiality does not mean that there is no ground from which to make ethical claims. Rather, it means that “both objects and subjects of knowledge-making processes [and thus ethical claims and claimants] must be located” (Haraway, 1997, 37).

The epistemological basis that underlies this arguably *geographical* approach to ethics has been critically questioned and built upon by geographers engaging with relational materialist (Roe, 2006) and non-representational (Thrift, 2004) approaches (Popke, 2009). From this perspective, ethics emerge through encounters, as an ontological condition, as opposed to emerging secondarily from the reasoning capacity of moral subjects.

Paul Harrison, a geographer with a strong commitment to the affective worlds of non-representation and practice, works with the ethical theory of Emmanuel Levinas. Harrison takes phenomenological inspiration from Levinas and reads his theory of ethics as “a series of descriptions of the structures and dynamics of sensibility and a consideration of the implications and consequences thereof” (Harrison, 2008, 426). This kind of approach understands ethics as “*lived*

³According to Descartes, Kant, and Hobbes, modern ethics are based on the rational deployment of human reason (Colebrook, 2005).

in the sensibility of an embodied exposure to another” (Critchely, 2002, 21, in Harrison, 2008, 426). Such geographers have then shifted our thinking towards the *encounter* and the more-than-rational aspects of ethical relations (see McCormack, 2007, 2003).

The influence of Spinoza’s *Ethics* and his notion of affect (Clough and Halley, 2007) has been especially popular with cultural geographers and is useful for considering the ways in which inter-personal encounters enact (Dewsbury, 2000) or perform (Laurier and Philo, 2006; McCormack, 2005; Crouch, 2003) ethics. McCormack paraphrases Spinoza, stating that “the affective capacity of a body is understood as its capacity to form relations with other bodies” (McCormack, 2007, 367; cf. Thrift, 2004). This primary recognition of affective inter-activity leads Jamie Lorimer to suggest that “affect offers an alternative mode of shared intelligence to the material world that operates outwith the individual subject” (Lorimer, 2009, 350). Considering affect thus lends itself to a conceptualisation of ethical relations as more-than-rational, collective, interactive and transpersonal. Ethics, by this definition, inhere in encounters and in the lived sensibilities of experience. It has been argued in these terms that ethics become a “dangerous discourse of the body” (Bennett, 2001, 149). Moreover, by focussing on inter-personal ethics, are we at risk of ignoring wider politico-economic issues (Tolia-Kelly, 2006)? These questions parallel the earlier debates around care/justice (or singularity/generality) and will be engaged in the latter section of this paper. Discussion of the PV project, below, explores inter-personal encounters in the context of a restructuring sugar industry in Barbados. I explore how the PV project itself performed inter-personal encounters and for me, led to an appeasement of the dualisms that plague much work on ethical geographies.

The Barbados Sugar Workers’ Video Project

Given the fairly unconventional methodology used to generate this empirical material, some initial explanation and justification of PV is required (see also Kindon, 2003; Pink, 2001). Having conducted semi-structured interviews and focus groups in the past, I felt that an alternative tool for engagement and expression was needed in order to generate material that more effectively conveyed the skills, knowledge and experiences of my research participants (Roe, 2006). After considering the merits of various qualitative methods such as oral history and biographical methods (Lee Miller, 2005), focus groups (Hopkins, 2007b) and participant observation (Bennett, 2002), I decided to experiment with PV for three broad reasons.

Firstly, the participatory nature of this method was considered valuable in its potential to generate new and unexpected insights. The participants shared some of their personal experiences and authored a short film in a collaborative way. In comparison to interviews, the PV project opened up a space where more intensive

and extended research encounters could take place.⁴ The participatory nature of this method also responded to “the experimental demands of ‘more-than-human’ styles of working [that] place an onus on actively redistributing expertise beyond engaging with other disciplines or research fields to engaging knowledge practices and vernaculars beyond the academy...” (Whatmore, 2006, 606-607). A second reason for choosing to experiment with PV was that, unlike focus groups and participant observation, the methodology would offer some skills training to participants and would also result in a product (a video) that could be left with participants. PV was therefore conceived of as a way of generating useful research material as well as giving something back to research participants in a relatively accessible format (Cloke et al., 2000).⁵ A third reason for enrolling PV was that early in the research program, I had been challenged by posthumanist geographers (e.g., Lorimer, 2009; Braun, 2008; Whatmore, 2006) to consider how I might engage with the more affective, corporeal, lively and experiential aspects of the Caribbean sugar industry and the ethics thereof. Sarah Whatmore has commented on the “urgent need to supplement the familiar repertoire of humanist methods that rely on generating talk and text with experimental practices that amplify other sensory, bodily and affective registers” (Whatmore, 2006, 606). The medium of video, as has been demonstrated by Laurier and Philo (2006), allowed for visual or non-verbal aspects of experience and knowledge to be presented (in a way that writing/talking/photography presents *differently*) (cf. MacDougall, 1998, 49). In addition, the *practice* of *doing* PV allowed more open and non-verbal interactions to take place, therefore promising an interesting way of engaging with bodily and experiential knowledges (Reville, 2004). I was convinced that the combination of these three rationales would render PV an extremely useful methodological intervention.⁶

⁴Creating a situation for longer-term relationships with research participants is not without its challenges. As Cahill, Sultana and Pain (2007, 309) emphasise, “the prioritization and value of relationships, and the alliances which emerge in participatory research — as opposed to the brief functional research encounters of many approaches — are what differentiate participatory research, and characterize it as both ethically challenging and rewarding”.

⁵More accessible to participants as a product than this paper, for example. Also, the process of making a video was more achievable than, for example, collaboratively writing an article, and much more applicable to political and personal circumstances.

⁶I did *not* enroll this methodology with the intention of conducting participatory research (Pain, 2004) as defined by participatory rural appraisal-based approaches (Chambers, 2005) or participatory action research (Kendon, Pain and Kesby, 2007), and so I do not engage here with the associated critiques (see Kesby, 2005; Pain and Francis, 2003; Cooke and Kothari, 2001; Mohan, 1999). This could instead be considered as a project that informed my research and that participated in the production of ideas. Critiques of participatory research are important but are not the focus of this paper.

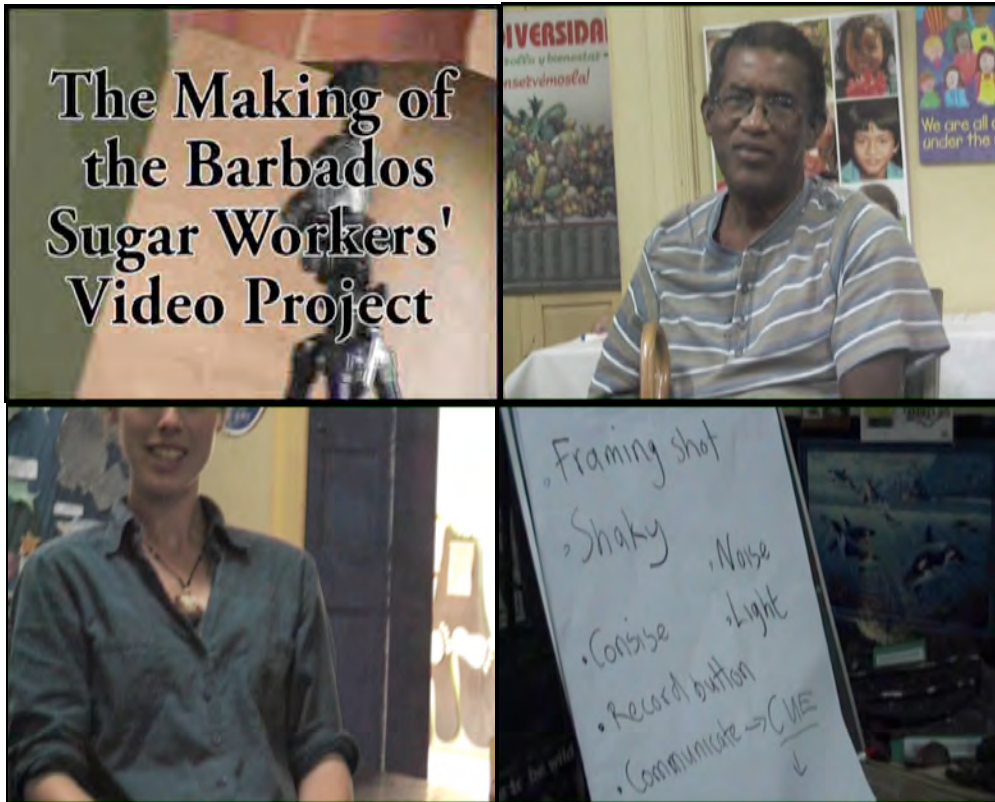


Figure 2. The making of the Barbados Sugar Workers' Video Project.

After undertaking over 60 interviews in Barbados, I determined that there was some interest among industry stakeholders in a PV project. I invited about 40 interested interviewees to participate in the video project and also recruited participants by phoning farmers registered with the Barbados Agricultural Management Company (BAMC), that had provided me with a list of contacts. I placed a call for expressions of interest in two national newspapers, which yielded a few phone calls and an interview, but no actual participants. As a result of these attempts, eight participants attended the initial one-day training workshop in April 2007. After much ado transporting participants to the venue, the first PV activity began by sitting in a circle. The facilitator (myself) demonstrated to the person sitting alongside, Mr Hinds, how to hold the camera, zoom, record and pause. He recorded the person sitting opposite as they introduced themselves. Mr Hinds then showed the person sitting beside him the same procedure and they filmed the person opposite them, and so on. When everybody had used the camera and introduced themselves, we watched the footage together and laughed. We then evaluated the footage and produced a brief checklist of things to remember in future when using the video camera (see Figure 2, bottom right).



Figure 3. The disappearing game

After some discussion,⁷ I introduced “The Disappearing Game”.⁸ This exercise, depicted in Figure 3, demonstrated the usefulness of the tripod for stability and shot continuity. I asked participants to record a still image of the group, with people leaving the scene one by one, resulting in an illustration of how video can disrupt real-time and create dramatic or playful effects (see www.vimeo.com/16089820, 42:50). We watched the footage and had another brief discussion about why we were all present and what we wanted to achieve together. Everybody seemed to be having a good time but we were all somewhat confused about what we were going to do next. Despite my early attempts to convey PV as distinct from regular film production, the participants were a little surprised that I did not have a filming agenda and that I was asking *them* what kind of film *they*

⁷At this stage, I re-introduced the general concept of PV to the group and gave my assurance that no footage would leave the room if anyone had any objections. I also introduced the idea that there could be an intended audience for our video and asked if there were any ideas about who we might show it to. It was agreed that we would wait and see how things progressed, but that the initial intention was to make something for ourselves that we could show to friends and relatives. The group had also been informed from our first conversations that I was doing research at the University of Oxford and that the video project was intended to help me learn about their experiences of and hopes for the sugar industry in Barbados.

⁸PV exercises and games were learnt during training sessions and an internship with Insight Share (a leading European NGO in this field). Robertson and Shaw (1997) also provided a very useful practical handbook, wherein the games are described in a step-by-step illustrated manner. For more practical detail on PV activities, see Ngwenya (2010) and Lunch and Lunch (2006).

wanted to make. “What do you want to say about the sugar industry?” seemed a rather open question, so we brainstormed three broad themes: 1) the past importance and role of the sugar industry in Barbados; 2) the present circumstances of the industry, and; 3) visions for the future of the sugar industry.⁹ These themes, especially the third, were significant in the context of an industry facing restructuring in a region where two national sugar sectors had recently been closed down (Richardson-Ngwenya, 2010a). I then introduced “the interview” as a story-telling technique and split the eight participants into two groups of four, trying to put at least one of the younger and more technologically-savvy men with each group. The idea was to get the participants to practice interviewing each other – with each person taking turns to be the interviewer, interviewee, cameraperson and audio controller. The plan had been to review the footage and then evaluate interview techniques, question style, camera operation and filming tips. However, the participants became engrossed by the exercise immediately and did not stick to time or instruction. I went from group to group, facilitating and observing (see Figure 4). Hearing the interesting conversations/interviews that were going on and overseeing the technical aspects as best I could, I decided in the moment to relax the timeframe and let the interviews roll out unplanned.



Figure 4. Conducting interviews and watching back

After 30 or 40 minutes, we watched the footage together and discussed the good and bad points relating to the interview content, style and the videography. A

⁹Diagrams were drawn onto flipchart paper, to use as reminders.

lot of the footage from this exercise was unusable, due to poor audio, but much of it ended up in the edited video.



Figure 5. Storyboarding

After lunch, I demonstrated the concept of the shot-type and storyboard, showing how one might plan to tell a story using a storyboard. The two groups set to work drawing their own storyboards and planning their shots (see Figure 5). The guiding theme was the sugar industry, but participants had to come up with a particular story to tell. One of the groups grasped the storyboard idea very well; the other group did not want to draw pictures so noted a few things down instead.¹⁰ We watched back the footage and were on the whole a bit disappointed with the results (Figure 6, bottom right). I assured everybody that they had achieved a lot in just a few hours and should not be discouraged. We planned to do some more filming to illustrate the perceived importance of the sugar industry to Barbados (this was their assertion and the general message that they wanted to convey). I also wanted more exposure to their particular knowledges about the sugar industry.

¹⁰As a result, they did not plan the shots in advance and the piece they created was a little incoherent, though entertaining for its impromptu docu-drama style (see sketch “Clean Sugar” www.vimeo.com/16089820, 7:40).



Figure 6. Filming the storyboards and watching back

In the following days, I visited two of the farmers at their farms and we did a lot of informal talking and some more formal PV work for the project.¹¹ The participatory dynamic changed at these meetings due to the change in individuals present. For example, one of the elderly farmers, Mr Thompson, could not see the camera button very well and so, he said, did not want to operate the camera. Mr Lowe, who was present at the farm, was “not interested” in using the camera and so I became the cameraperson on this day while Mr Thompson led the general flow of events. He suggested what we should shoot; for example, him cutting cane at his farm (www.vimeo.com/16089820, 00:25).¹² These filming excursions resulted in

¹¹I also went to the sugar factory where one participant, Mr Renee, worked and I received a tour. Mr Renee was supervising a section in the factory so I did the filming, which features mainly as ‘cut-away’ shots in the edited piece (eg., www.vimeo.com/16089820, 6:10). A cut-away shot is usually a close-up (but not always) showing a detail of the scene or topic that is being discussed. For example, if one is interviewing a fisher about fishing, one could also record a shot of a fishing boat and a close up of some fish as cutaway shots. When editing the footage later, images of the boat and fish can be inserted to cut-away from the interview, to make it look more interesting (Ngwenya, 2010).

¹²Regarding the footage of Mr Marshall (e.g., www.vimeo.com/16089820, 19:00); this was taken during another day spent in the field with Mr Marshall and an interested driver (who had been helping me transport the participants to and from workshops). In this instance, the driver volunteered to do a lot of the camera work, but I was left to ask most of the questions. The topics discussed were decided as the conversations unfolded, with a lot of input from Mr Marshall. The majority of the remaining footage that features in the final video was shot by the participants of the first PV workshop.

about three hours of footage, which became the subject of a collaborative review process undertaken with the workshop participants. This process, along with the editing, viewing and dissemination that followed, will be discussed in depth in the next section.

With close reference to the methodological interventions of PV, the remainder of this paper addresses questions that emerged, for me, during and after our experience of conducting the BSWVP in Barbados. Namely, *how* were ethics articulated through situated practices and experiences? And how exactly do we conceptualise the ethical (as opposed to say, the political, the cultural or the economic)? *Where* were ethics located and *how* were ethics experienced? The following section develops a strand of feminist-poststructuralist thought, further outlining a conceptualisation of ethics as inherent in any encounter; in particular, the inter-personal encounter. Moreover, I posit an inter-personal ethics of encounter that is necessarily embedded in a dynamic network of connections to other persons in other places and times. This understanding takes inspiration from participatory video encounters to articulate an ethical geography that is simultaneously trans-personal and trans-local.

Participatory Video: Mediating My/Our Ethics of Encounter

There is a deep strain of thinking that imagines that understandings of responsibility [or ethics at large] could be arrived at monologically, outside of any encounter with others. This is a disposition which, in presuming that it is possible or preferable to take on the suffering of the world, inadvertently arrogates to itself the perspective of impartial observer. (Williams, 2006, 145, cited in Barnett and Land, 2007, 1069, my insertion)

If understandings are generated through encounters, then how did my experience of encounters with participating sugar workers, mediated through PV, perform and inform an understanding of ethics more broadly? I begin to address this question by returning to the PV process that framed our encounters. Two important demands of PV facilitation are: 1) the need to be responsive to each participant's needs and wishes, and; 2) the need to foster group consensus and multilateral decision making.¹³ Every group action must be considered in the context of the needs and wishes of (in the least) every participant. No participant should violate the consensus of the group and therefore, no video must be taken (or shown) if any participant objects. A balance must therefore be negotiated between the often different and divergent needs and wishes of each participant (including oneself).¹⁴ Negotiating a balance in order to move forward and generate a

¹³Guiding principles of PV also include the participatory transfer of skills, the equitable sharing of roles, self-expression, collaboration, continual self-monitoring and evaluation, and (not-for-profit) 'community' ownership of video (see Pink, 2004, 2001).

¹⁴Different needs may be of a physical, emotional, technical, practical, linguistic, intellectual and creative nature. Some of *my* particular needs and wishes related to my DPhil research, which often seemed to be in

participatory video is no easy matter. These demands shape the inter-personal ethics of PV; the practical relations between participants and facilitators and the ways in which we interact as a collective. The next paragraphs document the process we went through, negotiating and articulating inter-personal ethics in order to create a video. I focus here on the editing stage of the project.

A few days after the initial PV workshop and farm visits, myself and two of the participants, Mr Hinds and Mr Alleyne, met up for another workshop.¹⁵ I demonstrated the computer editing software and explained the general procedure of editing.¹⁶ I showed how to log the footage and rate according to audio and visual quality as well as content. Once all were confident with the activity, we each took a tape of raw footage (we had three tapes in total), watched the footage and logged it on a time sheet. We then discussed together what we had on each tape, reflecting on the quality and content of the footage. Next was the conceptual edit stage. Having seen most of the footage, Mr Hinds and Mr Alleyne were asked for their ideas on how the film should be sequenced: what should be the message and general flow of the edited piece? This was by no means clear from the original footage. Should we make the interviews and the storyboard sketches as separate films, or was there an overall and unifying message/narrative that could be assembled into one film? Should we dump the playful footage generated during initial introductions, or include it? Should we show ourselves making the film (i.e., behind the camera) or try to follow a more conventional (i.e., detached observer) documentary style?

After some deliberation, it was decided that we stick to the themes we had brought up in the very first workshop and create a single piece. In facilitating the conceptual edit, I tried to ask as many open questions as possible rather than making clear proposals, although my questions were often not open enough, resulting in an anxious feeling that perhaps I was making too many suggestions and over-determining the creative process (cf. Hume-Cook et al., 2007).¹⁷ Mr Hinds and Mr Alleyne decided that the film should show that in the opinion of the participants, sugar is and was important to the development of Barbados and should be safeguarded for the future.¹⁸ This was in contrast to the more conventional

conflict with the PV project and process. More thorough discussions of the difficulties and political complexities of negotiating participation can be found in Cooke and Kothari (2001) and Hume-Cook et al. (2007).

¹⁵Only two participants were interested and had time to participate in the editing process.

¹⁶Adobe Premier Elements was used.

¹⁷Reframing questions and juxtaposing different scenes helped to generate new ideas. But the influence of the facilitator has been critiqued by Kothari (2001) and Mohan (2001), and should be kept in mind when considering the video production process and result.

¹⁸Their stance was significant in the context that despite very high costs of production in Barbados, such that the industry has not seen profit for over three decades, the government has continued to support the sugar sector. The abandonment of the Sugar Protocol and associated EU preferential prices presents a challenge for Barbados, with the level of foreign exchange set to drop drastically if the sugar sector continues business-as-usual. Sugar remains a positive contributor to foreign exchange earnings, generating US\$300 million (€230 million) per annum. Despite considerable decline in the acreage under cane, from 52,000 in 1967 to 23,000 in

documentary-style approach that could have shown a wider array of (for and against) perspectives on the situation. I was happy with this consensus as I felt that we should be conveying the perspectives of the participants, who were usually not given a voice in the popular media.¹⁹ Moreover, I was confident that although the group collectively supported the sugar industry, their perspectives were different and sometimes divergent and so the final piece would not convey a fictional unified voice that disallowed polyvocality.²⁰ As a facilitator, this was important in order to try to respect the wishes of each participant whilst simultaneously searching for a group agreement.²¹

I went away and gathered the suitable footage (as identified by myself, Mr Hinds and Mr Alleyne) and edited a rough cut of the film according to their instructions. However, this process turned out to be much trickier than I had anticipated (cf. Hume-Cook et al., 2007). The conceptual edit and sequencing instructions were not precise enough and became open to interpretation. We had over two hours of footage and were aiming for a twenty to thirty minute edited piece. Sitting at the computer with all of the footage sliced up and arranged in a non-linear format on the screen, I was faced with the challenge of creating a narrative; of choosing one sequence among many possible sequences. I faced a dilemma at this point: should I get on with it and use my own judgement, or should I delay and return to the group with an unedited piece and insist that they give more of their time in order to collectively decide on each and every shot? Thinking about the objectives of PV, part of me felt the need to do the latter. However, given the fact that it was harvesting time and all of the participants worked at least six days a week, there was no chance that we would get the video edited this way without editing workshops spread over several months. Moreover, only two of the participants had been interested to come to an editing session and I therefore doubted that the group would be willing to attend more workshops. Based on these limitations and on the fact that I had to leave Barbados in less than three weeks, I took the proverbial bull by the horns and anxiously set to work on creating a rough edited version of the film.

The selective process of editing was fraught with emotional, political and ethical tensions (see Cahill, 2007). The responsibility to attend to the participants'

2008, sugar cane is still the dominant crop and accounts for nearly half of the agricultural land in Barbados, mostly in the form of large plantations (Momsen, 2005). There is much at stake in the restructuring of this industry.

¹⁹This approach to representation is integral to PV, which was developed as a tool for the "inclusion of marginalised voices" (www.insightshare.org). Also see Smith (1999) and Lykes (2001) for further discussion of participatory methods as a tool for the inclusion of marginalised narratives.

²⁰An example of divergence of opinion occurred when Mr Cumberpatch argued that the BAMC "don't know what they're doing", and that the high fibre cane was a bad idea (www.vimeo.com/16089820, 25:00). The other participants were much less critical of the 'fuel cane' project.

²¹Cahill, Sultana and Pain (2007) consider how "we must maintain a critical awareness about who participates in our research, with what means, and to what ends" (310). It is important to remember that this was a small group and that had more people participated, there could have been a very different story to tell. Perhaps those who felt negatively about the sector would not have felt comfortable to participate in the project.

wishes for the film was highly demanding and the selection process often conflicted with my more academic and personal interests.²² The power to negotiate a specific narrative out of many possible others was a huge responsibility, but having the overarching narrative agreed upon helped to relieve some of the anxiety. Moreover, the knowledge that I would be playing the edited video back to participants for their feedback and input meant that by placing one shot here or cutting one shot there, I was not committing a final act of closure in any sense: the process of making this video was still open to intervention.



Figure 7. Viewing and responding to the rough cut (edited version)

After a week or so, I invited all the participants to re-group and watch the rough edit (see Figure 7).²³ Everyone seemed remarkably pleased and I was surprised by the positive reactions. I felt that we had not really spent enough time planning the storyboards and that the quality of the footage was disappointing from a technical perspective. However, I was apparently proven wrong by the participants, who were all surprised by the quality of the video! Having watched the piece and received positive feedback on the rough cut, I tried to encourage more critical input by going through the video shot by shot and stopping to ask questions about the sequence, relevance, and general feeling regarding different shots. Mr Hurley and Mr Hinds suggested that we re-shoot an interview with Mr Hurley, the “King of the Crop”²⁴, as our original footage had poor audio quality and had not been included in the edit (see Figure 7, right). This largely met the quietly expressed wishes of Mr Hurley, who hoped to appear a bit more in the final video.

²²It seemed, at the time, that the video project had diverged somewhat from my research, but I was nevertheless committed to seeing the project through to completion. Additionally, I had been shocked by the unanimously positive view of the sugar industry, having originally assumed a more critical environmental and social justice perspective myself.

²³Mr Forde, an elderly participant with mobility problems, could not make the trip and so I visited him at his home for a separate viewing before I left the island.

²⁴Each year at the Crop Over carnival, the man and woman who have cut the most tonnes of sugar cane that year are crowned “King and Queen” of the crop.

We all had emotional needs to attend to, and becoming the video editor entailed a huge ethical responsibility to make everybody happy.²⁵

This sense of personal responsibility to the participants prompted a lot of thinking about inter-personal ethics. How are ethical relations related to emotional relations, for example? Ethical relations are, I would argue, intimately emotional (Richardson, 2004), but they are also more than this (cf. McCormack, 2006, 2003). My particular inter-personal experiences of sharing knowledges through PV, and negotiating an edited video, facilitated an understanding of ethics as inter-personal, affective, responsive, practical and embodied. The collaborative process encouraged inter-personal interaction and the articulation of particular ethical orientations towards one another. That is, in order to achieve a successful outcome – a participatory video – each person was forced to respond affectively and practically to the specific and embodied situation of other participants. In our group, relations were shaped and inter-personal responses were forced by our differences in racial, gender, dialect, physical mobility, age and occupational characteristics, for example. The ethics of these relations were experiential and involved being moved by/through encounters (Diprose, 2002). Spinoza's notion of affective ethics (see Spinoza, 2001, 147), provides us with useful terms and ideas with which to frame the ethics of PV. The quality, orientation or movement of encounters can be experienced in variously positive (joyful) or negative (painful/sorrowful/anxious) ways; and it is always the collective experience of joyful encounters that we aim for in the PV process.²⁶ Therefore, one participant should not benefit to the detriment of another, for this would affect sorrow in some form. In facilitating a PV project we encourage positive (or joyful) interactions through continual self-evaluation exercises, which of course, are not always effective.

Having seen the rough edited version of the film, all participants were keen to have the film shown more widely and Mr Forde proposed getting it broadcast on television; all agreed to this. I was somewhat surprised and a little worried. I had not expected that the video would reach so many people and this entailed a reconsideration of the risk and responsibility involved in participatory video work (Cahill, 2007). I agreed to make enquiries and work towards this goal as well as organise a screening event later in 2007. With a consensus reached on the final version of the film, I returned to the UK and finished editing the video. DVDs were

²⁵See ACME's special issue on "Participatory Ethics" (2007) for more detailed discussions of the ethical responsibilities of the researcher in participatory projects.

²⁶This brings in age-old philosophical questions about the nature of humanity, which cannot be addressed here. My discussion is premised upon the notion that people are both generous *and* self-interested, rather than simply selfish *or* altruistic. A proposition of Spinoza proves useful here: "If a person has done anything which he [sic] imagines will affect others with joy, he also will be affected with joy, accompanied with an idea of himself [sic] as its cause; that is to say, he will look upon himself with joy. If, on the other hand, he has done something which he imagines will affect others with sorrow, he will look upon himself with sorrow" (2001, 121).

made for all the participants and mailed along with a detailed consent form (referring to all the intended audiences we had agreed upon) to each participant.²⁷

Six months later, in October 2007, I returned to Barbados for follow-up work. With the backing of a local business, I organised a screening event, kindly hosted again by the Future Centre Trust. All participants were invited along with about 50 key stakeholders and interested persons in the sugar sector. These included private growers, agricultural specialists, small cane farmers, Barbados Agricultural Management Company (BAMC) representatives, EC delegates and industry associates. They had vested interests in the future of the sugar sector, but also divergent opinions, which made the prospect of these encounters especially interesting. I telephoned previous contacts and posted written invitations.



Figure 8. Community Screening event

Around 50 people came to the screening event. I introduced the video project to the audience and Mr Alleyne then introduced himself and gave a brief account of how the video was made and who was involved (Figure 8). I dimmed the lights, pressed play, and held my breath as our film became the centre of attention and scrutiny. Having shown the film,²⁸ a lively discussion followed. We also hosted an after party where the discussion continued between stakeholders, and unlikely encounters occurred between people who did not usually meet in a non-work environment.

The screening event (photographed in Figure 8) generated multiple encounters between differently interested people (cf. Hume-Cook et al., 2007). The audience also encountered the video itself, experiencing it in different ways. For example, while some people enjoyed hearing the views of ‘ordinary’ workers, others were frustrated by the lack of interviews with managers and policy-makers. They wanted to hear the ‘facts of the matter’: is the multipurpose cane project good

²⁷The consent form was essentially an act of compliance with institutional codes of practice. The process of making the participatory video together had already involved extensive discussions of consent, audience and ownership issues (see Elwood, 2007).

²⁸At this point, the PV team received a round of applause and we later appeared in the local press alongside a discussion on the future of the sugar industry.

or bad for Barbados, for example? When exactly will the new factory be built and who will pay for it? ²⁹ Media conventions and audience expectations were contravened, but the video nevertheless proved provocative and sparked debate about the uncertain future of the sugar sector. The ways in which different viewpoints and people with vested interests encountered each other, through engaging with the video, created moments of gladness and respect. The plantation owners, for example, congratulated the sugar cane farmers on their accomplishment. Mr Alleyne also thanked me for bringing him into contact with the other participants and stakeholders, whom he had never met before and had enjoyed meeting.

Our encounters also entailed more negative tensions and frustrations. For example, when questions were raised about the prospective new factory, the Barbados Agricultural Management Company (BAMC) representative (in charge of the restructuring program) refused to comment and impart any information to the audience. He then quietly slipped out of the room. On this occasion the BAMC representative encountered a host of particular others who made demands on his knowledge; they wanted to know exactly what the BAMC was planning. The representative participated in a negative ethical interaction creating an impasse by refusing to answer questions about the proposed multipurpose factory and subsequently leaving the discussion.³⁰ He thereby affected a negative closure upon the other members of the audience, who expressed disappointment at the lack of forthcoming information.

Each of these encounters can be understood as a situated ethical orientation towards particular others, but also, importantly, as always embedded in broader networks of relations that exceed the particular encounter. The BAMC representative was embedded in his state-sponsored corporate role, the independent planters in their feisty affiliations with the various companies and unions, myself as a white female British academic embedded in other networks of power, for example. We all carry with us historical 'baggage' and heritage, inscribed upon our bodies, specific to context (Butler, 1993). We also carry our own assumptions and experiential memories, which shape the nature of our encounters.

At this point, we could return to the quote from Williams (2006) to disrupt this rather biased commentary of the PV project. Is my description arrogating itself to the perspective of impartial observer? This is definitely not the intention, nor

²⁹In 2007, the Government of Barbados approved controversial proposals for a multi-purpose factory that would cost an estimated US\$150 million (€115 million). The new factory is "expected to lead to a viable and profitable sugarcane industry" (Government of Barbados, 2006, 67) and will generate electricity for the national grid, as well as producing specialty sugar (for export and the local tourism market), 14,000 litres of ethanol and up to 10,000 tonnes of high grade molasses for local rum production (Government of Barbados, 2006).

³⁰ However, for him, this encounter was framed by his professional obligation to obey the corporate rules and guard information from the public. His job may have been on the line. His ethical orientation was to fulfil these obligations rather than respond to public questioning in an open manner.

how the encounters I describe were experienced in the *doing* of the PV project. But it is worth considering how the less ‘participatory’ practices of academic writing and having a research agenda potentially undermine the ethics I have described. For I *have* benefitted from the project in ways that the participants may be unaware of, and perhaps even, some would argue, at their expense. In the least, the joys and sorrows I experience in writing about the project now are not collective in relation to the workshop participants (though they are collective in relation to others). This disconnect highlights the somewhat colonial shadow that hovers over the practices that are encouraged in the making of a participatory video. One could argue that the planning and initiating of the project, as well as the post-workshop editing, screening and analysis are indeed arrogations and make a mockery of the discourse of participation. Although the practices of skills-sharing in a PV workshop are radically different to conventional pedagogic practices (Raht, 2009), a recognition of the embodied (and colonizing) geographies of academic knowledge-production and also the capitalist economies in which video technologies are embedded, call attention to a network of ethical relations that complicates the condensed and bounded description of PV above. Moreover, the act of leaving Barbados and taking the video with me points to differential postcolonial mobilities and to our capacities to benefit from the PV workshop.³¹

Thinking about inter-personal ethics as embedded in broader spatio-temporal networks debunks the oft-cited problem of conflict between attending to singular encounters with particular others *as opposed* to distantiated encounters with generalised others (see Held, 2006, 2002; Barnett, 2005; Silk, 2000). As discussed in the first section of this paper, this conflict is often framed by the ‘care versus justice’ argument (Barnett and Land, 2007), or more recently by the ‘ethics versus politics’ problematic (Smith, 2007; Tolia-Kelly, 2006), and engages especially with the ethical philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas (1969). Clive Barnett (2005), for example, argues that:

it is common to suggest that the inviolable value ascribed to ethical responsibility for a concrete other must lead to political impasse, *in so far as practices of formalized justice that define responsibilities to generalized others seem to contravene the intense singularity and partiality that characterises the purity of the ethical relation.* (Barnett, 2005, 11, my emphasis)

As is pointed out elsewhere (Barnett and Land, 2007), an imagined geography of distance versus proximity often underlies these debates, whereby the singularized inter-personal encounter is understood as proximate and generalized responsibility is understood as impersonal and ageographical. However, the experiences of

³¹ This accusation of “running away” is not as straightforward a separation/distinction as one might assume: for example, one of the participants visited my home in Oxford a year after the workshop; I have returned to Barbados twice and been in touch with the group since April 2007; and in 2011, I remain in friendly email contact with two of the participants.

facilitating the PV project demonstrated how particular intense and concrete encounters are not at all singular events, but are inter-connected and mediated events embedded within a network of interactions that exceed the space-time of each specific encounter. Positing singularity of ethical encounters is as abstract and imaginative a fiction as positing a general other. As argued by Sharp (2007), singular things cannot exist but in community.

The ethical encounters that constituted the PV project were part of a temporally and geographically distributed web of ongoing encounters. In Barbados, I began with research forays, conversations, interviews and then organising a video workshop. The PV workshop then led to other meetings and workshops, multiple screening events and many follow-on encounters. The singularized encounters framed by the video itself were/are dynamically re-articulated with every replay of the video. In watching the video, new inter-personal ethical encounters emerge(d) that are/were connected to our initial PV experience. The significance of acknowledging the inter-connection and mediation of particular and concrete encounters is that any “either/or choice between equally compelling, undecidable ethical imperatives — to honour One’s responsibility for a singular Other or to generalized others” (Barnett, 2005, 19) becomes disrupted and re-framed *not* as an either/or choice but as a responsibility to honour all inter-personal relations and treat them as embedded in a collective of inter-connected and particular others. The PV experience became a tool for both mediating and conceptualising these multiple and dispersed encounters. But how did/does the video mediate and connect, and thus enable new encounters? And what is the significance of the video as a mediator?

As a medium, video has particular qualities and affordances that generate, mediate and distribute encounters in interesting ways. There are two obvious aspects I wish to address here: firstly, the replay capacity, and secondly, the audio-visual nature of video. Although obvious, these aspects are significant in terms of the affects/effects that the BSWVP had. Not only can the corporeal and more-than-verbal aspects of life be visually demonstrated on video, they can be and have been shared – through replay – with many other respondents in sites far removed from Barbados. A key difference between watching a scene off-camera and watching the scene on video is the capacity of video for replay. Digital video allows for repetition, manipulation, re-assemblage and circulation of moving images (Lorimer, 2010; Holliday, 2000). The video as a re-playable set of moving images has the capacity to provoke responses from different others in different times and places (MacDougall, 1998). PV thus allows for my particular encounters with sugar workers to travel and encounter others, affecting them in different ways and connecting people through asymmetrical relations of empathy, interest or perhaps indifference (Marks, 2000). The inter-personal ethics of encounter, initiated and experienced in April 2007, thus have repercussions in places and spaces far beyond the actual PV workshops.

For example, the initial screening event in Barbados received publicity in the national newspapers, which led to some interest from local academics who were given copies of the video. DVDs were also distributed to the national archives, the local University, the Ministry of Culture, the national broadcaster and other interested parties. The video was shown by the Barbados Agricultural Management Company (BAMC) at a staff team-building day at their agronomy research station. The video was also shown by myself at a conference in the US and at seminars in South Africa. I also organised a screening event at my graduate school, where geographers at the University of Oxford were invited to participate in a brainstorming discussion around affect, ethics and video methods. It was uploaded to the Internet and has been viewed over 180 times.³² It has been added, by “Transforming Images”, to an online video album (www.vimeo.com/album/1630852).

At every screening event where I have been present, the video has generated surprised responses in the audience, particularly around the news and implications of crisis in Caribbean sugar industries.³³ In discussions that have followed the viewing, people have tended to be most affected, at least openly, by the enthusiasm for sugar cane conveyed by one of the farmers, Mr Thompson. This most often leads to consideration of the weak position of Caribbean farmers *vis-à-vis* the global economy of sugar and the EU’s neoliberalised trading regime (Richardson and Richardson-Ngwenya, 2011; Harrison, 2001). There has been much interest from viewers in how the video was made and the problems faced. By watching the BSWVP with a group in the outside of the production context, a person can forge an affective connection with sugar workers through a mediated video encounter, completely unknown to and physically removed from the video makers/stars. Indeed, this can happen any time anybody watches the video online.

So how might the notion of ethics elaborated in this paper – ethics as emergent and dynamic relations that consist in the encounter between persons – relate to such a seemingly *imaginative* encounter? The key point to register is that encountering the sugar workers in person and encountering their image on screen are two very different experiences, and therefore entail different ethical relations. A proximate encounter between people is qualitatively and radically different from an encounter between people as mediated by video, particularly as the video is a replay of events that occurred in the past. The asymmetry of response-ability in such an encounter is crucial. A viewer can respond affectively to the sugar workers on screen whereas they cannot respond and have no experience or even knowledge of the encounter taking place. The asymmetry of response-ability radically affects the ethics of such an encounter. However, this point granted, shouldn’t we rather

³²As of October 2011.

³³See ACP Group Press Release, 24th November 2005, “ACP sugar group biggest losers of EU sugar reform; they deplore the insensitivity of the EU to their case”, for a brief summary of the crisis (<http://www.acpsugar.org/Press%20releases.html>).

say that a viewer responds to *the image* of, for example, Mr Alleyne, rather than Mr Alleyne himself? It is his *image* that participates in the encounter after all. The asymmetrical distribution of response-ability in our encounters with moving images demonstrates how “[f]ilm images [are] as anodyne as words; and although they attract us they simultaneously cut us off from the world of their referents” (MacDougall, 1998, 49). In thinking about the difference between seeing in the flesh and seeing on film, MacDougall concedes, as do I, that “as images seen by the eye, they [film/video images] have also a phenomenological existence as substantial as our glimpses of actual persons, and *can certainly affect us as much*” (1998, 48, my emphasis).

This brings me to the significance of the audio-visual nature of video and the imaginative resonance of image and body that has such affective force (cf. Marks, 2000). As in reading this paper, one can experience a mediated encounter with (the image of) sugar workers through other media, for example, the medium of text. But this difference in mediation changes the nature of encounters and thereby the ethical dimensions of the experience. As argued by David MacDougall (2005, 1998), the corporeally demonstrative aspect of video/film, embodied in/by the moving image, has affective force in a way that is elusively different *and* similar to that of the written word and the face-to-face encounter. As MacDougall suggests, the moving image “regenerates a form of thinking through the body, often affecting us most forcefully at those junctures of experience that lie between our accustomed categories of thought” (1998, 49). It is precisely these affective differences that render encounters as experientially different and thus shift the character of the ethical relation. Affects, the corporeal and incorporeal fluxes that impinge upon and reshape interacting bodies, are thus at the core of ethical relations. Video is (an example of) a medium for specifically located encounters to travel; to become transposed (Braidotti, 2006), translated, and to *affect* situated others in different space-times (cf. Yusoff, 2007; Deleuze, 2005). Viewers can be affected by the images and ideas presented in the video; be touched by the encounters they witness and partake in. Further, through screening events, new inter-personal and responsive encounters are generated. Images and affective energies connect these different inter-personal encounters across space-times.

In summary, by thinking through the video, it becomes clear that inter-personal ethics can be conceived of as never singular or general, but always and at once trans-personal *and* trans-local: ethical relations are generated *between* persons and *between* places. According to the approach adopted in this analysis, these trans-personal encounters are intrinsically ethical. If we then reassess the propositions put forward here to consider the ethical dimensions of the EU Sugar Reform, or the new sugar trading regime, we might ask how the affective encounters connect with policy-making, or link consumers and producers of sugar. The way in which Caribbean sugar travels between distant locations and affects bodies across space has parallels with the way the participatory video *moved* and generated trans-local, transnational, inter-personal encounters. Thinking about

sugar in this manner raises questions of consumer responsibility. But the hiddenness of the multiple and geographically distributed inter-personal encounters, which leads up to the act of sugar consumption, also reminds us of the (minimized) response-ability of consumers. Visual media, such as the BSWVP, has the potential to generate new inter-personal encounters that *could* mobilise more positive trade ethics (Richardson-Ngwenya, forthcoming 2012).

Conclusion

This account of the Participatory Video process has attempted to provide thorough details of the emergent methodology, describing what took place and (some of) the many moments of unease (and joy) that arose as the process unfolded. But it is important to highlight again that the account of the process and of associated encounters is given from my own perspective and positionality (Mohammad, 2001; Rose, 1994; Jackson, 1993). This paper does not attend in detail to the problematics of gender and race in undertaking research in a postcolonial context (Hopkins, 2007a; Saldanha, 2005; Valentine, 2002). The problematic (post)colonial dynamics of the project – including the cultural and social make-up of our group, the academification of my experiences, the politics of ownership (of both knowledge and technological capacities) – have been a quiet backdrop to the narrative presented here and influenced the negotiation of encounters that took place in Barbados and continue to unfold as a result of the video. However, as Shildrick argues, we must take into account the idea that “encounters are never unmediated but form part of the wider ongoing discourse which has already compromised the capacity for autonomy of one participant more than the other” (1997, 116). That is, one cannot *escape* such mediations and power relations (Moss, 2002; Nast, 1994). However, we can acknowledge them and try to respond mindfully to the nature of our encounters (Bondi, 2003). The exact ways in which our multiple positionalities (Hopkins, 2007a) influenced the process of PV and the resulting narrative of the BSWVP are uncertain. But the turnout of only eight of the forty-plus invitees is perhaps suggestive of scepticism towards my self and the video project, or a hesitation to publicly disclose (possibly negative) issues around work in the sector. We can only speculate at the untold narratives around sugar that may have emerged had our positionalities been different.

There was also the ongoing and tricky negotiation of dual roles as PV project facilitator and researcher. The two roles were seemingly at odds because I had set myself up doing research that was not participatory research (Kindon et al., 2007) in the community development sense. However, the PV project itself was ‘participatory’ and so the connection between personal research agenda and the video became confusing. Only after over a year had passed, did I see how the PV project was actually *shaping* research questions and conceptualisations of inter-

personal, affective and trans-local ethics, and thereby participating in the generation of ideas.³⁴

This paper has demonstrated how my experience of facilitating the BSWVP affected an understanding and an engagement with ethics, at the practical and conceptual level of inter-personal encounters. I have argued that ethics are *affective*; we are moved to respond in particular ways to particular others, continually re-articulating and re-negotiating our orientations and alliances. Every inter-personal encounter entails a movement or response to the encountered other and interactions can generate different kinds of ethical relations, depending on the accumulation and distribution of joys and sorrows (Spinoza, 2001). The experience of facilitating the PV project prompted thinking about how PV's moving images facilitated the extension of ethical relations beyond the immediate and local PV workshops. The video provided images that connected differently placed others across space and time. In this way, ethical relations were extended not in any generalisable sense but in specifically embedded instances. One set of encounters (i.e., the PV workshop) enabled another set (i.e., the screening), each with their own dynamics and ethics, but nevertheless connected. In thinking through the ethical encounters of the PV project, I argue that the video provided a medium for connection to distant/absent others. The ethics of the Caribbean sugar could also be conceptualised as a geographically and historically distributed network of inter-personal encounters and connections.³⁵ This recognition of connectivity overcomes the oft-cited problem of aligning singular ethical relations with generalised ethical responsibilities: the problem becomes one of conceiving of and acting upon how multiple persons are specifically and ethically inter-connected.

This conceptualisation of ethics performs a geography of "being-in-common" with others (Popke, 2009, 88), emphasising the affective dimension of encounters. Affective approaches to ethics, and to Geography at large, have been criticised as apolitical and inattentive to relations of power (Smith, 2007; Saldanha, 2005; Thein, 2005). But I would suggest that an attention to situated encounters, emphasis on inter-connectivity, as well as the generation of new encounters through the PV project, was/is a political act and presents a challenge to dominant narratives and relations of power. Moreover, although it was not the direct intention of the project to produce a counter-narrative to dominant perceptions of sugar in the Caribbean or the value of the sector to Barbados, this was indeed one of the outcomes and should not be discounted in its political potential. Exploring ethical geographies requires in-depth engagement with particular instances which cannot be generalised, and yet, through their historical and geographical connectivity, do not stand in isolation.

³⁴My original interests, in terms of the PV project, were more about situating ethical arguments and ways-of-life than of attending to affect.

³⁵This approach speaks to Jeff Popke's poststructural and geographically-concerned aim of "reanimating a form of ethics that is not solely dependent on spatial proximity" (2007, 510).

Acknowledgments

This paper draws upon doctoral research undertaken for the thesis, “The Ethical Geographies of Caribbean Sugar” (see Richardson-Ngwenya, 2009), funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, postgraduate studentship TTA-030-2005-00333. Supplementary funding was also kindly provided by Jesus College, Oxford. Postdoctoral funding to pursue the publication of this research is kindly provided by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Many thanks are due to Sarah Whatmore and Colin Clarke for their supervision and to the video method enthusiasts at Oxford University Centre for the Environment who kindly participated in a screening session and discussion of the BSWVP. Special thanks are due to Jeff Popke and Sara Kindon for their considerable feedback on various drafts of this paper. In Barbados, I am indebted to John and Janice Hunte for their support and inspiration during fieldwork and also to the Future Centre Trust, Chris Docherty of Plantation Reserve, the BAMC and most especially, the participants of the Barbados Sugar Workers’ Video Project: Shaun Alleyne, Michael Cumberpatch, Mr Forde, Damien Hinds, Grantly Hurley, Mr Marshall, Evans Renee and Clarence Thompson.

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