

Thinking with publics, politics and ethical boards in participatory ethnographic research

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Introduction

In this paper, we are interested in exploring through three case studies what ethical dilemmas and issues might arise when ethnographic studies are being publicised. Publicizing an ethnography is part and parcel of what makes public ethnography. In other words and drawing on Fassin's (2017, p. 10) definition: public ethnography "refers to what is publicized and how such a process can be apprehended: *it is simultaneously an ethnography made public and the ethnography of this publicization*" (emphasis original). We do not claim that we have conducted an ethnography on the publicization of our case ethnographies, as at the times when our respective research projects were conducted, we did not consider these events as part of our projects. Rather, they are like an 'afterlife' (Fassin 2015, 2017, p. 7) of our research, observations taken and thoughts that emerged as participants in our studies wished to go public and we have aided them to do so. As we have acted on their wishes, we have found ourselves facing some ethical dilemmas bringing with them 'complications' and 'dares' (Fassin 2017, p. 9). We specifically highlight those aspects here that are related to decisions made by ethical boards. We offer these cases to help think further about the limits of ethical decisions made prior to data generation for participatory research. Board decisions are critiqued as inflexible and limiting for participatory research, especially if we consider changes to the dissemination of research that arose from participants' wishes (Schrag, 2011).

Ethnography mixed with principles of participatory research and forms of autoethnography creates a space "for dialogue and debate that instigates and shapes social change" (Holman Jones, 2012, p. 206). When participants themselves develop explicit or implicit intentions to bring about change, ethnography becomes "an engaged practice open to the world and its problems" (Fassin 2017, p. 9) and visions of publics emerge. The 'politicization' of ethnography (Fassin 2017, p. 11) reshapes relations between researchers, participants and visions of publics and audiences. While the public of public ethnography is obscure, what is certain is that it is difficult to know about it before the study (Fassin 2017). Even though the outlines of the public is obscure, or perhaps exactly because of that, the incumbent political actions and debates might also become paralysed or at least regulated by ethical boards' guidelines.

In this chapter, we introduce two studies from Australia and one from Finland. The first study is an autoethnographic study of the implementation of a new policy that required abrupt changes in the everyday operation of a preschool. The second study is part of a larger, Finnish-Australian participatory research project exploring refugee students' school experiences. The third study investigates young asylum-seekers' and refugees' inter- and intraethnic friendships and peer relationships in Finland. As in all research with vulnerable populations or easily identifiable research sites, participants and personnel, ethical considerations were central throughout the research processes from design to dissemination. We discuss specifically participants' wish to 'go

public' within the limits of respective ethical board's decisions, and the consequent ethical dilemmas which were successfully negotiated within the three research projects but non-the-less posed challenges and disappointments for our participants in regards to their wish to affect broader change.

After providing a short review on gaps between institutional ethical review and participatory ethnographic research, we offer the three case studies to show the contentious relations between ethical mandates of respective boards and participants' views about guarding their own privacy and integrity during and after 'going public'. As we discuss these cases, we also highlight the various ways in which participants envisioned the public taking different forms, which might be quite different to how ethics applications and decisions conceived those.

Institutional ethical boards

Good ethnographers, we were taught, are adventurous in their pursuit of thick descriptive data and conduct fieldwork in natural settings, creating rapport with participants to gain their views of the researched phenomenon (Hemmings, 2006). As they get more acquainted, researchers' relations with participants change as well as their methods develop together with other aspects of their research. These aspects include their growing insights about how their research can serve the betterment of society, including social justice, policy-making or practice, or research participants themselves. There are also researchers who do participatory research in order to give more stake to participants in research and equalise power relations between the researchers and those who are 'researched'. Participatory approaches have been argued to become the 'mantras' of childhood and youth research (Spyrou 2018, Tisdall and Punch 2012) for both ethical and practical reasons (Cahill 2004; Ansell et. al. 2012). It makes a strong ethical stance on respecting and including in research those whose lives are being scrutinized, entailing the idea of researching *with* people, rather than *on* or *about* people and sometimes including participants as co-researchers (Smith, Monaghan and Broad 2002) However, it also comes with added considerations for ethical engagements, such as how to create reciprocity in research and how to include participants' developing agendas with/in the research at all stages of the process.

While there is hardly an unanimous definition of what participatory research is, or should be, it is commonly agreed that it should aim to involve participants (ideally) in all stages of research, from problem definition to data collection, analysis and interpretation. For our considerations here, participants should also be invited to the dissemination of the findings in ways that suit them. These may apply to the individual participants and the whole research collective, all who are involved in the research, including institutions and stakeholders, and may become particularly poignant when research is set to go to these stakeholders' imagined publics. Because of the scarce research on the aspects of dissemination, we know little about, for instance, to what extent intended messages reach the audience and how they are interpreted by the various publics (Healy and Fitzgibbon 2020). At the same time, the well-meaning participatory approaches during dissemination are accompanied by ethical concerns that are inadequately understood or addressed in formal ethical processes.

Ethical boards might help to solve some of these dilemmas by providing guidance on the rights, protection and privacy of research participants and institutions. However, as many researchers have clearly identified, there are "intractable divides between notions of good, ethical ethnography and qualitative research and the ethical frameworks" (Hemmings 2006, p. 12). Indeed, the applications of basic ethical principles endorsed by local institutional review boards might be too simple, i.e. not acknowledging the ethical complexities of particular fields, and at the

same time too rigid, i.e., not allowing room for relational ethics based on the common sense of the researchers and research participants (Reimer et al. 2019). As we will demonstrate through our three case studies, the basic principles enshrined in ethical boards' work with which we worked, did not only present ambiguity in guidelines and their protective capacities, but if applied inflexibly by us researchers, could have prevented research participants to engage in the dissemination of research projects with a view to effect change with research in their respective communities.

There are many critiques of ethical boards, which are summarised as "1) ethics committees impose silly restrictions, 2) ethics review is a solution in search of a problem, 3) ethics committees lack expertise, 4) ethics committees apply inappropriate principles, 5) ethics review harms the innocent, and 6) better options exist" (Schrag 2011, p. 120). Our projects' ethical dilemmas arise mainly from participatory ethnographic work that cannot be fully planned in advance. Balancing the researchers and participants' roles and intentions is also a delicate act that might raise ethical challenges. Balancing can be particularly tricky when intentions emerge to generate public dialogue and debate in relation to the study. During our collaborations, it became clear also that going public is not typically considered in the ethical boards' deliberations. Thus, there were situations when we lacked ethical guidance. In some cases, the participants' best interest even required that we went *against* ethical guidelines that were supposed to guide our overall research. This is not surprising since "ethical boards are primarily focused on the principle of assessing risk to individuals and organisations where the research is conducted, not to communities [that participants are representatives of] and continue to perpetuate the notion that the domain of 'knowledge production' is the sole right of academic researchers" (Flicker et al., 2007, p. 478). However, when participants become knowledge producers, research and its results become more relevant to their communities' concerns. In this process, participants might also develop more initiative and capacities to deliver these results to their communities. The ways in which participants imagine the research to be beneficial, or the ways in which they desire to bring about changes that increase the well-being or justice in their communities, might only emerge during the research or change as the research unfolds. These processes therefore, are difficult to include in ethical applications and boards' decisions.

Ethical dilemmas in relation to dissemination, if considered by ethical boards, are mostly concerned with academic channels. If these deliberations are related to public dissemination, questions are often only raised about who is motivated to publish what and in what format, and what might lead to insensitivity or repercussions for the community if presented prematurely (Flicker et al., 2007). Since participants' wish to disseminate research in their own ways mostly emerge during the research process, ethical questions related to those are rarely known during the research design phase (Vannini 2019). Consequently, these considerations are often excluded from ethical applications. An inflexible interpretation of the ethical guidelines, that are laid at the design phase of a study, may hence inhibit any emergent dissemination activities that were not initially written in the plan.

In order to address these inherent issues in participatory ethnographic research, we argue that researchers and ethical boards should explore possibilities to work collaboratively to find solutions to unique ethical tensions that potentially come with participatory ethnographies (Guta et al., 2012). The following case studies highlight different aspects of these ethical concerns and aid us in proposing points for discussions with ethical boards.

Case one: Politically mediated participation and ethical boards

The first case study explored the implementation of a policy in New South Wales (NSW), Australia, that sought to increase access to 15 hours per week of quality early childhood education for all 4- and 5-years old children. The autoethnographic account of the policy implementation studied the consequences as seen in the everyday operation of a preschool through the eye of the director (Millei and Gallagher, 2017). The participant of the research thus became a co-author. Ethical considerations in policy research concern all stakeholders. As a general rule organisations where the research is executed are best included anonymously to protect them (Spicker 2007). In the case of an autoethnography, the research site cannot be hidden in publications, unless the author uses a pseudonym, yet still the characteristics of the setting might expose the organisation's identity. Additionally, the policies and their implementation analysed might contain information that easily identifies the State in question and therefore the responsible policy-makers involved. Thus, even if policy makers' work is critically discussed with respect, the arising ethical dilemma is not easily resolved. In addition, when the results reach the public domain, the researcher is no longer in control of its effects on the studied organization or on public figures, and the said views might affect the research site in an unfavourable manner.

This ethical dilemma has been further complicated by the co-author director's wish to advocate on behalf of children and families and early childhood professionals through research. The director is a well-known person in NSW both among her colleagues and policy-makers. She is a resolute activist who has fought for children's right for affordable and high-quality early childhood education during her more than 30 years long career, also by lobbying to the government as well as being part of many submissions and protests. Despite the ethical board giving permission to the research, if the anonymity of the research site is ensured, the director saw an opportunity in taking an active stance by revealing her author identity and therefore the organisation where the research has been carried out. For this, she has gained the support of the preschool's management committee and the article has been published.

It was not long after, when her co-researcher (Millei), presented the research at the European Early Childhood Education Research conference in Budapest, Hungary. As the presentation concluded, a person from the audience stood up and delivered a deliberated response. She identified herself as the policy-maker concerned. She talked about the ways in which the presentation was not based on facts, that it contained a false analysis, lacked substantive understanding of the policy context and policy implementation for which she was responsible. In the available 5 minutes for questions and answers, the researcher decided not to contest these views, but instead to highlight the differing perspectives - research and policy maker - from which critical evaluation about the implementation have been made. Another person from the audience added that she was not surprised by this response. She added that she was researching early years policy in the UK and her respective policy-maker would have received a well-supported critique probably the same way. The policy-maker left the room and the researcher remained with deep concerns about the consequences for her co-author director and the respective preschool. A phone conversation with the director / co-author cleared her conscience. She stated that she knew what she was entering when she published the article with her name and that she is very pleased that the paper found the right person and that it was also presented in an academic community that was sympathetic. The director also attempted to make an appointment with the policy-maker to follow up this presentation in person, however she was

unavailable for a meeting. It was however intriguing when the preschool received two random compliance checks¹ quickly following each other in a short interval.

This case study shows how the autoethnography due to the participant researcher's well thought through decision revealed the identity of the preschool involved and hence the government official, and in turn has brought about the state government's increased scrutiny as compliance visits. In order to turn her participation in the research for the benefit of children and the profession, she has reconsidered the ways in which she went about 'going public' despite the conditions given by the ethical board in regards to academic dissemination. The director has turned her participation into intentional activism to effect policy-making and to bring about change towards ensuring children's right to quality preschool education. In her decision, she constructed the public as policy-makers and professionals, identified the studied organisation and in effect the very stakeholder the ethical board deemed important to anonymize. After careful deliberation, the participant researcher overruled the ethical board's recommendation to protect her own and her organisation and with this act made the stakeholder accountable. She took the risk and dealt with the consequences of this act, from which the ethical board intended to protect her and her organisation.

There are two questions that this story raises. First, how can ethical boards allow flexibility in disseminating research in politically mediated ways when the risks are carefully assessed and taken, and the consequences are handled by the participants? Second, what are the ethical dilemmas that emerge around protecting and/or making accountable organisations through research?

In the next case, the starting point was to produce analytically rich research data. The unexpected turn was that the participants - migrant and refugee children, thought the data they co-produced was too good not to be shown publicly and take pride from.

Case two: Children's rights for protection and voice

The second case relates to refugee and migrant children's experiences in an Australian primary school and the children's desire to broadcast their school life. As part of a qualitative Finnish-Australian study (Kaukko and Wilkinson 2018, 2019), 13 students from a range of migrant- and refugee backgrounds collected audio-visual data documenting and analysing their school lives. This phase was a continuation of previous research activities, during which the researcher (Kaukko), together with her Australian colleague Jane Wilkinson, interviewed refugee children, teachers and educational leaders (Wilkinson and Kaukko 2020) who worked in their schools, with an aim to understand what happens when children feel successful² in school. One of the themes that emerged especially from the ethnographic part of the study was the crucial importance of play. While this is not surprising for anybody working with young children, the researchers decided

¹ Compliance checks are randomly performed in NSW preschools to inspect that preschools are operating in line with the current and extensive list of National Regulations. These checks are administered by the state governments.

<https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2011/653/whole#/chap5/part5.2/reg188>

² In the study, the word 'success' was understood in its broadest sense, meaning any kind of academic/social achievements or anything that made the children feel happy at school. The Finnish word used the word 'onnistuminen', deriving from the root word 'onni', happiness.

to delve deeper into understanding how play unfolds as a practice, and what it means for newly arrived children in Australia.

A group of 'Play Agents' was recruited in collaboration with one of the schools participating in the previous phase of the study. The group consisted of 13 young (5-8-year-old) students who were keen to be experts on play, and to document what they were doing in and outside of the school building during their school days. The researcher's plan was to conduct a participatory analysis of the videos with children, aiming to understand what happens during the extraordinarily rich and complex play practices the children were involved in, and what these moments meant for them. This aim was fulfilled; the children produced hours of rich, analytically insightful audio-visual data.

During the participatory analysis phase, the children watched the video data they had created on the classroom white board. They were fascinated and wanted to see the selected clips over and over again. They added comments and elaborations on each watching, which, of course, was the purpose of the analysis. Each repeat helped the researcher understand what was going on, and what was important. But the children did not see these videos as productive data. They saw clips in which they were the stars and they wanted to showcase themselves as authors of this material. Data was rich but its reach was limited since ethical permission prohibited the researcher sharing any part of it publicly, even though the students themselves wanted others, their peers, families, teachers and the wider public to see it.

This example raises important considerations about how by protecting children's rights to privacy, ethical boards can actually prevent children from communicating and having their voices heard, which is another of their rights (UNCRC 1989). The children wanted to share the audio-visual material publicly. Some had a YouTube channel ready to be used and were already very familiar with sharing videos. Others wished that the videos could at least be shown for the other students at their school. They acted as stars and it made them happy. In the recorded discussions we can hear them narrating as documentarists. Some of the children told that they felt like YouTubers. Yet it turned out very soon that the ethical agreement did not allow this to happen. The videos were not going to be seen by anybody except for the researcher and the participating children. In this instance, the ethical boards prevented children's rights to be heard exercised.

A small compensation was when the researcher, together with her university's media team, turned the study into a media project. With long discussions with the ethical board and countless supporting letters from the school arguing that taking pictures and videos of the school was their common practice, the project was approved. The researcher had to ensure that what was collected for the media film is clearly separate from the preceding research project. The same children participated, the same cameras were worn, similar kind of footage was recorded with the help of the best possible media team, but it was no longer the 'real' thing. Some children felt they were performing rather than sharing their real life. They were asking for instructions from the adults hovering around the filming, rather than doing what they could do already. Some suddenly felt too shy to even take part. Thanks to the professional media team who could handle the situation skillfully and sensitively, the outcome was as good as it can be in these circumstances. The video is available and can be seen online (Play Agents 2019)

This case raises the following questions: How can ethical boards consider in a more unfolding and flexible manner child participants' wish for going public? How can they ensure that all children's rights are upheld at the same time, thus the right to protection does not overrule their rights for voice? How can control over data be exercised in line with ethical boards' mandate when

data is released to the public, thus it is no longer under control? What risks does going public with the participants present for the research institution and researcher?

In the next story, the photos produced as part of an ethnographic research were so worthy of attention that the participants wanted to present them to a wider audience. Although this was not part of the original research plan, the researcher saw this as an opportunity to engage with the public as she thought the photos were explicit in telling about the results of the study in the way she wanted them to be heard (and seen) by the wider (non-academic) public. However, not all the public saw the photos in the expected way, which caused potential unwanted consequences for the participants' position in their respective communities.

Case three: The expected and unexpected consequences of going public

The third case explored young asylum seekers' and refugees' social networks and relationships in Finland, namely friendships, peer relationships and social support networks (e.g. Korkiamäki and Gilligan 2020). 32 recently arrived unaccompanied and separated asylum seeking and refugee boys and girls, ages 13-18, participated in the study. Among other activities, the participants were asked to take photos under the themes of friends and friendship, or choose photos they had taken earlier that represented this theme. The photos were used to elicit discussion about the meaning and practices of friendship and the advantages and complexities around peer relationships in their new country of residence. 12 boys and 4 girls decided to take part in this research activity.

After presenting the photos to the researcher, some of the participants wanted to know what happens next. They had put large efforts into taking beautiful and thoughtful photos, some of them were 'artistic' and some 'profound' in their views. Hence, they were disappointed if the researcher would be the only audience for their photos. The unplanned idea of constructing a photo exhibition of the participants' photos then emerged. This was not a planned activity of this ethnography and therefore was not included in the ethical pre-review. Despite this, the idea of putting up the exhibition was supported by the researcher as she thought this would be an advantageous way to interact with the community and present the migrant young people as 'ordinary' youths, similar to any (native-born Finnish) boys or girls of their school, neighbourhood and town. During the research, it had become clear that this was the way the young people saw themselves and wanted to be perceived by other people (Korkiamäki and Gilligan 2020). In the uninformed and sceptical climate of the surrounding society, the researcher saw this as an opportunity to present the young migrants in a positive light and in a way that they hoped to be recognised in their new surroundings.

The young people and the researcher worked long hours on the photos, choosing the right ones for the exhibition, editing them, thematizing them under the themes of various aspects of friendship (e.g. 'Friends near and far', 'Different friends', 'Being and doing with friends') working on finding suitable captions to explain the chosen photos. The photo exhibition "YSTÄVYYS - FRIENDSHIP - صداقة - дружба - دوستی - มิตรภาพ" opened first in the participants' school, and was then taken into the university to where the researcher invited the same aged class groups from different schools to see the exhibition. Finally, the exhibition was held at the municipal library open for a variety of audience to see. These public exhibitions were suggested by the researcher and agreed on by the youth. Feedback on the thoughts and impressions about the exhibition were asked from the audiences by inviting them to write their thoughts on an open-ended questionnaire. In this way,

the 'afterlife' (Fassin 2015) of the initial ethnography grew into a 'continuation' of the study which, again, was not included in the initial evaluation done by the ethical board.

The ethical pre-review of the study, naturally, emphasized the protection of the participants through anonymity. In her ethical consideration the researcher had contemplated how the privacy of the youth will be protected throughout the ethnography, including dissemination in its traditional form, namely research publications and other written texts. As the idea of the photo exhibition emerged, she thought that the same methods of using pseudonyms and covering the faces and other identifiers in the photos would guarantee an ethical procedure. What she had not thought about was that some of the participants decidedly wanted to perform in the exhibition with their own names and faces. They were proud of their work and wanted to gain recognition for their photos. They also expressed their concern on the benefit of the exhibition if anonymity is employed and they asked: How will the other people in their respective communities be more tolerant towards them if no one knows who they are?

As the researcher thought the participants were growing confidence and self-esteem through their photos (which they felt were lacking in most other dimensions of their life in Finland), she found it to have been unethical not to let them be 'photo artists' with their own names. In consequence, some of the photos showed some of the participants' faces, and the participants' names were presented among the creators of the exhibition. However, also few other migrant children, who did not participate in the research study, took part in constructing the exhibition. Therefore, it was possible to state that, while the exhibition was linked to the research study, the creators of the photo exhibition were not the exact young people involved in the study. This eliminated the potential risk of the study participants to be identified in research publications of the ethnography while allowing them to get credit for their work and, potentially, be recognised through broader views - beyond vulnerability - in their respective communities.

This case tells how an unplanned creation of a photography exhibition, initiated by the participants, turned the ethnography into activism aiming at the public. The public engagement following the ethnography allowed young people to perform according to their competencies and potentially to be seen not only as asylum seekers and refugees but as 'ordinary' young people, which was partly the motivation of the youth and also an important result of the ethnography. However, while the young people had a clear agenda on how they wanted to represent their identities to certain audiences, the publics were many and unexpected, and the reception of the exhibition was multifarious. While the public of their same age Finnish peers saw them 'just like us', the publics of adults who visited the exhibition interpreted the photos through the risk discourse, hence reinstating the 'artists' vulnerable position. Therefore, while the ethical issue of non-anonymity was solved, a host of new ethical concerns were raised. The biggest ethical concern had to do with the potential harm: reproducing the image of migrant children and young people exclusively as vulnerable and in risk. Paradoxically, talking back to this image was the main aim for creating the exhibition in the first place.

This study raises questions particularly on balancing between ethical risk and ethical 'profit'. Following the basic ethical principle of giving voice to people in vulnerable positions may mean 'risky' ways of meeting publics. While research ethical guidelines provide practical 'tools' of protecting young participants' privacy, they do not offer means to influence the 'afterlife' of the research. The question is: Should we protect our participants from all potential harm and, in the course of doing that, potentially loose possibilities of making a change in their lives? How can we resolve the disappointment of the participants if we decide to 'play it safe'? And, is someone

responsible for the 'afterlife' of the study: the researcher, the Ethical board, or the participants who decided to go public?

Ethical boards and the participatory ethos: points for discussion

The three case studies explored in this chapter also exemplifies, as Fassin (2017) explains, how including research participants in dissemination creates publics not present in researchers' initial plans. Publics come into view through participants' expertise and desires to affect change. These publics could be professional groups, committees, same age children or youth, or respective policymakers, and these may well be the publics that are most important to address when pursuing social or political change. As Fassin (2017) argues, public ethnography presents risks to the ethnographer, such as being attacked or losing legitimacy or scientific authority, or for the organisation and all who are involved by losing control over data during the popularization. However, it seems from our case studies that when the desires for change moves participants to act, the ethos of participatory work aids in mitigating these risks, or the foreseen change makes risk-taking worthwhile. Furthermore, participants usually know the most effective ways of speaking to their imagined publics, whether through the voice of a researcher in a conference presentation, Youtube videos, or presenting photos of themselves. Sympathetic audiences are aroused by the experience of shared understanding, which cannot be built from an outsiders' view (Healy and Fitzgibbon 2020).

However, the groups and individuals participating in our studies are sometimes silenced by controlling actors, structures and systems. As highlighted by Mitchell (et al. 2017), this means a failure to facilitate meaningful engagement between participants and the public, and raises vital questions for ethical boards. Ethnography often comes with unexpected elements that ethical boards cannot foresee and therefore control. For example, and as our cases demonstrate, as the research unfolds, researchers and participants can gain an understanding of the potentials that the research can carry in order to initiate change in society. Participants might wish to live with these opportunities and decide about the ways in which their views are most effectively portrayed to their identified publics. What also can be seen from the examples, however, is that changing society does not always work out, because the translation to the public and the reception of the message cannot be controlled. Emancipatory ideas can in practice be turned to something else, or being used for further control. Depending on the nature and participants of the ethnographies, arising desires for change can produce ethical dilemmas which have to be flexibly deliberated and treated as they emerge. Should these considerations involve ethical boards and at what phase of the research? Could researchers and participants be trusted to work through these dilemmas and carry the risks and consequences themselves? How could consequences be evaluated for organisations to which researchers and participants belong in ways that still protect and give rights to participants?

We have demonstrated that guidelines produced by institutional ethical boards produced at the onset of projects are too rigid to address the complex situations when participants decide to 'go public'. This applies to participatory research in general and brings controversies in the production and reception of dissemination efforts. A further complication is when participants themselves choose their publics, initially not considered by ethical boards. The risks inherent in these public dissemination events that emerged at the later stages of research are almost impossible to identify, measure or mitigate as part of the pre-research ethical assessment. Should this mean that research projects must not adjust and develop their communication plan as opportunities arise? How can ethical boards respond to these unfolding events with a view of keeping participants' and organisations' protection and rights to voice in balance? Is it possible to

imagine ethical boards' work as ongoing producing flexible or continuously adapting ethical guidelines?

While there is not and should not be a comprehensive answer to these dilemmas, we hope that the experiences from our studies provide 'food for thought' and encourage researchers and ethical boards for discussions that consider institutions and participants' protection with a view of maintaining their agencies and rights. We suggest that instead of inflexible or absolute ethical rules, ethical boards endorse 'situational ethics' to be practiced by researchers, which could recognise many unforeseeable factors unique to each research set up. Principles for situational ethics would ensure the quality of ethics in action, since "what is morally right or wrong will depend on the circumstances and may vary from one situation to the next" (Prins 2006, p. 196). Fletcher's (1966, in Prins 2006, p. 197) "unifying ethical principle of love with scholarly integrity and social justice" drawing on "the moral guidelines the human rights articles" offer could help to weigh decisions in 'grey zones'. Ethical boards requiring situational ethics, we hope, will help ethnography going public, safeguard the research, researcher and organisations' integrity, and potentially effect change as imagined and desired by participants.

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