

Capstone
Ethical Leadership Reflection
Dikran Melkonian
Oct 4th, 2021

The 21st century challenges for the law enforcement community will continue to be tested. The legal and ethical concerns over public safety initiatives versus privacy rights of its citizens have taken front stage. Public safety leaders have access to new technologies that can significantly improve surveillance, assist in identifying persons of interest, and possibly reduce crimes in affected areas.

Body worn cameras have been issued to many of our police departments around the nation and has been a common tool for many officers. My first paper, Super Body Worn Cameras, examines this new technology and its implications in our society. The ability to view critical incidents, and to have the first-person perception of the officer faced with life-threatening situations, forced to make a quick decision, while adhering to the departmental policy and legality of his actions, has been a tremendous asset to all involved. Moreover, the use of facial recognition in some our communities have sparked questions of biased policing and invasion of privacy issues. This paper identifies these areas of concern using the 4th amendment and relevant case law in determining the extent of the state's intrusion to privacy rights issues. The ethical concerns of a person being recorded in a public setting can cause privacy rights concerns. However, public safety outweighs these privacy concerns in public settings, here the right to privacy is not guaranteed or expected.

The topic of Biometrics and surveillance is continued with my second paper, 21st Century Surveillance Technology. The technological advancement in modern day policing, including biometrics such as facial recognition, safe-street lights, license plate readers, gun shot detectors, officer's body-worn cameras and drones, will challenge the fragile line between advancing our communities public safety and infringing the

constitutional protections of our citizen's individual privacy rights. Privacy and ethical standards on the use of these technologies are discussed, including relevant case law. The community engagement aspect is also presented, as the community needs to be aware of the potential use of these technologically intrusive tools in their community. In conclusion, the paper reflects on the premise that constitutionally protected privacy rights of the members of our community shouldn't be jeopardized by advancement of Biometric technology in public safety.

The third paper is the Report to the Community. In this piece the six pillars of building trust within the community are discussed and assessed. "Law enforcement culture should embrace a guardian—rather than a warrior—mindset to build trust and legitimacy both within agencies and with the public" (Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing). These pillars are essential for proper training, accountability, communication, and crime reduction goals. The methods used to achieve these goals are discussed and a path to their successful resolution are outlined.

The fourth paper discusses the ethical dilemma between releasing personal records of individual officers. The releasing of police officers' records and privacy rights have been revolutionized, and since January of 2019, the California Public Records Act (CPRA) has significantly changed the landscape of previously held confidential and sensitive police materials. The statutory scheme thus carefully balances two directly conflicting interests: the peace officer's just claim to confidentiality, and the criminal defendant's equally compelling interest in all information pertinent to his defense.

As a leader in law enforcement, I've discovered through my experiences and these modules that proper collaboration and engagement with the community is essential in order to introduce and utilize these new technologies. These leaps in biometric technology can provide significant improvement in identifying perpetrators as well as curtailing potential crimes. However, it would be just as irresponsible to close our eyes to this technology that can improve public safety, as it is to use it without the proper safeguards of protecting our communities trust and privacy rights.

Work Cited:

Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. US Department of Justice, May 2015.

Jordan, Jeff, and Erik Fritsvold. *5.1 Spotlight Expert Surveillance, Ethics & Technology Part I*. University of San Diego, 2010

"PERF Public Disclosure of Officer Disciplinary Records." Critical Issues July 28, Police Executive Research Forum, 28 July 2020