

6.13: Current Issues - Body Cameras

An overwhelming number of police officers welcome body cameras, just like citizens. The reason being is the high number of citizen complaints received which center around a citizen exaggerating or lying in order to try and get out of an expensive traffic related citation. ‘The officer yelled at me and made me feel stupid and used profanity.’ Is an example of a citizen complaint often reported to a supervisor. Body camera footage of the incident more than often shows the exact opposite. The truth often is that the citizen did run the red light or failed to stop at the stop sign and did not want to accept responsibility and pay the fine. Body cameras changed the environment of citizen complaints; however, body cameras also ensure that grass-eaters do not partake in temptation. Moreover, those meat-eaters are held accountable for excessive use of force or illegal actions.

Body cameras would seem to be the panacea for all police misconduct, the truth of the matter is not so concrete. First, body cameras only show one point of view. Until small drones can hover above the officer showing a 360-degree view, the accurate recollection of an event can never be indeed known. Second, no matter how full-proof department policies and procedures regulate the use of body cameras, there will always be a user that can turn off the camera in certain situations. Body cameras are one answer in a giant puzzle to hamper and stop police misconduct. As technology improves, so hopefully will view the body cameras record.

Police Body Cameras: What Do You See Exercise

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/04/01/us/police-bodycam-video.html>

“People are expecting more of body cameras than the technology will deliver,” Professor Stoughton said. “They expect it to be a broad solution for the problem of police-community relations, when in fact it’s just a tool, and like any tool, there’s limited value to what it can do.” You will have a 500-word response to the questions below.

- First, go to the above link and complete the activity. Be as honest with yourself as possible.
- Second, after the videos and this experiment, has your view of policing and the role of video changed? Do you think body cameras are worth the expense or could we do without? What are the pros and cons?

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