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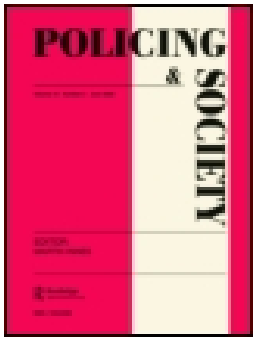


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# Police officers as filmmakers: the cinematography of body worn cameras

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## ABSTRACT

The impact of body worn cameras on policing will depend on multiple factors such as effective training, and high-quality technological design. Among these factors, we argue, are police officer's understanding and operation of body worn cameras. Operation involves user decisions about when to activate a body worn camera and where to direct its lens. With that in mind, we propose that police officers, especially when ineffectively regulated by policy, can be theoretically understood as filmmakers who determine the footage body worn cameras produce and the stories the technology can tell. In support of our reconceptualization of police officers as filmmakers, we highlight two cinematographic decisions officers make as part of routine police work: the cutting decision and the camera-angle decision.

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## KEYWORDS

Body worn cameras; police; accountability; filmmaking; cinematography

## Introduction

In their efforts to theoretically conceptualise the police, scholars have referred to officers as keepers of the peace, maintainers of order, agents of crime control, distributors of knowledge, as well as agents of oppression (Reiner 2010). This paper adds to the list by conceptualising the officer as a filmmaker who uses audio-video technologies to tell stories of police work. Researchers have conceptualised various professions using the storyteller analogy. Physicians, executives, economists, and lawyers have all been conceptualised as such (Strassman & Polanyi, 1995, Reid, 1997, Dennehy, 1999, Verghese, 2001). We argue police officers can be conceptualised similarly considering the adoption of body worn cameras. That body worn camera is, we argue, a storytelling device which films and represents police work to a massive viewing audience including fellow officers, members of oversight bodies, the general public, and others. The notion of a police filmmaker may seem strange, but when we consider the prominent role officers play in deciding when and from angle body worn cameras record, the analogy becomes more plausible. The goal of this paper is to justify this analogy and recognise its utility as the camera-equipped police officer becomes the norm.

Body worn cameras document police work from a point of view perspective. This provides officers with a means of visually recounting interactions with public. As opposed to listening to a dull and legally approved report from a media trained police chief, body worn camera footage allows audiences to see and hear the realities of front-line police work. The camera, however, is not an objective or neutral technology. What officers record, from what angle, for how long, and with what narration influence the stories body worn cameras tell. Because these cinematographic decisions are largely in the hands of the user of technology, we argue the camera-equipped police officer should be

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understood as a filmmaker. The filmmaking police officer can influence what their camera records and, therefore, how the captured footage represents police work (Gray, Figueroa-Sarriera, and Mentor 1995, Gray 2000, Bijker 1997, 2010, Bijker, Hughes, and Pinch 2012).

To nuance our argument, we acknowledge that multiple factors determine how a body worn camera is used and what footage it produces. Many of these factors are out of an officer's control, such as the lighting or environment in which police work is filmed. We also acknowledge that decisions about how body worn cameras are used are not necessarily determined by considerations related to filming. Officers may record from a certain distance because of a concern for their safety rather than a conscious effort to record a particular element of police work. We nonetheless suggest officers have a high degree of influence over how the body worn camera is used and, therefore, the footage it produces. This influence is largely determined by an officer's discretion over when to activate the body worn camera, as well as choice about how to stand and how to move while it records (Coudert *et al.*, 2015, Boivin *et al.*, 2021, Miranda, 2021). Regardless of the degree of control an officer has over what is recorded, or whether or not they are immediately focused on recording a particular element of police work, we conclude that the police officer remains a filmmaker. As Miranda (2021) argues, the body worn camera is constantly 'on the move' and both intentional and unintentional moves must be considered when examining the captured footage. Decisions related to movement and activation lead Sualneir, Bagg, and Thompson to conclude that the design of body worn camera programs require considerations of not only technological capabilities and training, but the user's decisions about how to operate the technology (Saulnier *et al.*, 2021 ). The latter decisions are the focus of this paper.

## The body worn camera

Body worn cameras are usually the size and shape of a smartphone and attached to an officer's chest, though some cameras can be clipped to armbands, sunglasses, and helmets. Officers can use the camera for a variety of tasks including capturing visual evidence of crimes and documenting interactions with citizens. Many, though not all, body worn cameras are technologically up-scale. For example, the Axon Body 3 features a fisheye lens providing 130 degrees of vision, retina high-definition video (1080P), 64 gigabytes of storage, and Wi-Fi capabilities. Body worn cameras are also capable of live streaming, which allows third parties to monitor police work from a distance in real time. Though not fully implemented, further advancements to the technology include biometric and facial recognition software such as CameraFace, which enables in-field tagging and automatic identification (Almadan *et al.* 2020, Hood 2020).

Despite advancements in body worn camera technology, concerns remain about their accuracy and practicality. Common concerns include whether footage can be used for accurate evidence collection; how to manage expenses related to the storage of high-quality video; whether to grant public access to the footage; and how to redact footage to protect the privacy of offenders, victims, and anyone else who might be recorded (Simmons 2014, Bud 2016, Lippert and Newell 2016, Lawrence *et al.* 2019, Tregle, Nix, and Pickett 2020). Despite these concerns, officers, detainees, and arrestees tend to support the technology (Gaub *et al.* 2016, Taylor *et al.* 2017, M.D. White *et al.* 2018, Lee *et al.* 2019). This support likely reflects an assumption that body worn cameras will create visual opportunities to document as well as assess police work, potentially exposing misconduct, and subjecting officers to repercussions for abusing their power (Ariel *et al.* 2017a, 2017b, Braga *et al.* 2018).

Many advocates add that the body worn camera will reduce unnecessary use of force. Several randomised control studies have compared use of force rates among officers equipped with body worn cameras with control groups. Some studies show a reduction in use of force incidents (Ariel *et al.* 2015, Braga *et al.* 2018, Groff *et al.* 2019). One study found use of force rates decreased by 38% among officers using body worn cameras (Groff *et al.* 2019). Other studies, however, have shown no relationship between the implementation of body worn cameras and reduced use of force

incidents (Ariel *et al.* 2017a, Yokum *et al.* 2017, Peterson *et al.* 2018). Meta studies have found that while the use of body worn cameras can result in a small reduction in use of force rates, such results vary radically across contexts and are not consistently realised (Lum *et al.* 2019, Lum *et al.* 2020). Reductions in use of force are most likely to occur when police agencies establish policies restricting police discretion over camera use. In other words, body worn cameras will be most effective in reducing use of force when an officer cannot use their discretion to turn cameras on or off at their will (Ariel 2016, Boivin *et al.* 2021).

Despite mixed results, scholars continue to theorise that body worn cameras may cause significant changes in police behaviour. Some argue that body worn cameras will have a 'deterrent effect' by encouraging officers to reconsider decisions, including the decision to use of force (Ariel *et al.* 2015). Others argue officers may reconsider proactive police work because of concerns about being recorded and criticised (Nix and Wolfe 2016, Maguire *et al.* 2017, Wallace *et al.* 2018). Both theories about the impact of body worn cameras on police behaviour are compelling, but one implies the technology can improve police work by discouraging excessive use of force, while the other suggests the technology can discourage effective police work by creating 'camera-induced passivity' among apprehensive police officers (Mac Donald 2017, Wallace *et al.* 2018).

The inconsistency and confusion surrounding body worn cameras may be a function of unreliable and under appreciated variables that influence body worn camera use and implementation. These variables include differences in the legal contexts; effective training policies; and whether body worn cameras are implemented by police organisations with clear strategic goals (Alpert and McLean 2018, Gaub *et al.* 2020). This paper adds to the list of variables that determine what body worn cameras do by examining how police officers decide to use the technology. Officer decisions include when body worn cameras are activated, how officers move while wearing a camera, as well as where the camera is pointed.

It must be noted that advancements in body worn cameras can reduce police discretion over how the technology is used. For example, body worn cameras can be automatically activated when officers remove their gun from its holster (Suss *et al.*, 2018). Nonetheless, police discretion continues to play a central role in the production of footage through user decisions. Even footage produced through automatically activated body worn cameras are influenced by an officers' discretionary decisions about when to pull their gun from their holster, when to deactivate their body camera (perhaps by returning their gun to holster), as well as decisions about how to stand and where to aim their camera's lens. These user decisions, or what we call 'filmmaking decisions,' are the focus of our argument. We build on larger social constructionist theories of technology that emphasises the importance of personal, cultural, and social structural factors in determining how a technology operates.

## A technosocial view of body worn cameras

According to the technodeterministic framework, a technology is assumed to develop independently from social variables and when implemented, that technology is assumed to directly change social processes (Bijker 2010). This framework separates the technological and the social and then overestimates the degree to which the former influences the latter. In his criticism of technodeterministic frameworks, Wiebe Bijker reminds that 'society is not determined by technology, nor is technology determined by society. Both emerge as two sides of the sociotechnical coin' (Bijker and Law 1992, Bijker 1997). Together with Trevor Pinch, Bijker was among the most influential critics of technodeterminism and a leader in the development of a social constructionist study of technology (Pinch and Bijker 1984). The resulting technosocial approach contends that the meaning and impact of a technological artefact is not solely a function of its design or capabilities, but a function of social processes that determine how that technology is understood and used. More precisely, a technological artefact cannot be understood without an in-depth consideration of how the technology is embedded within a web of social, economic, and political conditions that determine its relationship with human behaviour (Hughes 1986, Bijker *et al.* 2009).

Although scholars criticise technosocial approaches for adopting a narrow historical approach (Winner 1993, Clayton 2002), the approach has nonetheless reshaped common understandings of technology. Technosocial approaches remind us that the impact of a technology cannot be understood without considering the social factors guiding its development and use (Pinch and Bijker 1984). Of particular importance in our technosocial analysis of body worn cameras is the role of the user who makes discretionary decisions about how a technology is operated.

Building on a similar premise, technological frames theory (Orlikowski 1992, Orlikowski and Gash 1994) proposes that users make sense of a technology through fluid frames which are made up of assumptions, expectations, and knowledges about the technology (E.J. Davidson 2002, E. Davidson 2006). Many qualitative studies of policing have highlighted the importance of the police officer's technological frame on the use of technology (Chan, 2001, Manning, 2008, Sandhu & Fussey, 2020). For example, despite the hype surrounding predictive policing, police officers may be reluctant to adopt said technologies due to frames that understand predicting policing as ineffective and biased (Sandhu and Fussey 2020). The impact of technologies will, therefore, depend not only on technological design and police policy, but on the decisions of so-called 'front line' officers who determine if and how the technology will be used (Manning 2008, Koslicki 2019, J.B. Chan 2001).

Drawing on the technosocial approach, to understand the body worn camera's impact on police work, we must understand how frontline officers frame the cameras and make decisions determining how the technology is used. Such decisions include when and how the camera is activated and where its lens is aimed. We acknowledge that camera use will be regulated by policies and training that attempt to manage police decisions about when a camera is activated or deactivated (Saulnier, Bagg, and Thompson 2021, M.D. White, Flippin, and Malm 2019). These policies will likely reflect research examining how procedures can and should limit police discretion over the camera (Lum *et al.* 2020). Accordingly, many policies in North America recommend that officers activate body worn cameras as soon as reasonably possible during law enforcement interactions. Many also guide camera use by encouraging officers to narrate their recordings by announcing where they are, what they are doing, as well as vocalising non-visible observations such as the smell of alcohol (Saulnier, Bagg, and Thompson 2021). Policies can further instruct officers as to when body worn cameras should be deactivated to respect privacy rights and avoid recording inappropriate content in locations such as bathrooms. Such policies seem to adopt recommendations made by civil liberties groups such as the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada<sup>1</sup> and the American Civil Liberties Union.<sup>2</sup>

Despite efforts to regulate the use of body worn cameras and limit officers' filmmaking decisions, many policies in the United States and Canada nonetheless allow officers some discretion over how the cameras are used. Consider discretionary decisions officers make about the body worn camera's usage when considering a victim's privacy, or maintaining the security of tactical discussion, or when speaking to a witness who is more likely to speak while off-camera (M.D. White, Flippin, and Malm 2019, Saulnier, Bagg, and Thompson 2021). This discretion expands when we consider the larger influence police officers have over how interactions with citizens are labelled and, therefore, whether they are deemed worthy of camera activation (Ericson 1981). For example, officers can determine if interactions are labelled as law enforcement interactions and, thus, whether a body worn camera should be turned on. Further, officers will have ultimate control over micro decisions such as precise moment at which the record button is pressed and the exact position in which they stand while recording will sufficiently influence what footage is created. While these may seem like minor decisions, we argue that when understanding police officers as filmmakers, we can recognise the impact these cinematographic decisions have over what is recorded and, thus, what stories body worn cameras can tell.

### **Police cinematography: how police officers make films**

Cinematography colloquially refers to the 'shooting' of a film. While accessible and intuitive, this definition lacks precision and neglects the level of influence a cinematographer has over a film's

narrative. The cinematographer not only ‘shoots’ footage but uses a variety of techniques to alter what is captured on camera, including framing and composition, angle, movement, and the duration of the shot (Mascelli, 1965). Consequently, the cinematographer plays a vital role in crafting how a story will be visually told to audiences (B. Brown, 2016). The overlap between cinematography and direction highlights how prominent a position the cinematographer holds. In most filmmaking contexts, the cinematographer works in direct collaboration with a director to determine what is shot to create a particular narrative. Given the central role of the cinematographer in the creation of narratives, directors also have a long history of acting as their own Directors of Photography (DPs). Among independent filmmakers, the role of director and cinematographer often blur together.

Although the complexities of the cinematographer’s role on a film set are unique, we propose that a similar role is adopted by the camera-equipped police officer. Like the cinematographer, the camera-equipped officer is a ‘shooter,’ making a movie by recording interactions with citizens and a ‘cinematographer’ making decisions about framing and composition, angle, movement, and duration of a shot. We acknowledge that these decisions are not pre-planned as they would be by a cinematographer in Hollywood. In many cases, police officers press the record button on their body worn camera and give the footage they are recording little consideration while they complete other duties. Further, a police officer’s filmmaking decisions are not motivated by the goal of making an entertaining and profitable product as would be the case in Hollywood. Thus the police officer cannot impose a particular narrative on the subjects in frame in the same way that the professional cinematographer can. We do not, therefore, suggest that a police officer is equivalent to the cinematographer on a movie set, guided by a director and a movie script. The officer’s ability to determine what is seen by the camera, however, suggests that they are in a cinematographic position with the power to influence what stories can be told using body worn camera footage. The police officer’s cinematography is most like the Dogme 95 filmmakers of the late 1990s who produced images on location without special lighting or optical work. Officers produce scenes free from geographical alienation, much like the single camera documentary filmmaker Antoine de Maximy, who naturalistically filmed his encounters with strangers. Also, like Maximy, officers make their filmmaking decisions during encounters with the public.

Filmmaking decisions place the officer in a powerful position as their decisions—whether planned or not—influence what footage will be produced. Should an officer deactivate or cut early, they may fail to record the tense interaction between two drunken bar-goers that preceded a violent assault. Their decision would, therefore, prevent their body worn camera from creating contextualising information about any crimes committed by those hypothetical bar-goers. Similarly, should they place their camera at a certain angle, they may fail to record the exact location at which they apply a charge from their taser on those drunk bar-goers. This choice would prevent their body worn camera from creating key information about whether their use-of-force was reasonable.

Factors such as the quality of lighting in which an officer is recording will undoubtedly impact the footage their cameras produce. Police officers, unlike Hollywood cinematographers, cannot control these decisions by hiring a gaffer or lighting technician. The filmmaker is also guided by artistic goals. By contrast, the officer may produce a film with little consideration of its artistic qualities. The officer instead focuses on goals such as completing a breathalyser test or safely returning a victim to their feet. Still, the officers’ choices directly impact the visual narrative, that is, the stories that emerge from their captured footage. Thus, the filmmaking analogy applies and can help recognise the user-decisions that are key to understanding how body worn cameras are used and what footage they create. We offer two examples of specific cinematographic decisions camera-equipped officers regularly make.

### **The police officer’s cinematographic decisions**

Instead of *replicating* reality, film footage *represents* reality, even in more naturalistic settings as is captured in the filming of a documentary film. Although we may imagine this representation of



reality as a form of truth-telling, film footage is inevitably produced through various manipulations (Deren 1960). These manipulations include choices of camera, lens, lighting, and colour schemes. Photographic techniques also play a role, such as camera placement and movement (B. Brown 2016). For example, a filmmaker may use bright lighting and direct angles to create clarity and, in another scene, use dark lighting and indirect angles to create confusion. A recognition of cinematographic techniques prefaces our argument that contemporary police work is not passively conducted 'on film' (Goldsmith 2010, Sandhu and Haggerty 2017). Rather, officers make cinematographic decisions to *create* the footage their body worn cameras record and *represent* reality in a particular way. Footage produced by body worn cameras are not determined solely by the technological quality of the camera's lens and battery power, but by the camera-equipped officer who makes filmmaking decisions about how to use their Axon Body in the same way a cinematographer decides to use their Panavision Panaflex Platinum.

To illustrate the cinematographic qualities of contemporary police work, we examine the relationship between cinematography on the filmset and the cinematography on patrol. Joseph V Mascelli (1965) categorises some of the core elements of cinematography in *The Five Cs of Cinematography*. These categories include *camera angles*, continuity, *cutting*, close-ups, and composition. Each of the Five Cs are as relevant to the camera-equipped police officer as they are to a Hollywood filmmaker. In the same way that a Hollywood cinematographer makes decisions regarding close-ups to serve a story, police officers make decisions about close-ups influencing what is discernible and salient in their footage. These choices can impact whether a dealer's drugs appear clearly or whether a violent offender's weapon appears clearly, as just two examples.

We highlight two filmmaking decisions to illustrate the cinematographic qualities of contemporary police work. Drawing on Mascelli's *Five Cs of Cinematography*, we refer to the first as 'cutting decisions' and the second as the 'camera-angle decisions.' These categories do not exhaust all filmmaking choices available to officers, but they are among the more deliberate and impactful cinematographic decisions officers make. Our intention is to initiate and/or contribute to an emerging discussion of the relationship between activation compliance, police movement, and the operationalisation of body worn cameras (Bryan, 2020, White & Malm, 2020, Miranda, 2021, Boivin *et al.*, 2022).

### **Cutting decisions**

Cutting decisions refer to choices about when to start and stop recording. Evidence of police discretion over cutting decisions is found in studies showing body worn cameras sometimes remain inactive during police-citizen interactions despite policy and training suggesting that they should be turned on. What is commonly known as 'activation compliance' can reach below 50% according to some studies (Gaub *et al.* 2016, Hedberg, Katz, and Choate 2017, Huff, Katz, and Hedberg 2020, M.D. Headley, Guerette, and Shariati 2017, White and Malm 2020). Low compliance may be the result of officers forgetting to activate because of the novelty of body worn cameras, especially among those who have limited experience using the technology. However, does not always improve over time and, in some cases, may even decline (Lawrence *et al.* 2019, Boivin, Poirier, and D'Elia 2021). For example, compliance can start as high as 85% but then decline to 50% or lower (Katz *et al.* 2014, Headley, Guerette, and Shariati 2017). While researchers have many explanations for this decline, including a lack of opportunities to activate, the discretionary cutting decision is a likely factor. Notably, compliance varies significantly between officers, ranging from 0-100% in some studies (Boivin, Poirier, and D'Elia 2021) and 0-75% in other studies (Lawrence *et al.* 2019). Research on activation compliance demonstrate police officers have immediate influence over when body worn cameras are turned on through cutting decisions which are not effectively managed by policy or technology. Thus, though activating a camera is influenced by technological factors such as battery life, we argue technosocial variables including police discretion also play a major role (M.D. Ariel 2016, White and Malm 2020).



One way to understand an officer's cutting choices is to examine the technological frames they adopt when activating and deactivating a camera. Some officers, for example, associate body worn cameras with external pressures to maintain a 'by the book' appearance (Adams and Mastracci 2019). Consequently, officers may understand body worn cameras as technologies of scrutiny and, as a result, leave cameras inactive despite policy and training encouraging their activation (Simmons 2014, Newell and Greidanus 2017). Until these frames change, officers may use their discretion over cutting decisions to maintain a low activation compliance rate.

### ***Camera-angle decisions***

Police officers make choices about how a camera is moved and angled to create a particular narrative. On film sets, cinematographers prearrange movements and angles by blocking out scenes and pre-arranging camera movement to create footage. Although officers do not block out scenes, they do position their cameras relative to available space and situational context. Consider an officer's distance from a subject wielding a knife. The officer's choices about movement relative to their subject, and regardless of primary motivation, will immediately impact whether the knife is seen and, thus, the visual narrative that is created (Houwing and Ritsema van Eck 2020, Miranda, 2021). As with their decision to 'cut,' their decisions about movement reflect the filmmaking qualities of contemporary police work. Technosocial factors such as an officer's posture, gait, and even attitude towards the subject can impact their movement and resulting footage (McKay and Lee 2019, Miranda, 2021, M.D. White and Malm 2020, M. White and Coldren 2017).

Officers may purposefully or accidentally undermine a clear line of sight when conducting police work. If officers frame body worn cameras as technologies of anxiety and unfairness (Adams and Mastracci 2019), they may refuse to aim their cameras in the appropriate direction. For example, when using force, officers may adopt a 'bladed' stance instead of working 'chest first,' which will potentially undermine the quality of information available in the footage. We are not suggesting that an officer will always and purposefully aim away from arrests, for example, to avoid accusations of misconduct. Rather, we suggest officers have some influence over the composition of body worn camera footage. Even relatively small decisions can significantly influence how audiences understand captured footage (Deren 1960). For example, an arresting officer may record an offender's rapid and aggressive arm movements to visually justify their use of force. As with cutting decisions, these camera-angle decisions will significantly influence what stories body worn cameras tell and, as a result, how said interactions are understood by audiences which will likely include oversight bodies assessing police work.

### **Conclusion: the cinematography of police work**

The discretionary nature of police work includes decisions about when to engage with a citizen, when to issue a warning rather than a citation, and when and how to use force. These decisions are subject to controls such as training and policy, but officer discretion remains a key influence over decisions including arrest and use of force (Bronitt and Stenning 2011, M.K. Brown 1981). We must attend to these discretionary elements with respect to body worn cameras as well. Understanding officers as filmmakers can help us reimagine how body worn cameras are used to tell the story of policing. Through a filmmaking lens, seemingly small decisions, such as where and how an officer stands become significant. These decisions are determined by technological frames, many of which reflect officers' worries about excessive external scrutiny. Officers may selectively activate their cameras to de-prioritise a clear line-of-sight, undermining the efficacy of body worn cameras as tools of accountability. Alternatively, officers may selectively activate their cameras to prioritise a clear line-of-sight, emphasising the efficacy of body worn cameras as tools of justification. The messy relationship between police discretion and body worn cameras supports the need for a theoretical reconceptualization of the officer. Although organisational policies and training models may

guide camera use, we should also recognise opportunities for ‘innofusion’ as camera-equipped officers make tiny and exact decisions about how to use the technology (Sobreperez 2008). Accordingly, the ‘filmmaker’ becomes a compelling concept with which to understand the camera-equipped officer.

Cutting and camera-angle choices are only a couple of cinematographic decisions that police officers make when using their body worn cameras. Even if activation compliance improves and officers are trained to maintain a clear line of sight when recording, officers will retain some discretion regarding image-composition. For example, an officer will continue to make choices about how they position their bodies, determining what we see in a use of force incident. Too close, and the camera may be obstructed. Too far or from the wrong angle, and details about the use of force might be missed. As camera technologies advance, even more cinematographic choices are likely to emerge. For example, as officers are trained to narrate the viewing experience, they may influence how body worn camera footage is interpreted by audiences hearing what an officer describes. We conclude that we must factor in ‘front line’ filmmaking choices when examining the story of policing.

Officers’ filmmaking choices are not necessarily guided by consideration of the resulting footage. They may instead be guided by concerns for officer safety. How the body worn camera is used and what footage is captured may, therefore, be a side-effect of larger decisions about how an officer positions themselves to keep distance between themselves and a dangerous subject. Consequently, our work not only draws on technosocial theories but offers adjustments by acknowledging the more immediate factors influencing how a user operationalises their technology. The officer may intend to produce a particular representation of their work. Then again, an officer may not give the camera’s operation much thought as they complete larger duties related to crime control and peacekeeping. Still, officer discretion will impact what the technology can record, and, thus, it makes sense to continue to refer to these as technosocial qualities of the body worn camera.

As officers become more aware of their filmmaking choices, they may actively use body worn cameras to produce footage supportive of their personal and institutional legitimacy. For example, they may record from an angle that is most likely to emphasise a citizen’s resistance during an arrest (Koslicki 2019, McKay and Lee 2019, Houwing and Ritsema van Eck 2020). We do not, however, propose that body worn cameras are inherently deceptive technologies. By recognising the cinematographic qualities of police work, we only intend to show that officers have significant influence over what is recorded, bringing attention to the technosocial variables that determine the impact of the technology on police behaviour and accountability. We offer the concept of the police filmmaker to highlight the important role police discretion plays in body worn camera-based storytelling, an example of what Richard Ericson (1995) called ‘account ability.’ Future research should explore the technological frames police officers use to understand the body worn camera and how such frames influence cinematographic decisions. By understanding these frames we can determine how body worn cameras are used and the resulting impact body worn cameras may have on police behaviour and police accountability.

## Notes

1. See guidance for the use of body-worn cameras by law enforcement authorities: [https://www.priv.gc.ca/media/1984/gd\\_bwc\\_201502\\_e.pdf](https://www.priv.gc.ca/media/1984/gd_bwc_201502_e.pdf)
2. See a model act for regulating the use of wearable body cameras by law enforcement: <https://www.aclu.org/other/model-act-regulating-use-wearable-body-cameras-law-enforcement>

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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