

RETHINKING

LENS

POWER SWITCH

EVENT
BUTTON



BODY CAMERAS

**BODY CAMERAS DO
NOT GUARANTEE
ACCOUNTABILITY.**

**BODY CAMERAS DO
NOT GUARANTEE
TRANSPARENCY.**

**WE MUST ENSURE
THAT ANY TECHNOLOGY
MAKING THESE CLAIMS
DOES NOT END UP AS
ANOTHER WEAPON TO
BE USED AGAINST US.**

AXON BODY CAMERAS



AS OF LATE 2018, OVER HALF OF POLICE DEPARTMENTS HAD IMPLEMENTED A BODY-WORN CAMERA PROGRAM.

Axon, formerly called Taser, is the nation's leading body camera manufacturer with 85% of the market as of 2017.

Since their beginnings making stun guns, Axon has expanded their product line to include other weapons, cameras, and cloud data services tailored for the police and military.

Since the death of George Floyd on May 25th, Axon's stock price has risen 40%.

SOURCES:

["Axon", Wikipedia.org](#)

["Just How Common Are Body Cameras in Police Departments?", GovTech.com](#)

CAMERA OPERATION



WHEN TURNED ON, AN AXON BODY CAMERA IS ALWAYS RECORDING VIDEO BUT NOT NECESSARILY SAVING THAT VIDEO.

To save storage, the camera is constantly recording and deleting until an officer activates the camera by pressing the Event Button.

When activated, the camera goes back and grabs the last 30 seconds of video but not audio.

This means that relevant audio like conversations, gunshots and other spatial/non-visual information is not captured.

PERSPECTIVE



THE BODY CAMERA SEES THE WORLD THROUGH THE POLICE OFFICER'S EYES.

Audiences tend to empathize and favor with first-person video, a psychological phenomenon known as "camera perspective bias".

Additionally, many departments allow officers to review footage before giving testimony or writing reports. This gives them the ability to craft narratives that are supported by the available evidence.

These policies allow officers to retroactively justify unlawful actions such as illegal stops, searches, and use of force.

SOURCES:

"Police Body Cameras: What Do You See?", New York Times

"Body camera footage leads to lower judgments of intent than dash camera footage", Broderick L. Turner, Eugene M. Caruso, Mike A. Dilich, and Neal J. Roese

A 2018 STUDY FOUND THAT THERE WAS NO DECREASE IN USE OF FORCE INCIDENTS BY OFFICERS WEARING BODY CAMERAS.

A 2017 STUDY FOUND THAT 93% OF PROSECUTORS' OFFICES USED BODY CAMERA FOOTAGE TO HELP PROSECUTE CIVILIANS.

BODY CAMERAS WERE USED TO PROSECUTE POLICE JUST 8.3% OF THE TIME.

SOURCES:

"Research on Body Cameras: What We Know, What We Need to Know, by Cynthia Lum, Megan Stoltz, Christopher S. Koper, and J. Amber Scherer, Criminology & Public Policy

EVIDENCE.COM



Police departments store body camera footage on Evidence.com, Axon's cloud-based digital evidence storage site.

Files uploaded to Evidence.com contain metadata including location, date, and category of incident (as determined by the officer).

Officers may view, share, or redact files from within the program.

A single department can generate 100k+ hours of footage per year. Data storage alone can cost millions of dollars in addition to the cost of cameras and subscription services.

DEPARTMENTS STORE THIS PUBLIC VIDEO EVIDENCE ON PRIVATE SERVERS OPERATED BY MICROSOFT AND AXON.

SOURCES:

["Axon moves 20 PB of data, Evidence.com to Microsoft Azure", ZDNet.com](#)

MACHINE LEARNING



It is impossible for any department to manually process the massive amounts of footage body cameras capture.

Axon has unrolled machine learning software to automatically sort and process video evidence.

These services include algorithms for detecting faces, transcribing speech to text, and looking up license plate information, further building a surveillance infrastructure in over-policed communities.

THESE ALGORITHMS ARE SUBJECT TO THE SAME RACIAL BIASES AS THE HUMANS THAT DESIGN THEM AND THE POLICE THAT DEPLOY THEM.

THE FUTURE?



The criminal justice system functions as a means to target, surveil and manage minority groups that it deems a threat.

Disproportionate surveillance of minorities leads to higher incarceration, not higher rates of crime.

Technology that accelerates this process is not an acceptable solution.

The question should not be how to better use body cameras, but what does it say about the institution of policing that body cameras are needed in the first place?

TO ACHIEVE TRANSFORMATIVE JUSTICE IN AMERICA, WE MUST PRIORITIZE HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNITY-BASED SOLUTIONS.

WHAT TO DO NOW



If your local police department already has a body camera program in place, here are some things you can do:

RECORD your own video of interactions with police, taking proper measures to protect yourself and the identities of civilians who you film.

CONTACT your local officials and demand they support legislation banning the use of facial recognition by law enforcement.

REQUIRE police departments to commit to specific and well-defined procedures on camera operation, data retention, and public access to footage.

PROHIBIT officers from viewing footage before filing reports in cases involving use of force.

SUPPORT your local bail funds, transformative justice organizations, and mutual aid networks.