

Civic Minds

Date: Friday, October 7, 2016

Print Replica Date: Wednesday, October 5, 2016

Article Title: LAPD releases video showing suspect with gun before shooting

Section: Main, A5

Learning Objectives

- ✓ Students will discuss the use of police surveillance and videos as public evidence.
- ✓ Students will debate whether videos will help police departments with accountability and transparency in their officers.
- ✓ Students will talk about whether releasing videos will either create or undermine public trust.

CCSS Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1.b

Work with peers to promote civil, democratic discussions and decision-making, set clear goals and deadlines, and establish individual roles as needed.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1.d

Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

EALR 1 CIVICS

Understands and applies the key ideals of unity and diversity within the context of the community.

- Evaluates how a public issue is related to constitutional rights and the common good.
- Evaluates relationships between key ideals and historical and current realities.

Vocabulary

Look up the definition of **transparency**. Please write the definition and create a new sentence, using your own words.

But after days of protests and continuing demands for **transparency**, police leaders relented and released the video in the hope of reducing tensions and validating their accounts of what happened.

Comprehension Questions

1. Chiefs in Fresno, Calif.; Charlotte, N.C.; El Cajon, Calif., and other cities initially refused to make the recordings public. But after days of protests and continuing demands for transparency, police leaders relented and released the video in the hopes of what?
2. Faced with criticism over the fatal police shooting of a black 18-year-old this weekend, Los Angeles Police Chief Charlie Beck found himself in a similar position and opted Tuesday to do what?
3. Beck, generally a staunch advocate of keeping such videos confidential, said he acted out of concern for public safety as well as to correct what?
4. Police leaders nationwide have long argued that the release of such videos can do what?
5. The decision to make the video of Snell public followed lengthy conversations among Beck, Johnson and Mayor Eric Garcetti, according to interviews. All three were concerned about what?

6. Despite the decision to release the recording, Beck said the department had yet to decide if it would release video from body cameras worn by officers in a second deadly police shooting, which took place in South L.A. on Sunday. Beck has said that the video clearly refutes reports that some of the shots were fired when the man was on the ground. But releasing that video, he said, could set a standard for what?
7. Beck cited a number of reasons why he was hesitant to release body-camera video. What were they?

Class Discussion Questions and Essay Prompts

“It’s clear that keeping video confidential isn’t going to work. It undermines public trust more than it advances it,” said Peter Bibring, director of police practices for the ACLU of Southern California. “Body-camera footage or other video doesn’t provide transparency if the public never gets to see it.”

Some law-enforcement experts were critical of police leaders for giving in to protesters by releasing video they otherwise would not.

- Should law enforcement keep videos confidential? Should they be viewed by the public?
- Do you agree with Bibring’s statement? Why or why not?
- Do you think that the frequent release of videos could violate the privacy of members of the public captured in recordings? Why or why not?

Snell’s great-aunt, Carlena Hall, said she wished that the LAPD had informed her family before releasing the video but said that the recording clearly showed he had a gun.

“I don’t care if it hurts the LAPD or me, the truth needs to come out,” she said.

But the video doesn’t show the moment that the shots were fired, she noted. And she disputed the police account that Snell was shot when he turned toward officers while holding the firearm, saying he was no threat.

- Should members of the family of those involved be notified prior to releasing the videos to the public? Why or why not?
- Why do you think there isn’t video showing when Snell was shot?

Essay

The move underscored the challenge law-enforcement agencies confront in trying to keep video of police shootings confidential during a time of heightened public scrutiny of how officers use force, particularly against African Americans. By releasing videos in these high-profile cases, police departments have raised expectations that they will make recordings public in the future.

- Will the release of videos raise expectations and behaviors of police officers? Why or why not?
- When you know you’re being recorded, does that change your behavior? Why or why not?

Newspaper-related CBA activity: U.S. Policy

How the United States government interacts with the world affects people across the globe. Analyze and evaluate the causes and effects of US foreign policy on people in the United States and across the world.

- Using The Seattle Times print replica, find an article from this week that deals with world politics or foreign policy.
- What are the main points of view from someone living in that particular country? How is that “view” similar and different than your own opinion, regarding the specific issue the article is discussing?
- Why is it important to study and learn about foreign policy? How does it help you understand the world we live in, using current issues and events?

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