**5.4 Case Analysis on Whistleblowing**

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8 April 2024

# Introduction

Manning, a former US army Solider, leaked a video to Wiki Leaks that they called “collateral murder” that shows a US airstrike killing people in Iraq. Not as if the video is already graphic enough- as the video is playing, you can hear the soldiers congratulate other team members on the “great job” that they did and calling the dead bodies insulting names. Not only did the soldiers kill the people that they targeted, but they also killed medical aids that were going to go help the wounded. It turns out that the people that they murdered were just journalists, and they mistook the journalist’s camera equipment as weapons, and that is why they killed them. The video that Manning released is a cause for huge debate on the ethics of war and citizen fatality. It is obvious that the US soldiers have been desensitized to murder and treat killing people as a normal activity. The degrading of the people that they killed shows that the US soldiers do not even feel a little bad about the people they just killed. In this case analysis, I will argue that the ethics of care shows us that Manning did not act out of loyalty to the United States, and that her actions were a moral case of whistleblowing.

# Whistle Blowing and Rational Loyalty

The article called “Whistle Blowing and Rational Loyalty” by Wim Vandekerckhove talks about the ethics involved with organizational whistle blowing and rational loyalty. Whistle blowing is the act of disclosing information from an organization that is considered illegal immoral, irrational. Rational loyalty can be described as an employee’s commitment and loyalty to their organization according to their ethical responsibilities. Whistleblowing and rational loyalty are often things that are considered an organizational need. Vandekerckhove also talks about how the social responsibilities that are pushed onto businesses is increasing the environmental complexity and by giving some of these responsibilities to the employees in the “lower hierarchy” can help combat this issue. According to Vandekerckhove, whistle blowing is considered a need for organizations, as both the leaders of the organization and the public has a right to know about any wrongdoings that are occurring. Vandekerckhove says that loyalty and whistleblowing are not contradictory to each other, and that they are both important but on their own. For example, whistleblowing would violate any “loyalty” that an employee has to an organization. Duska (1997) says that whistleblowing is the “obligation one has to the public to prevent harm”. Another core concept that Vandekerckhove elaborated on is the fact that rational loyalty allows for centeralized decision-making. Rational loyalty can only occur where the ordered act is “in the interest of the object of rational loyalty”.

The ethics of care teaches us that one should act with partiality, where we support each other with mutual interdependence so that the relationship will grow and thrive. Manning was probably thinking from an ethics of care perspective when she leaked the Iraq war video, because she thought it was inhumane and wrong because innocent people were killed. Leaking the video could help protect the people she cares for and also build a relationship with mutual interdependence. What Manning did can be looked at as loyalty towards the people she actually cares for, since you need a caring relationship to have loyalty. The video showed a lack of respect and care for innocent civilian lives by the US soldiers. If the US government showed an ethics of care perspective by wanting a caring society, they would of taken action concerning the video.

Rational Loyalty is a trait of ethics of justice as the government feels they are owed loyalty, and not necessarily caring about the rest of society, only caring that their soldiers are loyal to them. If the government instead acted from an ethics of care perspective, the government would care about the lives of the journalists and medical aids who were brutally killed for no good reason. The government should care for all of the world, including both their soldiers and harmless citizens.

# Care and Loyalty in the Workplace

The article called “Care and Loyalty in the Workplace” by Julinna Oxley and D.E Wittkower talks about how loyalty is not a virtue, especially in the workplace. The authors also said that loyalty can be looked at as a characteristic of care, and it is not a “duty nor a rational requirement”. Oxley said that by looking at loyalty as a secondary fundamental moral, that it is possible for an employee to be loyal to an organization and whistleblowing can actually be an expression of critical loyalty. Another key concept in this paper is that workplace loyalty is never an obligation but can be earned by going “above and beyond duties and obligations. Ethics of care shows why Oxley and Wittkower’s argument makes sense and is totally justifiable. Ethics of care means that one acts in a caring way with caring virtues, with the end result being growth with mutual interdependence. The authors arguments show that loyalty itself is not really a virtue, but rather an expression of care, and this is exactly what ethics of care talks about.

This article is great evidence as to why what Manning did was a moral case of whistleblowing. According to this article, the video that Manning leaked was unethical and Manning does not owe the government her loyalty, even if she did go under oath. Manning does not owe loyalty to the army because loyalty and care are not mutually exclusive. According to care ethics, “loyalty should be interpreted as a kind of partiality to those ones cared for, justified on the basis that one care for the other” (Oxley & Wittkower). In broader terms, this statement means that loyalty should only be given to the ones you are close for and have partiality with. Like we stated earlier, ethics of care gives forth a caring relationship that involves partiality and a build for mutual interdependence. Partiality and mutual interdependence are characteristics of loyalty, and this is why loyalty is a second-hand fundamental moral. Since loyalty is a second-hand fundamental moral that is developed after you have a good relationship with someone, Manning did not owe the government her loyalty, after all, they never did anything to justify why she would owe them loyalty. The government was not Manning’s friend, and probably mentally hurt her more than they benefited her. The authors also said to have loyalty as a concern for an organization, that implies that your placing someone else’s interest over your own.

Oxley and Wittkower also said that according to the ethics of care perspective, obligations for loyalty for a company would be just like loyalty to your family, on the basis that moral obligations “flow from the nature of the relationship”. The more that someone cares for another, the more moral obligations they gain towards the person they care for. Therefore, using the ethics of care perspective, we can argue that Manning did not act out of loyalty to the United States, and its morally okay that she didn’t, because she did not care for the United States like she would if it was someone from her family. Manning felt disrespect and harm from the United States Army, so she acted from a place of trying to do the morally right thing and protect the people that she did actually care for. While the United States Army might not be an organization that Manning cares for, her friends and family are people that she owes loyalty to, because she cares for them.

# Conclusion

According to the ethics of care, Manning does not owe loyalty to the United States and her leaking the video called “collateral murder” was ethical. Manning does not owe loyalty to the United States because loyalty is earned and is not a virtue in itself like many people think it is. Loyalty is something that develops after a strong relationship with partiality and mutual interdependence is established. Loyalty by an employee should only come after the organization builds a good relationship with them. Loyalty is earned on a basis of strong, caring relationships between people, with a mutual ground of trust. Manning did not owe the United States Army anything, especially loyalty. Manning did not feel respected or cared for by the US Army, so she did not even get to a point to developing loyalty to them. After all, Manning was already risking her life every day for the Army and what the army had her do was unethical. If Manning believed that the government does not act according to status quo or care ethics, then she has a moral right of freedom, which includes leaking the video and documents that she did.

Manning’s actions did constitute a moral case of whistleblowing because she was trying to protect the people she actually cared for. Manning also felt that what the United States government was doing was unethical and she felt she had a moral obligation to expose their actions. Manning’s actions have a potential to protect the people she cares for and to build an even stronger relationship with partiality and mutual interdependence.