

Whistleblowing Case Analysis

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In this case, we see that the United States military utilized an Apache Helicopter to target individuals that they deemed to be armed insurgents. The attack resulted in loss of life and the leaking of the video to the public via Wikileaks. The actions in that video could be argued ethically on both sides. This obviously depends on what stance a person takes. It is my belief that Manning acted out of loyalty for the affected peoples and the American Public. In this paper, I will argue that Manning's actions were moral, and she acted ethically with respect to utilitarian views.

Vandekerckhove and Commers discuss loyalty to an institution in their writing. The argument that is made effectively states that a person has no duty to uphold loyalty to the point that they should not blow the whistle on something (Vandekerckhove & Commers, 2016 pg. 227). This is a very important view that we can use to investigate the case at hand. Loyalty seems to be something that, could be considered, as a social contract with an organization. A lot of organizations assume loyalty from an employee or individual that is a part of it. Manning displayed loyalty to those affected but also the American Public.

The releasing of the video directly relates to what Vandekerckhove and Commers discuss about loyalty. By releasing the video, Manning showed that she holds loyalty to regular people, not to an institution. We can argue this because, in America, the citizens dictate how the government is ran. Obviously, the public cannot dictate how military operations function or what rules of engagement are used during combat situations. The public can demand change in various ways when information like this is known. They can also hold their officials accountable for their actions. The same can be said for the people affected by these actions. They can demand justice and hold those who caused the suffering they endure accountable. Only by knowing these actions have taken place can we go forth and bring justice and reform. Through Manning's actions, we now have the ability to invoke a form of accountability. If

accountability does not work, we can then bring reform and change by electing officials into office that while bring about that change. Manning also acted morally within utilitarian views.

When utilizing utilitarian views, we find that Manning acted morally. Utilitarianism states that we must cause the least amount of suffering regardless of how hard the choice may be. The actions taken in this video would cause far more suffering if the video was never leaked. With the video being hidden from the public, we would not know about what happened or if anyone was brought to justice for these actions or if the families were compensated in any way. If this video remained hidden, it would have also strained the relationship between the US, the American public, and the world. The victim's families know what happened, but if the US denied the actions and the victims had no supporting evidence, they would have no support. This would cause issues amongst those affected and the people around them with trusting the US. With the release of that video, the victims know that they have support and the actions taken against the ones they lost were wrong. This also allows them to know that the actions will be seen by many, and justice can be served. Through the actions of Manning, we can seek justice and reform for the individuals that were affected and the people who may have been affected in the future if this video was never released. Most of all, Manning allowed the truth to be seen by anyone who wanted to. By releasing this video, Manning helped reduce the possibility of others suffering in the future. The only correct action, in my opinion, would have been to mitigate the loss of life as much as possible. Its different to act on a threat than the possibility of one.

Oxley and Wittkower discuss a couple of important points in their writing. One being the second-order mutual commitment which means that two parties do not have to agree on everything (Oxley & Wittkower, 2011 pg. 238). The second being that loyalty should be seen as partiality to those that are cared for if those parties are actually cared for (Oxley & Wittkower, 2011 pg. 224). These points have a direct correlation between Manning and the leaking of the video.

If we utilize the first point that was given to us by Oxley and Wittkower, we can see that the leaking of the video is a good representation of this action. If the video was kept secret, it would imply that Manning either agreed with the actions taken in the video, or Manning did not care about the individuals affected. The leaking of this video supports the argument that Manning does not agree with the actions take. The US military would have kept the video hidden and not openly spoken about the incident, but Manning forced them to do it by releasing the video. This is a direct representation of disagreement of action. The second point given shows that the actions taken by Manning demonstrate that she cares for those affected and the US. As I stated previously, Manning did not act out of loyalty, but she did act out of a caring place. We could argue that Manning also cares about the reputation of the military itself and she believes that they acted immorally.

Using the utilitarian view, we find that Manning acted accordingly with respect to the points given. By Manning acting through a caring place, we find the need to reduce suffering. This is the core of the utilitarian moral argument. Caring for others is a representation of wanting to reduce suffering or pain. The second-order mutual commitment point also blends well with the utilitarian moral argument. If Manning acted out of disagreement because the actions would have caused avoidable suffering, then Manning acted morally. We can look at this from a different perspective as well. If Manning voiced her concerns and the military denied her request to investigate because they did not care about those affected or how the American public/military would look due to the incident, Manning would still have acted morally by leaking the video. Manning acted in a caring nature for the American public and their image, as well as those that needlessly suffered. Through these viewpoints, the only morally sufficient avenues would have been to prevent this atrocity all together by reacting to a threat, not specifically acting to something that may be a threat or by being forthcoming about the incident and seeking justice for the families involved immediately after the incident took place. Preventing the incident through a different avenue of action is the best choice, but if the action was unavoidable, we could have been

transparent and serious about the investigation prior to the leaking of the video. This would have given the military some moral wiggle room and shown that they do not tolerate those kinds of actions.

The position of utilitarianism shows us that Manning acted morally. This is apparent by the action itself. The leaking of the video was done to reduce the overall suffering of a people and the potential suffering of future people if these kinds of actions were not addressed. There are possible objections to the arguments that I have made. One of these objections could be made about Mannings loyalty to the US military. Manning could have leaked the video to prevent the tarnishing of our military through her admiration for the institution. It is also possible to suggest that Manning leaked the video to allow for justice to ensue in a deontological fashion. If the military kept the video hidden, they would be preventing others from making their own moral decisions on what to do based on the actions displayed in it. This would also prevent any other moral arguments from taking place. Overall, I think I presented a strong utilitarian argument for the moral correctness of Manning's actions.

Works Cited

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