

Did Manning act out of loyalty to the United States when she released the footage in the video? Do her actions constitute a moral or immoral case of whistleblowing?

Manning's decision to leak military's classified information remains one of the most controversial acts in recent history, and has raised serious ethical questions on loyalty, government transparency, and national security. Some argue that she acted as a traitor while others see her as a hero, a whistleblower who acted out of concern for human rights and justice. Whether she acted out of loyalty to the United States or not is a question that needs to be explored through the lens of the ethics of care. In my opinion, Manning did indeed act out of a deep sense of loyalty to the United States, and her actions of releasing the video footage constituted a moral case of whistleblowing aimed at exposing wrongdoing. Therefore, in this case analysis, I will argue that ethics of care shows us that Manning acted out of loyalty to the United States, and that her actions were a moral case of whistleblowing.

Manning's actions of leaking classified information received mixed reactions from the public. Some saw her as a hero, who stood for justice and human rights by exposing government wrongdoing and promoting transparency. Others viewed her as a traitor who endangered national security by leaking sensitive information. Whether she was a traitor or a hero, totally depends on how loyalty to a country is perceived and applied.

In order to thoroughly examine this case, it is crucial to understand what loyalty to a country truly means. In general, loyalty can be referred to as a strong feeling of faithfulness or commitment to someone or something like a person, group, community, society or nation. In this case, Manning's actions have questioned the loyalty to her country, the United States. Being in the military, in what ways could she have demonstrated her loyalty to the United States? Did her military service not, in itself, reflect her loyalty to the nation? Moreover, from the perspective of the ethics of care, she reaffirmed her loyalty by upholding the country's core values and ideals; Vandekerchoke called it a form of rational loyalty. The definition of rational loyalty in his words: "The object of rational loyalty is not the physical aspects of the company – buildings, executives, boards, hierarchies, colleagues – but the explicit set of mission statements, goals, value statement and code of conduct of the organization which is judged as legitimate." In nutshell, loyalty is not about sticking with an organization (in this case, a nation) no matter what, rather it is about supporting its ideals, values and missions. Thus, when Manning released the video footage of collateral damage, she acted out of loyalty to the US. More specifically, as a whistleblower, she showed rational loyalty to the nation as well as to the public. By exposing wrongdoing of the US government, Manning upheld the country's core values of human rights of transparency,

and justice. Doing so, she nurtured the relationship of mutual interdependence between the government and the public. So, exposing the government's wrongdoing was an act of moral whistleblowing. Manning herself stated in an interview that her intention was never to compromise the nation's security, but to stand up for human rights and against injustice. Some may argue otherwise, viewing her as a traitor who jeopardized the national security by disclosing sensitive information. However, I argue that, in the long run, Manning's actions contributed to the betterment of both the nation and its citizens. The US must exemplify as a nation that stands for its core values and ideals, thereby enhancing public trust and loyalty. Moreover, it would encourage organizations to institutionalize whistleblowing, providing proper channels and safer mediums for employees to report any wrongdoing. It is crucial for organizations to institutionalize whistleblowing because, as Vandekerchoke said, institutionalization of whistleblowing is necessary to help them identify quickly if someone is making decisions that are harmful to the organization. Thus, from ethics of care, her actions were ethical and would help the country and its citizens to prosper and grow in the long run. Furthermore, Oxley and Wittkower interpretations of loyalty further affirm that Manning's actions were morally justified when viewed through the lens of the ethics of care.

As previously noted, to better analyze Manning's case, it requires a clear understanding of what loyalty is in the first place. To explore this further, let's understand the concept of loyalty through the explanations given by Julinna Oxley and D.E. Wittkower in their work, *Care and Loyalty in the Workplace*.

Definitions and explanations of loyalty offered by Wittkower and Oxley are rooted in the ethics of care. According to them, loyalty in the workplace is grounded in a care and concern for others. It is about caring for the relationship between employer and employee even when it conflicts with company's norms, policies or formal agreements. It involves an emotional commitment and disposition to go above and beyond what is required by the contract. Moreover, loyalty is neither merely a duty or obligation, but a form of care that involves actively pursuing the best interest of the object of care, whether that is a person, group, company or a nation. Thus, loyalty can never be coerced through a contract or any formal agreements, but can be earned through actions that demonstrate care. Furthermore, the authors suggested that when an organization's goals, values, missions and actions reflect care for their consumers, employees, and the environment, employees are more likely to be motivated to support the company's success, thereby strengthening their relationship. Thus, from the perspective of the ethics of care, it is morally justified to show partiality when caring for such relationships. Therefore, in this case, when Manning exposed the critical information, she acted out of her loyalty to the US by genuinely caring about both her relationships with the country and with the public.

As I mentioned above, from the perspective of the ethics of care, it is morally right to show partiality toward those with whom we share meaningful relationships. Like any citizen, Manning had a relationship not only with her country but also with the public. When she was disclosing classified information, she demonstrated a form of loyalty to the public as she claimed that the public had the right to know what the government was doing in the name of warfare. However, opponents might argue that she didn't care for the country as she broke the law by leaking classified information that endangered national security. Here, I argue that following sets of rules or guidelines without rational thinking is not a genuine care, as Oxley and Wiitkower stated, if loyalty or caring of something generates obligation, then it is not actual care; moreover, organizations or employers cannot demand loyalty as a kind of care, since true loyalty goes beyond fiduciary duties, that involve ethical obligation to act in another's best interest, without questioning or advising. Thus, fiduciary duties don't demonstrate genuine care. Loyalty is not a duty to be obliged rather it is actual care that shows willingness to go above and beyond the norms or policies. So, by being the whistleblower, Manning did show her genuine care for the country. The video footage disclosed by her revealed the collateral damage that took place in Iraq. The killing of innocent people including children can never be justified under any ethical principles of Warfare. Additionally, the public had the right to be informed. By becoming a whistleblower, she prioritized core values of justice, transparency, and human rights over blind obedience, ultimately helping the country live up to its ideals and values. She showed actual care by exposing wrongdoing of the US rather than blindly following the norms. The video footage disclosed by Manning was an act of a moral case of whistleblowing that showed her loyalty towards the country as well as towards the public. Hence, from ethics of care, her actions were moral and ethically justified.

In conclusion, Manning acted as a whistle blower by exposing wrongdoing of the government. Her actions were not driven by any personal gain or interest, as she put herself at risk of losing her job, career, and even worse, possibility of imprisonment. She acted out of loyalty to the US by disclosing classified information. Having said that, it is also crucial to utilize proper mediums or channels when performing whistleblowing. That is why organizations, whether governmental or private, must encourage institutionalizing whistleblowing. This would encourage employees to stand against any wrongdoing that could harm the organization. Moreover, utilizing proper channels in whistleblowing would eliminate the possibility of other risks, such as national security in this case. To conclude, from ethics of care, her decisions and actions were moral. By becoming a whistleblower, she showed her loyalty to both the public and the country. Manning was a courageous person who put her life and career at risk to do the right thing. Thus, in my opinion, she was a hero, not a traitor.

Note: *This is my own work and I have proofread it.*

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Date: 04/26/2025