

Do Law Enforcement Cameras Invade Privacy?

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ABSTRACT

The question of whether police surveillance using cameras is an invasion of privacy is an ongoing issue that increases in debate. There are those who feel safety is more important than the diminishing personal freedoms and constitutional freedoms including the right to privacy. On the other hand there are Americans from all political affiliations who view the lack of regulation on the use of surveillance cameras by government/police as a dangerous policy.

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How much police surveillance is too much when it invades Americans right to privacy depends on how the highest court in the land interprets the 14th amendment. Some proponents of law enforcement surveillance believe safety super cedes all freedom of guaranteed privacy. The ACLU continues taking a stand against invasion of privacy under the 1st Amendment rights. According to Stanley, the ACLU is now looking at the invasion of privacy that Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) use threatens American way of life. The use of UAVs at American Mexican borders is now considered for use by Los Angeles police. United States privacy laws do not, at present, provide adequate guarantee of the right to privacy because the technology is advancing so fast (2011). Debose reports the ACLU continues pushing for more civil/criminal consequences for law enforcement use of cameras until legal restrictions are on course (2002).

Slobogin's research finds Americans in general, no matter their political affiliation, have concerns there lacks constitutional regulations over growing methods of police use of camera surveillances invading privacy. Due to the risk of excluding evidence because of unreasonable search as well as the new standards imposed by Homeland Security since 911, there exists a dichotomy of blame for "today's constitutional nihilism" on this increasingly debatable issue (2007).

One common denominator exists among those with concerns about the increased presence of police surveillance cameras as an invasion of Americans' constitutional right to privacy and that is the lack of the highest court in the land taking a concerted effort to do something. Benjamin Franklin would tell Americans who want to "feel" safe no matter what rights are forsaken, "Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety (1759)".

References

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