

Introduction

Chelsea Manning, is a former U.S Army intelligence analyst, and she leaked classified military documents and a combat video which is known as the “Collateral Murder” to WikiLeaks in 2010. In the video it shows a U.S Apache helicopter in Baghdad that killed a lot of pedestrians, including two Reuters journalists. Manning justified her actions by arguing that people need to see what is happening in these third world countries and the potential war crimes the military is causing. However, her decision to give out the videos caused a heated debate regarding the national security transparency, and their ethical obligations of whistleblowers. In this case analysis, I will be arguing that the utilitarian ethical framework shows that Manning acted out of loyalty to the moral interest of the United States prioritizing truth and the public awareness over the government rules. Her actions show a moral case of whistleblowing because they are ultimately aimed to reduce harm and promote accountability.

Vandekerckhove Concepts

Vandekerckhove explains the role of whistleblowing as a crucial mechanism for holding institutions accountable. He explains that the externals of whistleblowing such as Manning’s are often undertaken when internal mechanisms are ineffective.

Vandekerckhove also highlights the risk that the whistleblowers may have when deciding to expose something wrong. Manning’s actions are aligned with Vandekerckhove’s model of whistleblowing since she is doing a favor for the public interest. Given the nature of the military and its history of trying to cover up civilian deaths, by choosing an external platform like WikiLeaks, Manning made sure that the information was going to be seen by the public. Which caused the military code of conduct to be questioned and the governmental transparency as well. Although she did violate her legal obligations, from an utilitarian standpoint, the long term benefits outweigh the negative consequences.

One of the key elements in Vandekerckhove’s framework is the concept of responsibility in whistleblowing. He argued that whistleblowers must make sure that whatever they are going to disclose will lead to a positive outcome. In Manning’s case, what she leaked caused an important discussion about military accountability, the ethics of war, and civilian deaths. Critics were claiming that disclosing the information undermines national security, Vandekerckhove’s view on this suggests that revealing unethical practices is crucial in society. Without being transparent with the public, institutions are at risk of losing the public's trust, which can have long term effects that outweighs the short term risk of getting exposed.

Another critical key aspect of Vandekerckhove's analysis is the idea that whistleblowing helps as a corrective mechanism in the government. He states that when the government fails internally to correct their mistakes, then that is when external

statements become necessary to help align their behavior within the ethical standards. Manning's decision to bypass their internal rules reflects this dynamic; the military established that the mechanisms for accountability have not been working as well when it comes to addressing the concerns over civilians dying, which makes external statements a necessary step. From a utilitarian standpoint, Manning's choice was the right thing to do since in the future it is going to help minimize future harm by preventing any misconduct that occurs. Furthermore, Vandekerckhove highlights the role of the whistleblowers in also challenging the systemic injustices. He argues that whistleblowing are often responses to deeply ingrained institutional failures. When Manning posted the video it exposed not only the individual acts of misconduct but also the systems issues within the military operations. Her statement forced the public and the policymakers to explain their ethical implications of wartime decisions that could lead to policy discussions that are meant for reducing future civilian deaths.

Using Vanderkerckhove's framework within a utilitarian analysis, Manning's actions are completely justified within the ethical morals. Whistleblowing in this context aligns with the principle of trying to maximize people's well being by exposing harmful practices and making the institution accountable for their actions. The consequences such as the government being embarrassed, tension, and Manning's legal repercussions, are all outweighed by the long term benefits of the public being informed and the potential of the policies being changed to prevent future ethical violations.

Wittkower and Oxley Concepts

Wittkower and Oxley is exploring a document about professional ethics, particularly one about loyalty, duty and moral responsibility. They argue that true loyalty is not a blind allegiance to authority but instead it is a commitment to the fundamental ethical principle. In their view whistleblowing is an expression of loyalty when it comes to correct systemic wrongdoing and it aligns an institution with the correct ethical morals. From these statements, Manning's disclosures can be seen as an act of loyalty towards the ethical side of the society rather than the government or military. The United States is supposed to uphold democratic values such as being transparent and accountable. Manning posting those videos to WikiLeaks exposed the conduct and contradicted these values, assuming that her actions were to fix the military operations with moral and legal standards.

Oxley and Wittkower perspectives on professional ethics helps us see that ethical loyalty is more focused on committed to the moral principle rather than being obedient to an organization. Manning's choice to release classified information, while it was controversial, was actually meant to make sure that there is an ethical foundation within the democratic institution. By prioritizing the truth over keeping secrets, she showed a form of moral integrity that overpowered institutional loyalty. Oxley and Wittkower also

discuss the ethical problems of conflicting obligations which is when a professional must choose between their job and their morals. Manning's case displays this problem well, as she is sworn into the military confidentiality agreements but also has her moral beliefs to do the wrong thing and reveal the military's mistakes. In situations where companies have policies that protect unethical behavior, whistleblowing may be ethical to break the rules for the greater good.

During the discussion where they focused on "Care and Loyalty in the Workplace". They argue that workplaces function best when employees have care for their coworkers and their responsibilities with being loyal to their ethical principles. Manning's case shows a conflict between being loyal to her peers and her moral duties, while some might argue that she betrayed her peers, an utilitarian view would show that her whistleblowing is showing that she cares for them. Manning being a whistleblower could prevent her coworkers who might feel the same way from leaking information in the future.

From a utilitarian perspective, Manning's whistleblowing resulted in public awareness, even though her actions are legally punishable, they led to society changing for the better. Manning's legal consequences serve as a caution for others who may attempt to whistleblow, but it also shows the importance of ethical morals and standing against institutional wrongdoing. Oxley and Wittkower really emphasize that when you make an ethical decision you should be considering long term society benefits over instant results. Manning's actions helped with making sure the military is following the ethical rules and making sure that the government is accountable, these factors can lead to a more transparent and ethical society. Exposing the unethical things that the military did aligns with the utilitarian principles, even though her actions had significant personal cost they served as an important example on how ethics must sometimes override the rules.

Conclusion

In conclusion Chelsea Manning's whistleblowing through the perspectives of Vandekerckhove and Oxley/Wittkower, you can see that her actions align with the ethical morals that prioritize transparency and trying to reduce harm. Vandekerckhove's analysis shows the importance of whistleblowing in a democratic society, especially when companies fail to address their own wrongdoings. Manning deciding to leak classified information exposed the flaws in the military, showing you that whistleblowing is effective. Oxley and Wittkower's discussion of ethics and loyalty shows how moral obligations work in an institutional setting. Their perspective of "Care and Loyalty in the Workplace" shows that true loyalty is a commitment to being ethical and others wellbeing. Manning's actions were a form of ethical loyalty despite it being controversial it still helped the public rather than the institutional. This case raises questions about the

balance between national security and transparency, and the protection of people who are whistleblowers. While the consequences for them are severe, there should be rules that protect them especially if they are helping the world be a better place. Manning's actions demonstrate that whistleblowing with the intent of preventing harm, can be seen as an act of moral responsibility,