


THE ROUTLEDGE
COMPANION TO LABOR
AND MEDIA

Edited by Richard Maxwell

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
NEW YORK AND LONDON

2016

THE WORK OF WEARING CAMERAS

Body-Worn Devices and Police Media Labor

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In June 2014, the company TASER International held a Tech Summit at its headquarters in Scottsdale, Arizona—a promotional event showcasing its AXON body-worn camera systems. TASER is best known for its signature product line, various versions of conducted electrical weapons (CEWs) designed to immobilize bodies with “neuromuscular incapacitation” technology. In response to the steady stream of complaints against police filed by people subjected to painful Taser shocks, or tasing, the company began attaching cameras to its devices. The aim was to provide a visual record from the police point of view, primarily to counter claims that tasing constitutes unjustified or excessive use of force. TASER quickly realized that it made more sense to mount the cameras on police officers themselves, and on-officer camera systems have become central to TASER’s business vision. The company hopes to build a profitable future off of the body-cam’s promise to provide factual representations of police work, aligning truth with the point of view of their primary market: the criminal justice system.

Elsewhere I have argued that the political legitimacy and narrative authority of the police is negotiated in part through forms of *cultural* and *media labor* that police officers perform, focusing on the evolving field of forensic video analysis, or the post-production work that cops and other investigators do with surveillance video.¹ While the evidentiary status of recorded surveillance video would seem self-evident, in reality it involves an intentional process of production—the application of codified rules of evidence, as well as the repurposing techniques and technologies borrowed from the domain of creative media production in order to invest recorded video with *indexicality*, or a direct, empirical connection to material reality. In fact, the practices of modern policing include a wide range of cultural and media work:

- the cultural labor involved in constructing the dominant narratives about crime and social disorder and communicating symbolic authority;²
- the forms of labor and expertise required to operate media equipment;³

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- the everyday performance of policing analyzed by critical criminologists like Peter Manning;⁴
- mediated performances of policing seen in news, reality television, true crime, and fictional crime dramas;⁵
- police activities involving online social media;⁶
- “intelligence-led policing,” most notably COMPSTAT,⁷ and related strategies of predictive analytics for police management, crime mapping, and “hot spot” policing; and
- the extraction of data from smartphones (a police practice that now requires a search warrant in the United States).⁸

In order to examine more closely some of the particularities of police media labor, this chapter focuses on body-worn camera systems and the way they make police work into a form of media work. I consider the role of body-worn camera systems and the body-worn camera market in the broader *police media economy*, focusing what TASER International refers to as its “video business” and the forms of media labor that such business both requires and makes possible. By employing the term “police media labor,” I mean to capture the fully integrated aspects of cultural and technical work, material and immaterial labor, that define modern policing and police power—both *police work* and police *authority* as embodied, technical, data-intensive, performative, interactive, and mediated.⁹

First, I discuss TASER International and the TASER Tech Summit I attended in June 2014, considering the role of both the company and the promotional event in the police media economy. While there are many other companies vying for position in the body-worn camera market, TASER seems poised to be a market leader, given the company’s already established relationships with hundreds of police agencies outfitted with their CEWs. In the second section, I look more closely at the “work of wearing cameras,” a form of labor that is part performance and part auto-surveillance. Operating on-body cameras allows cops to create representations of their encounters on the job, self-representations of their subjective experiences. At the same time, the camera systems provide a record of police work for risk assessment within police organizations, and for review in the courtroom or official legal milieu, or by media audiences more broadly. Finally, I consider the practices associated with the backend video evidence management systems, the work required to process, archive, search, circulate, and render authoritative interpretations of video generated by body-worn cameras. It is in these backend systems where the work of wearing cameras is transformed into scalable, infrastructural labor, and where the individual videos and embodied work activities involved in digitally recorded policing become valuable objects of exchange in the police media economy.

TASER and the Police Media Economy

While police labor is typically not commodified labor per se, policing has proven to be a profitable market for a variety of industries, from weapons manufacture to cars to information technology (IT). As the very existence of companies like TASER suggests, police agencies represent a market in the classic economic sense, a site of commodification where significant market value is extracted. TASER International’s 2013 Annual Report identifies two segments to its business: the “TASER Weapons segment” and

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its "Evidence.com & Video segment."¹⁰ The latter includes body-worn cameras and their accessories, as well as a backend, cloud-based video evidence management system developed in partnership with Amazon. Of TASER's total net sales of US\$137.8 million in 2013, its Evidence.com & Video segment generated about US\$10.3 million.¹¹ Although very modest revenues by Fortune 500 standards, the size of the body-worn camera market is expected to grow exponentially. Of course, such projections depend fundamentally on the ability of companies like TASER to produce the expanding market, in part by constructing a vision of the inevitable future of policing and convincing police actors of the necessity and certainty of widespread camera deployment.

The workers in TASER's slice of the police media economy include more than police officers equipped with wearable cameras. It also includes factory workers who assemble TASER devices and camera system components, the media production teams who produce the company's promotional videos and multimedia website, the computer engineers who design the evidence management system, the strategic communications professionals who handle the company's public relations, and many more. A variety of work cultures and activities animate and enable the productive output of TASER's business, from factory floor to corporate offices.

The TASER headquarters is designed, if imperfectly, for multiple purposes, housing a wide variety of work activities and communicative functions—the manual, mental, and affective labors involved in everything from product assembly, tech design, computer engineering, strategic planning, legal management of intellectual property and patents, and marketing and public relations. The building's expansive interior space mimics the cinematic *mise-en-scène* of the "Pre-Crime" predictive police agency in Stephen Spielberg's science-fiction film, *Minority Report*. Open stairways and catwalks crisscross the central space of the building, which extends upward three stories revealing workspaces on either side of an open floor plan. Sunlight pours in through a wall of glass windows on the front of the building, filtered through screens displaying giant, translucent images of uniformed police officers fully equipped with Taser devices (also visible on the outside front wall of the building). The interior space also includes closed-off rooms, their doorways secured with biometric eye-scanning devices scattered throughout the building, carrying through with the *Minority Report* theme. A circular, dark glass enclosure visible on the top floor is TASER's secret design space, referred to in-house as the "black box" and off limits to both visitors and other TASER employees. Another room, once used as a space where real human bodies, including volunteers from TASER's workforce, were used as targets for Taser testing, now serves as a media production studio—a repurposing of space emblematic of the shift in the company's business model from less-lethal weapons into the body-worn camera market.

The TASER headquarters also includes an expansive factory floor, where human workers and robotic machines assemble Taser devices. TASER's Vice President of Strategic Communications informs visitors that even he himself has submitted to Taser testing and once worked long hours on the factory floor when help was needed to fill large orders on deadline. TASER's website likewise notes that as a measure of the commitment of every employee to the quality and safety of its products, "TASER employees regularly undergo voluntary exposures with our various TASER CEWs. This includes our founders: Rick Smith, CEO and his brother Tom Smith, former Chairman of the Board."¹² That company founders and employees alike submit their bodies for exposure to painful Taser shocks is used, if implicitly, as a public testament to the safety of

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TASER weapons, as well as a claim about the democratic culture of a company with an otherwise conventionally hierarchical division of labor.

Held at company headquarters, the TASER Tech Summit is a promotional event designed to present a compelling vision for the future of policing, persuading the audience of the need for body-worn camera systems and the inevitability of their universal or near-universal deployment. The speaker lineup for the event (almost exclusively white and male) underscored the rhetoric of technological inevitability. The summit began and ended with speakers connected in some way to the Singularity University, the branchchild of inventor and futurist Ray Kurzweil. The first was TASER's CEO and co-founder, Rick Smith, a board member at Singularity University. One of Smith's slides asked the audience, "How can you be a change agent?" For his part, Smith expressed his desire to "obsolete the bullet" and make the very idea of killing someone "arcane and frankly unacceptable."

Speakers also included a number of current and former police chiefs, a constitutional lawyer, and TASER's Vice President of Information Security. Each of the police chiefs spoke about their own experiences overseeing deployments of body-worn cameras, many of them showing actual video examples. These video clips by and large depicted scenes where the police behaved appropriately, including one showing a fully uniformed officer diving into a pool to save a man whom he had just shot with a Taser. The man was apparently about to commit suicide, although that was not readily apparent in the video. In contrast, there was one mention of a case in which body-worn video contradicted the officer's version of events, by former Albuquerque Police Chief Ray Schultz, who described himself as a "Police Futurist" and an expert on the application of predictive analytics to policing. Schultz discussed an incident in which stills taken from an on-officer video showed an officer's boot marks on a door that the officer had alleged was ajar when he entered it. The images revealed that the door in fact had been closed, with the boot marks suggesting that the officer had forcibly kicked it open.¹³

The final speaker of the TASER Tech Summit was David Roberts, Vice President and Director of Graduate Studies at Singularity University. Roberts had the least to say about body-worn cameras, focusing instead on the techno-futurist themes of disruptive innovation and the exponential pace of technological change. His role seemed to be to encourage the audience to get psyched about the brave new world of everything high-tech, promoting the idealistic dream of technological transcendence espoused by Kurzweil and the Silicon Valley crowd. But at the Summit, Roberts and the other speakers were appealing to an entirely different audience, people with very different priorities and professional identities. The cops attending the Tech Summit, many of them command-level officers, seemed less inclined to fully embrace TASER's futuristic vision of policing. While they were clearly there to take seriously the possibility of deploying body-worn cameras in their agencies, the men and women (mostly men) assembled at the event had more immediate practicalities in mind. These concerns included the costs of camera systems, the policies and procedures needed to govern their use, and the difficult labor issues they introduce.

The Work of Wearing Cameras

The police are among the first occupations to adopt body-worn cameras on a system-wide basis, as a matter of decision-making at the managerial or command level rather than something individual police choose to adopt as a means of enhancing worker agency.

There are other professions considering the use of body-worn cameras, including especially the medical professions—doctors, nurses, and paramedics. These occupations and their associated organizations and industries have their own unique demands for visualizing work practices. One very basic problem that plagues hospitals, for example, is hand hygiene, connected to systemic infections among patients. But moves to mount cameras on the bodies of different types of professionals also share some common motivations, like increasing accountability, preventing misconduct, and handling complaints. They also raise some similar concerns, about things like worker agency and autonomy, personal and bodily integrity, and the privacy of both workers and those with whom they interact.

There also are reasons why body-worn cameras are viewed as well-suited to police work. The camera systems promise to help police agencies manage the perceived “uncontrolled visibility” that has resulted from the proliferation of mobile camera phones and social media platforms for sharing user-generated media.¹⁴ For many agencies, command-level professionals make decisions to deploy body-worn camera systems in order to manage risk for their organizations, whether risks are defined as threats to officers’ safety and job security, threats to a police agency’s bottom line, or threats to police legitimacy and public acceptance of police actions. For criminologists, body-worn camera systems address the strategic and operational needs of the police. For example, a randomized controlled study of a pilot deployment of TASER’s AXON Flex system in Rialto, California, in 2013 found a statistically significant drop in both incidents of police use of force and public complaints against officers.¹⁵ A reduction in the use of force suggests that the presence of cameras functions as a disciplining force on police workers, making them behave with more restraint and professionalism in their encounters with the public. And a reduction in complaints filed against officers is a finding that law-and-order advocates find useful for discrediting their prevalence.

Perhaps more significant from a managerial perspective, reductions in both use of force and public complaints means less money paid by agencies to settle lawsuits. One of the main selling points for TASER’s camera systems is that such benefits outweigh the costs of adoption. In addition to claims that it helps reduce bad behavior, the system is promoted as a means to identify and publicize good behavior of exceptional officers. In other words, the message is that TASER’s products promise to serve a range of managerial needs for police agencies, and they should be embraced rather than resisted by police at all levels.

There are calls for the deployment of body-worn cameras coming from outside of police agencies as well, namely from actors concerned with police misconduct and abuse of power. The judge who rendered the decision against the New York Police Department’s stop-and-frisk policy, for example, included in her decision an order for the deployment of body-worn cameras for officers in at least five NYPD precincts.¹⁶ The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has also entered the discussion on police body-worn cameras, making recommendations for policies governing their deployment and use.¹⁷ Although generally opposed to the proliferation of surveillance cameras, the ACLU is supportive of police body-worn camera systems if properly used, viewing them as a check on police abuse of power and an important means of addressing problems of police misconduct and accountability.

Like criminological studies showing a reduction of police use of force, the support of the ACLU for body-worn cameras is an important selling point for advocates. ACLU endorsement is especially helpful to the police in addressing public concerns

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and gaining public acceptance for camera systems. Of course, not all of the ACLU police recommendations are ones that police actors view as commensurate with their interests. ACLU Senior Policy Analyst Jay Stanley emphasizes the need to ensure that police officers are not able to self-select when to record their interactions with the public, or to edit or otherwise tamper with video stored in evidence management systems.¹⁸ To incentivize police officers to use the cameras consistently and appropriately, Stanley suggests "an exclusionary rule for any evidence obtained in an unrecorded encounter" (not for all police officers, but specifically for those issued cameras).¹⁹ He also proposes that police agencies adopt policies whereby "in any instance in which an officer wearing a camera is accused of misconduct, a failure to record that incident would create an evidentiary presumption against the officer."²⁰ One imagines that such recommendations are not universally well received among police actors, especially police rank-and-file and their unions. But while principally concerned with the potential of body-worn cameras to serve as a check on police power, the ACLU's recommendations do not overlook the rights of police officers as workers: officers themselves, they argue, should not be subjected "to a relentless regime of surveillance without any opportunity for shelter from constant monitoring."²¹

There are other ways of making sense of the police body-worn camera phenomenon beyond the managerial concerns of the police themselves and the policy issues raised by the ACLU. From the perspective of surveillance studies, we could say that, insofar as they make police work visible in limited but consequential ways, body-worn cameras function as both disciplining technologies for police workers and an extension of police power outward to the population. While the cameras may in fact reduce incidents of police misconduct, they may also add to the already asymmetrical prosecutorial power of the police,²² and contribute to a more integrated and effective "surveillant assemblage."²³ Body-worn camera systems themselves enable, require, and enact a form of surveillance labor, while at the same time providing a means of monitoring a particular labor force. In other words, wearing cameras is work, and at least one of the functions of body-worn camera systems is to provide a means of recursively monitoring surveillance workers.

From a cultural and media studies perspective, body-worn camera systems are designed to invest the police with greater capacity to narrate stories about crime and criminals from the police perspective, inviting viewers to occupy and identify with the police gaze and encouraging favorable interpretations of both specific incidents and the role of police power in society more generally. Of course, this is not to suggest that it always works out that way, or that police workers themselves are universally supportive of wearing cameras on their bodies and taking on the added responsibilities of managing their video output. In fact, the deployment of body-worn camera systems requires enlisting often-resistant police workers to incorporate the devices and associated work practices into not only their occupational activities but also their professional identities.

The question of how body-worn cameras might articulate with the professional identities of police officers is a complicated one that registers at multiple levels, including intimate levels of affect and embodiment. Mounting a camera to one's body is an intimate act, made evident by expressed concerns about the private details of officers' lives that might inadvertently get recorded, like trips to the bathroom or conversations with spouses. But despite the threat that the cameras would seem to pose to officers' personal privacy, the devices also promise them a form of self-protection, and one that can no doubt register at the level of their sense of psychic well-being. Cops may find

some satisfaction as well in providing others' with intimate glimpses of the daily challenges they face on the job. For these and other reasons, it would not be surprising to find police workers developing a close connection with their camera devices, much the way people relate intimately to their smartphones. A number of the police chiefs speaking at the TASER Tech Summit noted that officers can often be resistant to wearing cameras at first, only to completely change their views after trying them out, becoming ardent supporters very much attached to their camera attachments.

One promise of body-worn cameras for police workers and managers alike is their labor-saving potential when it comes to the work of documenting incidents. Body-worn camera video promises to replace written reports as systems of police documentation, thereby automating the kinds of interpretative, mental labors that officers perform in the process of documenting their accounts of incidents. Several speakers at the TASER Tech Summit alluded to the future obsolescence of the written report as more body-worn cameras are deployed in the field. For example, Scott Greenwood, a constitutional lawyer and advocate for body-worn camera systems, emphasized the fallibility of officer memory and the value of having video that supplements or entirely substitutes for officers' flawed capacity for accurately recounting incidents, both in their reports and on the witness stand. Salt Lake City Police Chief Ray Burbank also spoke of the potential for body-worn video to replace written reports, emphasizing the superiority of video at capturing emotion, especially in domestic violence incidents. Officers' written reports simply cannot adequately translate the red marks on a woman's face, he noted, or the "tears and emotion" they express in these moments. Here, the affective labor involved in documenting the emotional valence of incidents is deferred to the camera devices, which ostensibly do a better job of recording the expression of emotion and thereby making it available for future examination.

Body-worn camera systems enact a particular form of police agency, where officers produce content as they perform the duties of their job, recording a portion of their perspective as they engage in the gendered performance of policing.²⁴ By recording their point of view, wearers of cameras are both producing content and producing themselves, in the service of "law and order." What we see when we view body-worn camera videos are subjective shots that capture a portion of what the wearer was seeing, thereby offering a representation of his or her perspective (although crucially, not the actual embodied perspective itself). Although the wearers themselves are not in view (with the exception of outstretched arms and the occasional leg and foot shot), the act of using a body-mounted camera is a form of self-monitoring, in that it provides viewers with a sense of what the officer was doing and saying (typically recording his or her voice). It is also a way of self-representing officers' labor from their own point of view, though only a fragment of that point of view. It transforms the immediate action of policing into a mediated performance, one that aims to represent what the wearer sees and hears, sometimes capturing other individuals, including other police officers, within that field of view. The content captured by an on-officer camera is, in effect, a *representation of the embodied, intersubjective relationship* enacted between the police and those they interact with in any given encounter. It is, unequivocally, a profoundly asymmetrical power relationship, but the presence of the camera itself may change the dynamics of this relationship, as both cops and the people they encounter adjust their performance, deliberately or not, in recognition that those actions are being recorded.

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Evidence in the Cloud

The act of recording video with a body-mounted camera itself can transform incidents as they unfold in real times and places, but it is the potential of such “scenes” to be viewed and used later, in other contexts, that gives body-worn camera systems their reason for being. The work of police body-worn camera systems needs to be distinguished according to (at least) two interrelated dimensions or stages: the embodied, situated practice of capturing video with on-body cameras, and the work required to process, archive, search, circulate, and render authoritative interpretations of the video. From a police-managerial view, as much as a social justice perspective, the labor practices associated with backend evidence management are as important to understand as the situated practices of live body-worn video recording.

Video evidence management involves a variety of work activities, from the conceptual labor of developing archival systems, to the visual selection and analysis of relevant video frames, to the often rote labors of data entry, tagging, and search and retrieval. It requires the development and maintenance of IT infrastructures for managing live-action video recorded from a variety of sources—body-worn cameras, public and private surveillance cameras, camera-mounted drones, handheld devices of police officers, and from bystanders (sometimes actively solicited for media by the police after incidents, such as the Boston Marathon bombing). It also requires integrating video evidence with other types of evidence data—crime scene photographs, interrogation transcripts, audio files, information obtained from informants and witnesses, fingerprints, mug shots and other identifying information, and more.

While seemingly straightforward, evidence management is in reality a messy and complex process. It is governed, to some extent, by rules of evidence and standard operating procedures, but it also generates its own tacit knowledge and improvised work activities. Evidence management has long posed significant challenges for police organizations, with mishandling of evidence leading to myriad problems, including botched investigations, failed court cases, and lost legitimacy. It is also a source of intentional or unintentional falsification of evidence and, in turn, can lead to wrongful convictions, a problem endemic to the legal system.

Video evidence, including video from body-worn cameras, is no exception to problems of evidence management and, in fact, poses its own unique set of problems. At the TASER Tech Summit, for example, retired Police Chief and “Police Futurist” Ray Schultz offered a glimpse of his former agency’s fraught efforts to manage video from body-worn cameras as well as other types of video evidence. He recalled how they were at one time “burning DVDs by the thousands,” then storing video on laptops, then saving evidence on external drives.²⁵ The surplus of separate storage devices, many unmarked and physically identical, complicated efforts at effective evidence search and retrieval, case management, metadata standardization, work sharing, and purging of unnecessary video files. Video evidence management often became an overtime issue, as officers worked beyond their standard working hours to try to manage video using redundant and poorly designed systems.

In response to these problems of data storage, labor, workflow, and infrastructure, agencies have begun moving evidence management to cloud computing systems. (On cloud computing, see Mosco in this volume.) In 2013, a survey of members of the International Association of Police Chiefs found that about half of respondents had

implemented cloud-based systems or were planning to go this route in the next two years.²⁶ The backend system for TASER's body-worn cameras is a cloud computing website called Evidence.com, designed and hosted by TASER in partnership with Amazon. The TASER system is designed so that when officers return to their headquarters at the end of their shifts, they insert their cameras into a docking station that then automatically uploads the video to the cloud. Time, location, and officer metadata are automatically attached to uploaded video files, limiting the manual data entry to more interpretive data, or additional information needed to make the video more meaningful, retrievable, or capable of being linked to other case files.

Cloud computing systems like Evidence.com promise to provide the means for a more efficient distribution of the labor of video evidence management by transferring certain tasks to computational systems and creating centralized repositories of evidence that can be accessed by officers in different locations and even from different agencies. They promise to help agencies to cut costs by outsourcing not only IT infrastructure itself, but also some of the labor of infrastructure security and maintenance. And cloud computing promises to provide storage at whatever scale police agencies require, from small rural operations to large urban systems like the NYPD. According to TASER's website, Evidence.com "makes it easy for agencies of any size to collect, transfer, manage, retrieve and share any form of digital evidence."²⁷ Beyond serving the needs of any specific agency, a cloud-based platform like Evidence.com can also serve as a video evidence clearinghouse across municipalities, creating a distributed platform for collecting, transferring, managing, retrieving, and sharing digital evidence across cases. The systems offer more effective image-evidence search and retrieval within and across agencies—the ability to locate and discern individual bodies in the cloud, so to speak, whether those bodies represent the people captured in images, or the cops whose bodies perform the labor of policing and function as mobile camera mounts.

Importantly, outsourcing the infrastructure of video evidence management to cloud-based systems is a move that hands considerable control over video collections, and other important data, to companies that own and operate the cloud infrastructures. The "cloud" is not really a "cloud," but a distributed network of proprietary data centers owned and operated by giant IT companies like Amazon and Salesforce.com. In the case of Evidence.com, TASER designs the interface and Amazon provides the storage facilities, but both of these companies have an interest in further monetizing both the content and the uses of video evidence management systems. One imagines that these companies might pursue ways of monetizing video content, if the legal environment permitted—using online platforms or selling videos to other media organizations and even back to police agencies themselves. Companies providing cloud services might find it useful to analyze the data on how police officers use these systems, in order to optimize interface design and find ways of organizing police media labor toward greater productivity and efficiency (which, in turn, would allow companies to further sell evidence management systems on their cost-saving benefits). Companies could devise metrics for valuating police media labor on the basis of things like quantity of videos uploaded, quantity and quality of manually added metadata, and relative value of officers' videos for reducing financial risk to the organization. Data analytics companies could develop packaged labor-management software programs for analyzing police media work—offered to agencies at a price but always with promised cost-savings. There

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are countless other ways that IT industry players might try to monetize cloud-based evidence management systems, repurposing them as a means of managing risk and optimizing the distribution of labor in the police media economy.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the police body-worn camera phenomenon for what it reveals about the cultural and media labor of policing in these times. The work of wearing cameras is fast becoming standard police practice. For a growing number of cops, cameras have become parts of their professional identities, now pieces of their uniforms that they attach to their bodies along with their badges, guns, Tasers, handcuffs, radios, and other devices. But the wearable camera is not an isolated gadget or fashion accessory. It is a node in a distributed network of other cameras and bodies, standards and protocols, docking stations and data centers, police agencies and private companies. Understanding the implications of police body-worn cameras requires attention to multiple registers, from the dynamics of police-civilian encounters, to the circulation and interpretation of videos, to the risk-management priorities of police agencies, to the business strategies of IT industry players. While the cameras and the video they generate may lend certain agency to individual police workers, camera-mounted cops operate in broader systems of exchange that are reconfiguring the demands and dynamics of their work.

For police media workers, their contradictory location within democratic societies and capitalist economies poses challenges for identifying linkages with other media workers, building the coalitions so important to labor activism and advocacy.²⁸ These challenges are similar in some ways, but also very different than the impediments to building labor coalitions across the identities and forms of work implied in concepts like “digital labor,”²⁹ “venture labor,”³⁰ or “immaterial labor.”³¹ Like most forms of media work, the media labor that the police perform is simultaneously immaterial and material, cultural and technical, mental and manual. Far from providing individual police workers with an empowering creative outlet for self-expression, police media labor requires a repudiation of creative subjectivity, by and large serving the risk-management needs of police organizations and policing as an institution. It also serves the direct and indirect aims of a variety of interconnected industries—a set of aims and connections that require further research.

In terms of its own internal priorities, police media work is aimed at giving individual police officers, as well as police agencies and the broader law enforcement institution, a competitive advantage in battles over truth—the truth about individual incidents, to be sure, but also, more broadly, the truth about crime, social disorder, and police power itself. While the systems of mediated exchange that govern these police efforts at self-representation are not devoid of monetary concerns, they are not defined by the logics of a “market economy” per se. The measures of success and productivity within and among police agencies and their constituencies do not derive directly from things like profits, stock values, or market shares, but instead from things like crime statistics and public perceptions of crime—measures not directly tied to the extraction of value from labor for profit. Nevertheless, by harnessing the power of the cloud to capture and analyze both the products and practices of police media labor, the IT industry stands to make a killing in the police media economy.

Notes

- 1 Kelly Gates, "The Cultural Labor of Surveillance: Video Forensics, Computational Objectivity, and the Production of Visual Evidence," *Social Semiotics* 23(2) (2013): 242–260.
- 2 Ian Loader, "Policing and the Social: Questions of Symbolic Power," *British Journal of Sociology* 48(1) (1997): 1–18; Christopher Wilson, *Cop Knowledge: Police Power and Cultural Narrative in Twentieth-Century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).
- 3 Gates, "The Cultural Labor of Surveillance"; Blair Wilkinson and Randy Lippert, "Moving Images Through an Assemblage: Police, Visual Information, and Resistance," *Critical Criminology* 20 (2012): 311–325.
- 4 Peter Manning, "Theorizing Policing: The Drama and Myth of Crime Control in the NYPD," *Theoretical Criminology* 5(3) (2001): 315–344; P. Manning, *Policing Contragencies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).
- 5 Aaron Doyle, *Arresting Images: Crime and Policing in Front of the Television Camera* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003); Michael Hallert and Dennis Powell, "Backstage with 'COPS': The Dramaturgical Reification of Police Subculture in American Crime 'Info-tainment,'" *American Journal of Police* XIV(1) (1995): 101–129.
- 6 Daniel Trotter, "Policing Social Media," *Canadian Review of Sociology* 49(4) (2012): 411–425.
- 7 From the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation website: "CompStat- or COMPSTAT (short for COMPuter STATistics or COMParative STATistics) is the name given to the New York City Police Department's accountability process and has since been replicated in many other departments: COMPSTAT is a management philosophy or organizational management tool for police departments, roughly equivalent to Six Sigma or TQM, and is not a computer system or software package." <http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/COMPSTAT/About-COMPSTAT.html>.
- 8 As Joshua Reeves and Jeremy Packer have argued, "the modern police force has been constituted through its capacities for human and technological mediation," and "work done by the modern police apparatus . . . has from its outset been imagined to be accomplished in part through media." Joshua Reeves and Jeremy Packer, "Police Media: The Governance of Territory, Speed, and Communication," *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies* 10(4) (2013): 359. Reeves and Packer classify a range of technologies as "police media": the police gazette of the late eighteenth century; anthropometric science and rogues' galleries of the nineteenth century; media technologies associated with the policing of automobility, such as the radar gun, Breathalyzer, and two-way radio; and, finally, the broadly defined category of "digital police media." They explore how these various police media systems have enabled the integration of intelligence and logistical functions over time, investing police with the technical capacities for governing populations.
- 9 My approach synthesizes a number of theoretical works on forms of labor associated with digital devices and networks: as digital labor, immaterial labor, free labor, and venture labor, to a name a few. These concepts share some common characteristics with ways of conceptualizing labor in cultural and media studies—Vicky Mayer's below-the-line production labor, as well as Toby Miller's "new international division of cultural labor," and concepts like Jhally and Livant's "watching as working," and Mark Andrejevic's "the work of being watched" and "the work of watching one another." Police work in particular has been theorized as knowledge work and as surveillance labor—terms that likewise have affinities with the "turn to labor" in social research on ICTs. Trevor Scholz, ed., *Digital Labor: The Internet at Playground and Factory* (New York: Routledge, 2013); Maurizio Lazzarato, "Immaterial Labour," in *Radical Thought in Italy*, trans. Paul Colilli and Ed Emory, ed. Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 132–146; Triana Terranova, "Free Labor: Producing Culture for the Digital Economy," *Social Text* 63 18(2) (2000): 33–58; Gina Nef, *Venture Labor: Work and the Burden of Risk in Innovative Industries* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2012); Vicky Mayer, *Below the Line: Producers and Production Studies in the New Television Economy* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011); Toby Miller, "Introducing . . . Cultural Citizenship," *Social Text* 69 19(4) (2001): 1–5; Sut Jhally and Bill Livant, "Watching as Working: The Valorization of Audience Consciousness," *Journal of Communication* 36(3) (1986): 124–143; Mark Andrejevic, "The Work of Being Watched: Interactive Media and the Exploitation of Self-Disclosure," *Critical Studies in Media Communications* 19(2) (2002): 230–248; Mark Andrejevic, "The Work of Watching One Another: Lateral Surveillance, Risk, and Governance," *Surveillance and Society* 2(4) (2005): 279–297; Richard V. Ericson and Kevin D. Haggerty, *Policing the Risk Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Richard Maxwell, "Surveillance: Work, Myth, and Policy," *Social Text* 83 23(2) (2005): 1–19; Kristie Ball, "The Labours of Surveillance,"

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- Surveillance and Society* 1(2) (2003): 125–137; Jack Linchuan Qiu, Melissa Gregg, and Kate Crawford, "Circuits of Labour: A Labour Theory of the iPhone Era," *tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique* 12(2) (2014). Accessed December 3, 2014. <http://www.triple-c.at/index.php/tripleC/article/view/540>.
- 10 TASER International's 2013 Annual Report is accessible online at https://materials.proxyvot.com/Approved/87651B20140320/AR_200436/pubData/source/Annual%20Report.pdf.
- 11 TASER International, "Annual Report 2013" (2013): <http://investor.taser.com/annuals.cfm>.
- 12 "About TASER," <http://www.taser.com/about-taser>.
- 13 Schultz did not mention an incident that happened a year after his departure from the Albuquerque Police Department—the body-worn video depicting the police shooting of a homeless man in March 2014, a few months prior to the Tech Summit. The video circulated widely in the press, sparking protests against the Albuquerque Police. The incident was followed up, in April 2014, by the release of a damning report from the US Department of Justice, based on an investigation that began during Schultz's tenure as police chief. Radley Balko, "Albuquerque's Long History of Police Abuse, Cover-up and Scandal," *The Washington Post*, April 14, 2013. <http://www.abqjournal.com/227488/news/albuquerque-police-chief-leaves-with-mixed-legacy.html>.
- From 2010 to the time of Schultz's departure, the city saw more than two dozen officer-involved shootings and a surfeit of excessive force allegations, some caught on video. Schultz initiated the deployment of body-worn cameras in the Albuquerque Police Department in response to the Justice Department's probe, a move that some officers saw as a challenge to their professional integrity. Stephanie Lopez, the president of the Albuquerque Police Officers Association, said "that many officers feel that their integrity was questioned¹ with the introduction of lapel cameras, something required by Schultz amid the pending federal probe." Russell Contreras, "Albuquerque Police Chief Leaves with Mixed Legacy," *Albuquerque Journal*, July 31, 2013. <http://www.abqjournal.com/227488/news/albuquerque-police-chief-leaves-with-mixed-legacy.html>.
- 14 Andrew Goldsmith, "Policing's New Visibility," *British Journal of Criminology* 50 (2010): 914–934.
- 15 Rory Carroll, "California Police Use of Body Cameras Cuts Violence and Complaints," *The Guardian*, November 4, 2013. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/nov/04/california-police-body-cameras-cuts-violence-complaints-rally>; Tony Farrar, "Self-Awareness to Being Watched and Socially-Desirable Behavior: A Field Experiment on the Effect of Body-Worn Cameras on Police Use-of-Force," *Police Foundation*, March 2013. <http://www.policefoundation.org/content/body-worn-camera>.
- 16 Joseph Goldstein, "Judge Rejects New York's Stop-and-Frisk Policy," *The New York Times*, August 12, 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/13/nyregion/stop-and-frisk-practice-violated-rights-judge-rules.html>.
- 17 The police chiefs who spoke at the TASER Tech Summit were generally receptive to consulting with the ACLU, although with the caveat that they would pick and choose which recommendations to adopt. The speaker list at the summit included not only police chiefs and TASER executives, but also a constitutional lawyer and ACLU member, who, while not an official ACLU representative, offered comments that closely aligned with the ACLU's official policy recommendations. Of course, the specific ACLU policy recommendations do not necessarily align perfectly with the aims or desires of police agencies, management, or rank-and-file. See Jay Stanley, *Police Body-Mounted Cameras: With the Right Policies in Place, a Win for All*. aclu.org, October 2013. https://www.aclu.org/files/assets/police_body-mounted-cameras.pdf.
- 18 *Ibid.*
- 19 *Ibid.*, 3.
- 20 *Ibid.*
- 21 *Ibid.*, 2.
- 22 Gary Edmond, "Just Truth? Carefully Applying History, Philosophy and Sociology of Science to the Forensic Use of CCTV Images," *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* 44 (2013): 80–91.
- 23 Kevin D. Haggerty and Richard V. Ericson, "The Surveillance Assemblage," *British Journal of Sociology* 51(5) (2000): 605–627.
- 24 Attention to the police body-worn camera phenomenon brings into sharp relief the inescapable reality of policing as gendered performance, a site where gendered power relations are enacted, reproduced, and sometimes challenged. The video generated by these systems provides a valuable field of data for studying the way the gendered performance of policing plays out in real time. On policing as gendered performance, see Michael Aiello, "Policing the Masculine Frontier: Cultural Criminological Analysis of the Gendered Performance of Policing," *Crime Media Culture* 10 (2014): 59–79.

- 25 Ray Schultz, presentation delivered at the TASER Tech Summit, June 6, 2014.
- 26 David J. Roberts, "Cloud Computing in Law Enforcement: Survey Results and Guiding Principles," *The Police Chief* 80 (March 2013): 56–58.
- 27 TASER International, "EVIDENCE.com | How it Works," <http://www.evidence.com/how-it-works/>.
- 28 While police officers are workers who perform wage-labor for police organizations, police labor also has its own unique characteristics and is not entirely representative of "labor" as such in capitalist economies. The largest police forces are state agencies rather than private enterprises, and police are typically classed as "unproductive labor," rather than commodified labor from which capital extracts surplus value. Police labor does not directly support capital accumulation but functions more indirectly in the protection of property interests, and in the provision of security and social order that enables capitalist economies to function. The police historically have performed the capitalist-serving labor of strike-busting and other forms of repressive regulation aimed directly at the urban working classes. The systems of exchange that govern police organizations and their interactions with constituencies are not devoid of monetary concerns, nowhere better exemplified than in the central role played by asset forfeiture in bolstering police agency budgets. But the measures of success and productivity within and among police agencies do not derive directly from things like profits, stock values, or market shares, but instead from things like crime statistics and public perceptions of crime—measures not directly tied to the extraction of value from labor for profit. Sidney L. Harring, *Policing a Class Society: The Experience of American Cities, 1865–1915* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1983); John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988); Sarah Stillman, "Taken," *The New Yorker*, August 12, 2013, <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/08/12/taken>.
- 29 Trevor Scholz, ed., *Digital Labor: The Internet at Playground and Factory* (New York: Routledge, 2013).
- 30 Gina Neff, *Venture Labor: Work and the Burden of Risk in Innovative Industries* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2012).
- 31 Maurizio Lazzarato, "Immaterial Labour," in *Radical Thought in Italy*, trans. Paul Colilli and Ed Emory, ed. Paolo Virno and Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996): 132–146.