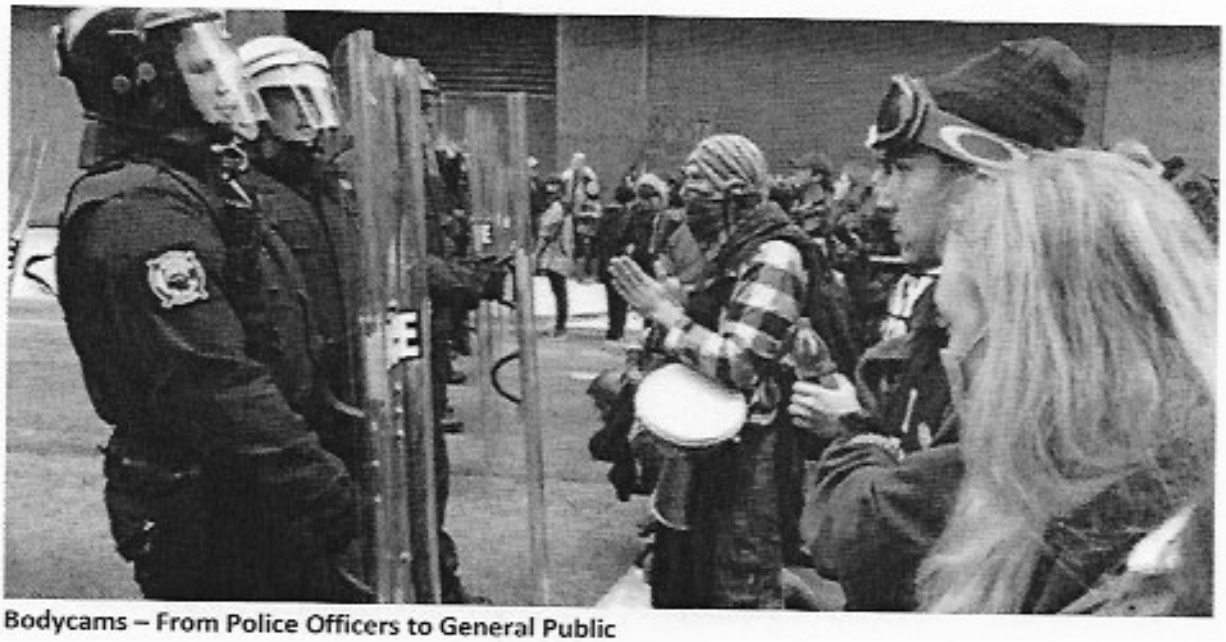


Bodycams – From Police Officers to General Public

Sep 28, 2017

This post is also available in: עברית (Hebrew)

More and more police officers worldwide have been wearing body cameras, documenting their encounters with criminals or legitimate civilians. But would civilians themselves benefit from wearing cams, capturing whatever happens from their perspective as well? Wolfcom, a manufacturer of body cams worn by law enforcement officers, recently announced that it's developed a similarly sophisticated gadget that it plans to market to civilians.

According to electronics.howstuffworks.com, the new Venture cam can be used as a body cam, a mountable car cam, a flashlight cam with four bright LEDs, and even a livestream camera. What sets the Venture cam apart from many existing wearable personal cameras such as GoPro etc. is that Wolfcom started as a supplier for law enforcement, and is modifying those cameras and systems for the general public.

The company's founder and president Peter Austin Onruang says that over the years, the company received hundreds of requests from the public to buy the cameras that Wolfcom sells to law enforcement, but was unable to sell directly to the public because the police cams could only be used with special software designed for police departments, making them unsuitable for consumers.

The company envisions the cams as a way for people to record and livestream mountain-biking or snowboarding adventures but also capture an encounter with police.

"People are already using cellphones to record their interactions .. but they continue holding their phones even when being placed under arrest or when struggling with an officer. I personally think it's dangerous to do so because in the course of a struggle with an officer in the dark, a backup officer might mistake a phone for a weapon."

Some of the police bodycam features will show up in the civilian-targeting model; for instance, anti-video deactivation prevents the cam from being turned off accidentally if the switch is bumped during a physical altercation. Features like that could make it "a perfect camera to have at a protest," says Onruang.

He offers some tips on how protesters could use cams effectively to document their point of view. "I think the best way to use Venture at these events is to wear Venture on the chest area with either the headset camera or clip-on camera POV attachments," he says. "Both POV cameras would provide point-of-view recording. That means that wherever the user is looking, that is what's being recorded. This is important if the user wants to be able to record a crime or an act of violence he or she is witnessing or to prove their innocence." He added that protesters could livestream video directly to a Facebook or YouTube account "to ensure important video is immediately saved elsewhere."