Big Brother

Jamen Martin

SOC 120 Introduction to Ethics & Social Responsibility

Lisa Gaetje

10/16/2017

Ethical Issues have pledged human society ever since I can remember, from the Roman times and earlier to modern times there have always been questions that one answer seems not to satisfy everyone in questions. These issues generally can not be disputed with facts and objective realities, these issues are more subjective to different ethical theories and perspective. The most simplistic explanation of this is if an action is right or wrong or what is right and wrong (Mosser, 2013) The ethical issue I will be focusing on for this paper is Domestic surveillance using the classical theory Utilitarianism ethics and looking at this through duty theory. I will also take an ethical perspective ethical egoism as an argument to why DomesticSurveillance is wrong. Domestic Surveillance in the United States is operated by the National Security Agency or simply known as the NSA.

The NSA violates and is breaking every citizenright, this government organization collects massive amounts of data also known as data mining and storing it in a huge facility in Utah. This facility uses enough power to supply 55,000 homes with power for a day and was subcontracted compartmentally so there is not one person who know how the facility was built and how it works. This is done on purpose, if nobody literally knows how it works there would be no leak of a weakness as nobody would know of the weakness if one existed (Defending Our Nation. Securing THe Citizen, n.d.). The common argument is if you do not have to hide anything then you will be fine, this issue is not that I or anyone else would have to hide anything, it is aninvasion of one personal life and privacy. With the wide spread use of electronic equipment such as cell phones, tablets, computers, smart glasses, smart speakers and the list goes on, all these productsto work need to communicate to a server to get instructions on how to respond to you. By saying “okay google”, “okayCortana” or “okay Siri”, we are sending little clips of voices to the serverswhere they are stored and used to contour speech recognition. You can even locate the files with google and have the option to delete these files. Back to the NSA, allowing this organization to monitor all is a violation to everyone and help nobody. Looking on the National Security Agency website I did find how they monitor civilian everyday communication. They explain that everyone leaves an electronic bread crump through the day, using an electronic bus card scanning what bus you got on, passing through downtown street with surveillance cameras, skype videos, social media activity, mobile phone GPS location data, travel documents, cable television shows and so on. All of this was found on their website explaining that they do in fact record everything. It should be ones right to have privacy, NSA can tap in to almost anything electronic and start recording and watching your every movement. This concerns me as this gives NSA so much power over what gets decided with this information as you personally have no access to this information. They can Taylor this information to fit the agenda. From a utilitarianism perspective this is ethically wrong as breaking individual privacy of all people is also a violation of the 4thamendment that protect citizens from unreasonable searches and seizures and requires a warrant to be judicially approved and supported with evidence or probable cause (What Does the Fourth Amendment Mean?, n.d.). Many people argue that the NSA can use this information from the benefit such as framing people to bribing and setting their political agenda with this information by extortion. Using the Ethical Egoism stating that whatever is in the best interest of the “Nation’s Security” is moral or ethically correct in that action, even if some freedoms should be surrendered. The other argument for DomesticSurveillance also has good points and is why this is still a topic of debate. For those in favor of the NSA monitory every move can use the classical theory Deontology to make their case. This theory is better known as the duty theory states that we are obligated to do what is moral right as moral agents (Mosser, 2013). Meaning that to protect people from others some freedoms maybe lost in the way of surveillance will protect us from one self. It is the duty of mankind to protect one another even if this mean recording every step and storing this data without your knowledge. There is even diagrams on the NSA website showing were the illegal search and seizure happens in the whole process. If this is the case, this means that and data provide from NSA would not be able to be used in court as it was not obtained with a warrant, many argue this so there is nothing to worry about as far as the NSA coming after you. How ever the NSA can hand information they think to obtain illegal activity to local law enforcement giving them probable cause to dig deeper. Having these different perspectives on these ethical debates can make it easier to understand were one is coming from and why they are feeling that this is right or wrong, have an ethical perspective to only one is very limiting and to have an understand of all of them can help you come to terms with the situation.

# Works Cited

*Defending Our Nation. Securing THe Citizen*. (n.d.). Retrieved from Domestic Surveillance Directorate: https://nsa.gov1.info/data/index.html#data

Mosser, K. (2013). *Ethics & Social Responsibility Second Edition.* Bridgepoint Education, Inc.

*What Does the Fourth Amendment Mean?* (n.d.). Retrieved from United States Courts: http://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/educational-resources/about-educational-outreach/activity-resources/what-does-0