

## Bugging the Proselytizers

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### **If cops are expected to wear body cameras, teachers' lessons should be recorded.**

In Texas, a 9<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher adorns her virtual classroom with posters professing support for Black Lives Matter and the LGBT lifestyle. In southern California, a teacher regularly tells her students how stupid President Trump is, and that conservatives are destroying the world. A high school English teacher in Philadelphia is frustrated because online learning has hindered his ability to accomplish his “equality/inclusion work.” He is concerned about the “damage” that “helicopter parents” might cause if they overhear lessons on topics such as gender and sexuality.

These are just a few of the cases reported by the media. As I have written about for years, the indoctrination in American schools is widespread, but thanks to so many schools being in full online mode due to COVID-19, some of the proselytizers are being outed. The coronavirus has a shelf life, however, and we will just have to accept that the closed-door brainwashing that has been going on for years will return when the virus dissipates or a vaccine is found.

Or will we?

Capturing real-time police activity has become very popular in recent times. In fact, a July 2020 poll from the University of Maryland shows that nearly 90 percent of respondents support body cameras, including 85 percent of Republicans, 86 percent of independents and 94 percent of Democrats. This is consistent with a 2016 Cato Institute poll which showed that 89 percent of Americans support “requiring police officers to wear body cameras to record their on-duty interactions.”

The benefits of cop-cams are many – for all concerned. They provide transparency for interactions with the public, faster resolution of citizen complaints, corroborating evidence in arrests, and training opportunities for rookies. It is even popular with cop unions. Sean Smoot, a police union attorney, writes, “Though unions have concerns regarding BWCs (body worn cameras), most unions also recognize that BWCs provide added layers of protection and accountability for officers. They protect officers from false claims when the alleged behavior is captured (or, more frequently, its absence is captured) by BWC video.”

There is a downside to the cameras, however. Some people may respond negatively or violently to being filmed by police, especially those who may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Additionally, informants or witnesses may fear reprisal from criminals.

Which brings us to teachers. Like cops, public school teachers are entrusted by the government to perform a service. So how about edu-cams which would disclose the content and quality of their lessons, as well as help keep their students in line?

A few schools in England are on the case, using the technology as a way to reduce attacks against teachers. Larry Davis, deputy headteacher of Southfields Academy in Wimbledon, said

the use of body cameras by a small number of staff “had improved behaviour and lessened the number of dangerous confrontations since they were introduced at the start of the school year.” Also, a school official said police “found evidence from the body cameras was more useful in making arrests, and that their presence was deterring disruptive behaviour....”

My thinking is that, while cameras may curb classroom violence, many parents may not want their children to be part of an ongoing video stream. Instead, why not have a live microphone in every classroom? Only the name of the teacher, and perhaps the first names of some of the students would be known. It would deter some kids from acting up, and very importantly, the teacher would be much less likely to promote his/her favorite political cause, go on an anti-Trump rant, or disparage conservatives. Parents would be able to monitor just what little Johnny or Janie is really learning in school.

Referring to streamed lessons, John Hinderaker writes in a *Powerline* blog post, “This is much like the manner in which parents use cameras in their homes to keep tabs on what babysitters are up to.” Except in my scenario, it would be audio only.

Of course, states with powerful teachers unions will fight to keep this from happening. In fact, recording teachers’ lessons became an issue for the California Teachers Association when online learning became the norm in the spring. As reported by *EdSource*’s John Fensterwald, the union argued that “school districts lack the authority to force teachers to do live online instruction or to record lessons for later use.” CTA points to Education Code 51512, a 1976 law that provides privacy protections for teachers. “It prevents unauthorized recording in a classroom and requires a teacher’s and a principal’s consent for the use of any ‘listening or recording device.’” So each teacher would have to okay any recordings.

Things have changed since I was in school more than a half-century ago; indoctrination is now common. By recording teachers, those who take advantage of their position to proselytize will have to think twice before ramming social justice dogma down students’ throats, and teaching very well could go back to being about the ABCs, not BLM and LGBT.