

# Television and News Media: New research examines how viral police body cam videos featuring Wisconsin cases may shape public opinion

Posted on Tuesday, Mar 10, 2026

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A new peer-reviewed study published in *Television & New Media* examines the rise of YouTube channels that turn police body camera footage into viral entertainment — including footage from **La Crosse, Milwaukee, and surrounding Wisconsin communities.**

The study, authored by **Matthew Clark, M.A., and Jacquelyn Arcy, PhD,** analyzes the popular YouTube channel *Code Blue Cam*, which frequently features police encounters from **western Wisconsin and Milwaukee-area departments** and has amassed millions of subscribers and over a billion views.

The researchers call this growing trend “**participatory policing.**”

**Article:** *Participatory Policing: Code Blue Cam and the Disciplinary Power of Police Body Camera Videos on YouTube*

**Journal:** *Television & New Media*

**Link:** <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/15274764251399170>

## Why This Matters for Wisconsin

Police encounters filmed in La Crosse, Eau Claire, Wausau, Milwaukee and other Wisconsin communities are reaching **national and global audiences.**

Wisconsin-based cases are being edited, narrated, and monetized as entertainment.

AI-enhanced thumbnails and dramatic framing may influence how viewers interpret local incidents.

## **Key Findings**

First-person “body cam” footage positions viewers from an officer’s perspective.

Videos presented as “raw” are often heavily edited with narration and sensational titles.

Comment sections frequently amplify racial and class-based stereotypes.

Engagement metrics may incentivize increasingly dramatic portrayals of local incidents.

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