The full body scanner philosophy essay

Nudity is a Taboo for some and for others it is considered an improper behavior. From place to place the view point of how much of our human body we can expose in public differs. In some part of the world, people believe it is a divine teaching from ALLAH (GOD) for women to cover their body from tip to toe, no parts of the women's body is allowed to be exposed in public and for the man to cover from the neck to the knee. In contrary to these believes that is mentioned on top, there are also others that don't limit how much of the human body of either man or man can be exposed in public, except their private parts. Contrarily, there are also others who believe it is a divine to be nude, and that is their believe system. For whichever part of these groups that someone is affiliated with, there are times where we have to break from our believe systems and commit to acts that are contrary to what we believe. Today's world's rising crises illuminate many rights that the planets' inhabitants used to enjoy in the days of peace and stability. Taking shoe off at the airport for screening purposes became already a norm. Some take it as inconvenient screening methodology, but is not a real solution to the airport security, thus there many people who prefer " to be safe than sorry." However, airport commuters are divided when it comes the installation of new system call " Full body scanner." This technology is similar the once used at big hospitals. Machines produces a " low levels of X-rays." The safety risk produced by millimeter X-rays which generated by the full scanner machines could minimal and have the potential benefit that it might add the safety of the airports security throughout the world, but there are disagreements of proper usage of this equipment among the experts and the public is divided between the lines.

Safety.

Safety is number one issue for almost all the individuals and is the sole purpose that these systems are currently being installed in all the airports. It makes no sense and is silly for airport commuters to choose between the lasers of the two evils. Either to suffer through painful sickness caused exposure to undetectable X-rays or explosion in the air by a terror bomb. Majority of people might choose not suffer through pain and die once without the pain and the suffering. Why even negotiate when it comes to the security and the wellness of the citizens. All the authority has to do is to conduct a thorough test that either approves the use of full body scanners at the airport or come up with an alternative way to secure the safety of the airports without jeopardizing the health of the individuals. Many people see these new systems as an expressed decision to push through some type of security systems that can detect explosives hidden beneath the underwear, after the Detroit December incident that could have claimed many innocent lives. In order travelers to make a sounding judgment when it comes cooperating with the authority to use the full body scanner or not to, there should be some type of public awareness for the pros and cons of using the system. The health of the travelers is in the line and they are up against a well known killer that if not properly protected can cause fetal healthy damages to the human body and can kill people without noticing it. The silent killer is called x-ray. " In 1895 x-rays were discovered by Wilhelm Röntgen. This discovery of how to look through an object to observe details beneath has advanced to include new techniques. One such technique called " backscatter" X-Ray is based on ' the emergence of radiation from that surface of a material through which it entered. " experts suggest that this is

high energy x-ray is more likely to scatter than to penetrate materials different from its sister used in the medical flied which used penetrate materials and is low power. Father more; experts are skeptical about government's claim that this technology is harmless and they point out the possibility that x-ray can go through other materials, such as clothing.

Ethical evaluations.

Kantianism " Act so that you always treat both yourself and other people as ends in themselves, and never only as a means to an end " the question to be asked in here is whether the system providers misleading the public by selling a products that have not been tested thoroughly and could cause a potential health hazard. Also, the luck data that supports the authority's claim of harmlessness of product adds suspicions and the users' concern. Critics are asking an independent research to be conducted on these systems before their widespread usage and suggest public access to the data. In this case, until trustable tests are conducted and the data is shared with all the stake holds there is going to be doubt. As mentioned in the above quotation Kantianism rejects using individuals as a means to an end. In that case, the use of these systems without the satisfaction of others is evaluated as a means to an end.

Act Utilitarianism. The principle of utility says " An action is right (or wrong) to the extent that it increases (decreases) the total happiness of the affected parties" as an illustration, let us say one tenth of a percent of the total number of people that goes through the machines are affected by the x-rays that they have been exposed to, through the process. Their suffering could also affect many others that might not even step into one of these machines

ever. For example, family members that has to share the pain with their loved ones and has to be there for the person who is suffering and might have to bear to pay the sky rocketing healthcare costs. Also, other by standards that their health insurance premiums might be jacked up because of the raising claims and the insurances adjustment to the costs, and generally all the tax payers that their taxes are used to support law income families. The installation the full scanner can create can decrease the total happiness of the affected parties which is not a good idea to install using Utilitarian evaluation.

Social contract " Morality consists of in the set of rules, governing how people are to be treated one another, that rational people will agree to accept, for their mutual benefits, on the condition that others follow those rules as well." There are of course a set of rules that rational people can agree on. Safety of all citizens and the need of securing that is no brainer to today's post-9/11 societies. Authority claims that the installation of these systems is necessary in order to provide a full security to the traveler. Many people agree with the authority and appreciate the authority's plan to put these systems in place. Also the authority is responsible of reinforcing the rules and is liable to the safety of the traveler incase of incident. The authority is also doing this to protect its citizens and not harm them. Any security escape could initiate a public outcry. For that reason, government believes the installation of these systems is the only way to avoid any security escapes. Using social contract theory permits the installation of these systems, though it might cause harm to some of the system users.

Privacy

Privacy is important to the majority of humans whether they have the same believe systems or not. All over the world people share a common thread which is covering all, half or some of their body parts. Some of these acts are reinforced by a deep divine believes and for others that is matter of human dignity. Even those who live in rural areas, and walk necked with no clothes, majority of these people might cover few parts of their body parts. These days plenty of rights that people took for granted originally have been revoked from them without foreseeable hope of their return of these rights. We let go one right and clinch on another, ignorantly believing it be taken over our dead bodies, and that one too slips in front of our eyes. Now and new technology that violates another right and destroys slowly like it never existed before is surfaced. It is called Full Body Scanner and is planned to be install into all airports and as reported on CNN " One hundred and fifty new full-body scanning machines are set to be placed in airports across the United States as federal authorities work to close security loopholes exposed by the attempted Christmas Day bombing of a U. S.-bound airliner." Full body scanner produces complete nude human body feature and almost perfect image. It exposes all the body parts to strangers that are screening the travelers without concealing any of its parts. Besides revealing private body parts this machine has the ability to store data permanently and this how a report describes it, " Full-body scanners at airports can store or send their graphic images." When data is store somewhere in a public domain, the possibility of misuse and tempering of data is likely high. Due that circumstances, the access and probable misuse of the images produced by the security machines create a concern for many travelers and for that

reason there many skeptic of the installation of these systems into the airport. Many people from different walks of life warn the luck credibility of the authority's claim that the images of travelers will not be saved and think otherwise. They believe the government and other agencies that coordinate airport security are not sharing the full details of the use of the private images that the full body scanner will produced. There are all ready law suits and complaints about the technology before it is even installed into the majority of the airports. The battle to stop the installation of full body scanner at the airports already drawn steam after a United States Law maker voiced this concern, " We don't need to look at naked 8-year-olds and grandmothers to secure airplanes, a lawmaker says." In addition to this, there are many different religious groups, from different believe systems voicing their oppositions to deployment the full body scanner, which includes many well known religious leaders, like the Pope, and the report put it this way. " Pope Benedict XVI has joined civil libertarians and airline safety experts in voicing concern about new airport scanners like the ones destined for O'Hare International Airport." To make matters even worse, some people already refused to go through these machines at the airports and as reported on TIMESONLINE a Muslim woman " was barred from boarding a flight after she refused to undergo a full body scan for religious reasons."

Ethics evaluations.

Divine Command Theory. Majority of the religious people agree that at least it is divine

command from creator of the mankind that humans to cover their private parties. This is the

reason that a Muslim woman forfeited her ticket by refusing to go through the machine which could expose her private parties to a strangers. The action of this woman is totally in lines with the Islamic teaching that prohibits individuals exposing their private parties in a public. There are also many other people different religious believers that oppose the installation of this system for the same reason. In that case, according to the divide command theory it is unacceptable to install full scanner system or mandate all people go through this machine.

Kantianism according to Kantianism it is in ethical to use people as a means to an end. For this case the system does not work with people who don't want their private parties to be exposed to the strangers and for that reason it is in ethical according to that theory.

Act Utilitarianism evaluates the extent that an action raises or decreases the happiness of the individuals, and action is considered good if it increases the total happiness and is considered bad if decreases. According to this theory if the violation of the privacy of the travelers decreases their total happiness action is considered bad. Since religious follower expressed discomfort of using the system and could be many none religious people that are concern with exploitation their own private body images and the likelihood of these information falling into the hands of an authorized individuals, that signals the disapproval of this system according to the Act Utilitarianism. However, there're many other facts that needs to be evaluated before deciding if an action is good or bad according to the act. For example, there're many religious followers that thinks the action is in line with their religious teaching because it is permissible for the followers to act contrary to their religious

teaching if their livelihood depends on, and they prefer to sacrifice their images than their life. So in order to say precisely that is system inacceptable using this theory we have compare the number of unhappy people to the happy ones and if the majority is happy than the action good otherwise the action is bad.

Consequences. There could be many consequences that relate to the installment of this system. The first one is, the possibility of these machines becoming a health hazard. Exposure to X-rays can cause health issues to all individuals and is riskier to pregnant women and children and that is what many are concerned with. A BusinessWeek reports that people who file complaints regarding the use of full body scanner complaints contain concerns relating to the health of the pregnant women, here is how they put it "…. Travelers also expressed concern about their privacy being invaded, of feeling humiliated, of radiation risks to pregnant women and of children being subjected to the scans." This proves that there is public outcry that could swing either way. If the system causes more problems than it solves, it could backfire big time. Secondly, it could be consequential if the machines cause security escapes. There are already experts that believe that these machines might not be able to prevent terror threat like the Detroit one over the last Xmas and the news puts it this way, " The machines create images outlining the unclothed human body by bouncing X-rays or radio waves off skin or concealed objects. But security experts say the advanced imaging technology, or AIT, has limits: The " backscatter" rays can be obscured by body parts, may not readily detect thin items seen " edge-on" or objects hidden inside the body, and require a human operator to decide whether to

conduct additional questioning or a physical search." So the question is why are investing billions of dollars that into a system that cannot leave up to its reputation which is to detect things that already existing technology cannot detect.

Alternatives. Yes, there're alternative. Those who do not want to through the full body scanner can go through something call " physical pat down" which include includes physical checking of the entire body of both men and women. This method similar to others could cause the same problem to some people like the define command theorists. What if there is no women on duty at specific flight time and there is a woman who prefers pat down method over the full body screener or vice versa. This alternative itself could cause more problems than it solve.

Advantages and disadvantages

The advantage of the system is it enhanced airport security. It is also a peace in mind for many that are daily travelers. A wide usage of this system could minimize the long waiting lines at airports through that the United States and elsewhere in the world where travelers through a lot of airport checks to prevent terrorist acts. The disadvantage of system will be if system fails to detect materials that it is designed to catch and could cause a security failure. If the equipment is related with security failure, people will see it as wasted tax payer money and could back slash. Another disadvantage is if the system becomes a health hazard it would be hard persuade travels to use the system even if the problems are fixed and cost a lot more money for the government for law suits.

Summary

Full body scanner technology is similar the once used in big hospitals. It produces a " low levels of X-rays." There are many experts that believe system has potential of causing health problem to the users. There are also many other people from different walks of life and have different religious believes that oppose the installation of these systems into the airports due to their religious believe. Others are also concern with their privacy. Health concerns, religious believes, and privacy is the three biggest obstacles that could put risk in the installation of these systems. Systems are already installed and are in use through the world. Its oppositions is also growing, people are refusing to through the machines for all the different purposes we mentioned on top. Whether these systems will be widely accepted or not accepted will be a sing of the TIME.

Resources

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