BOOK REVIEWS

Leaks, whistleblowing and the public interest: the law of unauthorised disclosures, by Ashley Savage, Cheltenham, UK, Edward Elgar, 2016, 298 pp., £85 (hardback), ISBN 9781783474899

In 1998, the UK's Public Interest Disclosure Act became law. It has been praised by some as a model and criticised by others as inadequate. So what is the situation for UK whistleblowers, those employees who make disclosures about fraud, malpractice and other problems within organisations?

If whistleblowers are adequately protected against reprisals, employees are more likely to report problems, thus benefiting the public interest. If not, then problems will fester, and some whistleblowers may decide to take their concerns to journalists or activists. What is the state of play?

Ashley Savage's book, *Leaks, Whistleblowing and the Public Interest*, provides answers to these and related questions, and the answers are far more complex than most people imagine. Savage looks at the legal situation of whistleblowing in the UK with amazing thoroughness. As well as analysing the laws in the light of their provisions and assessing them in the light of legal cases, he has used freedom of information (FOI) requests to obtain a large number of documents about how organisations deal with disclosures.

The legal status of whistleblowing, namely whether a disclosure is 'protected', depends sensitively on who makes the disclosure, to whom is it made, what it involves and how it relates to the public interest. The 1998 UK law is only the beginning. Also involved are various official secrets acts and other restraints on speech. Savage has separate chapters on whistleblowing in the civil service, in the security and intelligence services, and in the armed forces. In each of these domains, there are special circumstances, various precedents and a range of considerations. On top of this are the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights.

Savage provides a careful exposition of the issues and complications, and adds considerable critical commentary. He addresses what happens to whistleblowers when they report internally and when they disclose to journalists, and to what extent they are protected in a range of circumstances. He draws on court cases in the UK and relevant ones in the EU, and on media accounts of major whistleblowing cases. Finally, he makes recommendations for revising the law in the light of its various shortcomings.

Trying to understand the intricacies of UK whistleblower laws is not for the faint hearted. At one point, Savage notes that whistleblowers could hardly be expected to appreciate all the subtleties that a court might take into account in judging a disclosure. The information obtained by Savage through FOI suggests that policy makers do not appreciate all the subtleties either.

Focusing on major whistleblowing cases, namely the ones that go to court or are reported in the media, inevitably omits dealing with garden-variety cases, which are far more common. Savage's book is aimed not at whistleblowers, but at policy makers.

Should a potential whistleblower consult Savage's erudite study, she might be left with the impression that the complications are far too great to risk speaking out and relying on protection from the law. That the legal complexity and uncertainty are so great is one factor

encouraging anonymous disclosures. If you don't get caught, then legal protection is superfluous.

Savage would like whistleblower protection to be much stronger and more predictable, seeing this as a means of reducing unauthorised disclosures, especially anonymous leaking. Whether policy makers will pay any attention is another question.

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Designing in ethics, edited by Jeroenvan den Hoven, Seumas Miller and Thomas Pogge, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2017, 240 pp., £75.00 (hardback), ISBN 9780521119467

The disciplines that comprise contemporary science and technology studies have long argued that technologies are value laden and able to affect, translate and mediate human interactions. Technology to achieve this is co-constructive with humans, rather than simple tools created for a specific task. To this end, *Designing in Ethics* provides a compilation of well-curated essays that tackle the ethical issues surrounding technological design. It argues that ethics must form a constituent part of the designing process and a foundation in our institutions and practices. The appropriation of a design approach to applied ethics is seen as a means by which ethical issues that relate to technological artifacts may be addressed.

Van den Hoven, Miller and Pogge have assembled a set of papers that make persuasive arguments for this design approach. The essays range widely, from healthcare to security. However, the central theses are consistent in their design approach to ethics as an imperative. The editors build upon over a decade of research on the 'design-for-values' approach to technologies by arguing for a methodology that ultimately aims to resolve ethical problems. The authors do not resort to *a priori* absolutism or the sort of moral theorizing that is divorced from practice.

All the chapter authors use case studies in ethics and technology to show how design can address real-world issues. *Designing in Ethics* does this remarkably well, synthesizing the various author styles and presenting a cohesive and surprisingly coherent collection, something not common in curated collections of essays. This said, the ultimate strength of this text emerges from the introductory chapter by Jeroen van den Hoven, professor of ethics and technology at TU Delft. His chapter, 'The design turn in applied ethics', not only provides a chapter-by-chapter description and rationale, but also lays out a sober and philosophically rigorous *raison d'être* for design as a dangerous avenue for inquiry, both academically and practically.

In sum, *Designing in Ethics* proves to be a solid primer to the history of, and necessity for, a design approach to applied ethics, one that is accessible to both graduate students and seasoned scholars in the field. The use of case studies by all chapter authors makes the applied ethics case for design in itself. The exponential advance in technology development and its increasing harmonization with human society make this collection particularly timely and its endorsement unproblematic.