BOOK REVIEW ESSAY

Human, All Too Human: Drones, Ethics, and the Psychology of Military Technologies

A Review Essay of:

Bousquet, Antoine. (2018). *The Eye of War:* Military *Perception from the Telescope to the Drone*. University of Minnesota Press.

Clark, Lindsay C. (2019). *Gender and Drone Warfare: A Hauntological Perspective*. Routledge.

Dobos, Ned. (2020). *Ethics, Security, and The War-Machine: The True Cost of the Military*. Oxford University Press.

Schwarz, Elke. (2018). *Death Machines: The Ethics of Violent Technologies*. Manchester University Press.

How does technological innovation impact our thinking about war, ethics, killing, and dying? The four books under review each explore a central element of the ethical and political dilemmas of human-machine interactions and war in the 21st century. Drones are often touted as an ethically superior way of killing in war, a solution to the dilemmas and psychological traumas of war. Antoine Bousquet's *The Eye of War*[1] gives a historical account of the technological steps in scientific visualization and military targeting that ultimately culminated with the drone. Each component system of the drone is given a chapter to interrogate the historical constitution and sociotechnical interactions. Elke Schwarz in *Death Machines* seeks to uncover what enables the framing of an instrument for surveillance and killing as inherently ethical. Utilizing Hannah Arendt, she analyzes the development of military technologies and how they shape our capacity to think ethically: "whether they widen or limit the scope for ethical concern and ethical deliberation about violence in warfare; whether they shift our thinking about violence as a political instrument" (Schwarz, p. 5). Lindsay Clark's *Gender and Drone Warfare* investigates the implications of using armed drones through extensive interviews with British Reaper Drone crews, specifically the "*gendered* implications of the use of armed drones" (Clark, p. 2). Through a hauntological perspective, she argues that technology in war has changed how war functions, changed the interactions between opposing sides, and changed how those who inflict death are affected psychologically. Finally, Ned Dobos in *Ethics, Security, and The War-Machine* takes a step back and asks the poignant question of the moral and social costs of having a military in the first place. The oft-taken for granted questions of the "costs of the war-machine, generated by the presence of a military establishment even when it is running idle" is something that we must not assume as an inherent good or foregone conclusion (Dobos, p. 11).

In this essay, we ask: How has technological problem solving shifted the way we discuss the ethics of killing? How have drones altered our understanding of war? What psychological insights can be garnered from these books to inspire future political psychology research in this area of

[1]See the video trailer of Antoine Bousquet's *The Eye of War* at https://youtu.be/mxLLG_HUIj0.

sociotechnical interactions of militarized societies? In what follows, we will give a brief overview of each book and analyze their contribution to five areas of psychological interest: (1) biological fallibility and the technological perfection of humans; (2) moral injury and the psychological toll of war; (3) blurring the home front and battlefront with drone warfare; (4) the emergence of a techno-ethics of war and its implications; (5) cognitive biases and the risks a standing army for society.

Overviews

The broader issue touched on by these books is that human biology is lacking; we need technologies to perfect our limitations, especially in killing. Summarized by Schwarz: "[The] relationship between modern humans and their machines is characterised not only by a role reversal in which the human creator of the machine becomes subject to the machine's flawless powers. It also implies shamefulness about not-being-machine, encapsulating awe and admiration of the superior qualities of machine existence and the promise of flawless perfection for a specific role or task" (p. 155). Nevertheless, as each book tackles in its own unique way, such technological fantasies neglect how human-machine interactions have historically evolved and their impact on human psychology and our understanding of ethics in warfare.

The Eye of War: Military Perception from the Telescope to the Drone gives the readers an incredible history of surveillance and technologies of military targeting. Bousquet identifies this historical evolution—perception and destruction melding together—due to technological developments and Western ideals. This process has led to the development of the psychological phenomenon that, in war, "visibility equals death." In what is a visually stunning and creative work of scholarship, Bousquet masterfully demonstrates the ways in which militarized perception and killing have an inexorably intertwined history. Today's drone's epistemological foundations begin with perspective, which is "intertwined process of rationalization of vision and mathematization of space" that originated artistically with the Renaissance figures Filippo Brunelleschi and Leon Battista Alberti (Bousquet, p. 17). Brunelleschi's genius opened the door for new knowledge revolving around optical lenses and perspective. Next, the development of sensing through spy glasses, scopes, and other enhanced forms of eyesight. Human lack of sensing and night visions later culminated in adopting infrared light to allow soldiers to employ superhuman vision, surpassing our ocular limitations. Hearing was the next sense to no longer be apt for the battlefront; thus, the creation of listening and viewing instruments allowed for their combination to create machines of war like the submarine. Imaging was designed to capture and circulate visual representation of the battlespace. The camera progressed through many other phases, including the camera gun, kite camera, and others, but one of the most notable progressions, at the beginning of the First World War, was the ability to use the camera to perform surveillance from the sky. Today, computer and machine vision imitate the human senses, and although they claim to perfect it, these systems often fall short and remain dependent on human interpretation. In mapping, the apotheosis of mapping are global positioning systems, which provide a tactical advantage to militaries by reducing the unexpected from battle. As the martial gaze was perfected, so was hiding or the art of visual deception. Within the realm of hiding, camouflage was designed to visually trick the enemy to gain a military advantage with the motto "concealment first, protection second" (Bousquet, p. 157). Ultimately, these technological developments intersect in a sociotechnical matrix of components and their unique histories from a human-machine assemblage that culminates in the drone. In the end, the drone troubles our notions of war inherent in the risk asymmetries that allow for individual targets to be killed without risking the lives of our soldiers.

In *Gender and Drone Warfare: A Hauntological Perspective*, Lindsay Clark explores the complex, contradictory, and insightful implications of armed drones, specifically, its gendered implications with extensive psychological insights with interviews with British Reaper Drone crews. She utilizes the sociological framework of Haunting to "more accurately shed light on the ways the

gendered discourses are destabilised and (re)inscribed through the use of novel military technologies" (Clark, p. 17). Ghosts are useful to understanding personhood as complex (whereby the drone troubles notions of categories of masculinity and femininity), how the in/(hyper)visibility of things affects their power and influence, and how (cob)webs of power are as much a creative fiction/myth as fact. With this method, Clark masterfully lives within the tension that arises with drones—i.e., killing at a distant intimacy (geographically far, yet visually proximate). Both with lethal strikes and with persistent surveillance of unknown subjects below puts the Reaper crews in a position of god-like omniscience that does not fit neatly into the categories of watcher (empowered/masculine) and watched (disempowered/feminized). With this unique prism, she analyzes "the interaction between gender and military technology in order to engage with, and trouble, binaries such as silence and scream, absence and presence, visibility and invisibility, masculinity and femininity" in ways that allows both opposing sides of the binary to coexist simultaneously (Clark, p. 5). The techno-fetishization of contemporary Western militaries troubles gendered notions of war and elevates hyper-masculinization of violence in novel ways. Drone warfare represents a feminization of the drone pilot for their inability to put their body in harm's way while simultaneously utilizing the ultimate realization of god-like power and rationality—the drone—to kill. The fact that the drone pilot is disembodied means that they are not confined to the particularities and limited vision of their body; the satellite systems and the drone's video cameras mean that the bomber's visualization of the target like Bousquet's *Eye of War* is represented as the god's-eye view of objectivity. This book has both accessible theoretical depth and empirical breadth that should be cited by anyone engaging in issues of drone warfare. Ultimately, Clark is one of the only authors we have read that truly addresses the ways in which drones trouble our categories of the masculine warrior and simultaneously offers immense psychological insight into the everyday lives of Reaper crews and the question of human-machine interaction of killing in war.

In *Death Machines: The Ethics of Violent Technologies,* Elke Schwarz sets out to understand contemporary technologies of violence and the underpinnings of their ethics. This is a direct response to a growing trend of military practitioners, academics, and a public discourse that the use of lethal autonomous weapons systems—or killer robots—will inherently make warfare more humane and ethical. In particular, Schwarz is interested in what enables the framing of an instrument for surveillance and killing as an inherently ethical technology. *Death Machines* addresses these dilemmas by offering an analysis of the production of techno-biopolitical subjectivities—through the political theory of Hannah Arendt—of technologized warfare. Schwarz demonstrates just how prescient Arendt's theory was regarding the scientific-technological implications of the modern human condition. Her aim of the book is "to look at whether the changing nature of military technologies makes us think about ethics differently; whether they widen or limit the scope for ethical concern and ethical deliberation about violence in warfare; whether they shift our thinking about violence as a political instrument" (Schwarz, p. 5). Thus, this book provides a unique look at the psychological insights of human-machine interactions and the ethics of contemporary warfare practices. While much of the discussion of drones has already moved into the realm of killer robots, Schwarz guides the reader through an accessible Arendtian philosophy making a genuine contribution to international political theory while also tackling the concrete dilemmas of human-machine psychology and how technology shapes our capacity to think ethically.

Finally, Ned Dobos, in his *Ethics, Security, and The War-Machine: The True Cost of the Military*, asks the broader antebellum question of whether or not it is ethical to militarize society and maintain a permanent military establishment. Dobos looks beyond the economic costs alone and begins "cataloguing some of the less appreciated cultural and moral costs, and the security sacrifices associated with creating and maintaining" a war-machine even when it's running idle (Dobos, p. 10). Of course, there are many reasons to maintain a standing military; however, the question remains, why do we always assume that the costs of militarization will outweigh the benefits? He breaks down some of

the costs in compelling detail and makes us question our assumptions about the necessity of the oft-cited Latin phrase: *Si vis Pacem, Para Bellum*—if you want peace, prepare for war. Dobos begins by arguing whether troops go to war or not, they must prepare to kill, and this conditioning can be morally damaging to the soldiers. Second, there is always a risk of a military's domestic political intervention—i.e., a coup. Thus, "the citizens of a militarized polity should take the threat of a coup seriously for largely the same reasons that they take the threat of foreign aggression and occupation seriously" (Dobos, p. 61). Furthermore, Dobos tackles the quintessential security dilemma of international relations: Wherever there is a military establishment, there is a possibility that it will provoke the very thing that it is meant to deter. A foreign enemy might be driven to attack us not despite our armed forces, but because of them. Finally, wherever there is a military establishment, there is always the risk that their use will not be confined to 'just wars,' and instead, four cognitive biases (explored below) may compel leaders to overuse the military for unjust causes. Dobos truly excels in his Epilogue, where he offers a nonmilitarized path forward in "Towards a Post-Military Defence" by utilizing Gene Sharp's theory on the politics of nonviolent action as an alternative to the war-machine.

Ultimately, these four books offer theoretical breadth and empirical depth to the social-psychological dilemmas of advanced military technologies and the ethics that they enable. In what follows, we highlight some of the many psychological insights garnered from these works to inspire the readers of *Political Psychology* to pursue new avenues of research by utilizing their methods and expertise to push research on drones, ethics, and war in new and exciting directions.

Psychological Insights

Biological Fallibility

Henry David Thoreau "memorably said of soldiers that they serve the state 'not as men mainly, but as machines, with their bodies'" (Dobos, p. 34). Technology no longer needs our soldier bodies to act as machines but as a complex sociotechnical system of killing. Indeed, the idea prevalent throughout these books (which they critique) is that humans are somehow inadequate. Our biology is a deficit that needs to be rendered more efficient at killing through a process of human-machine integration. As Bousquet notes, although humans can sense, they fall short of what the battlefield demands in the visual sphere. As war has progressed, so has the distances needed to strike an enemy, therefore natural human eyesight has become obsolete. Walter Benjamin marveled that the camera "exposed spaces otherwise inaccessible to the human eye" (Bousquet, p. 84). In the words of U.S. Reaper drone operator, Martin:

> Our supported unit wanted me to keep an eye on [a mound] until daybreak … I would continue to circle and stare at it … hours passed. Once the sun rose … I asked my senior operator to switch to day-light cameras. The telephoto lens brought out the full picture … I burst into laughter. The feature we had stared at for hours, that had preoccupied that most sophisticated reconnaissance apparatus on the earth and baffled the world's finest intelligence analysts, was a pile of barnyard manure. (Clark, p. 146)

Thus, there is a sense that the human element remains the weak link in the sociotechnical war machine and is progressively being phased out and replaced by computers, AI, and more "rational" autonomous weapons systems. To fit within this technologized war environment, "humans seek to become machines through technological enhancement, not merely to be better but to meet the quasi-moral mandate of becoming a rational and progressive product: ever-better, ever-faster, ever-smarter, superseding the human limited corporeality, and eventually the human

self" (Schwarz, p. 156). Ultimately, the framing of the biological and psychological fallibility of humans drives an increased mechanization of war, further removing humans one causal step from the act of killing.

Moral Injury

It is not only the protection of the soldier's bodies that is paramount but the protection of their psyches and their souls. Moral injury is a growing concept in the ethics of war whereby soldiers who kill suffer the emotional distress of taking life. Overcoming our aversion to killing leaves lasting moral damage to our psyche. Dobos breaks down moral injury into two camps: moral trauma and moral degradation. To draw out the distinction, he gives two examples of U.S. soldiers: an unnamed soldier and Stephen Canty. The unnamed soldier in Iraq was involved in a firefight with insurgents. Some of the insurgents attacked the soldier while shielding themselves behind innocent civilians. The self-preservation impulse kicked in, the soldier fired back, and some of the human shields were killed. Upon returning to the United States, the veteran's wife handed him his newborn baby daughter, but he cannot bear to hold her. The veteran felt so morally impure as a result of having killed those civilians that he feared contaminating his child. Here the moral emotions (guilt, shame) are so intensely engaged that the individual has become dysfunctional (Dobos, p. 22). In contrast, Stephen Canty describes what happened after he shot an Afghan man in the back:

> One of the bullets bounced off his spinal cord and came out his eyeball, and he's lying there in a wheelbarrow clinging to the last seconds of his life, and he's looking up at me with one of his eyes and just pulp in the other … I just stared down at him … and walked away. And I will… never feel anything about that. I literally just don't care whatsoever…I think I even smiled… You learn to kill, and you kill people, and it's like, I don't care. I've seen people get shot, I've seen little kids get shot. You see a kid and his father sitting together and he gets shot and I give a zero fuck. (Dobos, p. 33)

The difference between the two soldiers is stark. The former undoubtedly experienced moral trauma, but he maintains a proper moral foundation because he is horrified by what his primal brain had done. This emotional trauma and the guilty feeling may indeed be debilitating, but it is not a moral injury per se. On the other hand, Canty's moral degradation involves complete corrosion of the moral emotions. He should be morally repulsed by what he has done, but he isn't; there is no proper affect (Dobos, p. 24). Lindsay Clark quotes one drone operator who has no doubt experienced a moral trauma in taking life: "I know the feeling you experience when you see someone die. Horrifying barely covers it. And when you are exposed to it over and over again it becomes like a small video, embedded in your head forever on repeat, causing psychological pain and suffering that many people will hopefully never experience" (Clark, p. 118). Nevertheless, that aversion to killing shows that these individuals still have a proper affect and are horrified by what they have done. Thus, "even when killing is justified, it is a sign of good moral character if the killer experiences some anguish or distress. The absence of such feelings—an emotional indifference or numbness to killing—is a morally degraded state to be in, arguably a form of moral injury" (Dobos, p. 25).

While drones alter the understanding of warfare and the warrior, there is a distant intimacy between operators and targets. One may assume that killing by drone is like a video game and allows the operators to emotionally detach from their targets, freeing them from moral trauma or injury. However, there is also a distant intimacy that the drone provides. One interviewee of Clark stated: "It's a long, prolonged exposure to the guy: you will find him…[there is] much more emotional involvement with the target…[it] affects you more than it does turning up at a target [and just] hitting a target…[even though] the physical visuals are the same" (Clark, p. 152). This

hyper-visibility whereby drone pilots can watch from above as targets interact with their families and go about their daily lives only to be killed later produces a psychological connection with the target that few soldiers experience on the battlefield. Nevertheless, a more robust discussion of moral injury and moral trauma is necessary to understand the moral toll that killing can have on emotions and affect. One issue is that this reality of trauma to combatants is oft used as a justification for a more autonomous and technologized form of killing by removing humans from the act of killing. Bousquet recognizes that drones have already changed the very idea of war. Instead of having men fighting visible wars on the ground, this weapon allows individual targets to be taken out without risking soldiers' lives. All that is left is the risk to their psychological state with moral trauma and moral degradation. The drive to further automate killing seeks to solve this dilemma that came about with the creation of the drone.

Blurring Homefront and Battlefront

As the crux of Dobos' argument stresses, there are genuine social costs to a militarized society and the idea that keeping our soldiers out of harm's way through drone warfare raises new gendered psychological issues. When we talk of the militarization of society, "the values, assumptions, and even language associated with the military are spreading beyond it into civilian society…Start with the observation that the suppressed martial values–forcefulness, domination, emotional toughness–stand in direct contrast to the values that we usually associate with femininity–gentleness, cooperation, emotional sensitivity, and the like" (Dobos, p. 106). Indeed, as Clark discusses, the general sentiment is that these Reaper crews cannot have PTSD or other mental illnesses because they are not on the ground, but they do experience it. They watch people die at their hands all the time, and sometimes they kill innocents. Just because they are fighting through the medium of drones does not make them less of a warrior. This idea also extends to the concept of their protection. Their lack of physical danger makes them cowardly and feminine because they are not literally risking their lives on the battlefield. This idea explains why drone pilots aren't considered for high-achievement medals in the military; they are perceived as not having risk in their job. As one drone operator put it: "I don't think you can be a warrior if you're not there" (Clark, p. 126).

For these warriors, war is often in a trailer not too far from their houses instead of on the physical battlefield. There is an extreme blurring between these worlds. How do these warriors live both of these lives? Clark brilliantly displays the difficulties these warriors face as they attempt to separate these lives. In one impactful passage, an interviewee reports that "I killed six Taliban today in Pakistan, now I'm off home to barbecue" (Clark, p. 173). The general public probably does not know the horrors of trying to live this double life. Those who must navigate this morally ambiguous terrain must try to find ways to divide these worlds. These pressures impact family life and marriage. One lieutenant colonel of the USAF describes it as: "every decision you made was … somebody living, saving somebody or somebody dying. And you walk into your house and you're trying to figure out whether your daughter is going to wear a blue tutu or a pink tutu and the disconnection is astounding" (Clark, p. 178). These individuals epitomize the troubling that occurs and the psychological traumas of the impact of killing by remote control, where home and battle become increasingly overlapping and fuzzy spaces. Indeed, Clark's utilization of a Haunting framework captures the "queer logic(s) of the crews simultaneously being and not being present in the war" (Clark, p. 173). As some pilots stated, the door to the operation trailer is like "a time and space portal to the space and time of war" and the burst of realization when the next shift crew walks in that "Oh my God, I'm not, I'm not in Afghanistan [laughing], I'm still in Las Vegas and it's extremely strange, it's very strange" (Clark, p. 172).

Techno-Ethics

While there are many discussions of ethics and psychology throughout the discipline, we are just now scratching the surface of complex sociotechnical interactions with empirical data with drones and warfare. At the intersection of ethics, technology, and psychology, this debate precedes the 21st century with a rich history stretching back to the industrial revolution and Marxist analyses of labor. Nevertheless, we assert that the faith in today's computing power (i.e., the pervasive belief that AI or algorithms are somehow objective, neutral, and superior to human decision-making) is deeply entrenched and poses new psychological dilemmas. What is often neglected today is the fact that it is humans that make these machines and algorithms, which then get socially constructed as if they were other than human and intrinsically superior to the actions of the human [beings that brought them into being]—so much so that humans come to measure their worth and general moral standards by the 'flawless' functions of machines. Thus, the drone operator is "wired into a technical ethical universe; a universe that relies predominantly on scientific processes and algorithmic logics to identify correct ethical solutions" (Schwarz, p. 182).

As many of these books point out, the techno-ethics that is enabled by killing at a distance is based on Western Enlightenment assumptions of visualization and empiricism that technological developments force us to confront. Indeed, Bousquet's opening of Brunelleschi and Alberti in the Renaissance with the rationalization of vision and mathematization of space maps onto Enlightenment assumptions of visually verifiable 'facts' and 'empirical data.' These assumptions meant that 'truth' became only what the eyes verified as 'reality' (Clark, p. 144). Ultimately, the blending of technology and humans in ever-increasingly complex webs of violence indicates that there is a danger to our modern ethical assumptions. Currently, technology proffers god-like omniscience over the inherent uncertainties of war and the social world more generally. As Schwarz argues, where ethics is coded, it contains the "illusory promise of certainty, the fallacy of being able to offer a technical way of resolving ethical questions. The actual ethical question is thus obscured" (Schwarz, p. 198). In the case of drone warfare, "the preoccupation with lives saved (of military personnel) and lives taken (as collateral in the war on terrorism) obscures the production of wounded and maimed bodies, psychological harm inflicted or disruptions and impediments of political communities in targeted populations" (Schwarz, p. 198). Thus, in coding ethics, a techno-ethics of war has begun to emerge that claims to solve the complexities of ethical-political dilemmas of killing and being killed in war. The human condition is reduced to a technical problem to be solved. It cannot answer the tensions inherent in the political choices to kill in war, nor can it detach "our soldiers" enough from the psychological traumas of war. In closing, we now turn to Ned Dobos' larger discussion of a militarized society's ethical pitfalls more broadly.

Cognitive Biases and the Risks of the Military

There are several risks and costs associated with a standing military, more so when you are utilizing it. Dobos discusses several psychological factors that mislead political decision-makers into misconstruing unjust conflicts as legitimate, thereby making our militaries prone to overuse. The Einstellung Effect is the "tendency to fixate on one particular kind of solution to a problem due to one's exposure to, or familiarity with, that solution"—a shortcut the mind takes to solve problems as efficiently as possible (Dobos, p. 88). Even well-meaning leaders will seek to address political problems with military solutions (this could well be a summary of U.S. post-9/11 foreign policy). Additionally, the instrument's law is the biased "tendency to use things just because we possess them, and have invested time, energy, or resources in their acquisition" (Dobos, p. 89). These impair our ability to make a clear-eyed and impartial assessment of the probability of success. Hence, their effect is to distort the appraisal of competing solutions to a problem, unbeknownst to

the decision-maker (Dobos, p. 90). The "illusion of control" is another cognitive bias whereby agents are emotionally invested in achieving a particular outcome, as war makers presumably are, they are more likely to exaggerate their ability to maintain control over the sequence of events (Dobos, p. 91). Finally, there is the danger that war makers will be inclined to overstate civilian culpability on the other side, and consequently to apply too heavy a discount to their interests when calculating proportionality. This danger exists "not because of any particular psychological feature that is unique to political decision makers. It exists because of a widespread unconscious bias known as 'attribution error'" (Dobos, p. 96). Ultimately, this leads to the conclusion that even in the hands of democratic states, the risks of the military being misused and overused is endemic to the institution itself; the only way to eliminate this would be to abolish the military.

There are a number of other cognitive biases at work, especially with the more specific use of technologies of war. Bousquet best explores this evolution of the complexities of human-machine interactions. This complex historicization of these human-machine interactions and the limits of human interpretation may lead some to falsely believe that technological advancements could solve these dilemmas. These machines were constructed to imitate all human senses, and yet it is assumed to be somehow outside of our creation or above our sensing/interpreting bodies. Today, however, the role of the human in the political economy of the human-technology complex is shifting, and the hierarchies are changing. What is lost in this discussion of technology is the fundamental question of a militarized society in the first place; from which all of the pertinent *in bello* questions follow. In Dobos' work, he has shown "that militaries are very costly institutions, not just financially, but morally and socially. Even in peacetime, the war-machine can be harmful to the individuals in it, and to its parent society, and dangerous to everybody else" (p. 132). While all of the other works allude to this critique of militarized societies in general, Dobos hopes to "have convinced the reader that whether a military is worth having ought always to be treated as an open question. Currently we think of it as a foregone conclusion" (p. 132).

Essential Questions for Psychology Moving Forward

In closing, we hope that this article has sparked an interest in the diverse fields of technologies of war and ethics, as we argue that psychology has much to contribute to these unique theoretical and empirical studies. The issue for drones and technological problem-solving more generally is that it is so easy to lose sight of the social and cultural contexts of war, killing, and ethics that have been outsourced to a kind of scientific-technological approach—offering answers to the ethical-political dilemmas of war as opposed to questions for democratic debate. As Bousquet aptly states: "In the twenty-first Century, the dialectical play of these tendencies is rapidly dissolving the spatiotemporal and normative constraints of the conventional battlefield. Untethered from discrete spheres of armed conflict and committed to relentlessly pursuing individual antagonists, the martial gaze must inevitably cast itself on the very civilian society that it was ostensibly erected to defend from external threat" (p. 192). There is indeed something seductive about war that captures those of us who study it. The issue that all four of these books raise is how we attempt to distance ourselves from the act of killing through technological innovation to solve the ethical-political dilemmas of warfare. From a microview of drone crews and the technologies they utilize to larger questions of ethics in modernity and the macroview of the costs of militarizing society, we must attempt to grapple with the issues raised here seriously as scholars and citizens.

As the sociologist and philosopher Zygmunt Bauman proffered: "Modernity did not make people more cruel. It created a system whereby more cruelty could be done by non-cruel people."[2] How

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[2]Bauman, Zygmunt. (1995). Life in Fragments: Essays in Postmodern Morality. Oxford: Blackwell, 197-198.

is it that the human has become so entangled with the inhumane? That humanity's highest creative aspirations of literature and imagination have been all but inseparable from its most terrible invention: the scourge of war. As Drew Gilpin Faust best summarizes: "the notion of war as sublime… reminds us that the human attraction to war as an embodiment of the transcendent is about the struggle to surpass the boundaries of the human as well as the limits of human understanding. The seductiveness of war derives in part, from its location on this boundary of the human, the inhuman, and the superhuman. It requires us to confront the relationship among the noble, the horrible, and the infinite; the animal, the spiritual, and the divine. Its fascination lies in its ability at once to allure and repel, in the paradox that thrives at its heart." The centrality of "paradox to any understanding of war: it is terrible, and yet we love it. We need to witness the worst of its destruction, in order not to love it even more. We must acknowledge both its horror and its attraction if we hope to understand the contradictions in its impact and presence in human lives."[3] Technology claims to absolve humans of the paradoxes and the sublime of war itself by further removing us from the act of killing and all of the psychological and moral injuries that come with it. Our fear is that technology claims to solve the ethical-political dilemmas of war, while in actuality, it only eases our consciences of taking lives; riskless war is even more politically seductive.

John R. Emery
University of Oklahoma

Hadley Biggs
Georgetown University

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[3]Faust, Drew Gilpin. (2011). The Chronicle of Higher Education. May 2. In Jefferson Lecture, Drew Faust Traces the Fascination of War, From Homer to Bin Laden. Retrieved February, 2022 from https://www.chronicle.com/article/in-jefferson-lecture-drew-faust-traces-the-fascination-of-war-from-homer-to-bin-laden/.