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Drone Wars: Transforming Conflict, Law, And Policy



Synopsis

Drones are the iconic military technology of many of today's most pressing conflicts, a lens through which U.S. foreign policy is understood, and a means for discussing key issues regarding the laws of war and the changing nature of global politics. Drones have captured the public imagination, partly because they project lethal force in a manner that challenges accepted rules, norms, and moral understandings. *Drone Wars* presents a series of essays by legal scholars, journalists, government officials, military analysts, social scientists, and foreign policy experts. It addresses drones' impact on the ground, how their use adheres to and challenges the laws of war, their relationship to complex policy challenges, and the ways they help us understand the future of war. The book is a diverse and comprehensive interdisciplinary perspective on drones that covers important debates on targeted killing and civilian casualties, presents key data on drone deployment, and offers new ideas on their historical development, significance, and impact on law and policy. *Drone Wars* documents the current state of the field at an important moment in history when new military technologies are transforming how war is practiced by the United States and, increasingly, by other states and by non-state actors around the world.

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Customer Reviews

Drone Wars is a rich collection that offers the latest in the growing scholarship on drone warfare. The book casts a wide net in terms of subject matter. One wonders how, even with the obvious interrelationship between its sections, the editors can keep the volume from reading like a piecemeal collection. But the book benefits from a shrewd organizational choice — each of the

book's four sections begins with brief personal narrative accounts – and these help the book to hang together well. These first-person descriptions of drone warfare range from the perspective of civilians on the ground to the experience of drone operators themselves. Journalist David Rohde authors the book's leading chapter, where he gives an account of his time as an imprisoned abductee under the control of the Taliban in the Tribal Regions of Pakistan; parts two and three of the book begin with stories from drone operators, and a particularly compelling chapter offers a glimpse of drones' impact on a shopkeeper's life in North Waziristan, Pakistan. These views – from the ground – offer insightful glimpses inside the lives and minds of those who operate drones and those who feel the effects of their operation. While similar (and more detailed and in-depth) accounts of such experiences exist in the popular press and in the reports of NGOs and international organizations, the inclusion of these accounts is refreshing; too often academic discussions of drones can tend to be abstract and distant – the editors did well by reminding the reader of the human face – that is impacted by drone use, drone policy, and the relationship between drones and international law.

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