

Title: Remote Warfare, the Warrior Ethos, and The Just War Tradition

Speaker: Dr. Joseph Chapa

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POC: Dr. Pauline Shanks Kaurin

SYNOPSIS:

What is wrong with "drone" warfare? There have been several arguments in the literature that there is something morally wrong in principle with the remote application of lethal means in combat. Most of these critiques are grounded in the risk relationship between the remote warfare crew, who faces almost no physical risk at all, and the target of a "drone strike," who faces a great deal of physical risk. Does this risk asymmetry render remote warfare morally impermissible even in contexts in which a more traditional application of lethal force would be morally justified? In this talk, Lt Col Chapa addresses two lines of argument in particular. The first of which is that there is something untoward about remote warfare because remote warfare crews, based on their lack of physical risk, are unable to cultivate the warrior ethos that other combatants can cultivate. The second is that one's moral justification for killing in war is grounded in one's facing physical risk. Because the remote warfare crews do not face physical risk, the argument continues, remote warfare crews lack a moral justification for killing in war. Through a closer look at historical cases, the just war tradition, and US Predator and Reaper operations, Lt Col Chapa argues that remote warfare crews can, in principle, cultivate the warrior ethos and, in many cases, have the same moral justification for killing in war as their more traditional counterparts.

BIOs:

Joseph Chapa is an officer in the U.S. Air Force and holds a doctorate in philosophy from the University of Oxford. His areas of expertise include just war theory, military ethics, and especially the ethics of remote and autonomous weapons. His doctoral research investigates an individual rights-based account of just war theory. He is a senior pilot with more than 1,400 pilot and instructor pilot hours, many of which were flown in support of major U.S. combat and humanitarian operations. He currently serves as the Department of the Air Force's first Chief Responsible AI Ethics Officer. His book, *Is Remote Warfare Moral?* with PublicAffairs Books was published in July, 2022.