



Australian
National
University

Predators, Reapers and post-heroic war

Tuesday 9 August 2011 5.30–6.45pm, refreshments served from 5.00pm

Dr Christian Enemark Associate Professor, National Security College, ANU

Theatre 1 Hedley Bull Centre (Bldg 130), Corner Liversidge Street and Garran Road, ANU, Asia Pacific College of Diplomacy



Are air strikes using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs or 'drones') changing the character of war? The United States has recently carried out drone strikes against targets inside Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and Libya. The use of hunter-killer drones like the Predator and the Reaper is a means of engaging distant foes in a post-heroic, risk-free manner. As such, this mode of killing challenges traditional notions of what it means to be a combatant and the status of war as something morally distinguishable from other forms of violence. Arguably, the peculiar characteristic of war is that it is a potentially lethal contest in which one combatant using force against another does so in a relationship of mutual self-defence. Unlike the pilots of in-theatre aircraft, ground-based drone operators on the other side of the world experience no physical danger and are thus not required to exercise courage when using lethal force. Although the military profession is supposedly one whose defining and much-admired characteristic is risk-taking, drone operators manifest paradoxically as disembodied warriors. Is this an aberration or a transformation in military affairs?

Mark O'Neill from the National Security College will moderate questions and answers after Dr Enemark's presentation.

Presented by

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Registration required

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by 4 August 2011

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This seminar is free and open to the public

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