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## Military Technologies and Human Labor

Schnepf, J. D.

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***Killer Apps: War, Media, Machine.* By Jeremy Packer and Joshua Reeves. Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press. 2020. 280 pp. Cloth, \$99.95; paper, \$26.95; e-book, \$26.95.**

***Life in the Age of Drone Warfare.* Edited by Lisa Parks and Caren Kaplan. Durham, NC: Duke Univ. Press. 2017. 449 pp. Cloth, \$114.95; paper, \$30.95; e-book, \$30.95.**

***Unmanning: How Humans, Machines, and Media Perform Drone Warfare.* By Katherine Chandler. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press. 2020. 190 pp. Cloth, \$125.00; paper, \$34.95; e-book, \$34.95.**

In *Surrogate Humanity: Race, Robots, and the Politics of Technological Futures*, Neda Atanasoski and Kalindi Vora (2019) observe that under capitalism transnational media and corporate promotional accounts of artificial intelligence (AI)—alongside algorithms, robotics, and digital technologies—subscribe to a logic of technoliberalism whereby technological advancements promise to unburden humanity from the daily toils of unfulfilling work in order to reach its full potential. To romanticize human flourishing by way of technological efflorescence requires that engineering imaginaries craft a narrow definition of what the human is and what such flourishing entails; as the authors put it, these cultural imaginaries “tend to be limited by prior racial and gendered imaginaries of what kinds of tasks separate the human from the less-than or not-quite human other” (4). It is no surprise, then, that those menial tasks performed by the “not-quite human other” have historically been rendered invisible or deemed insignificant in order to attribute the marvels of machine autonomy to AI and other technological developments. As Atanasoski and Vora explain, “The technoliberal desire to resolutely see technology as magical rather than the product of human work relies on the liberal notion of labor as that performed by

the recognizably human autonomous subject, and not those obscured labors supporting it” (6).

In its historicization of the engineering imaginaries that inform AI, *Surrogate Humanity* draws our attention to the constitutive relation between autonomous, “intelligent” systems posited as a feature of our technological future and the obfuscation of forms of labor—what the authors refer to as surrogacy—that historically have consolidated the autonomous, liberal subject. As Atanasoski and Vora (2019: 6) explain, attending to surrogate figures, including “the body of the enslaved standing in for the master, the vanishing of native bodies necessary for colonial expansion, as well as invisibilized labor including indenture, immigration, and outsourcing,” makes clear how “disappearance, erasure, and elimination [prove] necessary to maintain the liberal subject as the agent of historical progress.” Although *Surrogate Humanity* is not one of the books under consideration in this review, I begin with it to put forth a theoretical framework that informs what follows. So much has been written about the rise of AI and warfare—some of it descriptive, most of it speculative—so it is worth reminding ourselves that much of AI’s rhetorical force depends on deliberate efforts to discursively reframe and bureaucratically rearrange human labor and human settlements to shore up certain teleologies and mythologies about the infallibility and foresight of military technologies. And while the books under consideration in this review—Katherine Chandler’s *Unmanning*, Lisa Parks and Caren Kaplan’s edited volume *Life in the Age of Drone Warfare*, and Jeremy Packer and Joshua Reeves’s *Killer Apps*—spin out an astonishing array of arguments pertaining to technologies of war, this framing asks us to follow only those threads that would tie intelligent systems back to the human and human labor. The deliberation informing this approach is important to acknowledge from the outset because across the texts there is no consensus that AI warrants special attention or even that it ought to anchor current scholarly discussions of military technologies. In fact, while *Killer Apps* claims that “war has emerged as perhaps the predominant public concern regarding AI and its futures” (90), *Unmanning* and *Life in the Age of Drone Warfare*, the two books devoted exclusively to drone technology and warfare, do not take AI as a central concern (neither *artificial intelligence* nor *AI* appears in either book’s index). My hope is that, by pursuing how war machines are placed in discursive formations that inevitably must contend with the presence of the human in the context of our colonial past and

present—how the human appears through the appeal to autonomy and technoliberal narratives of progress, on the one hand, and through the disappearance of the body and surrogate labor, on the other—we get closer to a historical and cultural account of how we have arrived at the term *intelligent* to describe the senseless weapons of contemporary warfare.

In *Unmanning: How Humans, Machines and Media Perform Drone Warfare* (2020), Katherine Chandler delves into the historical circumstances that give rise to the concept of unmanning—a pervasive descriptor for the weapons of twenty-first-century warfare and regularly ascribed to the technological assemblage commonly referred to as the drone—by turning to the past. Moving through densely detailed archival materials recounting drone experimentation conducted between 1936 and 1992, *Unmanning* considers five case studies as it unfolds the story of how the US military sought to equate the removal of human labor from the circuit of drone operations with the machine's technological optimization. Chandler's goal is to undo the tenacious "myth of unmanning" that adheres to military technologies and subsequently hides the complex interactions of humans, machines, and media that make up the drone assemblage (11). Chandler contends that, in disavowing the human who remains present in the circuit of drone operations, drone aircraft "perform politics" through the appeal to technoscientific neutrality (127).

For Chandler, the shift to the terminology of *unmanned* drone flight begins around 1946, when it comes to index a "conceptual shift" positing "the negation of man" from the scene of strategic military reconnaissance (61). If drone systems prior to World War II functioned as aerial targets for anti-aircraft gunners and as missile-like projectiles in the war itself, then it is the postwar turn to technologies of surveillance that served the Cold War demand for a continuous world picture and anticipated a militarized future in which war readiness required the acquisition of massive amounts of information as a form of risk mitigation. The unmanning concept contributes to the sense that reconnaissance images are the objective output of advanced machinery. Not only does the production of the aerial photo's "self-evident" factuality contribute to the disavowal of the media infrastructures that produce it, but also, as Chandler explains, "the camera unmans the actions of operators, government officials, industry executives and others who make the systems function while defining threat and attack in the Cold War as a system that operated automatically and without

human volition” (71). Referring to the military’s reconnaissance flights as “unmanned,” then, not only hid the masses of human labor that went into retrieving, processing, and analyzing such images but also shored up the perception that a technologically mediated view of the land below is the politically neutral output of mere machinery.

Importantly, the use of drones for reconnaissance in the Cold War also drew on enduring “tropes of colonialism” that understood the “destruction of indigenous lands and histories as technological advance” and foresaw machine automation as a method of obscuring the colonizer (81). One of the most interesting chapters of *Unmanning* is titled “Buffalo Hunter”—a reference to US intelligence-gathering drones that flew over Vietnam in the 1960s and 1970s. It argues that the notion that the Cold War was managed through “automated control arose in tandem with postcolonialism” (81). Removing the human from the scene of action effectively names a new iteration of colonial strategy in this period, one that incorporates technoscience as progress. Specifically, the emergence of the military’s omniscience through “[a] dispersed network of bases, laboratories, industry, and personnel allowed for the illusion of unmanning to cohere, shaping a context for US global control that claimed to be machinelike, deterritorialized, and all-seeing” (87)—even as the United States outwardly supported the processes of decolonialization and self-determination.

As Chandler tells it, the clandestine US project of imperial expansion through archipelagic occupation and control in this period further informed and refined the conceptual contours of unmanned technology. Disavowing Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands in the Pacific as a politically strategic holding, for example, in the late 1940s the United States nonetheless displaced and dispersed the indigenous population of Bikini Atoll while polluting the environment in its quest to test military technologies—most famously its atomic weaponry, but also its drone aircrafts. This deliberate intervention and removal of inhabitants, coupled with the effects of enduring contamination that render the land uninhabitable, abets the concept of a machinic deterritorialized view from nowhere. A similar move is discernable in the southwestern United States in the 1950s, when the US Air Force framed the New Mexico desert, where test flights of the Firebee pilotless drone took place, as “desolate”—a discursive tactic that writes over the history of land seizure from the indigenous populations that live in this region (88). Finally, Chandler recounts how unmanned reconnaissance systems supplied by the industry contractor Ryan Aeronautical were authorized for use in Southeast Asia between 1962 and 1975

as a part of US counterinsurgency efforts in Vietnam. Despite official US Air Force accounts that continued to emphasize the unmanned nature of its reconnaissance systems, Chandler shows how Ryan Aeronautical's own project engineers contested this portrayal by emphasizing the necessity of human laborers in the circuit of drone operations: Ryan engineer crews not only arrived to work early in the morning to commence an hours-long programming operation before planes could become airborne, but they also performed a series of cross-checks with a crew from the US Air Force.

Despite the work of human laborers who ensured that drone systems remained operational, the disavowal of the human operator produced through the concept of “unmanning” also paves the way for the anthropomorphization of this technology. From foundational developments in the emerging field of cybernetics, Chandler finds a conceptual basis for the new emphasis on “purposeful and purposeless behaviors in order to transform the definition of machines: rather than mere tools, technical systems, like organisms, can react in response to feedback” (66). Self-regulating and purposeful in theory, machines were readily reframed as possessing something akin to human intention—even though, in practice, cybernetic control and communication did not displace human control but often operated alongside “remote communication,” as in the case of the Firebee (68). The transference of human attributes onto technologies went beyond mere intention. As early as 1945, intelligence itself became a machinic attribute when the *Washington Daily News* referred to a drone as the “Brain Box” and later described it as a “robot brain” (61), while Ryan Aeronautical promotional materials from 1953 described the Firebee target plane as “the bee with an electronic brain” (65). Chandler shows that, far from the intelligent, autonomous systems they were pitched as, drones like the Firebee I were largely preprogrammed. It responded to only “five radio controlled commands” (67) and was operated by men on the ground who manipulated “a small black box containing a control stick and switches” (67). The “black box,” in other words, isn't shorthand for an early iteration of AI; rather, it is a locus for what Chandler describes as “the elision of human engineering, design, and control with a behavioristic model of technology [that] provides the conditions for ‘unmanning’ to emerge, as if the black box exceeds human action” (68).

Throughout her argument, Chandler contends that accompanying the process of machinic humanization is the ghostly presence of

humans whose persistence in drone operations endures even as military and corporate accounts of the technology often obscure the necessity of their labors. If, on the one hand, cybernetic appeals to the automaticity of the human, what N. Katherine Hayles once described as the body “reconfigured as an information system,” sought to recast the human as a seamless element of an efficient, automatic operation (67), then on the other hand, labor practices shuffled humans out of the picture through an endless process of sectioning and dividing. Chandler emphasizes how human labor embedded in networks of drone operations is atomized so that the work of surveillance and killing gets segmented and dispersed through technical systems. For example, the book’s fifth and final chapter, titled “Pioneer,” revisits a description of a 1992 targeted killing carried out by Israeli forces. Here Chandler notes that “RPV [remotely piloted vehicle] operators do not know *who* they are targeting as they carry out the operation” (123). This segmentation of operations, coupled with their geographic dispersal, hides the technical laborer from view. In this way, Chandler’s thesis accords with Atanasoski and Vora’s contention that obscuring certain forms of labor is crucial to the production and maintenance of technological futures that highlight the apparent autonomy and intelligence of machines.

Edited by comparative media studies scholar Lisa Parks and American studies scholar Caren Kaplan, *Life in the Age of Drone Warfare* (2017) picks up chronologically where *Unmanning* leaves off, pursuing the political and cultural implications of civilian and martial unmanned aerial vehicles primarily in the post-9/11 era of the US-led global drone wars. The book’s introduction, written by Parks and Kaplan, rises to the formidable task of giving intellectual shape to what was, at the time of its publication, a still emerging field of study. This incipience is evidenced by the disparate voices the volume assembles to convey the scope of the critical conversation, which brings together appraisals of the drone warfare found in popular journalism and activist writing in the late 2000s and early 2010s (they single out CODEPINK founder Medea Benjamin’s 2012 *Drone Warfare: Killing by Remote Control*), as well as studies of robotic warfare, new accounts of verticality, and various strategies of risk mitigation. Among critical scholarly works, they highlight Derek Gregory’s series of essays on the geographies of drone warfare, as well as Grégoire Chamayou’s influential monograph, *Théorie du drone*, first published in France in 2013. What differentiates this volume from these previous works, according to the authors, is “a privileging of critical humanities,

poststructuralist, and feminist perspectives” that takes care to offer historicization and contextualization (7). For Parks and Kaplan, one goal of the volume is to correct what they see as an absence in the existing scholarship, namely, the need to provide “a critique of the technology that recognizes its imbrication within cultural imaginaries, biopolitics, difference, and perception” (8).

For many scholars, especially those working in the critical humanities, this intervention lays the foundation for what has become the multidisciplinary field of drone studies. While they note that the volume assembles a diverse range of scholarly fields, including “science and technology studies, poststructuralist and transnationalist feminism, postcolonial criticism, critical legal studies, media studies, geography, and art” (9), Parks and Kaplan draw these approaches together by formulating five key themes that, taken together, set out a succinct, new agenda for the study of drone technologies and warfare (9). The first of these themes calls for drones to be understood as participants in “cultural imaginaries” (9):

This book approaches the drone as a technology that draws upon and generates particular ways of perceiving and understanding the world. Drones are not idle machines hovering above; they are loaded with certain assumptions and ideologies. They operationalize fantasies and produce psychological states ranging from fear to fury, vulnerability to vengeance, anxiety to security. Drones should not only be thought of as the high-tech machines of militaries or states; they are also ideas, designs, visions, plans, and strategies that affect civilians on the ground, pilots in the remote cockpit, and consumers in the marketplace. (9–10)

Building on this argument for thinking about the drone expansively, their second theme “approaches drones as technologies of power or as biopolitical machines” (10). As Parks and Kaplan put it, “Far from being wholly ‘autonomous’ or ‘unmanned,’ drones are fusions or hybrids of human labor and technical objects and processes” (10). This approach accords with Chandler’s insistence that the human remains in the circuit of drone operations. If for Chandler, the drone “performs politics” especially at the moment it disavows human operators to claim technological neutrality (127), then Parks and Kaplan elaborate on the ramifications of this claim, underscoring how the drone, in its humanitarian and martial incarnations, might be said to intervene unevenly in human life by distributing life and death, respectively. The contributors to *Life in the Age of Drone Warfare* also



attend to what Parks and Kaplan identify as “the critical issue of *difference* and *affect*” (10). By this they gesture to the need to address “specific drone uses across different (trans)national, regional, or local contexts and analyze the effects of drone operations from diverse social perspectives, from those who build, design, and pilot drones to civilians who live daily beneath their unwavering eye” (10). In particular, they seek to highlight “the affective experiences of subaltern and minority subjects whose lives are too often eclipsed in scholarly discussions of drone technology and warfare” (10). Here, one might recall the report titled *Living under Drones* jointly released by the International Human Rights and Conflict Resolution Clinic and the Global Justice Clinic (2012). Apart from quantitative and qualitative strike data, it conveyed how the presence of US drones in the skies over Pakistan had impacted the nation’s civilians in terms of medical assistance, property damage, and economic hardship, as well as educational access, literacy, cultural disruption, and mental health.

Parks and Kaplan also contend that scholars ought to “approach drones through the registers of the *sensory* and the *perceptual*” (11). We can see the urgency of attending to the theme of remote-sensing practices and the perceptions they produce by linking it back to Chandler’s account of military reconnaissance. In this volume, too, we see how the aerial “view from nowhere” is deployed for political ends. This theme has important resonances in the domestic realm as well, where civilians can now use readily available consumer drones to “sense, perceive, and privatize the Earth’s surface” (11). Finally, the volume puts a spotlight on the use of drone warfare by the United States alongside its strategic use of juridical power—a power that bends existing legal definitions and creates new ones to produce classes of people newly subject to containment, surveillance, and targeting. Taken together, they appeal to the liberal desire for the appearance of a hygienic application of state power—what Lisa Hajjar in her chapter in this volume refers to as “lawfare.” In framing the volume’s analysis of drone technology and warfare with this set of thematics in mind, Parks and Kaplan offer what ought to be understood as nothing less than a reorientation to drone technologies, a concise yet sweeping set of new approaches for a scholarly field that had thus far been largely splintered across disparate scholarly, journalistic, and technoscientific interests.

Parks and Kaplan helpfully schematize this multidisciplinary project further by organizing the fifteen pieces in this volume into three distinct parts. The chapters in part 1, titled “Juridical, Genealogical,

and Geopolitical Imaginaries,” are broadly interested in how drone technology maintains a “constitutive relation to concepts such as sovereignty, territory, borders, and verticality” (12). Chandler’s chapter, “American Kamikaze: Television-Guided Assault Drones in World War II,” appears here (an earlier iteration of her own book’s second chapter), as does Parks’s chapter, “Vertical Mediation and the U.S. Drone War in the Horn of Africa,” which “argues that U.S. military drone operations can be understood as technologies of *vertical mediation*” (14). Part 2, titled “Perception and Perspectives,” opens with Kaplan’s essential “Drone-o-Rama: Troubling the Temporal and Spatial Logics of Distant Warfare.” Broadly, this part examines the “relationship between aerial drone technology and modes of perception, meanings of ‘perspective’ and the production of worldviews” (14). Part 3, titled “Biopolitics, Automation, and Robotics,” brings together chapters that “engage with the sociotechnical dimensions of drones, theorizing their relation to biopolitics, robotics, and automation” (17). In this part, which includes a chapter by Packer and Reeves, whose book is also under review here, the status of the human and human labor in drone operations receives the greatest attention.

While Chandler has enumerated the many points at which humans enter the circuit of drone operations, for the chapters in part 3 of Parks and Kaplan’s volume it is a multifaceted consideration of the complex labor performed by the military drone operator that gives the lie to the tenacious concept of unmanned drone systems. This part further refines Chandler’s account of the drone assemblage as an interaction between human, machine, and media by dwelling on the affective, subjective, social, and psychological aspects that feed into and emerge from this configuration. In fact, the critical force of many of these pieces, including the first-person letter to the reader written by former sensor operator Brandon Bryant, derives from the marked discrepancies between their accounts of what Peter Asaro’s chapter names the “bureaucratized killing” that operators perform and the ideals of the sort of labor fit for the autonomous liberal subject outlined by Atanasoski and Vora. For instance, Asaro points out that “killing work” is subject to “cultural imperatives to render invisible certain distasteful forms of work” (285) and that, even within the military, operators “are subject to powerful social pressures not to reveal or discuss their work or its psychological or emotional stress” (286). Through a consideration of fictional texts, Inderpal Grewal’s chapter theorizes how, under globalized neoliberal capitalism, critiques of the monotonous, networked nature of the labor demanded by drone

operations may perversely generate a nostalgia for forms of “manned” military violence that furnished a sense of “empowerment” and liberal subjecthood for subjects of US empire building (350).

The final book under consideration in this review, *Killer Apps: War, Media, Machine* (2020), by communications scholars Jeremy Packer and Joshua Reeves, puts its theoretical orientation, objects of inquiry, and scholarly motivations plainly in its introduction: it aims to “[use] media theory as a lens to analyze the history of warfare, the rationality of weapons development, and US military roadmaps in order to better understand the political implications of this convergence of AI and war—especially as this convergence serves to replace human soldiers in the air, underwater, and on the battlefield” (4). Unlike the traditional academic monograph that unfolds its argument stepwise across its chapters, the authors state upfront that the book makes no attempt to offer a “single route” through its claims (x). As such, the book touches on resource extraction, atmospheric science, and extra-terrestrial life, in addition to its focus on weapons of war. Scaffolding each of its nine chapters are official military terms borrowed from the US Department of Defense (DoD) or US Air Force that set the stage for a series of unexpected accounts of an array of media technologies relied on by military strategists.

In contrast to the first two books in this review, *Killer Apps* takes the concept of “artificially intelligent weapons” as a given from its opening pages (1–2). More specifically, it works from the premise that, since the beginning of the Cold War, the US military has sought to develop superior technology by “trying to dispense with as much of its human personnel as possible,” to remove them from the circuit of weapons operations in a move toward automation and away from waged labor (2). The authors attribute this desire in part to a belief, derived from the classic Shannon and Weaver sender-receiver model of communication, that humans introduce delay, distortion, and error into the chain of communication (10). Packer and Reeves argue that, by minimizing this sort of “noise,” reducing the probability of user error (15), and displacing human perception, autonomous weapons do away with the need for human labor, so much so that even “drone warfare’s much-discussed and heavily relied on ‘human in the loop’ has become all but ornamental” (3). No doubt this account of military technology’s replacement of human labor in battle, as well as its underlying assumption that these technologies work autonomously and efficiently— (“[human] replacement by smarter, faster machines

is simply a natural advancement in communications, command and control” (10), they claim)—positions this book in marked contrast to *Unmanning*, which argues that the discursive production of unmanned intelligent machines obfuscates human decision making, error, and politics from the scene of war, and *Life in the Age of Warfare*, which insists that “drones are fusions or hybrids of human labor and technical objects” (10). In many ways Packer and Reeves’s claim seems to follow in part from their disciplinary interest in the media technologies of the US military. To look at war through a media theory lens is to foreground the transmission of footage or decisions, the processing of data, the assessing of targets, even as it can also risk setting aside what is human.

The key contention of *Killer Apps* is that media technologies are not merely passive instruments of war; instead, they actively participate in the epistemological work of producing enemies. “Every new medium shifts the realm of the intelligible,” the authors state, “creating new enemies specific to its particular capacities for capturing and processing data” (8). Media apparatuses not only extend this productive capacity to soldiers—who effectively sense and perceive through military media—but also recursively produce “new weapons and new forms of warfare” (8). Packer and Reeves acknowledge the formidable challenge of saying something new about media and war, given that the military-media complex is a central consideration for many media theorists, including Donna Haraway, N. Katherine Hayles, and Paul Virilio. To differentiate their argument and maintain their position, following Friedrich Kittler, that “media technology provides the basic material conditions for what is thinkable, practicable, and sayable in any given cultural moment” (12), the authors explicitly distance themselves from humanist and feminist interventions that focus on how humans shape technological developments in warfare. Instead, they propose a materialist analysis, aligning themselves with such post-human feminists as Rosi Braidotti, Lucy Suchman, and Donna Haraway and building on Helen Hester’s belief in the insistent physicality of the digital. Carving out a gap in the scholarship for their argument and justifying the project’s reluctance to critique US imperial culture depend on excising situations that sit outside a hermetic realm they describe as the “intense, highly specific conditions of live warfare” (13); for the authors, these situations include everything from “capitalist exploitation” and “inequitable social relations” to “protest movements, and other forms of social/political struggle” (13). Whether or not a reader accepts the proposition that warfare’s intensity, immediacy, and sheer

violence make it “a special case” will determine if the reader is sympathetic to such an approach (13).

The chapters themselves are decidedly less decisive on the stark discontinuities proposed in the introduction. For example, despite the introduction’s strong assertion that the “human in the loop” of drone operations “has become all but ornamental” (3), we learn in a chapter devoted to the decentralization of command that “at this time only humans are officially entrusted with ‘kill’ decisions” and that human labor remains essential to the operations of remotely piloted drone aircraft, particularly when it comes to the processing of surveillance data (55). These shifting responses to the question of whether and how AI has replaced humans in media-assisted warfare might be due in part to the book’s interest in not only how media technologies have been incorporated into warfare historically but also how the DoD’s prolific speculative output, such as its various *Unmanned Systems Integrated Roadmaps* or the US Defense Science Board’s 2016 “Summer Study,” repeatedly narrates scenarios that fantasize the foreclosure of any military future that might require human labor. The DoD’s long-standing investment in the creative work of writing scenarios that hypothesize fictional distributions of technology and labor exemplifies Parks and Kaplan’s contention that “a wide spectrum of imaginaries . . . are deployed through and with unmanned aerial vehicles” (10).

In their approach to AI and warfare, Packer and Reeves work from Kittler’s famous premise, here reformulated by John Durham Peters, that “media—not human creativity and political will—determine our situation” (91). In their chapter titled “In Extremis”—a DoD term that describes “[a] situation of such exceptional urgency that immediate action must be taken to minimize imminent loss of life or catastrophic degradation of the political or military situation” (89)—Packer and Reeves disagree with those who would suggest hopefully that humanity can program, regulate, or otherwise repurpose the destructive capacities of media technologies. As they see it, efforts to produce AI that is “docile and inoffensive” or benevolent and altruistic risk underestimating military-technical systems’ formidable resistance to political agency (102). Atanasoski and Vora would take issue with both positions—the call to make AI kinder and gentler and the inevitability of media’s recalcitrance—insofar as this disagreement does not address the force of their critique, put forth at the beginning of this review, that AI imaginaries, whether framed as beneficial to humans or as potentially destructive, inevitably reproduce the historic erasure of laboring surrogates necessary to shore up what Lauren Wilcox

(2017: 33) helpfully describes as “an ideal humanity associated with a certain form of masculinity; namely, the possessive liberal individual, whose agency is secured in a conscious mind.” Insofar as each of the books in this review nonetheless finds surrogate figures—inhabitants from the Marshall Islands, drone operators engaged in surveillance and killing, or those quietly parsing surveillance data, for instance—we must continue to question the erasure of certain populations and laborers that inevitably accompanies the emergence of “intelligent” military technologies.

**J. D. Schnepf** is Assistant Professor of American Studies at the University of Groningen.

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