Another Case against Killer Robots

Robo-Philosophy 2014 Aarhus University

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Background

- Increasing concern about lethal autonomous robotic weapons.
- Two opposing views about their ethical nature.



Questions

- Is there anything particularly unethical about lethal autonomous weapons, compared to, for example, drones or missiles?
- More generally, is there any reason against any autonomous (or even automatic) killing machines, not only against autonomous weapons used in war?

Goal

• To articulate a reason against killer robots, including lethal autonomous weapons.

Upstate Drone Action Reports

Resistance to Automated Warfare, beginning in Our Own Back Yard!

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Drones equal War Crimes



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Videos of May 8th Hearing in DeWi April 28, 2013 Defendants

Posted on May 26, 2014 by Upstate Drone Action

Videos by Charley Bowman

Taken at May 8 DeWitt Town Court hearing for Protesters arrested during a protest at Hancock Air National Guard Base on April 28, 2013. The first video shows a meeting between the Pro Se defendants and ADA Jordan McNamara. The rest show Judge David Gideon meeting with individual protesters to decide their Court Date.

:三・再生リスト | 1/7 ADA Jordan McNamara Offers to Hancock Pro Se De.







http://upstatedroneaction.org/index.html

Weapons with Greater Autonomy







http://www.hrw.org/node/111291/section/4

Cases for lethal robotic weapons

- It is possible to make robots who will observe the Laws of War.
- Robots can be more ethical than human because they are not disturbed by emotions like fear, hatred etc.
- To protect people's lives is a duty of a nation, and so it is ethically bad if a nation exposes it's soldiers to unnecessary risks by not using robots.







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Can robots be trusted to know right from May 12, 2014

Is it possible to develop "moral" autonomous robots with a right, wrong, and the consequences of both?

Researchers from Tufts University, Brown University, and R Polytechnic Institute think so, and are teaming with the U.S. Navy to explore technology that would pave the way to do exactly that.

"Moral competence can be roughly thought about as the ability to learn, reason with, act upon, and talk about the laws and societal conventions on which humans tend to agree," says principal investigator Matthias Scheutz, professor of computer science at Tufts School of Engineering and director of the Human-Robot Interaction Laboratory (HRI Lab) at Tufts.

"The question is whether machines — or any other artificial for that matter — can emulate and exercise these abilities."

But since there's no universal agreement on the morality of interesting questions. Was HAL 9000 (HAL = (Heuristically morality?

Algorithmic morals on the battlefield

Scheutz cites a simplified military battlefield scenario, when

improve on Asimov's simplistic three laws of robotics): a robot medic responsible for helping wounded soldiers is ordered to transport urgently needed medication to a nearby field hospital. En route, it encounters a Marine with a fractured leg. Should the robot abort the mission to assist the injured? Will it?

If the machine stops, a new set of questions arises. The robot assesses the soldier's physical state and determines that unless it applies traction, internal bleeding in the soldier's thigh could prove fatal. However, applying traction will

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Algorithmic morals on the battlefield





M. Scheutz

S. Bringsjord

http://www.kurzweilai.net/can-robots-be-trusted-to-knowright-from-wrong



Nations confront killer robots challenge

At the first multilateral meeting ever held on killer robots, nations have recognized the need to confront the challenge of fully autonomous weapons that could select and attack targets without any human control. The call issued by the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots for a pre-emptive ban on these fully autonomous weapons has become a central feature of the international debate.

A total of 87 countries participated in the four-day informal meeting of experts on "lethal autonomous weapons systems" by the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) at the United Nations (UN) on Geneva, which concluded on the afternoon of Friday, May 16 (71 states parties and signatories to the convention and 12 observer states). Representatives were also present

e of the Red Cross (ICRC), and ation of the Campaign to Stop Killer







LOSING HUMANITY The Case against Killer Robuts



IRC

Losing Humanity The Case against Killer Robots 2012

http://www.stopkillerrobots.org/2014/05/ccwexperts/

Cases against lethal robotic weapons

- Robots cannot distinguish noncombatants from combatants.
- Robots make war an easy choice for policy makers.
- It is unclear who would be responsible for the crime by robots.

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What if these problems are solved?

Situations other than war where killing a person might be accepted



Can robots be an executioner?



Cases against lethal robotic weapons (again)

- Robots cannot distinguish noncombatants from combatants.
- Robots make war an easy choice for policy makers.
- It is unclear who would be responsible for the crime by robots.

These types of objections do not seem applicable to the robot executioner

What is a robot?

- Artificial
- Possibly autonomous or automatic
- Possibly human-like
- Labourer





Structure of Labour



Structure of Robot Labour



Structure of War



Structure of Robot War







Why is the robot executioner evil?

Why is the robot executioner evil?

Because it creates greater psychological distance between us and those executed.



Cf. Gunkel, The Machine Question, Žižek, Parallax View.





Distance affects our moral thinking

- Waldmann, M. R. and J. H. Dieterich (2007) Throwing a bomb on a person versus throwing a person on a bomb: Intervention myopia in moral intuitions. *Psychological Science*, 18(3): 247-53.
- Aguiar, F., P. Brañas-Garza, and L. Miller (2008) Moral distance in dictators games. *Judgement and Decision Making*, 3(4):344–54.
- Aguilar, P., S. Brussino, and J.-M. Fernndez-Dols (2013) Psychological distance increases uncompromising consequentialism. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 49(3):449–52.
- Costa, A., A. Foucart, S. Hayakawa, M. Aparici, J. Apesteguia, et al. (2014) Your Morals Depend on Language. *PLoS ONE* 9(4): e94842.

Weapons and Distance



distance: mapping the moral epistemology of remote fighting"

To sum up

- Morality should change over time and across the cultures. Instead of adhering the existing norms, we have to rethink them when necessary.
- We should keep a close eye to what our action lead to, and to those affected by our morally significant action.
- Employing robots may get in the way of this process.
- So when we delegate a morally significant task to a robot, we have to be careful not to let it blind our eyes.

``Mittler zwischen Hirn und Händen muss Hertz sein." Fritz Lang, *Metropolis* (1927)