

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS
Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice
Symposium: **Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems**
Submissions Due: January 15, 2021

Under the guest editorship of Pierre Thompson, universities/colleges committee member of Pax Christi International's Catholic Nonviolence Initiative (CNI-US), *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice* 33(2) invites essays for a special issue on: **Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems**.

Artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics researchers have warned of “the third revolution in warfare, after gunpowder and nuclear arms” – the emergence of fully autonomous weapons that can select and engage targets without human intervention. Sometimes referred to as “killer robots”, Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) will fundamentally change the nature of warfare and policing. Governments and civil society are intensifying the call for an international treaty to ban the development, production, and use of evolving weapons systems that lack meaningful human control over the application of deadly force. This special issue of *Peace Review* seeks to investigate: first, the ethical, legal, moral, operational, security, societal, and technical concerns that arise from the delegation of decision-making authority to machines with respect to the use of force; second, possible lines of approach and action to retain meaningful human control over the use of force. Essays are invited from scholars, practitioners, and activists.

General themes that contributors can address in their essays include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Terms used in the discussion of LAWS, including “autonomy” in weapons systems and “meaningful human control” over the use of force
- Dangers of algorithmic bias, automation bias, and the “black box problem”
- Compliance with International Humanitarian Law, including the principles of humanity, distinction, proportionality, and military necessity
- Effect on the psychology of killing, moral injury, accountability for war crimes, and protection of human dignity during war
- Operationalization in military doctrine, organization, and modernization efforts, such as algorithmic warfare, multi-domain command and control, and sensor-to-shooter systems
- Applications of LAWS outside of armed conflict, such as border control and policing

- Unintended consequences of LAWS, such as arms races, proliferation among non-state actors, lowering the threshold of war, targeted killing, and nuclear risk
- Analysis of existing weapons systems and their contexts, providing insight into what constitutes an appropriate degree of human control
- Arguments for and against a specific normative framework for the regulation of LAWS, such as a preemptive prohibition on fully autonomous weapons, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, and the Martens Clause
- Proper role of research universities in the technical and conceptual development of AI, production of knowledge and human capital for military purposes, and promotion of ethics education for scientists
- Efficacy of guiding principles for AI research and development, such as those proposed by Google, the Future of Life Institute, and the Pontifical Academy for Life
- Power of the responsible tech movement, and the moral conscience of AI and robotics researchers

Guidelines

Submissions with quality writing are sought, free of jargon, with simple titles, without embedded footnotes and endnotes. Please refer to the submission guidelines: <https://www.usfca.edu/arts-sciences/research/peace-review-journal/submission-guidelines>. Deadline for submissions will be **January 15, 2021**, with publication expected within six months of that date.

Content Questions

Expression of Interest and questions to the guest editor are welcome. Please direct content-based questions or concerns to the guest editor: Pierre Thompson: pierre.thompson@outlook.com. For more information about the Catholic Nonviolence Initiative, contact nonviolence@paxchristi.net.

Submissions

Essays should be sent to *Peace Review* no later than 5 p.m. PST **January 15, 2021**.

Send Essays to: peacereview@usfca.edu to the attention of Robert Elias, Editor in Chief and Shawn Doubiago, Managing Editor:

Subject Line: Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems