**Ethics Homework**

**Is “a ban on offensive autonomous weapons beyond meaningful human control” going to work?**

* Why will this work? / Why will it not work?
* Can you implement this in practice?
* Who are the stakeholders?
* Who should evaluate new scientific products?
* How will this implicate IPS research and development?

Autonomous agents are an increasingly ubiquitous presence in our daily lives. Modern technology is designed to be personalized, optimized and robust more than ever before. A natural application of the development of autonomous agents is in weaponry. The benefits of this are obvious- an ideal agent capable of replicating a soldier allows controlled warfare without the cost of sustaining a soldier abroad or the risk of dying soldiers. It is inevitable that warfare will be heavily reliant on autonomous systems in the near future. Yet, a ban on offensive autonomous weapons that are beyond human control is likely to succeed.

The first argument for believing in the success of such a ban is historical precedence. Modern nuclear weapons and chemical weapons for the most part have been controlled by international powers. While one may argue that nuclear warfare is always imminent or that chemical weapons have been used by tyrants like Saddam Hussein and Bashar al-Assad, it seems that the Western world for the most part has been safe from these modern weapons. Similarly, while the debate over gun control in America rages, modern gun control in other large countries has for the most part seen a decrease in violence. In other words, the weapons developed today for the most part are regulated to a degree that the common man is not affected by their use over his or her lifetime.

Next, the state of artificial intelligence regulation as it stands prevents autonomous weapons from being beyond a ban. No widely used autonomous warfare agent will be created without extreme scrutiny from the research community and international governments. Those entities which have the ability to construct and deploy such agents have few incentives to do so as it stands. More precisely, the entities that have the intellectual, financial, and material resources to develop a fully autonomous weapon are limited to major corporations, governments, and universities. Governments and defense suppliers may want to leverage artificial intelligence to create modern autonomous weapons, but only defense companies and the government would have an application for this. Though artificial intelligence regulation is a subject of debate, it is true that as it stands few restrictions are present on artificial intelligence precisely because of its limited scope. Yet, in instances of public safety, governments such as California’s have established regulations, and companies have accepted that regulatory oversight of artificial intelligence is necessary in order for the public to fully accept autonomous agents.

Finally,

California regulation: https://www.dmv.ca.gov/portal/dmv/detail/vr/autonomous/testing