



Predators: The CIA's Drone War on al Qaeda

Brian Glyn Williams

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Predators is a riveting introduction to the murky world of Predator and Reaper drones, the CIA's and U.S. military's most effective and controversial killing tools. Brian Glyn Williams combines policy analysis with the human drama of the spies, terrorists, insurgents, and innocent tribal peoples who have been killed in the covert operation—the CIA's largest assassination campaign since the Vietnam War era—being waged in Pakistan's tribal regions via remote control aircraft known as drones, or unmanned aerial vehicles. Having traveled extensively in the Pashtun tribal areas while working for the U.S. military and the CIA, Williams explores in detail the new technology of airborne assassinations. From miniature Scorpion missiles designed to kill terrorists while avoiding civilian "collateral damage" to *prathrais*, the cigarette lighter-size homing beacons spies plant on their unsuspecting targets to direct drone missiles to them, the author describes the drone arsenal in full. Evaluating the ethics of targeted killings and drone technology, Williams covers more than a hundred drone strikes, analyzing the number of slain civilians versus the number of terrorists killed to address the claims of antidrone activists. In examining the future of drone warfare, he reveals that the U.S. military is already building more unmanned than manned aerial vehicles. *Predators* helps us weigh the pros and cons of the drone program so that we can decide whether it is a vital strategic asset, a "frenemy," or a little of both.

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