

# Drone Warfare: The Brutal Reality

## Selected Articles

By [Julie Lévesque](#)

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Theme: [Militarization and WMD](#)

A new study from Stanford University and New York University shows that the highly spoken of drone warfare, praised by both military and political officials, is pure fantasy:

In the United States, the dominant narrative about the use of drones in Pakistan is of a surgically precise and effective tool that makes the US safer by enabling “targeted killing” of terrorists, with minimal downsides or collateral impacts.[\[1\]](#)

This narrative is false. (Stanford/NYU, [Living Under Drones.](#))

U.S. drones have been killing countless innocent civilians in Pakistan and elsewhere. Those killings are rarely acknowledged by the U.S. government, if only to make tasteless jokes. We may recall President Obama making fun of the efficient killing machine two years ago:

“The Jonas Brothers are here; they’re out there somewhere. Sasha and Malia are huge fans. But boys, don’t get any ideas. I have two words for you, ‘predator drones.’ You will never see it coming.” ([Barack Obama at the White House Correspondents Association Dinner, May 1, 2010.](#) Click on the link to view the video)

Reporting on the study, the The News International (Pakistan) wrote the following:

Just one in fifty victims of the CIA programme of “targeted” drone strikes in Pakistan’s tribal areas are known militants, while between 2,562 and 3,325 people were killed in Pakistan between June 2004 and mid-September this year – of whom between 474 and 881 were civilians, including 176 children. (The News International (Pakistan), [Pakistan. CIA Annihilation From The Air: Drone Warfare’s Invisible Dead](#), September 26, 2012.)

The Stanford/NYU study states further:

First, while civilian casualties are rarely acknowledged by the US government, there is significant evidence that US drone strikes have injured and killed civilians. In public statements, the US states that there have been “no” or “single digit” civilian casualties.”[\[2\]](#) It is difficult to obtain data on strike casualties because of US efforts to shield the drone program from democratic accountability, compounded by the obstacles to independent investigation of strikes in North Waziristan.

The report concludes that:

- US drone strike policies cause considerable and under-accounted-for harm to the daily lives of ordinary civilians, beyond death and physical injury.
- publicly available evidence that the strikes have made the US safer overall is ambiguous at best.

- current US targeted killings and drone strike practices undermine respect for the rule of law and international legal protections and may set dangerous precedents.

What we are dealing with is a process of “remote killing” of civilians.

We bring to the attention of our readers a selection of Global Research articles regarding drone warfare.



[Living Under Drones](#), *Global Research News*, September 26, 2012



[Pakistan. CIA Annihilation From The Air: Drone Warfare’s Invisible Dead](#), *Stop NATO*, September 26, 2012



[GRTV: Living Under Drones: The Brutal Reality of “Targeted Killing”](#), *GRTV*, September 26, 2012



[ACLU Sues CIA Over Drone Killings](#), *Stephen Lendman*, September 23, 2012



[Spying on Americans: 64 Drone Bases on US Soil](#), *Global Research*, September 22, 2012



**[UN Human Rights Rapporteur Calls on US to End the CIA's Drone War in Pakistan](#)**, *Farooq Yousaf*, September 19, 2012



**[Legal action over US Drone Strikes](#)**, *Drone Wars UK*, September 20, 2012



**[Mapping Drone Proliferation: UAVs in 76 Countries](#)**, *Drone Wars UK*, September 18, 2012

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Julie Lévesque is a journalist and researcher with the Centre for Research on Globalization (CRG), Montreal. She was among the first independent journalists to visit Haiti in the wake of the January 2010 earthquake. In 2011, she was on board "The Spirit of Rachel Corrie", the only humanitarian vessel which penetrated Gaza territorial waters before being shot at by the Israeli Navy.

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