

Who are We Killing?

The numbers killed by US drones since 2001, when the global drone war campaign began, is probably around 5,000 people, mostly men, but also many women and children. This is according to the Bureau of Investigative Journalism who has gathered the most complete and reliable statistics through personal interviews and investigation. Not only does the U.S. claim a much smaller number killed, but that virtually all of those killed are "militants," despite no evidence to that effect. The fact is, that the United States does not know how many people its combat drone program has killed, nor does it know who those people are.



"After the drone strike (in Yemen), villagers were left to identify their two dead relatives from identity cards, scraps of clothing and the license plate of Mr. Jamal's Toyota; the seven bodies were shredded beyond recognition, as cellphone photos taken at the scene attest. 'We found eyes, but there were no faces left, ' said Abdullah Faqih, a student who knew both of the dead cousins. "

Drone Strikes' Risks to Get Rare Moment in the Public Eye
New York Times - February 6, 2013

The so-called "targeted killing" using US drones costs an average of 28 innocent civilians their lives. This is the conclusion of a report by the human rights organisation "Reprieve". The number of unreported cases is probably much higher.

www.reprieve.org.uk/press/2014_11_25_us_drone_strikes_kill_28_each_target/

The drone hunt for 24 terrorist leaders in Pakistan resulted in the death of 874 civilians, one fifth of them children. In 41 attempts to kill "terrorist group" leaders, at least 1,147 civilians, mainly families and children, died. In Yemen, there were 33 confirmed drone killings of named "targets". However, a total of 947 people died as a result of the attacks.

We must not accept our government's claims that the drones are only killing militants, first of all because none of the people killed were arrested, had evidence presented against them, or were afforded a trial. Secondly, the weapons launched from these combat drones are Hellfire missiles, an air-to-surface, or surface to surface weapon designed to take out armored tanks. Each missile weighs about 100 lbs, is propelled by a solid fuel rocket, and carries a 20 lb warhead.



"Ahmedjan, who lost his foot in a drone strike, discussed the challenges rescuers face in identifying bodies: 'People were trying to find the body parts. We find the body parts of some people, but sometimes we do not find anything.'"

Drone attack to have come into the public eye at a rare moment. .
New York Times - 6. Februar 2013

