

Visions on Peace Thesis Prize Award **2019** + war/truth

Investigating civilian harm caused by Western remote warfare in Syria/Iraq

6 December 2019 | 13.15 - 17.00 | Drift 21, room 032, Utrecht

Since 2014 a coalition of Western states, including the US, UK, France and The Netherlands have engaged in remote warfare across Syria and Iraq in name of defeating the Islamic State (IS). Their remote warfare strategies have included the financing and training of local militias, and engaging in over 34.000 air-strikes, firing over 100.000 munitions across Syria and Iraq. The anti-IS Coalition claims that this was the most “precise air campaign in the history of warfare”. But is this really the case? How precise can one be when waging urban warfare from above, as happened in Hawija? How many civilians have in fact died as a consequence of Western remote warfare strategies? And what image of Western-style liberation exists among those victims who have survived?

This seminar brings together four experts who highlight the challenges of investigating and producing 'inconvenient counter-truths' on civilian harm caused by Western remote warfare.

This will be followed by the Visions on Peace MA thesis award ceremony.

- 13:15-13:30** *Prof. dr. Jolle Demmers & dr. Lauren Gould – Conflict Studies UU - Intimacies of Remote Warfare programme
Welcome & Opening*
- 13:30-13:50** *Laurie Treffers - Airwars in the Netherlands “Researching civilian casualties of US-led anti IS Coalition airstrikes, and the Hawija case”*
- 13:50-14:10** *Marrit Woudwijk – Liberal Arts & Sciences UU “The Good Victim: Limits of speaking counter-truths in the context of The Netherlands”*
- 14:10-14:30** *Ali Aljasem and Mohammad Kanfash – Conflict Studies UU
“Outsourcing violence: A Syrian civilian perspective on the anti-IS Coalition and its cooperation with local forces”*
- 14:30-14:45** Q&A
- 14:45-15:00** *Coffee Break*



Visions on Peace MA Thesis Award Ceremony

- 15:00-15:10** *Introduction by Prof. dr. Ruud Welten – Chairman of Stichting Vredeswetenschappen*
- 15:10-16:15** *Presentations by the MA Thesis prize nominees followed by Q&A*
- 16:15-16:30** *Announcement of the winner by dr. Gijsbert van Iterson Scholten – Chairman of the Thesis Jury*
- 16:30-17:00** *Closing statements & drinks*

