

A Century of War

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Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#), [History](#),
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Photo: Hiroshima survivors.

July 28 marks WWI's 100th anniversary. It was called the war to end all wars. Never again was heard.

In 1928, Kellogg-Briand policy renounced aggressive wars. The UN Charter's Preamble states:

"We the Peoples of the United Nations Determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind..."

America, key NATO partners and Israel wage them on humanity. They're ongoing in multiple theaters. They cause horrific human suffering.

America waged wars at home and/or abroad every year in its history. They began long before the republic's inception.

It's an unparalleled record. It's shocking. It's deplorable. It continues out-of-control. Peace never had a chance. It's more endangered than ever.

Wars assure more of them. America by far is the world's leading offender. Israel, Britain, France and other key NATO partners are willing partners. So are other rogue states.

Barbara Tuchman's "[The Guns of August](#)" recounted WW I horrors. Events were fast-moving. Things spun out-of-control.

Over 20 million died. Many more were wounded or disabled. An entire generation of young men was lost.

Two decades later it repeated threefold. Never again became permanent war. It rages on humanity. Both world wars were preludes for what followed.

All wars include horrendous atrocities. America's tortured past reflects some of the worst.

They predate the republic. Accused 17th century Salem witches faced horrific abuse. Trials were grueling. They excluded fairness. Death by hanging awaited those convicted.

One or more victims were crushed under heavy boulders. It's unknown if any were burned alive.

Native Americans were mass-murdered. Columbus exterminated Hispaniola's population.

He did so by by torture, mass-murder, forced labor, starvation, disease, despair, stabbing natives for sport, dashing babies' heads on rocks, letting children be eaten by dogs, beheadings, and burning people at the stake among other atrocities.

Ward Churchill documented America's genocide. Native peoples were reduced to at most 3% of their original numbers.

According to Churchill:

Millions were "hacked apart with axes and swords, burned alive and trampled under horses, hunted as game and fed to dogs, shot, beaten, stabbed, scalped for bounty, hanged on meathooks and thrown over the sides of ships at sea, worked to death as slave laborers, intentionally starved and frozen to death during a multitude of forced marches and internments, and, in an unknown number of instances, deliberately infected with epidemic diseases."

America's genocide remains unparalleled in history. It repeats in new forms. It did so throughout the last century. It continues now.

A century of war begot a second one. New millennium conflicts rage. They show no signs of ending. They're ongoing in multiple theaters.

Torture and atrocities are weapons of war. John Dower's "[War Without Mercy](#)" documented viciousness by both sides in the Pacific. America is as unprincipled as the worst of its adversaries.

US forces mutilated Japan's war dead. They did so for souvenirs. They sank hospital ships. They shot sailors trying to abandon them.

They murdered pilots who bailed out. They killed wounded soldiers. They tortured prisoners. They killed them in cold blood.

They buried combatants alive. They attacked civilians. Hiroshima and Nagasaki are two of history's greatest crimes.

Gratuitous slaughter describes them. They had nothing to do with defeating Japan. Nor did firebombing Tokyo. America bears full responsibility for numerous crimes of war, against humanity and genocide.

Post-9/11, some of the worst occurred. Others happened earlier. Millions of North Koreans and Southeast Asians were slaughtered.

Air war alone killed millions of civilians. North Korea became rubble. Virtually everything in northern and central areas were destroyed. Napalm, cluster bombs, chemical and biological weapons, as well as other terror ones were used.

US forces dropped threefold the amount of WW II tonnage on Southeast Asia. Agent Orange's deadly legacy remains.

Dioxin is one of the most deadly known substances. It's a potent carcinogenic human immune system suppressant. Minute amounts cause serious health problems and death.

Agent Orange causes congenital disorders and birth defects. It causes cancer, type two diabetes, and numerous other diseases.

It remains toxic for decades. It killed millions of Southeast Asians. Many others were disabled and/or suffer from chronic illnesses. Future generations are affected like earlier ones.

Around three million US servicemen and women were harmed. So were many American civilians. Many died. Living victims endure diseases, birth defects, and other ill effects.

New generations of terror weapons replaced earlier ones. US wars are merciless. Fundamental laws are ignored. Anything goes is policy.

Civilians suffer most. America considers them legitimate targets.

Obama's Asia pivot perhaps intends repeating the worst of past and current conflicts. They're ongoing in multiple war theaters.

Washington's new millennium wars killed millions. Many more victims die daily. Wherever America shows up, mass slaughter, destruction and human misery follow.

War without mercy describes them. America is a killing machine. Making the world safe for war profiteers is policy. So is committing genocidal crimes.

The measure of national policy is its respect for life, liberty, equity and justice. America deplores them. It scorns them. It ruthlessly seeks unchallenged global dominance.

It thrives on war. It wages permanent ones. Its culture reflects violence, unfairness, cruelty and intolerance. It punishes its own. It does so like others abroad.

Torture is official policy. It's practiced worldwide. It operates the world's largest gulag. Thousands of political prisoners suffer inside. Anyone challenging US lawlessness is vulnerable.

So are America's poor, people of culture, others most disadvantaged, and human rights advocates championing their rights.

America is a dystopian wasteland. Millions are denied fundamental rights. Growing poverty, unemployment, underemployment, hunger and homelessness reflect horrific conditions.

Hot wars rage abroad. Financial ones cause more harm than standing armies. Bipartisan complicity wages war on fairness.

America's social contract is on the chopping block for elimination. Growing millions face protracted Depression conditions.

Families struggle to pay rent, provide sustenance, and handle other essential expenses. Harvard Magazine's January-February 2014 issue featured Elizabeth Gudrias' article.

It headlined "[Disrupted Lives](#)." It discussed Harvard Sociology Professor Matthew Desmond's research. His academic interests include poverty, race, ethnicity, organizations and work, social theory and ethnography.

He studied how evictions impact America's poor. It's a story raw data hide. Sheriffs arrive disruptively. They've come to evict. Loud knocks announce them. If no one's inside they "kick the door in."

Desmond studies how poverty, housing and eviction affects America's most disadvantaged. Millions are horrifically harmed.

He captured an important snapshot. He did it through original research. It reflects hard times getting harder. It's ongoing out of sight and mind.

It's longstanding. It's raged since 2008 crisis conditions emerged. For growing millions, it never ends.

Imagine living life on the edge. Imagine it without house or home. Desmond witnessed what happened to Danielle Shaw and her partner, Jerry Allen.

"(De)puties swept into (their) apartment," said Gudrias. They took over. They "briskly outlined" their intentions.

"The couple could choose to put their belongings in storage at the moving company's warehouse - and pay a fee to retrieve them - or the movers would leave everything on the curb."

The couple had little advance notice. They learned only days before eviction. They had little time to plan.

Desmond's research showed "how common eviction is in the lives of poor people," said Gudrias.

Inner city people of color are harmed most. They have no recourse. Their lives are involuntarily disrupted.

Desmond studied inner city Milwaukee. He analyzed formal eviction court records. Others take place off the books.

Some landlords are adversarial. They cut off electricity. They stop heat in winter. They remove front doors. They use other ways to evict tenants.

Desmond found almost one in eight Milwaukee renters were evicted or involuntarily relocated. For blacks, it was one in seven. For Hispanics, it was one in four.

Many end up homeless. Some live on streets. Others end up in shelters. Ones finding substitute housing "are limited to decrepit units in unsafe neighborhoods."

Transient existence affects children's emotional well-being. Their school performance suffers.

Adults endure "depression and subsequent job loss, material hardship, and future residential instability," said Desmond.

Eviction compounds poverty and racial discrimination. "We are learning that (it) is a cause, not just a condition, of poverty," he said.

It gets little public attention. Most often it gets none at all. Imagine millions suffering enormous hardships. Imagine federal, state and local governments doing practically nothing to help.

Imagine mainstream media ignoring what need to be headlined. Imagine a growing problem across America.

“The average cost of rent, even in high-poverty neighborhoods, is quickly approaching the total income of welfare recipients,” said Desmond.

“The fundamental issue is this: the high cost of housing is consigning the urban poor to financial ruin.”

Desmond was a University of Wisconsin-Madison doctoral student. Eviction “brings together poor and nonpoor people – tenants, their families, landlords, social workers, lawyers, judges, sheriffs – in relationships of mutual dependence and struggle,” he explained.

He learned how little eviction was studied. No national data exist. He constructed Milwaukee facts and figures on his own.

He did it by examining tens of thousands of Milwaukee County eviction records.

He interviewed 250 tenants in eviction court. He conducted over 1,000 others with affected households.

He calls evictions and incarceration twin destructive forces. They relate to each other. They affect millions of inner-city lives.

They’re out of sight and minds. They’re nameless, faceless victims society forgot.

Many prior inmates can’t find work. Others don’t earn enough to live on. Criminal records are marks of Cain. They’re permanent. They affect victims for life.

Their ability to rent is hampered. Desmond lived in poor neighborhoods he studied. He learned human suffering firsthand. He explained, saying:

“I sat beside families at eviction court; helped them move; followed them into shelters and abandoned houses; watched their children; ate with them; slept at their houses; attended church counseling sessions, Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, and Child Protective Services appointments with them; joined them at births and funerals; and generally embedded myself as deeply as possible into their lives.”

He discovered numerous cases where victims don’t know their rights. They don’t understand the process. They’re given conflicting, inaccurate information.

They lack legal help. They’re on their own. They’re up against an unforgiving system. Disadvantaged people endure what America’s privileged avoid.

Poverty is a process, he says. It involves victims, a system creating them, people benefitting from it, and society overall not caring.

Sociology Professor Eric Klinenberg admires his writing skill. It’s “deceptively simple but devastatingly sharp,” he said.

He's a voice for the voiceless. He lets them be heard. He explains their humanity. It needs to be known.

He hopes to make a difference. Disadvantaged households need all the help they can get.

America's wars include waging them on poor people. They're increasingly deprived. Forced austerity inflicts greater harm. It's ongoing when help is most needed.

Main Street economic recovery is nowhere in sight. Hard times for millions keep getting harder.

Federal, state and local governments dismissively ignore them. Today's America is the United States of I Don't Care.

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His new book is titled "Banker Occupation: Waging Financial War on Humanity."

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Listen to cutting-edge discussions with distinguished guests on the Progressive Radio News Hour on the Progressive Radio Network.

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