Even as I write, the United States is blinding and maiming innocent people and innocent soldiers coerced into battle by elites who sit back in safety. Silence and passivity in the face of this is unholy. The passivity of citizens is the life-blood of tyrants.” Daniel Maguire, The Horrors We Bless

These newsletters are divided only very generally into Causes and Prevention because most authors examine the two subjects together.
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Libya Petition
Libya: Code Pink
Causes and Prevention of Wars
Books: Corporate-Pentagon-Congressional-White House-Corp. Media Complex:
   *Lockheed Martin* by Bill Hartung and *Eisenhower* by James Ledbetter
Climate Change: *Global Warring* By Cleo Paskal,
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“Water wars? Thirsty, energy-short China stirs fear”

By Denis D. Gray Associated Press Apr 17, 2011

BAHIR JONAI, India  The wall of water raced through narrow Himalayan gorges in northeast India, gathering speed as it raked the banks of towering trees and boulders. When the torrent struck their island in the Brahmaputra river, the villagers remember, it took only moments to obliterate their houses, possessions and livestock.

No one knows exactly how the disaster happened, but everyone knows whom to blame: neighboring China.

"We don't trust the Chinese," says fisherman Akshay Sarkar at the resettlement site where he has lived since the 2000 flood. "They gave us no warning. They may do it again."

About 500 miles east, in northern Thailand, Chamlong Saengphet stands in the Mekong river, in water that comes only up to her shins. She is collecting edible river weeds from dwindling beds. A neighbor has hung up his fishing nets, his catches now too meager.

Using words bordering on curses, they point upstream, toward China.

The blame game, voiced in vulnerable river towns and Asian capitals from Pakistan to Vietnam, is rooted in fear that China's accelerating program of damming every major river flowing from the Tibetan plateau will trigger natural disasters, degrade fragile ecologies, divert vital water supplies.

A few analysts and environmental advocates even speak of water as a future trigger for war or diplomatic strongarming, though others strongly doubt it will come to that. Still, the remapping of the water flow in the world's most heavily populated and thirstiest region is happening on a gigantic scale, with potentially strategic implications.

On the eight great Tibetan rivers alone, almost 20 dams have been built or are under construction while some 40 more are planned or proposed.

China is hardly alone in disrupting the region's water flows. Others are doing it with potentially even worse consequences. But China's vast thirst for power and water, its control over the sources of the rivers and its ever-growing political clout
make it a singular target of criticism and suspicion.

"Whether China intends to use water as a political weapon or not, it is acquiring the capability to turn off the tap if it wants to — a leverage it can use to keep any riparian neighbors on good behavior," says Brahma Chellaney, an analyst at New Delhi's Center for Policy Research and author of the forthcoming "Water: Asia's New Battlefield."

Analyst Neil Padukone calls it "the biggest potential point of contention between the two Asian giants," China and India. But the stakes may be even higher since those eight Tibetan rivers serve a vast west-east arc of 1.8 billion people stretching from Pakistan to Vietnam's Mekong river delta.

Suspicions are heightened by Beijing's lack of transparency and refusal to share most hydrological and other data. Only China, along with Turkey, has refused to sign a key 1997 U.N. convention on transnational rivers.

Beijing gave no notice when it began building three dams on the Mekong — the first completed in 1993 — or the $1.2 billion Zangmu dam, the first on the mainstream of the 1,790-mile Brahmaputra which was started last November and hailed in official media as "a landmark priority project."

The 2000 flood that hit Sarkar's village, is widely believed to have been caused by the burst of an earthen dam wall on a Brahmaputra tributary. But China has kept silent.

"Until today, the Indian government has no clue about what happened," says Ravindranath, who heads the Rural Volunteer Center. He uses only one name.

Tibet's spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, has also warned of looming dangers stemming from the Tibetan plateau.

"It's something very, very essential. So, since millions of Indians use water coming from the Himalayan glaciers... I think you (India) should express more serious concern. This is nothing to do with politics, just everybody's interests, including Chinese people," he said in New Delhi last month.

Beijing normally counters such censure by pointing out that the bulk of water from the Tibetan rivers springs from downstream tributaries, with only 13-16 percent originating in China.

Officials also say that the dams can benefit their neighbors, easing droughts and floods by regulating flow, and that hydroelectric power reduces China's carbon footprint.

China "will fully consider impacts to downstream countries," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu recently told The Associated Press. "We have clarified several times that the dam being built on the Brahmaputra River has a small storage capacity. It will not have large impact on water flow or the ecological environment of downstream."

For some of China's neighbors, the problem is that they too are building controversial dams and may look hypocritical if they criticize China too loudly.
The four-nation Mekong River Commission has expressed concerns not just about the Chinese dams but about a host of others built or planned in downstream countries.

In northeast India, a broad-based movement is fighting central government plans to erect more than 160 dams in the region, and Laos and Cambodia have proposed plans for 11 Mekong dams, sparking environmental protest.

Indian and other governments play down any threats from the Asian colossus. "I was reassured that (the Zangmu dam) was not a project designed to divert water and affect the welfare and availability of water to countries in the lower reaches," India's Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao said after talks with her Chinese counterpart late last year.

But at the grass roots, and among activists and even some government technocrats, criticism is expressed more readily.

"Everyone knows what China is doing, but won't talk about it. China has real power now. If it says something, everyone follows," says Somkiat Khuengchiansa, a Thai environmental advocate.

Neither the Indian nor Chinese government responded to specific questions from the AP about the dams, but Beijing is signaling that it will relaunch mega-projects after a break of several years in efforts to meet skyrocketing demands for energy and water, reduce dependence on coal and lift some 300 million people out of poverty.

Official media recently said China was poised to put up dams on the still pristine Nu River, known as the Salween downstream. Seven years ago as many as 13 dams were set to go up until Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao ordered a moratorium.

That ban is regarded as the first and perhaps biggest victory of China’s nascent green movement.

"An improper exploitation of water resources by countries on the upper reaches is going to bring about environmental, social and geological risks," Yu Xiaogang, director of the Yunnan Green Watershed, told The Associated Press. "Countries along the rivers have already formed their own way of using water resources. Water shortages could easily ignite extreme nationalist sentiment and escalate into a regional war."

But there is little chance the activists will prevail.

"There is no alternative to dams in sight in China," says Ed Grumbine, an American author on Chinese dams. Grumbine, currently with the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Yunnan province, notes that under its last five-year state plan, China failed to meet its hydroelectric targets and is now playing catch-up in its 2011-2015 plan as it strives to derive 15 percent of energy needs from non-fossil sources, mainly hydroelectric and nuclear.

The arithmetic pointing to more dam-building is clear: China would need 140 gigawatts of extra hydroelectric power to meet its goal. Even if all the dams on
the Nu go up, they would provide only 21 gigawatts.

The demand for water region-wide will also escalate, sparking perhaps that greatest anxieties — that China will divert large quantities from the Tibetan plateau for domestic use.

Noting that Himalayan glaciers which feed the rivers are melting due to global warming, India's Strategic Foresight Group last year estimated that in the coming 20 years India, China, Nepal and Bangladesh will face a depletion of almost 275 billion cubic meters (360 billion cubic yards) of annual renewable water.

Padukone expects China will have to divert water from Tibet to its dry eastern provinces. One plan for rerouting the Brahmaputra was outlined in an officially sanctioned 2005 book by a Chinese former army officer, Li Ling. Its title: "Tibet's Waters Will Save China,"

Analyst Chellaney believes "the issue is not whether China will reroute the Brahmaputra, but when." He cites Chinese researchers and officials as saying that after 2014 work will begin on tapping rivers flowing from the Tibetan plateau to neighboring countries. Such a move, he says, would be tantamount to a declaration of war on India.

Others are skeptical. Tashi Tsering, a Tibetan environmentalist at the University of British Columbia who is otherwise critical of China's policies, calls a Brahmaputra diversion "a pipe dream of some Chinese planners."

Grumbine shares the skepticism. "The situation would have to be very dire for China to turn off the taps because the consequences would be huge," he said. "China would alienate every one of its neighbors and historically the Chinese have been very sensitive about maintaining secure borders."

Whatever else may happen, riverside inhabitants along the Mekong and Brahmaputra say the future shock is now.

A fisherman from his youth, Boonrian Chinnarat says the Mekong giant catfish, the world’s largest freshwater fish, has all but vanished from the vicinity of Thailand’s Had Krai village, other once bountiful species have been depleted, and he and fellow fishermen have sold their nets. He blames the Chinese dams.

Phumee Boontom, headman of nearby Pak Ing village, warns that "If the Chinese keep the water and continue to build more dams, life along the Mekong will change forever." Already, he says, he has seen drastic variations in water levels following dam constructions, "like the tides of the ocean __ low and high in one day."

Jeremy Bird, who heads the Mekong commission, an intergovernmental body of Laos, Cambodia, Thailand and Laos, sees a tendency to blame China for water-related troubles even when they are purely the result of nature. He says diplomacy is needed, and believes "engagement with China is improving."

Grumbine agrees. "Given the enormous demand for water in China, India and Southeast Asia, if you maintain the attitude of sovereign state, we are lost," he
"Scarcity in a zero sum situation can lead to conflict but it can also goad countries into more cooperative behavior. It's a bleak picture, but I'm not without hope."

*Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet: The New Geopolitics of Energy*

by Michael T. Klare

"Klare's superb book explains, in haunting detail, the trends that will lead us into a series of dangerous traps unless we muster the will to transform the way we use energy."-Bill McKibben

Oil recently hit $140 a barrel, and it is still climbing. Unlike the oil shocks of the 1970s, this dizzying leap is not the product of an OPEC embargo or a sudden flare-up in the Middle East. Rather, it is a harbinger of a permanent new structure of world power, one in which market forces and military strength matter far less than the scarcity of vital natural resources. Read More...

[http://us.macmillan.com/risingpowersshrinkingplanet](http://us.macmillan.com/risingpowersshrinkingplanet)


About The Book

About The Author

Read An Excerpt  Blood and Oil

*Blood and Oil: The Dangers and Consequences of America’s Growing Petroleum Dependency* by Michael T. Klare

Since the tragic events of September 11 and the commencement of the "war on terror," the relationship between U.S. policy in the Middle East and the oceans of crude oil that lie beneath the region's soil has come under close scrutiny. In Blood and Oil, international security expert Michael T. Klare traces oil's impact on foreign affairs from World War II to the present, arguing that America's oil-influenced military actions will only increase in the coming years. By 2020, the United States will need to import twice as much fuel per year as it did in 1990, and since most of this oil will come from chronically unstable, strongly anti-American regions -- the Gulf, the Caspian Sea, and Africa -- recurrent involvement in violent conflict is sure to follow. Read More...

CHRISTIANITY


Allitt writes: "Is it true that the Bible teaches peace and the Koran war? Only if you approach the books selectively, taking the gentlest of Jesus' teachings and setting them against the harshest of Muhammad's. Philip Jenkins' s challenging new book 'Laying Down the Sword' shows that the Bible contains incitements not just to violence but also to genocide."

READ MORE  http://readersupportednews.org/opinion2/295-164/9926-christian-jihad

Call for Papers:

Nationalism, War and Sacrifice

Dear Colleague,

The deadline for your abstract for our book volume—Nationalism, War and Sacrifice: Dying for one's Country—is coming up in four weeks (May 28, 2012). We encourage you to send us your abstract as soon as possible (the detailed call for papers is directly below).

One of the contributors to this volume will be Professor Ivan Strenski, the renowned scholar of religion and Holstein Family and Community Professor of Religious Studies at University of California, Santa Barbara. Among Strenski’s fifteen books are Contesting Sacrifice, Thinking about Religion, and Why Politics Can't Be Freed From Religion.

In his highly acclaimed paper, “Sacrifice, Gift and the Social Logic of Muslim 'Human Bombers',” Professor Strenski examines suicide bombing as a form of martyrdom where the act of self-immolation constitutes a peculiar kind of gift that the victim offers to the community.

The torrent of writings and speculation evoked by suicide bombings provides an opening to examine the Western posture toward sacrificial death. Nationalism, Strenski notes, is a form of religion in which human beings are willing to kill and die for transcendent entities.

Why do we say that it is “sweet and fitting to die for one’s country?” How are we to understand the willingness of societies to forfeit human bodies in the name of glorifying mystical bodies called nations? What is the nature and meaning of the soldier’s gift to the community?

Our book volume, Nationalism, War and Sacrifice, will explore and interrogate this phenomenon of killing and dying for a sacred ideal, which seems to be at the heart of The Western Way of War.

We look forward to receiving your proposal.

Best regards,

Orion
Orion Anderson
Communications Director
Call for Papers:

Library of Social Science, Publishers is seeking submissions for an edited book volume: Nationalism, War and Sacrifice: Dying for One’s Country

FRANCE IN WWI, GERMANY WWII: SOLDIERS SACRIFICED FOR THE NATION.

Ivan Strenski’s CONTESTING SACRIFICE:


REVIEW ESSAY By Richard A. Koenigsberg.

Contesting Sacrifice traces the political theology of sacrifice in France. Ivan Strenski shows that the idea of sacrifice was an exposed nerve of French political culture: a constant irritant, too important to ignore, too fearsome to think away, and thus constantly interrogated by French thinkers of different ideological persuasions. Pointing out that every major theorist of sacrifice is French, including Bataille, Durkheim, Girard, Hubert and Mauss, Strenski argues that we cannot fully understand their work without first taking into account the deep roots of sacrificial thought in French history. A continuously existent and intransigent Catholic subconscious centered on the discourse of “sacrifice,” Strenski says, constitutes the “Catholic bedrock of France.” Drawing on meticulous research, this study will prove in dispensable to intellectual historians, historians of France, and scholars of religion and its relationship to politics.

This fundamental text interrogating the role and meaning of sacrifice in Western culture is essential reading for scholars and students researching the topics of war, genocide and terrorism. It is available directly from the University of Chicago Press, or through Amazon at special discounted rates. Strenski’s book is a “must read” for anyone seeking to comprehend the roots of collective forms of violence.

Click here for information on how to purchase from Amazon.com

Click here for information on how to purchase directly from University of Chicago Press

Ivan Strenski is the Holstein Family Community Professor of Religious Studies at
In *Nations Have the Right to Kill*, I demonstrate how the ideology of National Socialism was based on the idea of sacrificial death. The SS-man’s vow of “obedience unto death” expressed Nazism’s fundamental ideal, even its purpose: to orchestrate a gigantic sacrificial ritual.

Ivan Strenski’s great book, *Contesting Sacrifice*, suggests that French behavior in the First World War similarly grew out of a sacrificial ideology. He observes that nations are sacred objects—“meaning-making entities”—that transcend the individual. As such, nations routinely require that individual citizens sacrifice themselves. Strenski shows how the ideology of French Catholicism informed and reinforced French nationalism, helping to shape the First World War. As Christ “poured out his being in death for the sake of all humanity in an act of sacred annihilation,” so French soldiers absorbed bullets and shrapnel in the name of France.

For French Catholic nationalists, death in warfare was viewed as a “gift to God in exchange for the gift of life.” On the front, soldiers sought to be “active martyrs.” Novelist Jean D’Arnoux declared that French soldiers at Verdun (who died in massive numbers) were “victims on an altar, like Christ on the cross, the altar of the world.” War for them was an “immense Good Friday.” The blood of the sacrificed French soldiers would bring “renewed life,” refreshing the nation as “spring rain would renew the good French earth for the benefit of all.”

The First World War was welcomed by some French Catholics, who lamented that individualism had “run amok in France.” Captain Antoine de Quéré, a representative of Catholic ideals, thrilled to the changes war would force upon an unruly nation, glorifying in the blessings it would bring. Everything had been “liberty, disorder and anarchy”—things that the Catholic “party of order” abhorred. War represented the return of “rigor, discipline and authority.”

Nationalists attacked the deplorable state of French morale. Intellectuals were derided for “egoism” and “lazy melancholy,” workers for small-minded localism and lack of enthusiasm for collective causes. War represented a spiritual force that would “bind citizens into common service for the nation,” as it had always done, incubating a spirit of national unity. Just as Jesus’ death cleansed the sins of humanity, so common soldiers’ self-sacrifices were seen as expiation for France’s sins. Soldiers were enduring an “enforced Lent.” Sacrifice constituted a “gift of self for the common good.”

As German soldiers in the Second World War were asked to be obedient unto death, so French First World War soldiers were required to radically subordinate themselves to the nation-state. One French soldier explained his role to a confused comrade:

The day that you put on that uniform, while the bells of all the villages of France and the drums of all the town criers announced the general mobilization, you were at that very moment given totally over to the nation. She owns you completely. We don't think things over anymore; it would be futile. We are cogs in an enormous machine. We aren't even ourselves any more. The country has absconded with your soul. Now, do you get it?

Social scientists once interpreted warfare as the “male aggression” of soldiers. Quite to the contrary—as the above passage suggests—the posture of the soldier in war is one of absolute passivity and submission. The soldier in battle becomes the property of his nation. He offers himself to be slain—to abandon existence when required to do so.

From this perspective, one may comprehend the First World War’s strategy of the “offensive at all costs,” which focused on the “psychological battlefield” as the key element of warfare. This strategy derived from the idea that morale and discipline were the crucial determinants of success in battle. A nation could achieve victory only if troops had the courage and will to cross the fire-swept zone (“no man’s land”), suffer heavy casualties—and still keep going. “War,” British General Ian Hamilton
declared, is the triumph of “one will over another weaker will.”

Of course, this strategy proved anything but successful or triumphant. On the contrary, it generated monumentally disastrous results: 9 million dead and 21 million wounded. Yet France—along with other nations—persisted in this bizarre battle strategy. For four years, troops were required to get out of trenches and run toward the opposing trench, only to be cut down by machine gun fire and artillery shells. How are we to comprehend this fanaticism of the First World War—the persistence of a futile battle strategy that resulted in massive destruction?

To attack, Strenski observes, is to open oneself to risk and loss, most critically to loss of life. Advancing this strategy of the offensive was to accept the need for soldiers to prepare themselves for probable death. Indeed, French General Joseph Joffre admitted in 1913 that the results he sought in pushing this strategy could be obtained only “at the price of bloody sacrifices.” This policy of unleashing Gallic furor, Strenski concludes, wasted swarms of men in futile assaults on well-entrenched German lines. In maximizing the heroic, sacrificial and even metaphysical values that informed the strategy of the offensive at all costs, the French command virtually ensured “the massive slaughter of its own infantry.”

POLITICAL PONEROLOGY--the science of macroevil, or why so many psychopaths get into positions of power.

Political Ponerology: A Science on The Nature of Evil adjusted for Political Purposes

by Andrew M. Lobaczewski

with commentary and additional quoted material
by Laura Knight-Jadczyk

Andrew M. Lobaczewski's book is available from Red Pill Press now in both paperback and E-Book formats.

This article is a two-parter. I should notify the reader that the really good stuff is in the second part, so don't skip it!

Pathocracy is a disease of great social movements followed by entire societies, nations, and empires. In the course of human history, it has affected social, political, and religious movements as well as the accompanying ideologies and turned them into caricatures of
themselves. This occurred as a result of the participation of pathological agents in a pathodynamically similar process. That explains why all the pathocracies of the world are, and have been, so similar in their essential properties.

Identifying these phenomena through history and properly qualifying them according to their true nature and contents - not according to the ideology in question, which succumbed to the process of caricaturization - is a job for historians.

The actions of [pathocracy] affect an entire society, starting with the leaders and infiltrating every town, business, and institution. The pathological social structure gradually covers the entire country creating a new class within that nation. This privileged class [of pathocrats] feels permanently threatened by the others, i.e. by the majority of normal people. Neither do the pathocrats entertain any illusions about their personal fate should there be a return to the system of normal man. [Andrew M. Lobaczewski Political Ponerology: A science on the nature of evil adjusted for political purposes]

The word psychopath generally evokes images of the barely restrained - yet surprisingly urbane - Dr. Hannibal Lecter of Silence of the Lambs fame. I will admit that this was the image that came to my mind whenever I heard the word. But I was wrong, and I was to learn this lesson quite painfully by direct experience. The exact details are chronicled elsewhere; what is important is that this experience was probably one of the most painful and instructive episodes of my life and it enabled me to overcome a block in my awareness of the world around me and those who inhabit it.

Regarding blocks to awareness, I need to state for the record that I have spent 30 years studying psychology, history, culture, religion, myth and the so-called paranormal. I also have worked for many years with hypnotherapy - which gave me a very good mechanical knowledge of how the mind/brain of the human being operates at very deep levels. But even so, I was still operating with certain beliefs firmly in place that were shattered by my research into psychopathy. I realized that there was a certain set of ideas that I held about human beings that were sacrosanct. I even wrote about this once in the following way:

my work has shown me that the vast majority of people want to do good, to experience good things, think good thoughts, and make decisions with good results. And they try with all their might to do so! With the majority of people having this internal desire, why the Hell isn't it happening?
I was naïve, I admit. There were many things I did not know that I have learned since I penned those words. But even at that time I was aware of how our own minds can be used to deceive us.

Now, what beliefs did I hold that made me a victim of a psychopath? The first and most obvious one is that I truly believed that deep inside, all people are basically good and that they want to do good, to experience good things, think good thoughts, and make decisions with good results. And they try with all their might to do so.

As it happens, this is not true as I - and everyone involved in our working group - learned to our sorrow, as they say. But we also learned to our edification. In order to come to some understanding of exactly what kind of human being could do the things that were done to me (and others close to me), and why they might be motivated - even driven - to behave this way, we began to research the psychology literature for clues because we needed to understand for our own peace of mind.

If there is a psychological theory that can explain vicious and harmful behavior, it helps very much for the victim of such acts to have this information so that they do not have to spend all their time feeling hurt or angry. And certainly, if there is a psychological theory that helps a person to find what kind of words or deeds can bridge the chasm between people, to heal misunderstandings, that is also a worthy goal. It was from such a perspective that we began our extensive work on the subjects of narcissism which then led to the study of psychopathy.

Of course, we didn’t start out with such a diagnosis or label for what we were witnessing. We started out with observations and searched the literature for clues, for profiles, for anything that would help us to understand the inner world of a human being - actually a group of human beings - who seemed to be utterly depraved and unlike anything we had ever encountered before.

Imagine - if you can - not having a conscience, none at all, no feelings of guilt or remorse no matter what you do, no limiting sense of concern for the well-being of strangers, friends, or even family members. Imagine no struggles with shame, not a single one in your whole life, no matter what kind of selfish, lazy, harmful, or immoral action you had taken.

And pretend that the concept of responsibility is unknown to you, except as a burden others seem to accept without question, like gullible fools.

Now add to this strange fantasy the ability to conceal from other people that your psychological makeup is radically different from theirs. Since everyone
simply assumes that conscience is universal among human beings, hiding the fact that you are conscience-free is nearly effortless.

You are not held back from any of your desires by guilt or shame, and you are never confronted by others for your cold-bloodedness. The ice water in your veins is so bizarre, so completely outside of their personal experience, that they seldom even guess at your condition.

In other words, you are completely free of internal restraints, and your unhampered liberty to do just as you please, with no pangs of conscience, is conveniently invisible to the world.

You can do anything at all, and still your strange advantage over the majority of people, who are kept in line by their consciences will most likely remain undiscovered.

How will you live your life?

What will you do with your huge and secret advantage, and with the corresponding handicap of other people (conscience)?

The answer will depend largely on just what your desires happen to be, because people are not all the same. Even the profoundly unscrupulous are not all the same. Some people - whether they have a conscience or not - favor the ease of inertia, while others are filled with dreams and wild ambitions. Some human beings are brilliant and talented, some are dull-witted, and most, conscience or not, are somewhere in between. There are violent people and nonviolent ones, individuals who are motivated by blood lust and those who have no such appetites. [...] Provided you are not forcibly stopped, you can do anything at all.

If you are born at the right time, with some access to family fortune, and you have a special talent for whipping up other people's hatred and sense of deprivation, you can arrange to kill large numbers of unsuspecting people. With enough money, you can accomplish this from far away, and you can sit back safely and watch in satisfaction. [...] Crazy and frightening - and real, in about 4 percent of the population....

The prevalence rate for anorexic eating disorders is estimated a 3.43 percent, deemed to be nearly epidemic, and yet this figure is a fraction lower than the rate for antisocial personality. The high-profile disorders classed as schizophrenia occur in only about 1 percent of [the population] - a mere quarter of the rate of antisocial personality - and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say that the rate of colon cancer in the United States,
considered "alarmingly high," is about 40 per 100,000 - one hundred times lower than the rate of antisocial personality.

The high incidence of sociopathy in human society has a profound effect on the rest of us who must live on this planet, too, even those of us who have not been clinically traumatized. The individuals who constitute this 4 percent drain our relationships, our bank accounts, our accomplishments, our self-esteem, our very peace on earth.

Yet surprisingly, many people know nothing about this disorder, or if they do, they think only in terms of violent psychopathy - murderers, serial killers, mass murderers - people who have conspicuously broken the law many times over, and who, if caught, will be imprisoned, maybe even put to death by our legal system.

We are not commonly aware of, nor do we usually identify, the larger number of nonviolent sociopaths among us, people who often are not blatant lawbreakers, and against whom our formal legal system provides little defense.

Most of us would not imagine any correspondence between conceiving an ethnic genocide and, say, guiltlessly lying to one's boss about a coworker. But the psychological correspondence is not only there; it is chilling. Simple and profound, the link is the absence of the inner mechanism that beats up on us, emotionally speaking, when we make a choice we view as immoral, unethical, neglectful, or selfish.

Most of us feel mildly guilty if we eat the last piece of cake in the kitchen, let alone what we would feel if we intentionally and methodically set about to hurt another person.

Those who have no conscience at all are a group unto themselves, whether they be homicidal tyrants or merely ruthless social snipers.

The presence or absence of conscience is a deep human division, arguably more significant than intelligence, race, or even gender.

What differentiates a sociopath who lives off the labors of others from one who occasionally robs convenience stores, or from one who is a contemporary robber baron - or what makes the difference between an ordinary bully and a sociopathic murderer - is nothing more than social status, drive, intellect, blood lust, or simple opportunity.

What distinguishes all of these people from the rest of us is an utterly empty hole in the psyche, where there should be the most evolved of all humanizing
functions. [Martha Stout *The Sociopath Next Door*] (highly recommended)

MORE  [http://www.cassiopaea.org/cass/political_ponerology_lobaczewski.htm](http://www.cassiopaea.org/cass/political_ponerology_lobaczewski.htm)

WARRING FOR DOMINATION INHERENT IN MALES

*Man's Greatest Fear: The Final Phase of Human Evolution* by Thomas M. Lister, Ed.D

Athena Books. reviewed by Sandra Shwayder Sanchez

"Man simply loves to kill something, anything that's alive. Whether its an endangered polar bear, or a whale or even another man, the males of our species enjoy killing."

We've all heard that those who do not study history are doomed to repeat it, but we also know, from studying history, that mankind has indeed been repeating cycles of violence, abusive hierarchy, and destruction for thousands of years. Psychologist Thomas Lister is able to quote historians and philosophers from Thucydides and Plato to Rousseau and Thoreau, and right up to Howard Zinn. We've also heard that history is written by the victors, and for the other prespective, we are lucky to have such writers as Howard Zinn, Greg Palast (for the truth about current history in the making), and now Thomas Lister.

Lister not only fills this compact book with a great deal of important and shocking factual information, but he also explains, using Freudian theory, the subconscious motives underlying much of the history that we wish would not be repeated. **Foremost among those motivations is man's fear of woman with her life giving force and his need therefore to dominate her.** One lesson we should have learned is that the course of mankind's trajectory through time cannot be changed by force. Our only hope of correcting the destruction, violence and hatred of several millennia is in understanding the psychological peregrinations that have led to it and, through that understanding, find the cure for the ills of human civilization. If you read for enlightenment and care about the future of human civilization, this book is a very important part of your necessary study of history

MYTHS: EXCEPTIONALISM


DemocracyNow.org – During the most recent Republican presidential debate on Monday, September 12th, Congressman Ron Paul of Texas drew boos and jeers from the crowd and his fellow debaters for his views on the roots of 9/11 attacks. **Dr. Paul criticized U.S. foreign policy** as the catalyst stating, “we’re under great threat because we occupy so many countries… We have to be honest with ourselves. What would we do if another country, say China, did to us what we do to all those countries over there?” For more, Democracy Now! spoke with Professor Emeritus of Linguistics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Noam Chomsky. **Dr. Chomsky responded to Dr. Paul’s comments by reciting the history of antagonism to US policy,** concluding: “I think what he said is completely uncontroversial. You can read it in government documents.”

EXCERPT OF RUSH TRANSCRIPT:

AARON MATÉ (DN! Co-Host): Well, Noam, you mentioned the changes in discourse between 10 years ago and today. And actually, this issue of the reasons behind 9/11 came up last night at the Republican presidential debate. Congress Member Ron Paul of Texas drew boos from the crowd and a rebuke from other candidates on the podium when he criticized U.S. foreign policy in discussing the roots of 9/11.

REP. RON PAUL: We’re under great threat because we occupy so many countries. We’re in 130 countries. We have 900 bases around the world. We’re going broke. The purpose of al-Qaeda was to attack us, invite us over there, where they can target us. And they have been doing it. They have more attacks against us and the American interests per month than occurred in all the years before 9/11. But we’re there, occupying their land. And if we think that we can do that and not have retaliation, we’re kidding ourselves. We have to be honest with ourselves. What would we do if another country, say China, did to us what we do to all those countries over there?

So, this whole idea that the whole Muslim world is responsible for this and they’re attacking us because we’re free and prosperous, that is just not true. Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda have been explicit. They have been explicit, and they wrote and said that we attacked—we attacked America because you had bases on our holy land in Saudi Arabia, you do not give Palestinians a fair treatment, and you have been bombing—I didn’t say that, I’m trying to get you to understand what the motive was behind the bombing. At the same time, we had been bombing and killing hundreds of thousands of Iraqis for 10 years. Would you be annoyed? If you’re not annoyed, then there’s some problem.

AARON MATÉ: That was Republican Congress Member Ron Paul of Texas speaking last night at the Republican presidential debate. Noam Chomsky, your response?
NOAM CHOMSKY: I think what he said is completely uncontroversial. You can read it in government documents. You can find it in polls. Maybe people don’t like to hear it, but, as I mentioned before, it goes back to the 1950s. Actually, right after 9/11, the Wall Street Journal, to its credit, did a study of privileged Muslims, sometimes called “monied Muslims,” people in the Muslim world who are deeply embedded in the U.S. global project—lawyers, directors of multinational corporations and so on, not the general population. And it was very much like what Eisenhower had—was concerned about, and the National Security Council, in the 1950s. There was a lot of antagonism to—a lot of antagonism to U.S. policy in the region, partly support of dictators blocking democracy and development, just as the National Security Council concluded in 1958.

ECONOMICS

The Real Reason Why Gadaffi Was Killed & Why We're In Libya

- YouTube  or [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hN0aNsA9ALg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hN0aNsA9ALg)

The real reason the US invaded Libya had more to do with the primacy of the American dollar than anything else.

WAR PROFITEERS: Lobbying, Bribery

Robert Greenwald: “War Budget Cuts Possible If We Counter Contractors' Multimillion-Dollar Campaign Spending”

From Just Foreign Policy News, August 12, 2011

Brave New Foundation is launching a campaign to expose war contractor lobbyists working to stop the Pentagon from being cut as part of debt reduction.

[http://warcosts.com/](http://warcosts.com/)

2011

**Tomgram: Michael Klare, Is Washington Out of Gas?**

Way back then, the signs out on the streets read: "No Blood for Oil," "How did USA's oil get under Iraq's sand?" and "Don't trade lives for oil!" Such homemade placards, carried by deluded antiwar
protesters in enormous demonstrations before the Bush administration launched its invasion of Iraq in March 2003, were typical -- and typically dismissible. Oil? Don't be silly!

True, Undersecretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz spoke admiringly about Iraq “floating on a sea of oil,” but that was just a slip of the tongue. President Bush was so much more cautious. Despite his years in the energy business and those of his vice-president (not to speak of the double-hulled tanker that had been named after his national security advisor while she was on the board of Chevron), he almost never even mentioned oil. When he did, he didn't call it “oil,” but Iraq’s “patrimony.”

Back then, of course, everyone who mattered knew that whatever the invasion of Iraq was about -- freedom, possible mushroom clouds rising over U.S. cities or biological and chemical attacks on them, the felling of a monster dictator -- it certainly wasn’t about oil. An oil war? How crude (so to speak), even if Iraq, by utter coincidence, happened to be located in the oil heartlands of the planet.

And it wasn’t just the Bush administration. You wouldn’t have found the New York Times speaking about oil wars either. Not much has changed, actually. As in last weekend’s eight-year-late modified mea culpa for the Iraq war that former liberal war hawks conducted in that paper’s magazine section, you could find some breast-beating, testosterone-dissing, and even regret for past positions, but not a mention of oil. And -- who would expect anything else -- never a mention either of the ignorant hoi polloi who carried such oily signs, demonstrated against war, and are best forgotten, or any stray experts who genuinely opposed Bush’s wars before they were launched. (Here’s a little tip for those who want to make it into the Rolodexes of high-powered Washington reporters: being wrong is helpful, and wisdom is a platonic ideal not to be dented by evidence of the lack of it.)

As for our most recent (definitely not oil) war in Libya where American and NATO planes are still bombing the you-know-what out of the remnants of Muammar Gaddafi’s forces, the explanations in the news pages have generally focused on preventing massacres, “humanitarian intervention,” and the felling of evil dictators. For oil, you have to head for section D (the business pages) where, under the headline “The Scramble for Access to Libya’s Oil Wealth Begins,” you could indeed finally read a comment like this: “The resumption of Libyan production would help drive down oil prices in Europe, and indirectly, gasoline prices on the East Coast of the United States. Western nations -- especially the NATO countries that provided crucial air support to the rebels -- want to make sure their companies are in prime position to pump the Libyan crude.”

Of course, despite the best attempts of Bush’s men in Baghdad, we never did get Iraq’s oil. But that’s the lumps you take when, as an imperial power, you don’t actually win your oil war. And there are more lumps when you can’t win any war, oil or otherwise. Michael Klare, TomDispatch regular and author of Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet, is an expert on both war and oil. In the second in a series of TomDispatch posts on American decline, he considers whether both America and oil are now on the downhill slope. Tom

America and Oil
Declining Together?
By Michael T. Klare

America and Oil. It’s like bacon and eggs, Batman and Robin. As the old song lyric went, you can’t have one without the other. Once upon a time, it was also a surefire formula for national greatness and global preeminence. Now, it’s a guarantee of a trip to hell in a hand basket. The Chinese know it. Does Washington?

America’s rise to economic and military supremacy was fueled in no small measure by its control over the world’s supply of oil. Oil powered the country’s first giant corporations, ensured success in World War II, and underlay the great economic boom of the postwar
period. Even in an era of nuclear weapons, it was the global deployment of oil-powered ships, helicopters, planes, tanks, and missiles that sustained America’s superpower status during and after the Cold War. It should come as no surprise, then, that the country’s current economic and military decline coincides with the relative decline of oil as a major source of energy.

If you want proof of that economic decline, just check out the way America’s share of the world’s gross domestic product has been steadily dropping, while its once-powerhouse economy now appears incapable of generating forward momentum. In its place, robust upstarts like China and India are posting annual growth rates of 8% to 10%. When combined with the growing technological prowess of those countries, the present figures are surely just precursors to a continuing erosion of America’s global economic clout.

Click here to read more of this dispatch.

Thoughtlessness, POOR REASONING

_Resurrecting the Lost Art of Reasoning: The Way to Truth, Wisdom, and Enlightenment_ by Joan Morrone. (Unpublished book). The Age of Enlightenment came to an end due to the lack of faith in reasoning. It is not that reasoning doesn't work, but that it is not used often enough, and that is a main cause of wars. jmorrone@centurylink.net

WHY PUBLIC SUPPORTS WAR NOT FOR THEIR GOOD BUT FOR THE INTERESTS OF ELITES: ELITE PROPAGANDA

_Reasons to Kill: A conversation with Richard E. Rubenstein_

This book is not about the factors that motivate elites to make war. Elites have many reasons to fight, including economic interests, geopolitical ambitions, and domestic political motives. The basic question I ask is: What convinces ordinary Americans to send their kinfolk, friends, and countrymen to kill other people and risk their own bodies and minds in battle? The overall answer, I find, is that we are persuaded to fight by appeals to widely shared and deeply held moral values – values associated with what some call our civil religion. The most common themes are these... Rubenstein also analyzes Obama's Nobel speech. For the entire interview go to:


_Reasons to Kill: A conversation with Richard E. Rubenstein_
Q. In REASONS TO KILL, you study the arguments that pro-war advocates have made throughout American history as we’ve mobilized for war. What reoccurring themes did you find in our rhetorical and philosophical strategies?

RR. This book is not about the factors that motivate elites to make war. Elites have many reasons to fight, including economic interests, geopolitical ambitions, and domestic political motives. The basic question I ask is: What convinces ordinary Americans to send their kinfolk, friends, and countrymen to kill other people and risk their own bodies and minds in battle? The overall answer, I find, is that we are persuaded to fight by appeals to widely shared and deeply held moral values – values associated with what some call our civil religion. The most common themes are these:

* **Self-defense.** We have a moral right and duty to defend the nation against unjustified attacks. The problem is that we have vastly expanded the definition of self-defense. The “self” we feel justified in defending is not just America’s soil and people but U.S. troops, intelligence agents, civilian employees, private contractors, and allied forces around the globe. Equating this imperial apparatus with American proper creates what I call “imperial circularity” and generates an endlessly expanding war.

* **Evil enemies.** We have a moral duty to destroy diabolical leaders who commit atrocities against their own people, threaten their neighbors, and seek world domination. The problem is that we often label adversaries absolutely evil when they are not really satanic and can be dealt with in ways short of total war. To justify U.S. participation in World War I, we converted Kaiser Wilhelm II into the “Beast of Berlin,” and to justify attacking Iraq we diabolized Saddam Hussein. Sometimes we label a whole people evil, which can lead to violence on a horrific scale.

* **Humanitarian interventions and moral crusades.** We have a special mission to secure the values of democracy, human rights, civil order, and moral decency around the world, by military means if necessary. The problem is that the U.S. is a superpower with its own interests and cultural biases, not a disinterested liberator of the oppressed. More often than not, as in the case of the Spanish-American War, we end up acting exactly like
the tyrants and aggressors we oppose.

* Patriotic duty. We earned our freedom by fighting for it. When Uncle Sam asks us to fight, even die, for our nation, we should be prepared to do so. The problem is that patriotism has never meant killing and dying on command. Generations of American patriots have demanded that the government justify war by showing that there is a real threat to the nation and that violence is needed to counter it. What I call communal patriotism creates a special problem by excluding anti-war dissenters from the American community.

* National honor. If we don’t demonstrate that we are willing to fight, we will lose face and credibility, bad people will take advantage of us, and we will become a humiliated second-rate nation. For the same reason, once we have committed the nation to a war, we cannot retreat or withdraw without dishonor. The problem is that this is not a moral doctrine; it is an insecure cowboy machismo posing as morality. Most American wars since the end of World War have ended in something short of victory, and most should not have been fought at all.

* No peaceful alternative. Negotiations to avert war have failed, or they would be fruitless, since the enemy cannot be trusted to keep its word. The only alternative to war is therefore dishonorable appeasement. The problems are that the U.S. refuses to negotiate in good faith as much as any other nation, and that, even where it is attempted, negotiation falls short of conflict resolution. Without serious attempts at conflict resolution – that is, ending violence by eliminating its underlying causes – war is never a last resort.

You note the United States has the most bellicose record of all modern nations and in REASONS TO KILL are most curious about why people follow. Can you tell us a bit about your ideas here?

There are two common answers to this question. One: Americans are naïve and easy to manipulate and will buy any war that is cleverly packaged and marketed. I call this the innocent dupe theory. Two: Americans are weapons-loving warriors who like to fight: the frontier killer theory. Both theories contain part of the truth, but neither gets to the heart of the matter, which is that we are a people who will not ordinarily fight unless we are convinced that a war is necessary and morally justified.
Americans have been sold a bill of goods in the past, from President Polk’s dubious claim that the Mexican army had invaded America in 1846 to President Bush’s claim that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and was in league with al Qaeda. But we are not so much tricked into fighting as persuaded to fight by arguments and images that emphasize the evil nature of some adversary and our own innocence and vulnerability. Similarly, the U.S. has incubated the sort of local warrior culture described by Senator Jim Webb in his book, Born Fighting. Nevertheless, we are not impelled to fight because of the Appalachian frontier tradition – if that were true, American history would not demonstrate so many strong and widespread anti-war movements. We choose war, sometimes, because we are convinced that we need to fight for reasons of self-defense or moral obligation, and that there is honorable alternative.

Speaking of anti-war movements, public approval has been low for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, yet antiwar mobilizations haven’t occurred on the scale that they did during Vietnam. Why do you think this is?

Some think that the principal reason is the absence of the draft and the creation of professional armed forces. Professionalization of the military plays some role, but I do not think that it is the main reason. We drafted men to fight the Korean War, and that did not generate a mass anti-war movement even though the war became very unpopular. Conversely, we did not draft soldiers to fight the War of 1812 or the Iraq War, but there was enormous opposition to those conflicts nevertheless.

Three reasons for today’s passive discontent seem most important to me: fear, cooptation, and recession.

Fear: Americans are still traumatized by the September 11, 2001 al-Qaeda attacks, and fears of a new attack are kept alive by reports of new conspiracies hatched and new plots broken up. Of course, there is reason to be concerned about terrorist attacks, but the fear in America goes way beyond that in other nations, such as Britain and Spain, that have experienced more recent attacks. I believe we are panicking because of concerns that are not generally recognized, including the disturbing recognition that we are not a “chosen people” exempted from
material, social, and spiritual problems that affect the rest of the world. I think we are beginning to recognize that our empire is tottering – and that’s a scary prospect for many people.

**Cooptation:** Barack Obama’s election raised expectations for a new deal both in domestic and in foreign policy. Even though many of his supporters are disappointed in the results so far, many are unwilling to abandon their original hopes. So far at least, there has been no Great Betrayal equivalent to Lyndon Johnson’s commitment of half a million troops to Vietnam, which triggered the anti-war movement of the sixties. Moreover, many of Obama’s policies are oracular – they mean what people want them to mean. Conservatives can interpret his escalation of the Afghan War as a sign of his toughness, while liberals can interpret the same escalation as a preliminary to negotiations.

**Recession:** Technically, the recession is over, but grave economic problems persist. The result is exactly the opposite of what happened at the height of the great economic boom of 1945-65, when people’s expectations soared, inspiring a series of group liberation movements, detonating a cultural revolution, and generating a new sense of entitlement and solidarity among young people. People do not usually mobilize en masse against war if they are worried about finding jobs or defending the cultural gains of the past against attack. By the same token, if America remains bogged down in endless wars, both expectations and anger can be expected to rise as the economy revives and the trauma of September 11 abates. One further condition may be necessary: a shocking event equivalent to the Tet Offensive of February 1968 in Vietnam. It is impossible to say what form this will take – but, given our involvement in violent activities around the world, a significant shock seems likely.

**What were your thoughts on Barack Obama’s Nobel Prize acceptance speech?**

I found the speech very disappointing – a few hoary cliches about war and peace flimsily disguised as a new foreign policy. “War, in one form or another, appeared with the first man,” Obama said. “At the dawn of history, its morality was not questioned; it was simply a fact, like drought or disease.” This will be news to most evolutionary scientists, anthropologists, and archaeologists. The evidence suggests that early humans were peaceful creatures and that war did not appear until people began settling in densely populated river valleys, where classes of warriors and priests first appeared. Moreover, almost as soon as this happened, prophetic figures like Isaiah of Jerusalem (8th century BCE) arose to question the morality of collective violence.
Even more questionable was Obama’s use of the theory of the Just War to justify America’s current “war on terrorism.” “Evil does exist in the world,” said the president. “A non-violent movement could not have halted Hitler’s armies. Negotiations cannot convince al Qaeda’s leaders to lay down their arms.”

How does Obama know this? Has he offered to meet with al Qaeda? Obviously not. The president is quite right about Hitler – but the analogy between the Nazis and Islamist extremists is flawed. Since World War II, every American president who wants to fight a war, from Lyndon Johnson in Vietnam to George W. Bush in Iraq, has labeled the enemy of the moment a new Adolf Hitler. Hitler made an agreement with Britain and France at Munich and then tore it up. But how does Obama know that negotiations with al Qaeda would be useless? He makes this assertion because he is convinced that they are diabolical and that one cannot negotiate with the devil.

This is a mistake. Islamist terrorists are relatively, not absolutely, evil. They are the violent, misguided fringe of a much larger movement with real grievances against America and the West. Bin Laden is the tip of an iceberg that can be melted – but not by the methods of total war used against Hitler and the Nazis. I would not negotiate with Usama bin Laden either, in the sense of bargaining with him, but I would offer to meet with any and all Islamic leaders who want to discuss what is wrong with their relationship with America and what to do about that. Such a meeting should be strictly confidential, open to influential figures who are not official leaders of any nation or group, and facilitated by impartial conflict resolvers. It might mark the beginning of a new era in Western-Islamic relations.

This kind of conflict resolution is exactly what the British and Irish did in connection with Northern Ireland – they used the services of an impartial peacemaker – America’s George Mitchell – to bring together violent extremists on both the Catholic and Protestant sides for serious analytical talks. The result was a split in each movement. The ultras on both sides isolated themselves, and militants who were calling each other children of the devil shortly before conclusion of the 1998 Good Friday Agreement ended up sharing power in a new Northern Ireland.

The final disappointment in Oslo was the president’s insistence that the U.S. “has helped underwrite global
security for more than six decades with the blood of our citizens and the strength of our arms,” and that we did this not for the sake of power, but out of the goodness of our hearts. This is a grotesque misreading of history. Six decades ago, the U.S. fought the Korean War, which could be justified, up to a point, as an effort to defend South Korean independence against a North Korean invasion. But the vast expansion of American power since then – with hundreds of military bases in more than 60 countries – has far more to do with U.S. geopolitical and economic interests than with “global security.” President Obama equates American power with global security. He is unwilling to say the “E word” – empire – or to recognize that trying to maintain an American empire makes both the world and the United States less secure.

Do you believe there is such a thing as a “good war”?

I believe that there have been a few justifiable wars, although very few, and that even these can be justified only in part. Justifying war involves three requirements: the war must be necessary, it must be fought for a good cause, and it must cause the minimum amount of human suffering consistent with vindicating that cause. No war since Korea has fulfilled these essential requirements . . . and even Korea seems to me a marginal case, since it became a war of conquest when U.S. forces crossed the 38th parallel in order to unify the nation under American control.

World War II was necessary because it proved impossible to negotiate with Hitler or the Japanese government. (Hitler himself would not have been a factor if Germany had been treated decently at the end of World War I, instead of being impoverished and humiliated, but that is another story.) World War II was also fought for a partially good cause, since we could not co-exist with fascist regimes that enslaved and exterminated millions of people, and that commanded the most powerful economies outside the U.S. The violence used to defeat the Axis powers was justified up to a point, but we ended by subjecting enemy civilians to wildly excessive force. It was unnecessary and wrong to cause a firestorm over undefended Dresden, incinerate Tokyo, and drop atomic weapons on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, taking hundreds of thousands of lives when our enemies were on the verge of surrendering.

At present, in my view, there is no way to justify a “War on Terrorism” that obfuscates America’s imperial role,
portrays the leaders of mass movements like the Taliban and Hezbollah as isolated terrorists, corrupts and brutalizes societies subject to U.S. intervention, and inflames the structural situation that is generating anti-Western violence. It is not just a new foreign policy we need but a new way of understanding ourselves and the world we inhabit. In developing this new understanding, I think that critical conflict theory has a crucial role to play.

Richard E. Rubenstein is a part of Unrest’s Editorial Cell and a professor of Conflict Resolution and Public Affairs at the Institute for Conflict Analysis & Resolution. Contact: rrubenstein@unrestmag.com This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it

Reasons to Kill

Why Americans Choose War: Elite Propaganda

By Richard E. Rubenstein

What makes Americans fight? Why do the professed first citizen of the free world so often accept armed conflict as a political measure, and how do we justify those choices to ourselves? When is war the right decision?

From the American Revolution to the end of World War II, the United States spent nineteen years at war against other nations. But since 1950, the total is twenty-two years and counting. On four occasions, U.S. presidents elected as "peace candidates" have gone on to lead the nation into ferocious armed conflicts. Repeatedly, wars deemed necessary when they began have been seen in retrospect as avoidable, and ill-advised.

Americans profess to be a peace-loving people and one wary of "foreign entanglements." Yet we have been drawn into wars in distant lands from Vietnam to Afghanistan. We cherish our middle-class comforts and our children. Yet we send our troops to Fallujah and Mogadishu. How is it that ordinary Americans with the most to lose are so easily convinced to follow hawkish leaders-of both parties-into war? In Reasons to Kill noted scholar Richard E. Rubenstein explores both the rhetoric that sells war to the public and the underlying cultural and social factors that make it so effective. With unmatched historical perspective and insightful commentary, Rubenstein offers citizens new ways to think for themselves about crucial issues of war and peace.

New blog post from Rich.

Advance Praise for Reasons to Kill:

“Many of us long for an intelligent and informed conversation about America’s role in the world. Are we going the way of all empires, or is there another way? Richard E. Rubenstein has provided a sane and
probing contribution to that conversation. In a time of faux-populism and jingoistic patriotism, it is encouraging to read a critical analysis of our attitude to war and violence from a writer who deeply loves his country.”—Alan Jones, dean emeritus, Grace Cathedral and author of Soul Making: The Desert Way of Spirituality and Reimagining Christianity: Reconnect Your Spirit without Disconnecting your Mind.

Reviews and media for Reasons to Kill:
Here’s Richard’s Guest blog post for the Washington Post’s Political Bookworm
Feisty essay in The Chronicle Review this week that includes Reasons To Kill
Great post on Juan Williams’ website
“A lively, contrarian view of history—fruitful reading for peaceniks and warfighters alike.” —Kirkus Reviews
Nice early excerpt in Alternet – 5 Ways We Should Radically Reconsider War
Watch a Video with Richard.

PREVENTION

1. The Better Angels of Our Nature — By Steven Pinker — Book ...
www.nytimes.com/.../the-better-angels-of-our-nature-by-steven-pinker...
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Oct 6, 2011 – In his new book, Steven Pinker argues that our current era is less violent, less cruel and more peaceful than any previous period of human ...

2. Steven Pinker's The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why should you ...
www.slate.com/.../steven_pinker_s_the_better_angels_of_our_nature...
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Oct 3, 2011 – Is pessimism a biological trait, implanted in our ancestors by natural selection, or a learned, culturally inculcated propensity? Either way, it’s ...

3. Steven Pinker's book. The Better Angels of Our Nature – the final ...
www.guardian.co.uk/.../18/steven-pinker-better-angels-final-verdictCached
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Nov 18, 2011 – David Shariatmadari: A selection of your views on Steven Pinker’s grand idea on violence in society, and a last chance to air your thoughts.

Amid the general gloom about global warming and collapsing economies, a little bubble of optimism is popping out from science-land. The cognitive scientist Steven Pinker has written "The Better Angels of Our Nature," in which he argues - at the risk, you might think, of being labeled a Holocaust denier - that human violence has greatly decreased in the past few centuries. Now the estimable science writer John Horgan offers "The End of War," a brief, and largely cogent, argument for ending the most expensive and highly organized form of human violence there is - right now.

We can do it because nothing is forcing us to keep on fighting. Horgan impressively marshals the evidence, much of it well known by now, against any biological imperative to make war. Men are not driven to fight wars by testosterone. In fact, they usually have to be pressed into service and then further pressed into killing when the fighting breaks out, as shown - although Horgan doesn't use this example - by the elaborate stratagems generals have historically deployed to prevent their troops from deserting.

He points out that some human societies, like the Inuit, are utterly peaceable, while others, like the Waorani of the Amazon, have gone from obsessive war making to more irenic occupations within living memory. Nor do economic considerations, such as shortages of resources, reliably impel people to fight. If nothing is making us do it, we might as well stop.

This leaves us with the question of what has kept people fighting for all these centuries, and not just stupid or sociopathic people. Consider, for example, the roster of brilliant individuals who got swept up in the excitement of one of the least defensible wars of all, World War I: Anatole France, Isadora Duncan, Isabella Pankhurst, Mohandas Gandhi and Sigmund Freud, to name just a few. War may not be etched into our psyches or genomes, but, somehow, it has just kept barreling along. No one can say what ultimately "caused" World War I, or any number of other well-known wars, except that several nation-states were armed to the teeth and waiting for orders to fire.

Horgan acknowledges that war has a "self-perpetuating" quality seemingly separable from human volition. Although it often comes wrapped in familiar human arrangements like male supremacy and class hierarchy, it behaves mathematically like an infectious disease: It spreads from one place to another as if by "contagion"; it propagates itself through time as a cycle of revenge.

Here I expected Horgan to dissect the forces that give war a kind of life of its own, such as the institutional weight of militarism - or the fact that, as Brian Campbell writes in his new book on one of the world's most aggressive empires, "The Romans and Their World," "Rome had to give all these soldiers something to do." But instead Horgan throws up his hands and invokes "the essential mystery of war:" "War has been blamed on a dizzying array of factors, but wars are so diverse that you can find evidence to support or contradict almost any theory."

Within pages of that disappointing conclusion, Horgan surprises the reader with his own preferred theory, borrowed from Margaret Mead, that war is a "cultural tradition." How this differs from saying that war is something that people have done over and over again - a kind of habit - is not altogether clear.

But the identification of war as a "tradition" seems to free Horgan to promote his "just say no" approach to ending war. If war is a habit, we can stop it simply by exercising our free will. And the good news is that - with our high-tech, urban, cosmopolitan societies - we now have more free will than
ever, certainly more than our Paleolithic ancestors could have dreamed of. (Never mind that it was Paleolithic people who painted the caves at Lascaux and dared to populate the entire planet.)

Unfortunately, Horgan stops short of taking into account the latest transformation of warfare, just in the last decade, from a human undertaking to a contest among machines - fought by robots and drones and increasingly master-minded by computers. The very technologies that give us so many consumer choices today, and, hence, supposedly free will, are on the verge of automating warfare, to the point where military analysts are already fretting over whether humans will even remain "in the loop." In the service of optimism, Horgan ends up making one of the oldest military mistakes that there is - underestimating the enemy.

Barbara Ehrenreich is the author of "Blood Rites: Origins and History of the Passions of War." E-mail comments to books@sfchronicle.com.

This article appeared on page FE - 2 of the San Francisco Chronicle

Read more: http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2012/01/27/RVLP1MT4CP.DTL#ixzz1lGReLnPR

PREVENTING WARS: PROSECUTE HEADS OF STATE
INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT: WAR CRIMES, GENOCIDE COURT:
Heads of State are Accountable for their Killings

Mike Corder (AP). “Ivorian Faces Judges in War-Crimes Court.” ADG (Dec. 6, 2011). “Ivory Coast’s ex-president” appeared at the ICC on 12-5 “the first former head of state to face judges at the world’s first permanent war-crimes court.” Ex-Jugoslavian President Milosevic and ex-Liberian Pres. Taylor were tried at tribunals. “Together, the cases are ushering in a new era in which heads of state no longer enjoy impunity.”

CLOSING IN ON US PRESIDENTS!

Rep. Mike Honda, “Congress Must Resist the War Industry”
Reader Supported News "Such a shift requires courage, especially for members of Congress, given all the industries that benefit from our footprint-heavy warfare. But now is the time to take that necessary step. Our country has been emboldened, and we must now leverage this unity into a new direction for our defense apparatus - one that will keep us safer in every possible way, from our forces to our finances."

READ MORE http://readersupportednews.org/opinion2/268-35/5890-congress-must-resist-the-war-industry
WORLD WAR II: PACIFISTS’ PERSPECTIVE

This is James K. A. Smith's brief comment in "Fors Clavigera," Jan. 2010. Nicholson Baker, *Human Smoke: The Beginnings of World War II, the End of Civilization*. This is a strange book: really just a cumulative, chronological assemblage of news clippings leading up to the entry of the United States into World War II. A haunting, non-theological refutation of the so-called "What about Hitler?" refutation of pacifism. While I think Baker is somewhat given to a rather utopian notion about the "effectiveness" of pacifism, he nonetheless recounts why and how World War II did not have to be, and how the Allies were certainly not concerned with saving "the Jews."

Nicholson argues in "Why I'm a Pacifist: The Dangerous Myth of the Good War," *Harper's* (May 2011), that Hitler was foremost a hostage-taker, and that the allies early in the war at least should have tried to negotiate with Hitler to rescue Jews, as the pacifists at the time urged (Abraham Kaufman, Dorothy Day, Jessie Wallace Hughan, Rabbi Abraham Cronbach, Vera Brittain, Arthur Ponsonby, Clarence Pickett, Bertha Bracey, Runham Brown, Grace Beaton, Victor Gollancz, to name a few). Instead, the allies chose retribution, air war, firebombing, and the Holocaust continued. The pacifists were practical (there are numerous smaller examples of saving Jews and other objects of Hitler's enmity); they sought to save lives.

I had gradually concluded that no US war was justified, all were aggressions, and therefore all could have been prevented by the people-- except for WWII in Europe. But Baker calls that assumption into question. Dick

EFFORTS TO PREVENT LIBYAN WAR

*http://www.tomdispatch.com/post/175378*

**Tomgram: Andrew Bacevich, Obama Still Hammering Away**

Posted by Andrew Bacevich at 7:02am, April 12, 2011. [Special Offer for TomDispatch Readers: The paperback edition of Andrew Bacevich’s bestselling book *Washington Rules: America’s Path to Permanent War* is being published this week. When Washington Rules came out in hardcover, it was reviewed *smashingly* and many of you read its introductory chapter at this site. A devastating anatomy of the narrowness of Washington’s thought processes, the book challenged the idea that American security requires the United States (and us alone) to maintain a permanent armed presence around the world and be ready to intervene anywhere at any time. Unfortunately, given recent events, Washington Rules remains
unbearably timely. As a gesture of support to this site, Bacevich has agreed to send a personalized, signed copy of his new paperback to anyone who gives a contribution of $75 (or more) to TomDispatch. Believe me, your contributions help keep us above the waves. To make such a contribution or check out the offer further, just click here. Remember, if you can’t contribute but are planning to buy the paperback of Washington Rules at Amazon.com anyway, please travel to that site via any TomDispatch book link or book-cover link and we get a small cut of your purchase, whatever it may be, at no extra cost to you. [Tom]

Was there ever an American president who publicly told more people on this planet what they must do than George W. Bush? I suspect not. He’s gone, of course, but America’s version of a “must-do” foreign policy didn’t exactly leave the scene with him -- the only difference being that from Saudi Arabia and Bahrain to Libya, Iraq, and Pakistan, ever more places are taking those “musts” ever less seriously.

Just the other day I noticed this lead paragraph in a New York Times piece on Yemen, a country boiling with protests aimed at unseating its autocratic ruler Ali Abdullah Saleh: “The United States, which long supported Yemen’s president, even in the face of recent widespread protests, has now quietly shifted positions and has concluded that he is unlikely to bring about the required reforms and must be eased out of office, according to American and Yemeni officials.”

Admit it: whatever you think of Saleh, or the movement to unseat him (if you think about either at all), the idea that the U.S., only recently eagerly supporting him and his military forces as a bulwark against al-Qaeda, must now “ease him out of office” reeks of a very special kind of hubris. Behind all this lies a kind of institutional self-love, Washington's deeply embedded belief that we are still the only superpower in town and all situations should be amenable to our shifting needs and desires.

Increasingly, as Andrew Bacevich, the bestselling author of Washington Rules: America’s Path to Permanent War, indicates, even when we send in the planes, drones, and missiles, as we did in recent years in Yemen and have just done in Libya, those “musts” have a remarkable way of working out rather badly -- to the eternal surprise of Washington. (To catch Timothy MacBain’s latest TomCast audio interview in which Bacevich discusses what to make of the Obama administration’s Libyan intervention, click here, or download it to your iPod here. ) Tom

Not Why, But How

To the Shores of (and Skies Above) Tripoli

By Andrew J. Bacevich

It is a commonplace of American politics: when the moving van pulls up to the White House on Inauguration Day, it delivers not only a closetful of gray suits and power ties, but a boatload of expectations.

A president, being the most powerful man in the world, begins history anew -- so at least Americans
believe, or pretend to believe. Out with the old, sordid, and disappointing; in with the fresh, unsullied, and hopeful. Why, with the stroke of a pen, a new president can order the closing of an embarrassing and controversial off-shore prison for accused terrorists held for years on end without trial! Just like that: done.

For all sorts of reasons, the expectations raised by Barack Obama’s arrival in the Oval Office were especially high. Americans weren’t the only ones affected. How else to explain the Nobel Committee’s decision to honor the new president by transforming its Peace Prize into a Prize Anticipating Peace -- more or less the equivalent of designating the winner of the Heisman Trophy during week one of the college football season.

Of course, if the political mood immediately prior to and following a presidential inauguration emphasizes promise and discovery (the First Lady has biceps!), it doesn’t take long for the novelty to start wearing off. Then the narrative arc takes a nosedive: he’s breaking his promises, he’s letting us down, he’s not so different after all.

The words of H.L. Mencken apply. “When I hear a man applauded by the mob,” the Sage of Baltimore wrote, “I always feel a pang of pity for him. All he has to do to be hissed is to live long enough.” Barack Obama has now lived long enough to attract his fair share of hisses, boos, and catcalls.

Along with prolonging and expanding one war in Afghanistan, the Nobel Peace laureate has played a leading role in starting another war in Libya. Laboring to distinguish between this administration and its predecessor, Obama’s defenders emphasize the purity of his motives. Contemptuous of George W. Bush’s claim that U.S. forces invaded oil-rich Iraq to keep weapons of mass destruction out of the hands of terrorists, they readily accept this president’s insistence that the United States intervened in oil-rich Libya to prevent genocidal slaughter. Besides, testifying to our virtuous intent, this time we’ve got the French with us rather than against us.

Explaining Why Is a Mug’s Game ………Go to:

http://www.tomdispatch.com/post/175378

Libya: Negotiations Now! By Tom Hayden

A diplomatic alternative to a deepening quagmire is now possible, and the opportunity should be seized. The suggestion this week by U.S. Gen. Carter Ham that American ground troops might enter the conflict in support of the Libyan rebels goes beyond the United Nations mandate and suggests that the politics of escalation are underway. Continue reading... https://mail.google.com/mail/?hl=en&shva=1#inbox/12f5006f6bca58c3
*Action: Urge Congress to Block Escalation of the Libya War

Despite President Obama's promise not to put U.S. ground troops in Libya, General Ham, the former U.S. commander of the military mission, said last week that U.S. ground troops in Libya are a possibility. Rep. Conyers has proposed an amendment prohibit U.S. ground forces from being introduced into Libya. Urge your Representative to support this prohibition.

http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/act/nogroundtroops

“Can Jeff Sachs Get Us Out of Afghanistan?

Economist Jeffrey Sachs, slamming the White House's proposals for cutting domestic spending, calls for the US to get out of Afghanistan.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/robert-naiman/can-jeff-sachs-get-us-out_b_847995.html

Congressional Progressive Caucus: “The People's Budget Ends the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. “

http://cpc.grijalva.house.gov/index.cfm?sectionid=70&sectiontree=5,70

Rethink Afghanistan: “War Tax Calculator: How much are you paying for the war?”

http://rethinkafghanistan.com/iou

Yifat Susskind: “Don't Let NATO Chill the Arab Spring MADRE opposes NATO's military intervention.


*Action: Urge Congress to Bar Ground Troops in Libya
Despite President Obama's promise not to put U.S. ground troops in Libya, General Ham, the former U.S. commander of the military mission, said last week that U.S. ground troops in Libya are a possibility. Michigan Rep. John Conyers wants to explicitly prohibit U.S. ground forces from being introduced into Libya. Urge your Representative to support this prohibition. http://www.justforeignpolicy.org/act/nogroundtroops

“Kucinich Responds to Office of Legal Counsel's Twisted Rationale for Libyan War

Mr. President the Word Is War
By Rep. Dennis Kucinich, Reader Supported News
08 April 11, http://www.readersupportednews.org/opinion2/266-32/5562-mr-president-the-word-is-war

Kucinich Responds to Office of Legal Counsel's Twisted Rationale for Libyan War: "Positively Orwellian"

Congressman Dennis Kucinich (D-OH) today released the following statement responding the Office of Legal Counsel's opinion regarding the President's authority to use military force in Libya:

In the legal memo provided by the President's Office of Legal Counsel, the Administration argues that the President had the authority to attack Libya absent Congressional authorization because he determined it was in the national interest and because the US is engaged in limited military operations that do not constitute a war.

The war in Libya is not in our national interest. The claim that the US had to act in Libya in order to maintain stability in the region - "a vital US interest" - runs contrary to the history of US military intervention in the region. As evidenced by US intervention in Afghanistan, Iraq and drone bombing campaigns in Pakistan, rather than maintain stability, US military action in the region has unfortunately served to further instability. Occupations fuel insurgencies and close a circle of never-ending violence. Additionally, the doctrine that the US has a responsibility to act militarily, without prior authorization from Congress, in the event of a threat to any of our friends in the world puts us on a path to permanent war and has no legal basis in the Constitution or the War Powers Act.

The Obama Administration has prosecuted a war that is "not a war." The assertion that US military actions in Libya do not constitute war belies the significant use of military force in Libya. The Administration's own Secretary of Defense, while testifying before Congress last month, admitted that enforcing a no-fly zone in Libya was an act of war: "A no-fly zone begins with an attack on Libya to destroy the air defenses." [1] The United States, thus far, has spent well over $550 million on the war in Libya, using at least 112 long-range Tomahawk cruise missiles, estimated to cost up to $1.5 million
each, in the first day alone. The US also used Joint Direct Attack Munitions - 2,000 pound bombs - to bomb Libya. The characterization of the use of force in Libya solely as a humanitarian intervention cannot hide the reality of what war is. The attempt to assert that this is not a war does violence to cognition and violence to the English language. It is positively Orwellian.

The Administration also claims that authority to use US military force abroad was provided by United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1973, which authorized member states to "take all necessary measures" to protect Libyan civilians and to enforce a no-fly zone. The Constitution does not provide an exception for the President to unilaterally decide to use military force abroad if an international body, such as the United Nations, provides him with one. It is unequivocally clear, in Article 1, Section 8, that the power to authorize the use of military force or to declare war lies solely with Congress.

The law provides the President with the authority to use military force absent prior Congressional authorization only to repel sudden or imminent attack. There was no threat of sudden or imminent attack to the United States from Libya. President Obama himself recognized the constitutional limitations imposed on any US President when, in an October 2008 interview, he stated that "The President does not have power under the Constitution to unilaterally authorize a military attack in a situation that does not involve stopping an actual or imminent threat to the nation." [2]

In the sophistry of the Office of Legal Counsel's memo, the Obama administration fails to justify what cannot be justified. While the President has argued that the credibility of the United Nations (UN) was at stake if members of the Security Council did not act, it is actually the credibility of his administration and of our own democracy that is at stake. Preserving the credibility of the UN has never been a reason to go to war. A plain reading of the US Constitution explicitly places war powers in the hands of Congress.

In this flimsy attempt to justify military action in Libya, it appears as though the administration is taking scissors and scotch tape to the Constitution, cutting out sections they do not like, and replacing them with legal theory that is reminiscent of the now discredited theories (of a former administration) which were used to justify torture.


Los Angeles Times: “High-tech tools and human errors

By the U.S. military's own admission, excessive faith in high-tech tools contributed to the deaths of civilians in a U.S. airstrike.


PREVENTION OF WARS: 2 PRINCIPLES
ANN McNEELY : All should sacrifice

For all who think a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution is a good idea, I have two additional amendments. No.

1, any war or military action that the United States undertakes must be paid for 100 percent by additional taxes. No. 2, all wars or military actions must be fought with troops that are all or partially derived from a impartial draft. I suspect that would make our future budgets much easier to balance.

Shared sacrifice and accountability go hand in hand.

During WWI, the British government tightly controlled the war news. On hearing a report from the front, Prime Minister David Lloyd George said, “If people really knew, the war would be stopped tomorrow. But of course they don't know, and can't know.”

“Taking Away the Occasion for War. UN Conference Focuses on Conflict Prevention.” Quaker Action (Fall 2005). Expression of AFSC’s efforts to shift the UN from reaction to violence to prevention.

ENDING RIVALRIES TO PREVENT WARS

By Dick Bennett (9-7-12)

The Arkansas Democrat- Gazette (8-5-12) published an essay weighing the pros and cons of having enemies. (Carolyn Johnson, “Dear Enemy”). “In the history and mythos of human achievement, certainly, rivalry is a crucial plot component.” At the end of her article she turns to the research of Paul Diehl, Univ. of Illinois, on rivalries in armed conflict between countries. Diehl has amassed a dataset of some 300 rivalries spanning two centuries. He asks: What conditions allow rivalries to thrive, how animosities develop and escalate, how signing treaties affects rivalries, what causes enemies to become friendly? His aim is to understand the factors leading to the onset, escalation, and termination of rivalries in order to avoid war. Unfortunately Johnson ends her essay here.
We will recollect the long Cold War as fertile ground for studying Diehl’s questions and factors. The US Institute for Peace is studying them, and they will be central to the hoped-for Department of Peace, particularly the factors causing enemies to become friendly.

END OF NEWSLETTER #3 ON THE CAUSES AND PREVENTION OF WARS

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Dick Bennett
My blog:
War Department/Peace Department
http://jamesricharbennett.blogspot.com/
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