It is the governments of the world that either carry out or condone genocide, modern war, and other forms of mass killing. Although genocide and warfare are often regarded as distinctly different phenomena, there are in fact a number of important connections and commonalities between them, among which are several psychosocial facilitating factors. Markusen gives special attention to three of these: dehumanization of the victims, the systematic use of euphemistic language in describing the violence that is inflicted on victims, and bureaucratic organization of the overall effort. These three factors are of approximately equal importance in the waging of both wars and genocides. "The scale of man-made death is the central moral as well as material fact of our time." In the light of this fact, it is particularly unfortunate that the energy and resources devoted to understanding and preventing mass killing have been negligible.

CHAPTER 7

GENOCIDE AND MODERN WAR

by Eric Markusen

INTRODUCTION

Four generalizations emerge from a review of the scholarly literature on genocide, warfare, and other forms of mass killing that governments have conducted or condoned: 1) the twentieth century is the most violent and murderous in history; 2) genocide and warfare are by no means the only significant forms of governmental mass killing; 3) although genocide and warfare are often regarded as distinctly different phenomena, there are in fact a number of important connections and commonalities between them; 4) the scholarly attention devoted to these issues is negligible relative to their significance.

THE VIOLENCE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The discussion of genocide and modern war must, at the outset, be placed in the overall context of collective violence and mass killing. As William James observed in his 1910 essay, "The Moral Equivalent of War," "History is a bath of blood." Likewise, in his pioneering study, Taking Lives: Genocide and State Power, sociologist Irving Louis Horowitz asserts: "Mass murder and warfare among peoples is an ever-present truth of humankind." And in an article on human cruelty throughout history, another sociologist, Randall Collins, concludes that "The prevailing reality of world history is violence."

According to a number of scholars, the violence of past centuries pales before the violence and murder-
ousness of the present one. In his pioneering work, *Twentieth Century Book of the Dead*, Scottish sociologist Gil Elliot estimated that more than 110,000,000 people were killed by their fellow human beings between 1900 and 1972. "To set such a figure against the scale of violence in previous times," he stated, "involves the difficulties of comparing like periods and allowing for population increase. However, every attempt to do so shows the twentieth century to be incomparably the more violent period." Such findings led Elliot to conclude that "the scale of man-made death is the central moral as well as material fact of our time."5

Efforts to compare the magnitude of "man-made death" in the twentieth century with that in prior centuries confront serious methodological obstacles. Among them is the fact that the number of people—particularly civilians—killed in wars, massacres, and other forms of collective violence have seldom been recorded with precision. Also, many deaths caused by warfare result from delayed or indirect effects of the conflict, such as destruction of crops, economic collapse, and disruption of medical care. And, as acknowledged by Elliot in the preceding paragraph, evaluation of the assertion that the twentieth century is the most violent requires that population trends be taken into consideration. This, in turn, requires not only estimates of casualties of violence but also estimates of the population for the place and time in which the violence occurred. Thus, comparisons of the scale of twentieth century violence with violence in previous centuries are necessarily imprecise. The reader should bear this caveat in mind as the following studies are reviewed.

Sociologist Pitirim Sorokin was one of the first modern scholars to trace quantitative trends in collective violence over the centuries.6 After a lengthy discussion of the numerous methodological difficulties entailed in such a study, he used historical materials to estimate the casualties, that is, both deaths and injuries, of European wars from the eleventh century through 1925. He also used population estimates to calculate the number of war casualties per 1,000 in the population for each century in each of the ten European nations under study. He found that the estimated war casualties per 1,000 population during the first twenty-five years of the twentieth century, fifty-four casualties, were considerably higher than in any other entire century. For example, the war casualties per 1,000 of the population for the twelfth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries were two, thirty-three, and fifteen respectively.7 On the basis of such trends, Sorokin concluded that "the curse or privilege to be the most devastating or most bloody war century belongs to the twentieth; in one quarter century it imposed upon the populations a 'blood tribute' far greater than that imposed by any of the whole centuries combined." [emphasis in original]8 In a later book, in which he extended the scope of his comparative study farther back and forward in time, he confirmed his earlier results, finding the twentieth century to be "the bloodiest and most belligerent of all the twenty-five centuries under consideration."9

The recent work of William Eckhardt supports Sorokin's conclusions. Eckhardt has continued the effort to quantify the human costs of collective violence.10 In a recent study, he compared the number of wars and the number of war-related deaths from 3000 B.C. through the first half of the twentieth century.11 For estimates of the global population, the number of wars, and the number of people killed in wars during each century, he reviewed a wide range of sources, including world population histories and military histories. While acknowledging the limitations of such data, particularly in earlier centuries, Eckhardt argues that rough estimates are nonetheless possible. His findings for recent centuries are summarized in table 1.

It is evident that the number of people killed in wars, per each 1,000 of the population, has increased steadily over the past centuries, culminating in an unprecedented number during the first half of the twentieth.

Summarizing his research, Eckhardt states that "war-related deaths have been increasing over the past fifty centuries. When death estimates were divided by population estimates, this measure was significantly correlated with centuries, so that population growth alone could not explain the increase in war deaths over these fifty centuries. In other words, war-related deaths were increasing significantly faster than population growth." [emphasis added]14 In an earlier study, Eckhardt eliminated the death tolls of World Wars I and II from the estimate of war-deaths during the twentieth century and still found that the rate of war-deaths has been increasing faster than the rate of population growth.15

These studies, and others,16 focused their quantitative historical comparisons on warfare, but they do not consider genocide as another, ostensibly different, form of governmental violence. Unfortunately, the field of genocide studies has not yet produced its counterpart to Sorokin or Eckhardt. Indeed, as is discussed below, genocide scholars are still engaged in debate over the very definition of "genocide." Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that some researchers have suggested that, during the twentieth century at least, the death toll from warfare, as high as it has been, may be significantly lower than the death toll from genocide and genocidal killing. Political scientist R.J. Rummel, for example,
Table 1: War-Related Deaths per 1,000 of the Global Population, by Century, between 1000 and 1950 A.D.\textsuperscript{12}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Century (A.D.)</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>19</th>
<th>20*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>global pop. (millions)</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of wars**</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>war deaths per 1000 of the global population</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>11.21</td>
<td>9.72</td>
<td>16.19</td>
<td>44.37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Eckhardt computed figures only for the first half of the twentieth century.

** He defined "war" as "any armed conflict, involving at least one government, and causing at least 1,000 civilian and military deaths per year, including war-related deaths from famine and disease."\textsuperscript{13}

has estimated that, while more than thirty-five million people "have died in this century's international and domestic wars, revolutions, and violent conflicts," more than 100 million have been killed "apart from the pursuit of any continuing military action or campaign," mainly at the hands of "totalitarian or extreme authoritarian governments" in "massacres, genocides and mass executions of [their] own citizens."\textsuperscript{17} Similarly, Helen Fein has estimated that genocides between 1945 and 1980 killed more than twice as many people as did wars during the same period.\textsuperscript{18}

Thus, it appears that, despite serious methodological limitations, there is in fact evidence to support the assertion that our present century is very probably the most violent and lethal in history. When the nuclear weapons currently deployed by several nations are taken into consideration, there can be no doubt that this century has the potential to be unequivocally the most murderous. Nuclear weapons are so destructive that a nuclear war could, in a very real sense, "end history" by destroying civilization.

**Structural Violence**

While the literature on collective violence focuses predominantly on genocide and warfare, it is important to note that there are other forms of governmental mass killing. One important, though insufficiently appreciated, means by which governmental policies result in large numbers of deaths is the creation or tolerance of harmful social conditions. According to William Eckhardt and Gernot Köhler, "While one group of scholars in the field restricts the term 'violence' to mean armed violence in wars and revolutions, others take a broader view and subsume both armed and structural components under the term 'violence.' Structural violence is the violence created by social, political, and economic institutions and structures which may lead to as much death and harm to persons as does armed violence."\textsuperscript{19} Horowitz mentions a related concept, benign neglect, in his important essay, "Functional and Existential Visions of Genocide," where he alludes to "one shadowy area of genocide that permits the state to take lives by indirection, for example by virtue of benign neglect, or death due to demographic causes." Unfortunately, he does not develop this intriguing concept beyond commenting that the efforts a government makes to reduce deaths from malnutrition, disease, and other "natural" causes constitute a "central indication of how a society values life."\textsuperscript{20}

As devastating as armed violence has been during the twentieth century, structural violence has resulted in many more deaths. In fact, on the basis of careful demographic analysis, Eckhardt and Köhler conclude that "about ninety-five percent of the total violence in the first three quarters of the twentieth century could be attributed to structural violence."\textsuperscript{21} More recently, Eckhardt has estimated that, during the twentieth century, structural violence "has caused a total of some 1600 million deaths, or approximately nineteen million deaths per year."\textsuperscript{22}

This form of governmental mass killing requires urgent attention, not only because of the sheer scale of the death tolls, but also because it is directly related to armed violence in at least two ways. First, structural violence, by causing suffering and death as the result
of structured social inequality, creates conditions conducive to the outbreak of overt violence, particularly in the form of revolution and civil war. Second, by diverting societal resources from programs to meet human needs and by destroying portions of the economic infrastructure, armed violence tends to aggravate the economic and social conditions that cause structural violence.

**THE PREPARATIONS FOR NUCLEAR OMNICIDE**

No discussion of governmental mass killing in general, and genocide and modern war in particular, can be complete without reference to the preparations, by a diverse group of nations, for a war waged with nuclear weapons. For nearly fifty years, the United States and the Soviet Union held the world under the threat of nuclear holocaust by their policies of deterrence through the threat of mutually assured destruction, a threat that was backed up by the deployment of more than 50,000 nuclear weapons. As this book goes to press in 1992, the United States and the new leaders of the former Soviet Union, particularly Boris Yeltsin, the president of the Russian Republic, have entered a period of unprecedented cooperation and have made preliminary agreements to dramatically reduce the size of their nuclear stockpiles. There is no doubt that the risk of a massive nuclear war between the U.S. and the former Soviet Union has significantly diminished.

However, complacency is by no means warranted. There are still tens of thousands of nuclear warheads in the arsenals of the United States, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan. These weapons collectively possess the explosive equivalent of more than one million atomic bombs like those that destroyed the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the closing days of World War II. Ambitious plans to reduce these arsenals could founder if the current economic chaos in the former Soviet Union provokes the overthrow of the democratically elected governments and their replacement by militaristic hardliners. Yeltsin himself, in a meeting with President Bush early in 1992, warned that the Cold War could return if improvements in the lives of Russians and other former Soviets are not made soon. He was quoted by the Wall Street Journal as telling President Bush, "if reform in Russia goes under, that means there will be a cold war—the cold war will turn into a hot war—this is again going to be an arms race."

In addition to the United States and the former Soviet Union, several other nations have acquired nuclear weapons capability, including China, France, Great Britain, India, Israel, Pakistan, and South Africa; and other nations, like Libya, Iraq, and North Korea, are striving to obtain nuclear weapons. Indeed, one of the reasons the United States gave for the use of military force against Iraq in the Persian Gulf War of 1991 was the fear that the Iraqis would soon possess nuclear weapons.

As yet, these nuclear arsenals pose only a potential threat to humankind; those nations that possess nuclear weapons do so in order to deter the use of nuclear and, in some cases, non-nuclear, weapons against them. However, in order for such deterrence to be credible, the nuclear-armed nations must be ready and willing to actually use the weapons. In recent years, a number of authorities, including retired military officers and former government officials, have warned that present nuclear deterrence arrangements are dangerously unstable. They cite the likely spread of nuclear weapons to additional nations in some of the most crisis-prone regions of the world and possibly to terrorist groups; the growing numbers of so-called first strike weapons designed more for fighting nuclear wars than simply deterring them; the existence of nuclear policy makers who argue that it is possible to fight, win, and survive a nuclear war; and serious problems in arrangements for maintaining control over nuclear weapons in the event that deterrence fails and nuclear war breaks out.

If even a fraction of the existing nuclear arsenals were used in combat, it is likely that more people would die than in any genocide or war in history. One study by the United States Congressional Office of Technology Assessment estimated that a "large" Soviet attack on the United States could cause as many as 160,000,000 deaths. A study by the World Health Organization calculated that a war fought with about one-half of the existing Soviet and American nuclear weapons would promptly kill as many as 1,100,000,000 and that another billion would die within the first year as a result of radiation exposure, untreated burns and other injuries, the lack of food and water, and other deprivations. This statement, made in the mid-1980s, is still valid in 1992.

In addition to directly-caused deaths and injuries, nuclear war would cause great damage to the environment. For example, the smoke and soot from fires started by nuclear detonations are likely to drift into the higher levels of the earth's atmosphere and reduce the amount of sunlight and heat that reaches the surface. This would create what scientists have called a "nuclear winter" and drastically reduce the survival chances for anyone who survived the initial effects of the war. Reputable scientists have even warned that the possibility of human extinction cannot be ruled out as a consequence of nuclear war and nuclear winter.

Some scholars have questioned the appropriateness of the term "war" when used in connection with nuclear
weapons, given their unprecedented destructiveness. As an alternative to the misleading concept of "nuclear war," philosopher John Somerville has proposed the term "nuclear omnicide," to convey the probability that a war fought with nuclear weapons would constitute a categorically new dimension of mass killing. Somerville coined omnicide from the Latin words *omni* meaning "all" and *cide* meaning "to kill." In recognition of the uniquely destructive nature of nuclear weapons, and the fact that they are deeply embedded in the national security arrangements of several nations, Lifton and Markusen have suggested the concept of a nuclear "genocidal system." "A genocidal system," they write, "is not a matter of a particular weapons structure or strategic concept so much as an overall constellation of men, weapons, and war-fighting plans which, if implemented, could end human civilization in minutes and the greater part of human life on the planet within hours...." 36

**Genocide and Modern War as Forms of Governmental Mass Killing**

Some scholars regard genocide and war as quite different phenomena. For example, sociologist Horowitz asserts that "it is operationally imperative to distinguish warfare from genocide," and political scientist R.J. Rummel has stated that "There are no common conditions or causes of domestic and foreign conflict behavior." 37 Similarly, in their discussion of definitions of genocide, Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn emphasize that it is "essential...to exclude from our analysis the casualties of war, whether military or civilian." 38 In her recent critique of the available literature on this question, Helen Fein asserts that "The question of whether killings of civilians in war are war crimes, consequences of acts of war admissible under the war convention, or acts of genocide has been clouded by the fact that genocide-labelling of wars today is often a rhetorical strategem for political delegitimation of specific wars which the labeller opposes." 39 However, it is important to note that genocide and modern war are not as distinct and separate as some have asserted them to be; other scholars have discerned important connections between them. 40

**Genocide**

According to political scientist Roger Smith, the twentieth century "is an age of genocide in which sixty million men, women, and children, coming from many different races, religions, ethnic groups, nationalities, and social classes, and living in many different countries, on most of the continents of the earth, have had their lives taken because the state thought it desirable." 41 A partial listing of twentieth century genocides includes the killing of more than 1,000,000 Armenians by the Turks in 1915; the Holocaust in which 6,000,000 Jews and 4,000,000 members of other victim groups were killed by the Nazis between 1939 and 1945; the slaughter of approximately 3,000,000 Ibo tribesmen by other Nigerians between 1967 and 1970; the massacre of more than 1,000,000 Bengalis by the the army of East Pakistan in 1971; and the killing of as many as 2,000,000 Cambodians by the Khmer Rouge between 1975 and 1979. 42 An analysis of genocides and closely-related forms of mass killing since 1945 found forty-four "episodes" of genocidal violence that, collectively, took the lives of "between seven and sixteen million people, at least as many who died in all international and civil wars in the period." 43

Recent scholarship has indicated that death tolls from past cases of genocidal killing may be far greater than has been thought. In a meticulous analysis of just one case—the Soviet Union between 1917 and 1987—R.J. Rummel estimates that during that seventy year period, "Probably 61,911,000 people, 54,769,000 of them citizens, have been murdered by the Communist party, the government of the Soviet Union." 44

The basic act of defining genocide is problematic and controversial. Despite a plethora of recent scholarship on definitional issues, a widely accepted definition of genocide continues to elude scholars. 45 The definitional dilemma has been complicated by the misapplication of the term. As Jack Nusan Porter notes, the label of "genocide" has been applied, inappropriately, to the following practices: racial integration, methadone maintenance programs, certain features of the medical treatment of Irish Catholics, and the closing of synagogues in the Soviet Union. 46

Raphael Lemkin coined the term "genocide" in his 1944 book, *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*, which contained one of the first detailed accounts of Nazi persecution of Jews and other groups. Lemkin derived the term from the Greek word *genos*, which means "race" or "tribe," and the Latin word *cide*, meaning "to kill." Thus, he defined genocide as "the destruction of a nation or ethnic group." 47 In addition to direct mass killing, such "destruction" could assume other forms, including destruction of cultural heritage and prevention of procreation. Lemkin's definition served as the basis for the first formal, legal definition of genocide, which was codified in 1948 in the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. According to the Convention, genocide refers to "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial,
or religious group, as such." The UN definition, while generally acknowledged as an important milestone in international jurisprudence, emerged from a contentious process of political compromise and deliberately excluded social and political groups, for example, the millions of Soviet civilians identified as "class enemies" and murdered by the Stalin government between 1920 and 1939. Many scholars of genocide decry this omission.49

In comparison with the legal definition of genocide embodied in the Genocide Convention, social science and other scholarly definitions encompass a wider array of targeted groups, destructive actions, and actual cases. For example, Horowitz defines genocide as "a special form of murder: state-sanctioned liquidation against a collective group, without regard to whether an individual has committed any specific and punishable transgression."50 Another definition, based on in-depth study of more than thirty cases of genocide, is offered by Chalk and Jonassohn: "Genocide is a form of one-sided mass killing in which a state or other authority intends to destroy a group, as that group and membership in it are defined by the perpetrator."51 Genocide scholar Israel Charny has proposed a "humanistic" definition that greatly expands the range of targeted groups: "the wanton murder of human beings on the basis of any identity whatsoever that they share—national, ethnic, racial, religious, political, geographical, ideological." [emphasis in original]52 More recently, Charny has proposed an even broader, "generic," definition of genocide: "mass killing of substantial numbers of human beings, when not in the course of military action against the military forces of an avowed enemy, under conditions of the essential defenselessness and helplessness of the victims."53

From the welter of competing definitions of genocide, we can discern several common features. First, genocide is a crime of governments, either directly, as when a government officially undertakes a campaign of extermination against a targeted group, or indirectly, when a government permits a subnational group to slaughter members of another subnational group. Put in different terms, genocide is a national security policy.44 Second, the victims are selected for death on the basis of group membership, rather than any transgressions against the killers. Third, while direct killing is the most characteristic form of destruction, for example, mass shooting or burning alive, many deaths result from starvation and disease. Finally, the victims are far less powerful than the perpetrators.

**MODERN (TOTAL) WAR**

Just as the twentieth century has been described as "an age of genocide," so has it been labeled "the century of total war."55 William Eckhardt has estimated the death tolls of 471 wars that have occurred since 1700 and arrived at a total of 101,550,000 fatalities.56 Ruth Leger Sivard, on the basis of Eckhardt's data, notes that "With twelve years to go, this modern century in which we live will account for over ninety percent of the deaths in wars since 1700."57 In just one year, 1987, Eckhardt counted twenty-two wars underway—more than in any other year in recorded history. In that single year of fighting, an estimated 244,000 people were killed; the overall death toll of the twenty-two wars since their inceptions is more than 2,200,000. Civilians accounted for eighty-four percent of the deaths.58

As is the case with the concept of "genocide," there is no single, widely-accepted definition of "war." Indeed, it is not uncommon to find books on the subject of war in which the term itself is left undefined. Among those who do formally define war, there is much variance among definitions. A common starting point for contemporary discussions of war is the 1832 book, *On War*, by the Prussian general and military theoretician, Karl von Clausewitz. Clausewitz saw war as "an act of violence intended to compel our opponent to fulfill our will" and as "an act of violence pushed to its utmost bounds." He also referred to war as a "mere continuation of politics (or policy) by other means."59 Clausewitz identifies two key dimensions of war. The first is violence since war is violence by definition. The second is more implicit, that is, at least one of the combatants is a government whose foreign or domestic policy goals are served by violence. These two dimensions of war are also featured in contemporary definitions. For example, William Eckhardt, as noted in table 1 above, defines war as "any armed conflict which includes one or more governments, and causes deaths of 1,000 or more people per year."60 Ronald Glossop similarly states that "War is large-scale violent conflict between organized groups that are or that aim to establish governments."61 And Arthur Westing defines war as "armed conflict between nations or between groups within a nation."62

Traditionally, there have been two principle types of war: international war, in which two or more nations engage directly in armed conflict, and civil war, in which a government fights against a subnational group or two or more subnational groups fight against each other. In the post-World War II era, a third type of war—proxy war—has become increasingly common. In this type of war, nations, particularly the United States and the Soviet Union, avoid direct conflict with
each other but instead fight each other indirectly through each other’s allies, as was the case with the United States in Vietnam. Thomas M. Franck has described proxy wars as "wars of agitation, infiltration, and subversion carried on by proxy through national liberation movements."63

Each of these types of war can develop either or both of the two features associated with the concept of total war. The first feature of total war—extensive mobilization of the warring nations—is accomplished in several ways, including the conscription of citizens to serve in mass armies, the use of propaganda to maintain morale and support for the war, and the exploitation of large sectors of the national economy for the war effort. The second feature of total war—an extremely high level of death and destruction in general and deliberate targeting of civilians in particular—reflects both advances in weapons technology and a steady expansion in the types of targets considered legitimate by military and political leaders.64

The actual term "total war" was invented in 1918 and inspired by the Napoleonic wars of the late 1700s and the early months of World War I, both of which featured mass armies raised by conscription and the application of science to develop highly destructive weapons.65 No recent war, even World Wars I and II, has been completely "total" in the sense that all of the available resources of the combatant nations have been devoted to the conflict or that the destruction of the enemy has been complete. Rather, as Marjorie Farrar has suggested, "totality can be interpreted as one extreme in a spectrum of possibilities. Distinction is then made among degrees of totality... war is total in the degree to which it approaches the extreme of totality."66 Thus, in practice, the term "total war" is applied to conflicts in which extensive societal involvement and/or indiscriminate destruction are evident.

While many wars in history have been characterized by one or both dimensions of total war, a number of features of modern war have created an especially strong tendency in the direction of totality. In his study of historical and modern war, Quincy Wright emphasized the following trends in modern war: the increased size of military force, primarily as the result of conscription; the mechanization of society in general and warfare in particular, with the latter resulting in escalating destructiveness of weapons; and the breakdown of the distinction between soldiers and civilians.67

The lethality of weapons has increased tremendously during the modern era. Whereas in World War I, about three people were killed by each ton of bombs dropped on London by German airplanes, during World War II, the American use of fire bombs against Japan raised the deaths per ton to about fifty. By the end of World War II, the invention of the atomic bomb raised the rate far higher, up to "about 10,000 persons killed per ton of normal bomb load for the B-29 that made the raid."68 According to sociologist Hornell Hart, "The five centuries from 1346 to 1875 saw several times as much increase in explosive power as had been achieved in the previous million years. The seventy years from 1875 to March 1945 saw several times as much increase in explosive power as the previous five centuries."69

Also, the targeting of population centers with very destructive weapons, for example the Nazi bombardment of London and Belgium with V-1 buzz bombs and V-2 ballistic missiles, and the British and American incendiary bombing campaigns against German and Japanese cities during World War II, greatly heightened the risk to civilians. In World War I, civilians accounted for only one in twenty deaths; by World War II, in contrast, approximately two-thirds of the deaths were of civilians.70 This trend has continued and increased since 1945. According to Sivard, "By the 1970s, civilians accounted for seventy-three percent of war deaths; thus far in the 1980s, civilians have accounted for eighty-five percent of war deaths."71

The destructive power of modern weapons, combined with the fact that many people are crowded into cities, can mean that even when efforts are made to avoid direct attacks against civilians, many noncombatants may nonetheless be killed or injured. A case in point is the recent Persian Gulf War of 1991, in which the United States and about thirty other nations fought against Iraq in order to end the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and destroy the Iraqi projects to develop and deploy nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons of mass destruction. Although the U.S. and allied forces asserted a clear policy of targeting only military targets, many civilians were killed when bombs went off course and when nearby buildings, including homes, were smashed and burned. The U.S. Air Force, as reported in the New York Times, estimated that seventy percent of bombs dropped missed their targets.72

No official U.S. estimate of the number of civilians killed has been announced to date, but one unofficial estimate put the toll at between 5,000 and 16,000 Iraqi civilians killed during the war and an additional 4,000 to 6,000 who died in the months immediately following the war as the result of untreated wounds and the lack of medical attention.73 So great was the destruction of the capital city, Baghdad, and other cities, that a United Nations report issued in March 1991 described the damage as "near apocalyptic" and stated that Iraq had been moved back to a "pre-industrial age."74 Further evidence of the toll on civilians was gathered in May 1991 by a medical team from Harvard University that visited several Iraqi cities. They estimated that the destruction of hospital facilities
and the general degradation of public services were likely to cause the deaths of tens of thousands of Iraqi infants in the coming months.85

**CONNECTIONS AND COMMONALITIES BETWEEN GENOCIDE AND MODERN WAR**

Although, as noted above, there has been a tendency to differentiate between genocide and warfare as distinct forms of collective violence, there are in fact a number of connections between them. First, modern war often creates political, organizational, and psychological conditions that are highly conducive to the outbreak of genocide. Second, the techniques of modern war—specifically, the targeting of noncombatants with very destructive weapons—tend to blur the line between genocide and war. Third, there is evidence that similar psychological and social processes operate in both forms of mass killing. Each of these connections is briefly examined below.

**MODERN WAR EXPEDITES GENOCIDE**

Leo Kuper has noted that "international warfare, whether between 'tribal' groups or city states, or other sovereign states and nations, has been a perennial source of genocide."76 Referring to the Armenian genocide of 1915 and the Nazi Holocaust against the Jews, Vahakn Dadrian observes that "It is no accident that the two principal instances of genocide of this century coincided with the episodes of two global wars."77 Civil wars also create the potential for genocide, as was the case with "auto-genocide" in Cambodia between 1975 and 1978.78

Several dimensions of modern war expedite genocide. First, by posing a dire threat to the society, war serves, according to Dadrian, as "a cataclysmic agent of disequilibrium entailing manifold crises...."79 The threat of disruption not only is blamed on the external enemy but also can be blamed on members of a minority group within the society. The minority group may be accused of collaborating with the enemy or used as a scapegoat for the frustrated aggression of the dominant group, especially when the war begins to go badly. Second, during modern war, the government, whether democratic or totalitarian, becomes more centralized and powerful, using censorship and propaganda to increase support for its belligerent policies.80 This can diminish popular resistance to intensified ruthlessness against enemies, both external and internal. Third, the government at war can utilize the military forces—men who have been trained to kill in the service of their nation—for the perpetration of genocide. This occurred in both the Armenian genocide81 and the Holocaust.82 Fourth, just as conditions of war significantly increase the power of the genocidal government, they also tend to increase the vulnerability of the targeted victim groups, which tend to be, as Dadrian notes, "isolated, fragmented, and nearly totally emasculated through the control of channels of communication, wartime secrecy, the various sections of the wartime apparatus, police, and secret services, and the constant invocation of national security."83 Finally, modern war creates a climate of moral and psychological numbing or desensitization that increases popular tolerance of cruelty, whether directed against an external or internal enemy.84

**BLURRING OF THE LINE BETWEEN WAR AND GENOCIDE**

Genocide and warfare have been differentiated on a number of grounds. Morally, genocide is universally regarded as unequivocally evil, while warfare is widely regarded as a necessary and valid "continuation of politics," to paraphrase Clausewitz. Also, the two forms of mass killing may be distinguished with respect to the relation between ends and means. While both use similar means—mass killing—the end or goal is quite different. Genociders aim to kill for the sake of killing; in war, killing is done in order to end the war. Had the Nazis not lost World War II, for example, they would have continued their genocide against the Jews. In contrast, the Allies immediately discontinued the practice of firebombing cities when the enemy surrendered. Finally, there is an apparent difference in the nature of the victims. The victims of genocide are usually defenseless members of a minority group, while the victims of war are generally citizens of a society engaged in armed conflict.

Nonetheless, on close examination these differences become narrower or blurred. With respect to the moral dimension, one of the traditional criteria for a "just war" has been the careful discrimination between soldiers and civilians.85 The deliberate targeting of civilians violates this important criterion. As Lewis Mumford has observed, "In principle, the extermination camps where the Nazis incinerated over six million helpless Jews were no different from the urban crematoriums our air force improvised in its attacks by napalm bombs on Tokyo...our aims were different, but our methods were those of mankind's worst enemy."86 Leo Kuper, in a discussion of "the changing nature of warfare," notes how, in the Second World War, "Germany employed genocide in its war for domination." He goes on to say, however, "but I think the term [genocide] must also be applied to the atomic
bombed by the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the U.S.A. and to the pattern bombing by the Allies of such cities as Hamburg and Dresden. It should be noted that some scholars strongly disagree with such a comparison.

Also, in certain cases of war and genocide, the distinction between ends and means also breaks down. Some genocide scholars suggest that not all genocides aim to destroy the entire victim group as the primary goal, but that killing part of the group may be used to deter the survivors from resisting oppression by the perpetrators; in other words, killing is the means to an end other than total annihilation. Dadian, for example, discusses retributive genocide, in which a portion of a minority group is killed as a warning to the remainder of the consequence of non-compliance with dominant group policies, and utilitarian genocide, in which part of a group is decimated in order to confiscate their property or to exploit the labor of the demoralized survivors.

Modern total war, by slaughtering enemy civilians, also seeks to exploit the survivors, in this case by inducing them to withdraw their support from their government’s war effort and thereby hasten surrender.

Finally, the distinction based on the nature of the victims is often blurred. In many cases of total war, the victims, despite being citizens of an armed sovereign state, are every bit as defenseless and helpless as the victims of genocide. The majority of victims of modern war are civilians—including the elderly, women, and children—who have scant chance of escaping bombs dropped from airplanes or high explosives or chemical weapons shot from heavy artillery.

**Psychosocial Facilitating Factors Common to Both Genocide and Modern War**

A further connection between genocide and modern war is that similar psychological and social processes facilitate both. These psychosocial facilitating factors operate at all levels of the killing projects to neutralize potential moral qualms, minimize empathy with the victims, and negate doubts that might otherwise interfere with smooth, guilt-free, even enthusiastic, performance of tasks. They help account for the fact, observed by a number of scholars of collective violence, that the vast majority of perpetrators and implementors of mass killing are not sadistic or psychopathic, but are, instead, quite "normal" psychologically.

There are several psychosocial factors common to both genocide and modern war. The healing-killing paradox, a concept developed by Robert Jay Lifton in his study of Nazi doctors, refers to the justification of mass killing as being in the service of a noble, and even heroic, cause. Thus, at the Auschwitz death camp, Lifton found that "killing was done in the name of healing...For the SS doctor, involvement with the killing process became equated with healing." Israel Charny has observed a similar process in other genocides: "Incredible as it may seem," he writes, "virtually every genocide is defined by its doers as being on behalf of the larger purpose of bettering human life." Historian Ronald Schaffer has observed a comparable process in the justification of strategic bombing of cities during World War II: the advocates of city bombing argued that such attacks would demoralize the civilian population and thus hasten the end of the war, thereby sparing high casualties on the battlefields. It should be emphasized in this context that both genocide and modern war are national security policies authorized by the highest government officials. Many, if not most, of those who follow the orders to engage in mass killing are likely to regard themselves, therefore, as dedicated patriots serving their nation by assuming a grim but necessary responsibility.

**Dehumanization** of the victims of the violence is an extremely important contributing factor in mass killing projects. Kuper defines dehumanization as "the relegation of the victims to the level of animals or of objects." Dehumanization dramatically reduces inhibitions against killing by destroying moral concerns and empathy. It can take at least two forms—ideological and technological—both of which operate in genocide and modern war.

Ideological dehumanization relies on government propaganda and indoctrination to portray the targets of violence as subhuman and evil, thereby deserving of any degree of ruthlessness. For example, Lifton points out that in the Holocaust, the Jewish victims were frequently characterized as "bacteria" and "vermin." And Dower notes that in World War II, the Americans and Japanese engaged in what could be called reciprocal dehumanization. Thus, "the Japanese were perceived as animals, reptiles, or insects. The Japanese, in turn, stereotyped their American enemies as "unclean and wrong-hearted men, as beasts, and ultimately—in the most prevalent Japanese idiom of all—as demons." Technology dehumanization erases the individual identity of the victims by imposing physical distance between them and the killers. Thus, in the Holocaust, the psychological stress on the killers was greatly reduced when the Nazis shifted from the earlier technique of face-to-face mass shooting of victims to the far more impersonal technique of huge gas chambers. Likewise, Lee Kennett has observed of World War II that "The escalation of the air war was made..."
easier by the fact that those who directed the bombing offensives and those who carried them out remained curiously insulated and detached from the consequences of their work. Photographs taken at thirty thousand feet gave no clue to the human effects of a raid, nor did other sources.\textsuperscript{100}

\textit{Euphemistic language} plays an important role in enabling ordinary people to be involved in killing projects.\textsuperscript{101} As Kelman has noted, "Moral inhibitions are less easily subdued if the functionaries, in their own thinking and in their communication with each other, have to face the fact that they are engaged in organized murder...The difficulty is handled by the well-known bureaucratic inventiveness in the use of language."\textsuperscript{102}

In the Holocaust, for example, deportation to the death camps was code-named "evacuation to the East," and the actual killing was termed "special action" and "special treatment."\textsuperscript{103} In World War II, likewise, the deliberate fire bombing of cities crowded with civilians was known as "strategic bombing," and the specific attacks on neighborhoods filled with German factory workers, which killed thousands and women and children, was intended, in the official jargon, to "de-house" those workers.\textsuperscript{104} The Persian Gulf War of 1991 was no exception to the tendency to "sanitize" the killing by the use of euphemisms. Hence, bombing raids were called "sorties"; inadvertent killing of civilians was "collateral damage"; bombs of various kinds were referred to as "ordnance"; and the accidental killing of American and British soldiers by their compatriots was termed "death by friendly fire."\textsuperscript{105}

The \textit{bureaucratic organization} of modern genocides and wars plays an extremely important role in facilitating the participation of psychologically normal individuals in projects designed to mass murder innocent men, women, and children. As Richard Rubenstein has observed: "Usually the progress in death-dealing capacity in the twentieth century has been described in terms of technological advances in weaponry. Too little attention has been given to the advances in social organization that allowed for the effective use of the new weapons. In order to understand how the moral barrier was crossed that made massacre in the millions possible, it is necessary to consider the importance of bureaucracy in modern political organizations."\textsuperscript{106}

Four features of bureaucratic organizations serve to promote the overall efficiency of modern genocide and warfare as well as to enable individual contributors to carry out their tasks with a minimum of questioning or doubt. These four features are: hierarchical authority, division of labor, amoral rationality, and organizational loyalty.

Hierarchical authority refers to the formal, top-down decision-making arrangements of bureaucracies which enable people at lower levels to have a reduced sense of personal responsibility for either the policy they are helping to implement or its final outcome. They are, after all, only "following orders" that have descended through all the levels of the organization above their own.\textsuperscript{107}

Division of labor involves the breaking down of complex tasks into compartmentalized sub-tasks. As sociologist Fred Katz observes, "Bureaucracies are social machineries for accomplishing complex objects in relatively orderly fashion...The individual bureaucrat typically focuses on a particular task, without considering the wide implications, including broader moral issues."\textsuperscript{108}

Amoral rationality involves preoccupation with the best means of attaining a particular goal, or completing a given task, while tending to ignore moral or human implications of the goal or task. Bureaucracies deliberately strive to render moral and human considerations irrelevant with respect to the task at hand.\textsuperscript{109} As sociologist Helen Fein suggests, "Bureaucracy is not itself a cause of the choice of destructive ends, but it facilitates their accomplishment by routinizing the obedience of many agents, each trained to perform his role without questioning the ends of action."\textsuperscript{110}

Finally, organizational loyalty refers to the tendency for members of bureaucratic organizations to become preoccupied with maintaining or expanding their particular organization as an end in itself. Such concerns may obscure moral and human implications of given policies. Markusen has examined the role of organizational loyalty in both the Holocaust and the British and American strategic bombing campaigns in World War II, as well as in the preparations for nuclear war.\textsuperscript{111}

In closing this section, it should be emphasized that all of the psychological and organizational forces discussed above can mutually reinforce each other to create a powerful momentum toward genocidal killing.\textsuperscript{112}

\textbf{Conclusions}

Gil Elliot, one of the pioneers in the study of collective violence, was quoted above as saying that "the scale of man-made death is the central moral as well as material fact of our time." Unfortunately, the energy and resources devoted to understanding and preventing mass killing have been negligible. As Israel Charny has written, "At this point in its evolution, mankind is deeply limited in its readiness to experience and take action in response to genocidal disasters. Most events of genocide are marked by massive indifference,
silence, and inactivity." Our understanding of this crucial realm of human behavior, despite the efforts of a relative handful of dedicated scholars and activists, remains rudimentary and dangerously inadequate.

Finally, in view of the fact that the preparations for nuclear omnicide could well lead to the worst catastrophe of human history, it is extremely important to note that psychological and social factors similar to those operating in more "ordinary" forms of mass killing, like genocide and modern war, have been observed in the individuals and organizations responsible for inventing, building, operating, and planning for the use of nuclear weapons. Thus, some of the same processes that have accounted for mass killing in the past, and that have made the present century the most lethal ever, are also at work in creating the potential end of history.

NOTES


5. Elliot, 6.


7. Sorokin's data are summarized in Quincy Wright, A Study of War V.I. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942), 656.

8. Sorokin, 342.


12. Table derived from data in Eckhardt, "War-Related Deaths," 7.


16. See, for example, Roy L. Prosterman, Surviving to 3000: An Introduction to the Study of Lethal Conflict (Belmont, CA: Duxbury Press, 1972).


20. Horowitz, 34.


27. Tom Harkin, with C.E. Thomas, *Five Minutes to Midnight: Why the Nuclear Threat Is Growing Faster Than Ever* (New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1990); see also Spector.


37. Horowitz, 32; Rummel quoted in Horowitz, 32.


39. Fein, 22.


51. Chalk and Jonassohn, 23.


57. World Military, 28.

58. World Military, 28.

59. Karl von Clausewitz, Vom Krieg. (Bonn, Germany: Ferd. Dümmlers Verlag, 1966), Section no. 24. First published in 1832. The pertinent sentence in the German original reads: "Der Krieg ist eine blosse Fortsetzung der Politik mit anderen Mitteln." The sentence is to be literally translated as: War is a mere continuation of politics (or policy) by other means. Politics seems to us to be a better translation of Politik than policy. More idiomatic, perhaps, would be the phrase foreign policy. Hence the sentence in English probably should read: War is a mere continuation of foreign policy by other means.

60. Eckhardt, "War-Related Deaths," 1.


64. Markusen, "Genocide and Total War," 103-105 and Markusen and Kopf.


67. Quincy Wright, A Study of War, with a Commentary on War since 1941. 2d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942, 1965), 75.


69. Hart, 42-43.


71. World Military, 28.


80. Farrar, 175.

81. Reid, 175-191.

82. Arno Mayer, Why Did the Heavens Not Darken?: The "Final Solution" in History (New York: Pantheon, 1988).


88. See, as a good example, Huttenbach, "Locating," 292-293.


96. Lifton, 16.


98. Dower, 216.


100. Lee Kennett, A History of Strategic Bombing (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1982), 187.


103. Lifton, 445.
CHAPTER 7: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The bibliography that follows is divided into five sections. The first section contains materials on trends in collective violence and mass killing during the twentieth century. Sections two, three, and four focus on genocide, modern war, and nuclear omnicide respectively. The fifth section contains materials on connections and commonalities among the three types of governmental mass killing projects.

The Murderousness of the Twentieth Century

* 7.1 *

In the modern era, famine increasingly reflects governmental policy choices, either to allow people to starve or to deliberately create conditions that result in famine. This book is a primer on mass starvation from 4000 B.C. to 1978.

* 7.2 *

The authors explore the important concept of structural violence, which refers to deaths caused by social and economic conditions that impair the health and reduce the life expectancy of vast numbers of disadvantaged people throughout the world. Armed violence, in contrast, involves overt destruction, and is caused primarily by warfare. The authors conclude that "structural violence was about seventeen times greater than behavioral, that is, armed, violence in the twentieth century...." (p.365) The essay contains several useful tables and charts, as well as a good bibliography. See also 7.36.

* 7.3 *

Anyone seriously concerned about the subject of governmental mass killing should read this book carefully. "The aim of this work, precisely, is to identify, against a background of knowable fact, the violent dead of the twentieth century...." (p.11) As noted in the narrative above, Elliot estimated that more than one hundred million human beings were victims of "man-made death" in the first seven decades of this century; he compares this scale "with the scale on which a modern nation operates and lives. The obvious reason for the comparison is simply that the figure of a hundred million represents the size in population of a large modern nation, and as a familiar image it may help us to visualize the scale and complexity of man-made death." (p.6) In Book One, titled, "Sketch-

* 7.4 *

Leviton's collection makes an important contribution to the recognition and understanding of the problem of collective violence. It contains excellent articles on homicide, genocide, terrorism, war, destruction of the environment, poverty and unemployment, hunger, and the threat of nuclear war.

* 7.5 *

In this succinct article, Rhodes makes a persuasive case for allocating more resources to the understanding, and prevention, of man-made death. Citing Gil Elliot's pioneering work [7.3], as well as recent statistical analyses of the death tolls of modern war, the author concludes that "The scale of public man-made death in modern times is comparable with the scale of death in former times from epidemic disease." (p.686) Rhodes suggests that the public health movement that dramatically reduced the toll of epidemic disease may provide an analogue, or model, for efforts to bring man-made death under rational control.

* 7.6 *

In an important, provocative, and disturbing study of governmental mass killing, Rubenstein argues that an important underlying motive for oppression and genocidal violence is the elimination of "surplus populations," which are increasing in numbers and significance in recent decades of the twentieth century. According to the author, "A surplus population is one that for any reason can find no viable role in the society in which it is domiciled. Because such people can expect none of the normal rewards of society, governments tend to regard them as potential sources of disorder and have often attempted to control them or to remove them from the mainstream of society altogether." (p.1) Rubenstein examines several case studies, including the Irish Potato Famine, the Holocaust, and the genocide in Cambodia in order to explicate his controversial thesis. His concluding chapter, titled "Is There a Way Out?", advocates fundamental changes in social values and economic arrangements.

* 7.7a *

* 7.7b *

In these two volumes in a projected three-volume series on governmental mass killing during the twentieth century, Rummel uses the concept of "democide" to refer to cases where governments deliberately slaughter masses of civilians. He concludes that "Such democide has been far more prevalent than people have believed, even several times greater than the number killed in all of this century's wars." (p.ix) Another important conclusion is that democracies are much less likely to engage in democide and related forms of mass killing than are totalitarian governments.

* 7.8 *

The contributors to this important study of governmental violence argue that terrorism is practiced not only by non-governmental groups, but also by governments. Thus, Barbara Harff, in "Genocide as State Terror," argues that "genocide is the most extreme policy option available to policymakers bent on state terror, and is likely to be used to eliminate opposition groups." (p.183) Equally provocative are George Lopez's chapter on "National Security Ideology as an Impetus to State Violence and State Terror" and Ted Gurr's chapter on "The Political Origins of State Violence and Terror: A Theoretical Analysis."
Genocide

* 7.9 *

The ancient practice of deliberately destroying the "enemy's" habitat has become vastly more harmful due to modern technology. For a focused case study of environmental warfare as a form of governmental mass killing, see Weisberg, Barry. Ecocide in Indochina: The Ecology of War. San Francisco: Canfield Press, 1970.

* 7.10 *

Part I of Chalk and Jonassohn presents the conceptual framework and includes a detailed discussion of the concept of genocide, a review of scholarly literature on genocide, the authors' own definition and typology of genocide, and a brief historical survey of genocides from antiquity through the twentieth century. Part II features succinct case studies of genocides, ranging from the Roman destruction of Carthage in 176 B.C. to the Turkish-Armenian genocide; the U.S.S.R. under Stalin; the Holocaust; and post-World War II genocides in Indonesia, Burundi, Bangladesh, Cambodia, East Timor, and the Amazon jungles of South America. Of particular note are the readings on the slaughter of Indians in North America. Part III consists of non-annotated bibliographies on conceptual and background issues as well as each of the case studies examined in Part II. This book can serve as a core text for courses on the genocide.

* 7.11 *

Comprising a selection of papers that were presented at the International Conference on the Holocaust and Genocide in Israel in 1982, the book is divided into five parts. Part I, "Scenarios of Genocide Past and Future," features two important articles: Helen Fein's "Scenarios of Genocide: Models of Genocide and Critical Responses" and Leo Kuper's "Types of Genocide and Mass Murder." Part II includes a number of case studies, including Pol Pot's Cambodia, the Soviet Gulag, the Armenian genocide, the Holocaust, and genocidal killings in Tibet. Part III focuses on "Dynamics of Genocide"; Part IV on "Arts, Religion, and Education"; and Part V on "Toward Intervention and Prevention."

* 7.12 *

Charny has compiled a vital contribution to research and education about genocide and genocidal killing. Scholars from a wide range of disciplines have written the thirteen critical reviews and accompanying bibliographies. Their topics include the psychology of genocidal killing; specific genocides, the Holocaust, the Armenian genocide, genocide in the U.S.S.R., the Cambodian genocide, and other selected cases; and philosophical aspects of mass killing.

* 7.13 *

The second volume contains critical reviews and annotated bibliographies on subjects not covered in the first. There is a special section on denial of the Holocaust and the Armenian genocide that includes a remarkable article by Vahakn Dadrian, "Documentation of Armenian Genocide in Turkish Sources," as well as sections on "Law and Genocide" and "Educating about the Holocaust and Genocide." Another section contains articles on a comparative analysis of genocide, war, and the preparations for nuclear omnicide; the role of professions and professionals in genocidal killing. Other topics are the memorialization of the Holocaust; first person accounts of genocide; contributions of rescuers in the Holocaust; and the role of language in genocide.

* 7.14 *

In this helpful review of earlier attempts to define genocide, Churchill states, "While it can be said with virtual certainty that genocide today exists on a widespread and possibly growing basis, it cannot be correspondingly contended that the phenomenon is understood." (p.403) As contributions toward such understanding, the author points out how political issues intrude on the study of genocide, offers useful reflections on the concept of "cultural genocide," and proposes his own typology of genocide.

* 7.15 *

* 7.17 *

* 7.18 *

Dadrian is a sociological pioneer who has contributed to the conceptual and theoretical understanding of genocide and has demonstrated important parallels between the Holocaust and the Armenian genocide of 1915.

* 7.19 *

Fein's analysis of the important scholarly literature on genocide is comprehensive. Among the issues that she surveys and comments on are "social recognition and criminalization of genocide"; "defining genocide as a sociological concept"; and "explanations of genocide." She also includes two sections on "contextual and comparative studies," in which she addresses such issues as the alleged uniqueness of the Holocaust, misuses of genocide comparisons, relationships between genocide and other forms of mass killing, and the role of helpers and rescuers. Her final section examines literature on punishment and prevention and ends with a research agenda for sociology.

* 7.20 *

After critically reviewing previous definitions and typologies of genocide, the authors propose a typology "which distinguishes between two categories of genocide, in which victim groups are defined primarily in terms of communal characteristics, and four types of politicide, in which victim groups are defined in terms of their political status or opposition to the state." (p.359) They then identify, and estimate the death tolls of, genocides and politicides since World War II.

* 7.21 *

After decrying the neglect of genocide by the social science community, Horowitz examines a number of definitions of genocide and presents a valuable discussion of "eight basic types of societies that can be defined on a measurement scale of life and death" (p. 43), that is, the extent to which they resort to mass killing, torture, and other forms of violence as means of social control. Horowitz is one of the sociological pioneers in this field.

* 7.22 *

The author examines the concept of genocide, perhaps as well as the question of the uniqueness of the Holocaust as an example of genocide. He advocates and initiates the development of "a spectrum of genocide....within which the Holocaust will occupy a distinct niche, flanked by those events with which it shares the greatest similarity...." (p.291)

* 7.23 *

Katz addresses the issue of the uniqueness of the Holocaust by comparing it with several other cases of governmental violence, including the witch hunts of the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries; black slavery and the slaughter of Indians in the United States; and the Nazi persecution of Gypsies, homosexuals, and other groups. He concludes that "fundamental distinctions, elemental differences, mark off the Holocaust phenomenologically from these other, similarly immoral and abhorrent, cases." (p.127)

* 7.24 *

In what is perhaps the definitive social scientific analysis of genocide currently available, Kuper reviews the literature on theories of genocide and provides a number of succinct case histories of specific genocides and related atrocities. He argues that decolonization can create preconditions for genocide when ethnic and tribal rivalries that had been suppressed by the colonizing power are permitted to flare into violence, a thesis
of his conclusions, one that has provoked considerable controversy as indicated above, is that the highly destructive nature of modern weapons, combined with the willingness to target civilians in war, has blurred the line between genocide and warfare. His criticisms of the inability of the United Nations to prevent or interrupt genocide, and his concluding chapter on "The Non-Genocidal Society," set the stage for 7.25.

* 7.25 *


Kuper builds on his 1981 book. He supplies additional cases and examines in detail the prospects for early recognition, intervention, and prevention of genocidal violence. His main argument is that the international community in general, and the United Nations in particular, have been disgracefully negligent and weak when confronted by cases of genocidal killing, for example, Cambodia between 1975 and 1978. After reviewing the inadequacies of the United Nations response in Cambodia and elsewhere, Kuper presents a number of suggestions for strengthening the UN's capacity for effective intervention.

* 7.26 *


This special issue devoted to the Holocaust and genocide contains a number of provocative essays. Among these are "The Concept of Genocide," by Berel Lang, on the meanings of the term "genocide" and the psychological processes that operate among the perpetrators; "The Origins of Extermination in the Imagination," by William Gass; and "Measuring Responsibility," by A. Zvie Bar-On.

* 7.27 *


Basing his detailed case study on extensive interviews with former Nazi doctors as well as several dozen Auschwitz survivors, Lifton examines the role of the German medical profession in the Holocaust. The final section of the book, titled "The Psychology of Genocide," develops a number of psychological and historical concepts to explain how "ordinary" men could become implicated in "demonic" actions. Lifton argues that genocides like the Holocaust may be seen as desperate attempts to find a "cure" to massive psychological and social upheavals, and that violence against designated victim groups may give the perpetrating group the illusion of security and safety. Lifton also demonstrates the roles of euphemistic language, bureaucratic compartmentalization of tasks, and the distorting effects of technology in facilitating genocidal killing.

* 7.28 *


Markusen examines how members of such professions as medicine, law, education, the church, and the military have contributed to the Holocaust, the Armenian genocide, and other types of mass killing as bystanders, accomplices, and perpetrators.

* 7.29 *


The author states that the purpose of the book is "to answer a very basic question: Why is genocide, rather than any other alternative, selected by a people or state as the solution to a real or imagined problem?" (p.ix) In order to answer this question, Mazian analyzes, in a comparative mode, two major genocides of the twentieth century by means of a conceptual framework consisting of six determinants: 1) the creation of "outsiders"; 2) internal strife in the perpetrating group; 3) destructive uses of communication, including the use of propaganda to promote an aggressive ideology; 4) powerful leadership; 5) organization of the destruction process (i.e., recruitment and training of the perpetrators); and 6) the "failure of multidimensional levels of social control." (p.ix)

* 7.30 *


Rubenstein argues "we are more likely to understand the Holocaust if we regard it as the expression of some of the most profound tendencies in Western civilization in the twentieth century." (p.21) Among these tendencies, according to Rubenstein, are secularization, rationality, bureaucracy, and growing numbers of politically stateless and economically superfluous people. His chapters on "The Modernization of Slavery" and "The Health Professions and
Corporate Enterprise at Auschwitz" are particularly noteworthy.

* 7.31 *

The editors have divided their valuable collection of essays into two major parts. The first contains essays that conceptualize, classify, define, and explain genocide. The second contains case studies, such as the Holocaust, the Armenian genocide, and the killing of aboriginal peoples in Australia. Richard L. Rubenstein provides a provocative afterword entitled "Genocide and Civilization."

Modern War

* 7.32 *

In a sobering survey of the global arms traffic, Adams shows how some of the most unstable regions of the world are acquiring large arsenals of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

* 7.33 *


* 7.34 *

War is a readable, richly illustrated historical overview of warfare from primitive conflict through contemporary proxy wars and nuclear deterrence. Dyer's chapters, "The Road to Mass Warfare" and "Reductio Ad Absurdum: Total War," as well as his two chapters on nuclear war, are particularly noteworthy.

* 7.35 *

Racism and "race hate" were important in the war between the United States and Japan. Noting that "it was a common observation of Western war correspondents that the fighting in the Pacific was more savage than in the European theater," Dower suggests that "Race hate fed atrocities, and atrocities in turn fanned the fires of race hate. The dehumanization of the Other contributed immeasurably to the psychological distancing that facilitated killing, not only on the battlefield but also in the plans adopted by strategists far removed from the actual scene of combat...The natural response...was an obsession with extermination on both sides—a war without mercy." (p.11) In his final chapter, Dower explores possible reasons for the "speed with which a war of seemingly irreconcilable hatred gave way to cordial relations once the fighting had ceased." (p.311)

* 7.36 *

Eckhardt succinctly summarizes war casualties during the last three centuries. He concludes that "wars have increased in frequency, duration, and deaths from the 18th to the 20th centuries. The increase in deaths was four times the increase in world population." (p.97) His discussions of "hunger-related deaths in wartime" and "structural violence" are notable.

* 7.37 *

Among Farrar's conclusions in this useful essay is that total wars, like World War II, tend to blur the distinction, both politically and morally, between democratic and totalitarian governments that wage them. "The war," asserts Farrar, "pushed Western civilization toward totalitarianism." (p.179)

* 7.38 *

Fetter examines the proliferation of highly destructive weaponry to nations in unstable, violence-prone regions of the world. He provides technical information on such weapons, a discussion of why nations may seek to acquire them, and suggestions for impeding such acquisition.
7.39

In this widely-cited book, Fuller argues that the era of modern, total war began with the use of the military draft to raise mass armies during the Napoleonic wars of the late 1700s. He traces the evolution of totalistic tendencies in subsequent wars, particularly the breakdown of the distinction between soldiers and civilians. He includes a fascinating discussion of the American Civil War as an example of total war.

7.40

The vulnerability of the human mind to the stresses of military combat is a crucial, yet all too frequently ignored or under-appreciated, aspect of modern warfare. Pointing out in detail how mental breakdowns among soldiers have been very common throughout history, Gabriel argues that modern war, with its vastly more destructive weapons, is far more likely to cause psychiatric casualties than its precursors. In his final chapter, Gabriel examines efforts by U.S. and Soviet researchers to develop drugs that "will prevent or reduce anxiety while allowing the soldier to retain his normal and vitally needed acute levels of mental awareness." (p.168) However, according to Gabriel, "The real horror lurking behind the attempt to use chemical means for preventing psychiatric collapse in battle is that in order for a soldier to function in the environment of modern war, he must be psychically reconstituted in a manner precisely identical to what we have traditionally defined as being mentally ill. He must be chemically made over to become a sociopathic personality in the clinical sense of the term." (p.172)

7.41

Gander presents, clearly and succinctly, the basic facts about these three types of weapons of mass destruction, and includes a great many excellent photographs, of which those depicting aspects of chemical warfare are particularly striking.

7.42

The author asks: "Is the idea of the civilian an anachronism? Have nuclear weapons and guerilla warfare forever obliterated the distinction between combatant and noncombatants?" (p.1) Reluctantly, Hartigan answers in the affirmative and then proceeds to trace the history of the erosion of this crucial distinction.

7.43

Keegan examines the changing nature of warfare by means of a detailed portrayal of three battles: Agincourt, in 1415; Waterloo, in 1815; and the Somme, in 1916. A central theme is that advances in destructive technology have made warfare progressively more lethal and impersonal. In his concluding chapter, titled "The Future of Battle," Keegan notes that, "Impersonality, coercion, deliberate cruelty, all deployed on a rising scale, make the fitness of modern man to sustain the stress of battle increasingly doubtful." (p.325) See also 7.40.

7.44

Kennett succinctly reviews the evolution of strategic bombing. The final two chapters, "Japan: Ordeal by Fire," and "The Bombing War in Retrospect," are especially recommended.

7.45

Based on extensive interviews with seventy-five survivors of the Hiroshima bomb, Lifton's study of the psychological, cultural, and social impacts of the atomic bombings is the definitive one. In the final chapter, Lifton extends his analysis to other cases of mass killing and mass death and introduces such seminal concepts as "death guilt" and "psychic numbing."

7.46

The author argues that, despite public claims and a sincere effort to avoid direct targeting of civilians by the U.S. and its allies in the Persian Gulf War of 1991, "collateral damage" and civilian deaths were nonetheless very widespread.
Missiles capable of delivering nuclear, chemical, and biological warheads have spread rapidly to such nations as Israel, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Libya, South Africa, and Argentina. The authors warn that "The Third World military buildup is perhaps even more worrisome than its First World prototype, for it is far more likely to find expression in war." (p.34)

O'Connell offers an eloquent account of the evolution of weapons and warfare from antiquity through the nuclear age. Among the important themes that pervade this chronologically organized survey are dehumanization; increased distance between killers and killed; and the breakdown of the traditional distinction between soldiers and civilians during wars of the twentieth century. O'Connell exemplifies the meaning of dehumanization in this statement, "new armaments were most easily employed if their victims could be conceptualized, however implausibly, as belonging to another species." (p.190)

Sallagar asserts that "It was the adoption of indiscriminate air warfare which signaled the transition to total war...." (in World War II) (p.4) After tracing the process by which misunderstandings, as well as deliberate decisions, led to a policy of bombing cities by Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, he concludes with speculations on the implications of his study for future wars.

In an outstanding examination of the American practice of bombing cities during World War II, Schaffer reviews the shift from an initial aversion to attacks against cities in Europe to the policy of direct, incendiary attacks against Japanese cities. He includes two valuable chapters on moral dimensions of the bombing of cities and concludes with an epilogue in which he asserts that, "despite enormous qualitative changes in the potential of weapons [with the invention of nuclear weapons], the thinking of American military leaders, scientists, and statesmen in the postwar years contained important vestiges of earlier views about air warfare and its moral consequences." (p.190) In fact, the men responsible for the planning and implementation of the incendiary raids against Japanese cities were among those in charge of early American nuclear weapons policy.

Sherry delves deeply into the historical, political, ideological, cultural, and social-psychological dimensions of the embrace of the policy of attacking cities. The chapters on "The Sociology of Air War," "The Sources of Technological Fanaticism," and "The Triumph of Technological Fanaticism" are of particular interest. Like Schaffer [7.50], Sherry concludes with important reflections on early U.S. nuclear weapons policy, which evolved from strategic bombing policies and practices. While the Schaffer and Sherry books inevitably contain considerable common information, differences in focus make them usefully complementary, rather than redundant. Together with Richard Rhodes' The Making of the Atomic Bomb [7.76], they provide a solid historical foundation for an understanding of the early evolution of American nuclear weapons policy.


This SIPRI volume examines the uses of fire as a military weapon throughout history; fire weapons include flamethrowers and incendiary bombs in World War II and napalm in Vietnam. There is a summary of existing international laws that purport to limit the use of such weapons. Also several harrowing chapters relate the effects of incendiary weapons on human beings.

That "war is completely permeated by technology and governed by it" is Van Creveld's basic thesis. The author, whose other books on warfare are required texts in military academies throughout the world, divides both his book and the history of warfare into four periods, each characterized by the nature of the technology that dominated it. Thus, during the first period, from 2000 B.C. to 1500 A.D., human and animal muscle-power constituted the chief means of waging war. The second period, which the author labels "the Age of Machines," extended from the Renaissance to about 1830. Key technological developments during this period were the exploitation of gunpowder and the widespread use of firearms. Third, from 1830 to 1945, such inventions as the railway and the telegraph, and the rise of complex bureaucratic organizations, gave rise to "the Age of Systems." Fourth and finally, the invention of nuclear weapons and computers created the present age, which Van Creveld terms "the Age of Automation." Van Creveld concludes with a useful bibliographic essay. Compare with 7.94 below.


Media coverage of the Persian Gulf War of 1991 created "the impression that the war was a bloodless, push-button battle in which only military targets were destroyed."(p.21) The reality, according to the authors, was very different. In addition to providing details of the destructive power of some of the weapons that were used against Iraq, they note that "of the 88,500 tons of bombs dropped, only 6,520 tons—7.4 percent—were precision-guided ordnance, according to official Pentagon figures."(p.22)


At the end of the war, the United States government agreed not to prosecute the responsible Japanese as war criminals in return for their cooperation in providing American scientists with technical information that was used to develop American biological weaponry. The authors have based their account of Japan's use of biological warfare on long-secret documents obtained through the Freedom of Information Act. For a brief account, see: John W. Powell, "A Hidden Chapter in History." Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists 37, no.8 (1981): 44-52.

Sivard's annually published compendium compares expenditures of national governments around the world for war and armaments with those for the social needs of education, medical care, and housing, among others. It also provides key indicators of a nation's quality of life such as the infant mortality rate. A consistent theme of the series has been the great disparity between the prodigious resources devoted to the military and the relatively scanty funds committed to human needs. The annual editions are an excellent resource for students of collective violence, both behavioral and structural.


In the final chapter of his important study of World War II, Wright examines the political, social, and psychological impacts of the war on Western society. A major conclusion is that there is a tendency for democratic political institutions to weaken when they are engaged in a war against totalitarian powers.


Wright coordinated this vast compendium of data on trends in warfare throughout history at the University of Chicago. This edition, in 1,637 pages, is a one-volume, updated abridgement of the work that was originally published in two volumes in 1942.

Nuclear Omnicide


In the preface to this truly remarkable collection of authoritative articles on American, Soviet, British, and French nuclear targeting plans, the editors state that "Declassified U.S. nuclear war plans of the late 1940s and early 1950s showed that the target planning process had frequently been arbitrary and inefficient.
and sometimes irrational." (p.7) The chapters that follow indicate that later American nuclear war plans are by no means free of such problems; nor are those of other nuclear-armed nations. Of particular importance are the chapters by David Rosenberg, "U.S. Nuclear War Planning, 1945-1960;" Ball, "The Development of the SIOP, 1960-1983;" Richelson, "Population Targeting and U.S. Strategic Doctrine;" and David Cattell and George Quester, "Ethnic Targeting: Some Bad Ideas." "Ethnic targeting" refers to the deliberate targeting of specific population groups in the Soviet Union, notably the "Great Russians," as opposed to members of other Republics. This approach, note the authors, was advocated by key advisors to the Carter and Reagan administrations. Cattell and Quester assert that the employment of such a targeting scheme would constitute "genocide." (p.281)

* 7.60 *

A well-informed former presidential advisor relates the history of the nuclear age, from the decisions to build and then use the first atomic bombs to the present period. Bundy not only examines key actions by the United States and the Soviet Union, but also explores why other nations, like Great Britain and Israel, decided to acquire their own nuclear weapons.

* 7.61 *

Like 7.59, this startling book goes beyond the verbiage and rhetoric of much of the writing on nuclear strategy to focus on details about actual arrangements for the weapons, both during peace and in the event of war. The editors, in their introduction, assert that "All the widely accepted notions about the role of nuclear weapons in security make strong, but frequently tacit and sometimes unjustified, assumptions about the ability of the command system to manage nuclear weapons." (p.2) Indeed, an important theme running through the book is the doubtful ability of maintaining control over nuclear weapons in the event that a nuclear war breaks out. The titles of some of the chapters give an idea of the array of issues that are examined: "Alerting in Crisis and Conventional War," "War Termination," "Delegation of Nuclear Command Authority," "Targeting," "The Psychological Climate of Nuclear Command," and "Sources of Error and Uncertainty." See also 7.62.

* 7.62 *

On the basis of extensive interviews with key policymakers and decision makers, Ford identifies many fundamental problems in the arrangements for maintaining control over nuclear weapons during both intense international crises and actual conflict. He asserts that there is a sizeable "gap between official rhetoric and Pentagon plans" for nuclear war. (p.17) The rhetoric calls for the use of American nuclear weapons only in retaliation for an enemy attack, but the actual plans involve the capacity for a pre-emptive, first strike with U.S. nuclear weapons. Ford also exposes the tendency of presidents to be quite ignorant of the nuclear weapons and war plans for which they are responsible as Commander in Chief of all U.S. military forces. (p.89-90) And he critically examines the "technological illiteracy" of senior military officers responsible for nuclear weapons: "The military commanders' lack of knowledge about the new technology at their disposal makes it very difficult for them to make sensible choices...." (p.186)

* 7.63 *

The authors have written excellent essays on the history of the arms race, consequences of nuclear war, and alternatives to present policies. They have provided annotated bibliographies on a wide range of issues, and appended a helpful section on how to obtain additional information. Their chapter on "The Probability of Nuclear War" is particularly noteworthy.

* 7.64 *

The authors begin this essay on the philosophical dimensions of mass killing in the nuclear age by noting that "For the first time in human history, the issue of whether or not human beings possess the capacity to destroy all life on the planet Earth is being debated." (p.172) They then examine a number of topics, including the possibility of human extinction in a nuclear holocaust and traditional moral criteria for so-called "just-wars." The essay is followed by an excellent annotated bibliography that will be useful to
anyone, not just philosophers, seriously concerned about the nuclear threat.

* 7.65 *

A former deputy assistant secretary of defense has written a strong critique of past and present U.S. policies on nuclear weapons. Halperin identifies what he sees as many fallacies in recent strategic thinking and suggests that the most important fallacy is the tendency to think of "nuclear explosive devices" as weapons that can actually be used in war.

* 7.66 *

Although the recent improvement in U.S.-Soviet relations and the presumed end of the Cold War may have induced some observers to dismiss the nuclear threat to a low priority concern, these authors, the senior of whom is a Democratic U.S. Senator from Iowa, argue persuasively that the danger posed by nuclear weapons is still all too real and urgent. In their chapter, "The Growing Threat of Nuclear War," Harkin and Thomas expose the continuing dangers posed by the spread of nuclear weapons to additional nations. In addition to sounding a warning, they also include several provocative chapters in a section titled "Alternative National Security Strategies." See also 7.80.

* 7.67 *

Herken conducted interviews with dozens of key policymakers and delved through many primary and secondary documents in order to create this revealing, and frequently disturbing, historical study. Like Ford in 7.62, he exposes the fact that, while our leaders have stated publicly that American nuclear weapons would be used only in retaliation for a nuclear attack against us, the actual war plans have called for U.S. first strikes. Herken also documents the role of "inter-service rivalry," where the several branches of the U.S. military forces compete for shares of the defense budget and for new weapons technologies, in driving the nuclear arms race forward.

* 7.68 *

Recently declassified Pentagon documents, many obtained through the Freedom of Information Act, are the basis of the authors' examination of secret U.S. nuclear plans from 1945 through the mid-1980s. Kaku and Axelrod assert that "These secret documents demonstrate in detail that, contrary to public statements and widespread popular belief, in periods of crisis the Pentagon has indeed threatened the use of nuclear weapons against Third World nations and has seriously considered launching a first strike against the Soviet Union." (p.3)

* 7.69 *

This is perhaps the best single historical narrative of the development of American nuclear weapons policy from the end of World War II through the early 1980s. In-depth interviews with dozens of key figures, ranging from former secretaries of defense through retired generals to still-active nuclear policymakers, enabled Kaplan to produce a fascinating, intimate portrait of the key individuals and organizations responsible for nuclear war plans that reads almost like a novel. Of particular note is his account of the continuity in personnel and philosophy between the firebombing of Japanese cities during World War II and early post-war atomic warfare policy. (p.33-50) Kaplan also reveals how the ostensibly "scientific" basis of nuclear policy making often masks personal bias and organizational interests; for example, claims that the United States was dangerously behind the Soviet Union with respect to bombers and missiles, the so-called "bomber gap" of the 1950s and "missile gap" of the 1960s, respectively, were based on demonstrably weak and even deliberately distorted evidence, but led nonetheless to increases in defense spending and nuclear weapon deployments. (p.155-173)

* 7.70 *

During the last few years, there has been a plethora of books published on the subject of nuclear deterrence. This is one of the very best. Kolkowicz, in a chapter titled "Intellectuals and the Deterrence System," traces the evolution of a new academic speciality, "nuclear strategists," which purported to be
able to evaluate various nuclear weapons policies in objective, nonpolitical, scientific terms, a claim which Kolkowicz finds debatable. (p.26) The essay by Ken Booth, "Nuclear Deterrence and 'World War III': How Will History Judge?" emphasizes the disastrous consequences of the actual use of nuclear weapons and forcefully reminds the reader that deterrence, to be credible, rests on the ability and willingness to slaughter millions of innocent people. Also noteworthy are the essays by Robert Jervis, "Strategic Theory: What's New and What's True," and Joseph Nye, "The Long-Term Future of Nuclear Deterrence."

* 7.71 *

In an impassioned, but carefully-documented, attack on American nuclear weapons policies, Kovel explores the psychological, cultural, and political reasons that the American public has been so passive in the face of threatened annihilation. Among his important conclusions are that nuclear weapons are antithetical to democracy, and that "nuclear states" utilize a variety of methods to "terrorize" their citizens into compliance with national security policies. In Part II, he explores the provocative theme of technocracy, "domination projected through science," as an important factor in the nuclear predicament. Finally, he suggests principles and directions for anti-nuclear politics.

* 7.72 *

The authors criticize recent neglect of the nuclear threat by sociologists, review earlier contributions that sociologists did make toward understanding it, and suggest directions for further research. Their is the lead article of a special section of four pieces on "The Sociology of the Nuclear Threat."

* 7.73 *

Kurtz applies sociology and other behavioral sciences to explain how we have become trapped in "the nuclear cage" (i.e. a world threatened by the spectre of nuclear holocaust). The three chapters in Part II, "Reciprocity, Bureaucracy, and Ritual," "The Social Psychology of Warfare," and "Economic and Social Roots of the Arms Race," examine concepts and processes that are often ignored or given short shrift in books on nuclear weapons issues. Kurtz concludes with four chapters on the subject of "Preventing the Holocaust." His book would serve well as a core text for courses on nuclear weapons and nuclear war.

* 7.74 *

Lifton and Falk identify and critique the phenomenon of nuclearism, which they define as "...psychological, political, and military dependence on nuclear weapons, the embrace of the weapons as a solution to a wide variety of human dilemmas, most ironically that of 'security.'" The first part, written by Lifton, a psychiatrist, examines a wide range of psychological aspects of nuclearism, while the second, written by Falk, a scholar in international law and politics, traces its political causes and consequences. Both authors make recommendations for changes and reforms at the individual and political levels.

* 7.75 *

The chapters in this important compendium describe the organizations and procedures responsible for nuclear weapons policy in the United States, the Soviet Union, and other nuclear-armed nations.

* 7.76 *

In this massive and richly detailed history of the development of the first atomic bombs and the decisions to drop them on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Rhodes uses excerpts from diaries and memoirs to create vivid portraits of the individuals involved in one of the most significant enterprises in history. Rhodes provides a thorough explanation of the advances in nuclear physics that led to the atomic bomb and describes the violent wartime context in which it was used. He also uses accounts by Japanese survivors in order to reveal the nature of atomic destruction. His book won both the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize.

* 7.77 *
Two scientists who were involved in the discovery of the nuclear winter phenomenon make a major contribution to informed awareness of the nuclear threat. They assess recent scientific efforts to evaluate the probability that nuclear war would cause nuclear winter and conclude that even a "small" nuclear war would probably cause disastrous damage to the earth's ecosystem. They also criticize existing policy making about nuclear weapons for failing to adequately appreciate the danger of nuclear winter. And they offer a number of thoughtful proposals for reducing the risk of nuclear omnicide. Like Harkin and Thomas in 7.66, they argue against complacency about the nuclear threat despite the welcome improvements in rhetoric and relations, the machinery of mass murder still waits, purring and attentive. (p.xviii)

* 7.78 *

The contributors to this excellent collection were asked to discuss the implications for nuclear weapons policy of the so-called "nuclear winter" phenomenon, that is, the probability that even a "small" nuclear war would probably cause far greater damage to the planetary ecosystem than previously assumed. Their conclusions range from the conviction that nuclear winter has made nuclear deterrence obsolete to a reluctant acceptance of the fact that deterrence will remain a necessary policy into the distant future. Among the most noteworthy essays are Sederberg's on "Nuclear Winter: Paradoxes and Paradigm Shifts;" William Baugh's on "Dilemmas of Deterrence Policy;" and Robert Kennedy's on "Nuclear Winter, War Prevention, and the Nuclear Deterrent."

* 7.79 *

Somerville was one of the first to use the concept of "omnicide" to refer to nuclear war.

* 7.80 *

Spector is one of the most widely respected authorities on the spread of nuclear weapons. Here he examines the political and military motives, as well as the technical means, for the proliferation of nuclear weapons. See also his more recent article, "The New Nuclear Nations," Social Education (March 1990): 143-145.

* 7.81 *

Edited by one of the pioneers in the psychological study of war and peace issues, this excellent collection of readings covers a wide range of topics, including psychological effects of the nuclear threat; psychological dimensions of nuclear deterrence; attitudes of "ordinary" citizens and leaders; sources of impaired perception and judgment by decision makers; management of crises; and approaches to resolving conflicts without resort to violence by negotiation, bargaining, and mediation.

* 7.82 *

Zuckerman provides a detailed account of past and present American plans for surviving nuclear war, with many fascinating details about actual arrangements. He also offers insights into the mindsets of individuals responsible for making the plans.

**Commonalities and Connections between Genocide and Modern War**

* 7.83 *

In this important book, Aronson makes a comparative analysis of the Nazi Holocaust, purges and other forms of mass killing under Stalin in the Soviet Union, and the American war in Vietnam. After examining commonalities and differences among these three historical cases, he analyzes two ongoing cases involving actual or potential violence, the Arab-Israeli conflict and the nuclear arms race. The overall goal of this creative book is to suggest answers to the question with which it begins: "Is there reason to hope today?" (p.ix) Three of the eight chapters directly address the question of hope in an age of violence.

* 7.84 *
In an angry, stimulating book, Askenasy asserts that some of the same psychological and social factors that made the Holocaust possible are still active and influential in modern nations, including the United States.

* 7.85 *

In an erudite paper, Bedau denies allegations that U.S. actions during its war in Vietnam, such as mass bombing, free-fire zones, and defoliation, constituted a case of genocide. He concludes that while such actions resulted in indiscriminate mass killing of civilians, there was not clear evidence of intent to destroy a group, in whole or in part, as required by the Genocide Convention for a finding of genocide. Bedau does suggest, however, that "the gap between the results of the present discussion and a verdict of genocide is not very wide" (p.45)

* 7.86 *

Bauman's sociological analysis of the Holocaust illuminates other cases of twentieth century genocide and other forms of mass killing, like modern warfare. After decrying the relative neglect of the Holocaust by sociologists, Bauman states that he will "treat the Holocaust as a rare but significant and reliable test of the hidden possibilities of modern society." (emphasis in the original, p.12) In the remainder of the chapter, he proceeds to examine "the meaning of the civilizing process," the "social production of moral indifference," the "social production of moral insensitivity," and the "moral consequences of the civilizing process." (p.18-30) In later chapters, he examines such themes as the "peculiarity of modern genocide," "dehumanization of bureaucratic objects," "the role of bureaucracy in the Holocaust," and "inhumanity as a function of social distance."

* 7.87 *

In this indispensable work, a pioneer in the field of genocide studies explores in detail social and psychological forces that enable ostensibly normal men and women to participate in genocides and other forms of mass killing. One of his provocative psychological conclusions is that mass murder of designated victims may be an attempt to cope with and master death-anxiety and other forms of insecurity in the victimizing group. (p.91-182) The final section of the book is titled, "Why Can There Still Be Hope?" and includes two chapters that explore the concept of "nonviolent aggression" and one that advocates a "genocide early warning system." The text is followed by a lengthy section of richly annotated footnotes.

* 7.88 *

This concise account of Charny's thought on psychological and social factors in mass killing updates the entry above, 7.87. It consists of a narrative essay, followed by an annotated bibliography.

* 7.89 *

In a crucial theoretical and empirical contribution to the understanding of collective violence and mass killing, Collins examines three dimensions of human cruelty: ferociousness—"This is the dimension of overt brutality..."—callousness—"brutality routinized and bureaucratized, cruelty without passion;" and asceticism—"the turning of cruelty against oneself and against others with whom one has solidarity." (p.419) Of the three, callousness is most characteristic of modern society, in large part because modern societies tend to be bureaucratically organized, and because "the structural organization of bureaucracy seems uniquely suited for the perpetration of callous violence" (p.432)

* 7.90 *

In a pioneering, and still timely, contribution, Coser examines how "good," "normal" individuals can be induced to inflict cruelty and death on other human beings. A fundamental process, he finds, is the "denial of common humanity" between the killers and their victims. Coser analyzes a number of social and cultural factors that facilitate such dehumanization, including culturally-inculcated stereotypes, "restrictions on the span of sympathy," and simple "denial of knowledge."
* 7.91 *

Falk's is another thoughtful assessment of whether U.S. actions in the Vietnam war constituted genocide. Falk also considers parallels between genocide and ecocide, the deliberate destruction of habitat. See also 7.85 and 7.9.

* 7.92 *

On the basis of interviews with returning Vietnam combat veterans who had observed or participated in massacres of defenseless Vietnamese, the author, an Army psychiatrist, identifies several "principles contributing to slaughter." (p.451) These "devices...through which relatively normal men overcame and eventually neutralized their natural repugnance toward slaughter" included the inability to precisely define the enemy in a guerilla war ("the enemy is everywhere"); dehumanization of the victims—Gault uses the apt term "cartoonization;" "dilution of responsibility" through the chain of command; and the "ready availability of firepower." (p.451-452)

* 7.93 *

Dehumanization is the practice of regarding people targeted for violence as less than human and therefore undeserving of any moral or empathic considerations. Dehumanization, as this report documents, is an important factor in both modern warfare and in genocide.

* 7.94 *

Hart’s article is an early, but still very relevant, sociological analysis of the ever-increasing rate of cultural and technological change in the modern era. Of particular interest are Hart’s discussions of "the accelerating power to kill and to destroy," accompanied by several excellent charts and graphs, and "why cultural change accelerates." The article by Francis Allen, "Influence of Technology on War," in the same volume is also excellent. Both authors document the massive increase in the destructive power of modern weapons and the consequently increased costs of war, both human and economic.

* 7.95 *

Referring to the mass killings of the Holocaust, sociologist Hughes asks: "How and where could there be found in a modern civilized country the several hundred thousand men and women capable of such work?" (p.4) His answers to this question are relevant not only to the Holocaust, but also to other cases of governmental mass killing projects, including total war. Among his important points is his suggestion that "those pariahs who do the dirty work of society, e.g. exterminating society’s 'enemies,' are really acting as agents for the rest of us." (p.7)

* 7.96 *

Johnson analyzes some of the processes by which large-scale organizations facilitate contributions to violent outcomes by otherwise "ordinary" employees. These processes include bureaucratic routinization and division of labor, authorization, situational socialization, and dehumanization of both the implementers and victims of violence.

* 7.97 *

Although this brilliant essay focuses specifically on the Holocaust, it illuminates how technology can facilitate other forms of mass killing, including war. Among the provocative concepts Katz analyses is the "technological mentality" (p.276) See also 7.98.

* 7.98 *
Lang reflects on how technology facilitated both the perpetration of the Holocaust and the preparations for nuclear omnicide. See also 7.97.

* 7.99 *

Many of those involved in governmental mass killing projects justify their complicity by claiming to have "obeyed authority." Kelman and Hamilton examine several "crimes of obedience," including the cases of William Calley, Klaus Barbie, and Kurt Waldheim, in order to clarify the psychological and social dimensions of such crimes. The authors examine several social-psychological processes that facilitate violence by weakening moral and empathic restraints. Among these processes are authorization, routinization, and dehumanization. They also discuss the infamous "Obedience to Authority" experiments conducted by Stanley Milgram. The final chapter, "On Breaking the Habit of Unquestioning Obedience," is particularly noteworthy.

* 7.100 *

Kuper, one of the leading scholars of genocide, comments on "some of the implications of nuclear armaments, which now present an overwhelming threat of genocide, and indeed of omnicide, the extinction of our species." (p.228) Among his points: "Many sources of conditioning to nuclear warfare derive from quite ordinary routines in industry, government bureaucracies, and the armed forces. Some of the implications of their conditioning appear more clearly in the context of Nazi experience." (p.235) See also 7.102.

* 7.101 *

Lifton explores psychological issues relevant to genocide, war, and nuclear omnicide. He traces a sequence in genocidal killing from what he terms "psychohistorical dislocation," that is, disconcerting and bewildering confusion and anxiety caused by rapid social change and economic and political instability, to a desperate search for "cure" in the form of a totalitarian ideology that purports to explain the dislocation and provide a means for transcending it. The transcendence usually occurs by radically trans­forming the society at the expense of designated victims who become scapegoats for the perpetrators' anxieties and fears. Part III, "Death and History: The Nuclear Image" (p.283-387), and the chapters on "Dislocation and Totalism" and "Victimization and Mass Violence" are particularly valuable.

* 7.102 *

Lifton and Markusen argue that the actual genocide carried out by the Nazis and the potential genocide inherent in the preparations for nuclear war both reflect an underlying mind-set which the authors term "the genocidal mentality." In the nuclear case, this "can be defined as a mind-set that includes individual and collective willingness to produce, deploy, and, according to certain standards of necessity, use weapons known to destroy entire human populations—millions, or tens or hundreds of millions, of people." (p.3) While recognizing important differences between the two cases, Lifton and Markusen identify and analyze a number of important parallels and commonalities. Among these commonalities are the embrace of a violent national security ideology in response to a sense of threat to the society; the use of science, and pseudoscience, to rationalize policies involving actual or potential mass killing; the involvement of highly-educated professionals in the enterprise; and the facilitating roles of bureaucratic organization, euphemistic language, and a variety of psychological defense mechanisms, such as psychic numbing and doubling. The authors devote a chapter to the question of victims of the Holocaust and potential victims of nuclear war. They conclude with a call for further development of a gradually emerging "species mentality," that is, "full consciousness of ourselves as members of the human species, a species now under threat of extinction...a sense of self that identifies with the entire human species." (p.258)

* 7.103 *

Markusen identifies a number of psychological, organizational, and technological factors common to both genocide and total war and concludes that "Warfare in the twentieth century has become increasingly genocidal, and several genocides...resemble military
campaigns and utilize military forces in the killing process." (p.118)

* 7.104 *

Includes a discussion of genocide, total war, and the capacity for nuclear war as national security policies, as well as an analysis of organizational loyalty as an important psychosocial facilitating factor in several types of governmental mass killing.

* 7.105 *

The authors make a comparative analysis of genocide and war as two forms of state-sanctioned mass killing that focuses on the Holocaust as an exemplary case of genocide and the British and American strategic bombing campaigns of World War II as an exemplary case of total war. They analyze the two cases in terms of a conceptual framework of psychological, organizational, and technological facilitating factors, and then apply the framework to the nuclear arms race. Finally, they examine the implications of the study for other twentieth century wars and genocides.

* 7.106 *

* 7.107 *

* 7.108 *

All three of these works contribute important insights not only to the understanding of the Holocaust, but of genocide and other forms of mass killing as well, particularly with respect to ideological and institutional aspects. The 1986 monograph is a comparative analysis of the Holocaust and the capacity for nuclear omnicide. Mason is a Professor in the Department of Political Science at Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana 70118.

* 7.109 *

Merton's is a concise, classic analysis of the nature of bureaucracy and the multiple effects of bureaucracies on individuals working within them. Of particular relevance are his discussions of "trained incapacities" and "the stress on the depersonalization of relationships."

* 7.110 *

In this very significant article, Nash, a former intelligence analyst in the Air Targets Division of the U.S. Air Force, explains how the bureaucratic nature of his working environment made it possible "calmly to plan to incinerate vast numbers of unknown human beings without any sense of moral revulsion." (p.22) Among factors Nash discusses are the preoccupation with technique and puzzle-solving at the expense of moral-ethical concerns and the use of euphemistic language that mutes the full reality of the work being done.

* 7.111 *

Among the most noteworthy articles in this valuable collection are "Psychological Roots of Moral Exclusion," by Morton Deutsch; "Selective Activation and Disengagement of Moral Control," by Albert Bandura; and "Moral Exclusion, Personal Goal Theory, and Extreme Destructiveness," by Evrin Staub.

* 7.112 *

Peattie explicitly compares the Holocaust to the preparations for nuclear war. She suggests that "There appears to be no situation so abnormal, experientially, socially, morally, that human beings, if not totally stunned out of all reactivity, will not at least strive to assimilate it to normal practice..." (p.32) She then analyzes how the division of labor in both enterprises contributed importantly to the process of normalization.

* 7.113 *
This is a pioneering collection of essays on social and psychological processes that facilitate collective violence and mass killing. The titles of only a few of the chapters will give a hint of the range of issues that are examined: "Conditions for Guilt-Free Massacre," by Troy Duster; "Groupthink Among Policymakers," by Irving Janis; "Authoritarianism and Social Destructiveness" by Nevitt Sanford; "Evil and the American Ethos," by Robert Bellah; "Existential Evil," by Robert Jay Lifton; and "Resisting Institutional Evil from Within," by Jan Howard and Robert Somers.

* 7.114 *

An authority on altruism grapples with the problem of mass killing in this valuable book. In the first part, Staub develops a conceptual framework of psychological and social factors that account for how "a subgroup of society...comes to be mistreated and destroyed by a more powerful group or government." (p.4) In the middle two parts, he tests the applicability of his conceptual framework by comparatively analyzing four cases of genocide and mass killing: the Holocaust, the Turkish genocide of the Armenians, the Cambodian "autogenocide" from 1975 through 1978, and the "disappearances" and murders of civilians in Argentina during the 1970s. Finally, in the fourth part, he discusses the origins of war and then applies the lessons from the comparative analysis, as well as his earlier work on prosocial and altruistic behavior, to the problem of creating "a world of nonaggression, cooperation, caring, and human connection." (p.283)

* 7.115 *

The classic analysis of the characteristics of bureaucracies.