

# mind•full: a brainsnack for future leaders with ethical appetites

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## war-free world

War has plagued human beings throughout history. The 20th century has seen staggering levels of violence and bloodshed as weapons have become more sophisticated and destructive. In addition, the nature of war-fighting has changed. Rather than taking place between soldiers on clearly marked battlefields, wars are now fought in cities, villages, and other areas where it is difficult to distinguish between combatants and civilians. As a result, recent conflicts have caused numerous refugee problems, in addition to widespread destruction of economic and social infrastructures. As the media gains greater access to war-torn areas and the world witnesses the human suffering that takes place, an increasing sense of urgency to put a permanent end to these conflicts is emerging.

Many governmental and non-governmental bodies have attempted to create measures that would prevent warfare, diminish conflicts once they have started, and ensure that past conflicts do not reemerge. Such efforts include peace accords between belligerent parties, arms control treaties, cultural exchanges, conventions that limit the legality of certain forms of armed conflict, and the deployment of peacekeeping troops. These efforts have had mixed success.

For centuries philosophers have debated whether war is ever justified and what activities are permissible in war. Some claim that war is never justified. Others believe that although initiating an act of aggression is unjust, defending oneself against such acts is justified. In addition, there is little consensus on whether military force ought to be used to counter non-military forms of aggression.

Eliminating all war is a monumental task. Resource scarcity, ethnic rivalries, border disputes, and other factors all contribute to potential conflict. In order for the world to be free of war, humans ultimately must learn to solve differences without resorting to violence.

The mission of Student Pugwash USA is to promote the socially responsible application of science and technology in the 21st century. As a student organization, Student Pugwash USA encourages young people to examine the ethical, social, and global implications of science and technology, and to make these concerns a guiding focus of their academic and professional endeavors.

The **mind•full** series encourages readers to explore crucial ethical dilemmas associated with the application of science and technology.

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# go figure!

The 20th century has been the bloodiest in the history of the world. Increased firepower and large-scale conflicts have increased greatly the number of deaths due to war during the last one hundred years. These casualties include a large numbers of civilians. Civilian casualties, sometimes referred to in military terms as "collateral damage," have become a major consequence of modern-day warfare.

At the end of the Cold War many hoped that a new era of peace would occur. Nearly all wars since the fall of the Berlin Wall have been internal conflicts. Although there has been a steady decrease over the past few years in the number of major conflicts being fought, the world remains a long way from zero. Resolving conflicts peacefully will be one of the most important challenges of the 21st century.

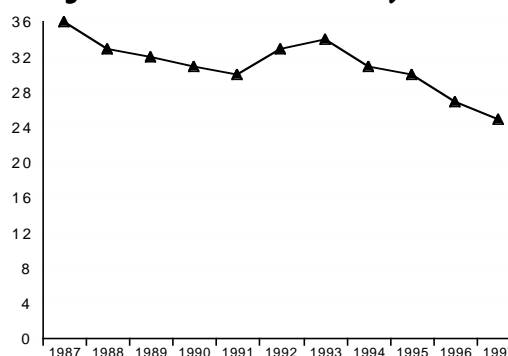
## estimated average annual military deaths in wars, worldwide, by century

Century	Average Annual Military Deaths	World Mid-Century Population in Millions	Average Annual Military Deaths per Million
17th	9,500	500	19.0
18th	15,000	800	18.8
19th	13,000	1,200	10.8
20th	458,000	2,500	183.2

**Source:** Richard M. Garfield and Alfred I. Neugut, "The Human Consequences of War," in *War and Public Health*, edited by Barry S. Levy and Victor W. Sidel, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

**no  
more  
war?**

## major armed conflicts, 1987-1997

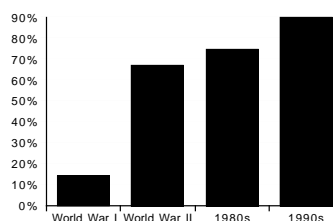


Year	Number of Conflicts
1987	36
1988	33
1989	32
1990	31
1991	30
1992	33
1993	34
1994	31
1995	30
1996	27
1997	25
?	0

**Source:** Adapted from *SIPRI Yearbook: World Armaments and Disarmament, 1988-1998*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988-1998.

## civilian deaths as a percentage of all war-related deaths

	Percent of All Deaths
World War I	14%
World War II	67%
1980s	75%
1990s	90%



**Source:** Richard M. Garfield and Alfred I. Neugut, "The Human Consequences of War," in *War and Public Health*, edited by Barry S. Levy and Victor W. Sidel, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.

# in control or out of it ?

World leaders throughout the twentieth century have tried to develop means and institutions to resolve conflicts peacefully. Early efforts, such as The Hague Conferences in 1899 and 1907 and the Geneva Conventions in 1906 (later revised in 1929 and 1949), set rules of war that they hoped would make hostilities more humane. The League of Nations was founded in 1920, following World War I, as a collective security system in which all members of the League would confront an aggressor with moral arguments and, if those failed, economic sanctions. The League ultimately broke apart due to the difficulty of enforcing economic embargoes and because the United States Congress refused to allow the US to join.

After the devastation of World War II, world leaders again created an international body to deal with war and aggression. The United Nations was formed in 1945 to maintain international peace and security. The body given authority to do this is the Security Council. The Security Council has five permanent members—the United States, the Soviet Union (now the Russian Federation), Britain, France, and China and ten nonpermanent members who are elected for two-year terms. Article 39 of the UN charter says that the Security Council “shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measure shall be taken . . . to maintain or restore international peace and security.” Action by the Security Council requires unanimity by the five major powers. Thus, any one of the permanent members has the power to veto any proposal on the table. As a result, the Security Council rarely uses its mandate to stop acts of aggression.

Many critics of the United Nations believe the five permanent members have too much power and that the UN should undergo democratic reforms. Suggestions include adding more permanent members to the Security Council and eliminating the veto of the five permanent members. The five permanent members, however, are not likely to allow this to occur. Many believe that more organized and binding systems of global governance, such as a stronger UN or an International Court of Justice that would uphold international law, will help maintain peace.

## learn the lingo

**convention**—a formal written agreement between states that creates legal obligations for the parties involved.

**ethnic cleansing**—the systematic elimination of ethnic minorities from a given territory using such means as terror, expulsion, and murder.

**genocide**—mass murder carried out by or with the complicity of political authorities and directed at distinct communally defined groups.

**humanitarian intervention**—reliance on force for the justifiable purpose of protecting the inhabitants of another state from treatment that is arbitrary and persistently abusive.

**peacebuilding**—the ability to anticipate conflict in order to apply proper measures to create the conditions for peace.

**peacekeeping**—the use of military personnel in noncombatant roles, such as monitoring cease-fires. Such activities require the consent of the warring parties.

**peacemaking**—enables peacekeeping forces not only to monitor a cease-fire but also to enforce it if it breaks down. Control over deployment and operation is exercised by the UN Security Council or can be delegated to a regional organization.

**preventive diplomacy**—nonmilitary options used to prevent escalation of crisis into open conflict, such as sending fact-finding missions, providing for mediation and arbitration, issuing formal warnings of impending sanctions, and offering political or material incentives.

**sanctions**—agreements among states to stop trade with violators of international law completely or in one particular commodity, such as military goods.

**Source:** Ted Robert Gurr and Barbara Harff, *Ethnic Conflict in World Politics*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1994.

The United Nations has played an important role in supporting peacekeeping operations around the world. Not specifically mentioned in the UN charter, peacekeeping operations developed over the years as a way to separate belligerent parties and to monitor cease fires and borders. Traditionally, UN peacekeepers only enter a zone of conflict when invited by the warring parties. However, many would like to see UN forces trained to enter combat zones without permission from the fighting parties as “peace makers” who can quickly diffuse the conflict. Critics of these operations fear that use of UN troops would result in heavy casualties without necessarily resolving the conflict, as was the case in Somalia.

Today, experts debate the role of other international and regional bodies in maintaining peace. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, an alliance formed during the Cold War to contain Soviet expansion, recently has tried to stop Yugoslavia’s aggression against its ethnic Albanian population in Kosovo. Other regional organizations such as the Organization of African Unity, the Organization of American States, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe have made efforts to resolve conflicts and maintain peace in their regions.

Non-governmental organizations also play an important role in maintaining peace. NGOs continually lobby governments, provide relief and medical attention to refugees, and give important independent views on conflicts around the world. Recent international efforts to ban the use and manufacture of land mines were largely initiated by NGOs around the world.

### **awash in arms**

Although not as individually destructive as weapons of mass destruction or larger conventional weapons, light weapons play a significant role in the levels of bloodshed in the world today. Light weapons generally are defined as weapons that can be carried and used by one or two people. Many, if not most, conflicts are being fought with a combination of light weapons and major conventional weapons. There is very little control over both the legal and illegal trade in light weapons. As a result, they have flooded war zones throughout the world. Most small arms are durable and often are transported to new conflicts once they are no longer needed. During the past two decades most civilian deaths due to war were caused by light weapons. Many experts agree that if a war-free world is to be achieved, the proliferation of these weapons must be controlled.

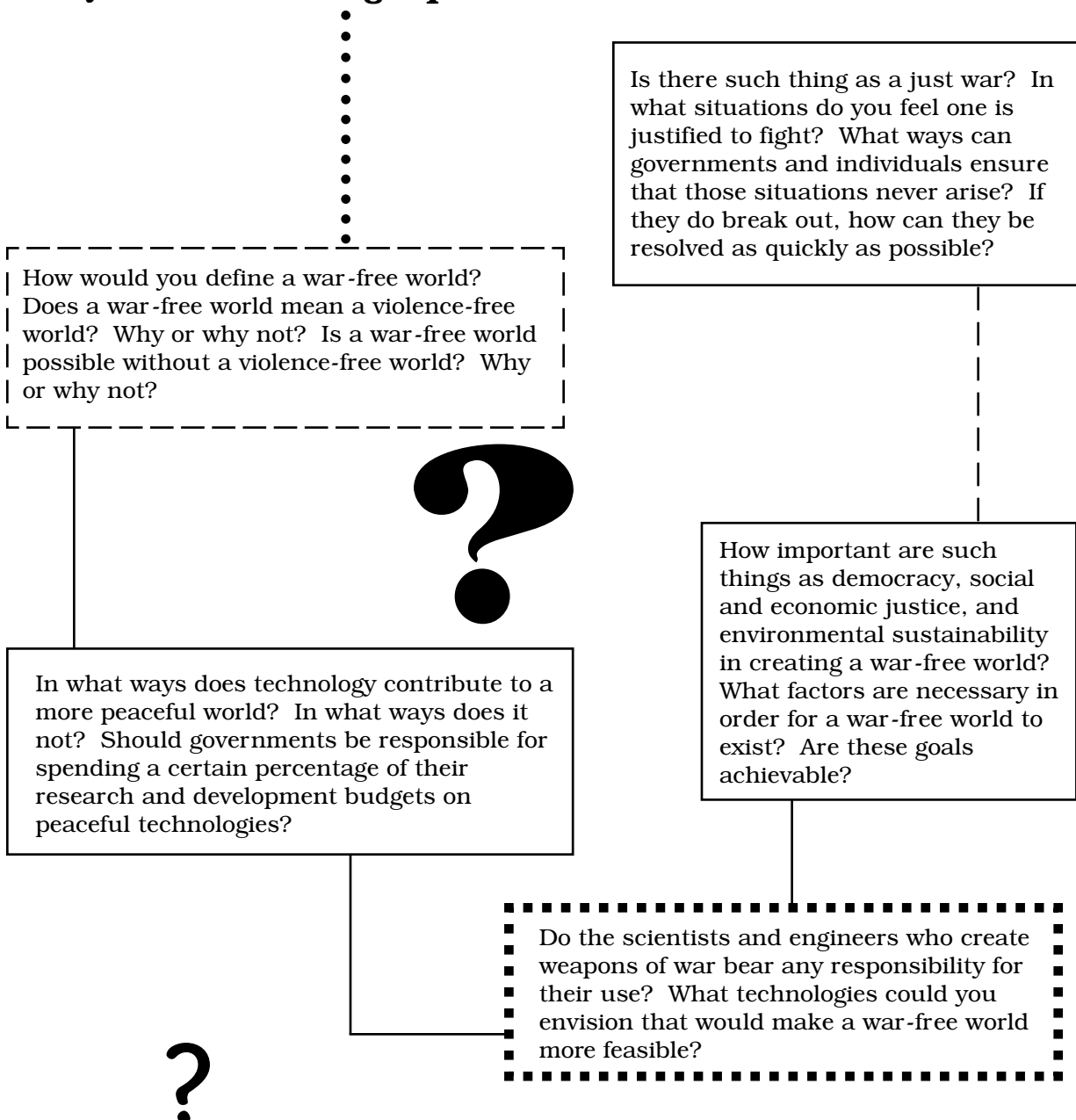
### **411-kaboom!**

Improvements in technology also change the face of warfare. Today many experts agree that information warfare will be a major concern in the next century. Information warfare includes actions taken to affect the enemy's information, information-based processes, and information systems, while protecting one's own. As the world relies more heavily on information networks and communications technologies, there is increased risk that these will be targeted. In addition to focusing on government and military targets, information warfare activities include attacks on the banking, transportation, manufacturing, and electrical power industries' networks. Many countries, including the United States, are preparing to be able to both launch and defend against information warfare. Although information warfare may not seem violent in nature, the outcomes of such activity can be devastating—from failed economies to compromised computer systems. As technology changes and evolves, the nature of warfare likely will change as well.

# (anything but a) conclusion

To create a war-free world is an ambitious goal. However, given the horrifying humanitarian disasters caused by war and the increasing sophistication and deadliness of armaments, stopping war is more important than ever. The complex factors that would contribute to a war-free world are numerous and difficult to achieve. With the threat of nuclear war still looming over us, it is imperative that states, ethnic groups, and religious factions learn to solve their differences peacefully. To do this, the international community must work together to create the institutions and mechanisms needed to put an end to war.

## How do **you** answer the **tough questions**



.....  
• Many treaties and conventions have set  
• rules of war and attempted to make war  
• more humane. Is it possible for a war to be  
• humane? Can morality exist in a state of  
• war? Why or why not?  
.....

What effect does the media have on people's perceptions of war? Do violent movies and television desensitize people? Why or why not? How do movies and television affect the way we perceive news of war?

How would differences be resolved in a war-free world? What role would international bodies such as the United Nations play in solving those differences?



According to the Center for Defense Information, the United States spends roughly \$280 billion on military spending annually, while "rogue" states (classified by the US as Cuba, Iraq, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria) spend \$16 billion. Is the disparity between US military spending and that of the rest of the world justified? Should the US cut its military budget in favor of education, health care, and other social spending? Why or why not?

What role do individuals play in creating a war-free world? In what ways can individuals prevent a despot or dictator from waging war? Do world leaders have a moral obligation to work for a war-free world?



What responsibility does the international community have for stopping known genocide? What ways can the governments respond to such atrocities? What role can a body such as the International Court of Justice play in preventing further genocides?

**peaceful reading**

- *All Quiet on the Western Front*, Erich Maria Remarque—a classic anti-war novel written in 1929 about World War I. If you haven't read it, pick it up!
- *An Agenda for Peace*, Boutros Boutros Ghali—the original treatise on the role of the UN and peacekeeping forces after the Cold War. The second edition includes new supplements and related UN documents. New York: United Nations, 1995.
- *Beyond Machiavelli: Tools for Coping with Conflict*, Roger Fisher—this Harvard negotiation specialist explains basic techniques for dealing with conflict and applies them to one international problem after another. New York: Penguin USA, 1996.
- *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*—this magazine is one of the best resources on peace and security issues. Get subscription info from [www.bullatomsci.org](http://www.bullatomsci.org).
- *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*—Huntington's controversial argument is considered a must-read for students of international relations. Touchstone Books, 1998.
- *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, US Department of State—these reports are submitted annually by the State Department to the US Congress. The reports cover internationally recognized individual, civil, political, and worker rights, as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Now available on-line at [www.state.gov/www/global/human\\_rights/hrp\\_reports\\_mainhp.html](http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/hrp_reports_mainhp.html).
- *Ethics, Killing and War*, Richard Norman—this moral philosophy book explores whether war can ever be justified. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies*, Jared Diamond—this book received the Pulitzer Prize for its geographic, demographic, and ecological look at how civilizations have formed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998.
- *Linus Pauling on Peace*, edited by Barbara Marinacci and Ramesh Krishnamurthy—an excellent compendium of thoughts and writings on creating a peaceful world by this Pugwashite and former member of Student Pugwash USA's advisory board. Los Altos, CA: Rising Star Press, 1998.
- *A Scourge of Guns: The Diffusion of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Latin America*, Michael Klare and David Andersen—monograph on the effects that light weapons proliferation has on a region. Washington, DC: Federation of American Scientists, 1996.
- *Spoils of War: The Human Cost of America's Arms Trade*, John Tirman—the executive director of the Winston Foundation for World Peace examines US arms sales policy with a focus on US sales of Blackhawk helicopters and their use against Kurdish refugees. Free Press, 1997.
- *World Citizenship: Allegiance to Humanity*, Joseph Rotblat, editor—essays by many Pugwashites on the necessity to become global citizens. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997.

**moving pictures**

- *The Phantom Menace*—get in line today. There is no end to the number of war and peace issues this film will address.
- *Planet of the Apes*—there is a lesson to be learned around every corner of this campy sci-fi series.
- *Underground*—brilliant film about the collapse of the former Yugoslavia and the psychology of war. Winner of the 1995 Cannes Film Festival Golden Palm Award.

**top picks**

Federation of American Scientists (an excellent site containing lots of government reports, independent analysis, links, and other information)—[www.fas.org](http://www.fas.org)

United Nations (contains endless UN documents and information about this important world body)—[www.un.org](http://www.un.org)

**[www.worldpeace.now](http://www.worldpeace.now)****best of the rest**

- 20/20 Vision (lots of tools for activists working for peace)—[www.2020vision.org](http://www.2020vision.org)
- British American Security Information Council (information about NATO, arms control, and other security issues)—[www.basicint.org](http://www.basicint.org)
- Center for Defense Information (this site is loaded with information and excellent links on US military spending and other information)—[www.cdi.org](http://www.cdi.org)
- Council for a Livable World—[www.clw.org](http://www.clw.org)
- Five College Peace and World Security Studies (great information on graduate education, fellowships, and careers in peace studies)—[pawss.hampshire.edu](http://pawss.hampshire.edu)
- Institute for War and Peace Reporting (independent journalists keep the world informed on issues of war and peace. Amazing coverage of the Kosovo crisis)—[www.iwpr.net](http://www.iwpr.net)
- North Atlantic Treaty Organization—[www.nato.int](http://www.nato.int)
- Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe—[www.osce.org](http://www.osce.org)
- Organization of African Unity—[www.oau-oua.org](http://www.oau-oua.org)
- Organization of American State—[www.oas.org](http://www.oas.org)
- Peace Action (the largest US grassroots peace organization)—[www.peace-action.org](http://www.peace-action.org)
- Physicians for Social Responsibility—[www.psr.org](http://www.psr.org)
- Prepcom (a community of NGOs preparing for a global campaign to alleviate the problems of small arms proliferation)—[www.prepcom.org](http://www.prepcom.org)
- Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs (our parent organization and recipients of the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize)—[www.pugwash.org](http://www.pugwash.org)
- United States Department of State (a very informative site by the principal US foreign policy-making branch)—[www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov)
- Women in International Security (a lot of great opportunities available through WIIS)—[www.puaf.umd.edu/wiis/](http://www.puaf.umd.edu/wiis/)

**check it out !****cyberspace**

This **mind•full** was written by David Andersen, Associate Director of Student Pugwash USA. Special thanks to Trevor Findley, executive director of VERTIC, and Natalie Goldring, executive director of the Program on General Disarmament at the University of Maryland, College Park and member of Student Pugwash USA's board of directors, for their comments. Any errors are the responsibility of Student Pugwash USA. ©1999 Student Pugwash USA.

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## but wait, there's more!

- **mind•full: a brainsnack for future leaders with ethical appetites.** Volume one includes: international weapons trade; emerging infectious diseases; access and the Internet; public's role in science; future of nuclear weapons; water quality and availability; war and disease; renewable energy. Volume two includes: pugwash conferences; exploring human genetics; science, technology, & culture; communications technologies; beyond nuclear weapons; nuclear energy; computers and human genetics; energy and international security; science, ethics, and education; environment and energy.
- **Jobs You Can Live With: Working at the Crossroads of Science, Technology, and Society.** The fifth edition of the Student Pugwash USA internship directory. It highlights approximately 200 organizations that work to promote the ethical use of science and technology and provides suggestions on how to go about the internship and job search.
- **Science, Technology, and Ethical Priorities: Proceedings of Student Pugwash USA's Ninth International Conference.**
- **Pugwatch.** The chapter newsletter.
- **Chapter Organizing Guide.** Newly updated, provides chapter members with an A to Z guide to getting a campus-based chapter up and running.

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**student pugwash usa**  
**815 15th street, nw, suite 814**  
**washington, dc 20005 usa**

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