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War and Conflict

It is an undeniable fact that war and conflict has been a part of human societies throughout all of history. Countless psychologists, philosophers and sociologists have studied how people place themselves within and in regards to war. It is a debate with millions of facts, theories, and at the end of the day no clear and factual answer. The United States has been a nationally recognized country for 244 years, and in its lifetime the US has fought in 12 major international wars, from WWI to the most recent war in Afghanistan. Some of these wars ended in success for the US, and others didn't, but they all had an impactful and long lasting negative effect on all involved. Although wars have the capability of advancing technology, war causes Unnecessary loss of life and oppression .

Times of war push countries into industrial evolutions. Conflicting countries race each other to create superior technology, in order to surpass their enemy, and come out victorious. Throughout this race, counties have been able to create impactful technologies that have had an overall positive effect on people. [The Colossus, one of the first ever computer divergent created, was made by British engineer Tommy Flowers was designed in order break the complex Lorenz ciphers used by the Nazis.](https://www.computerhistory.org/timeline/1944/) This invention, as well as [rader, field radio, modernized transport vehicles, and telephones.](https://airandspace.si.edu/stories/editorial/240-artist-soldiers-technology) Are all technologies created initially to aid in war efforts, and then further evolved to be accessible to the general public. In current day times, a government study found that an estimated [84% of US households own a smartphone](https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2021/computer-internet-use.html). These technologies have become an integral part of everyday life for billions of people throughout the world . War times have also had a positive impact on the development of medicine. There were many new and improved surgical and field medica techniques invented, because of war. There were new [antiseptics, improved methods of hygiene](https://www.nationalww2museum.org/sites/default/files/2017-07/thanks-to-penicillin-lesson.pdf), [and important antibiotics like penicillin were invented](https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-28678392#:~:text=But%20there%20were%20other%20significant,became%20more%20disciplined%20about%20hygiene.) and distributed en masse. Although the event of war has created technologies that were able to save lives throughout history. War has also caused the creation of advanced weaponry that has the capability of ending more lives. During the cold war, both the United States and the Soviet Union were able to create unimaginably destructive bombs that have the capabliaty of leveling miles of theretory, and leaving nothing behind. Bombs can also have long lasting effects on the surrounding environment and communities. The two atomic bombs dropped in WWII killed more then 100,000 people form radiation alone. And with acsess to these bombs on hand, countries have the capablity of destroying entire countries with the press of a bottom. This advanced technology has given humanity the worry of being completely annihilated. Corrupted leaders who long for power and global domination can now have the firepower to kill millions of innocents. So is a phone or a computer really worth the realistic possibility of humanitarian self destruction, caused by nuclear war?

Every war that the US has participated in, has resulted in some level of unnecessary loss of life. According to the oxford dictionary war is defined as “a state of armed conflict between different nations or states or different groups within a nation or state.'' The definition of war involves death and killing. This can occur in traditional war when one sides goes against another in open compact, fighting eachother with guns, bombs and other millitary artillarty. In more complicated wars, such as the cold war, there is less likelihood of open combat; But there can be secret assassinations, bombing, and proxy fights held in other countries. Despite the methods or reason for a war, there are people killed, and many of those people are innocent. Whether they are innocent women and children, young boys drafted-forced to be soldiers, and men manipulated to believe in extreme nationalism. One of the most recent wars in American history, the war in Vietnam was one of the most seemingly ineffective conflicts in US history. With the intention of stopping the spread of communism throughout Asia, the US declared war in Vietnam, and spent approximately 10 years fighting the North Vietnamese. At the end of the war, Vietnam ultimately came under control of the communist controlled north. Throughout these 10 years, [58,220 U.S. troops died](https://www.archives.gov/research/military/vietnam-war/casualty-statistics#:~:text=April%2029%2C%202008.-,The%20Vietnam%20Conflict%20Extract%20Data%20File%20of%20the%20Defense%20Casualty,and%20Records%20Administration%20in%202008.) because of the war. The deaths of vietnamese civilians were estimated to be over 2 million, as well as [1,100,000 vietnamese soldiers killed](https://www.britannica.com/event/Vietnam-War#:~:text=In%201995%20Vietnam%20released%20its,250%2C000%20South%20Vietnamese%20soldiers%20died.) including both sides. This information is an estimate from the US government, but in actuality the number could be much higher. Many people have also been metaly and physically disabled due to the war, missing limbs or suffering from PTSD. Sometimes it's so painful that soldiers end up killing themselves long after they have returned home. War causes millions of families to be left without family members, and many left to fend for themselves in difficult times after war, with no income or support. It is almost never the general population who has the decision whether to go to war or not. Despite this, it is the people who are affected and used to fight wars. They are sent to war to defend a government ideology of what is right or wrong, whether they agree or not.

Wars tend to push an us vs. them mentality. Each side sees themselves at the “good,” and to the see the other side as “evil.” Over time these beliefs can affect people's unconscious biases, and cause a certain group or groups to be othered or oppressed for a long period. In order for a leader or government to create an army, they need people's support, admiration or fear. Most people do not wish to die, so it requires a demagogue who can gain people's support, in whatever way they are able. In World War two, hitler was able to gain a large following because he spoke to the people's wants and seemed to “help” them by fixing the German economy and giving people jobs they desperately needed. So when he started to push his antisemetic and racist ideologies, the people accepted and believed him. This blind trust and belief led to a geonside of over [6 million innocent jewish people, and millions of more who were against their ideology.](https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/holocaust) The deaths caused by the holocauste are not limited to the events of the war. Since then there has been a spread of antisemtic ideas throughout America, as well as many other countries. Since the war there have beens countless hate crimes and attacks of Jewish people in the US. [In 2019 there was a mass shooting in a ptsburge synagogue, which killed 11 innocent people](https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/5/1/18524103/poway-synagogue-shooting-anti-semitism). In [2020 alone there have been 8,052 reported single-bias incidents, which involved 11,126 victims](https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/hate-crime-statistics). Biases and oppression are usually not created because people are inherently evil, but through opinions and information passed down to them for an early age, and fear. The Japanese internment camps delocated and held thousands of innocent people with no crimes, because the government was afraid. This fear is a mental defense mechanism, to protect oneself from threat. But is this x[enophobia](https://www.verywellmind.com/xenophobia-fear-of-strangers-2671881) is supported for years or even decades, it could lead to a aninitity and hatred to people perceived as “other.” If people were under less threat from war and conflict, they would be able to recognize biases and treat others with more equality over time. As well as heal the oppression and racism that already exist

War is unlikely to cause any lasting universal benefit to a society or community. As humans have evolved, they have created new technologies to help them survive in different environments. People are very adaptable creatures, and it is about time that humans move away from war as the first response to an issue. People are the generally the issue, but they have the capability to create solution as well. In a world with so much media and information accessible at all times, it can feel like certain things are insignificant. And people tend to soloy focus on the issues related to themselves. And only consider what will be useful in the short term future. But if they keep this mindset, it will cause issues later on. “It is easy to love your friend, but sometimes the hardest lesson to learn is to love your enemy.” -*The Art of War by Sun Tzu*  It is important for everyone to try to think independently and recognize your individual biases; Because your actions can greatly affect others, weather you mean it to or not. So, if we learn to love our “Enemy” we might be able to save ourselves from inpolding.