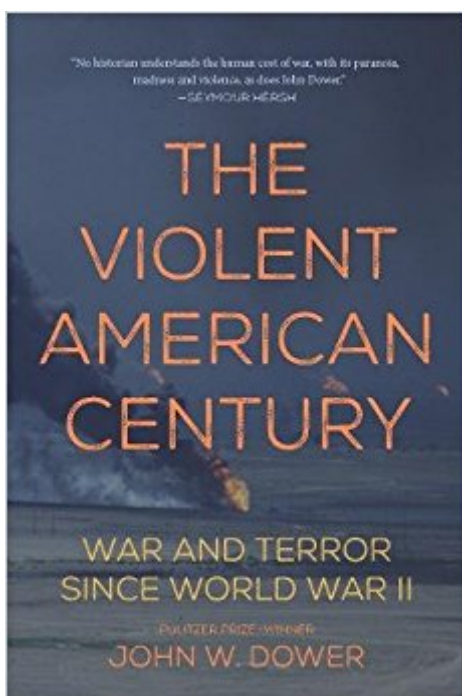


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# The Violent American Century: War And Terror Since World War II (Dispatch Books)



## Synopsis

World War II marked the apogee of industrialized total war. Great powers savaged one another. Hostilities engulfed the globe. Mobilization extended to virtually every sector of every nation. Air war, including the terror bombing of civilians, emerged as a central strategy of the victorious Anglo-American powers. The devastation was catastrophic almost everywhere, with the notable exception of the United States, which exited the strife unscathed and unmatched in power and influence. The death toll of fighting forces plus civilians worldwide was staggering. *The Violent American Century* addresses the U.S.-led transformations in war conduct and strategizing that followed 1945, beginning with brutal localized hostilities, proxy wars, and the nuclear terror of the Cold War, and ending with the asymmetrical conflicts of the present day. The military playbook now meshes brute force with a focus on non-state terrorism, counterinsurgency, clandestine operations, a vast web of overseas American military bases, and most touted of all, a revolutionary new era of computerized precision warfare. By contrast to World War II, postwar death and destruction has been comparatively small. By any other measure, it has been appalling and shows no sign of abating. The winner of numerous national prizes for his historical writings, including the Pulitzer and the National Book Award, Dower draws heavily on hard data and internal U.S. planning and pronouncements in this concise analysis of war and terror in our time. In doing so, he places U.S. policy and practice firmly within the broader context of global mayhem, havoc, and slaughter since World War II, always with bottom-line attentiveness to the human costs of this legacy of unceasing violence.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"[The Violent American Century] is so important, such essential reading... There is much in it that I knew, and quite a bit that I vaguely remembered, and some that I had never assimilated, but to have all that information in one short text, expertly woven and explained, is a devastating indictment of American violence and its imperial hubris. The footnotes alone are more than worth the price (which is very low, especially if we compare it to a Tomahawk missile). It is really like a mini-encyclopedia of American expansionism, but written with the verve of a political thriller, and with the murderer being chased and nailed down step by misstep.... The Violent American Century has a chance to affect at a massive level our understanding of the world we live in, the one that America has shaped but has been unable to dominate. At a time when the military has taken over the national government -- not to mention the industrialists -- I am grateful to have Dower's fierce intelligence on our side. Let's hope it gets the readership it deserves." • Ariel Dorfman, New York Times "John Dower ends this grim recounting of 75 years of constant war, intervention, assassination and other crimes by calling for 'serious consideration of why the most powerful nation in world history is so dedicated to these practices while ignoring the nature of its actions and their consequences' an injunction that could hardly be more timely or necessary as the Pentagon's 'arc of instability' expands to an 'ocean of instability' and even an 'atomic arc of instability' in Dower's perceptive reflections on today's frightening world." • Noam Chomsky "Dower delivers a convincing blow to publisher Henry Luce's benign 'American Century' thesis, positing that violence has continued at an epic pace through conventional combat and terrorism as well as through famine, disease, and displacement of people from their homelands. The U.S. often responds as victim rather than villain, but Dower concludes that the country's preoccupation with its own exceptionalism continues to perpetuate the American hubris that fuels ever more violent international conflicts." • Publisher's Weekly "No historian understands the human cost of war, with its paranoia, madness and violence, as does John Dower, and in this deeply researched volume he tells how America, since the end of World War II, has turned away from its ideals and goodness to become a match setting the world on fire. George W. Bush's post-9/11 'global war on terror' was not a new adventure, but just more of the same." • Seymour Hersh In *The Violent American Century*, John Dower has produced

a sharply eloquent account of the use of U.S. military power since World War II. From "hot" Cold War conflicts to drone strikes, Dower examines the machinery of American violence and its staggering toll. This is an indispensable book.

•Marilyn Young, author of *Vietnam Wars, 1945-1990* "John Dower is our most judicious guide to the dark underbelly of post-War American power in the world. Those who focus on Europe and North America speak of a Pax Americana. This is to ignore the technologies of violence that Washington meticulously deployed in Asia and the global South, from total war to "shock and awe," of which Dower is our unflinching analyst."

• Juan Cole, author of *The New Arabs* "A lucid, convincing, and chilling account of the self-deceiving American fall into violence. Dower's clear-eyed analysis of a terrible history, for its faith in the power of truth, invites a fresh determination to demand another way. Just in time."

•James Carroll, author of *An American Requiem* "A timely, compact, and utterly compelling exposé of the myriad contradictions besetting U.S. national security policy. John Dower has written a powerful book."

•Andrew J. Bacevich, author of *America's War for the Greater Middle East: A Military History* "If you think that because we've never experienced World War III the world is becoming far more peaceful, John Dower's book is mandatory reading. In clear, carefully documented fashion, this superb historian shows just how much violence the United States has unleashed outside its borders since 1945, so much of it below the radar of our awareness at the time and of our memories today."

•Adam Hochschild, author of *Spain in Our Hearts: Americans in the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939* "Praise for *Embracing Defeat*: "Extraordinarily illuminating.... Dower has deftly mixed history from the 'bottom up' and the 'top down' to produce what is surely the most significant work to date on the postwar era in Japan."

• Jacob Heilbrunn, *Wall Street Journal* "Masterly.... A penetrating analysis of Japan in the aftermath of defeat.... A profound and moving book, the best history ever written of Japan and its relations to the United States after the Second World War."

• Akira Iriye, Harvard University, *Boston Sunday Globe* "Richly detailed and provocative.... For anyone who knows modern Japan, it is an endlessly fascinating explanation of why things work as they do.... A marvelous piece of reporting and analysis."

• T.R. Reid, *Washington Post* "With *Embracing Defeat*, [Dower] confirms his place as this country's leading chronicler of the Pacific war."

• Janice P. Nimura, *Chicago Tribune*

JOHN W. DOWER is professor emeritus of history at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His many books include *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* and *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War Two*, which won numerous

prizes including the Pulitzer and the National Book Award.

Excellent in all particulars, including readability.

Full of the details of American actions against human rights and self determination. Every page a mine of information. Could be footnoted a tad more fully.

Our presidents and other politicians love to boast of the power of our enormous military. Dower shows us the dark side of all that power. Should be required reading for anyone in the House or Senate.

Wonderfully comprehensive and eye-opening. How much we have overlooked, especially during the Cold War while we focused on the two big superpowers!

Succinctly and beautifully written, excellently researched. Highly recommended.

Received book today in great condition and will begin my reading soon.

This is a book filled with information every patriotic American needs to know but too few want to hear. Excellent and powerful in every way,

I just received my copy of *The Violent American Century: War and Terror*. This book is an excellent piece of work that concisely covers things that I have only seen in bits and pieces over the years. I fully agree with Ariel Dorfman's comment in Tom Engelhardt's Tomgram of 4/23/17 that the book "is really like a mini-encyclopedia of American expansionism, but written with the verve of a political thriller." It's something every American should read, especially our elected leaders. I rate it at five stars +.

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