

Is war inevitable?



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

1 Is War Inevitable? The modern human mind has sought to present findings and evidence that would lead to some form of an indication or conclusion regarding the inevitability of war through the multifarious fields of science and technology; anthropology; political science; economics; psychology (both humanist and evolutionary); and cultural studies.

The general perception for most people – gauged through academic surveys and Social Networking websites – is that the innate biological tuning, socio-cultural infrastructure, geo-political systems, economic scarcity, and the massive amounts of arsenal possessed by mankind will never allow humans to transcend the atrocities of brutality, violence and aggressive bloodshed. Unfortunately, those general perceptions are not unsubstantiated: latest scientific research in the field of genealogy has blamed the Y-Chromosome for man's propensity to wage war.

Further anthropological studies have reiterated and reinforced the fear that clearly lays down the innateness of a tendency towards war, which, subsequently, implies that war is inevitable. However, that is not the complete picture. " Statistically, it is more common for humans to be cooperative and to attempt to get along than it is for them to be uncooperative and aggressive towards one another," says anthropologist Robert Sussman from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri.

With a growing number of experts now arguing that the urge to wage war is not innate, and that humanity is already moving in a direction that could make war a thing of the past, this essay will, based on further research done in the above stated fields, argue against the inevitability of war based on the following grounds: biologically, new research combined with cross-cultural

findings and a deeper insight into the evolutionary development of human beings will show how the “innateness” of war is a myth; socially, we will take a look at the development of a new society in the modern era that compels a change in social ideology that will inevitably lead to more peaceful times wherein war will not be inevitable. Anthropological and ethnic studies have shown that, long before the emergence of modern nation-states, human beings waged war in the tribal setting, basing these conclusions on archeological findings. Furthermore, observance of the behavior of our closest evolutionary cousins, the chimpanzees, has encouraged the perception that just the way chimpanzee troops tend to wage war on other chimpanzees – sometimes even beating them to death – similarly, we too are biologically programmed and naturally hardwired for aggression. In “Are Humans Hardwired to Behave Aggressively? Margie Wylie says that a new and upcoming field of genealogy suggests that the Y-Chromosome in human beings causes us to be, at least in part, “hardwired for aggression and troublesome behavior”. The question is posed to any logical mind: can we allow ourselves to conveniently use this as an excuse for war and crime? No. We can not. Yale’s “Human Relations Area Files” (Ember), a database of around 360 cultures around the world from the past and present, shows that nearly nine-tenths of these cultures have engaged in warfare. However, the frequency, intensity, and time spans of these wars varies vastly from one culture to the next. “There is variation in the frequency of warfare when you look around the world at any given time,” says Melvin Ember. “That suggests to me that we are not dealing with genes or a biological propensity. Even if we do consider the biological propensity and the arguments based on genetic findings, further studies with regards to these have painted a clearer

picture that war is not, in fact, inevitable. Harvard anthropologist, Richard Wrangham, argues that humans have made evolutionary steps towards being less aggressive. In comparison to our ancestors, our brains are ten percent smaller than they used to be, following a trend similar to the Bonobos: domesticated animals, bred for docility. Our ability to live in big cities without attacking each other all the time shows that we are learning to control our violent behavior, at least inside groups (Wylie, 2003). This coming from a propagator of the school of thought that believes in the innate tendency for war, it shows that in current times we can safely say that war is not inevitable.

The “ Us versus Them” syndrome that has plagued the human mind, thus naturally developing a propensity to wage war, is not quite as strong anymore. Bigger groups, with stronger and more complex bonds for internal cohesion have proven to be victors of war throughout history. They tend to become more inclusive, history is proof of that. The population explosion, increasingly obvious environmental challenges, and the threat of nuclear war leading to mutual annihilation are all modern world indicators of the inevitability of war, however, like our ancestors ten thousand years ago, we are being forced by the results of our own actions and successes to mutate into a new kind of society based on a new organizing principle.

The implications of globalization, the internet, the new concept of universal human rights, the political incorrectness of ethnic humor, the growth of transnational economic institutions and regional political ones, new thinking about gender relations: it all is part of a massive change in the way people live and think. It is only inevitable now that a new progression based

on competition between ideas; schools of thoughts and philosophies will take over and will not need to enter armed conflict. (Coon, 2000) To conclude, we can easily say that given the biological developments concerning evolution, combined with changes in the psychological arena and in socio-cultural norms, war is not inevitable.

The inevitability of war, in fact, was overestimated even before, as findings in this essay prove. The future progression of humankind may be slow and difficult, as it has always been, for change is not something engineered in design and geared in direction. But the future holds that war is not inevitable. Works Cited Coon, C. (2000). Is War Inevitable. Retrieved from Progressive Humanism: A New Approach to the Humanist Philosophy: <http://www.progressivehumanism.com/war.html> Ember, C. a. (n. d.). Human Relations Area Files. Retrieved from Yale University: <http://www.yale.edu/hraf> Wylie, M. (2003). Are Humans Hard-Wired to Behave Aggressively? Toronto Star (Canada) .