



# Shadow Wars: Chasing Conflict in an Era of Peace

*David Axe*

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Warfare's evolution, especially since 2001, has irrevocably changed the meaning of war. In the twentieth century—humankind's bloodiest—231 million people died in armed conflicts. Battlefield deaths since then have been steadily declining, despite the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and by 2012 less than 1 person in a million dies in war every year. This drastic change has led some academics to label our era one of peace, recalling the erroneously named "Hundred Years' Peace" or "Pax Britannica" of the nineteenth century, which nonetheless saw many violent conflicts. But war hasn't gone extinct. It has merely *evolved*. In *Shadow Wars*, journalist David Axe tells the story of the new war era—one of insurgents and counterinsurgents, terrorists and their hunters, pirates, mercenaries, smugglers, and slavers wreaking havoc on regions where conditions are brutal, people are poor, governments are weak, and the world rarely pays attention. Axe shows us what war has become in our era of peace. The mainstream media, meanwhile, ignores it. This book profoundly challenges readers' conceptions of war and peace in the twenty-first century.

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