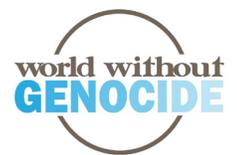


# WORLD VIEW

*A world without genocide- making it our legacy*



AT MITCHELL HAMLINE SCHOOL OF LAW

protect. prevent. prosecute. remember.

Fall 2017

## Genocide is an Iceberg

by Ellen J. Kennedy, Ph.D., Executive Director

The Titanic sank when it hit an iceberg. An iceberg's appearance is deceptive. Only a small part is above the water line but it goes far under the ocean, invisible and deadly to an extent that people on the surface don't anticipate.

What is the relationship between an iceberg and genocide?

On the surface, we think that genocide is caused by the factors in the UN Genocide Convention: "the intent to exterminate, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group." Armenian Christians were persecuted in the Muslim Ottoman Empire; Jews were exterminated by Aryan Nazis; Tutsis in Rwanda were persecuted by Hutu neighbors; Muslims were slaughtered by Serbs in Srebrenica; etc.

We want to believe that people kill others because of competing backgrounds and beliefs. But there are many places in the world where people see the world differently, have different backgrounds and experiences, and yet live together in harmony.

So why does genocide happen in some places and not in others?

Those defining characteristics are only the visible tip of the iceberg. Skin color. Ethnicity and national origin, discernable through language. Religion, labeled by clothing or other outward signs.

It's easy to see these manifestations on the tip of the iceberg and to categorize people accordingly. And when we categorize them, we name them as being different, as "other" from us.

But these characteristics, by themselves, don't create hate, fear, or polarization, and they don't lead to genocide. What's below the tip of the iceberg does that.

The potentially deadly factors are under the iceberg's tip: political instability and economic turmoil. These are the ultimate causes of genocide. They motivate a weak ruling elite to rally a majority population that is desperately fearful about an uncertain future. The leaders blame a racial, religious, ethnic, or national minority for everything unfortunate that is happening and encourage the majority to target the minority.

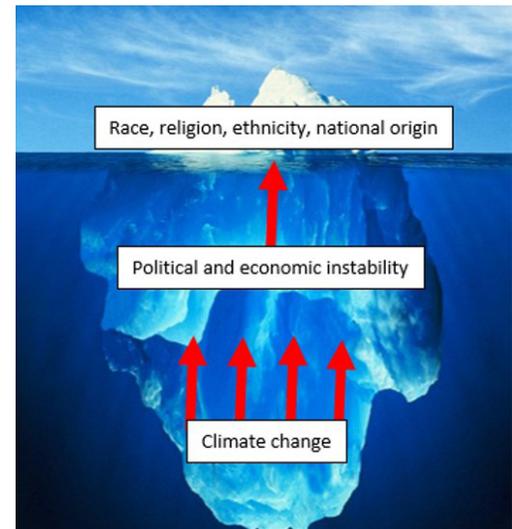
Politics and economics drive hatred and violence.

If we go further below the iceberg's surface, we find a 'force multiplier' and a trigger, a factor that makes a country's internal turmoil even worse: climate change. Famines from floods, droughts, and other natural disasters can push an already-shaky government to take desperate measures.

Climate experts document conditions for a likelihood of violence connected with extremes in temperatures and rainfall:

- communities that are vulnerable to adverse climatic conditions,
- communities where institutions can't respond effectively to agricultural devastation and the flight of hungry rural people to the cities, and
- communities where people at risk can't obtain essential services.

We must look below the surface to prevent violence. We must be watchful of hate-filled messages that take root during political and economic upheaval. We must strengthen civil society in vulnerable communities, promote practices in rural areas to withstand drought and flood, and, ultimately, we must address climate change, the hidden 'force multiplier' of violence.



World Without Genocide, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, **educates** to raise awareness about past and current conflicts and **advocates** at local, state, and national levels for policies and legislation to protect innocent people, prevent genocide, prosecute perpetrators, and remember those whose lives have been affected by genocide.

World Without Genocide at Mitchell Hamline School of Law | 875 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105

www.worldwithoutgenocide.org | admin@worldwithoutgenocide.org | 651-695-7621

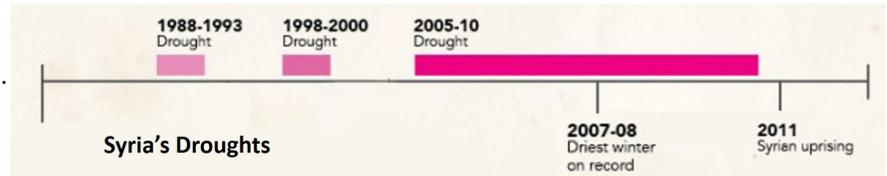
Printer: Jessen Press, St. Louis Park, Minnesota | Design and layout: Emily Grobelny

Legal services: Brad Lehrman, Soffer Charbonnet Law Group, Edina, Minnesota | Accounting services: Ellingson & Ellingson, Ltd., Edina, Minnesota

# Syria- It's On Our Watch

**Climate change in Syria.** Climate change tripled the likelihood of the drought leading to events that killed and displaced millions, gave rise to ISIS, and left Syria in ruins, according to a groundbreaking study in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*.

"This is the first example of connecting emerging climate change to a modern conflict. This is happening today," said Colin Kelley, the study's lead author.



The study builds on a growing body of research linking climate events such as heat waves and drought to conflict. The findings reflect the Pentagon's view that climate change is a threat multiplier that poses "immediate risks."

**The war.** Many years of drought meant that Syria's people faced debilitating food insecurity. This led directly to massive civilian protests in 2011 against the government of Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad, simultaneously with Arab Spring uprisings by millions of other hungry, drought-affected people throughout northern Africa and the Middle East. President Assad's response to Syria's demonstrations, which began as unarmed and peaceful, was to launch violent attacks that escalated dramatically to include the use of barrel bombs, chemical weapons, and heinous attacks on hospitals and other humanitarian services.

**The refugee crisis.** Syria had been a middle-class country of 18 million people. More than 400,000 men, women, and children have been killed by the Assad regime, which is armed by Russia. At least 6 million people are displaced within the country's borders; another 5.5 million people have fled to other countries. These refugees are part of the worst refugee crisis since World War II.

Most refugees have sought shelter in neighboring Turkey, Jordan, and Lebanon. Hundreds of thousands have made the perilous journey to Europe by boat, but thousands have drowned on small and inadequate craft that capsize at sea. The most horrific image is that of four-year-old Aylan Kurdi.



Aylan Kurdi

**The travel ban.** Trump's travel ban in January, subsequently revised in March, specifically forbids entry of Syrian refugees.

On August 30, constitutional law professor Anthony Winer will speak on "The Constitution and the Travel Ban," addressing legal issues currently being debated in U.S. courts (see event listing, back page).

**The disappeared.** The Syrian crisis is not only a tragedy of death and displacement; it is also the tragedy of the Syrian government's abduction, disappearance, and torture of thousands of civilians. On November 16, the film "Syria's Disappeared" will be screened at Mitchell Hamline; it includes documentary photographs, verified by the FBI, of the regime's brutality.

**Take a stand.** These crimes against humanity are happening on our watch. Contact your elected officials. Demand negotiation for safe zones, access to humanitarian aid, and entry for Syrian refugees to the US. We all believe we would have helped to save Anne Frank. This is our 21<sup>st</sup>- century moral moment. *Moruro conem fuem faciendum mo mordite risque acit vit;* Cat.



Photos of the Disappeared

# The Four Branches of Government

If you learned in sixth grade that we have three branches of government (the legislative, executive, and judicial branches), your teacher was wrong. There are four, and that fourth one is the most important: the people.



Since the election, Americans have stood up in remarkable ways.

- 44 states and Washington, D.C. refused to submit voter information to the Trump election commission.
- 51 lawsuits have been filed against the administration's 'Muslim travel ban.'
- 350 mayors representing 65.8 million Americans in 44 states will commit to the goals in the Paris Agreement on climate change, including the 10 largest US cities — New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, Phoenix, San Antonio, San Diego, Dallas, and San Jose — along with hundreds of additional cities, large and small, in both red and blue states. The mayors will align with the other 194 nations that adopted the accord.
- 9 attorneys general urge Congress to block Trump's ban of transgender people serving in the military, supported by 56 retired generals and admirals.

Human rights exist for us all. Now is the time to stand up. We are the fourth branch of government.

---

## Students Stand Up for Change

A student sent us a note. She wrote, "I want to say THANK YOU for another year of inspiration, friendship, and excitement!!! I wouldn't trade this program for anything in the world. I'm excited for where being an Upstander leads me." Paige had just finished three twelve-hour days at our annual Summer Institute for High School and College Students, a program that builds the next generation of human rights leaders.

The Institute focuses on genocides and atrocities in the past and those occurring today. But as we teach the students, "Knowledge is not power. Knowledge plus ACTION equals power."

The students learn – and learn to take action for advocacy and legislation. This year we addressed the challenges and vulnerabilities of children during violence. Our students pledged to protect and promote children's rights through supporting the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by every nation in the world except the US; ending child marriage, which claims more than 25,000 young people in the US every year; standing up for the Child Soldiers Prevention Act; and advocating for national and state rape kit reform, a policy to increase prosecutions of those who rape women and girls.

See photos and learn about the Institute at [worldwithoutgenocide.org/events-and-programs/sihs/summer-institute-2017](http://worldwithoutgenocide.org/events-and-programs/sihs/summer-institute-2017)



Summer Institute for High School and College Students, 2017

# Depoliticizing the Environment

by Christina Meyer

Five-year Summer Institute alumna and sophomore, Barnard College, New York

One of the most important lessons I have learned in my four years of working with World Without Genocide is that when it comes to activism, **be political, not partisan**. In today's political climate, issues that affect us all have become polarized. Unfortunately, one of the most pressing issues of our age—climate change—has become a liberal cause, leaving half of American voters apathetic to this pressing issue. Donald Trump's anti-environmental agenda could not have come at a worse time. We're reaching our deadline on stopping climate change. In order to save our planet, we need to reach peak fossil fuel consumption in the next three years and to be completely carbon-free in the next thirty.



Christina Meyer presenting to Liberty University students.

At first, I was doing environmental work at Columbia University in New York City; however, the president doesn't seem to be interested in listening to the concerns of New Yorkers. So I decided that my work would be more effective where Donald Trump was popular. I decided to bring my climate activism to Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia—the most conservative and largest Evangelical university in the US.

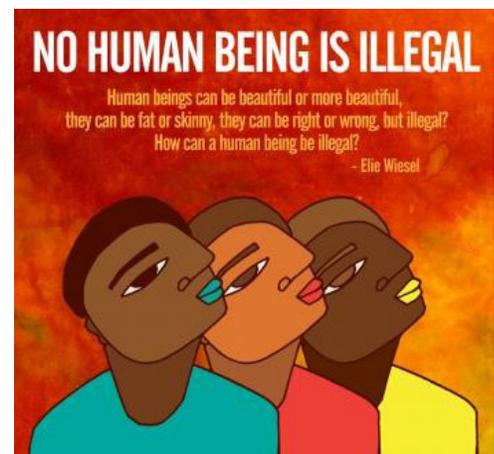
I spoke to students at Liberty University this spring about how environmentalism incorporates itself well into Evangelical Christian doctrine. I stressed the pro-environmental policies of Republican presidents in the past and illustrated how clean energy is good for the economy. The students had an amazing response to my lecture, and we had a wonderful discussion about the many ways they could make Liberty and the greater Lynchburg community greener. I'm currently working with several students from Liberty's Environmental Stewardship Club to make their university run on renewable energy. Working with students from across the political spectrum to solve this issue has been one of the highlights of my activism career.

---

## Sanctuary Today

A growing movement of nearly a thousand faith communities across the country are standing up to provide safety and security for immigrants at risk of federal deportation action. To learn more about this movement, visit [worldwithoutgenocide.org/advocacy/sanctuary](http://worldwithoutgenocide.org/advocacy/sanctuary). The site includes information about legal and other issues that congregations consider in decisions to participate and a PowerPoint presentation for group education.

Elie Wiesel, Holocaust survivor, reminds us that people are not illegal, nor are they aliens. People may be undocumented immigrants. Our language matters.



---

## LEARN MORE ABOUT WORLD WITHOUT GENOCIDE

Join our email list-serv at [www.worldwithoutgenocide.org](http://www.worldwithoutgenocide.org) and follow us:



# Change the Climate

People think that climate change can be stopped only by big efforts: switching to electric cars, wind power, etc. But every single one of us can make a difference – and if we all do a few of these simple things, the impact will be enormous.

- 1. Showers.** Refugees in a refugee camp get 20 liters of water a day. Period. That's for cooking, washing, bathing, everything. The average American uses 65 liters in a single shower. So get wet, turn off the water while you soap up, then turn the water on for a quick rinse. Don't waste our scarcest resource.
- 2. Straws.** Americans use 500 million straws every day, 182,500,000,000 every year. They wind up in the oceans, where they kill sea life and change marine ecosystems. Don't use a straw.
- 3. Plastic bags.** An estimated 12 million barrels of oil are used to make the 30 million plastic bags that Americans use each year, the equivalent amount to the supply in our Strategic Oil Reserve. This is a wasteful use of oil. But even worse is the buildup of plastic in the oceans. At least 100,000 marine animals die each year from suffocating on or ingesting plastic bags. And littered bags break up into pieces that enter our waterways. The toxins in these waste particles affect our food supply. And as the plastic breaks up, it releases greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. The worldwide consumption of plastic bags is nearly a trillion a year. Carry a reusable bag when you shop.
- 4. Food.** Diets that focus on meat from cows, sheep, and goats are major drivers of climate pollution. These grazing animals require a lot of pasture land that could be forested, soaking up carbon from the air. Give up meat, including chicken and turkey, a few days a week. Have a pet? Check with your vet and reduce meat in Fido's diet. Even some dinosaurs were plant-eaters.
- 5. Reduce, re-use, recycle.** These opportunities are pretty simple: use less stuff. Use it over again. And when you're through with it, recycle it.
- 6. Plant a tree.** If you have a yard, plant a tree. If you don't have a yard, donate a tree to be planted somewhere else. Watch it grow.
- 7. Travel differently.** Walk and bike more. Carpool. Use mass transit. Stay home.
- 8. Unplug.** We use electricity when we turn devices off but keep them plugged in.
- 9. Leftovers.** Bring your own containers when you go to a restaurant. The restaurant ones usually aren't recyclable.
- 10. Say no to the glass of water at a restaurant if you don't drink it.** It's that simple.



This sculpture in Tromso, Norway, the Tavaha Whale, is made of marine litter found in the nearby waters. 'Tavaha' in Norwegian means 'take care of the ocean.'



AT MITCHELL HAMLINE SCHOOL OF LAW

protect. prevent. prosecute. remember.

[www.worldwithoutgenocide.org](http://www.worldwithoutgenocide.org)

875 Summit Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105

## FALL 2017 PROGRAMS

- August 1-31** *Exhibit, Tracks in the Snow- Muslims in Minnesota (free)*
- Wednesday, August 30** *Talk, The Constitution and the Travel Ban\**
- Wednesday, September 13** *Film and Discussion, Rwanda: From Genocide to Transitional Justice\**
- Sunday, September 17** *Talk, Family Secrets and Stranger Scams: Protecting Elderly in our Community\**  
Edina Senior Center, 5280 Grandview Square, Edina, MN 55436
- Thursday, September 21** *Talk, The International Criminal Court\**  
Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church, 511 Groveland Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55403
- Thursday, October 12** *Talk, The FBI and the ACLU: Supporting Civil Rights and Voting Rights Today\**  
History Theatre, 30 10<sup>th</sup> Street East, St. Paul, MN 55101
- Tuesday, October 17** *Talk, Sexual Violence, Child Marriage, and Prosecutions\**
- Thursday, November 16** *Film, Syria's Disappeared: The Case Against Assad\**
- December, TBA** *After the Holocaust: Prosecutions, Forgiveness, and the Rise of Neo-Nazis\**

\*CLE credits. Events are held at Mitchell Hamline School of Law unless indicated.  
Fees apply for some events; check web listings at [www.worldwithoutgenocide.org](http://www.worldwithoutgenocide.org)