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9 War Photographers and Their Images That Moved Millions

By: [Sarah Gleim](#) | Updated: May 31, 2022



A U.S. Army soldier from the 14th Infantry points a submachine gun at photographer Dickey Chapelle, who is behind the camera. The photo was taken while she was in Panama during World War II. DICKEY CHAPELLE/WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In the month since Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered his troops to [invade Ukraine](#), the world has watched the horrors unfold live on television and social media. The images have been graphic and shocking, demonstrating the absolute worst of humanity.

But the pictures have shown another side of war, too. There are the images of brave Ukrainians staying behind to fight for their country. And photos of the women and children who have trekked miles into the arms of myriad volunteers waiting to clothe, feed and house them. These photos highlight the absolute **best of humanity**.

Both sides of this story are being photographed by men and women simply doing their jobs — war photographers and correspondents. They're bravely documenting the injustices of war, just as these nine photographers did before them, starting with one man who is considered the father of photojournalism for how he documented the U.S. Civil War.

Editor's note: The images that follow were taken during wartime and may be too graphic for some readers. In addition, in deference to the photographer's vision, HowStuffWorks did not crop the photos that follow to our usual site dimensions.

Mathew Brady (1822-1896)



This scene, photographed by Mathew Brady during the U.S. Civil War, shows a deserted camp and wounded soldier, circa 1865. MATHEW BRADY/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

Mathew Brady was a well-established photographer **before the Civil War**, but he's considered the first photographer to completely document a war with photos. **President Abraham Lincoln**, who Brady photographed on numerous occasions, gave him permission to shoot the war in 1861. Brady sent a staff of as many as 20 photographers out on the battlefields under his direction. The photos these men sent back, including many of **dead American soldiers** on the battlefield of Antietam, had a major impact on how people viewed the Civil War. Today Brady's images are part of the National Archives.

Ernest Brooks (1876-1957)



Ernest Brooks became known for his striking silhouetted photos, including this one taken during the World War I Battle of Broodseinde in 1917 near Ypres in Belgium. It shows a group of soldiers from the 8th East Yorkshire Regiment moving up to the front, silhouetted against the skyline. **ROBERT ERNEST/NATIONAL LIBRARY OF SCOTLAND**

Ernest Brooks enlisted in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve after World War I broke out. He initially began photographing the preparations for the Gallipoli military campaign, but was soon appointed as the first official British war photographer. Brooks received the

honorary rank of Second Lieutenant and was sent to photograph the Western Front in 1916.

Many of his images are more technically proficient and posed than candid. And his most famous shots are those where he used silhouettes to maximize drama and illustrate the anonymity of the war. London's Imperial War Museum and the [National Library of Scotland](#) house many of his images today.

Margaret Bourke-White (1904-1971)



A Polish concentration camp survivor weeps near the charred corpse of a friend at the Leipzig-Thekla subcamp of Buchenwald in 1945. The Nazi SS guards set fire to barracks No. 5 there with approximately 300 prisoners locked inside just before the army's 69th Infantry Division liberated the camp. MARGARET BOURKE-WHITE/GETTY IMAGES

Margaret Bourke-White had [many firsts](#) in her career as a war correspondent. She was the first foreign photographer to take pictures of industry in the Soviet Union in the late 1920s. She was one of the first four photographers hired by Life magazine in the mid-1930s. She also took extensive photographs of the Depression and the [Dust Bowl](#), but when World War II broke out, Bourke-White headed to Europe. There she was the only

Western photographer to capture images of Germany invading Moscow in 1941, and to fly alongside crews on bombing missions in 1942. But her harrowing images of the liberation of German concentration camps still leave an indelible impact on everyone who sees them.

Robert Capa (1913-1954)



Robert Capa was the only photographer to land on Omaha Beach with U.S. troops during the D-Day invasion. Only eight images from the landing were salvageable. ROBERT CAPA©/INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY/MAGNUM PHOTOS

It's hard to state in a few words the impact Robert Capa had on war photography. His most famous photo, "[Death of a Loyalist Soldier](#)" from 1936, earned him the label "the greatest war photographer in the world" by the British magazine *Picture Post* when he was just 25. The photo, taken at the beginning of the Spanish Civil War, shows the exact second a bullet hits a soldier.

The extraordinary photos he took while storming Omaha Beach alongside American soldiers during the D-Day invasion June 6, 1944, are iconic. Capa was the only photographer to accompany U.S. forces on that first wave, and his images serve as a

historic record of the Allied invasion of German-occupied France. You can read Capa's description of that day [in his own words here](#).

Dickey Chapelle (1918-1965)



Dickey Chapelle photographed Vietnam while embedded with the U.S. Marines. She was killed by a landmine while on patrol, making her the first war correspondent to die in the Vietnam War. [DICKEY CHAPELLE/WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY](#)

[Dickey Chapelle](#) grew up in Wisconsin and her goal was to be a reporter and photographer — which she became. During World War II, women weren't allowed in combat zones, but that didn't stop Chapelle. On assignment for her first major magazine in the Pacific Theater, she convinced soldiers to take her to the front lines at Okinawa, where she photographed some of the last battles there. Chapelle continued to travel extensively across the Middle East and India photographing communist rebel groups in Algeria and Hungary. She was in Cuba when Fidel Castro took over Havana. She was embedded with the Marines in Lebanon and again extensively during Vietnam.

Always eager to get the shot, she was the first female to get Pentagon approval to parachute with troops in Vietnam. It was there, in 1965 that Chapelle was killed by a

landmine while patrolling, making her the first war correspondent killed in the Vietnam War. In 2016, Marine Commandant Gen. Robert Neller gave Chapelle the title of **honorary Marine**. Today more than 40,000 of her images and letters are housed in the **Wisconsin Historical Society**.



Chapelle's haunting images show the horrors of war from all sides. Here, two Viet Cong prisoners are seen peering through a window covered in barbed wire in a structure built of bamboo and grass.

DICKEY CHAPELLE/WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Kevin Carter (1960-1994)



Kevin Carter worked tirelessly to photograph the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa in the 1990s. Here he photographed members of the African National Congress (ANC) who had staged an attack during a funeral for a member of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). KEVIN CARTER/SYGMA/SYGMA VIA GETTY IMAGES

South African photographer Kevin Carter was one of four members of the "[Bang Bang Club](#)," a group of photojournalists — Carter, Greg Marinovich, Ken Oosterbroek and João Silva — who earned fame capturing the violence as South Africa transitioned from apartheid between 1990 and 1994. Carter was also the first to photograph a public execution of a Black South African woman in 1980 by anti-apartheid groups.

But it's his haunting image of a young Sudanese child for which Carter will forever be remembered. He was in Sudan photographing the humanitarian crisis and famine caused by civil war ravaging the country. It's of a young, starving child who collapsed while on the way to a feeding center. Behind the child is a vulture that appears to be stalking them. The photo [won him the Pulitzer Prize](#). Just three months after the image was published — and a week after he received the Pulitzer — Carter committed suicide. The photo remains an unforgettable image of famine and war.

Catherine Leroy (1944-2006)



Catherine Leroy's moving image of U.S. Marine Vernon Wike grieving over his fallen comrade on Battle of Hill 881, is one of her most famous. Forty years later, she photographed Wike again in his home in Colorado. It was her last assignment before she died of cancer in 2006. ©DOTATION CATHERINE LEROY

Like Dickey Chapelle, Catherine Leroy was a [daring war photographer](#) in Vietnam; the two were the only female photographers during the Vietnam War. Leroy dedicated most of her time to capturing images of men in combat, living and patrolling with U.S. Marines for the three years she spent as a freelance photographer there. She was accredited by The Associated Press and United Press International and quickly earned a reputation for her powerful images. Leroy also was an accomplished parachutist and made several jumps with the Marines, including one with the 173rd Airborne Brigade during [Operation Junction City](#), the only major parachute assault of the war. The North Vietnamese forces held her prisoner during the Têt Offensive and she was seriously wounded in 1968. After the fall of Saigon in 1975, Leroy continued to photograph world conflicts, including civil war in Lebanon and the siege of West Beirut by Israel in 1982.



During her career, Catherine Leroy won numerous awards for her photography, including the George Polk Award, the Robert Capa Gold Medal and the Picture of the Year prize from the National Press Photographers Association.

©DOTATION CATHERINE LEROY

Philip Jones Griffith (1936-2008)



This image from 1980 by Philip Jones Griffith shows a West Somalia Liberation Front fighter in Somalia likely high from consuming 'khat,' a leaf containing an amphetamine-like substance. To compensate for food shortages, the soldiers ate large quantities of khat, which made them undisciplined and easy targets for the enemy. PHILIP JONES GRIFFITH@INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY/MAGNUM PHOTOS

After studying pharmacy in Liverpool, Welshman Philip Jones Griffith became a full-time freelance photographer in 1961. He first covered the Algerian War and then Central Africa where he moved on to Vietnam. He spent five years there photographing the war in the jungle. But his job took him to more than 120 countries during his life; he documented conflict in regions including North and Central Africa, Israel, Cambodia and Iraq. He is perhaps best-known for his book "[Vietnam Inc.](#)" First published in 1971, the book not only depicts the fighting, violence and destruction of that war, but also everyday life during Vietnam. The images helped turn the public's opinion of the Vietnam War, and essentially helped end it altogether.

Chris Hondros (1970-2011)



Chris Hondros' image of Samar Hassan, 5, shows how fast things can go wrong during war. Hassan is screaming and covered in blood after her parents were killed by U.S. soldiers in a 2005 shooting in Tal Afar,

Iraq. The troops fired on the Hassan family car when it unwittingly approached them during a dusk patrol in the tense northern Iraqi town. CHRIS HONDROS/GETTY IMAGES

Chris Hondros was an American war photographer who was twice a finalist for a Pulitzer Prize for his outstanding images. He was a staff photographer for Getty Images and photographed most of the world's major conflict zones of the late 1990s and early 2000s, including the attacks of Sept. 11, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the civil war in Liberia, and the Arab Spring in Egypt and Libya. His images were published on the front pages of The New York Times, The Washington Post and the Los Angeles Times. Hondros was killed in 2011 alongside fellow photojournalist Tim Hetherington while they were covering the uprising against Moammar Gadhafi in Libya.

While photography has certainly changed since the first images were captured in the 1800s, the photographers who use the medium to shine light on the atrocities of war have not. These men and women who brave the ravages of war, armed only with a camera, are still fearless and stoic, and today they are more essential to disseminating the true stories of war than ever.

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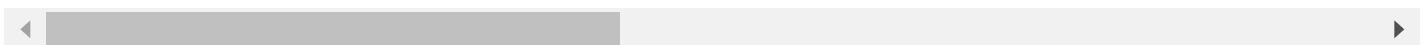
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