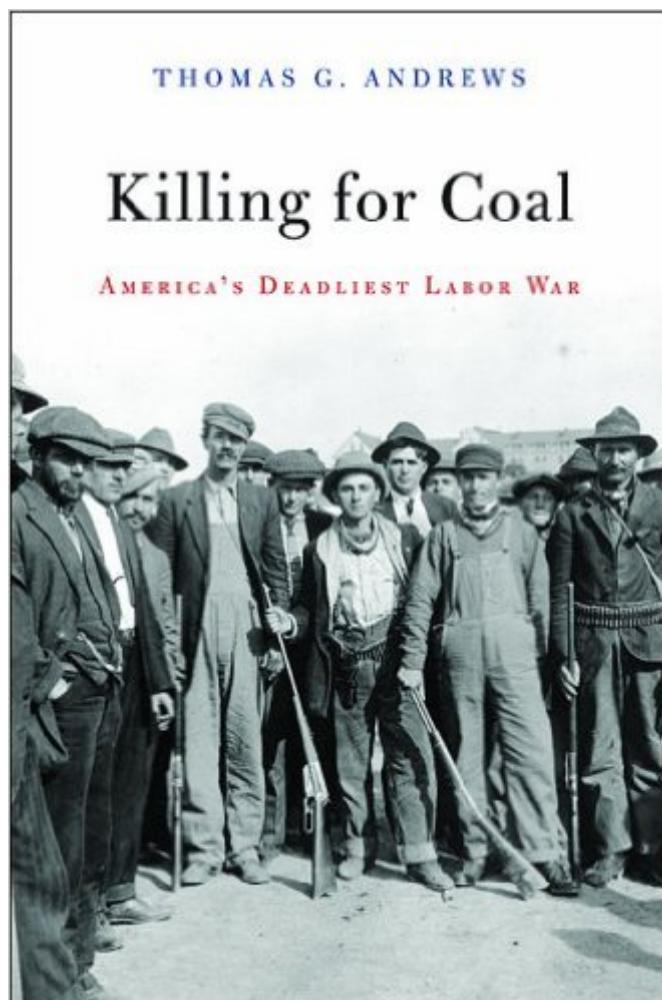


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Killing For Coal: America's Deadliest Labor War



Synopsis

On a spring morning in 1914, in the stark foothills of southern Colorado, members of the United Mine Workers of America clashed with guards employed by the Rockefeller family, and a state militia beholden to Colorado's industrial barons. When the dust settled, nineteen men, women, and children among the miners' families lay dead. The strikers had killed at least thirty men, destroyed six mines, and laid waste to two company towns. *Killing for Coal* offers a bold and original perspective on the 1914 Ludlow Massacre and the "Great Coalfield War." In a sweeping story of transformation that begins in the coal beds and culminates with the deadliest strike in American history, Thomas Andrews illuminates the causes and consequences of the militancy that erupted in colliers' strikes over the course of nearly half a century. He reveals a complex world shaped by the connected forces of land, labor, corporate industrialization, and workers' resistance. Brilliantly conceived and written, this book takes the organic world as its starting point. The resulting elucidation of the coalfield wars goes far beyond traditional labor history. Considering issues of social and environmental justice in the context of an economy dependent on fossil fuel, Andrews makes a powerful case for rethinking the relationships that unite and divide workers, consumers, capitalists, and the natural world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Most "massacre" sites in the Great Plains are from the campaigns to remove the Indians. One exception is the Ludlow Massacre site, just off I-25 between the Colorado cities of Trinidad and

Pueblo, snug against the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. There, the "massacre" occurred during a labor war -- "America's Deadliest Labor War" -- between coal miners and coal mine operators (of which the largest was owned by the Rockefellers). Ludlow was a tent city erected by the United Mine Workers union to house miners and their families after they had been evicted from company towns for going out on strike. On April 20, 1914, Colorado National Guardsmen (most of whom had only recently been guards for the mining companies) surrounded the Ludlow tent city. There is no consensus about what started the shooting, but by day's end there were nineteen dead -- one militiaman and eighteen coal miners and family members, including two women and eleven children. That touched off a ten-day "war", in which miners went on a destructive rampage, killing and attacking mines and company towns. The fighting stopped when President Wilson sent in Federal troops. The strike itself ended when the UMW ran out of money. All told, from the beginning of the strike in September 1913 to its end in December 1914, the death toll was between seventy-five and one hundred. **KILLING FOR COAL** starts and concludes with the Ludlow Massacre. In between, the book is about coal and coal mining in Colorado and about the larger conflict between labor and capital. It aims to be an environmental history and an industrial history. It aims to explore the natural world and the social, technological, and economic forces that combined to bring about the Colorado Coal War that culminated in the Ludlow Massacre.

I had no prior knowledge of Coal Mining in Colorado. Other than the wanton slaughter of Native Americans, the destruction of their culture and the merciless slaughter of the American Bison and the incipient Gold rush damages, I had no idea of the Coal and Labor issues in the West. This book, is a treasure for someone interested in the Coal Mining industry. If the reader is interested in Big Labor, child labor and the laws and the overall destruction of a country through Industrialization, then this is a must read. I have only read the 1st chapter and I am hooked. The book is easy to read of course, but the topic is very difficult. The terrible destruction brought about by the Coal Industry and the super wealthy owners is yet another example of greed and avarice, at the expense of everyone else. I think that this book is well written, and insightful. It is a shame that our ancestors never considered anything else but making money. Anything in the way of "progress", during the turn of the century was easily and quickly explained away. The destruction of an entire culture, the eradication of countless species of animals, 3.7 billion Passenger Pigeons shot in the open skies and child labor. American Bison shot and left to die on the American Plains. These practices continue today, the Mining Industry continues, mostly unchecked destroying the lives of others and countless examples exist of the environmental damage that is caused by this industry, in the name

of progress. In the first few pages of this book, a young child is shot down during a Coal Strike, mules are burned alive by an angry mob, dogs are also shot during a riot. The awful things that people will do when they are driven to their worst.

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