

History 350: The First World War and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Europe

Fall 2013

Monday and Wednesday, 2:30-3:45
Brogden Psychology Building, Room 121

Prof. Daniel Ussishkin
5112 Mosse Humanities Building
Phone: (608) 263 1839
Email: ussishkin@wisc.edu
Office hours: Tuesday, 1-3

The Great War has been linked to nearly every social, cultural, and political transformation that marked the short century that followed: mobilization and the experience of total war transformed the relations between governments and citizens, between men and women, and between social classes. Europeans experienced death on an unprecedented scale and came to terms with new forms of industrialized warfare, from the use of poison gas to modern practices of genocide. Europeans now learned to live with violence, both during as well as after the war, and found new ways to mourn or remember the dead.

This course will try to situate the upheaval of 1914-1918 within the larger framework of twentieth-century European history. Using a wide variety of sources – memoirs, essays, poems, literary and cinematic representations, among others – we will try to understand how historians have approached the cultural and political history of the war, and the problem of the relation between war and social transformation more broadly.

Required Texts:

Books: The following books are available at the bookstore. Cheap used copies are easily found online (any edition is fine). Copies of the books have been placed in the College Library course reserve.

Pat Barker, *Regeneration* (1993)

Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth* (1933)

Robert Graves, *Goodbye to all that* (1929)

Joe Lunn, *Memoirs of a Maelstrom: A Senegalese Oral History of the First World War* (Portsmouth, NH, 1999).

Course packet: A course packet is available at the Copy Center, 1650 Humanities. The relevant readings are marked by an '*' on the schedule of lectures below.

Online sources –marked by a '-' on the schedule below (go to Learn@UW→ Materials → Content, or to the hyperlinks on the electronic version of the syllabus).

Requirements:

The course consists of both lectures and discussions. The success of both depends on your active participation. Read the assigned pages **before** class and bring them with you. You are required to attend all lectures.

Papers: There are 4 papers of varying lengths (between 4-7 pp., 12 font, double space), due on weeks V, VIII, XII, and XV. All papers are based on sources discussed in class.

Group research project: Each group (3-4 students) will be required to conduct research on any topic related to the course and present their findings in class on week XIV. You will also be required to hand in a separate source list. Further information regarding this assignment will be given in class.

Grade structure:

Paper 1:	15%
Papers 2,3,4:	60% (20% each)
Group research project:	15%
Attendance and participation:	10%

Please note that active, constant, and collegial participation will be rewarded!

Schedule of Lectures

Week I *Total War and the Twentieth Century*

09/04 *Introduction and course mechanics*

Week II *"The Lamps Are Going Out"*

09/09 *Europe in 1914*

Read:

*Michael Howard, *The First World War* (Oxford, 2002), chapters 1-2, "Europe in 1914" and "The Coming of War," pp. 1-26.

09/11 *The Guns of August*

Week III *Nations in Arms*

09/16 *The "Spirit of 1914"*

Read:

*Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday* (1942), chapter 9, "The First Hours of the War of 1914," pp. 214-237.

*Filippo Marinetti, "The War as the Catharsis of Italian Society" (November 1914)

*BLAST: The Manifesto of Vorticism (July 1914).

09/18 *Propaganda and the Historian*

Read:

*Nicoletta Gullace, *The Blood of our Sons: Men, Women, and the Renegotiation of British Citizenship during the Great War* (New York, 2004), chapter 1, "The Rape of Belgium and Wartime Imagination," 17-33.

[-The Bryce Committee Report on German Atrocities, Part II \(b\): "Treatment of Women and Children"](#).

Week IV ***Mobilizing for Total War***

09/23 *Women and Men*

Read:

Book: Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth* (at least up to page 289. You will need to finish the entire book during the semester – we will discuss it again on 11/13).

*Review the chapter from Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*.

09/25 *Workers of the World*

Week V ***Industrialized Warfare***

09/30 *"Humanity is Mad"*

Read:

*War Poems: Siegfried Sassoon, "The Attack;" Wilfred Owen, "Dulce et Decorum Est" and "Mental Cases."

10/02 *Technology as Culture*

Read:

*Ernst Jünger on the pilots, from *Copse 125* (1930).

***** First Paper Due 10/02*****

Week VI ***The Politics of Resistance***
10/07 History Through Film: Stanley Kubrik's *Paths of Glory* (1957).

10/09 History Through Literature: *The Politics of Resistance*

Read:

Book: Elaine Showalter, *Regeneration* (entire).

-[Peter Taylor Whiffen on the "Shot at Dawn" campaign.](#)

Week VII ***Home Fronts***
10/14 *The Politics of Everyday Life*

Read:

*Belinda Davis, "Home Front: Food, Politics, and Women's Everyday Life during the First World War," in *Home/Front: The Military, War, and Gender in Twentieth-Century Germany*, 115-138 (2002), 115-138

10/16 The New Ecology of Production

Read:

*Roger Chickering, *Imperial Germany and the Great War, 1914-1918* (Cambridge, 1998), 32-40. **OR**

*Peter Gatrell, *Russia's First World War: Social and Economic History* (London, 2005), 113-124.

Week VIII ***Nationhood and Citizenship***
10/23 *War and Suffrage*

Read:

- Read about the [Suffragette \(later Britannia\)](#), the newspaper of the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU).

***** Second Paper Due 10/23*****

10/21 "A Terrible Beauty Is Born"

Read:

*Ken Inglis, "The Australians at Gallipoli," part I, *Historical Studies* (Australia), vol. 14 no. 54 (1970), pp. 219-230.

*"Pride in the Anzacs at Gallipoli," excerpts from an article in *Argus* (1915).

*Proclamation of the Irish Republic (1916)

Week IX ***Forgotten Victims?***

10/28 The Civilian's War: Occupation, Displacement, and Genocide

10/30 The Experience in the Colonies

Read:

Book: Joe Lunn, *Memoirs of a Maelstrom: A Senegalese Oral History of the First World War* (Introduction, chapters 1,2,3,5,6,7, Conclusion).

Week X ***A New World Order?***

11/04 *The Great War for Empire*

11/06 *Russia's War and Revolution* (Guest Lecture by Professor David McDonald)

Read:

*Orlando Figes and Boris Kolonitskii, *Interpreting the Russian Revolution: The Language and Symbols of 1917* (New Haven, CT, 1999), from chapter 1, "The Desacralization of the Monarchy: Rumours and the Downfall of the Romanovs," pp. 9-23.

*Reports on the condition of the troops (1917).

*Lenin's April Theses (1917).

*Order N. 1 (1917).

Week XI ***The Politics of Memory***

11/11 Death and Commemoration

11/13 Writing on the Great War

Read:

Book: Robert Graves, *Good Bye to All That* (entire).

*Review Brittain, *Testament*.

Week XII ***The Search for Stability***

11/18 Women and Men (Again)

Read:

-Mary Louise Roberts, "Samson and Delilah Revisited: the Politics of Women's Fashion in 1920s France," *American Historical Review* 98:3 (1987): 657-684. [JSTOR]

11/20 Unfulfilled Promises

***** Third Paper Due 11/20*****

Week XIII *Towards Another Armageddon?*

11/25 The Politics of Discontent

Read:

*SDP appeal for a general strike, 1920

*Hindenburg on the "Stab in the Back," 1918

11/27 *J'Accuse!*

Thanksgiving Holiday

Week XIV

12/02 Presentations of group projects

12/04 Presentations of group projects

Week XV *Great Illusions?*

12/09 History Through Film: Jean Renoir's *La Grande Illusion* (1937)

12/11 Course Conclusions

***** Fourth Paper Due 12/11 *****