

HIS 100-03, Fall 2016
MWF 10:00-10:50, JRC 209

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Fall office hours: Mon 2-4; Tues 2-4; Thurs 1:30-3; and by appointment

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Office hours & location TBA

The current centenaries of the Great War (1914-18) offer a timely opportunity to investigate its role in the making of the modern era. The war certainly marked a dramatic transition in Europeans' relationship with one another and the rest of the world. Yet to what extent did the war constitute a watershed moment, and to what extent did it accelerate processes which were already underway? Were the instabilities of the interwar period the direct result of the war, or of unforeseen developments in its aftermath? Did people address the trauma of war by looking forward or looking backward? Taking such questions of causality and consequence as our starting point, this course will evaluate the impact of the war in a series of social, political, economic, and cultural contexts. After introductory units on historical methodology and the war itself, we will investigate some of the myriad ways in which European citizens and subjects attempted to reconstruct, reinvent, and make sense of "a world undone." Each of these units will introduce different kinds of primary sources, methods of interpreting them, and scholarly practices of history. Students will also learn to become practicing historians themselves (and, hopefully, to fall in love with the process of doing history!).

Course objectives

Students in this class will learn how to:

- read and critically analyze primary sources
- read and critically analyze secondary sources
- research, synthesize, and critically evaluate a body of primary sources in an archive
- research, synthesize, and critically evaluate a body of secondary historical literature

They will engage with:

- history as a craft and a discipline
- a diversity of methods, approaches, and narratives about the past

They will develop:

- Their skills of analytical, argumentative writing
- Their skills of oral communication and dialogue

office (Health Services or Student Affairs). Note: The college requires that ALL coursework be submitted by 5:00 on the Friday of exam week unless you are taking an incomplete in the class. Work turned in after that time will not be considered.

Policy on electronic devices:

I ask that you refrain from using all electronic devices in class (including phones, laptops, and tablets) unless you have been given explicit permission to do so, e.g. for purposes of accommodation. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns about this policy.

Disabilities

Grinnell College makes reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Students need to provide documentation to the Coordinator for Disability Resources, Autumn Wilke, located on the 3rd floor of the Rosenfield Center (x3702) and discuss your needs with her. Students should then speak with me as early as possible in the semester we can discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course and coordinate your accommodations.

Religious observation

Grinnell College offers alternative options to complete academic work for students who observe religious holy days. Please contact me within the first three weeks of the semester if you would like to discuss a specific instance that applies to you.

Course texts

The following texts are required and can be purchased at the college bookstore. They are also available on reserve in Burling.

John H. Arnold, *History: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford)

Frank McDonough, *Origins of the First and Second World Wars* (Cambridge)

E. M. Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (Ballantine/Random House)

Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* (Fi)

*Course meetings and assignments*The Craft of History (I)

Fri, Aug 26

Letter from a German prison camp (Pweb)

Mon, Aug 29 True stories, over time

John Arnold, *History: A Very Short Introduction*, chapters 1-3

Wed, Aug 31: Sources and methods

Arnold, chap 4

McDonough, *Origins of First and Second World Wars*, chap 1

Fri, Sept 2: Telling tr2. ~~A~~

Fri, Sept 16: From modernism to traditionalism

Caleb McDaniel, "How to Read for History": <http://wcm1.web.rice.edu/howtoread.pdf>

Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning* introduction (pp 1-11)

Mon, Sept 19: The search for solace

Wed, Oct 12: Debating the origins of WWII
McDonough 5

Fri, Oct 14: TBA

Wed, Nov 9: Writing mentor office hours

Fri, Nov 11: No class