History 75700
THE FIRST WORLD WAR: CAUSES AND UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

DRAFT SYLLABUS
(subject to modifications)

SANDI E COOPER

SANDI.COOPER@CSI.CUNY.EDU
office: 5102

Wed. 6:30-8:30 pm

Overview:

2014 is the centennial of the outbreak of “the Great War” – a war which survivors, scholars and most most military specialists assess as a monumental mistake. Indeed, several of those who launched it suspected an ominous outcome for their own interests. Possibly more ink has been spilled on the July, 1914 decisions and their aftermath than any other historical watershed.

This class will explore selected issues: peace campaigns aimed at prevention and cessation; analyses of responsibility for 1914; the unprecedented violence on the battlefield and in occupied areas; its impact on socialist and feminist movements; the invention of “total war.”

Its (unintended) consequences has been called the whole 20th century – from the Russian Revolution, to global anti imperial outbreaks; from the reconfiguration of the Middle East to the foundations of U.S. global power; the appearance of fascisms and the roots of the Cold War.

Recommended purchases:


Vera Brittain, Testament of Youth

Recommended to buy: Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau & Annette Becker, 14-18: Understanding the Great War (Hill and Wang 2002 for English translation) esp Introduction, ch 1, chap 2

Course requirements:

Weekly discussions of readings led by a rapporteur. The extensive lists of books under the weekly topics provide a range of choices, NOT a weekly reading requirement for everyone. Everyone is expected to contribute each week.

As far as possible, readings will be posted on Blackboard or from books on reserve.

Written work:

You have a choice of a research paper for the semester or two shorter papers – depending on your interests and future plans. Those selecting the shorter papers will be given questions of a general nature. Students who chose a research paper will provide an outline and bibliography by the middle of October.
Week:
#1. Introduction – review of readings, assignments, overview of the issues. Consider how people who are living about 5 generations away from this so-called “Great War” can think about its historical impact.

2. Peace campaigns: Anticipating a Progressive Future or Catastropic Warfare

   General background: Sandi E. Cooper, *Patriotic Pacifism: Waging War on War 1815-1914* (1991) ch 3, 6, 7, 8;


Selected pre 1914 authors:
   Speech of Bertha von Suttner on receiving the Nobel Prize – 1905
   Google: Nobel Peace Prize Speeches, Bertha von Suttner)

   __ Ivan Bliokh (Jean de Bloch), *The Future of War in its Technical, Economic and Political Relations* (Garland reprint: 1971 of Boston 1902 translation by R C Lang including a conversation to Edwin Mead and W T Stead) (available in NYPL and in one or two CUNY libraries)


   __ Gugliemo Ferrero *Militarism* (Garland reprint, 1971, orig. 1902)

   __ David Starr Jordan *The Human Harvest: A study of the Decay of Races through the Survival of the Unfit* (Garland reprint, 1971; orig. 1907)


3. & 4. The Summer of the Crisis and its Origins

   Required: Report presented to the Preliminary Peace Conference, (1919) “Commission on War Guilt” – German responsibility for the war (On line)


Consult documentary archive on the internet – W W I Archive – Links to other W W I Sites, wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Links_to_Other_WWI_Sites – the July crisis

Select:

Annika Mombauer *The Origins of the First World War* (Longmans, 2002) – discussion of the 75 year controversy  Highly recommended  Library


Fritz Fischer *Germany’s Aims in the First World War* (1961)  Selections: Introduction and Part I (Blackboard)

New Works

Max Hastings, *Catastrophe 1914: Europe Goes to War* (N.Y.: Knopf, 1p13)


5 & 6. The New Nature of Warfare: Violence, Rape, Mutilation and War against Civilians


Judith Wishnia “Natalism and Nationalism in World War I” (English typescript of French article) And

“Forced Labor of Women in World War I: The “Rafles” of 1916" (English typescript) (Blackboard)


Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men’s Bodies, Britain and the Great War* (Chicago, 1996) (Library reserve)


[Background on German and British pre-1914 modes of warfare:

Isabel Hull, *Absolute Destruction: Military Culture and the Practices of War in Imperial Germany* (Cornell, 2005)


Literary representations

Henri Barbusse  *Under Fire* (1917) e book available

Ernst Junger  *Storm of Steel* (new translation 2004: orig. 1920)

Georges Duhamel *Civilization 1914-1917* (1919)
7 & 8  The War and Women

Vera Brittain *Testament of Youth* parts 1 and 2


Margaret Darrow, *French Women and the First World War: War Stories* (Berg, 2000) (Reserve)


Claire M Tylee, *The Great War and Women’s Consciousness* (U of Iowa, 1990) (Reserve)


Jo Vellacott, *Pacifists, Patriots and the Vote: The Erosion of Democratic Suffragism in Britain During the First World War* (N. Y., Palgrave, 2007) (Reserve)


Women’s Peace Efforts: The Hague Conference of 1915 – minutes (NYPL)

Anon., *Militarism and Feminism* (1915) Google the title


Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker, *14-18* ch. 8 and 9

Paul Fussell *The Great War and Modern Memory* selections Blackboard

Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* ch 3,4,7,9  Blackboard

Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* ch 1,4  (Blackboard)


Post War Novels (partial list)

Ernst Jünger *Storm of Steel*

Erich Maria Remarque *All Quiet on the Western Front*

Helen Zenna Smith *Not So Quiet*

Irene Rathbone *We That Were Young*

Robert Graves, *Good Bye to All That*

Major Films (partial)

Abel Gance *J’Accuse*

Maxwell Anderson, *All Quiet on the Western Front*

King Vidor, *The Big Parade*

11-12-13 Global Repercussions and the Victor’s Peace

Margaret Macmillan, *Paris, 1919*

to be developed – examples: prelude to the Cold War; creation of the modern Middle East; colonial risings in China, Indochina, Africa; Emergence of the U S as a world power

14. Week to cover the issue of political consequences Efforts to establish world order