

HIST 4400 – Age of the World Wars – Spring 2011

LeConte 341, 2:30-3:20, MWF

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Office Hours: TBA

Typically, when one thinks of the World Wars he or she considers such iconic images as trenches, tanks, kamikazes, and atom bombs. In this course, we will frequently discuss these and other aspects of the battlefield. At the same time, the World Wars hold no meaning without a clear understanding of the societies and cultures of those who fought them. Soldiers and sailors in both wars carried their society's ideologies, values, prejudices, and assumptions into battle. This extra baggage is just as (if not more) significant to the age as the soldiers' rifles and ammunition.

Through lectures, discussions, readings, films, papers, and exams, we will address these fundamental questions (among others): How did the Great Powers' experience with imperialism impact their views of warfare and, perhaps more importantly, each other before, during, and after each global conflict? What impact did the different cultures of the Great Powers have on how they waged war? Conversely, what impact did the wars have on their cultures and assumptions about their place in the world? Are the two World Wars separate conflicts? Or is the second merely a continuation of the first?

Disclaimer: This syllabus acts as a guide for the course and is not a binding contract between the instructor and the student. The instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus, including the course schedule (lectures, exams, and paper due dates), during the semester if timing and class performance deem it necessary.

Required Reading:

- Ernst Jünger, *The Storm of Steel* (1920)
- Robert Graves, *Goodbye to All That* (1929)
- Omer Bartov, *Hitler's Army: Soldiers, Nazis, and War in the Third Reich* (1992)
- John Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (1986)
- E.B. Sledge, *With the Old Breed: At Peleliu and Okinawa* (1981)
- For the rest of the readings for in-class discussions, go to http://www.libs.uga.edu/access_services/reserves.html and click "Search Course Reserves". Using the pull-down menus search for my name or the course title, then click "Search". Click on the assigned reading for the day and type in the password **trench** when instructed. You are required to bring the assigned reading to class in some form, either a hard copy or by accessing it on a laptop.

Recommended Reading:

- John H. Morrow, *The Great War: An Imperial History* (2004)
- Martin Gilbert, *The Second World War: A Complete History* (1989)

Assessment:

- Three 6-page papers on Jünger and Graves (due Feb.4), Bartov (due April 4), and Dower and Sledge (due May 2). Papers will be graded on argument, use of evidence, writing style, and grammar.

- Two 2-3 page writing assignments on films. In these short papers you will answer pre-prepared questions about each film (Jean Renoir's *The Grand Illusion* and Roman Polanski's *The Pianist*). Questions will be handed out on the day of the film's viewing.
- A late paper will cost you 1/2 of a letter grade on the assignment every *day* (not class meeting, but day) it is late. If the paper is not in my hands one week after the due date you will receive a zero. If you cannot be in class on the day the paper is due you can email the paper to me before the start of class (2:30) on the due date. However, the student must hand in a hard copy of the emailed paper within two class meetings of the due date or else late penalties will be assessed.
- Random reading quizzes. These will be given on random discussion days and are to ensure that you keep up on the weekly reading. They also will factor into your final participation grade. Missed quizzes cannot be made up, so attendance on discussion days is critical.
- Two exams consisting of short answer "identification" questions and one or more essays. If absent on a testing day you will need dated documentation in order to make up an exam. If you cannot provide documentation for an absence on an exam day, your exam grade will be assessed 1/2 letter grade penalty for every *day* between the scheduled exam date and when you take the make-up.
- Participation in classroom discussion is a significant portion of your grade. You'll be assessed on your performance and engagement during in-class discussions. You have to be present to participate.
- You need to be aware that as a non-tenure track faculty member I am not authorized to give any student an "Incomplete" for the semester.

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Students are responsible for making themselves aware of the University's policies on Academic Dishonesty contained in "A Culture of Honesty," which can be found at <http://www.uga.edu/honesty/index.html>. If I suspect a violation has occurred, I will refer the case to the appropriate University office and will request the stiffest penalty available.

Attendance and Class Etiquette

- I will take roll daily, but class attendance is not mandatory. I highly recommend that you do not miss class unless absolutely necessary. Your incentive to be here is that if you are not, you cannot participate. Class participation is a significant portion of your final grade (see below). In short, it is in your best interest to be disciplined and come to class daily.
- Because attendance is not mandatory, there is no such thing as an excused or unexcused absence. If you believe you will have to miss a significant portion of the class for medical or family reasons – or university-sanctioned activities or athletic events – see me as soon as possible and we will discuss if this class is a good fit for you.
- The two films will likely be scheduled outside of class time, most likely in the evening. I will make you aware of the film schedule as soon as possible. Because of the length of each film, we will not hold regular class on the class meeting following the viewing.
- Bringing the assigned reading to class on discussion days – accessed via a laptop or paper form, not your phone – is required. Failure to do bring the reading will result in a reduction of your participation grade.
- You will have an opportunity to participate on any given class day – not just the days designated for discussion on the class schedule.
- Poor classroom etiquette can adversely affect your participation grade. Cell phones and music players need to be turned off or set to vibrate during class.

- Text messaging in class is strictly forbidden. I will give you ONE warning. The next time will result in a 1/3 letter grade reduction in your FINAL GRADE for the course.

Course Grade Breakdown:

- Participation: 15%
- Film Papers: 10%
- Graves/Junger: 15%
- Bartov: 15%
- Dower/Sledge: 15%
- Exam #1: 15%
- Final Exam: 15%

Grading Scale

- 93-100 = A
- 90-92 = A-
- 87-89 = B+
- 83-86 = B
- 80-82 = B-
- 77-79 = C+
- 73-76 = C
- 70-72 = C-
- 60-69 = D
- Below 60 = F

Students with Disabilities: Those in need of accommodations due to a documented disability need to notify me as soon as possible so we can make all the necessary arrangements.

Course Schedule

WEEK I

Mon, Jan. 10: SNOW DAY!

Wed, Jan. 12: SNOW DAY!

Fri, Jan. 14: Syllabus and Introductions

WEEK II

Mon, Jan. 17: MLK DAY – NO CLASS

Wed, Jan. 19: The World at the Turn of the Century – The New Imperialism

Fri, Jan. 21: The Destruction of Peace – War Plans and the Crisis of 1914

WEEK III

Mon, Jan. 24: Opening Salvos – Trenches in the West, Movement in the East

Wed, Jan. 26: The European War Goes Global – Asia and Africa

Fri, Jan. 28: **Reading** – James K. Mathews, “Reluctant Allies: Nigerian Responses to Military Recruitment, 1914-1918” in Melvin E. Page (ed.) *Africa and the First World War* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1987), pp. 95-111 – Course Reserve

WEEK IV

Mon, Jan. 31: Empire and Genocide – The War in the Southern Europe and the Middle East

Wed, Feb. 2: European Bloodletting – Verdun, the Somme, and the Brusilov Offensive

Fri, Feb. 4: **Graves/Jünger Paper Due Date and Discussion**

WEEK V

Mon, Feb. 7: “Safe for Democracy” – The Naval War and American Intervention

Wed, Feb. 9: Total War and the European Home Fronts

Fri, Feb. 11: **Film** – *The Grand Illusion* (1937) – Showtime TBD, Run Time: 110 minutes

WEEK VI

Mon, Feb. 14: **FILM – NO CLASS**

Wed, Feb. 16: **Discussion Reading** – “A Food Dictatorship,” Chapter 6 from Belinda A. Davis, *Home Fires Burning: Food, Politics, and Everyday Life in World War I Berlin* (Chapel Hill: UNC, 2000), 114-136 – Course Reserve

Fri, Feb. 18: Entente Nears Collapse – Revolution, “Collective Indiscipline,” and Caporetto
Grand Illusion Paper Due

WEEK VII

Mon, Feb. 21: Germany’s Last Stand – From Offensive to Armistice

Wed, Feb. 23: Paris 1919 – A Peace to End All Peace?

Fri, Feb. 25: The Mourning After – The Western Front in European Culture

WEEK VIII

Mon, Feb. 28: Exam #1

Wed, Mar. 2: War Without End – Postwar Conflicts and Red Scares

Fri, Mar. 4: **Reading** – “The Politics of Symbols: From Content to Form,” Chapter 3 from Simonetta Falasca-Zamponi, *Fascist Spectacle: The Aesthetics of Power in Mussolini’s Italy* (Berkeley: University of California, 1997), pp. 89-118 – Course Reserve

WEEK IX

Mon, Mar. 7: The Price of Victory – France, Britain, and the U.S. in the Interwar Years

Wed, Mar. 9: Weimar Democracy and the Nazi Revolution in Germany

Fri, Mar. 11: **Reading** – “Spring Without End,” Chapter X from Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989), pp. 300-331 – Course Reserve; clip from *Triumph of the Will* (1935) – view in class

WEEK X

Mon, Mar. 14 – Mar. 18: SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS

WEEK XI

Mon, Mar. 21: Cult of Personality – Stalin’s Revolution in the Soviet Union

Wed, Mar. 23: The Rising Sun – Japan, China, and Race War in the Pacific

Fri, Mar. 25: **Reading** – “Six Weeks of Horror,” Chapter 4 from Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 1997), pp. 81-104 – Course Reserve

WEEK XII

Mon, Mar. 28: Road to War in Europe – Hitler Seeks Racial Empire, Allies Bide for Time

Wed, Mar. 30: Europe Gets Blitzkrieg Bopped and Britain Battles for Survival

Fri, Apr. 1: The Goths Ride East – The Nazi Invasion of the Soviet Union

WEEK XIII

Mon, Apr. 4: **Bartov Paper Due Date and Discussion**

Wed, Apr. 6: Pearl Harbor and Early Japanese Victories

Fri, Apr. 8: The Tide Turns in the Pacific – Midway and the Beginning of Island Hopping

WEEK XIV

Mon, Apr. 11: **Reading** – “Introduction: Sociology After the Holocaust,” Chapter 1 from Zygmunt Baumann, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithica, NY: Cornell, 1989), 1-30 – Course Reserve

Wed, Apr. 13: Churchill’s Soft Underbellies – North Africa, Italy, and the Balkans

Fri, Apr. 15: **Film** – *The Pianist* (2002) – Showtime TBD, Run Time: 150 minutes

WEEK XV

Mon, Apr. 18: FILM – NO CLASS

Wed, Apr. 20: Reading – “Bombing Civilian Populations: A Case of Moral Slippage,” Chapter 5 from Michael Bess, *Choices Under Fire: Moral Dimensions of World War II* (New York: Knopf, 2006), pp. 88-110 – Course Reserve

Fri, Apr. 22: The Noose Tightens – Japanese Setbacks in the South Pacific and China
The Pianist Paper Due

WEEK XVI

Mon, Apr. 25: “A Genius for Mass Production” – Industrial Capacity and War

Wed, Apr. 27: Götterdämmerung – Hitler’s Empire Falls, Iron Curtain Descends

Fri, Apr. 29: From Los Alamos to Tokyo Bay – Pacific War Ends, Atomic Age Begins

WEEK XVII

Mon, May 2: Dower/Sledge Paper Due and Discussion

FINAL EXAM: Wed, May 4, 3:30-6:30