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HSTA 333.01: American Military History - WWI and WWII

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The University of Montana

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*The lamps are going out all over Europe;
we shall not see them lit again in our lifetime.*

*Sir Edward Grey
British Foreign Secretary
August 3, 1914*

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
THE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**

**HSTA 333, Spring 2017
MWF 2-2:50 ISB 110**

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World Wars One and Two, 1914-1945

Course Syllabus

The period from 1914 to 1945 marks two great wars with a 20-year interval of peace. (Of course, all wars have causes and consequences; 1914-1945 thus encompasses the last half of the 19th and 20th centuries and all, so far, of the 21st). There is no general term for the period 1914-1945. Is it the “Second 30-Years’ War”? (But ’14 - ’45 = 31 years!) Are they the “German Wars?” (But what about Japan!) Is it “The Long War?” (The term usually includes the Cold War, 1945-1989). Your job this semester is to invent an independent but inclusive term for the period 1914-1945!

There are no useful textbooks for the period 1914-1945. Three recent books cover the period in Europe only, but they are almost exclusively political and economic, not military.

Ian Kershaw, *To Hell and Back: Europe, 1914-1949* (2015).
Heinrich August Winkler, *The Age of Catastrophe: A History of the West, 1914-1945* (2015).
Enzo Traverso, *Fire and Blood: The European Civil War, 1914-1945* (2016).

There are, however, several short histories of each of the World Wars:

James T. Stokesbury, *A Short History of World War I* (1981).
Norman Stone, *World War One* (2009).
Michael Howard, *The First World War: A Very Short Introduction* (2007).
James Stokesbury, *A Short History of World War II* (1982).
Michael J. Lyons, *World War II: A Short History* (5th ed., 2010).
Norman Stone, *World War Two: A Short History* (2012).
Gerhard L. Weinberg, *World War II: A Very Short Introduction* (2014).

I have placed three extensive Reading Lists on MOODLE reserve in the Mansfield Library for your summertime leisure reading.

Instead of a nonexistent textbook, I am assigning WIKIPEDIA, “The First World War,” and “The Second World War.”

Requirements include two short papers, based on the assigned readings:

Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1929).
George Wilson, *If You Survive: From Normandy to the Battle of the Bulge to the End of World War II. One American Officer’s Riveting True Story* (1987).
E. B. Sledge, *With the Old Breed at Peleliu and Okinawa* (1981).

I am interested in participant accounts of the wars—soldiers’ stories. There are many others, besides those required, which may be substituted:

The Great War

Sigfried Sassoon, *Memoirs of an Infantry Officer* (1930).
Robert Graves, *Goodby to All That* (1929).
Ernst Junger, *Storm of Steel* (1920).
William March, *Company K* (1933).

World War Two, European Theater

Audie Murphy, *To Hell and Back* (1949).
Bob Dole, *One Soldier's Story: A Memoir* (2005).
Raymond Gantter, *Roll Me Over: An Infantryman's World War II* (1997).
Grace Porter Miller, *Call of Duty: A Montana Girl in World War II* (1999).

World War Two, Pacific Theater

Robert Leckie, *Helmet for My Pillow: From Paris Island to the Pacific* (1957).
William Manchester, *Goodbye Darkness: A Memoir of the Pacific War* (1979).
John Masters, *The Road Past Mandalay* (1961).
Martin J. Kidstron, *From Poplar to Papua: Montana's 163rd Infantry Regiment in World War II* (2004).

Grading

Attendance. A sign-up sheet will be handed out each day—it's your responsibility to autograph it.	5%
Great War Quiz. First ten minutes of Class, Friday February 24, 2017.	5%
Short (5-page) papers, on Remarque and Wilson, at 30% each	60%
Final Examination to be handed out on Friday, May 5. Due Wednesday, May 10. Will include a question on Sledge.	30%

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENTS

M, Jan 23	Introduction: The Two World Wars.
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THE GREAT WAR, 1914-1919

Read: WIKIPEDIA, World War I
Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*

W, Jan 25 – F, Jan 27	Sarajevo to the Schlieffen Plan, 1914. Origins, Causes, the July Crisis, To Arms!
M, Jan 30 – W, Feb 1	Attrition: The Western Front, 1914-1917. Trenches, technology, the big battles: Verdun, the Somme, Ypres.
F, Feb 3 – M, Feb 6	German, Austria-Hungary and the Eastern Front, 1914-1918. Austrian ineptitude, and the Russian Revolutions.
W, Feb 8 – F, Feb 10	The Fall of the Ottoman Empire: The Great War in the Middle East, 1914-1918. Caucasus, Gallipoli, Armenian Genocide, Mesopotamia, Palestine.
M, Feb 13 – W, Feb 15	Unexpected Victory: The Defeat of Imperial Germany, 1917-1918. Handleskrieg, American entry, Ludendorf offensives, the Meuse-Argonne.
F, Feb 17 – W, Feb 22	The War to End All Wars? Versailles and the making of the modern world.
M, Feb 20	Washington/Lincoln Birthday HOLIDAY

INTERLUDE: INTERWAR 1919-1939

F, Feb 24 – M, Feb 27	Great War Quiz. Postwar. The 1920s: Russia, Poland, Turkey, Greece, Ireland.
W, Mar 1 – F, Mar 3	Prewar. The 1930s: The Great Depression, the arms race.
F, Mar 3	First Short Paper Due

THE SECOND WORLD WAR, 1939-1945

Read: WIKIPEDIA, World War II
Wilson, *If you Survive*
Sledge, *With the Old Breed*

M, Mar 6 – W, Mar 8	The Last European War, 1939-1941. Origins and causes, Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany.
F, Mar 10 – M Mar 13	Pearl Harbor: December 7, 1941. The United States, China, and Japan.
W, Mar 15 – F, Mar 17	The Pacific War, 1941-1942. Strategy, Southeast Asia, Coral Sea, Midway.
M, Mar 20 – F, Mar 24	SPRING BREAK
M, Mar 27 – W, Mar 29	Turning Points: The 90 Days. Guadalcanal, Stalingrad, El Alamein, Operation Torch.
F, Mar 31 – M, Apr 3	The Pacific War, 1943-1944. Operation Cartwheel. Tarawa, Marshalls, Marianas, Philippine Sea. Second Short Paper Due, Monday, April 3.
W, Apr 5 – M, Apr 10	The Mediterranean War, 1943-1944. Tunisia, Sicily, Italy.
F, Apr 7	Phi Alpha Theta: No Class
W, Apr 12 – F Apr 14	D-Day: June 6, 1944. The battle for Normandy.
M, Apr 17 – W, Apr 19	ETO, 1944-1945. Market Garden, Hurtgen Forest, Bulge, Rhine, VE-Day.
F, Apr 21 – M, Apr 24	The Pacific War, 1944-1945. Leyte Gulf, Manila and the Philippines, Iwo Jima, Okinawa.
W, Apr 26	The War at Sea
F, Apr 28	The Combined Bombing Offensive
M, May 1	The Holocaust
W, May 3	Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The atomic bomb and the end of the Pacific War.
F, May 5	FINAL EXAMS AVAILABLE

FINAL EXAMINATIONS DUE
Wednesday, May 10, 2017
3:20-5:20 PM MDT
LA 256

There is one great thing that you men will be able to say after this war is over... twenty years from now when you are sitting by the fireplace with your grandson on your knee and he asks what you did in the great World War II, you won't have to cough, shift him to the other knee and say, 'Well, your granddaddy shoveled shit in Louisiana.' No, sir, you can look him straight in the eye and say, 'Son, your granddaddy rode with the great Third Army and a son-of-a-goddamned-bitch name Georgie Patton!' June 5, 1944