

WRITING THE GREAT WAR

Coordinator: Tom Grant

During the centennial marking the entry of the US into World War I, we examine the most memorable poetry, fiction and commentary produced by combatants on both sides of “The Front,” important but neglected writing by women nursing on the front line and feminists restricted at home, post-war memoir as well as significant fiction and poetry written by Americans later, influenced by the war. This body of work reveals how “The War to End All Wars” became the main catalyst that decisively advanced in the West a distinctly new, avowedly modernist world view.

This study group is a repeat, but it stresses American combatants and writers on this, 2017, the centennial of the US entry into the war.

Readings and other Materials:

Nurses at the Front: Writing the Wounds of the Great War by Margaret Higonnet, {Northeastern U Press, ISBN 978-1- 55553-484-4, \$18}.

The Sun Also Rises by Ernest Hemingway, {Scribner's, ISBN 978-0743297332,\$10}.

A Coursepack—of primary & secondary material, \$12, approximately 50 to 70 pages per week

TOM GRANT has coordinated many courses on British and American writers.

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Readings are from the Coursepack unless otherwise indicated by an asterisk(*)

1. For God, King and Country: Imperialist Chauvinism, Its Final Assault

- A. Touchstones: Shakespeare, *Henry V*(IV, iii)
- Tennyson, “The Charge of the Light Brigade”
- Kipling, Poems.
- Rupert Brooke, “The Soldier”

- B. Portents: Arthur Machen, "The Last Bow"
"Sapper," [Herman Cyril McNeile],
"Private Meyrick—Company Idiot"
2. **Kulturkrieg: German Professed "Superiority" on the March**
Stefan Zweig, *World of Yesterday*, excerpts
Ernest Lassauer, "Hymn to Hate"
Ernest Junger, *Storm of Steel*, selections
3. **Avenging Sedan, 1871: The Revival of French "Sacred Unity"--
and its Collapse**
Ernest Psichari, *Call to Arms*, selection
Charles Peguy, "The Republic: Mystique and Politique"
Henri Barbusse, *Under Fire*, selections
4. **The Trench Experience I: The Elegiac Strain**
Wilfred Owen & Isaac Rosenberg, poems & letters
5. **The Trench Experience II: The Satirical Strain**
Siegfried Sassoon, Poems & selections from memoirs
6. **Homebound: The Plight of Feminists in Wartime**
Christobel Pankhurst, speeches
Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth*, selections
Rose Macauley, *Non-Combatants*, selections
7. **Sisters of Edith Cavell: Nursing at the Front***
Higgonet, ed., Mary Barton & Ellen LaMotte, selections

SPRING VACATION

8. **Famous Fathers and the Death of Sons**
Kipling, "Mary Postgate"
Conan Doyle, "His Last Bow"
Martin Booth, "Into the Ether," from *The Doctor and the Detective:
A Biography of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*
9. **Doughboys: Americans Over There—and Back**
Byron Farwell, *Over There*, "Introduction"
Theodore Roosevelt, letters

Alan Seeger, poems
Hemingway, "Soldier's Home,"
John Dos Passos, "The Great Show," from *One Man's Initiation*

10. **A "Botched Civilization": Postwar Disenchantment**

T. S. Eliot, "Gerontion," "The Waste Land," "Hollow Men"

11-12: **The "Lost Generation" : Finding Their Voice**

Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises**