World War I

Why did the leaders of Europe’s major countries embark on a war of choice in 1914 when their continent was more prosperous and integrated than ever before? Did the nature of combat in this “Great War” match their expectations, or did the stress of mobilization permanently alter their societies in ways they had not expected? At the end of the war, how did the leaders of the victor countries try to secure a lasting peace? This course follows recent scholarship in military history which sees WWI as the original catastrophe of the 20th century. We will take a grand strategic overview of the causes, military and social history, and peacemaking.

*Available as a 3-part series.

Brian Ganaway earned his Ph.D. in History from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in 2003. His teaching and research focuses on modern Germany, in particular the period from 1890 to 1918. Ganaway’s first book Toys, Consumption, and Middle-Class Childhood in Imperial Germany (Peter Lang) was published in 2010. Ganaway currently teaches classes in the CofC honors college, the history department, and the international studies program.

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