

War, Journalism, and History

Syllabus

Class 1: September 19

Introduction: Why do a course on “war correspondents”? Why single out Gellhorn, Bourke-White, Grossman and Fall? How were the recommended readings selected? Which instructor biases do we need to take into account? Class discussion.

Martha Gellhorn (1908-1998): Early life and writings. Excerpts from WWII reporting. Impact of visit to Dachau. Time in Israel and Vietnam. Class discussion.

Margaret Bourke-White (1904-1971): Early life and work. Time in the Soviet Union. Combat reporting in WWII. Later life and struggle with Parkinson’s disease. Class discussion.

Class 2: September 26

Introduction: Perspectives on the Eastern Front in WWII. Ukraine in the Soviet Union, 1918-1941. The city of Berdichev in Ukraine. Class discussion.

Vasily Grossman (1905-1964): Grossman’s family background and sense of identity. Shaping forces in his early professional life. The outbreak of WWII and his first year as a war correspondent for the Red Army newspaper. Class discussion.

Class 3: October 3

Introduction: The Battle of Stalingrad in historical perspective. Class discussion

Vasily Grossman: Grossman’s unique role in Stalingrad. The fate of his two novels centered on the battle. How historians view his work. Class discussion.