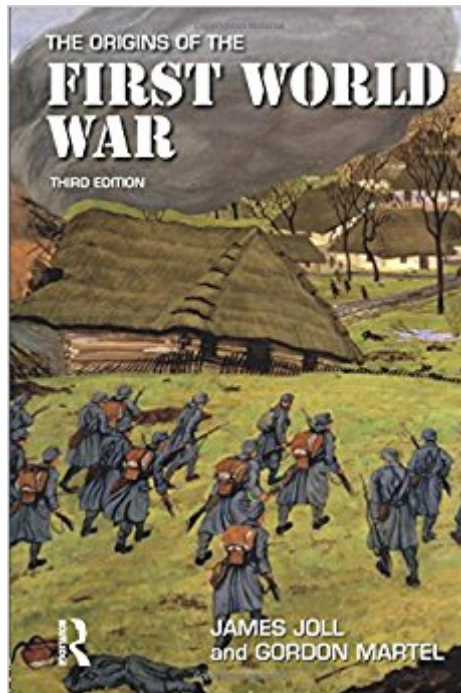




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The Origins Of The First World War



Synopsis

James Joll's study is not simply another narrative, retracing the powder trail that was finally ignited at Sarajevo. It is an ambitious and wide-ranging analysis of the historical forces at work in the Europe of 1914, and the very different ways in which historians have subsequently attempted to understand them. The importance of the theme, the breadth and sympathy of James Joll's scholarship, and the clarity of his exposition, have all contributed to the spectacular success of the book since its first appearance in 1984. Revised by Gordon Martel, this new 3rd edition accommodates recent research and an expanded further reading section.

Book Information

Paperback: 360 pages

Publisher: Routledge; 3 edition (October 7, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0582423791

ISBN-13: 978-0582423794

Product Dimensions: 6.2 x 0.8 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars 15 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #106,524 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #129 in Books > History > Military > World War I #221 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > History > Military #423 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > History > Europe

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'Gordon Martel has done the impossible: he has made James Joll's The Origins of the First World War once more the premier study on why war came in 1914'; Martel has not simply updated Joll's contribution but enhanced and improved it; A triumph of both scholarship and editorial talent; James Joll would have been pleased. Samuel R. Williamson Jr., University of the South. 'Probably the best comprehensive history of the origins of World War I available in the English language'; Gordon Martel's [revision] will make certain that the book's deep insights will continue to captivate and inspire future generations of students and others interested in the Great War. Volker Berghahn, Columbia University. Of the Second Edition: 'This succinct and, above all, admirably clear volume...will be essential reading for all students of the subject; It is written with lightness of touch and an eye for the telling anecdote that will commend it to the general reader too.' British

Book News ‘...this scholarly, comprehensive and subtle analysis should be made compulsory reading for all students of the period and, most of all, for the decision-makers of today.’ John F V Keiger, History

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A concise yet in-depth examination of why Europe went to war in August 1914. The authors cleverly tell the tale as a series of "concentric circles" of the war's approach: the July Crisis diplomacy, the

military and naval factors, the influence of the domestic politics of the various countries involved, how the economic conditions of Europe contributed (or didn't) to the breakout of war, the effect of imperial rivalries and finally, the "mood" and cultural assumptions of the peoples and leaders of Europe in that era. The result is a book that seems to examine all the important factors without drifting into either a narrative of diplomatic minutiae or an over-dependance on balance sheet charts to attempt to chart the course of the origins of the war. The writing is crisp and to-the-point throughout, and one comes away with a much firmer understanding of the underlying factors, as well as the mechanics of the breakout itself. Highly recommended.

It tells you the old thoughts as to why it was thought that World War I came to be a reality.

Great addition to any first WW collection. The thematic chapters are odd at first, but facilitate the reading in the long term.

Thanks!

the authors make a very profound review of all the political ,economic and social facts active in Europe in 1914 ,But the very disappointing fact is that in the final chapter under the pompous name of Conclusion they conclude nothing at all!!.

I have always believed that a good non-fiction book will leave you wanting to learn more about the subject. This is the case with Martels *Origins of the First World War*. It was a great overview of the causes leading up to the great war. It gives many different causes for the war itself, while the whole time affirming that these ideas should not be taken strictly as facts but should be wieghed in on the whole matter.Martel traces each of the major powers involved in the war back to the early 1800's. This is followed by a somewhat detailed overview of what causes, over the last 100 years, led them to participate in the war.One thing I especially liked about this book is the materials that he includes with the text. He includes several maps of pre-war Europe of several time periods, a documents section (complete treaties, letters, pacts etc... between the countries), and a whos who list of major players of the war. All of these go to help the reader better understand the situation and the circumstances that led to war.This is a great overview and outline of the causes, which is all it was intended to be. A great read for anyone who is just starting out in their study of the Great War.

I surprisingly large amount of information in packed into this small volume. The reader must remember that this is a short, survey type book, and not an indepth study. The author does cover the alliance system, basic strategic decisions, international involvement and the oddities of the situation in the Balkans at that time. Yes, there are better works out there, some of them come in multi-volumes, some in 800 pages or more. There is much to be learned in all of them, but for a quick, insightful look, you cannot really go wrong with this one. The text is in logical sequence and quite readable (if of course you like history) and the author backs his conclusions up, one by one. Highly recommend this one. It is a good additon to any library and a great primer on the subject.

I have read, and enjoyed this book, three times. As an amateur historian, and as someone who has studied the history of the period leading up to 1914, I am a little surprised at the lack of greater critical enthusiasm for Joll's book. To me, he does an outstanding job in describing all of the factors that could have, and ultimately did, lead to this most important of all modern wars (I consider WWII an extension and continuation of WWI). Since this conflict remains so seminal, and so difficult to comprehend, only a multi-faceted conceptual overview really does justice to the subject. However, it may make sense to complement this book with those of John Keegan, A.J.P. Taylor or Hew Strachan, all of whom take a narrative approach to understanding the war. Let's keep in mind that with the exception of Ivan Bloch, and very few others, NO ONE thought that WWI would become the conflagration that it did, and/or last for four years. Taylor's book, in his most cynical and perhaps too arbitrarily acerbic style, is excellent on this point.

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