Deborah Cohen
History 201-2
THE HISTORY OF MODERN EUROPE SINCE 1750
Day/Time: MWF 11:00-11:50
Office Address: Harris Hall Room 228
Email Address: deborah-cohen@northwestern.edu
Maximum Enrollment: 135

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is a course about the two centuries – the 19th and 20th – when events in Europe determined the course of world history. Our central theme will be the contest between liberty and equality and we’ll examine this struggle by considering the transformation of social relations: how societies of subjects and serfs became societies of citizens and comrades, how intimate relations within families changed; how masters and workers came to think about their interests and what they had to do to defend them. Readings will be drawn from a wide variety of sources, including political treatises, social investigations, memoirs, and diplomatic correspondence. We will ask why Europe came to dominate the world in the 19th century, considering especially industrialization, revolution and imperial expansion. We will investigate, too, how these apparent triumphs paved the way for the catastrophes of Europe’s 20th century – the world wars, the holocaust, decolonization, the cold War. We end with Europe’s monumental experiment: integration into a European union.

AREA OF CONCENTRATION: Europe

TEACHING METHOD: Lecture and mandatory discussion sections

EVALUATION METHOD: Midterm and short final paper

GRADING BASIS: Student option

TENTATIVE READING LIST:
Freud, Sigmund, Dora: A Case Study in Hysteria, 9780684829463.
Junger, Ernst, Storm of Steel, 9780142437902.
Levi, Primo, Survival in Auschwitz, 9781492942580.
And excerpts from Robespierre, Alexis de Tocqueville and Vaclav Havel, among others

NOTES: Generally no laptops permitted, exceptions only with permission of Professor Cohen

INSTRUCTOR PROFILE: Raised in Louisville, Kentucky, Deborah Cohen lived on the East and West coasts before returning in 2010 to the land of muscular modernism and the early dinner hour. She’s written three books: the first about the disabled veterans of the first world war in Britain and Germany, the second about the British love affair with their Houses, and the most recent one about family secrets (British, not her own). She is a regular contributor to The Atlantic, where she’s written about photography, political marriage, fashion, and punk rock. More at www.deborahcohen.com.