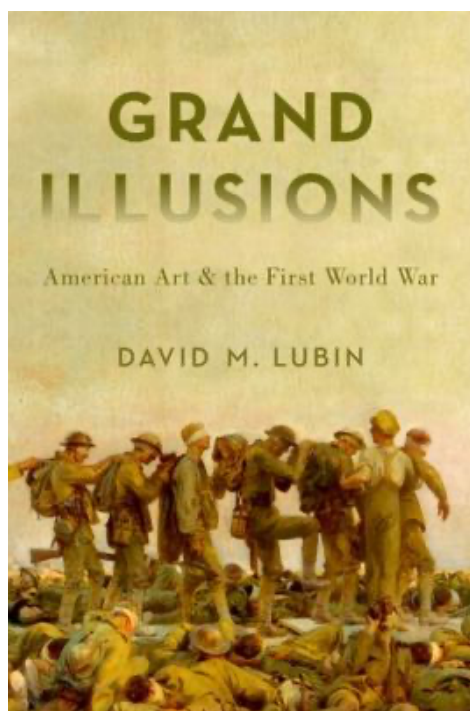


Grand Illusions: American Art and the First World War

by David M. Lubin. Oxford University Press, May 2016. 384 p. ill. ISBN 9780190218614 (cl.), \$39.95.

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David Lubin, professor of art at Wake Forest University, examines the influence of World War I on American visual culture from 1914 to 1933 in his most recent book. His interdisciplinary approach successfully integrates discussion of political history, art, literature, photography, and film, making case studies of both well-known and more obscure artists.

This book has a durable, hardcover binding and contains 149 half-page or smaller illustrations of paintings, photographs, posters, and more. The back matter consists of extensive endnotes, a list of figures, and an index of names, titles, and subjects.

Each chapter demonstrates the various ways in which imagery was used to control how the war was portrayed or reflect the effects of the war. The book opens by situating the artwork of Man Ray, Marsden Hartley, and Romaine Brooks at the beginning of the war within Gertrude Stein's concept of "academic

spirit." The next two chapters address concepts of feminine and masculine during the war.

Images of women in peril and idealized manhood in recruitment and propaganda posters are contextualized with examples from film, evidence of emboldened woman during the war, and the theories of Sigmund Freud. Lubin then juxtaposes the "opposing visions" of the preparedness movement and the Lyrical Left with an examination of recruitment posters, patriotic sheet music, film, Childe Hassam's flag paintings, and Paul Strand's photography.

Three interior chapters investigate a wide range of visual works, including those of Marcel Duchamp, Alfred Stieglitz, Marsden Hartley, George Bellows, John Singer Sargent, Edward

Steichen, and D.W. Griffith, closing with the eyewitness art of Harvey Dunn, Claggett Wilson, and Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney. Lubin ties together a discussion of war injuries with medical portraits and photographs, masks (with special attention given to those made by sculptor Anna Coleman Ladd for disfigured soldiers), and cosmetic surgery and makeup. In the penultimate chapter, the reintegration of soldiers into society is explored through the works of Ernest Hemmingway, James VanDerZee, and Horace Pippin, as well as examples of monsters in film. The book concludes with Lewis Hine's photography of working class people, while summarizing America's general transition from war-influenced images of idealism to those of disillusionment.

Grand Illusions would be a valuable addition to any library with an interest in American art or popular culture, offering a stimulating narrative of World War I's lasting influence on visual culture. Lubin's inclusion of visual culture examples falling outside of the traditional fine arts makes this book particularly appealing and rich.