



UNC Chapel Hill • Institute for Arts and Humanities

**MARY STEVENS RECKFORD MEMORIAL LECTURE
IN EUROPEAN STUDIES**

**Thursday, 20 February 2014
7:30 pm • UNC Gerrard Hall**



**AN AGE OF DESTRUCTION:
WORLD WAR I ONE HUNDRED YEARS LATER**

MICHAEL E. GEYER

**(University of Chicago, Department of History and Human
Rights Program)**

If World War I was a European war over the future of the world, the futures of the world that emerged from the age of destruction were unlike anything the belligerents, high and low, had expected. How could this happen? Answers hinge on understanding the peculiar “totalizing” energy of the war, which was unleashed in 1914 and crashed through legal, political and “civilizational” hedges that had meant to contain violence – away from bourgeois society and beyond the European world. It also depends on making sense of an age of destruction – a yet more deadly war, a forty-year war-in-sight confrontation in Europe and the violent ends of empire – that emerged from World War I.

Michael E. Geyer is Samuel N. Harper Professor of German and European History and faculty director of the Human Rights Program at the University of Chicago. He has published widely on the history of war and genocide in the 19th and 20th centuries, German history and historiography, global history.

**Co-Conveners: Duke-UNC “Gender, War and Culture Series” • North Carolina German Studies
Seminar Series • UNC-Chapel: Hill Center for European Studies • Department of History**

For more information see: gwc.web.unc.edu.

