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Making a stand: German opposition to World War One

During and after the First World War, 'German' and 'Germany' became bywords for militarism and a hundred years later commemoration of the First World War centenary can sometimes give the impression that the war was accepted without opposition in Germany, and that the First World War was fought without any dissenting German voices. This talk will look beyond German militarism at the various forms of anti-war resistance practiced by German citizens, including those conscripted into the German army.

Before the war, there were social, political and religious forces against militarism that were largely suppressed but not destroyed by military censorship. The terrible experience of war also created new opposition among the scientists, politicians and soldiers who participated in it and a small but determined minority within the organised women's movement formed international links across enemy lines to speak out against the war and to influence the peace processes.