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Steven C. Hause and Anne R. Kenney. Women's Suffrage and Social Politics in the French Third Republic. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1984. ix + 381 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, bibliography, and index.

Why did women in the land of liberté and égalité remain disenfranchised so much longer than women in most other western, and many eastern, countries? That is the question Hause and Kenney address in this overdue book on women's suffrage in France. For at least five centuries before the Great Revolution of 1789, privileged French women of all estates voted in national elections. However, the course of occurrences through the revolutionary 1790's stripped all women of virtually all political rights. It was not until 1944 that France finally extended its "universal" suffrage to include women.

Concentrating on the years between the late 1890's and the early 1920's, the authors review various factions in French society that influenced the issue of women and the vote. While there was a considerable movement struggling for women's suffrage in France, counter-currents from both the right and the left proved to be stronger and more effective on the political front.

One important characteristic that stood firmly in the way of women's suffrage in France was the country's solid Catholic heritage. Catholicism posed two separate problems. On the one hand, Catholic women supported the Church's position that a woman's place was in the home. On the other hand, liberal anti-clericals believed that women were influenced mainly by their clergymen and would, given the vote, elect conservative, pro-Catholic representatives. Thus, both Catholics and anti-clericals alike had their reasons for actively supporting women's continued disenfranchisement.

On the far left of the political spectrum, the socialists, radicals, and radical-socialists were at best sympathetic to the cause of women's suffrage: though not directly hostile, they were uncommitted. The left in the government

generally supported suffrage for women when the issue was raised but never actively embraced the cause. The parties were more interested in the plight of the working classes than in any gender-specific oppression. Even the women of the working classes were hardly impressed by the bourgeois aspirations of the middle-class suffragist movement. Any support at all from these sectors was, in general, extremely passive.

In addition to reviewing such ideological considerations, Hause and Kenney also follow the more institutional aspects of the suffrage movement. There were, for example, no less than fifteen women's rights organizations promoting suffrage and ten associated publications from 1910 to 1914 in Paris alone. The provinces, too, exhibited impressive organizational activity. In the legislative sphere, suffragism did find some supporters in the government and certain initiatives, notably the Dussaussoy Bill (introduced in 1906 and supporting somewhat limited suffrage for women), made it a visible and viable issue during the pre-war years.

While this book is a welcome addition to the scholarship on women's suffrage in late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century France, there are several problems with it. First of all, it is not altogether clear what set France apart from other countries that granted women the vote before 1944. The argument for the Catholic heritage is impelling, but does not seem sufficient to explain such slowness. Similarly, the French left betrayed not a specific French characteristic but a general leftist position, at the time, regarding women's suffrage; the left in most countries was only a lukewarm ally to women's suffrage movements. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, the book is something of a curious throw-back to the women's history of women's history's earliest hour - that is, the early 1970's. While the political and institutional aspects of women's movements are a necessary part of the history, they hardly tell the whole story. Opponents to women's suffrage are never necessarily anti-feminist. In the French case, many of the arguments against suffrage came from women who considered that, by defending anti-suffragism, they were defending women's greatest interests. Catholic women as well as socialist or working-class women were

trying to protect themselves in their specific social positions. The subject was not suffrage but social survival as they saw it. The authors address these issues only superficially.

The interesting and more vital question seems to be not "Why were French women so late in getting the vote?" but "Why were so many French women themselves apathetic about, or even opposed to, suffrage?" Hause and Kenney do not adequately investigate this question, yet methodologies in women's history have certainly progressed enough for such an investigation.

The authors' work will be appreciated by any scholar of French women's history. The maps, tables, and other numbers produce an invaluable source of reference since, surprisingly, nothing of the kind has been published before. However, a social history must parallel this politico-institutional history and would undoubtedly prove not only more interesting but infinitely more enlightening. In the end, this book remains another rather dull history of suffragism, a story of facts instead of faces.

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Robert H. Larson. The British Army and the Theory of Armored Warfare, 1918-1940. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1984. 265 pp. Charts, notes, bibliography, and index.

The British Army invented the tank and pioneered its development during World War I, and produced the leading theorists of armored warfare, J.F.C. Fuller and B.H. Liddell Hart, during the interwar years. Yet, the British were caught totally off-guard by the German blitzkriegs into Poland in 1939 and into France in 1940, and it took the British years to regain their superiority in armored warfare.

This book insightfully and authoritatively chronicles the development of the tank and the theory of armored warfare during this crucial era. The greatest contribution of Professor Larson's study is the refutation of the persistent and erroneous myths given to explain the failure of Great Britain's armored forces at