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**Ian Coller, Helen Davies, and Julie Kalman, Eds.** *French History and Civilization. Papers from the George Rudé Seminar. Volume One, 2005.* Melbourne: The George Rudé Society. 2005. 286 pp. ISSN 1553-9172.

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The publication, in both print and electronic form, of selected, peer-reviewed papers presented at Australia's biannual George Rudé Seminars is a welcome event. This inaugural volume shows that the enterprise is off to a fine start. There are 27 essays in this volume, all of them serious, well researched, and offering interesting arguments about noteworthy issues. In terms of chronological coverage, the emphasis is on the revolutionary era through the nineteenth century. Naturally, the topics range widely; and yet, one finds a shared vision of what matters in French history. This is because the collection is an excellent reflection of what is going on in the field today. By and large, the authors seek to understand the process of identity formation and attend, when applicable, to its cross-cultural and transnational dimensions.

After introductory essays by James Friguglietti and Alison Patrick on the legacy of the seminar's namesake, the editors have aptly grouped the essays into four categories: Boundaries and Borders, Cultural Identities, Insiders and Outsiders, and Embodied Identities. The first, with essays by David Garrioch, Peter McPhee, Peter Jones, Thomas Sosnowski, John West-Sooby /Jean Fornasiero, André Lambelet, and Pieter François, underscore the constructedness (by and large) of political categories. The second section with contributions by Marie Cross, Ingrid Sykes, Colin Nettelbeck, and Natalie Adamson) treats the contribution of various artistic experiences to political life. The third grouping (essays by Dominique Godineau, Tim Tackett, Joseph Zizek, Carol Harrison, Cynthia Bouton, Pam Pilbeam, Greg Burgess, Ian Coller, Julie Kalman, and Vesna Drapac) tackles the issues of Frenchness and otherness. "Embodied Identities" (entries by François Thebaud, Charles Sowerwine, Susan Foley, and Michael Sibalis) considers gender and sexuality.

Any attempt to sample the research contained in this volume will inevitably be arbitrary. Nonetheless, I will present three of the ones that strike me as indicative of that shared vision mentioned earlier. Lambelet's "Back to the Future: Politics, Propaganda, and the Centennial of the Conquest of Algeria (pp. 62-72) nicely continues Alice Conklin's exploration of the links between republican ideology and imperialism during the Third Republic.[1] Lambelet points out that President Gaston Doumergue entrusted the official 1930 commemoration to a board of experts that included neither Arab nor Berber. Their assignment, intended to counteract public indifference, was to bombard the French with information on the moral and material benefits that France brought to Algeria and that Algeria brought to France. Lambelet's provocative assessment of the racist ideology inherent in the commemorative publications, holding out little hope for progress other than that imposed on the native population by European settlers, leads him to conclude that the centennial was not only a celebration of French colonial practice but also "a celebration of the triumph of an anti-republican ideology at the heart of the Third Republic itself" (p. 63).

Cynthia Bouton's "Cowardly Bourgeois, Brave Bourgeoises, and Loyal Servants: Bourgeois Identity during the Crisis of 1846-47," (pp. 174-187) contributes to the classic debate, recently enlivened by Sarah Maza, on whether French Revolution bestowed social and political leadership on "the bourgeoisie." [2] Bouton incisively interrogates the copious documentation arising from a popular food

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riot that broke out in the town of Buzancais (Indre) in 1847. The rioters vociferously blamed their hunger on the hard-heartedness of the local bourgeoisie. Tellingly, officials of the Bourgeois Monarchy investigating the unrest, far from counseling the hungry to solve their own problems by enriching themselves, berated “the bourgeoisie.” One of the magistrates wrote that “there is a fairly numerous bourgeoisie [here] ...and although quite rich is not very charitable” (p. 182). In any case, it turns out that denouncing this elite was easier than finding it, since the well-off of the town eschewed the label in favor of “notables.” Although Maza’s iconoclastic claims about the bourgeoisie being a “myth” have met with a certain amount of skepticism, Bouton’s research upholds at least two major contentions: that few people self-identified as bourgeois and that bourgeois identity was constructed as the opposite of the general good.[3]

The 1,187 surviving love letters exchanged between republican leader Léon Gambetta and his mistress Léonie Léon during the 1870s allows Susan Foley to explore the complicated relation between gender and politics under the early Third Republic. The author takes it as a given that political life had become ever more masculine with the triumph of the republic.[4] Yet, reading through the epistolary conventions of the age, Foley finds that Leon contributed to the political thought and decision-making of the minister just because of the intimacy that the couple shared. The implication is that political partnership across gender lines and (imagined) public/private dichotomies coexisted easily in Third Republic France.

I hope that these examples illustrate the depth of this volume. The essays generally embody strong research and pointed efforts to reinterpret major issues. Therefore, we can all be grateful that special arrangements between The George Rude Society and H-France make the collection available free of charge at [h-france.net/rude/rudepapers.html](http://h-france.net/rude/rudepapers.html).

Concluding this review without dwelling on the pedagogical possibilities of this volume for both graduate and undergraduate students would be an unfortunate omission. The essays provide a crisp and incisive introduction to prominent current debates in modern French history and therefore be appropriate for graduate reading courses. Because the essays are shorter than most journal articles and because in almost all instances the authors make the historiographical context of their arguments accessible, many undergraduates will be able to deal with the specialized research they present. Furthermore, all budget-minded students will appreciate being able to access this volume without any financial sacrifice. What better testimony to the promise of integrating digital technology into our classrooms?

## LIST OF ESSAYS

### Introduction

- James Friguglietti, “A Scholar in Exile: George Rudé as a Historian of Australia”
- Allison Patrick, “The Price of Revolution”

### Part One: Boundaries

- David Garrioch, “The Local Experience of Revolution: The Gobelins/Finistère Section in Paris”
- Peter McPhee, “Frontiers, Ethnicity, and Identity in the French Revolution: Catalans and Occitans”
- Peter Jones, “‘Fraternalizing with the Enemy’: Problems of Identity during the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars”

- Thomas Sosnowski, “Revolutionary Emigrés and Exiles in the United States: Problems of Economic Survival in a New Republican Society”

### **Part Two: Borders**

- John West-Sooby and Jean Fornasiero, “A Cordial Encounter? The Meeting of Matthew Flinders and Nicolas Baudin (8-9 April 1802)”
- André Lambelet, “Back to the Future: Politics, Propaganda and the Centennial of the Conquest of Algeria”
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### **Part Three: Cultural Identities**

- Marie Cross, “Tuning into Politics: Flora Tristan’s Songs for the Union ouvrière”
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- Natalie Adamson, “Against the Amnesiacs: The Art Criticism of Jean Bazaine, 1934-1944”

### **Part Four: Insiders**

- Dominique Godineau, “Pratique du suicide à Paris pendant la Révolution française”
- Tim Tackett, “Becoming a Counterrevolutionary: A Conservative Notable in the National Assembly, 1789-1791”
- Joseph Zizek, “Marat: Historian of the French Revolution”
- Carol Harrison, “Protecting Catholic Boys and Forming Catholic Men at the Collège Stanislas in Restoration Paris”
- Cynthia Bouton, “Cowardly Bourgeois, Brave Bourgeoises, and Loyal Servants: Bourgeois Identity during the Crisis of 1846-47”
- Pam Pilbeam “Fourier and the Fourierists: A Case of Mistaken Identity?”

### **Part Five: Outsiders**

- Greg Burgess, “Selection, Exclusion, and Assimilation: The Project Lambert of 1931 on the Reform of French Immigration Policy”
- Ian Coller, “Egypte-sur-Seine: The Making of an Arabic Community in Paris, 1800-1830”
- Julie Kalman, “Rothschildian Greed: This New Variety of Despotism”
- Vesna Drapac, “A King is Killed in Marseilles: France and Yugoslavia in 1934”

### **Part Six: Embodied Identities**

- Françoise Thébaud, “Un féminisme d’Etat est-il possible en France? L’exemple du Ministère des Droits de la femme, 1981-1986”
- Charles Sowerwine, “The Sexual Contract of the French Revolution”
- Susan Foley, “‘I felt such a need to be love [...] in a letter’: Reading the Correspondence of Léonie Léon and Lon Gambetta”
- Michael Sibalis, “Gay Liberation Comes to France: The Front Homosexuel d’Action Révolutionnaire (FHAR)”

## NOTES

[1] Alice Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: the Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997).

[2] Sarah Maza, *The Myth of the French Bourgeoisie. An Essay on the Social Imaginary, 1750-1850* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2003).

[3] Jan Goldstein argues against Maza's positions in "On Marksmanship and Marx: Reflections on the Linguistic Construction of Class," *Modern Intellectual History* 2 (April 2005): 87-107.

[4] In a related essay in this volume, "The Sexual Contract of the Third Republic" (pp. 247-255), Charles Sowerwine concludes that fraternity was essential to the republican conception of the political order.

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