

French revolution success or failure ap european history:

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French Revolution Success or Failure AP European History: The French Revolution; Success or Failure Like many of the debacles and upheavals of France, and Western Europe, the French Revolution resulted in many examples of successes, as well as failures. Even the outcomes that were viewed positively, most came at a very high price. Amid a fiscal crisis, the peasants of France were increasingly angered by the incompetency of King Louis XVI and the continued indifference of the aristocracy. The people knew there was a problem, but everybody had different ideas on the solution. Thus, resulting in multiple successes and failures. One of the most obvious failures of the French Revolution was the Reign of Terror. The Reign of Terror occurred between: September 1793 to July 1794. "The Terror", which was orchestrated by Robespierre and his followers, was seemingly a way to provide for the security of the Republic, by exposing traitors to the people. The Revolutionary Tribunal summarily condemned thousands of people to death by the guillotine, while mobs beat other victims to death. Sometimes people died for their political opinions or actions, but many for little reason beyond mere suspicion, or because some others had a stake in getting rid of them. In reality, it was used, by Robespierre, as a means to consolidate and strengthen his hold on power. Instead of putting into practice the democratic ideals of liberty and equality that he spoke of in public, Robespierre used the Terror to execute or imprison thousands of people who he viewed as a threat. The Terror came to an end only after Robespierre himself came to an end at the guillotine. The French Revolution also failed to establish a constitutional monarchy or a representative government. France began in 1789 with the absolute monarch of Louis XVI and ended with the military

dictatorship of Napoleon Bonaparte. In between there were various elected legislative bodies, but these groups became more radical and dogmatic as the Revolution progressed. The leaders of these Assemblies cared for the people only to the extent that they could help them hold on to power. Men such as Robespierre, and later the members of the Directory, used the National Assembly for their own personal gain. There were some gains made by the Revolution in France. While the sans-culottes of Paris were not much better off by the end of 1799, the peasants of rural France had made some progress. The old feudal rights of the lords had been abolished in 1789, and much of the church land that had been seized by the government and sold to investors eventually ended up in the hands of the peasants. The system of taxation had also been revised so the burden did not fall so heavily on the peasants and other members of the Third Estate. The National Assembly also issued the Declaration of the Rights of Man, which said that men are born free and are equal before the law. Perhaps one of the most important outcomes of The Revolution was that it gave many citizens, even though brief, a taste of liberty, equality, and power. It also created feelings of national pride that had not existed before. The Revolution also saw the beginnings of socialist theory, such as the necessity of economic planning and a greater equality between the rich and the poor. These theories, along with a growing nationalism, would play a significant role in European politics in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In conclusion, I believe that The Revolution can be deemed a success. Malcolm Forbes said it best, " Failure is success if we learn from it. " The common people of France may have taken it to an extreme, maybe they didn't take it far enough; but what they did

they did it together, creating a sense of pride in self, and pride in nation. That sequence of events created, and contributed too many fundamental ideas and theories that are important to the world today. By: (Duane Curtis)