

French revolution essay sample

[Politics](#), [Democracy](#)



We can scarcely discuss why anything happens until we have a vital idea of what it is (Doyle, 2001). Almost any attempt to define the French Revolution too closely, however, will be tendentious, and exclude many of its complexities. Yet what it most certainly was not a single event. It was a series of developments, puzzling to most contemporaries, which prolonged over a number of years. It was a sustained period of uncertainty, disorder, and conflict, rumbling far beyond the borders of France. It began between 1787 and 1789.

The French Revolution was an epoch of radical, social and political turmoil in France that had a stalwart impact on French history and on modern civilization worldwide (McPhee, 2004). Due to the financial crisis brought by the involvement of France to Seven-years war and its participation in American revolutionary war, the common French people increasingly aggravated on the incompetence of their King Louis XVI adding the corruption taking place among the nobility or the upper classes. This fury, coupled with burgeoning of Enlightenment ideals fueled the radical sentiments of the common people that launched the Revolution in 1789. These enlightenment ideas took a great part on the revolution as it serve as the core of the history.

Many other factors involved resentments and aspirations given focus by the rise of Enlightenment ideals. These included resentment of royal absolutism and the monarchy power possess by the monarchy; resentment by peasants, laborers that led to the abolition of feudalism through the Civil Constitution of the Clergy made by the National Constituent Assembly that was formed after the failure of the estates-general. The bourgeoisie or the middle

class overthrew the traditional seigneurial privileges possessed by the nobility; resentment of the common people to the Catholic Church's influence over public policy and institutions that led to the aspirations for freedom of religion after Roman Pope Pius VI accepted the Civil Constitution of the Clergy isolating Catholics in France and fueling the gradual French de-christianization; resentment of aristocratic bishops by the poorer rural clergy; aspirations for social, political and economic equality, and republicanism that was formed after the constitutional crises and paved way to the constitutional republic; hatred of Queen Marie-Antoinette, who was falsely accused of being a spendthrift and an Austrian spy; and anger toward the King for firing finance minister Jacques Necker, among others, who were popularly seen as representatives of the people and the feminism that gave power to French women in fighting their rights that should be equal among men.

Some historians argue that the French people underwent a fundamental transformation in self-identity, evidenced by the elimination of privileges and their replacement by rights as well as the growing decline in social deference that highlighted the principle of equality throughout the Revolution.[157] The Revolution represented the most significant and dramatic challenge to political absolutism up to that point in history and spread democratic ideals throughout Europe and ultimately the world.[158] However, according to French historian François Furet it was also the origin of totalitarian political ideas, and of the legitimization of systematic, large-scale violence against social classes considered undesirable. When it comes to culture, French revolution strengthened feminism and promoted gender equality among

men and women.

French revolution was not only the period of history filled with new personal liberties, freedoms and challenges, but it was also an age when innovative technological advances were also occurring in rapid succession. The guillotine was a device that was invented during the French Revolution. This was used to make the death penalty less painful, by cutting off peoples' heads in the split of a second. This machine caused so many unnecessary deaths during that time period and left many people in devastation.

References:

Doyle, M. (2001). The French revolution: A Very Short Introduction, Oxford University Press

McPhee P. (2004). The French Revolution 1789 - 1799, Oxford University