Female Suffrage and Gender Politics in France

An honors thesis for the International Relations Program

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Tufts University 2014

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Thesis Abstract

In the industrialized world, states with large Catholic populations have enfranchised women on average 20-30 years later than states that are predominantly Protestant. The prevailing explanation for this phenomenon is largely cultural; Catholic doctrine creates strictly traditional roles for women and creates a culture of female oppression. This paper will show that in the French example, the delay in suffrage was actually caused by the parties of the Left who feared that the mass influx of highly religious and very conservative female voters would upset the fragile framework of the French government and would increase the political power of conservative parties. Conversely, the Catholic Church and Catholic Parties were the strongest supporters of the female vote because women tended to align themselves with the policies and parties of the Church. This resulted in a paradox in which the Catholic Church was the strongest supporter of female suffrage, and the ideologically progressive Leftist parties worked to suppress the female vote.

Following female enfranchisement in 1944 under Charles de Gaulle, women were indeed more conservative and more religious voters than men. From the 1960s through the present, however, women have become dramatically less religious, and have accordingly shifted in ideology from the Right to the Left. This ideological shift coincides with increased female participation in the workforce and union membership, secularization and modernization of French society and economy, but ultimately is rooted in increased access to higher education amongst women in France.

Chapter 1
Introduction

Women in France did not earn the right to vote until 1944. Alone, this statement is surprising; with female political integration today a given, it seems odd that women in a developed democracy earned the right to vote just 70 years ago. When coupled with the fact that nearly every Catholic state in Europe extended the right to vote enfranchised women decades after most Protestant states, the picture of female suffrage and its context in Europe becomes more complex.

Nearly every non-Catholic country in Europe had extended suffrage to women prior to 1930. Spurred by suffragette movements in the United Kingdom and the United States at the turn of the century, female political equality in was viewed as the final frontier of true democracy and inclusion. Uniformly, European countries with large Catholic populations lagged behind their Protestant neighbors: Spain enfranchised women in 1931, France in 1944, and Belgium in 1948.

The historical and political explanation for this lag has long been attributed to cultural elements and religious traditionalism. Many theorists have argued that traditional values in the Church seep into Catholic societies, instilling domestic roles for women and generally hostile cultural environments for female enfranchisement. This cultural traditionalism carries over into the political sphere, where women are refused access. As historian Richard J. Evans writes, “the Catholic Church was the most persistent and intractable of the feminists’ enemies” (McMillan 1982, 951).

This was the perspective I held when I first encountered the surprising statistics on female suffrage in Europe. Why else would Catholic states choose to block women from their political structures, if not because of religious or cultural beliefs? When I began researching the subject and reading accounts that challenged this cultural theory, a much more complex picture of female enfranchisement emerged, and inspired the foundation of this thesis.

Through reviewing primary documents and historical theories, I have concluded that the Catholic Church and her political parties were actually outspoken in favor of the female vote in France, while anticlerical political parties on the Left worked tirelessly to block female enfranchisement. This statement is itself a paradox, and requires some background to provide context.

Women in France under the Third Republic were uniformly more religious than men. Women attended Church more frequently than men and built their social and civic structures around the Church. They were perceived to be highly devout adherents to the Catholic Church by secular political parties as well as the Church itself. Their obedience to the Church and her political bodies was particularly important during the Third Republic, as French government became secular and parties in support of reinstating the Monarchy or other forms of Catholic governance waned. Anticlerical parties on the left feared the influx of conservative, religious female voters would tip the political scales toward the Right, and Catholic parties on the Right welcomed female voters for this same reason.

This paradoxical scenario in which parties of the Left and Right abandoned their ideologies in favor of political maneuvering on the Female Question is rife with contradiction. It illustrates that politics, not culture, drove the delay in female suffrage in France, and contradicts the idea that the culture of the Catholic Church was solely responsible for delaying political access for women.

By 1944, the enemy of the French state had shifted from the Monarchical Right to the Nazi and Communist Parties. Because women continued to be perceived as conservative allies, they were arguably given the right to vote to serve as a political barrier against the rise in popularity of communism. Again, politics trumped ideology and culture in the French example of female enfranchisement.

In the elections immediately following female enfranchisement, women were indeed more conservative than men, and served as a base of continuing support for Charles de Gaulle and his conservative allies. However, by the 1970s and 1980s, women had begun to shift to the ideological left, and today a strong majority of French women align with the multiplicity of political parties on the Left. This shift aligns with the secularization of France, and a steep decline in religious association, Church attendance, and devoutness.

These simultaneous shifts away from conservative political ideologies and religious devoutness beg the questions: Are religiosity and political conservatism related? If so, what is causing French women to become less religious and thus less conservative? What factors, other than religion, influence political ideology among French women? I answered these questions primarily using data from French National Election Studies, supported by political theory and historical context from several political scientists, French cultural specialists, and historians.

I considered many explanations, including Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris' appropriation of modernization theory to gender politics and culture around the world. They argue that as societies become more industrialized, they become less religious and less hostile to women. They also discuss other results of industrialization, such as increased female participation in the workforce and increased attainment of higher education for women.

In my analysis of the shift of French women away from religion and towards the ideological Left, I found increased access to education in French women to be the most compelling explanation. Higher education rates led to more employable women who go on to be economically and intellectually independent, come into contact with social groups and authority figures outside of religious circles, and develop "psychological autonomy" from spouses or authority figures. As Inglehart and Norris write, "Women's increasing entry into higher education can also be expected to influence their political values and priorities, as many studies of public opinion have reported that education is consistently associated with more liberal attitudes on a wide range of issues" (Inglehart and Norris, 90).

Thesis Overview

Chapter 2: A History of Female Suffrage and Gender Politics, Literature Review

The many varying historical theories on female suffrage and France are difficult to reconcile, and often devolve into back-and-forth disputes between historians. One such dispute was between historians Richard J. Evans, who viewed Catholic culture as the downfall of female suffrage in France, and James F. McMillan who argued that anticlerical parties were responsible for the delay in French female suffrage. I also discuss theories of gender equality, political ideology, and female inclusion in politics in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The history of female suffrage in France can be traced using primary documents and historical analyses. The study of the link between female political ideology and religiosity in France is less well documented, so I turn to French National Election Studies to evaluate the changing nature of ideology and devoutness in the elections of 1968, 1988, and 1997.

Chapter 4: Female Suffrage in France: Anticlericalism, Conservatism, and Instability in the Third Republic

This chapter delves into the French suffrage paradox outlined in this introduction and provides a strong historical context for the instability of the French Third Republic and the behaviors of parties of the Left and Right.

Chapter 5: Female Ideology and Religiosity in France, 1945-Present

In the years following enfranchisement, French women were indeed more religious and more conservative than men. By the mid-1980s, however, women had surpassed men in leftist ideology and continue to be less conservative (although remain more religious) than men. I seek to explain this shift using Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris' theory on modernization and secularization, and find rising attainment of advanced degrees among French women to be the best explanatory factor for this shift.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

Chapter 2
Literature Review: Female Suffrage, Catholicism, and Female Political Ideology

History of Female Suffrage in France

The question of female suffrage in France is a niche topic, but one that has introduced fervent debate and constant revision among expert historians, political scientists, and sociologists. The traditionalist overtones of the Catholic doctrine have long served as a scapegoat for theorists on the issue of suffrage and women's rights. With strictly limited domestic roles for women, Catholic culture is a logical precursor for the late expansion of suffrage to women. In France and other predominantly Catholic nations, the Catholic Church and associated groups did have some impact on female enfranchisement, but other more nuanced political factors contributed as well.

Historians such as Richard J. Evans have argued that the traditional values in clerical leadership and the pro-Monarchical tendencies of the Catholic church in the 19th century were the primary obstacles to suffrage in Catholic European states. His article, Feminism and Anticlericalism in France, 1870-1922 published in 1982 in *The Historical Journal* was, for many years, a model on historical theorization regarding French female suffrage. He correctly notes the strong correlation between Catholic percentage in the population and lateness in female suffrage, though exaggerates the importance of traditional and oppressive cultural and political values held by the Catholic voting bloc. He goes so far as to state, "the Catholic Church was the most persistent and intractable of the feminists' enemies" (McMillan 1982, 951).

He rather argues that anticlerical parties, most notably *le Parti Socialiste*, were not so uniformly hostile to women. Anticlerical parties, bent on maintaining a secular republic in

France from the frail remains of the Napoleonic Empire, were the primary proponents for the female vote. Rather than be motivated by backwards religious dogma as the Catholics were, the anticlerical parties wished to include women in the political process in order to create a true democracy to fit within their liberal ideal.

According to James F. McMillan and others, his summarization is not wholly incorrect, but overly emphasizes favor for the female vote within the anticlerical Republican majority. His ideological vision that non-Catholics favored female enfranchisement in accordance with Enlightenment ideals unfortunately paints too favorable a portrait of this group, and conveniently ignores the important political motivations that existed for anticlericals to exclude conservative women from politics.

Evans and McMillan were contemporaries, were also one another's harshest critics, and the two academics exchanged rebukes in various journals and reviews throughout their careers. McMillan goes so far as to suggest Evans' viewpoint that the Catholics were the suffragette's greatest enemy is derived from remnants of anticlerical propaganda misunderstood as historical truth. McMillan rather viewed the cultural and political atmosphere of the Third Republic as more uniformly hostile to women.

While he agrees with Evans' perspective that the Catholic Church's viewpoint was indeed unfavorable to female equality in general, he argues that anticlericals were harsher in their opposition to female suffrage. He conducts an objectively more accurate examination of both the public stances of Catholic and Anticlerical parties as well as their political motivations. While Evans studied Catholic culture and its effects on society and politics, McMillan rather identified hostility across all political and social groups, regardless of religion or political affiliation. For instance, he writes that some of the most scathing critiques of French suffragettes came from the highly traditional Parisian bourgeois, who were overwhelmingly anticlerical. His historical argument is more nuanced, and has persisted as an important reference for those seeking a historical foundation on the question of French feminism since being publishing in 1981.

As feminist thought became a necessary complement to traditional academic questions in the 1990s, new contributions were made to the historical analysis of suffrage around the globe. Stephen Hause, Professor Emeritus at Washington University, St. Louis, is generally considered to be the foremost expert on French female suffrage, having dedicated the entirety of his career to examining the political condition of women throughout French history and their unique struggle for suffrage in the 20th century. His books, Women's Suffrage and Social Politics in the French Third Republic (1984), and Feminisms of the Belle Epoque (1995) provide excellent background on the issue of suffrage and feminism in the Third Republic. Citing influences as varied as the male pronouns used in French Constitutions until 1958 (when the pronoun was officially changed from the male "*le citoyen*" to the more gender neutral, "*les citoyens*") to the predominant bourgeois attitude that favored polite discourse over public protest (and therefore prevented the "suffragette" activist popular in Britain and the United States from gaining traction in France), Hause's historical portrait is truly comprehensive.

Hause's purview of research extends beyond the party politics and social movements of the era, to strong comparative observations that enrich his research. For example, his meticulous research on female participation in philanthropic, pro-suffrage, humanitarian, religious, and political party groups serves as a gauge to measure the general female engagement in a vast array of issues during the pivotal decades in which female suffrage was developing.

Hause's coup de grace is his discussion of strong anti-communist sentiment in France, first spurred by the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, and continuing through the interwar period and through World War II. He sites this as an important external factor that redirected the domestic concerns in France away from fear of an authoritarian monarchy and towards an authoritarian communist regime. This shift in political threats created an environment more favorable to conservatism, which stood in direct opposition to communist goals. Where the threat to French democracy had once been the internal encroachment of Monarchism, now communism threatened to undermine Republican ideology. Hause correctly points to the vehemently anti-communist sentiment in the Catholic Church throughout this period, and remarks that for the first time, the threat of communism in France and other secular Catholic democracies created a more favorable situation in which women to win the vote. In other words, at the tail end of the Third Republic, the one thing French Republicans feared more than the conservative female vote was the communist vote. Having reached this critical tipping point, women were enfranchised as a political tool to dilute the influence of the extreme left.

In an e-mail interview with Professor Hause, he writes, “Indeed, I believe that a version of this theory is why a profound conservative (De Gaulle) chose to enfranchise women at the end of World War II. He agreed that they would follow the Church and vote anti-communist.” He goes on, “I also believe that there is some significant truth in the traditional and domestic roles held for women in Catholic culture having a negative effect on female empowerment in government. I see it as a matter of a nuanced argument, choosing which side is to be stressed.”

Gill Allwood and Khursheed Wadia pick up where Evans, McMillan, and Hause leave off in their book, Women and Politics in France 1958-2000 (2000). Starting their historical study 13 years after French women voted in their first election, Allwood and Wadia do not analyze how french women earned the vote but rather how they behaved once they got it. They examine how women have assimilated into political parties, political groups, and elected positions, as well as feminist politics and female participation in politics. Their most relevant study to my research is their discussion of electoral behavior and attitudes among French women throughout the Fifth Republic. With excellent data on voter turnout, interest in politics, and political orientation, this concise data and clear analysis draws intuitive comparisons between the debate on women and conservatism into the actual behaviors and opinions of French women in 20th century politics.

Sylvie Chaperon, Professor at the University of Toulouse, is a feminist theorist and historian of women in France. Her historical research on the path to female suffrage includes a comprehensive list of Parliamentary motions regarding the right to vote for women from 1919-1944. Her research also includes which parties voted in favor and against a series of motions to expand the right to vote for women beginning in 1919. In order to understand the motivations and behaviors of secular republican parties and non-secular parties regarding female suffrage, it is necessary to follow their actual voting records as an empirical way to analyze their voting trends. Chaperon's historical documentation is also valuable to note bias in the respective chambers of Parliament for or against female suffrage.

Her historical compilation of these documents reveal that the *Chambre des Deputés* was much more favorable to giving women the right to vote than the *Sénat*. Her explanation for this difference is lacking, though she notes the *Parti Radicale* and the *Parti Socialiste* held broader majorities in the *Sénat* than the *Chambre des Deputés*, which was representative and thus had a higher concentration of Catholic or anti-republican political voices.

Another excellent resource for voting and religious data throughout the Third Republic is W. Scott Haine's The History of France (2000). This volume is not an exemplary resource on gender-specific issues in France, but it is an excellent resource on the historical trends in

Catholicism. Included are percentages by year of self-identifying Catholics from the late 18th century to the modern day, and more obscure but extremely telling statistics. One such example is a year-by-year list of the number of priests per capita in France, which serves to define the "devoutness" of a population, rather than simply religious affiliation. Because France's Catholic identity is central to the discussion of women's rights, Haine's research on Catholicism and Catholic identity in France through the ages is indispensable.

Another crucial resource on French History throughout the struggle for the female vote is The Third Republic in France 1807-1940 by William Fortescue. This book is an essential overview of the political instability and major conflicts of the Third Republic. The monumental shifts that occurred under Napoleon Bonaparte and his successors during the First and Second Republics left a fractured and unstable France without a clear framework for democracy and stability. The first true elections of the Third Republic were held in 1876, with 363 Republicans and only 180 monarchists. Of these monarchists, 75 were Bonapartists, and wanted a descendent of Napoleon I to sit on the French throne. This political instability and the constant fear of reversion to a pre-democratic system left little room for change in the political system, especially change that could have created an enormous influx of female voters, correctly perceived at the time to be a conservative bloc.

Although a democracy had been in place from 1876, the separation of Church and State did not occur until 1905. The Concordat established under Napoleon in 1802 created some divisions between Church and State, but the vast majority of the educational systems remained in the Church's hands, and bishops and popes, were appointed and paid by the state (Fortescue, 74). The Boulanger Affair of 1894 was a close brush with military dictatorship in France, and The Dreyfus Affair revealed a hidden dislike for Republican values and virulent anti-Semitism. As the government shifted towards an anticlerical majority around the turn of the century, these biases and the strength of the military were viewed as dangerous to the perseverance of the French Republic.

Political Theory and Suffrage Extension: Modernization, Ideology, and Research Models

Stephen Hanson's emphasis on the importance of ideology in democratization is applicable to the unlikely democratization of the Third Republic. In light of the monarchies established in France's "geopolitical neighborhood" (Hanson, 87) and the turbulent century that preceded 1870, France was an unlikely though successful case of democratization. Despite instability and several pivotal political crises, the Third Republic lasted 70 years and was the first European democracy with universal male suffrage, state-run secular education, and genuinely democratic institutions.

Hanson's central thesis of Post-Imperial Democracies: Ideology and Party Formation in Third Republic France, Weimar Germany, and Post-Soviet Russia states, "in periods of high social uncertainty, political elites with clear and consistent definitions of the criteria for membership in their desired polity can potentially generate large-scale networks of party activists that give them a strategic advantage over their more 'pragmatic' opponents" (Hanson, 89). In France, this was evident in the chaos during and after the withdrawal of Prussian troops from France after the Franco-Prussian War; ideological extremists trumped the centrists. Royalists and Radical Republicans both emerged as the most successful parties due to their clear, consistent political rhetoric and ideologies. Under this framework, Republicans were able to "place their distinctive ideological stamp on state institutions" (Hanson, 89) thereby creating a system of universal male suffrage and democratic institutions that persisted through the Third Republic. Hanson's emphasis on the importance of ideology is more convincing in the French case, and can explain the deep commitment to Radical Republican and Socialist rhetoric that opposed the female vote.

According to Hanson, clarity and radicalism of ideology are more important in times of political uncertainty than political pragmatism. This means that ideologies that survive are generally less flexible, more radical, and very consistent. This is relevant to my argument because the Radical Republicans who formed the political institutions of the Third Republic under Leon Gambetta were deeply opposed to more conservative groups, whether they were Orléanists, legitimists, Bonapartists, or women. If ideological strength is a determinant of political strength, then inflexible and extremist parties like Gambetta's Republicans will succeed in times of political instability at the expense of moderate or inconsistent ideologies.

The case has been made that this period in France's history was turbulent, but Hanson suggests this may be due to historical revisionism among political scientists who sought to explain why France fell so easily to the Nazis in 1940. As Allan Mitchell writes, "the republican tradition in France was far from being unified or omnipotent…. Whether in a Bonapartist or Royalist guise, the possibility of a constitutional dynasty remained for France a plausible option" (Mitchell, 3). Hanson, though not in complete disagreement with this perspective, successfully argues that the Third Republic was not so unstable or tumultuous as most historians would describe. Hanson's illustration of a relatively stable Third Republic France is not altogether convincing in light of the Boulanger and Dreyfus Affairs, as well as the Paris Commune, which Hanson remarkably leaves out of his historical analysis of the Third Republic. However, his criticism of the accepted historical story of the Third Republic is valuable, and casts doubt over some broad declarations of French instability made by James F. McMillan and Stephen Hause.

Charles Boix, like Inglehart and Norris, is a modernization theorist who adjusts the broad tenants of Barrington Moore ("no bourgeoisie, no democracy") to explain historical examples that fall outside of Moore's purview. Boix argues that some countries may not democratize hand-in-hand with economic growth, because the type of economic development is important, as is economic inequality. Even if GDP is high enough to suggest democratization, this may not occur if there is extreme class inequality or the types of existing assets in a particular economy are not desirable.

The democratic system suggests economic equalization and wealth distribution: if a society is economically equal, the elites fear less in the way of wealth redistribution, and they will allow the implementation of democracy via suffrage extensions. If there is a high economic inequality, the elites have more to lose in the democratization process, and will oppose democratic systems.

Boix also describes the *type* of economic assets that will promote or delay democracy formation. An economy heavy in mobile assets (i.e. England), such as banking and investing, allow the wealthy to better retain this type of wealth during democratization. An economy based on immobile assets, such as land, oil, and natural resources, is vulnerable to the redistribution that revolution and democratization may bring. Thus, elites in societies that depend on immobile assets (i.e. Germany) should fear democratization and oppose it.

This modernization argument that is entirely reliant on economy structure to predict democratization faces some obstacles in explaining the French path to democracy. As Hanson explains, ideology and politics are enormously important in the French example, with deep roots in the French Revolution. Likewise, universal male suffrage existed in France in 1870, decades before a true industrial revolution spread to France, and the GDP ballooned to a point that would suggest democratization. Boix's modification to Moore's thesis helps to explain the extremes in Germany and Britain, but lacks explanatory power in France, where economic conditions were less polarized and ideology was so pervasive.

Democracy and the Politics of Electoral System Choices by Amel Ahmed is an interesting approach to the discussion of suffrage extension, and fits in well with my theory on the reluctance of the French elite to extend suffrage to French women. Ahmed essentially argues that electoral systems were originally designed to protect elites from the full impact of democratization and the "existential threat" posed by the working class vote. Rather than seeing democratization move along a path of increased inclusiveness with each wave of suffrage extension, Ahmed rather visualizes a system in which the elites are continuously seeking to impose safeguards that will protect their interests whenever possible.

Although universal male suffrage existed in France at the start of the Third Republic, it was hotly debated on all ends of the political spectrum. Republicans and conservatives alike questioned whether suffrage had been extended too soon, and what the consequences would be of giving the largely uneducated working classes the vote (Ahmed, 143). This questioning of the true ramifications of universal male suffrage came to a head after WWI:

> "As with many other European economies, the war effort had led to unprecedented industrial growth. The effect was especially striking in France, as it shifted the economy from one focused primarily on textile production to one that more resembled the British and Germany economies, focused on heavy industry. This also led to a move away from the decentralized organization of labor in small workshops to more centralized production that brought large numbers of industrial laborers together in factories and working class slums that in later years would be known as the "Red Belt."…Workers also became increasingly radicalized in response to the general revolutionary fervor spreading through Europe in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution. These factors all combined to significantly strengthen the labor movement and give it considerable political leverage" (Ahmed, 160).

This emerging “Red Threat” was the primary concern of the post-war period, which created increased unity on the Right, and persuaded some Republicans to join forces with the Right against communism. This fear of communism was so great that the May 1918 elections were postponed until the electoral system could be adjusted out of fear that in the existing single-member majority system, a Communist victory would ensue (Ahmed, 161). Ahmed’s theory that electoral structure reflects the fears and desires of the elites, not the working classes, supports my argument that the female vote was withheld because the Republican elite feared the female vote would lead to increased influence by the Church and Monarchists in state affairs. When the socialist threat was nonexistent, the Republicans (the majority elite) sought majoritarianism. Once working-class mobilization took off and the radical left gained traction, “advocacy for stronger safeguards increased” (Ahmed, 164). One of these “safeguards” was the enfranchisement of the female vote as a protective measure to dilute the Communist vote.

During the interwar period, when the elite began to view communism as a greater threat than monarchism for the first time in French history, the influx of conservative female voters became a desirable political outcome. In contrast with Hanson, who thought clear ideology mobilized politics in periods of political uncertainty, Ahmed argues that in periods of political uncertainty, the elites are motivated by the desire to minimize the power of the working class groups. These two theories are not mutually exclusive, and work together in interesting ways to justify the actions of the political elite throughout the Third Republic.

France as a Case Study

In light of these theorists, it is necessary to examine France’s nearly ubiquitous place as an important case study in testing theories of democratization, and why case studies are such a frequent tool of political analysis. Case studies are the petri dishes of the social sciences. Whether applying political theory to an individual politician or an entire political movement, real-world examples that follow the lines of a particular theory are extremely convincing evidence. "The case study as a means of building theories seems to me to hold regardless of level of inquiry, but at the macrocosmic level practical research considerations greatly reinforce that belief" (Gomm, 120). Case studies are also valuable in the development of a theory through the detailed examination of history and path-dependency in a specific example. For these reasons, and others, France is an excellent example to develop theories of female enfranchisement in secular democracies, and what factors block or promote enfranchisement of the female vote.

Comparative Political Analysis of Suffrage and Gender Equality

A good political theory will have strong explanatory power, be replicable, and can be re-appropriated to new issues and can provide conclusions that the researcher may not have otherwise foreseen. In this vein, the broad explanatory power of theories ranging from modernization to analyses of political party behavior can together provide a strong theory of female suffrage in France and the lasting effects of religion and secularization for French women and French politics.

While this sort of focus in a comparative study has not been applied to the French case, a doctoral dissertation published by Erika Maza Valenzuela at Saint Antony's College, Oxford University titled, Women's Suffrage and Party Politics in Chile, 1874–1953 (1995) examines the correlation between the date of female suffrage and anticlerical party policy in Chile and

Argentina. Her dissertation holds many theoretical similarities to my proposed thesis, due in part to the several shared characteristics of Chile and France. Firstly, the percentage of Catholics in France and Chile are roughly comparable. Secondly, both Chile and France experienced political instability and a small electorate during the years in which the first wave of Western democracies awarded women the right to vote. Thirdly, both nations had recently begun transitioning to a completely secular government, and were highly protective of their secular republics. Due to these similarities, Valenzuela's dissertation serves as an excellent framework for the French case, and suggests and disproves numerous challenging hypotheses that may also be examined in France.

The popularity of modernization theory has shaped political science theory, economic and political policy, and public opinion by describing a causal relationship between the economic joys of capitalism and the freedoms of democracy. The theory of modernization is, put simply, that economic growth will lead to a democratic "well-to-do society" and all of the liberal rights and luxuries it provides. Theorists such as Seymour Martin Lipset, Daniel Lerner, Walt Rostow, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber posited a variety of causes and consequences of this link between economic growth and democracy, but all concluded that once economic growth crosses a certain threshold, the liberal ideals of representative government, freedom of religion and press, and general equality would be demanded and received by the broader population. Gender equality is a secondary but important element of these modernization theorists, and Robert Inglehart and Pippa Norris examine the condition of women in the tradition of modernization theorists in their book, Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change (2003). Culture, religion, and economic model are the three lenses through which these theorists examine gender equalization to provide conditional criticism for the blanket statement that economic growth equals greater equality for women.

While Inglehart and Norris do generally argue that the more economically developed a nation becomes, the higher the gender equality index (GEI). They also argue that "culture matters, and indeed it matters a lot" (Inglehart and Norris, 8), and that both religion and religious devoutness are correlated with lower gender equality. The quantitative nature of their research on a somewhat abstract topic makes their results all the more convincing. Their most relevant research on the Woman Question in France is their analysis of the effects religion type, secularism, and religious devoutness on gender equality, and their important discussion of "cultural relativism" which posits that subtle differences in culture can greatly affect gender equality in nations that may otherwise be quite similar, such as Great Britain and France. Supportive theories describing the general shift of women from the political Right to Left as well as generational replacement are discussed to propose the direction of the women's movement into the future.

The Changing Logic of Political Citizenship: Cross-National Acquisition of Women's Suffrage Rights, 1890 to 1990 by Francisco Ramirez, Yasemin Soysal, and Suzanne Shanahan is a cross-national examination of female suffrage. This article sets aside the domestic causes of female suffrage to instead examine how international pressures can influence a nation's choice to enfranchise women. When New Zealand, Australia, and Finland first extended the right to vote for women, it was revolutionary. In 1971, when Switzerland became the last industrialized European nation to allow female suffrage, the international response was closer to a collective sigh rather than a celebration.

In this regard, Ramirez, Soysal and Shanahan examine the influence of international pressures on suffrage rather than internal politics or opinion. As the number of nations with female suffrage has increased, the international influence over female suffrage has also increased. Just as the right to same-sex marriage has snowballed in the United States, so too did female suffrage enfranchisement follow an exponential pattern internationally. This concept of international pressures leading to female suffrage may indeed apply to the French case. As the lone Ally in World War II to not allow female suffrage during the interwar period, France was viewed at times as the conservative and backwards member. Although the political reasons for female enfranchisement were many, the effects of these external pressures are worth examining in the issue of female suffrage in France.

Chapter 3
Methodology

Part I

While political instability, Catholic values, and culture are the most common factors attributed to the lateness of female suffrage in France, an overly heavy emphasis has been placed on the prevalence of conservatism and Catholic traditionalism among women and French society in general. I rather hypothesize that in the context of a highly unstable democratic political environment, the threat of an influx of perceived conservative, Catholic female voting bloc was viewed as the ultimate threat against the French Republic; the cultural, religious, and social factors associated with Catholicism in France were less relevant. My argument therefore places primacy on politics rather than on culture or religion.

Rather than attributing the lateness in female suffrage among Catholic countries (compared with Protestant countries) to religious effects on national culture and politics, it is necessary to study the behavior of the majority anticlerical parties who controlled French government throughout the Third Republic to identify motivations for the suffocation of the female vote. While anticlerical groups in Catholic countries may have spoken or written in favor of positive roles for women in political forums, in practice they did not implement policy to enfranchise them because they feared the greater religiosity (and thus conservatism) of women would translate into votes for pro-clerical, conservative, anti-Republican, and perhaps even pro-Monarchical parties, all of which remained very real threats to the rocky French democracy throughout the Third Republic.

I thus hypothesize a fascinating paradox in which political motivation and values of the parties of the Third Republic were at conflict: The Catholic political parties did not believe in the participation of women in society outside of domestic and religious functions, yet saw their political participation as an important tool in increasing the influence of the Church in French politics. The anticlerical parties, while at times more ideologically favorable to the enfranchisement of women in society, rejected female suffrage of fear of the perceived anti-democratic backlash.

For the anticlerical elites in French society, the threat of the conservative female vote was the greatest threat to the unity of the Republic until the rise of communism. Throughout the interwar period and World War II, fear of communism in Western democracies ballooned in response to the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. While the elites were willing to sacrifice a portion of their power in establishing a democracy in order to appease the middle and lower classes to avoid revolution, they were not willing to risk a spread of the communist revolution to their soil. Conservatism spiked in France as a response to Marxism, and the perceived downfall of the Third Republic shifted away from Monarchism and towards communism. Thus, the conservative bloc of women who had once been threatening to the preservation of the French Republic were now viewed as an important conservative crutch to stem the popularity of communism. This extreme shift in French politics compelled Charles de Gaulle to implement an independent motion which allowed women to vote, executed by his provisional government's headquarters in Angiers, Algeria in 1944. After the liberation of France and the defeat of the Germans soon thereafter, French women voted in their first election in 1945.

To evaluate how women earned the right to vote in France, I will analyze two variables. The first is the religious composition of the state of France under the Third Republic (1870-1940), and the second is anticlerical and Catholic groups' responses to the push for female suffrage. The first study is entirely quantitative; statistics on percentages of Catholics and

Protestants in European countries are available, as are the dates that every state allowed women to vote. I hypothesize a positive correlation between the date of female enfranchisement and the percentage of Catholic populations. In other words, the more Catholic a nation, the later their enfranchisement. The second study is primarily qualitative and descriptive; the behaviors of anticlerical groups and Catholic groups are varied and diverse, and neither behaved uniformly. I will generalize the behaviors and motivations of each group in regards to their ideological backgrounds as well as their political goals. This discussion necessarily involves an examination of the political instability of the Third Republic, which will include statistics on the frequency of regime change and public perception of political authority, as well as summaries and explanations of the Dreyfus Affair and the Boulanger Affair. These two events are particularly helpful in illuminating periods of upheaval and instability under the Third Republic.

I will lastly evaluate the motivations behind Charles de Gaulle's final decision to give women the right to vote in 1944 during his provisional government in Algiers, Algeria. I will argue that this decision was largely disconnected from the greater patterns of the anti-clerical/Catholic framework, and was rather influenced by the new and feared forces of communism and the militant Left in the context of Russia's Bolshevik Revolution and the rising threat of the spread of communism in Europe.

France as a Case Study

France has traditionally been a favored case study in political science, along with the United Kingdom and the United States. Its history of political revolution and radical politics has been viewed as exceptional and worth comparison to other industrialized nations. France has had a multi-party system with a prominent communist party, and the creation of coalitions was central to political momentum. Philosophy and ideology were more important in policy design than in the United States and the United Kingdom where public opinion and party platforms held more sway. With the secular democratic Fifth Republic established in 1958, France was comparatively late to join the other major Western Democracies. These and other factors exemplified France as an important case study for its unusual path to democracy.

France is also often used as a case study for its role as a Catholic European state. With a lengthy intellectual history and a larger middle class, France was perhaps viewed as a more refined culture than Belgium, Spain, or Italy. As one of the "big four" of Political Science (the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France), and the only predominantly Catholic state of the group, France is an important case study in regards to the role of religion and the exceptionalism of its politics and history.

Definitions

Anticlericalism: "The evil of clericalism has profoundly infiltrated into what is called the ruling class of this country. Those who spread and promote the evil of clericalism have for twenty years taken such good care, whether in the schools which prepare candidates for careers in public administration or elsewhere…that now they nearly always have, if not the complicity, at least the acquiescence of a large number of public officials." *—Leon Gambetta in the Chamber of Deputies, May 4 1877, Journal officiel de la Republique Francaise*

Gambetta, a popular politician and staunch anticlerical Republican, captures the phobia of the influence of the Church in France. In 1877, only 7 years after end of the (barely) constitutional Emperorship of Napoleon III, the influence of the Pope as a real threat to the secular, representative goals of the Republic were very near. Anticlericals defied any Catholic influence in government, though many were Catholics themselves. They equated Catholic control of government with a return to the Monarchical system, a loss of liberty to the mass of men who had earned their suffrage, and an ideological, political, and intellectual regression.

Republican: Most Republicans were also anticlerical, but not all. The Republican Party was in favor of a representative Republic in France, though this took many forms to different politicians, and thus it was not a uniform party but rather a coalition of parties with varying ideologies. Some favored a Republic with a King or Emperor at the helm (Bonapartists, among others), while others supported a true democracy with universal male suffrage. I will generally use anticlerical, Republican, and Socialist interchangeably, since all were widely opposed to the Catholic Church and conservatives, and shared similar political motivations in regard to allowing women to vote.

Conservative: The conservative party was associated with the Catholic Church, though not all conservatives were necessarily pro-clerical. The Conservative party tended to be in favor of restrictions on suffrage, and even had tinges of anti-semitism that were revealed during the Dreyfus Affair. Overall it was a small yet vocal minority in the French government that consistently opposed Republicans and was generally aligned with the Catholic Church.

Socialists (*Le Parti Socialiste, les Socialistes, le Parti Radical-Socialiste*): Formed in 1902, the

Socialist Party and its affiliated groups represented the urban poor, the labor classes, and fought hard for unions and worker's rights. This group was ideologically close in some ways to Marxist thought in regards to government intervention in the economy and personal life. They were wholly opposed to the female vote, since women were perceived as religious and conservative.

Catholicism and Religiosity: Catholicism is the primary religion of France and has a substantial role in French history and culture. France is often referred to as "*la fille aînée de l'église"* (the eldest daughter of the Church). In the last century or so, the Catholic identity in France has been declining, with decreased religious participation and increased secularism. While many in France still celebrate Christian holidays and follow regional religious traditions, the deeper Catholic identity and influence is on a steep decline.

To measure this decline in Catholic identity, or as I will call it, religiosity, I may choose from a variety of factors. Survey responses regarding belief in God, days per week spent attending Church, etc. are all fair measures, but most surveys of this type exist only within the last half-century. To measure religiosity in France, I will use church attendance per week; the more one attends church, the more "religious" one can assume them to be.

French Third Republic: The French Third Republic lasted from 1870, when Napoleon III was defeated during the Franco-Prussian War, to 1944 when Paris fell to the Nazis. The Third Republic is marked by periods of intense political instability, most notably the Dreyfus Affair and the Boulanger Affair. Ministries and cabinets changed frequently, often lasting only a few months at a time before being removed or replaced by new politicians.

The legacies of the Napoleonic Code and the glory of the Napoleonic Empire hang heavy over this era as well, with many Frenchmen yearning for a rebirth of the glory that France had seen at the turn of the 19th century. The misogynistic legacy of the Napoleonic Code prevailed as well; though women were given many rights after the French Revolution in 1789, Napoleon swiftly reversed them. Throughout this period, gradual expansions to universal male suffrage were implemented as well. Thus this period was marked by political turmoil, public concern over the role and influence of the government, as well as a political mobilization of the working classes.

Part II

Once women had earned the right to vote in 1944, it became crucial to French politics to understand exactly what they would do with it through the 20th and 21st centuries. As Gill Allwood and Khursheed Wadia write in *Women and Politics in France (1958-2000)*, "Religiosity has frequently been found to interact with gender as a significant factor in studies of political behaviour" (Allwood and Wadia, 7). Today, the debate between secular parties and conservative parties pushing for religious inclusion in government remains at the fore of French politics. While the lines between Right and Left are different than they were in 1944, the conservative parties tend to have closer ties to religious groups, while leftist parties tend to be supportive of a secular political agenda.

The role of women in this debate has changed dramatically from 1944, as women in France, following the same lines as most women globally, have largely shifted politically from the Right to the Left. I will attempt to draw a correlation in modern France between religiosity and voting behavior. I will seek to measure whether the assumption that women were more conservative was men was (and is) indeed true, and to what extent this may be attributed to their higher religious devoutness. I hypothesize that women have been and continue to be more devout than men, although I hypothesize a shift among both sexes away from religious association, as the trend towards secularism has been well documented in France and other developed nations throughout the latter part of the 20th century. Of those who remain regular churchgoers, I would predict a stronger inclination towards conservative ideologies. In other words, while women on the whole in France may have become less devout, a correlation between devoutness and conservatism may continue to exist. Women who do not identify with a religion, or who identify as Atheist, should be more likely to vote towards the Left.

To measure these trends, I will use French National Election Study data from the years 1968, 1988, and 1997. For each of these years, I will seek to find whether women identify further on the right of the ideological spectrum than men, whether women report attending church more often than men, and finally whether frequency of Church attendance is a good indicator of political ideology among women and men.

By asking similar questions in each of these decades, I will also be able to show whether the answers to these questions have changed over time or remained static. Other research shows a dramatic trend in France towards secularism and away from Catholic devoutness in the 20th century, and I suspect that this secularization will have a measurable effect on shifting ideological association away from the Right as well.

I will conduct this analysis using the Stata statistics software. I will condense ideological spectrum measurements to a 3-point scale (1=left, 2=center, 3=right) to simplify my analysis. The 1997 study employed this 3-point scale for self-identification of ideology, and I found it to be the simplest and most universal measurement for Ideology. I condensed broader scales of ideology from 1968 and 1988 to fit this 3-point scale for the sake of continuity.

I will similarly create a common measurement for church attendance to streamline comparisons between the three studies. I will lastly chart the changes in these measurements over time to identify changes, and to perhaps suggest a direction of female ideological shifts that could persist into the future.

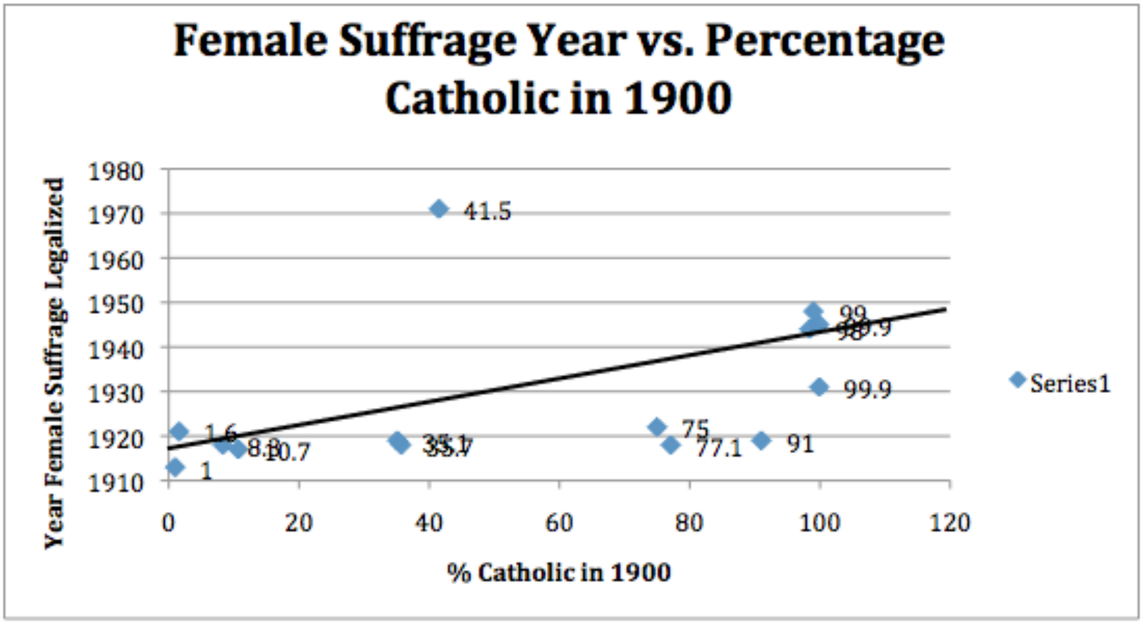
Perhaps the Socialist-Republican majority of the Third Republic was right to believe that women, who were more devout than men, would be more likely to vote to the right of the ideological spectrum. It will also be interesting to uncover whether these ideological preferences are indeed linked to gender, as these political parties believed, or whether ideological preference is more closely linked to church attendance. It is not only a relevant question for their time, but also necessary to answer today in order to better understand the ideological motivations of women in France and to predict their behavior as religiosity and conservatism continue to shift.

Chapter 4

Female Suffrage in France: Anticlericalism, Conservatism, and Instability in the Third Republic

Introduction

The struggle for female suffrage in Catholic democracies is a unique yet important question of political enfranchisement and the nuanced effects of religion, politics, and culture on political accessibility for historically repressed groups. Predominantly Catholic states tended to expand suffrage to women later than predominantly Protestant states. Historians have long argued that this late expansion of female suffrage in Catholic democracies was primarily due to domestic roles laid for women in Catholic culture imposed by clerical leadership. Protestant nations that lacked a similar link to the Church were culturally more receptive to the expansion of suffrage to women and allowed the women's vote earlier.



Sources: Pew Research Center and the Inter-Parliamentary Union

A strong trend is visible that European countries with a lower Catholic percentage in 1900 allowed female suffrage earlier while European countries with a higher Catholic population in 1900 enfranchised women in the 1930s and 40s. The single outlier is Switzerland, who did not allow the female vote until 1971.

Although it is clear that there is a correlation between Catholicism and late female enfranchisement, I will argue that this relationship is not directly causal. The explanation that Catholic culture and the influence of the Church is solely responsible for female political oppression creates too universal of a claim about Catholic culture in general and the nuanced issue of suffrage more specifically. In examining the Western European political environment of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, I will conclude that the delay in female suffrage in Catholic European democracies was rather led by anticlerical parties that feared the effect of the predominantly Catholic female voting bloc on electoral outcomes, electoral balances, and political instability. Due to the perceived vulnerability of the institutions of the early French Third Republic embodied in the Boulanger Affair and the Dreyfus Affair, anticlerical parties feared that the large influx of new conservative female votes would cause political upheaval while shifting the political landscape towards the conservative right.

While anticlerical groups in Catholic democracies may have held more sophisticated convictions on feminism and the role of women in government, the Republican and Socialist majority parties of France did not seek to enfranchise women. The fear that women's greater religiosity would tip the already fragile electoral scales toward pro-monarchical and conservative votes paralyzed the leftist majority from expanding suffrage to women despite their more liberal cultural perceptions of women. Meanwhile, the Catholic Church, an entity with historically traditional roles for women limited to domestic and religious functions, saw the influx of a large conservative voting bloc as essential, and emerged in favor of female enfranchisement in the early 20th century.

I will therefore seek to illustrate a paradox in which the political strategy and the values of anticlerical and conservative parties were at odds. In the case of female suffrage, when perceived political foes threaten the power of a political majority, they will abandon their ideological roots in order to preserve their power and secular government institutions. In this way, I will show that political strategy, rather than cultural or ideological motivations, served as the primary causal factor in the drive towards female suffrage in France and other Catholic democracies.

History of Women's Rights in France

French collective memory would like to believe that Charles de Gaulle was the hero of the French suffrage movement, rewarding female participation in the Resistance with the right to vote in 1944. In reality, de Gaulle was not a suffragist; not only was he an outspoken anti-suffragist, but not a single woman ever worked in his provisional government, even at the secretarial level (Chaperon, 306). Looking for a clean break from the failures of the Third and Fourth Republics, he needed to make a statement that would shift his reputation from conservative to progressive in order to be more in line with allied leadership, as well as a bolster against the rise of communism in France. A provisional assembly in Algiers passed the measure to extend the right to vote to women on April 21st with 51 votes for and 16 against (Chaperon, 306), 26 years after Britain and Germany, and one year before Italy.

The elections of 1945 were not the first time that French women had been given political agency. In 1302, the first recorded female signatures appeared on village assembly records and the *Loy et coutume de Beaumont*, passed in 1182, gave widows and women whose husbands were in military service some autonomy over their finances and property (Hause 1984, 3). The Catholic Church similarly granted women in powerful religious orders some political rights in the 17th and 18th centuries (Hause 1984, 4). Yet by 1789, all parties of the French Revolution opposed women's suffrage, and most political and legal rights were denied to French women (Hause 1984, 5). Due to the masculine and feminine pronouns used in the French language, the revolutionary Constitution of 1791 implicitly denied female civil liberties and voting rights by using the masculine noun *citoyen* rather than including the feminine *citoyenne* or the neutral *citoyens* (Hause 1984, 11), and women were denied all political inclusion in the First French Republic. After the Revolution, equal divorce and inheritance rights were awarded to women, but these were soon abolished in 1804 under Napoleon Bonaparte's legal code (Hause 1984, 6). Not a single revolutionary leader supported female inclusion in the new French democracy, and political suppression of women deepened under the Napoleonic Empire.

The role of women in violent protest preceding and during the French Revolution is often cited as the first case of French feminist action. The Bread Riots were led primarily by women too poor to feed their families during the famines through the 1780s (Hause 1984, 115-116) and had a profound impact on the popularity of the Revolution. Similarly, the role of anti-Prussian female activists during the Franco-Prussian War was notable, as illustrated in the popular French short story, *Boule de Suif* by Guy de Maupassant.

Despite these early militant feminist beginnings, the French Feminist movement was tamer than the Suffragette movements in Britain and the United States. The proper mentality in the bourgeois fashion was of demure, dignified discourse—and the early French feminist movement consisted only of the Parisian bourgeoisie. Though these bourgeois feminists varied in their philosophy, they did not vary in action, preferring assemblies and discussion groups to activism and protest. Since most of the feminist movement was concentrated within the bourgeois class, these women were relatively passive and polite in their action (Hause 1984, 116) as compared to the militancy of the British and American suffragettes. The early days of the French feminist movement (1880-1900) consisted of some men and women, mostly Parisians, discussing a wide rage of issues under the umbrella of "The Woman Question."

The Feminist movement began as secular and Republican. Protestants, Jews, Atheists, Freemasons, and some progressive Catholics were the main "troops," and worked within the legal framework of the French Constitution to bring about legislation to support female suffrage (Chaperon, 308). The question of taxation played a large role in the demands of early French Suffragists: Women were taxed on their family's income and their inheritance and therefore protested being taxed without representation in Parliament. A central tenant of the Feminist argument originally proposed in 1878 by the important French feminist, Hubertine Auclert, was that women should not carry the burdens of government without its corresponding rights (Hause 1984, 15-24).

These French Suffragists predominantly belonged to leftist political parties, ranging from Radical Socialist to Republican. Despite the political progressiveness of bourgeois French feminists, the majority of women in France remained highly devout and conservative. The perceived instability of the French democracy during and following the Dreyfus and Boulanger Affairs, combined with the rapid political shifts between Liberalism and Bonapartism, meant that women who wanted democracy – Republicans – often fought against their own party's stance on The Woman Question in their support of female enfranchisement. The Dreyfus Affair and the Boulanger Affair are crucial junctures in the Third Republic, and help illustrate these most critical moments of instability of the era. The Dreyfus and Boulanger Affairs were "very serious political crises that reinforced the impression of a government whose very survival was open to question" (Hause 1984, 26).

The Boulanger Affair and the Dreyfus Affair: Instability in the Third Republic

The Boulanger Affair was a near-coup d'etat led by French General, Georges Boulanger, and the political ideology he inspired, *Boulangisme*. His ideology that French identity was rooted in nationalism rather than class was popular in the late 19th century, especially in light of his emphasis on *la Revanche*, or revenge against Germany for the humiliation of the Franco-Prussian War. As a military leader, he was barred from political office during active duty by the French Constitution, but due to overwhelming public support in Paris, was elected a member in the House of Deputies for the Parisian constituency. Following this win, a coup d'état seemed to many to be inevitable. Backed by clerical leadership and the conservative right, but perceived as a possible military dictator by the left, he became more popular that Republican leaders in Paris, which had previously been a stronghold of democracy and the Left.

Seeing the threat of a coup and the ever-growing popularity of Boulanger, French Minister of the Interior, Ernest Constans utilized the many significant powers of the Minister of the Interior to reign in police troops and outlaw the Leauge of Patriots, a Boulangiste political group of which Boulanger was a member (Fulton, 317). He was eventually forced to flee France to avoid arrest and his coup narrowly failed. Anger over perceived government corruption blossomed during Boulanger's exile, although his supporters waned in number after his flight from Paris.

The Boulanger Affair brought the stability of the French Republic into question by revealing how close a single charismatic military general could approach a popular military dictatorship. It also revealed the strong popular support that could easily be rallied for a right-wing military leader. The Boulanger Affair bled over into the Dreyfus Affair, with many of the Boulanger supporters assuming the role of the anti-Dreyfusard movement of the Right.

The Dreyfus Affair was a decades-long scandal that challenged the essential legal and political dignity of the French Third Republic and its institutions, as well as unearthed blatant anti-Semitism and xenophobic rhetoric within far Right groups such as the *Action Française*. Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish captain in the French army with an honorable record, came against charges of espionage in 1884 for allegedly providing intelligence to the Germany army. Despite professions of innocence and proof that incriminated another officer, he was charged with treason and sent to a penal colony.

Conservatives, along with the Catholic Church, used the Dreyfus Affair as an example of the weakening of the French Republic and its military and political institutions. With anti-Semitic and conspiratorial rhetoric, Dreyfus was painted as an illustration of the failures of the French democracy. With help from Emile Zola and the Dreyfusards, Dreyfus was eventually pardoned by the French President, but waited 12 years to be officially exonerated and restored his prior military title. Georges Clemenceau, an outspoken Dreyfusard, wrote at the time, "What irony is this that men should have stormed the Bastille, guillotined the king, and promoted a major revolution, only to discover in the end that it had become impossible to get a man tried in accordance with the law!" (Arendt, 196). This sentiment, shared by the larger Dreyfusard movement, reveals the many backwards steps taken during the Third Republic from the liberal idealism and legal equality at the heart of the French Revolution.

Although some view the Dreyfus Affair as a crucial stepping stone to the secularization of government due to the negative influence of the Church over public opinion regarding Dreyfus' innocence, it was overall a clear expression of the fragility of the legal and military frameworks of the Third Republic. As Hannah Arendt, a German-American political theorist writes, "The Dreyfus case is a typical expression of the nineteenth century, when men followed legal proceedings so keenly because each instance afforded a test of its greatest achievement, the complete impartiality of the law" (Arendt, 196).

These political scandals were not isolated events of political turmoil and instability under the Third Republic. Other major events, such as the Panama Scandals and the near-constant ministry shifts in government, revealed a democracy that, while functioning, was at its core gravely unstable. If single public figures such as Georges Boulanger and Alfred Dreyfus could shake the very foundation of French Democracy so critically, what damages might the introduction of an enormous, conservative constituency incur?

Cornerstone Characters of the Catholic Suffrage Movement: Pope Benedict XV and Hubertine Auclert

Although a large portion of French women at the time was in favor of suffrage, most Catholic women were against the suffragette movement. In 1919, however, when Pope Benedict XV spoke in favor of increased female social and political enfranchisement, the Catholic female bloc shifted dramatically in favor of suffragism and legal equality (Hause 1984, 309). This uncharacteristic position taken by Pope Benedict XV was a poorly disguised political maneuver to double the population of the Catholic voting constituency to bolster the waning political influence of the Church in France and Italy (Chaperon, 309). The rise of the popularity of socialist, communist, and other far-left political parties that deeply opposed the Church of the early 20th century were threatening to the pro-clerical cause since these parties deplored the Catholic Church and the monarchical political structures it stood for. It is therefore logical that in the years following the October Revolution, the Catholic Church would shift its position on the critical issue of female suffrage just as the true threat of the waning influence of the Catholic Church was becoming evident.

Pope Benedict XV's discourse changed the political tide for Catholic women in Europe and recognized the increased purview of woman's role in society. Although he remarks, "no novelty of circumstances and events, will ever remove woman, conscious of her mission, from her natural centre, which is the family," he also outlines the new and valuable roles women could begin playing in political discourse:

> "Hence it may be justly said that the changed conditions of the times have enlarged the field of woman's activity. An apostolate of woman in the world has succeeded that more intimate and restricted action which she formerly exercised within the domestic walls; but this apostolate must be carried out in such a manner as to make it evident that woman, both outside and within the home, shall not forget that it is her duty, even to-day, to consecrate her principal cares to the family" (The Tablet, 7).

By commending the public efforts women had made to better their families and their children's access to education, Pope Benedict XV is also speaking in favor of Catholic women participating in political activity. By recognizing the changing political conditions of the early 20th century and the increased inclusiveness of women in the political sphere, Benedict XV is justifying a role for women outside the home and in the realm of politics. Although this same piece goes on to mainly focus on modesty in female dress, its central message was very progressive for the era.

This important shift in opinion by the Pope brought with it a new wave of Catholic Feminists. By the early 20th century, the French suffrage movement was comprised of Socialist

Feminists, Bourgeois-Republican Feminists, and Christian Feminists (Hause 1984, 6-7). The Socialist Feminists included women who identified with the Communist, Socialist, Union, and Labor parties and were mostly of the lower and working classes (Smith, 5). The priorities of this branch of Feminism focused on improved working conditions, establishment of a minimum wage for women, and the ability to divorce (Hause 1984, 163). Despite the gender equality posited in communist thought, the socialist parties of France were staunchly anti-feminist. The class basis of nineteenth century feminism in France and the nature of the Socialists' answer to the Woman Question closed off the possibility of a strong alliance between feminism and Socialism (Smith, 78).

Hubertine Auclert was the leader of the Feminist Left and the Bourgeois-Republican Feminists. Auclert's evolution from being a supporter of women's education and economic independence to eventually supporting women's suffrage is a microcosm of the larger French Feminist movement (Hause 1987, 194-197). Auclert identified as a member of the *Parti Radicale* but was frustrated by the party's backwards stance on divorce and women's suffrage. Despite an upbringing in a convent and a devout Catholic lifestyle, Auclert was in favor of a strict separation of Church and State (Hause 1987, 183). She is often described as the only true "Suffragette" in the French cause due to her militant tactics. This untraditional approach to protest culminated in the *Congrès National des Droits Civils et du Suffrage Des Femmes* (National Congress of Civil Rights and Female Suffrage) in 1908, which succeeded in forming an alliance between the Bourgeois Feminists and the Republican Feminists. This alliance created the largest and most moderate Feminist coalition of the era (Hause 1987, 202), and played an important role in legitimizing the suffrage movement in France.

The Politics of Article 21: Earning the Right to Vote

The Bourgeois-Republican Feminist movement consisted of middle class, affluent women, and was split into moderate and militant wings (Hause 1984, 40). Membership in this movement was solely urban: 95% of the national membership lived in Paris, while the remainder lived in Lyon (Hause 1984, 43). Teachers and students made up the majority of the membership: the aristocracy and working classes were not generally included. In a nation that was over 90% Catholic, this branch of the Feminist movement included a much lower percentage of Catholic women, who were less interested in the vote pre-1919 than in equalizing women's social rights (Chaperon, 316).

Some Catholic Feminists did exist before the Pope's 1919 shift in favor of female suffrage, but support for Catholic feminist parties ballooned after it. Despite the liberalization of the Church under Pope Benedict XV, French women did tend to be more politically conservative (Hause 1981, 12). The Catholic Feminists were mainly on the political right, but were not uniformly anti-democratic (Hause 1984, 62). Early Christian Feminists focused on the defense of the family rather than on suffrage, which aligned closely with the Church's pre-1919 stance (McMillan, 172). The Female wing of the *Action Française*, a strong right-wing political group with roots in Catholicism, was the *Ligue des Femmes Française*s, a like-minded right-wing group that grew to over 1.5 million members in the interwar period (McMillan, 371). These sorts of conservative, pro-clerical, Catholic Feminist groups stoked the paranoia of Socialist and Republican polities, and their popularity also contributed to the continuing unwillingness of anticlerical parties to admit female voters in the French system.

During the interwar period, legislation awarding women the right to vote was passed in

Britain, Germany, the United States, Canada, and Austria, as well as several other developed nations. This was partly due to the contributions made by women to the war effort while the male workforce was deployed during World War I, as well as the expansion of public education to women in most developed nations. The suffrage leagues in France, however, emerged from World War I more quietly than they had entered it (Hause 1984, 212). The female suffrage effort had refocused on anti-Bolshevic and patriotic causes, with growing membership in the humanitarian efforts of *le Croix Rouge* and other similar organizations. This shift to patriotic philanthropic causes stalled the Feminist movement for several years while progress for women was being made in neighboring countries with more militant suffragette movements (Hause 1981, 25-26).

During this same period, political pushes for female suffrage suffered as well. In both 1919 and 1922, the lower house of French parliament approved the vote for women, but the motion was voted down each time for review by the *Sénat*, the upper parliamentary body that was responsible for passing legislation (Chaperon, 311). In 1936, the same measure passed unanimously in the *Chambre des Deputé*s with the *Senat* once again refusing to take the measure up for vote. The *Parti Radical* and the *Parti Socialiste* blocked the bill, and saw themselves as, in their words, "*gardiens de la laïcité*" (guardians of secularism), since women were still perceived as minions of the Church's political motives (Chaperon, 311). Although women were not to earn the right to vote until much later, several women ran for and won political and bureaucratic positions in local governments, and three women were appointed as secretaries in the national government (Chaperon, 312). It was not until 1944 when the women of France were preoccupied with the woes of occupation and the Resistance that they would earn their right to vote.

Throughout the Third Republic, the great political foes of the Republic were monarchists and conservatives who sought recognition of the institutions of the Church and the Monarchy in varying degrees. By 1917, this great political foe had morphed into the ill understood yet dangerous threat of communism. Throughout the Interwar period and World War II, this profound fear of communism in Western Democracies grew significantly, and resulted in a conservative backlash to Socialist and communist ideology that gave conservative parties more power in France.

In this way, under Charles de Gaulle, the conservative bloc of women who had once been perceived as a central threat to French democracy and secularism now became the pillar of conservatism needed to counterbalance the perceived rise of communism. This extreme shift in French politics towards the right allowed for the election and popularity of de Gaulle. Seeing the strategic benefit in conservative female voters, de Gaulle extended suffrage to women by way of an independent motion, Article 21, in 1944. Unlike suffrage extensions that had preceded female enfranchisement in France and other democracies, de Gaulle's provisional government in Angiers, Algeria, decided this independent motion without a representative vote.

According to de Gaulle's war memoirs, the decision was based in simple necessity. "This tremendous reform put an end to controversies that had lasted for fifty years" (Hause 1984, 251). Despite this anticlimactic conclusion, Hause writes,

> "The diminished influence of the Radical and Radical-Socialist Party, the appearance of a Catholic party that hoped to win the votes of women, the role of women during the occupation, and the fear of communist strength deriving from their role in the resistance surely all contributed" (Hause 1984, 251).

In 1945, after Article 21 was enforced for the first postwar democratic election in France, the *Mouvement Républicain Populaire*, the political party of Charles de Gaulle, painted de Gaulle as a liberator of France and a liberator of French women. The decades of activism, writing, and campaigning of suffrage groups were ignored (Duchen, 34). On April 21, 1944, foreseeing an end to the Vichy reign in France and the return of Gaullism, a new French constitution was drafted which explicitly gave women the right to vote (Duchen, 35). The constitution reads, "the law guarantees to the woman, in all domains, rights equal to those of men" (Auvert, 99).

Catholicism and Feminism: At Odds?

It is impossible to examine the historical background of suffrage in France without first considering the influence of Catholicism, since over 98% of France self-identified as Catholic at the turn of the century and those who identified as Catholic were very devout. For every 10,000 individuals, the Church had 14 priests (Haine, 10) and the only real form of education for women was in Catholic convents. The Catholic women's movement in France converted more Frenchwomen to suffragism than all other types of suffrage groups combined (Hause 1981, 11), partly due to the sheer number of active Catholic women, but also due to the broad goals and tactics of the Catholic feminist movement that were inclusive of most women, regardless of class or political affiliation.

Catholic women's groups had many goals that varied across political parties and socioeconomic classes. Some were concerned with women's issues regarding workplace conditions, others with prostitution and solicitation, others with legal equality in divorce and finances, and yet others with suffrage and political equality (Hause 1981, 13). Catholic women's groups identified first and foremost as religious groups, and thus followed the position of the Church regarding the role of women in the family, society, and politics, but were also concerned with social issues that lay outside of the Church's reach, such as monitoring workplace conditions and wage regulations for women. Gaining the right to vote would allow these women to contribute to their religion in the political arena, as they already did in the domestic one. Marie Maugeret, an early founder of the Catholic suffragist movement, wrote, "Catholic feminism alone is French feminism, the only form which can acclimate itself to our national temperament" (Hause 1981, 14).

After 1919, the motion of the Catholic women's movement had shifted to voting equality rather than social and workplace issues (McMillan). The liberalization of the Catholic population and the women's movement was due in part to Pope Benedict XV, but also to Jules Ferry, the Minister of Public Instruction, who in 1880 helped to establish mandatory public *lycées* that were secular, included both sexes, and followed standardized state-controlled curriculum (McMillan, 366). Women were permitted in the public *lycées* but were not permitted to take the Baccalauréat except in exceptional circumstances. Prior to the institution of public education for both sexes, women were educated either by private tutors or by the Church. By making the education of women public and secular rather than private and religious, a new generation of men and women were educated in inter-sex cooperation outside of the home and in non-religious subject material.

Soon thereafter in 1885, divorce was legalized for French women, and finally in 1907, women were awarded general autonomy over their income and the option for custody of their children after divorce (Hause 1984, 14). This shift in the liberalization of the French mindset combined with the compulsory public education of both sexes equipped French Catholic women with the tools to pursue their political equality in the 20th century. Despite these advances in education and social norms, women's access to the political realm remained static. For this reason, it is difficult to cite social and religious opposition to women's rights as the only factor in the delay in women's suffrage in Catholic countries. Despite broad strides in education, religious inclusion, and general liberalization of the public on the opinion of women, the right to vote remained elusive. For these reasons, I look to a political explanation to account for these discrepancies.

Anticlerical Parties and the Suffragism Paradox

If the *Chambre des Députés* and the *Sénat* had passed pro-feminist legislation on divorce and financial protection by 1907, why would it take another 37 years for women to win the right to vote? The answer lies not in the moral or cultural construction of the French population, but rather in the political motivations of French Republicans and other anticlerical parties. Across the Channel in England, the House of Commons passed female suffrage in 1918. Richard J. Evans and other political theorists argue that the early advancement of women's suffrage in Protestant states was due to the absence of the Catholic Church's tyranny over cultural and political ideologies. In 1982, he writes, "The Catholic Church was the most persistent and intractable of the feminists' enemies," and posits that anticlerical parties were more supportive of women's rights than Christian parties (McMillan 1982, 951). As represented by the numerous Catholic feminist organizations of the era and the support proclaimed by the Church for women's suffrage in 1919, this seems to be a difficult position to defend, and historians James McMillan and Steven C. Hause agree.

McMillan writes extensively on the political narrow-mindedness of the *Parti Républicain* and the *Parti Radicale* on the Woman Question and their deep misogyny towards women in society. He argues that anticlericals criticized Catholics for their backwards and oppressive views towards women in French culture while their parties hypocritically voted down equality for women in the *Sénat*. McMillan notes that one Republican politician gave a well-received speech arguing that women could only be either "housewives or harlots" (McMillan 1982, 363) – a similar dichotomy present in Second Wave Feminist critiques of political and social patriarchy (Millett). McMillan isolates the debate over educational rights for girls to illustrate the fundamentally similar viewpoints by Republican and Catholic groups on the Woman Question.

While anticlericals spoke scathingly about the quality of education for Catholic women by nuns, they were similarly opposed to introducing equality between boys and girls in the public schools (McMillan 1982, 365). The anti-feminist philosophy of the anticlericals is not to say that Catholics were outwardly feminist. They were anything but. McMillan is rather arguing that although commonly held notions that Catholics were hostile to the female vote under the Third Republic are often true, the perception that Republicans were any less hostile is incorrect. McMillan's portrait of a universally disagreeable cultural climate to the enfranchisement of women serves to isolate the political reasons for the anticlerical opposition of women's suffrage as an important variable in this study. Since the fundamental belief that women were either too conservative (Republicans) or destined for more domestic pursuits (Catholic and Conservative parties), the ideological and cultural roles set for women in both groups ran counter to the pro-suffrage movement. Because both the Church and anticlerical parties were equally hostile to women, the reason for delayed female suffrage in France must be sought in the political strategies of majority parties.

Steven C. Hause provides the best argument to support the notion that cultural variables were comparatively irrelevant in the struggle for female suffrage in France, and that political motivations of Republican and Conservative parties were rather the driving force. His argument includes cultural explanations for the late women's suffrage in France but eventually isolates the political motives of anticlerical parties as the primary factor that prevented women from earning the right to vote in France (Hause 1984, 24-28). His illustration of the Radical-Socialist Third Republic is more favorable in regards to the political stance on women, but he likewise states that anticlerical parties feared the enfranchisement of the devoutly Catholic female population would lead to more pro-clerical opponents (Hause, 1981). Where McMillan paints a misogynistic portrait of the Radical-Socialist anticlerical alliance, Hause describes an alliance that may have been generally more sympathetic to women's rights, but feared the anti-Republican consequences of their electoral liberation. In an e-mail interview with Professor Hause, he writes, "Indeed, I believe that a version of this [anti-communist] theory is why a profound conservative (De Gaulle) chose to enfranchise women at the end of World War II. He agreed that they would follow the Church and vote anti-communist." He goes on, "I also believe that there is some significant truth in the traditional and domestic roles held for women in Catholic culture having a negative effect on female empowerment in government. I see it as a matter of a nuanced argument, choosing which side is to be stressed."

Hause's argument rightly portrays the paradox that I argue is at the heart of the fight for women's suffrage in France: The conservative, pro-monarchical, and Catholic parties did not believe fundamentally in the participation of women in government, yet saw their enfranchisement as an important political tool in increasing the volume of voters favorable to conservative parties. Anticlerical parties, while at times more ideologically favorable to the women's vote, rejected female enfranchisement out of the (correct) assumption that women would be overall more conservative, more religious, and more hostile to Republican ideologies.

Paul Smith, who studies French Feminism during the downfall of the Third Republic, the interwar period and the Fourth Republic, draws similar conclusions to McMillan and Hause and likewise discredits Evans' cultural explanation. His approach is more complex than either McMillan or Hause in that he also draws broader conclusions regarding the accuracy of current definitions of "universal suffrage" and applies many Second Wave Feminist critiques to this era.

Though Smith agrees with Hause and McMillan that the anticlerical reluctance to give women the right to vote is a better explanatory variable than the influence of Catholic culture, he modifies their theories to include broader feminist critiques. Smith challenges the notion that the beliefs of political parties can be applied to a non-voting populace, especially a populace as diverse as the female population of an entire country (Smith, 5). He argues that the Feminist movement was "distorted by political controversies that were not made by women," and the claim that "Catholics are not reliable Republicans" harmed the French feminist cause although they were not themselves recognized as political entities (Smith, 5-6). In other words, political parties that women were denied entry defined their movement and inhibited their access to the very institutions they were criticized for.

Erika Maza Valenzuela's appropriation of Hause, McMillan, and Evans to the struggle for suffrage in Chile in her doctoral dissertation, Catholicism, Anticlericalism, and the Quest for Women's Suffrage in Chile, shows the broad explanatory power of this political paradox. She similarly agrees with Hause and McMillan's arguments that late transitions to female suffrage in predominantly Catholic countries stem more from the fear of instability caused by a large influx of Catholic voters among anticlerical parties (Valenzuela, 3-4) than by traditional values of the Catholic Church.

Valenzuela argues that the Chilean process to enfranchise women carries a higher contrast between religious groups, social groups, has political parties that behaved more uniformly and predictably than those in France and Britain – and so serves as an excellent Petri dish in which to test the theories of Hause and McMillan (Valenzuela, 5). The fledgling Chilean democracy differs most centrally from the French democracy in that the conservative, Catholic parties quickly identified the strategic benefit women would have to their cause, and decided to participate in the democratic system which they opposed in order to strengthen the political power of the Catholic Church (Valenzuela, 4). This differs from the Catholic pro-monarchical groups of the French Third Republic who so deplored the democratic system that they were slow to effectively operate within it, and so prioritized the role of women's suffrage less. Thus, the conservative Catholic parties of Chile behaved more precisely how Hause and McMillan describe them in France: empathetic towards the women's cause, though not because they necessarily supported it ideologically but rather because they supported it politically.

Considering these factors, Valenzuela concludes that the trends seen previously in Latin Europe correspond closely to those in Latin America, and rejects Evans' thesis that the delay in female suffrage was caused by a Catholic culture emphasizing traditional roles for women (Valenzuela, 46). Her conclusion that anticlerical parties in Chile were responsible for late female suffrage out of fear of the female voting bloc's pro-Catholic political consequences is nearly identical to that of Hause and McMillan, and provides excellent support for the explanatory power of their theses to the French case.

Conclusion

Despite the common sense notion that a conservative Catholic Church with traditional roles for women would oppose women’s suffrage in Catholic countries, I have argued that the responsibility for the lateness in female political enfranchisement in Catholic countries lies with the anticlerical parties who feared the conservative influence of female voters. This paper has also posited that this theory is most evident in fledgling Catholic democracies in which the democratic framework is unstable. Perceptions of vulnerability of the state and fear of pro-monarchical sentiments among women created an environment of fear within anticlerical parties that delayed the implementation of female suffrage. The sensitivity to these issues held by the anticlerical majority blocked the women of France and other fledgling Catholic democracies from earning the right to vote as quickly as their non-Catholic counterparts.

Chapter 5
Female Ideology and Religiosity in France, 1945-Present

Introduction

The story of how women earned the right to vote in France ended in 1945 with female participation in their first municipal elections. Despite the benign effects of female enfranchisement in neighboring European states, the political perceptions of female voters that existed prior to World War II persisted. They were thought to be a more conservative and more religious voting bloc than men, and there were fears that the growing influence of the Catholic Church in the tenuously secular post-Vichy Republic could tip France toward Catholic influence. Yet others touted the possible benefits of this conservative, clerical shift in light of the sharp rise of Communist popularity in France.

These assumptions were based on preconceived notions about female behavior and piety. The belief that women were more conservative than men was developed before a single French woman had ever cast a vote. It is therefore worthwhile to discern, based on the actual ideological and religious behaviors of French women, whether they were truly more religious and conservative than men and whether their devoutness is itself a good indicator of their political ideology.

Based on data assembled in French National Election Studies, it is possible to quantify these assumptions and test them against the actual preferences and beliefs of French women and men. I also sought to determine whether the answers to these questions would change over time, beginning at the outset of the Fifth Republic and continuing through the legislative elections of 1997.

Religiosity and Ideology in French Female Voters

To measure ideological association in 1968 and 1988, I condensed political and ideological measurements to a 3-point scale in which 1=Left, 2=Center, and 3=Right. In 1997, a 3-point self-reporting scale was already included in the questionnaire. I chose to measure ideology rather than vote choice because vote choice may vary drastically with election cycles (especially in multi-party systems in which party identity is more fluid). Ideology tends to be stable regardless of political parties or election cycle. As a matter of practicality particular to the French multi-party system, many of the parties that existed in the 1968 study simply did not exist in 1988 or 1997, so ideology was a better measure in this longitudinal study.

To measure devoutness or "religiosity," I found the best measurement to be frequency of Church attendance. Church attendance was measured on the following scale: "more than once per week," "once per week," "several times per year," "once per year," and "never." Using these measurements, I tabulated whether there was a statistical association between respondents who attended Church frequently and their ideological bend. It quickly became clear that there was a significant association between religious devoutness and conservatism in each year studied, although the nature of this association was different among men and women and changed over time. There was also a striking increase in those who identified as having "no religion" in France.

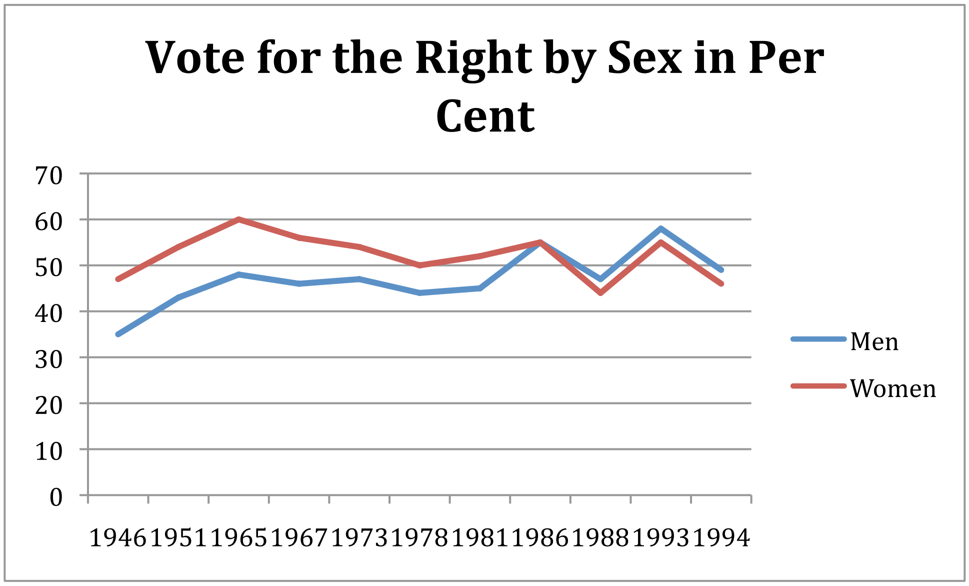
In 1968, 27% of women identified as Left, 9.7% of women as Center, and 41.6% as Right. This is compared with 30.5% of men who were ideologically Left, 12.3% who were Center, and 37.8% who were Right.

Table 1: Left-Right preference, 1968

Left-Right Scale	Male	Female
Left	30.5	27.0
Center	12.3	9.7
Right	37.8	41.6
N/A	19.3	21.7

Source: French National Election Study, 1968 (ICPSR 7247)

This indicates that theories that women were more ideologically to the right of men were indeed true, even twenty-two years after the first French elections in which women participated. This conflicts somewhat with data presented by Gill Allwood and Khursheed Wadia that shows this trend as early as 1946. According to their measurements, in 1968 only 33% of women voted to the Left while 56% voted right, compared with 44% of men who voted Left and 46% who voted right.



Source: Gill Allwood and Khursheed Wadia, 2000. "Vote for the left and right by sex, in per cent." ***Women and Politics in France 1958-2000*****.**

Women consistently voted right more often than men until 1986 when men matched women in votes for the Right at 55%. Men voted slightly more right than women in the 1988, 1993, and 1994 election years. What Allwood and Wadia's data reveals is that in the very first election in which women could vote in 1946, more women actually voted left (53%) than right (47%)

(Allwood and Wadia, 124) but by 1951, women had reverted to the Right, a pattern that continues in Allwood and Wadia's data until 1988. The only years in which more men voted parties of the Right than Left, however, were 1967 (by a slim margin without a majority) and 1986.

According to my data analysis, by 1988 women had shifted to the left for good.

Table 3:Left-Right Preference, 1988

Left-Right Scale	Male	Female
Left	46.8	50.0
Center	3.6	2.4
Right	32.8	30.9
N/A	16.9	18.4

Source: French National Election Study, 1988 (ICPSR 6583)

In 1988, 50% of women were ideologically Left, 2.4% were Center, and 30.9% were Right. This striking shift from ideological preferences 20 years earlier is telling of the overall shift of French women from the Right to the Left. Men had also shifted slightly to the Left, with 30.5% identifying as Left in 1968 and 46.8% in 1988. The trend continues in 1997.

Table 4: Left-Right Preference, 1997

Left-Right Scale	Male	Female
Left	42.6	38.6
Center	22.7	25.1
Right	32.4	33.5
N/A	2.3	2.7

Source: French National Election Study, 1997 (ICPSR 3138)

Although the female respondents identifying as Center has increased significantly from 2.4% in 1988 and 9.7% in 1968, women continue to identify as more ideologically Left than Right. However, they do remain slightly more ideologically Right than men.

Explanations for Problematic Statistics

The trend in women from the ideological Right to the Left is fairly consistent, though there are curious values for a few years. For instance, the significant drop from 50% of women identifying as Left in 1988 to only 38.6% in 1997 is problematic. Similarly, the increase from 30.9% of women identifying as Right in 1988 compared with a slight increase of 33.5% in 1997 conflicts with a clean shift away from the Right. Several possible confounding factors can be identified to explain these varying measurements.

The rise in popularity of center-right parties prior to this election, most notably Jacques Chirac's dominant *Rassemblent pour la Republique* (RPR, later included in a right-leaning coalition under the *Union pour un Mouvement Populaire*), brought politics toward the center in France. President Chirac called the parliamentary elections of 1997 in an unusual move in order to win a mandate for his somewhat unpopular austerity measures and efforts to replace the franc with the euro (IPU, *web*). His conservative coalition lost its majority, and Center and Socialist parties gained favor in a large coalition. The unusual timing of this election and its reactive nature against the unpopularity of austerity measures and the 35-hour workweek are evident in a shift towards the center among both men and women. This ideological backlash slightly confounds my data in this regard, but should not undermine it completely.

When the results from Allwood and Wadia's trends are combined with the results from French National Election Studies, I conclude that women were once more ideologically Right than men, and that women have gradually drifted to the Left on the ideological spectrum since 1968.

Devoutness and Gender, 1968-1997

The shift towards secularism in France since the turn of the last century is a well-documented phenomenon (Inglehart and Norris, 82). In 1968, 80.6% of men and 86.6% of women identified as Catholic; by 1997, only 69.6% of men and 75.9% of women identified as Catholic. Furthermore, over this 29-year period, the percentage of males without religion rose from 11.7% to 25.3%, and the percentage of females without religion rose from 7.4% to 19.3%. As has been the trend in the rest of my research, women across the board remain more likely to identify as Catholic, and are less likely to identify as having "no religion" than their male counterparts. In other words, although France in general has secularized, women have been slower to shed their Catholic identity.

Table 5: Religious Affiliation by Gender, 1968, 1988, and 1997

Religious Affiliation	1968 Male	Female	1988 Male	Female	1997 Male	Female
Catholic	80.6	86.6	76.6	84.1	69.6	75.9
No Religion	11.7	7.4	19.4	11.8	25.3	19.3

Source: French National Election Study, ICPSR

The striking rise in atheism in France are echoed in other studies of religious affiliation in France; an International Gallup Poll ranked France as the fourth most Atheist country in the world with 34% of polled self-described as "not a religious person" and 29% self-described as "atheist" in 2012. This study did not have a gendered component to compare to the data in the French National Election Studies, though it indicates an important trend in French society on the whole.

Women also report attending Church more often than men, although their Church attendance did not directly decline between 1968 and 1997, as trends towards secularism and Atheism would indicate.

Table 6: Church Attendance Frequency, 1968, 1988, 1997

Religious Attendance	1968		1988		1997	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
More than Once/Wk	20.1	26.5	15	25.2	7.7	16.1
Several Times/Year	24.8	28.3	25.4	24.1	14.8	20.2
Once per Year	6.1	5.6	37.6	33.3	43.4	36.5
Never	38.5	31	21.8	17.3	3.6	2.8

Source: French National Election Study, 1968 (ICPSR 7247), French National Election Study, 1988 (ICPSR 6583), French National Election Study, 1997 (ICPSR 3138)

Women who report attending church once or more each week was 26.5% in 1968, 25.2% in 1988, and 16.1% in 1997. These declines align with trends away from high devoutness in France, although the increase from 3.8% of women who attend church more than once per week to 10.3% in 1997 is an interesting anomaly.

A similar anomaly is the sharp decline in those who say they "never" attend church. In 1968, this was 38.5% of men and 31% of women. By 1988, this had decreased to 21.8% of men and 17.3% of women. By 1997 only 3.6% of men and 2.8% of women report "never" attending church. Those who attend church "once a year" increased dramatically from 6.1% of men and 5.6% of women in 1968 to 43.4% of men and 36.5% of women in 1997.

It is possible that these anomalies can be attributed to the shifting role of church as a hub of cultural identity rather than religious identity in France. While those who attended church very often (once a week or more) has declined, the number of those who never attend church has also declined. Those who say they attend church "several times per year" has more or less remained static. This could suggest that attending services once per year for the most popular service (traditionally *le Messe de Minuit*, or Christmas Mass) could have a cultural/ traditional basis rather than a strictly religious one.

The most important statistic to note about this particular study of church attendance is that despite these anomalies, women attend church more frequently than men across the board. To have no exceptions to this rule in 1968, 1988, nor 1997 is noteworthy, and underscores the notion that regardless of any trend to secularism, women attend church more frequently than men, and can therefore definitely be considered to be a more religious or more devout group than men.

Devoutness and Ideology, 1968-1997

The French National Election Studies indeed show that before the 1988 election, women tended to be on the ideological Right, whereas men tended to be on the ideological Left. After the 1988 election, both women and men tended to be center or left of center, although the 1997 legislative election study shows the popularity of center parties in light of Chirac's recall legislative election.

There is also a clear pattern that women tend to be more religious than men, although both women and men have become less religious since 1968. These two parallel trends towards the ideological Left and away from Catholic devoutness beg the question: Is Catholic devoutness a strong indicator of political ideology, and if so, is this indicator stronger among women, or can it be applied to men as well?

When church attendance is tabulated against Left/Right ideology, a definitive answer emerges. Those who attend church more frequently are reliably Right, and that the more one attends church, the more likely they are to be ideologically conservative. Likewise, those who rarely or never attend church are more likely to be ideologically Left. Since men tend to attend Church less often, they are also less likely to be ideologically conservative, though men who attend Church very frequently are much more likely to be conservative. This tendency raises a secondary question as to whether it is ideology that causes religiousness, or religiousness that determines political ideology.

In 1968, of women who attended church several times per week, 63.9% were ideologically Right; even of women who attended church once per week, 62.2% were ideologically Right. On the other end of the spectrum, 29.4% of women who "never" attend church were ideologically Right. This striking spread indeed implies a direct relationship between religiosity and ideology and directionality from church attendance to conservatism.

Table 7: Left-Right Preference and Religious Attendance in Women, 1968

Left-Right Scale	Several Times per Week	Once per Week	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No Response ("?")
Left	11.1	7.5	30.3	13.2	36.9	47.6
Center	16.7	16.4	8.6	7.6	7.2	3.7
Right	63.9	62.2	42.7	54.7	29.4	9.8
N/A	8.3	14.0	18.4	24.5	26.6	39.0

Source: French National Election Study, 1968 (ICPSR 7247)

This pattern holds with men as well. Of men who attend church several times per week, only 7.1% identified as Left. This is compared with 41.3% of men who "never" attend church who were Left. This spread is significant when considering that 30.5% of all men of that year were ideologically Left and 37.8% were Right.

Table 8: Left-Right Preference and Religious Attendance in Men, 1968

Left-Right Scale	Several Times per Week	Once per Week	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No Response ("?")
Left	7.1	11.8	23.6	22.4	41.3	48.0
Center	35.7	24.2	9.7	8.6	10.3	3.9
Right	57.1	46.6	44.7	44.8	32.1	20.6
N/A	.00	17.4	21.9	24.1	16.3	27.5

Source: French National Election Study, 1968 (ICPSR 7247)

It is clear that both men and women who attend church more frequently are more ideologically Right of those who attend less frequently. Since it was previously shown that women attend church more frequently than men, it can be determined that women's religiosity has a measurable effect on their political ideology. This trend continues in the 1988 and 1997 French National Election Studies as well.

The 1988 election showed a clear shift to the ideological Left among French men and women. 46.8% of men and 50% of women were ideologically Left, and only 32.8% of men and 30.9% of women were ideologically Right. This shift comes with a deepening of the relationship between devoutness and the Right in both men and women.

In both sexes, the more frequently one attends church, the less likely they are to be ideologically Left:

Table 9: Left-Right Preference and Religious Attendance in Men, 1988

Left-Right Scale	Several Times per Week	Once per Week	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No Response ("?")
Left	8.3	18.2	36.7	50.4	54.8	.0
Center	8.3	.0	7.1	2.1	1.2	.0
Right	63.9	63.6	43.9	33.8	21.4	.0
N/A	19.4	18.2	12.2	13.8	22.6	100

Source: French National Election Study, 1988 (ICPSR 6583)

Table 10: Left-Right Preference and Religious Attendance in Women, 1988

Left-Right Scale	Several Times per Week	Once per Week	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No Response ("?")
Left	22.4	31.4	47.8	52.6	59.3	.0
Center	6.0	7.8	1.8	1.3	.0	.0
Right	50.8	49.0	24.8	30.1	21.0	.0
N/A	20.9	11.8	25.7	16.0	19.8	100

Table 12: Left-Right preference and Religious Attendance, 1988. Source: French National Election Study, 1988 (ICPSR 6583)

Similarly, only about 21% of both sexes self-reported as ideologically Right when they "never" attended church, compared with 63.9% of men and 50.8% of women who attended church more than once a week.

In 1997, even as women and men retreated to the ideological Center and to the Right, this pattern of devoutness and conservatism deepens. 62.6% of women who attended church more than once a week were ideologically Right compared with only 18.4% who were ideologically Left. The difference in Right-Left percentage among very religious female voters was 44.2 in 1997; among all female voters, it was only 5.1. This staggering spread is an example of the trend that persisted in each election year I studied, and deepened with each measured election year between 1968 and 1997 among both men and women.

Table 11: Left-Right Preference and Religious Attendance in Men, 1997

Left-Right Scale	Several Times per Week	Once per Week	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No Response ("?")
Left	15.2	13.6	32.6	40.5	47.1	.0
Center	21.2	20.5	23.6	23.8	19.6	50.0
Right	60.6	63.6	41.5	33.0	33.3	50.0
N/A	3.0	2.3	2.4	2.7	.0	.0

Source: French National Election Study, 1997 (ICPSR 3138)

Table 12: Left-Right Preference and Religious Attendance in Women, 1997

Left-Right Scale	Several Times per Week	Once per Week	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	No Response ("?")
Left	18.4	28.3	28.2	39.1	40.9	33.3
Center	14.1	22.8	25.1	28.7	20.5	66.7
Right	62.6	46.7	44.2	29.4	36.4	.0
N/A	4.9	2.2	2.5	3.0	2.3	.0

Source: French National Election Study, 1997 (ICPSR 3138)

The pattern that those who attend church more often are much more likely to be ideologically conservative suggests that Catholic devoutness causes conservatism. For explanations for this phenomenon, I turn to existing literature and theories to elucidate this relationship.

Analysis and Application of Relevant Literature

These analyses reported above employ French National Election Study data to show that women were more ideologically Right of men when they earned the right to vote, but have reoriented to the Left beginning in the late 1980s. Women have been and remain more religious than men, though both men and women have declined in religiousness from the late 1960s through the late 1990s.

The most convincing literature that supports my assumption that the secularization of France is causing women to shift to the ideological Left comes from Gill Allwood and Khursheed Wadia's study, *Women and Politics in France, 1958-2000* and Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris' application of modernization theory to gender equality, *Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change Around the World*. These two pairs of theorists posit very different explanations for the association between Catholicism and conservatism, though I found them to be complementary. All theorists I read heavily reference Maurice Duverger, an important social scientist who completed a cornerstone study of female political activity in 1955, entitled *La participation des femmes à la vie politique* (The Participation of Women in Political Life). Although his theoretical analysis is somewhat outdated, it provides an excellent benchmark of the understanding of female voting behavior in the years directly following their enfranchisement.

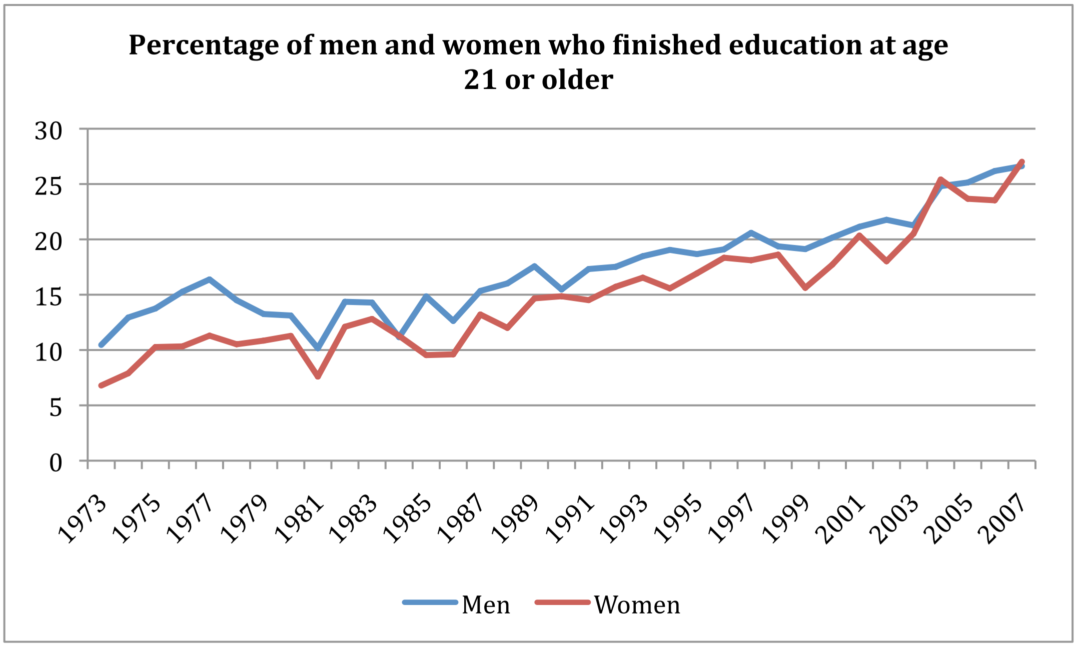
Allwood and Wadia describe a similar association between Catholic devoutness and conservatism as observed in the French National Election Studies. "Religiosity is still strongly correlated with support for the right, but it has declined dramatically since the 1950s… In the 1950s, women were more religious than men… even if this was the result of social factors rather than a natural propensity" (Allwood and Wadia, 126). They have also similarly noted that the decline in religiosity has an important effect on ideology and voting outcomes: "Since there is a correlation between religiosity and support for the right, the decline both in religiosity in general and the gap between men and women in particular has affected voting patterns" (Allwood and Wadia, 126).

Their theory also points to the popularity of feminism in the 1970s in France, as norms about the role of women in the workforce, home, and popular culture changed dramatically. They especially note that female inclusion in the workforce united women with labor parties rather than through the social frameworks of the Church and Christian Democratic social groups:

> "Women's position in the labor market has changed dramatically since they first acquired the right to vote and has influenced the way in which they exercise this right. Women's weaker support for the parties of the left in the 1950s and 1960s was explained at least partially by the fact that there were fewer female manual workers than male, the constituency represented by the traditional left" (Allwood and Wadia, 127).

The inclusion of women into the ranks of the *ouvriers* (blue collar workers) allowed them entry to unions and labor-based social groups and therefore to the leftist political structures they supported. Similarly, women who joined the workforce formed social ties with their workplace and its structures rather than exclusively with their Church groups. When women have access to social circles and authority figures that fall outside of the purview of the Church, their belief system and values will accordingly shift to the Left. This theory recalls Robert Putnam's thesis in *Bowling Alone*. He writes that social capital is important to promote civic engagement, and that the type of social interaction greatly effects political association and trust in government. If women associate with unions and co-workers rather than with housewives and priests, they are more likely to participate in government and participate in left-leaning parties.

A strong illustration of these new associations is evident in the steeply rising percentages of women pursuing higher education and entering the workforce. In 1973, the percentage of French women who finished education at age 21 or older[1] was about 7%; by 2007 27% of French women finished education at age 21 or older. The growth is comparable to men, although in 1973 there was a 3.5-point gap between men and women. Women have closed this gap, and actually surpassed men in education levels as early as 2004.



Source: The Mannheim Eurobarometer Trend File 1970-2011 (ICPSR 4357)

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[1] To measure attainment of higher education, the most uniform measurement was age at which subjects completed their education. If their age at the end of their education was 18, the equivalent would be a high school degree; if their age at the end of their education was 21-22, the equivalent would be a university education. Because the duration of both secondary and university education vary state-to-state, the age of education completion is the most universal and easiest to use in a comparative analysis between states.

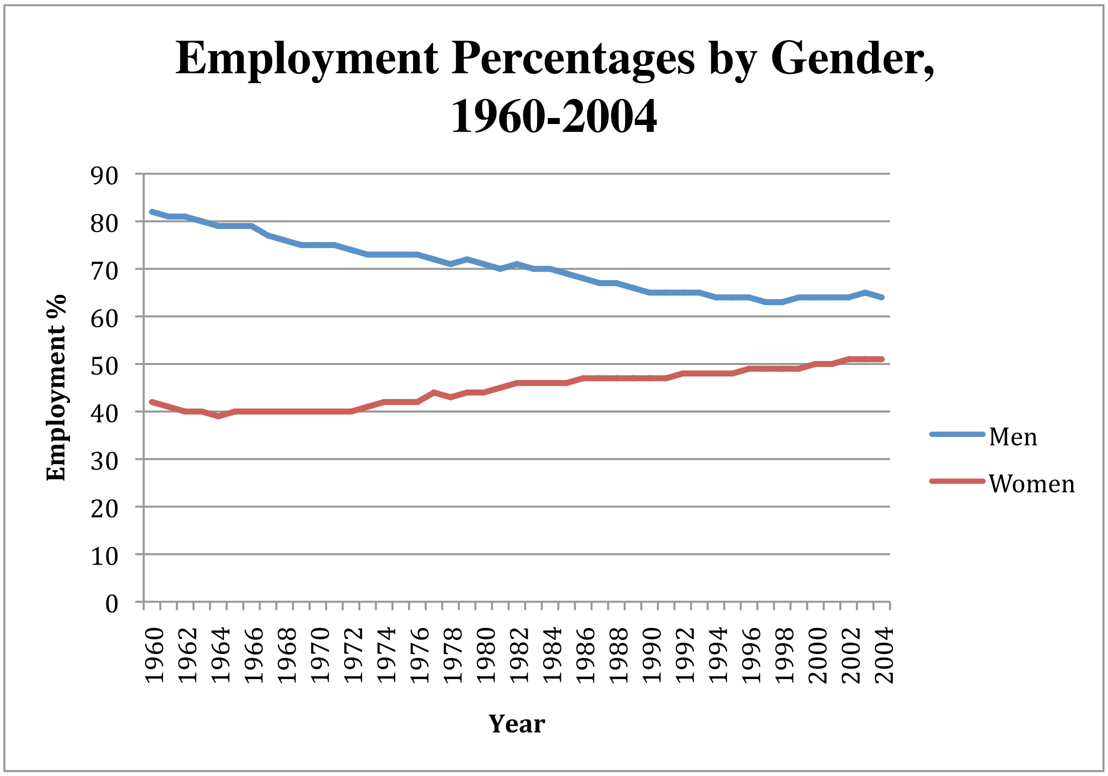
The equalizing access to education for women suggests that women have far more exposure to associations outside of the Church or home, and also that their associations are preparing them for a presence in the secular workforce.

This fits in well with Allwood and Wadia's discussion of female participation in the workforce, and the strong secular associations this provides. It also fits in with Inglehart and Norris' secularization theory which explicitly argues that as women have increased access to education, they will become less religious, more secular, and further to the ideological Left. Inglehart and Norris write, "Professional, college-educated, and fairly affluent groups…[have] economic and psychological autonomy from men" (Inglehart and Norris, 90). This psychological autonomy carries forward into the political realm, and influences how women identify ideologically.

I may go so far as to say that although women earned the right to vote in France in 1945, they were not truly enfranchised until their access to higher education matched (and then surpassed) that of men. Education is the undisputable key to allowing women to actively and usefully participate in their political, social, and professional environments in a meaningful and fulfilling way. Much of the existing political science literature regarding women (including the majority of this paper) implies that the social and political environments surrounding women are what shape and influence their behavior; very little literature argues that women themselves are important agents in their own enfranchisement. Perhaps this is because until very recently, women were indeed products of the religious and cultural frameworks that restricted them or relegated them to traditional roles. Today, this view of women as passive actors in a larger socio-political system is incorrect. Women's entry into the French workforce and their growing membership in unions are both important factors that have shifted women from the ideological

Right to the Left, and has made them increasingly independent and secular actors. I would also argue that female participation in the workforce, female secularization, and female ideological shifts are direct effects of the increased access to higher education for women in France.

Education is a prerequisite to increased employability, and as female education attainment has increased, so too has female employment. Allwood and Wadia's claim that as women gain entry to the workforce, their politics will align more closely with the Left is supported by French employment data collected between 1960-2013. In 1960, 82% of men aged 18-64 were employed and only 42% of women aged 18-64 were employed. Even by 1981 the percentage of women engaged in the workplace had only risen a single percentage point to 43%. It took until 2001 for the total French female employment to surpass 50% and today hovers around 51%, about 14 percentage points below the male employment rate of 65% (Bureau of Labor Statistics).



Source: French Employment by Gender, 1960-2004. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

In my data analysis of French National Election Studies I found 1988 to be a significant election year that marked a clear shift from the Right to the Left among women. This aligns with the trend in rising female employment evident in the graph above. Although total female employment only rose about 10% over this 44-year period according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the gap between men and women narrowed by about 25 percentage points. According to the Eurostat labor survey, in 2014 there was a rate of 66% employment among women and 74% employment among men.[2] Both studies, however, show a narrowing gap between male and female employment, with male percentages dropping and female percentages rising during the 1970s, 80s, and beyond.

The decline in male employment may be caused by the types of jobs available in post-industrial societies. Typically "male" jobs, like factory work, construction, carpentry, masonry, etc. are in high demand during the developing period of a country. Once a society moves into a post-industrial economy, skilled labor, government positions, and services become more prominent (Hout, 2). Government positions (in France this includes teachers, a traditionally "female" job) and services (health, administration, etc.) have remained strong, growing sectors while unskilled labor has generally fallen by the wayside. This can serve as a possible explanation for the decline in male employment, although I have focused on the rise of female employment independent of the condition of the male workforce.

The mid to late 1970s was an important period for female workers. Through the 1960s and early 70s, female employment in France was fairly static, but starting around 1972, female employment began to grow. The growing inclusion of women in the workforce in the decade preceding their ideological shift to the Left suggests a degree of causation between female employment and Leftist ideology. This coincides with my findings and supports Allwood and Wadia's argument that increased labor force participation and increased education among women will lead to a shift to the Left in political ideology. The rise in female employment is not necessarily dramatic enough to be the sole variable responsible for the female ideological shift in the 70s and 80s, but certainly cannot be ruled out as a contributing factor.

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[2] This wide variance in results between the BLS survey and the Eurostat survey is due to differing questionnaires, definition of employment, and age range of employment (Eurostat uses a 20-64 age range while the BLS uses a 16-64 age range).

Union membership is an important element of Allwood and Wadia's labor argument, especially in France, where unions hold significant political capital. In 1989, 70% of union members were male and 30% were female (OECD). In 2001, women accounted for 43% of labor union membership in France (Ebbinghaus). This rise in female Union membership coincides with the female shift to the Left, and serves as further evidence that employment as well as Union membership leads women away from conservative ideologies. These union statistics therefore support Allwood and Wadia's argument.

Allwood and Wadia also remark that age was an important indicator of party affiliation. Younger voters tended to be affiliated with progressive parties while older voters associated with conservative parties that preserved the policies and political frameworks of the past. "Women were moving towards the left more rapidly than men. This was especially the case for women under thirty. In 1978, only 37% of this age group expressed a preference for a party of the center or right, compared with 54% of a comparable group in 1968" (Allwood and Wadia, 124). This was further underlined by the progressive and feminist ideologies emerging during the 1960s and 1970s in France.

They also discuss the political policies of varying parties that either favored or limited certain rights that appealed to women, such as reproductive rights.

> "If women voted more for the right than the left, this was not due to their conservatism, but to the attitudes of the respective parties towards women's rights, including, and most significantly at the time, the right to vote and the right to control their own reproduction" (Allwood and Wadia, 128).

Considering in the 1960s and the early 1970s, neighboring Switzerland had still not given women the right to vote, issues of female political inclusion were very much still at the forefront of female political concerns. Not surprisingly, conservative parties who recognized their alliance with conservative women in the 1960s and 1970s supported women's right to vote, as well as a host of reproductive and social rights for women. It wasn't until 1971 that the Socialists, under Mitterand, began courting female voters. "The growing attention to feminist concerns among the parties of the left suggests one reason for attitudinal changes among women in France in the 1970s" (Allwood and Wadia, 129).

There are also hidden implications here regarding cultural norms about the female role in the home, workplace, and society. That women can attain higher education levels and become employed outside of the domestic services is a testament both to institutionalized acceptance of women, and greater mobilization on the part of women to better their social standing. Social shifts, such as the rise of the feminist movement in the 1970s, are certainly important factors that contribute to increased female civic engagement and breaking barriers that restricted women.

Allwood and Wadia's social and cultural argument emphasizes the changing age distributions, workplace norms, social associations, and political shifts that French women were experiencing through the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. They attribute the changing religious and political landscape of the female voting block to these social associations and political alliances. Their argument certainly provides valuable explanatory variables, most convincingly the increase in female association with unions and blue-collar workers, though their argument leaves out many of the economic factors at play during these pivotal decades.

Modernization Theory and Female Enfranchisement

Where Allwood and Wadia's argument leaves off in cultural and social analysis, Inglehart and Norris' argument picks up with economic theory. They reappropriate modernization theory to discuss the issue of female enfranchisement around the world. Their central thesis posits, "a process of secularization has gradually accompanied societal modernization, weakening the strength of religious values in postindustrial societies, particularly among the younger generation, and fuelling the rising tide of gender equality" (Inglehart and Norris, 49).

Inglehart and Norris draw heavily from Max Weber's theory that economic development and industrialization leads to the creation of a middle class, secularization, and liberalization as it simultaneously promotes literacy, education, and better all round quality-of-life. As women gain exposure to secular forms of education and come into contact with a multiplicity of authority figures and social circles that fall outside of the religious purview, younger generations are less dependent on religious structures and become more secular. This leads to the phenomenon of "generational replacement" in which younger generations are more amenable to progressive social agendas, specifically ones that favor female enfranchisement and political engagement, and over time replace the beliefs of their parents as they age. Similarly, women are freed from the hierarchical religious structures that may have relegated them to domestic roles: "Where traditional values prevail, women are not only limited by society in terms of the opportunities they seek, but also choose to limit themselves" (Inglehart and Norris, 9).

Like Allwood and Wadia, Inglehart and Norris agree that religious devoutness is closely related to conservatism, especially among female voters. "Women's greater religiosity has an important influence on… voter choice including greater female support for parties of the center-right, such as Christian Democrats and Conservatives" (Inglehart and Norris, 50). This statement further supports my argument that Catholic devoutness is the best predictor of conservative ideology among women in 20th century France.

This fundamentally economic theory, however, also includes references to the importance of religion and culture as well as economic development.

> "Culture matters, and indeed it matters a lot. Perceptions of the appropriate division of roles in the home and family, paid employment, and the political sphere are shaped by the predominant culture – the social norms, beliefs, and values existing in any society in turn rest on levels of societal modernization and religious traditions" (Inglehart and Norris, 8).

This well-crafted and persuasive marriage of the preexisting cultural conditions and economic development helps to negate the popular criticism that modernization theorists do not adequately address cultural and historical context.

They also recognize the unique nature of the Catholic Church and its pervasiveness in French culture as well as its intrinsically anti-feminist framework: "Religious organizations, particularly the Catholic Church… have often actively sought to reinforce social norms of a separate and subordinate role for women as homemakers and mothers" (Inglehart and Norris, 50). Although this statement could be partly negated by Pope Benedict XV's support of the female vote in 1919, as well as the following political maneuvering by conservative and

Christian parties to support female enfranchisement, it is a true summary of the roles assigned to women in Catholic doctrine.

Inglehart and Norris also emphasize that in industrialized countries, both men and women have increased access to education that will in turn positively affect their attitudes regarding female inclusion in society. This is implied in their theory of secularization in which countries with higher GDPs will tend to be less religious and hold less traditional roles for women. "Women's increasing entry into higher education can also be expected to influence their political values and priorities, as many studies of public opinion have reported that education is consistently associated with more liberal attitudes on a wide range of issues" (Inglehart and Norris, 90). Similarly, women will create associations with authority figures outside of the Church that will lead to a less dependent relationship between women and their religious associations. This argument also fits in nicely with Allwood and Wadia's discussion of increased workforce participation, as education is a clear route toward employment: "In recent decades, trade unions have made increasing efforts to expand their membership base by recruiting working women, a process that can also be expected to move this group towards the left" (Inglehart and Norris, 91).

One important critique of their reappropriation of modernization theory to gender equality around the world is that they fail to include political structures and motivations as relevant. This is especially important in the French example, where I have argued that politics, not culture, was the primary driving factor of female enfranchisement. The reality that many conservative and Christian parties went against their ideology and religious dogma in support of female suffrage proves that politics are indeed critical in this discussion and should not be completely ignored in the face of economic or cultural arguments. That being said, Inglehart and Norrice concede,

> "It is clear that the different historical legacies of different faces continue to shape their world views. The churches, sects, and faiths founded centuries ago have left an indelible imprint on each society that remains evident in religious practices, beliefs about God, and patterns of religious attendance around the globe" (Inglehart and Norris, 59).

In other words, despite the strong explanatory power of modernization and secularization theories, some cultural, political, and religious variables can make the simple economic cause-and-effect model of modernization more complex.

Maurice Duverger and Evolving Theories on Female Political Behavior

Finally, Maurice Duverger's 1955 study on female political behavior in Europe serves as a voice from the earliest reaches of the era with which these theorists, and this paper, grapple. Duverger writes that "there seems to be little doubt that the woman's vote is more conservative" (Duverger, 50) and that this conservatism is intrinsically tied to women's religious devoutness.

Duverger argues that this conservatism among women in the immediate post-war decade can also be explained by a creative reading of census data. Though these census-based explanations do not appear in any later theorists' work, they are creative nonetheless. "We may therefore assume that the support generally given by women to religious parties is mainly due to Catholic women…It can probably not be usefully considered without preference to its general social context, in other words, the position of women in society" (Duverger, 66). He goes on to cite the census statistic that the number of women over 50 in Western Europe dwarfed the number of men over 50, due to the "lost generations" of perished World War I and II soldiers.

Agreeing that older voters tend to be more conservative, he posits that another contributing factor could be their higher median age.

Also citing the French census, he notes that many of these older women live alone, and therefore probably find much of their social engagement through church groups. He hypothesizes that these older women who are not dependent on husbands for political direction will tend to align their political ideology with their most frequented social groups (in this case, religious groups) rather than with their spouse. This theory somewhat aligns with Allwood and Wadia's social capital argument, but marries church engagement and the Right rather than union membership and the Left.

These theories that center on age and marital status are creative, though some of Duverger's later application of these theories border on sexist when he claims that "women are slower than men to change their minds," and "have a less sharply developed sense of what is timely" (Duverger, 69), without much empirical support. Regardless, Duverger's analysis of women in the political sphere was written at a time in which women had not yet been awarded the right to vote in all European countries and their position very much remained socially inferior to that of men. His analysis provides a valuable perspective on female voting behavior at a time when few social scientists were concerned with the issue, and his analysis supports and embellishes the data pulled from French National Election Studies in this chapter.

Conclusion

The data analysis conducted on French National Election Studies from 1968, 1988, and 1997 aligns with my hypothesis that women are more religious than men, though both men and women have become less religious over time, and that this trend happened concurrently with women's shift from the ideological Right to the Left. It is difficult to prove directionality between religiosity and ideology, but it is clear that there is a significant relationship between the two variables.

Ronald Inglehart, Pippa Norris, Gill Allwood, and Khursheed Wadia, who reference data collected from the Eurobarometer studies, also support this finding. The analytical unity of our conclusions despite our differing data sources underlines both their findings as well as my own.

Further, my use of ideology rather than actual vote or party preference provides a good continuity to my findings. This continuity is not always present in Allwood and Wadia's longitudinal examination of voting in France because they used vote choice rather than ideology to measure their outcomes. Votes cast do not always align with ideology, and one who may identify as a conservative may not necessarily vote along their ideological lines, especially in a political system with as many parties as France. The Left/Center/Right ideology measure is understandable and applicable in any year, while party identification is not. My use of this scale also contributes to new perspectives and measures of female political behavior in France.

Furthermore, these findings show that women (and men, to a lesser degree) in Catholic societies who are more devout are significantly more likely to hold conservative political ideologies. If this finding holds, it would reason that societies with large and devout Catholic populations should tend to favor conservative policy and politicians. This has large implications for other devoutly Catholic societies such as Italy, Ireland, and Brazil. Conversely, the finding that those who have either low religiosity or no religion are much more likely to have Leftist political ideologies is important in light of an ever-shifting landscape within modernized countries toward secularism. If Weber's theory of secularization continues to hold, it can be expected that female political ideologies in the modernized world will continue their gradual trajectory to the Left.

Inglehart and Norris also argue that increased access to education for women will lead to increased secularization. When considering that less religious women are less likely to be conservative, it holds that increased access to education for women will lead to less conservative women in general. Thus education is an important causal factor in explaining women's shift away from religious devoutness and toward the ideological Left.

The results of this study follow logically from the presumptions of the political parties and religious groups discussed in Chapter 4, and suggest a continuing trajectory on the shift of French women away from Catholic devoutness and toward the Left. This has significant implications for the future of ideology and political outcomes in France as women become more involved and more ideologically Left than at any other time in their short history of democratic inclusion.

Chapter 6
Conclusion

This thesis set out to investigate the conditions that prevented women in France from earning the vote, and how Catholicism has affected female ideological shifts since 1944. In this concluding chapter, I will discuss the contributions this thesis has made to the study of female political behavior in France, and continued points of interest in this field for future study. I will also try to underline the links between female suffrage and subsequent female political ideology as well as the importance of this study.

Continuity in Catholicism and Gender Politics

The study of the political behavior of French women is imperative in understanding and predicting electoral outcomes, political changes, and public opinion in France. So long as women remain engaged and enfranchised members of French society, their ideology and political behavior deserves the same criticism and analysis of that as men; they are after all over 50% of the voting population.

My curiosity in female voting behavior was not based in frustration with injustices or prejudices against women; it is rather a fundamentally pragmatic view that so long as women are half of the voting population, their motivations and behavior deserve equal attention as that of men. It is therefore important to keep in mind that the relatively recent history of female suffrage in France and the trajectory of their enfranchisement and ideology are essential in understanding future political behavior and electoral outcomes in France.

Especially in nations that enfranchised women later than most, the struggle for equality and political recognition for women remains vibrant and relevant. In France, where ideology has been very closely related to Catholic religious behavior among both women and men, this historical context is even more important. Understanding politics and religion in France requires an understanding of where French men and women are moving away from, and what historical conditions have created present realities. As Inglehart and Norris write, "The churches, sects, and faiths founded centuries ago have left an indelible imprint on each society" (Inglehart and Norris, 59).

Though the ways in which these imprints can manifest themselves surely change dramatically from society to society, the influence of the Catholic Church on conservatism, politics, and traditional roles for women has certainly been important in directing the thrust toward female enfranchisement, and will undoubtedly continue to play a critical role in female political behavior in the future. Although my arguments on female suffrage and political behavior have largely left cultural factors by the wayside, these factors are worth mentioning in a larger context. The historical and cultural foothold in France by the Catholic Church has left an important legacy that French identity grapples with and profits from today. Even has the religiosity of women and men in France diminishes, the unmistakable identity of France as a Catholic nation will continue to be part of the discussion of female political behavior and identity.

Although previous political science researchers have individually underlined several of my findings, none have supplied continuity between the role of Catholicism and politics on female suffrage and the contemporary effects of these two variables in French female political behavior. The transition between female political ideology and religiosity prior to their enfranchisement and the ever-evolving nature of their political ideology and religious behavior following their enfranchisement is a fascinating path, and one that has been valuable to study. I believe my description of this transition, and the link between female suffrage and subsequent female voting behavior in regards to Catholic influence, has been the greatest contribution of this paper to the larger discourse on female suffrage and gender politics in France. Suffrage extensions are notable because they welcome an excluded population into the voting population that was not previously viewed as safe or advantageous. The behavior of these groups after their enfranchisement is closely related to and yet often academically separate from the study of how their suffrage was earned and awarded.

Inglehart and Norris' application of modernization theory to gender shifts around the world is a broad, well-supported study, but lacks historical depth and specificity to any particular state or region. The trend that as nations industrialize, secularize, and then become post-industrial economies, they will have more open and inclusive views towards women is supported across a swath of nations around the world. By reviewing and confirming their theory in a historical analysis of a single post-industrial state is a valuable contribution that both supports their conclusions and enriches them with examples, data, and context.

Thematic Conclusions

With the important legacy of Catholicism in French culture and identity in mind, I can conclude that the notion that Catholic societies enfranchised women later than non-Catholic countries is *not* a predominantly cultural argument. The political maneuvering of the Catholic and anticlerical parties is too contradictory to ideological and cultural motivations of their time to be ignored as a primary factor in French female suffrage.

Despite the common sense notion that a conservative Catholic Church with traditional roles for women would oppose women's suffrage in Catholic countries, I have argued that the responsibility for the lateness in female political enfranchisement in Catholic countries lies with the anticlerical parties who feared the conservative influence of female voters. This paper has also posited that this theory is most evident in fledgling Catholic democracies in which the democratic framework is unstable. Perceptions of vulnerability of the state and fear of pro-monarchical sentiments among women created an environment of fear within anticlerical parties that delayed the implementation of female suffrage. The sensitivity to these issues held by the anticlerical majority blocked the women of France and other fledgling Catholic democracies from earning the right to vote as quickly as their non-Catholic counterparts.

I have also supported my claim that conservatism and religiosity are indeed related in France with a statistical analysis of National Election Studies. Women were shown to be more religious than men, though both men and women have become less religious over time. This shift to secularism is without question associated with a shift away from conservatism in France, especially among women who have shifted to the Left of men in the last 20 years. I found the rising rates of higher education attainment by women to be the most convincing explanation for these two related phenomena. A wealth of literature points to increased intellectual and economic independence for women who attain higher levels of education. Likewise, many have observed a shift to the political Left and secularization among those who attain higher degrees. This direct causation is difficult to ignore in the French example, where women have shifted both to the Left and away from religious extremism in the years in which higher education was progressing.

The literature on rising rates of female education and the effects of this transition on personal and political autonomy was the most convincing of this study. I continue to feel strongly that regardless of political affiliation, higher rates of education lead to the heightened curiosity, self-examination, and independence that make strong citizens and informed voters. Insofar as female voters identify exclusively with the frameworks that surround them, whether these are the Church or a union, they will be passive players in a democratic political system that demands autonomy and criticism. Although I have argued that these social interactions are indeed important, higher education will create more "psychologically autonomous" women who have the best tools to be engaged and active citizens. I would like to note that while one may objectively agree that a higher attainment of education is a net positive for women, by no means are secularism or Leftist ideology objectively good in and of themselves.

While I have noted that shifts away from Catholic traditionalism and shifts to the ideological Left have seemed to align with higher rates of education, I am by no means condemning conservatism and Catholicism to be evils that dwell in ignorance and suppression. Increased access to education is an objective positive for society because it creates independent and engaged citizens. This does not outwardly negate the notion that many educated, independent, and engaged citizens may also be on the ideological Right and may regularly attend church.

Looking Ahead: Progress and Stagnation on "The Woman Question"

Now that women have surpassed men in Leftist ideology, but not yet fallen behind male religiosity, it will be interesting to track the interplay of these two variables into the future. It is imperative that the historical and political context of French female voters be understood before tracking their behavior forward. The religious, political, and cultural struggle that French women have engaged with will certainly continue to dictate their behavior as they evolve and confront new challenges and opportunities.

To ask a French woman about what it means to be female in French politics today would reliably produce a discussion of divorce, birth control, sexism in the workplace, inequality in elected positions, and beloved or despised female public figures (perhaps Marine Le Pen or Francois Hollande's mysterious mistress). Today, French Parliament counts fewer than 10% of its members as women, the percentage of women on municipal councils at 22%, and around 25% of regional councils (Senat.fr). Suggestive quotas were voted upon favorably by Parliament in 1999 to raise the percentage of women in Senate to 40% by 2001; these have failed dramatically. Francois Holland has implemented quotas to equalize the number of men and women in his secretarial cabinet, though women in elected positions lag significantly behind men.

Looking ahead in the study of female engagement and ideology in France, it will be difficult to continue to pin these political inequalities on Catholicism and political systems. New explanations, whether political, cultural, or economic, must be uncovered to probe into why women, despite their political enfranchisement, lag in political engagement and election. The Woman Question is no longer *whether* women will vote, nor even *how* they will vote. It is rather a more nuanced question of why women lag in political engagement and elected positions, and whether this is because women are less politically active than men, or if the political systems that exist in France today discourage women from participating. Regardless of this forward trajectory, the historical context and political path that women have taken from political exclusion to active citizenship is a vital component of tracking French female political behavior into the future.

Appendix A

List of *French National Election Study* Datasets Available from the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research

ICPSR # 3138 **French National Election Study, 1997**
Centre d'Etudes de la Vie Politique Francaise (CEVIPOF);Centre d'Informatisation des Donnees Socio-Politiques (CIDSP); Centre de Recherches Administratives, Politiques et Sociales (CRAPS), 1997

ICPSR # 6583 **French National Election Study, 1988**
Roy Pierce, 1988

ICPSR # 7247 **French National Election Study 1968**
Ronald Inglehart, 1968

Appendix B

List of Datasets Available from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Eurostat

Eurostat Code tsdec420 **Eurostat Employment by Sex, EU 1992-2013**
Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Union, 2013

Bureau of Labor Statistics **Comparative Civilian Labor Force Statistics, 10 Countries, 1960-2004**
U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Productivity and Technology. May 13, 2005

Bureau of Labor Statistics **International Comparisons of Labor Force Participation, 1960-81**
Constance Sorrentino, 1983

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