

to explain, rather than simply gape, we must be prepared for the unpalatable." So are Sutton and Hammond whitewashing Richard III? Given a careful setting by an instructor, this and other issues could create several involved (and heated) sessions of class.

The format of the book is attractive. On some pages, special-topic boxes of maps, genealogies, chronologies, and other subjects give helpful sidelights on the period. The bibliographic style consists of "Further Readings" at the end of each chapter. Portraits of leading figures will enhance interest, and the book is thoroughly indexed. As mentioned, of the two books reviewed here, *Medieval Queenship* would be of interest to advanced students and professionals. *Richard III: A Medieval Kingship*, also a fully professional work, will have an appeal for the survey-level student as well as for the more advanced. Either has potential for lively controversy: Does Hillary Clinton recall Margaret I of Denmark? Is Richard III an unjustly maligned prince, just a tough guy of his times, or a real sociopath?

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James Vernon. *Politics and the People: A Study in English Political Culture c. 1815-1867.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993. Pp. xviii, 429. Cloth, \$69.95.

In this important though sometimes obscurely written and badly edited book, James Vernon challenges the traditional notion that the English Reform Acts of 1832 and 1867 increased the effective participation of the population in politics and argues instead that during this period "English politics became progressively less democratic." Using the five constituencies of Oldham, Tower Hamlets, Boston, Lewes, and Devon for his illustrations, Vernon shows that as the elite had to grant the demands of Englishmen for direct participation in politics, it was able to find ways to make that participation all but meaningless.

During the nineteenth century symbol substituted for substance. Through ceremonies and rituals the elite defined political virtue as loyalty to the political structure from which most of the celebrants were excluded. Political theater and melodrama, with processions, banners, ballads, and oratory, prevented the development of substantive discussions. The use of tickets for political dances, dinners, and tea-parties kept out the wrong elements and made clear who was expected to be active in politics and who was not. The mass of the people became observers rather than participants, and the leaders became heroes to rather than advocates for their followers.

Registration of voters limited their numbers. The expansion of the number of polling places and the use of the ballot fragmented the population and made it less potentially dangerous: voting became an individual rather than a collective act.

The use of print rather than speech as the primary means of political communication isolated workingmen, reduced their solidarity, made them easier to manipulate, and thus reduced their power to "create their own politics."

The creation of parties, far from giving the people a stronger voice in politics, actually decreased their influence. By regulating and disciplining their members, parties kept political discourse within acceptable bounds and thus helped the oligarchy to retain control.

The expansion of democracy in England during the nineteenth century, therefore, turns out to be a myth—or, as Vernon says, a "sham." Informal participation in politics decreased, and formal participation had less and less meaning. The pretense of social and cultural inclusion was substituted for political inclusion.

Seeing all of this evidence, the reader can decide for himself whether to accept Vernon's claim that in spite of the resistance of the elite to the demands for broadened participation there was no class struggle.

Most of what Vernon says can be applied also to the United States. He does not mention two other ways in which the elites of the two countries helped to reduce the significance of the franchise. First, they established public schooling systems and then compulsory attendance to guarantee that future voters would be brainwashed into political attitudes that would not threaten their own positions. Second, they promoted the doctrine of *laissez faire*: If the people might by some chance gain an effective voice in the government, it was important that that government not be allowed to do anything the elite did not want it to do.

Politics and the People will be useful not only to people who teach English history but also to those who teach American, European, or world history on any level. It should also help broaden the thinking of graduate students and the best upper-level undergraduates. The general reader who wonders how English and American politics got into the grotesque situation in which in the 1990s oligarchy is called democracy will also find it worth their time.

Cortland, New York

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Ruth Henig. *The Origins of the First World War.* London & New York: Routledge, 1993. Second edition. Pp. 55. Paper, \$9.95.

V. R. Berghahn. *Germany and the Approach of War in 1914.* New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993. Second edition. Pp. 265. Paper, \$14.50.

Scholars have been focused on the details of the origins of major wars for many decades, but few have explored the ways that wars end, particularly those involving coalitions of nations. Often the termination of a war affects the agenda of subsequent wars. Clearly the unfinished affairs of the World War I belligerents affected the origins of World War II. But the subject here considered is the Great War, the war to end all wars.

Both these books are revisions of earlier editions. Teachers of World War I history have relied on the standard works of Sidney B. Fay, Bernadotte Schmitt, Joachim Remak, James Joll, Holger Herwig, and others with confidence. The Berghahn book is more substantial than the Henig pamphlet in both scope and detail, but the latter is useful for its brevity in a first introduction to the subject matter.

Ruth Henig teaches at the University of Lancaster in the United Kingdom. This pamphlet on the origins of World War I is intended to bridge the gap between survey texts and more detailed monographic literature. It fulfills that aim very nicely. Perhaps because it will be used by students as a first book on the subject, historical persons and authors should be introduced initially with their full names, not just the title and surname. The book is divided into two sections: a brief chronological overview of the period from 1871 to 1914 and a review of the major historical interpretations. There is a short, select bibliography, but no index.

Volker Berghahn is Professor of History at Brown University. His interest in European history has been communicated in several books dealing with German affairs in the Wilhelmine era. His 1981 book, *Militarism: The History of an International Debate 1861-1979*, was uniformly praised for its careful scholarship and compelling analysis. The first chapter of this recent book was revised to deal with new scholarship suggesting that pressures from the lower middle classes in Germany, along with that of the privileged elites, resulted in the "general deterioration of the monarchy's domestic position in the years prior to 1914." Otherwise the 1993 text is essentially the same as the first edition. This second edition of *Germany and the Approach of War in 1914*