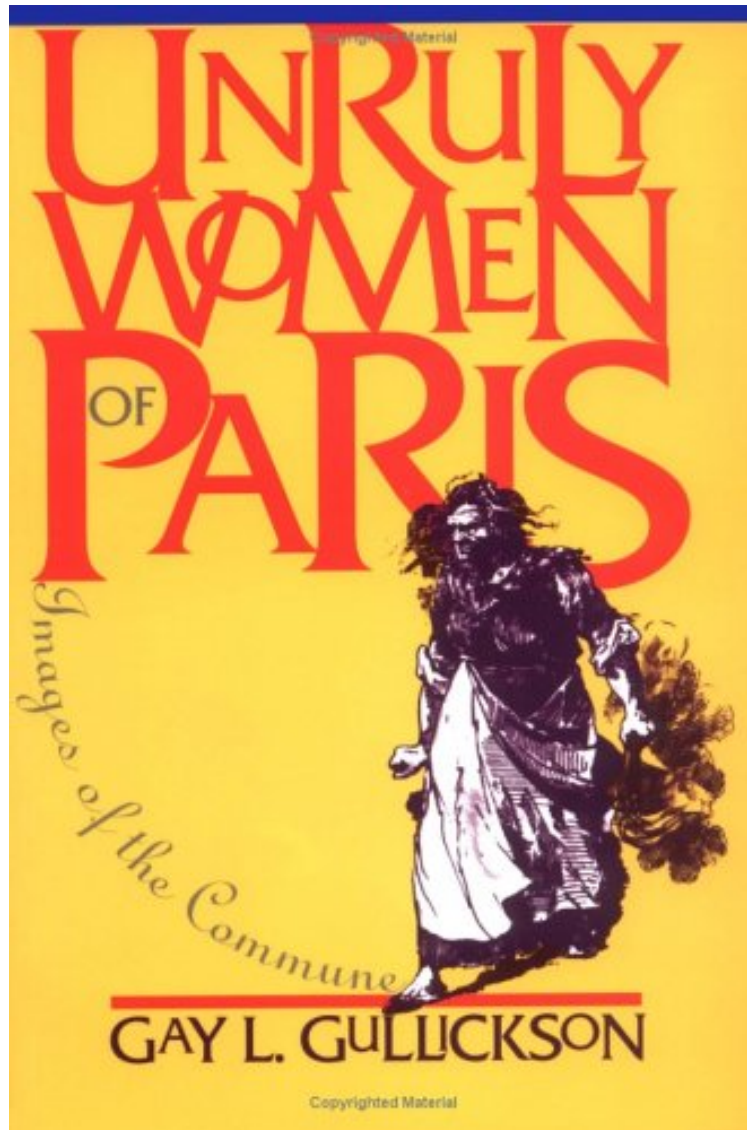


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Unruly Women of Paris: Images of the Commune (Pitt Ser.in Policy and Inst.Studies)

Gay Gullickson

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Gay Gullickson : Unruly Women of Paris: Images of the Commune (Pitt Ser.in Policy and Inst.Studies) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Unruly Women of Paris: Images of the Commune (Pitt Ser.in Policy and Inst.Studies):

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Interesting take on the Commune By Chris There are many good things to say Gay Gullickson's book on the Paris Commune. She makes a sound, coherent argument, and provides all

the necessary background on the topic, which many monographs fail to do. If you know nothing about the Commune, you can still read this book because Gullickson covers the history in enough detail to prepare you for her arguments. Since the actual events of the Commune in 1871, the women involved in the uprising have been portrayed negatively. Women were not supposed to be involved in politics and were expected to confine themselves to family duties, so many men -- particularly of the bourgeoisie -- were outraged by their participation in revolutionary activities. As a result, men slandered these women, and those perceptions not only stuck for decades, but they seemed to intensify. Gullickson gets to the root of these misconceptions and points out the hypocrisies and flaws. She also shows how Commune sympathizers and opponents sought to create far different representations of these women, meaning that at least one side, and probably both, were inaccurate. On the negative side, Gullickson is repetitive in this book and occasionally seems surprised at the way women were viewed in 1871, even though, sadly, these images of women lasted well into the next century. The book is easy to read and easy to follow. It's recommended for anyone interested in European history, and if you're assigned this book for a class, consider yourself fortunate.

In this vividly written and amply illustrated book, Gay L. Gullickson analyzes the representations of women who were part of the insurrection known as the Paris Commune. The uprising and its bloody suppression by the French army is still one of the most hotly debated episodes in modern history. Especially controversial was the role played by women, whose prominent place among the Communards shocked many commentators and spawned the legend of the ptoleuses, women who were accused of burning the city during the battle that ended the Commune. In the midst of the turmoil that shook Paris, the media distinguished women for their cruelty and rage. The Paris-Journal, for example, raved: "Madness seems to possess them; one sees them, their hair down like furies, throwing boiling oil, furniture, paving stones, on the soldiers." Gullickson explores the significance of the images created by journalists, memoirists, and political commentators, and elaborated by latter-day historians and political thinkers. The ptoleuse is the most notorious figure to emerge from the Commune, but the literature depicts the Communardes in other guises, too: the innocent victim, the scandalous orator, the Amazon warrior, and the ministering angel, among others. Gullickson argues that these caricatures played an important role in conveying and evoking moral condemnation of the Commune. More important, they reveal the gender conceptualizations that structured, limited, and assigned meaning to women as political actors for the balance of the nineteenth and well into the twentieth century.

"Gullickson offers a persuasive account based on an almost exhaustive marshaling of the relevant evidence. . . . a contribution to our fuller understanding of the Commune and its role in reinforcing gender stereotypes." James A. Leith, Queen's University, Canada, *American Historical*, October 1997 "Gullickson does what few have attempted before: to trace the ways images of women first took shape in contemporary writings and cartoons, including those by women themselves, and then made their way over the years into the writings of politicians and historians. A definitive and fascinating interdisciplinary study of the highest quality." Lynn Hunt, University of Pennsylvania
From the Back Cover
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