

A Vindication of the Rights of Woman

Author: Mary Wollstonecraft

The visionary treatise, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* was published by the English writer Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1897) in 1792. It is one of the first texts by a female author that presented women's educational as an issue of universal human rights. Wollstonecraft argued that women are entitled to an equal education, one which aligns with their position among society, as mothers, housewives, and laborers.

A Vindication of the Rights of Woman was initially published in London during the third year of the French Revolution, which had started in 1789. With all eyes on France, Wollstonecraft wrote her introduction as a response to Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, a French politician, who had drafted *The Vindication of the Rights of Men of 1790*, a revised version of the French constitution. While Talleyrand agreed that girls should be educated among their male peers, he suggested they be taught only until the age of eight. In her work, Wollstonecraft argued that females should be regarded as full human beings who deserve all the same educational rights as men. Serious social harm and implications, she continued, would result from limiting the capacities of women and their mental and moral abilities.

Throughout the text, she continuously restated the idea that man is not necessarily the enemy, yet their actions are what has attributed to these intentional disparities and injustices between men and women.

In response to the perception of women as submissive and weak, Wollstonecraft argued that this portrayal of women is not attributed to any sort of natural, biological predisposition. Instead, these societal constructions of womanhood occurred through the denial of education imposed on them by men.

In many ways, Rights of Woman is interlaced with bourgeois vision of the world and society itself. Wollstonecraft preaches to the values of modesty and labour among the middle class and criticized the “idleness of the aristocracy.”

The structure of Wollstonecraft's work was meticulously crafted to appeal to her contemporaries and legitimize her philosophy. Appealing to the literate audience of 18th Britain, which she said suffered from a "fear of innovation," Wollstonecraft wrote *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* by layering her argument and examples to mimic the layered human experience.

Thank You

The background features a white central area with abstract, overlapping green geometric shapes on the right and bottom edges. These shapes include triangles and polygons in various shades of green, from light lime to dark forest green, creating a modern, layered effect.