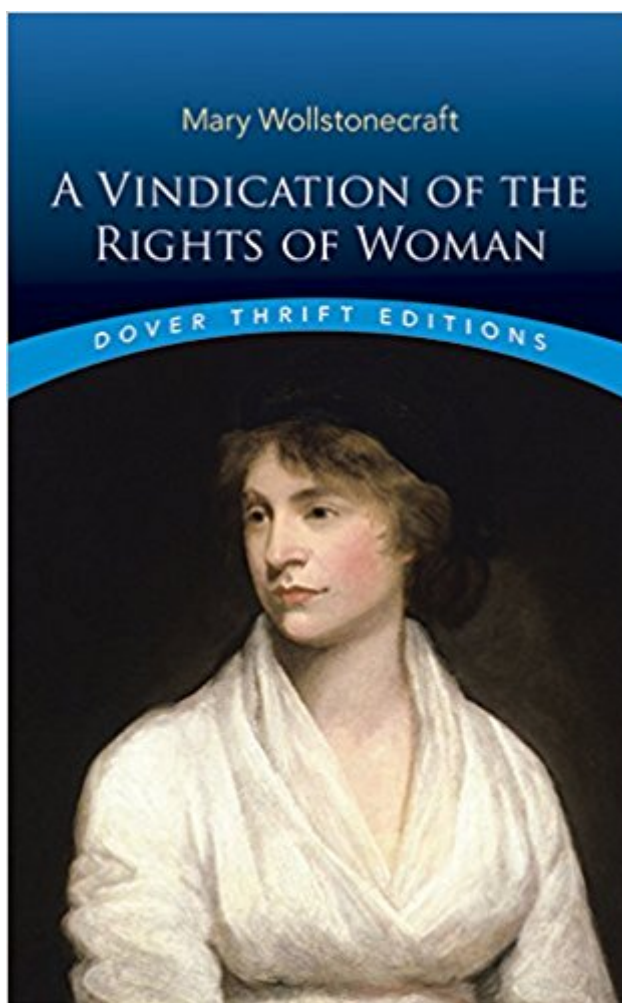


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# A Vindication Of The Rights Of Woman (Dover Thrift Editions)



## Synopsis

In an era of revolutions demanding greater liberties for mankind, Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) was an ardent feminist who spoke eloquently for countless women of her time. Having witnessed firsthand the devastating results of male improvidence, she assumed an independent role early in life, educating herself and eventually earning a living as a governess, teacher and writer. She was also an esteemed member of the radical intellectual circle that included William Godwin (father of her daughter, novelist Mary Godwin Shelley, and later her husband), Thomas Paine, William Blake, Henry Fuseli and others. First published in 1792, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* created a scandal in its day, largely, perhaps, because of the unconventional lifestyle of its creator. Today, it is considered the first great manifesto of women's rights, arguing passionately for the education of women: "Tyrants and sensualists are in the right when they endeavor to keep women in the dark, because the former want only slaves, and the latter a plaything." No narrow-minded zealot, Wollstonecraft balanced passionate advocacy with a sympathetic warmth—a characteristic that helped her ideas achieve widespread influence. Anyone interested in the history of the women's rights movement will welcome this inexpensive edition of one of the landmark documents in the struggle for human dignity, freedom and equality.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"She is alive and active--we hear her voice and trace her influence even now." Great Ideas... is the

right name for these slim, elegant paperbacks... They are written with precision, force, and care. ("The Wall Street Journal") Penguin Books hopes to provide an economical remedy for time-pressed readers in search of intellectual sustenance. ("USA Today") --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

In this passionate reaction to Rousseau's pedagogical work *Emile* (1762) Wollstonecraft powerfully defends woman's ability to reason, given appropriate education. Her radical prescription was for girls to be educated alongside boys and to the same standard. Originally published in 1792, this is a foundational work of feminist political thought. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

It's nice not to have to trudge through a read. My norm seems to be expletive-laced grumbling while the last page can't come soon enough. Wollstonecraft has been a breath of fresh air. I have to admit that I went into it with bias. I've read so many male philosophers, probably because women at the time weren't taken seriously, as what happened with Wollstonecraft and the ridicule she received. I was nervous that it was going to be trite and overly emotional. It was an extraordinary blend of reason and sentiment. Her style is poetic. At times, it feels it almost has a sing-song way about it. Her ability reminds me of Jane Austen and makes it very hard to put the book down. I wonder how much Austen lifted from Wollstonecraft considering there was a section on *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*. Her philosophy is intriguing. Wollstonecraft was quite ahead of her time. She felt that women were trapped in an eternal childhood in the way they were treated by their other halves. This left them unable to be good wives much less good mothers. She makes the argument that not only can women reason, but they can be employed in any field. She envisions a time where boys and girls, rich or poor, can be educated together. As an aside, I don't think the public school system has worked out so well. I attended a joke of a school. That is why I am grateful to have the opportunity to homeschool. Even if you disagree with her assessment that children should be publicly educated, her main point is that boys and girls alike can be educated the same. She actually advocated for a private/public school mix. I'm not sure that our modern day system would meet her vision at all. The *crème de la crème*? Pages upon pages of attacks on Rousseau. I think I've formed a personal vendetta against Rousseau so when she blasts his inane philosophy for nearly 1/3 of the book, it could only bring a sense of sweet justice. If you're no fan of Rousseau, it's worth the read just for that. Ya know, the guy who created *Civil Religion*. The guy who wrote books about how children should be educated then abandoned all 5 of his newborn children to a foundling hospital. The guy who said women were created for his pleasure. Yeah, it's a pretty epic takedown.

Enjoy.

It's dreadful to read at times because it kind of makes you want to travel back in time and slap some sense into men and how dreadful the patriarchal system was. BUT... It's a great book. I bought it for my thesis on the patriarchal system in Regency England and this book, while showing Mary Wollstonecraft's very clear point of view on her society, provides a lot of information and detail that shows what life was like at that time (or a few years before, but it's basically the same era). A must if you're into history, women's rights or the likes. If you're thinking about getting it for a paper or thesis or something, go for it.

This book is simply amazing for the author's thinking on women's rights (and responsibilities). I can't believe that such a forward thinking woman was writing in the 1700s. Her clear view of women's rightful position in society, as opposed to their actual position, is made evident at every turn. Her ideas on education - for girls and boys - must have seemed bizarre for her time, but her arguments in favour of her theories are sound and endorsed by modern education philosophies. My only criticism is that she is verbose and repetitious and some of her sentences are over a page long! Well punctuated and quite correct as to grammar, they seem to go on and on. I loved this book and have written down many quotes to keep. One in particular, where she describes foolish women foregoing the joys and duties of motherhood and marriage as chasing the ephemeral "pleasures that sit lightly on the wing of time". What a delightful turn of phrase!

Pankhurst of the early 20th century is considered the first woman to stand up for women's right. WRONG. Britain and later America owe its equality for women revolution to Mary. This small easy to read book is a must, not just for the activist, but for every woman young and old. Mary was entranced with the French Revolution before it's twisted evil side took over. She sat amount men to discuss and write how the equality of women should be as important as the equality of the social classes. When the French Revolution betrayed its humble noble origins with a blood lust for vengeance, Mary returns to England to continue to write for the equality of women nearly 100 years before the women's rights movements of the early 20th century. The book and her life have several twist and turns that make for a great movie someday but for now its a great read. I have no daughters but had I Daughters I would include this as part of their summer reading or for social studies reports during the school year.

Years ago, Academia established the content, essence & historical significance of Mary Wollstonecraft's 'A Vindication of the Rights of Woman'. With that in mind, I am most definitely NOT qualified to go into any great detail. Other contributors at your fingertip have approached & covered their angles/ thoughts aptly. 'A Vindication of the Rights of Woman' is Mary Wollstonecraft's best known and most celebrated literary achievement. It is... "the first feminist manifesto in the history of human rights." . Mary W.'s declaration presents, subscribes TO and defends the equality OF ALL. \*(save what SHOULD BE irrelevance to physical frame) It calls for each of us to 'recognize' & in doing so, choosing... to strive for improvement. Not only towards Women's struggles for Equality but in overcoming Man's shortcomings in denying Gender Equality. EDUCATION & Opportunity For EQUAL EDUCATION Is The Key To Much. ----- Five stars cannot rate this book.

I love this book. It is so well written that the prose in and of itself is a joy to read. The ideas and principles it teaches are timeless. This is pure feminism minus modern day politics and hullabaloo! I wrote a paper about this text for a college level philosophy class comparing Wollstonecraft's feminism to Plato's feminism.

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