

French women in 18th century



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French women The two men agreed that the right occupation for a lady was that of a housekeeper. They had conflicting views regarding the method of training for the woman's proper role. At that time, women were considered as naturally modest beings and were appreciated as morally superior to men. Hence, the utmost duty of a woman was to create a safe and calm place for her husband the women from the marketplace sought protection of their professional rights and complained about poor working conditions and social injustice.

In contrast, the requests of the aristocratic women were focused on civil issues, like obtaining the right to vote, equality in marriage and initiating divorce.. Virtually every aspect of a woman's life was being scrutinized and analyzed both by the forces of resistance and by the forces of change In the typical eighteenth-century French mind, woman was differentiated from man not merely in terms of gender, but by a presumed discrepancy in relative intellectual strength and by a rigidly enforced division of destinies, duties, characteristics, personalities, and even requisite virtues.

In 18th century France, women of the upper classes were often highly educated and noted for their intellect. The salons of 18th century Paris, run by women of intellect, were famous as meeting places for intellectuals, writers, artists etc. Middle class women would be less likely to have a high degree of education, but would be expected to learn a variety of domestic skills, be adept at managing a household etc. And, France being a Catholic country, for upper and middle class women there would be the option of entering a convent if they did not wish to marry. Working class women, like working class men, would not receive much of an education, if any, and would

be expected to work from an early age. A great many women worked in domestic service, or in the textile trade, and many worked in the retail trade. Women from artisan and lower-middle class families, who were prepared to agitate over economic and political matters, were prominent in riots and mass movements during the French Revolution. As small traders, family managers and often sole providers, they also took the lead, consistently and frequently, in small-scale actions, denouncing rising prices and forcing shopkeepers to adhere to government price-fixing on essential products like grain, soap, and salt