

Topic - Enlightenment & Women's State.

- Pre-Enlightenment Roles of Women: -

⇒ Women were required to live within the domestic sphere. The middle and upper classes women were responsible for cooking, cleaning, and other household duties.

⇒ Usually women in lower class families worked in fields and outdoors to provide their income for their families. Fathers and husbands dictated the lives of their female family members.

- Salons - Women hosted salons in their households. Through these salons, women obtained knowledge and literary support. Women were allowed to govern salons due to the perception of women being gentle leaders. The salons increased attention to gender inequality and permitted women to take a leading role.

- Universal Suffrage: — Male philosophers during the enlightenment advocated for universal suffrage for all men but excluded women from the narrative.

⇒ Women were confined to traditional gender roles, which forced them to remain in the domestic or private sphere of society. Women's roles as daughters, wives or mothers were considered their most significant function in society.

Women during the Enlightenment :-

- ⇒ The Enlightenment era was often viewed as the founder of individualism and rationality. Women at that time often challenge those ideas and started questioning their roles in society.
- ⇒ Writers such as Rousseau, wrote about this but continued to separate women as the opposites of men. Women were still perceived to have designated roles in society, particularly as mothers and wives.
- ⇒ Throughout the age of the Enlightenment women found ways to combine the new intellectual movements existing in the public sphere with their appointed roles in the domestic private sphere.
- ⇒ Out of the salons, women were able to obtain knowledge and gain literary support. Because of these gatherings, women were able to think critically, participate and contribute in society in many ways rather than being becoming caretakers of the households.
- ⇒ Female authors started to emerge during this period and increased in number. Over the course of the eighteenth century and beyond. Additionally, a few women started to publish writings or tracts that grappled with the new theories of the Enlightenment and the subordinate position of women in society.
- ⇒ Throughout the eighteenth century many women took advantage of new literary forms as a way to participate and contribute in the society. This was truly of the novel, which became an increasingly popular form of reading during the eighteenth century.

→ Mary Wollstonecraft :-

→ The British writer Mary Wollstonecraft is considered one of the earliest feminists in western history. She is best known for "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" (1792) in which she offered a response to the writings of eighteenth-century theorists who argued that women should not receive a formal education.

→ Wollstonecraft believed that women should receive a level of education that matched their social standing, so that they could be both ornamental figures and intellectual companions for their husbands.

→ Olympe De Gouges :- was known as a revolutionary for women's rights in French revolution. Her ambition to fight sparked when she was unhappy about how women were treated in pre-revolution France.

→ After a series of events that occur, she would establish a series of documents acknowledging women and their equal rights. She is also believed that women natural rights were lost and it was up to women to retrieve them.

→ Anne Finch :- Used her writing to call for the education of women. Her works centered around the sadness and loneliness in women's lives.

→ Thus, the Enlightenment was the foundation of the feminist movement. Women began to speak out and became advocates for gender equality. They pushed the limits of their rights and privileges.