

Women in European History

Time Period	Status (Rights)	Education	Work Opportunities	Marriage	Examples
Renaissance	Status of upper-class women declined Seen as possessions Status declined with regard to sex & love	Limited education Improved educational opportunities for women, but they were expected to use their education solely to run their household	Continued to perform economic functions: rural women assisted husbands & fathers in agricultural tasks, urban women helped in the shops & were involved in the textile industry Worked as midwives, maids, household servants, cooks & laundresses Widows ran their husbands businesses	Bourgeois double standard Rape not seen as serious Seen as possessions Sex was restricted entirely to marriage; men could pursue sexual indulgence outside marriage	The rape of women by upper-class men was frequent and not considered serious Infanticide of girls because they were considered inferior and less useful than boys
Reformation	Luther-wife controls economy of household Witch-hunt/ hatred of women Prostitution Anabaptists- death for insubordinate wife Cherished and dignified in home Weaker vessel	Ursuline order of nuns gained enormous prestige for the education of women- training future wives and mothers Schools were established by Protestants where boys and girls were equal	Place at home instead of a place of business Bearing children Concerns of women revolved around the children, the kitchen, and the church Anabaptists admitted women to the ministry	Henry VIII- divorce Prostitution Marriage only occupation for upper-class Protestant women Marriage often determined diplomatic status of states	A happy women was a patient wife, an efficient manager, and a good mother Prostitution Henry VIII- divorce Luther- wife controls economy of household
Enlightenment	Ran salons, social gatherings Witch-hunt/ hatred of women Prostitution Weaker vessel New ideas about women's rights – spread in salons	The salons were often presided over by women- informal "schools" for women Limited and unequal education	Highly productive members of society Labored for years before marriage to earn dowry Married women worked hard on farms and in home industries while hearing and caring for their children and large families	Marriage only occupation for upper-class Protestant women Prostitution	Wollstonecraft, <u>A Vindication of the Rights of Women</u> Madame du Chatelet- discriminated against because of her gender March on Versailles Olympe de Gouges, <u>Declaration of the Rights of Women</u> Madame Geoffrin's salon was famous → Diderot and Encyclopedia

Industrial Revolution	Full property rights for women in Great Britain (1882) Separate spheres, patriarchal tradition- sexual division of labor	Women were dependent on their husbands	Mines Act kept women and boys under ten from working underground (coal mining paid higher wages→ some women protested) Continued to work as wage earners- limited job opportunities Poor married women worked at home, wealthy did charity	Marry earlier Fewer remained unmarried Married women did not work for wages outside home	Mines Act (England) Rousseau, <u>Emile</u> (separate spheres) Man emerged as the family's primary wage earner
French Revolution	Given equal status with men New laws broadened women's rights to seek divorce, to inherit property, and to obtain financial support from fathers for illegitimate children→ then it was changed to limits child-raising and domestic duties	Wollstonecraft advocated rigorous co-education	Bought the food and managed that poor family's slender resources In Paris, great numbers of women worked for wages Unemployment Home-focused wives Women stay out of politics and public activities	Napoleonic Code- "family monarch"- women lost gains, they were dependent on men, they could not make contracts or even have bank accounts in their own names	March on Versailles- Oct. 5 some seven thousand desperate women marched the 12 miles to Versailles to demand action Wollstonecraft, <u>A Vindication of the Rights of Women</u> Olympe de Gouges, <u>Declaration of the Rights of Women</u>
19 th century Urban Society	Women's movement became organized Political and economic gains were made Law placed women in an inferior position Women's control in the home increased- money was spent and major domestic decisions	Middle-class feminists campaigned for equal opportunities in education and the professions, and the right to vote Socialist women called for liberation of working-class women through revolution	Married poor women earned money at home (low-paid craft) Rare for middle-class women to work outside home- charity work was socially acceptable Unskilled domestic servants Women were also employed in the "sweated industries" Mothers and homemakers, not wage earners	Marry late-middle-class Few remained unmarried Romantic love Economic love Economic consideration important to middle-class Dowries and legal marriage contracts (France)	Premarital sex and illegitimacy increased Prostitution Marriage and family ties were often strong England- no legal identity, no right to own property France- Napoleonic Code

Post WWI	Secured right to vote in most Western countries after 1918 Little expansion of rights (conservative and fascist ideologies, Great Depression)	In communist countries they became better educated than ever before (also occurred in West) Novelists- Woolf, Joyce, Faulkner	Workplace gains were lost in 1920's and 1930's (returning male workers, conservative and fascist ideologies, shortage of jobs in Great Depression) Most married women still had to work for wages outside home Opportunities to earn money inside home practically disappeared	Marry earlier Child care took less of married women's lives	Right to vote after 1918 in most countries Early Marriage Working women spent less time with children
Post WWII	Emancipation of women was on its way Beginnings of another women's movement	In communist countries they became better educated than ever before (also occurred in West)	Need for trained experts Moved into areas of employment formerly closed to them Most married women began to work for wages outside home Opportunities to earn money inside home practically disappeared Rising employment of married women → powerful force in drive for equality and emancipation	Marry earlier Having children earlier Birth control within marriage Having fewer children Child care took less of married women's lives	Simone de Beauvoir, <u>The Second Sex</u> (existentialist) Earl marriage Working women spent less time with children Birth control within marriage
1960's - Present	1970's-broad-based movement devoted to promoting the interests of women Friedan founded National Organization for Women (NOW) to press for women's rights Gender equality Political and economic gains were made Abortion was common, right to divorce, and more Civil rights and antiwar movements	Continued to be better educated NOW grew rapidly	Laws against discrimination "Equal pay for equal work" was called for Maternal leave Affordable day care Rising employment of married women → powerful force in drive for equality and emancipation Began to leave the home for the workplace Women entered the labor market as full-time wage earners	Marry earlier Having children earlier Birth control within marriage Having fewer children Right to divorce Legalized abortion Protection from rape and physical violence Child care took less of married women's lives Emotional aspects of marriage became more important Divorce rate increased	Friedan, <u>The Feminine Mystique</u> (victims of a system) Simone de Beauvoir- argued that women could become free only by way of courageous action and self-assertive creativity (existentialist) Early marriage Less children Divorce Increased Birth control within marriage