

Examining Disparities and Bias in Educational Approaches for Men and Women in Rousseau's Emile

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Abstract

Rousseau's philosophical masterpiece "Emile" provides an educational philosophy based on the distinct caring roles and abilities of men and women. He believes that women's education should differ from men's, with a focus on cultivating emotional and intellectual maturity. This qualitative study examines Rousseau's support for gender-specific education for women and goes into feminist historians' criticisms of his idea, most notably Mary Wollstonecraft. While "Emile" advances significant approaches in male education, it also limits women's prospects to the home realm. The journeys of Emile and Sophie highlight a fundamental disparity coming from the complex difficulty of educating women within cultural constraints, a situation that resonates throughout nations. Rousseau proposes postponing formal education until children achieve rational maturation, allowing them to explore and cultivate their inherent curiosity and creativity. The idea of excluding women from formal education in favour of segregated arrangements is intrinsically anti-feminist.

Key Words: Education, Emile, Gender-segregated education, Rousseau, Sophie, Women's learning.

Introduction

Influential 18th-century philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau had a significant impact on educational philosophy, and his views on gender roles and education have been the subject of extensive debate and criticism. This article analyses Rousseau's educational philosophy, including his views on the education of men and women, gender segregation, and feminist and scholarly criticism. Feminist academicians criticise Rousseau's views on women's education by highlighting historical gender dynamics and patriarchal nature. Rousseau's "Emile" serves as the primary source for this analysis, which is supplemented by scholastic articles, books, and papers to obtain a comprehensive understanding of his educational philosophy. The study employed a qualitative research design to analyse and critique Rousseau's educational philosophy in depth. Rousseau's children's education policy has undergone extensive research and evaluation. Relevant scholarly publications, books, and academic papers were studied to get a comprehensive grasp of Rousseau's education concept. The collected data from both primary and secondary sources was evaluated thematically.

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Rousseau is credited with the famous quotation, "Man is born free, but everywhere he is in shackles" (1979). Rousseau believed that education should emphasise the natural evolution and inherent virtues of the individual (Schaeffer, 2013). He stated that children are born good and pure, but that society can undermine these traits. Therefore, rather than imparting external principles, the purpose of education should be to preserve and cultivate their inherent characteristics. Rousseau believed that education should be individualized and tailored to each child's specific requirements and interests. He emphasised the superiority of hands-on learning and direct experience over memorization and abstraction. He advocated "learning by doing," in which children actively interact with their environment and discover and learn from their own experiences. Rousseau believed that a child's formal education should be delayed until he or she attained a certain level of maturation and reasoning. Prior to that, the child should be free to explore and cultivate their intrinsic curiosity and creativity. Rousseau advocated a stage-based educational system, with each stage corresponding to the cognitive and emotional development of the neonate (Vaughan, 1915). Emile makes a clear distinction between the education of men and women (Scott, 2104).

He advocated restricting women to the domestic sphere and did not support gender equality. According to Fralin (1978), Rousseau believed that women should confine their activities to the confines of their homes. (Bernstein, 1971) In the political arena of the time, these two competing positions reflected opposing viewpoints. He believed that Emile needed companionship, so he brought Sophie to console him. "It is detrimental for man to be alone. He is a male. We have promised him a companion. He must receive her as a gift. Sophie is the companion (Rousseau, 1979).

The purpose of this study is to examine the applicability of Rousseau's educational theories to contemporary practices. Despite the passage of years, his ideas about education for men and women are still important, especially since there are still differences in education between men and women. In addition, the study intends to examine how Rousseau's ideas influenced post-revolutionary France and the opposition posed by women such as Mary Wollstonecraft. Through Rousseau's ideas on women's education, we may understand society's expectations and the historical backdrop of gender-based educational standards.

Rousseau's Educational Philosophy in Emile

Emile, or On Education, by Jean-Jacques Rousseau is a thesis on the nature of education and the character of man. Emile was banned and publicly burned in Paris and Geneva in 1762 because of a portion of his work titled "Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar" (Bernstein, 1971). Emile is not a comprehensive parenting manual, but it does provide some particular suggestions on child-rearing. Rousseau described a lifelong education in Emile. Children will first learn from nature and later from reason. Emile learned through his interactions with objects over the first twelve to fourteen years of his life. He requested that he be kept dependent on things. During this time, Emile receives a "negative" education, i.e., a "non-social" preventive education that is markedly different

from standard concepts of education in that reading and writing play virtually no role (Greentree, 2017).

Emile's text is divided into five books: Books I, II, and III are about Emile as a kid; Book IV is about Emile as an adolescent; and Book V is about Emile's education, home, and civic life. Rousseau outlines how one might nurture a child in accordance with such ideology in Book I. He begins with the physical and emotional development of the baby and child. Book II concentrates on the child's initial encounters with the outside world (Rousseau, 1979). He thought that at this time, children's education should be based less on books and more on the child's interaction with the world, with a focus on developing the senses and the ability to draw conclusions from them (Rousseau, 1979). Book III is all about deciding on a deal. Rousseau felt that acceptable role models should teach the kid a manual skill that is appropriate for his gender, age, and interests. Emile will be ready for the final stage of his schooling when he is physically robust and begins to pay close attention to his environment. He will grow into a caring and sensitive creature capable of thinking for himself. Rousseau said that when Emile is a teenager, he is only just beginning to understand complicated human emotions, notably pity. While a child cannot put himself in the shoes of others, he can be introduced to the world and socialized once he enters puberty and is able to do so (Rousseau, 1979). During Emile's adolescent years, the tutor teaches him about society and religion. According to Rousseau, babies cannot grasp abstract notions such as the soul until they are approximately fifteen or sixteen years old; therefore, teaching religion to them is risky. He claims that "ignorance of the divine is a smaller evil than offending it" (Rousseau, 1979). He claims that because infants are incapable of absorbing the intricate notions of religion, children will just regurgitate what is given to them and be unable to believe (Raillard, 2011).

Rousseau included a passage titled "Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar" in Book IV, which was primarily responsible for Emile's condemnation and was the most often excerpted and published outside of its parent tome (Bernstein, 1971). The subject of his only conviction in "natural religion" provoked debate in modern France. Both secular and non-secular organisations criticise Rousseau's educational views. The Archbishop of Paris condemned his beliefs as anti-Christian, and several municipal governments in and around Geneva and Paris quickly pushed Rousseau to escape (Bernstein, 1971). At the end of "Profession," Rousseau admits, "I have transcribed this book not as a guideline for the sentiments that one should follow in religious matters, but as an example of how one may debate with one's pupil in order not to depart from the method I have endeavoured to construct" (Rousseau, 1979). "

Rousseau describes Emile's political upbringing and education in Book V. Emile was also quickly prevented from entering the nation due to his contested notions regarding universal will. During the French Revolution, Emile served as a prototype for a new national educational system. Rousseau devoted Book V to Sophie, Emile's future bride's youth. Rousseau begins his painting of Sophie, the lovely lady, in a typical manner by

emphasizing the fundamental imbalances between men and women: they are equal in terms of what they have in common. When they differ, they are not comparable. Sophie would be an ideal lady. And a perfect man should not be intellectually or physically comparable to another, because perfection is unchangeable. Everyone in a sex union contributes equally to the shared goal, but not in the same way. This variability is responsible for the first visible variance in the moral interactions of the sexes.

The basic education plan for Emile

Natural Education: Rousseau conceives of the child as a plant whose course of development is determined by nature and of the educator as a gardener whose task is to ensure that corrupt society does not interfere with that predetermined pattern of development. Rousseau strongly advocates the course of nature in the upbringing of infants. He views the strength of the body as important in the development of strength of mind and character. "The body must be strong enough to obey the mind; a good servant must be strong (Velkley, 2012; Foxley, 1911)." He longed for the independence of body and mind that physical strength could assist in procuring. He states,

"Keep your eye on nature. Follow the road she indicates. The child who has sustained hardships has gained strength. This is nature's law; why oppose it? Train them to endure extremes of temperature, climate, environment, hunger, thirst, and fatigue. Since human life is full of danger, can we do wiser than face danger at a time in our lives when it can do the least damage?" (Rousseau, 1911).

According to Ulich (1945), Rousseau's philosophy of education emphasises the concept of nature. Rousseau proposes an education that follows nature, one that trusts the child's spontaneous impulses and allows for natural development (Martin, 1981).

Learning Reason: Learning Reason is an important part of Emile. Emile learns to reason by seeing the necessary relations between things and between him and things. In the third grade, Emile will learn the 'reasoning of the intellect'. Only when Emile has thus reached the stage of having a rich understanding of things rather than an intellectually crippling burden of words will he, in Rousseau's opinion, be ready for "the reasoning of the intellect."

Education for the Poor: Rousseau states that the poor man has no need of education. It means he prefers different educations for elite and poor men. In saying that 'the poor man has no need of education,' Rousseau is employing a focus on the ordinary course of education for the poor man receives an ordinary course of education to survive. Rusk (1955) argues that Rousseau's apology for choosing his scholar from among the rich is that "we shall have made another man; the poor may come to manhood without our help." And if Emile comes from a good family, so much the better—"he will be another victim snatched from prejudice (Greentree, 2017). "He proposes to give the sons of the rich a natural education so that whatever might befall them in later life, they would be independent of fate or fortune. It is necessary to emphasise this fact that Rousseau is expounding a universal system of education, for frequently the Emile is regarded as an

account of an individualistic scheme of education, and difficulty is thereby encountered in explaining how the democratic systems and others originated in the *Emile* (Rusk, 1955). Priest claims that when Rousseau states that "the poor have no need of education," this statement is not incompatible (Priest, 1961).

Moral and Social Education: Rousseau emphasised the significance of moral and social education for the development of children. He said education should foster the growth of a well-rounded individual who is capable of participating as an independent and responsible member of society. He believed students should learn empathy, compassion, and a sense of justice. A tutor will teach them compassion, and they will learn to control anger. Tutors will apply various strategies to cultivate compassion in *Emile*, which raises questions about whether it constitutes teaching or manipulation (White, 2008). It serves as a bridge from individuality to social order. Consequently, Rousseau considers the education of compassion as the initial step in *Emile's* socialisation and the foundation on which everything else depends. The effect of social and educational philosophy on France and the French Revolution was illustrative of the capability of the impact of Rousseau's writings.

Sex biases: *Emile V* is a treatise on education that outlines the education of *Emile*, representing every boy from birth to manhood. Rousseau describes in considerable detail what *Emile*, who apparently represents every boy, should have from childhood through maturity. The texts that mention *Sophie's* education do so with shame, implying that it will be quite different from *Emile's* (Martin, 1981). *Sophie's* education deviates from *Emile's* conventional viewpoint, which sees education as a natural process of growth and development. Rousseau's fundamental assumptions in *Emile V* compose an educational production model. In her landmark work, *Women in Western Political Thought*, Susan Moller Okin devoted numerous chapters to Rousseau's opinions. She claims that Rousseau had fundamentally different notions about *Emile* and *Sophie's* education (Okin, 1979). Okin depicts the sex discrimination in Rousseau's portrayal of *Sophie*. In her essay "Rousseau: Women and the General Will," Lynda Lange exposes sex prejudice in Rousseau's political philosophy (Clark & Lange, 1979). Some of the best-known collections of educational historians portray *Emile's* education as Rousseau's ideal for both sexes while neglecting Book V (Ulich, 1945; Masters, 2015; Rusk, 1918).

Martin's evaluation of Rousseau must take into account both *Emile* and *Sophie*. One possibility is to attach two competing notions of education to Rousseau: a natural or growing model for *Emile* and a production model for *Sophie*. Lynda Lange demonstrates the sex bias in Rousseau's depiction of *Sophie*. *Sophie's* destiny is determined not by her nature, as the standard *Emile* development interpretation holds, but by her function in society. It's no wonder that educational historians either ignore or dismiss *Sophie* as an anomaly. Rousseau's depiction of *Sophie's* education raises basic problems about their reading of *Emile*. Martin (1981) revealed the sex bias in Rousseau's educational and political thought in his masterpiece *Emile*. He argues Rousseau's philosophy of education is fundamentally mistaken and traces its inadequacy to its failure to acknowledge

Rousseau's discussion of the education of girls in Emile V. Rousseau's education of Emile V and Sophie is a complex issue with two approaches: a growth or natural model for Emile and a production model for Sophie. This raises questions about the interpretation of Emile and the sex bias in educational thought. Emile and Sophie's role in society portrays their education differently, making it a case study of sex bias.

Gender segregation: Natural and social women

He categorizes women into two categories: natural women and social women. Rousseau's social philosophy is founded on the premise that, in terms of love, the social woman outperforms the social male. Rousseau's classification of women as natural and social leads to the conclusion that the social woman is the most important component of his social theory. Julie in *La Nouvelle Heloise* is the most important to understanding his ideas since she is the only highly developed example of a corrupt social lady. Rousseau strives to eliminate "unnatural" desires in both sexes, but especially in women. Julie is inherently and irreversibly corrupt, owing to the connection between her womanly character and the surrounding culture. Rousseau's distinction between natural and social women leads to the conclusion that his social philosophy prioritizes social women to the greatest extent. According to his conviction, she is the cause of all societal inequalities. In Rousseau's writings, Julie in *La Nouvelle Heloise* is the only example of a fully developed representation of a morally flawed lady. The presence of women like Julie is irreconcilable with Sophie, who represents the notion of a virtuous woman in Rousseau's envisioned utopian society. Rousseau, on the other hand, believes that the fulfilment of this perfect society is unlikely as long as women like Julie remain. Rousseau's goal is to eliminate "manufactured" feelings in both genders, with a focus on the feminine gender. According to Rousseau, Julie is fundamentally and irrevocably corrupted, a condition that may be explained by the interaction between her feminine character and society's conventions.

Rousseau's statement that humans possess a "general desire to unite with each other" indicates his comprehension of the necessity of women for men's survival (Wootton, 2008). Women possess the inherent qualities of modesty and shame, as well as a proclivity towards servitude. The expectation is that a woman should conform to her husband's expectations and exhibit asexual behaviour towards all men other than her husband. The socialisation and education of women ought to be founded upon the notion that women were exclusively fashioned to gratify men and to be subordinate to them. Rousseau's conception presents certain issues, as it poses a significant predicament for women, who are deprived of the opportunity to assert their individuality and attain citizenship. Rousseau's perspective on men fails to acknowledge the ways in which women have been constrained and influenced by their socialisation and cultural milieu over the course of their existence. Paradoxically, Rousseau held the belief that while the cultivation of intellect and rationality is imperative for men, these attributes are intrinsic to women and therefore do not require instruction.

Rousseau suggests Sophie as a carer; modest and motherly, unschooled and unskilled, she strikes many as more of a plaything than a partner to Emile. Sophie gets her way indirectly through feminine wiles and cares too much about appearance and reputation to make herself an appealing role model. Emile was to be a critical, self-reliant citizen, entitled to an elaborate education and full equality with his peers. Sophie, on the other hand, was to be trained only as a wife to Emile and as a mother to his children.

Rousseau's Emile advocates gender segregation. Emile was a critical, self-sufficient citizen who deserved a proper education and equality with his classmates. Sophie was taught to be Emile's wife and mother (Wexler, 1976). Rousseau thinks Sophie is illogical. Men's education promotes freedom and independence, whereas women's education promotes submission and pleasing men (Christenson, 1972). Boyd (1963) claims that Rousseau's method of female education is an unthinking reflection of his sexist times or his own misogyny (Wexler, 1976). Rousseau's theory is best understood by ignoring female education (Weiss, 1987). Rousseau promotes Emile's physical strength via pain and exercise. He did not offer Sophie any plays. These disparities contributed to Emile's self-sufficiency and Sophie's reliance. Sophie doesn't mention such training. She learns cooking, sewing, housekeeping, and bookkeeping. Sophie seems dependent and unprepared for change, whereas Emile's trades provide him freedom and flexibility (Weiss, 1987). Emile's education tries to create a resourceful, independent thinker and doer who is as impervious to others' opinions as possible, whereas Sophie's creates a sensitive, submissive person. Rousseau opposed women in politics. He worried that women would overtake men in politics. Rousseau claims that more women entering politics complicates the situation, elevating dishonest women above corrupt males. Rousseau's new social covenant ensures the social man's political control over a social woman and forbids love, restoring his dignity.

Rousseau believes that if women had been given equal opportunities to participate in the administration of commerce and the governance of empires, it is possible that they would have demonstrated greater bravery and valour, resulting in a higher number of women achieving distinction in these fields. According to Rousseau, women have the potential to bring about substantial change in society if they are granted equal opportunities to exert their influence, similar to men. Notwithstanding any inherent biological differences between males and females, women have consistently exhibited their ability to attain greatness, despite being historically characterised as the "inferior gender. The provision of equal opportunities to women for participation in the administration of commerce and the governance of empires could have potentially led to a greater display of bravery and valour by women, thereby increasing the number of women who achieved distinction in these fields.

Critique from Feminists and Scholars

Rousseau's concise account of female education sparked a significant contemporary reaction. In her work, French writer Louise d'Epinau expressed her disagreement with Rousseau's views on female education. Louise believed that women's education impacted

their role in society rather than being solely based on natural differences, as Rousseau argued (Hageman, 1991). Rousseau's contemporary philosopher, Voltaire, criticised Emile as a whole, but he admired the section of the book that led to its banning, known as the "Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar. According to Voltaire, philosophers will be more forgiving than priests (Durant & Durant, 1967). The German scholar Goethe stated in 1787 that "Emile and its sentiments had a universal influence on the cultivated mind (Durant & Durant, 1967)".

Rousseau believes that he can give back to man the freedom he once enjoyed in the earliest or most pure state of nature. Rousseau's Discourse on Inequality argues that the new social contract offers limited freedom to men through the oppression of social women, and to the degree that Sophie is unsocialized, limited freedom extends to her as well. Rousseau believes that many early civil societies were able to circumvent the rise of social woman over social man, but he also believes that as the natural power of man over woman recedes further and further into the past, contemporary societies are in great danger of becoming matriarchies, which he believes is equivalent to complete world chaos.

Rousseau's Emile has been criticised for promoting women's submission to men. Some scholars argue that Rousseau's intentions were ironic in nature. Scholars have pointed out that Emile has a problem with how women are treated in school. The present study examines Rousseau's claim that women are responsible for educating the younger generation and that they cannot think logically. Jonas (2016) claims that his educational programme for women has a serious issue in that it is overtly discriminatory. According to Rousseau, women must be taught how to seduce men and fill their lives with rewarding and delightful experiences (Jonas, 2016). Because women are fundamentally inferior to men, men should always be in positions of power. Men and women fulfil separate sex roles, according to Rousseau.

According to Smith (1996), feminists have expressed grave concern regarding Rousseau's misogyny, claiming that he intends to injure all women in order to save man or to rescue societal women from their depraved nature for the sake of man. Rousseau's point of view is that he intends to undermine societal women for their own benefit, but he does not intend to injure virtuous or natural women. The author attempts to rescue the societal woman by eradicating her unnatural sexual inclinations, which are considered to be extremely detrimental to her own and humanity's moral rectitude. To the best of my knowledge, no feminist perspective contends that Rousseau intended to protect virtuous or uncorrupted women from those who have been corrupted by societal influences.

Smith (1996) argued that Sophie and Emile are fetish subjects for Rousseau, or at least that they are close to being so. Rousseau thinks that Sophie and Emile are perfect because they don't have sexual desires, are stupid, and are honest. In this way, he treats them like fetish objects that could be used as perfect people in his future utopia. Rousseau seems to treat Sophie and Emile like sexual objects (Smith, 1996). He uses them as storage for his

own sexual urges, so he carefully gives them a strong sense of sexual shame so they can take their proper places in his vision of a utopia without passion.

The majority of feminist scholars argue that Rousseau's discriminatory philosophy is rooted in patriarchy and its inherent fluctuations for women. The act of isolating Sophie from her natural condition grants her a social significance that Rousseau did not intend for Emile. My perspective on the distinction between natural Sophie and highly socialized Julie differs from that of feminists, as I do not distinguish Rousseau's archetypal natural woman in her unaltered state of nature from Sophie.

Despite his belief that it is in Sophie's best interest, Rousseau's positioning of her in an oppressive patriarchal environment is detrimental to her well-being. Despite her lack of intelligence, it is undeniable that she is experiencing tremendous happiness in this setting. According to Rousseau, a person's lack of knowledge and limited social interaction serve as safeguards against moral deterioration. From a feminist perspective, Sophie's possible lack of awareness of her feminist identity may be attributable to her social isolation and naiveté.

One notable critic, Mary Wollstonecraft, dedicated a substantial portion of her chapter in her book "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" (1792) to vehemently opposing Rousseau and his arguments. In her response to Rousseau's argument within "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman," Wollstonecraft directly quotes him from Chapter IV of her own work, stating:

"Emile Rousseau says, 'Educate women like men, and the more they resemble our sex, the less power they will have over us.' This is the very point I aim for. I do not wish them to have power over men, but over themselves" (Wollstonecraft, 1792). Wollstonecraft argued for a non-discriminatory educational concept that would empower women and challenge discriminatory ideologies. The Wollstonecraft-Rousseau debate on education revolved around differing views on the role of women and the importance of their education. Mary argued that women should be seen as natural carers and that education would empower them to fulfil this role effectively. Despite facing criticism during the French Revolution, Wollstonecraft's radical idea of combining men's and women's education had a significant impact on shaping the educational path for women (Okin, 1992). Wollstonecraft advocates for equal educational opportunities for women, arguing that such a step would strengthen their natural obligations (Owusu-Gyamfi, 2016). Wollstonecraft makes a proposal for an equitable educational structure directed at future generations. According to Wollstonecraft's study, the fundamental reason for women's historical marginalization and maltreatment has been a lack of educational possibilities. She advocates for more rights and educational opportunities for women. She criticizes Rousseau's natural education in Emile in her novel Maria (the Wrongs of Woman). She offers a rejoinder to Rousseau's views on the subject of women. She argues that women possess rational faculties and can reap substantial benefits from education.

However, Rousseau and Wollstonecraft emphasise common educational beliefs with respect to children. Both underline the importance of education and children's liberty to develop in healthy circumstances. Rousseau believed that women should be educated to serve men and care for children, while men should be the main subject. Wollstonecraft, on the other hand, criticised this discriminating attitude and campaigned for women's education. Rousseau's idea devalues and objects young girls, making them simply objects of male enjoyment, according to Wollstonecraft. Mary Wollstonecraft's support for equal educational opportunities aligns with this current focus, emphasizing how such opportunities enhance women's natural responsibilities. The focus on women's education as an essential aspect of societal progress can be attributed to this debate and the ideas put forth by Wollstonecraft. Despite facing criticism from the French Revolution, Wollstonecraft's radical idea of combining men's and women's education was influential in shaping the educational path for women.

Conclusion

The significant influence of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's educational and societal views during the French Revolution cannot be overstated. Rousseau's idea of education, as expressed in "On Education," was a radical break from the conventions of his time. The continuing impact of his educational philosophy may be attributed to his prioritization of child-centred learning, experiential education, and the development of individual gifts and virtues. This approach has influenced future generations of educational reformers and progressive thinkers. The impact of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's social and educational theory on France and the French Revolution was significant. Rousseau's education philosophy, as detailed in his work *On Education*, was a significant break from his time's typical educational practices. The educational framework proposed by Rousseau, which emphasises the cultivation of innate virtue and potential, remains influential in current discussions around education and the growth of children.

"Emile" focuses on educational and nurturing methodologies aimed at equipping individuals with the necessary skills and abilities to flourish in a societal context. Rousseau's proposed curriculum plan is in accordance with the fundamental ideas of inherent rights. According to Rousseau, the purpose of education is to cultivate individuals who possess a comprehensive range of skills and knowledge, enabling them to make independent and accountable contributions to the betterment of society. This approach emphasises the importance of personal responsibility and the cultivation of characteristics that inhibit the use of power and instead encourage ethical conduct, empathy, and the recognition of others' autonomy. He prioritizes Emile's education while restricting Sophie to domestic schooling. He places a premium on male education and cultivates their natural way of thinking. In his book, Rousseau proposes an educational curriculum based on natural rights, underscoring the need to foster and explore an individual's inner potential. Rousseau thinks that formal education should be postponed until children reach a certain age of reason and maturity, allowing them to explore and develop their cognitive and emotional talents spontaneously. While others argue that

Rousseau's goal was not to eliminate all women or their nature but rather to protect men from corrupting influences, it is evident from his literature that he had a bias against women. The value of teaching female children has expanded throughout history. Emile focuses on educational and caring practices in order to produce people capable of living thriving lives in society. Rousseau recommended a curriculum for education based on the fundamental principles of inherent rights. Formal education, according to Rousseau, should be deferred until a child reaches a particular age of reason and maturity. Prior to that, the youngster should be able to explore and express their innate curiosity and creativity. Rousseau advocated a stage-based educational system, with each step corresponding to a child's natural cognitive and emotional growth.

Rousseau also emphasised the value of moral and social education. He felt that children should learn empathy, compassion, and a sense of justice. According to Rousseau, education should support the development of a well-rounded individual capable of contributing to society as an autonomous and responsible citizen. It emphasises personal responsibility and the development of qualities that encourage non-domination, in which citizens will be ethical, compassionate, and respectful of others' independence. He also argues that there are many stages of socialisation, with each level corrupting the individual more severely. His most prominent manifestation is Emile, which ensures social man's political control over the social woman and bans the moral element of love.

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