



Philosophy of Education in Mme de Maintenon (1635–1719)

John J. Conley
Loyola University of Maryland

The morganatic wife of Louis XIV, Françoise d'Aubigné, Marquise de Maintenon developed her philosophy of education in her many addresses to faculty and students at the academy for impoverished aristocratic women she founded at Saint-Cyr. The primary purpose of education is the formation of moral character. Teachers must be vigilant to supervise the formation of their pupils in moral virtue and in an authentic, simple piety. The reason of the pupils should be formed, but the emphasis should be placed on practical reasonableness rather than on speculative reason. In the use of pedagogical methods, teachers should limit the use of lecture and exercises of memory. Interactive methods are to be preferred. Such methods include teacher-student dialogues, teacher-student conferences, small-group work, classroom dramatic dialogues, and classroom games.

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