In "Our Deportment, or the Manners, Conduct, and Dress of Refined Society," John H. Young explains the rules of etiquette during the nineteenth century. In this excerpt, Young explains the proper etiquette for wives and husbands. As you read, take notes on how these 1881 ideals compare to ideals today.

CHAPTER XVIII

Home Life and Etiquette.

[1] Home is the woman's kingdom, and there she reigns supreme. To embellish that home, to make happy the lives of her husband and the dear ones committed to her trust, is the honored task which it is the wife's province to perform. All praise be to her who so rules and governs in that kingdom, that those reared beneath her roof "shall rise up and call her blessed."

[...]

The Wife a Helpmate.

A wife should act openly and honorably in regard to money matters, keeping an exact account of her expenditures, and carefully guarding against any extravagances; and while her husband is industriously at work, she should seek to encourage him, by her own frugality, to be economical, thrifty, enterprising and prosperous in his business, that he may be better enabled, as years go by and family cares press more heavily on each, to afford all the comforts and perhaps some of the luxuries of a happy home. No condition is hopeless when the wife possesses firmness, decision and economy, and no outward prosperity can counteract indolence, folly and extravagance at home. She should consult the disposition and tastes of her husband, and endeavor to lead him to high and noble thoughts, lofty aims, and temporal comfort; be ever ready to welcome him home, and in his companionship draw his thoughts from business and lead him to the enjoyment of home comforts and happiness. The influence of a good wife over her husband may be very great, if she exerts it in the right direction. She should, above all things, study to learn the disposition of her husband, and if, perchance, she finds herself united to a man of quick and violent temper, the utmost discretion, as well as perfect equanimity on her own part is required, for she should have such perfect control over herself as to calm his perturbed spirits.

1. Embellish (verb): to make something more attractive by adding details
2. a person's proper or appropriate functions
3. the act of spending money
4. a lack of restraint in spending money
A Husband's Duties.

It must not be supposed that it devolves upon the wife alone to make married life and home happy. She must be seconded in her noble efforts by him who took her from her own parental fireside and kind friends, to be his companion through life's pilgrimage. He has placed her in a new home, provided with such comforts as his means permit, and the whole current of both their lives have been changed. His constant duty to his wife is to be ever kind and attentive, to love her as he loves himself, even sacrificing his own personal comfort for her happiness. From his affection for her, there should grow out a friendship and fellowship, such as is possessed for no other person. His evenings and spare moments should be devoted to her, and these should be used for their intellectual, moral and social advancement.

The cares and anxieties of business should not exclude the attentions due to wife and family, while he should carefully keep her informed of the condition of his business affairs. Many a wife is capable of giving her husband important advice about various details of his business, and if she knows the condition of his pecuniary affairs, she will be able to govern her expenditures accordingly.

It is the husband's duty to join with his wife in all her endeavors to instruct her children, to defer all matters pertaining to their discipline to her, aiding her in this respect as she requires it. In household matters the wife rules predominant, and he should never interfere with her authority and government in this sphere. It is his duty and should be his pleasure to accompany her to church, to social gatherings, to lectures and such places of entertainment as they both mutually enjoy and appreciate. In fact he ought not to attend a social gathering unless accompanied by his wife, nor go to an evening entertainment without her. If it is not a fit place for his wife to attend, neither is it fit for him.

While he should give his wife his perfect confidence in her faithfulness, trusting implicitly to her honor at all times and in all places, he should, on his part, remain faithful and constant to her, and give her no cause of complaint. He should pass by unnoticed any disagreeable peculiarities and mistakes, taking care at the proper time, and without giving offense, to remind her of them, with the idea of having her correct them. He should never seek to break her of any disagreeable habits or peculiarities she may possess, by ridiculing them. He should encourage her in all her schemes for promoting the welfare of her household, or in laudable endeavors to promote the happiness of others, by engaging in such works of benevolence and charity as the duties of her home will allow her to perform.
The husband, in fact, should act toward his wife as becomes a perfect gentleman, regarding her as the "best lady in the land," to whom, above all other earthly beings, he owes paramount\textsuperscript{19} allegiance. If he so endeavors to act, his good sense and judgment will dictate to him the many little courtesies which are due her, and which every good wife cannot fail to appreciate. The observance of the rules of politeness are nowhere more desirable than in the domestic circle, between husband and wife, parents and children.

\textit{Our Deportment, or the Manners, Conduct, and Dress of Refined Society by John H. Young is in the public domain.}

\textbf{19. Paramount (adjective):} of highest rank or importance
Text-Dependent Questions

Directions: For the following questions, choose the best answer or respond in complete sentences.

1. PART A: How does the author depict women in the text's introduction?
   A. The author describes women almost like servants, subject to the whims and needs of others, especially their husbands.
   B. The author describes women as perfect, angelic beings of virtue.
   C. The author describes women as tyrants of their homes whom must not be contradicted.
   D. The author describes women almost like queens, rulers of the household who are praised and adored.

2. PART B: How does this depiction of women contribute to their expected roles and responsibilities?
   A. This depiction of women contributes to the expectation that they are fully responsible for domestic duties and happiness, limiting them to this sphere as their natural and virtuous responsibility.
   B. This depiction of women contributes to the expectation that they are saintly and always the voice of goodness, pressuring them into maintaining virtuous facades.
   C. This depiction of women contributes to the idea that women are naturally born to serve, contributing to their expected role as a husband's “helpmate.”
   D. This depiction of women contributes to the idea that only women can run a household, that she takes this power from her husband for her own sake and wields it with absolutism.

3. PART A: What role, according to the text, should women have in relation to money?
   A. Women should stay away from finances all together; it is the responsibility of the husband.
   B. Men and women should equally contribute income to the household.
   C. Women should be economical and orderly with the household finances and encourage their husbands to do the same.
   D. Women should use their husbands’ income to provide comforts at home after a long day at work; this will encourage the men to be more industrious.

4. PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A?
   A. "...and while her husband is industriously at work, she should seek to encourage him, by her own frugality, to be economical, thrifty, enterprising and prosperous in his business...." (Paragraph 2)
   B. "...to afford all the comforts and perhaps some of the luxuries of a happy home." (Paragraph 2)
   C. "...no outward prosperity can counteract indolence, folly and extravagance at home." (Paragraph 2)
   D. "It must not be supposed that it devolves upon the wife alone to make married life and home happy." (Paragraph 3)
5. PART A: Which of the following statements best describes the ideal relationship between a wife and husband?
   A. A wife should be obedient and humble in all things ordered by her husband, the head of the household, regardless of any negative effects to the household.
   B. Husband and wife should both work to make the home happy and prosperous, treating the other with respect and trust for the betterment of the household.
   C. The household (including the finances and children) should be in total care of the wife, while the husband attends to outside matters.
   D. The husband should refer to wives on all matters social and financial, treating her more like a boss than a wife.

6. PART B: Which of the following quotes best supports the answer to Part A?
   A. “The influence of a good wife over her husband may be very great, if she exerts it in the right direction.” (Paragraph 2)
   B. “It must not be supposed that it devolves upon the wife alone to make married life and home happy. She must be seconded in her noble efforts by him who took her from her own parental fireside and kind friends, to be his companion through life’s pilgrimage.” (Paragraph 3)
   C. “In household matters the wife rules predominant, and he should never interfere with her authority and government in this sphere.” (Paragraph 5)
   D. “He should pass by unnoticed any disagreeable peculiarities and mistakes, taking care at the proper time, and without giving offense, to remind her of them, with the idea of having her correct them.” (Paragraph 6)
Discussion Questions

Directions: Brainstorm your answers to the following questions in the space provided. Be prepared to share your original ideas in a class discussion.

1. Do you feel that these rules are fair to men and women? What specifically is or is not fair?

2. Why do you think these rules evolved to be like this?

3. Imagine you live during this time. What sort of education do you think you may have had to prepare you for life in this world?

4. How has society progressed? In what ways has it remained the same? Are there still rules of etiquette that govern the relationships of men and women?

5. In the context of this passage, how do we define the roles of men and women? Cite evidence from this text, your own experience, and other literature, art, or history in your answer.