Gender Conventions

- Women and men were considered two “separate spheres;” met at breakfast and dinner
  - Domestic and Laborious
- Men were asked to be chaste, but used prostitutes
- Women were chaste and did not fool with other men
- Men had all decision-making jobs in government and in house; women were subject to husband’s, father’s, and sons’ rule
Roles of Men and Women

MEN:

➔ Men were smarter and more emotionally capable because “their brains were bigger”
➔ Men were expected to work and provide for the family
➔ Men were dominant over the women and a woman was considered inferior without a man

WOMEN:

➔ Women were intellectually inferior because “their brains were smaller”
➔ Women’s sole duty was to take care of the home and were essentially imprisoned in their households
➔ Women were expected to be submissive and were often treated like children by their husbands
➔ Women were expected to only have two hours of intellectual thinking
Legal Issues Pertaining to Marriage

- After a woman married her rights, property, and identity almost ceased to exist.
- Beatings and marital rape were legal.
- Children and money or property the wife brought into the house belonged to the husband.
- One Victorian male contemporary wrote in a letter to a friend described the perfect wife as nothing more than an extension of his household surroundings: “of course at a certain age, when you have a house and so on, you get a wife as part of its furniture.”
The Cult of Domesticity was a set of guidelines that women were expected to follow in their everyday lives. Some of the guidelines were that women were expected to stay and tend to the home, be submissive to their husbands, and to refrain from too many intellectually straining activities.
Works Cited


VIDEO: