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The Code of Chivalry

I wanted to put these here because I think that there are some good ideals within the code of chivalry. Plus it's interesting to see how our ideas about chivalry and/or honor have changed with time. Sure, some of this is obviously outdated and probably not very useful, but some of it is still good advice; I'm sure you'll recognize which points are useful even today.

This page will probably not be updated any longer. I have moved, at least temporarily, to <http://www.geocities.com/dronak/chivalry.html>.

The Ten Commandments of the Code of Chivalry

From *Chivalry* by Leon Gautier

- I. Thou shalt believe all that the Church teaches, and shalt observe all its directions.
- II. Thou shalt defend the Church.
- III. Thou shalt respect all weaknesses, and shalt constitute thyself the defender of them.
- IV. Thou shalt love the country in the which thou wast born.
- V. Thou shalt not recoil before thine enemy.
- VI. Thou shalt make war against the Infidel without cessation, and without mercy.
- VII. Thou shalt perform scrupulously thy feudal duties, if they be not contrary to the laws of God.
- VIII. Thou shalt never lie, and shall remain faithful to thy pledged word.
- IX. Thou shalt be generous, and give largess to everyone.
- X. Thou shalt be everywhere and always the champion of the Right and the Good against Injustice and Evil.

The Code of Chivalry

From the Riffs: England Supplement

I'm pretty sure I got this list somewhere else, but I haven't found out where. Still, some reference is better than none, so thanks to Jeremy Treanor for giving me this one.

- Live to serve King and Country.
- Live to defend Crown and Country and all it holds dear.
- Live one's life so that it is worthy of respect and honor.
- Live for freedom, justice and all that is good.
- Never attack an unarmed foe.
- Never use a weapon on an opponent not equal to the attack.
- Never attack from behind.
- Avoid lying to your fellow man.
- Avoid cheating.

- Avoid torture.
- Obey the law of king, country, and chivalry.
- Administer justice.
- Protect the innocent.
- Exhibit self control.
- Show respect to authority.
- Respect women.
- Exhibit Courage in word and deed.
- Defend the weak and innocent.
- Destroy evil in all of its monstrous forms.
- Crush the monsters that steal our land and rob our people.
- Fight with honor.
- Avenge the wronged.
- Never abandon a friend, ally, or noble cause.
- Fight for the ideals of king, country, and chivalry.
- Die with valor.
- Always keep one's word of honor.
- Always maintain one's principles.
- Never betray a confidence or comrade.
- Avoid deception.
- Respect life and freedom.
- Die with honor.
- Exhibit manners.
- Be polite and attentive.
- Be respectful of host, women, and honor.
- Loyalty to country, King, honor, freedom, and the code of chivalry.
- Loyalty to one's friends and those who lay their trust in thee.

Rules of Courtly Love

I wanted to put these here because I think that there are some good ideas in these sets of rules. It's also interesting to see how our ideas about love have changed with time (OK, so we don't exactly have the idea of courtly love around anymore, but still). Some of this is certainly outdated and probably not very useful, but some of it is still good advice; I'm sure you'll recognize which points are useful even today. Both lists apparently come from the same source, *The Art of Courtly Love* by Andreas Capellanus. Thanks to Mark Lipsman for pointing out an error (now corrected) in point 2 of the second list below.

The Twelve Chief Rules in Love

From *The Art of Courtly Love* by Andreas Capellanus

1. Thou shalt avoid avarice like the deadly pestilence and shalt embrace its opposite.
2. Thou shalt keep thyself chaste for the sake of her whom thou lovest.
3. Thou shalt not knowingly strive to break up a correct love affair that someone else is engaged in.
4. Thou shalt not chose for thy love anyone whom a natural sense of shame forbids thee to marry.
5. Be mindful completely to avoid falsehood.

6. Thou shalt not have many who know of thy love affair.
7. Being obedient in all things to the commands of ladies, thou shalt ever strive to ally thyself to the service of Love.
8. In giving and receiving love's solaces let modesty be ever present.
9. Thou shalt speak no evil.
10. Thou shalt not be a revealer of love affairs.
11. Thou shalt be in all things polite and courteous.
12. In practising the solaces of love thou shalt not exceed the desires of thy lover.

The Art of Courtly Love

From *The Art of Courtly Love* by Andreas Capellanus

1. Marriage is no real excuse for not loving.
2. He who is not jealous cannot love.
3. No one can be bound by a double love.
4. It is well known that love is always increasing or decreasing.
5. That which a lover takes against the will of his beloved has no relish.
6. Boys do not love until they reach the age of maturity.
7. When one lover dies, a widowhood of two years is required of the survivor.
8. No one should be deprived of love without the very best of reasons.
9. No one can love unless he is propelled by the persuasion of love.
10. Love is always a stranger in the home of avarice.
11. It is not proper to love any woman whom one would be ashamed to seek to marry.
12. A true lover does not desire to embrace in love anyone except his beloved.
13. When made public love rarely endures.
14. The easy attainment of love makes it of little value: difficulty of attainment makes it prized.
15. Every lover regularly turns pale in the presence of his beloved.
16. When a lover suddenly catches sight of his beloved his heart palpitates.
17. A new love puts an old one to flight.
18. Good character alone makes any man worthy of love.
19. If love diminishes, it quickly fails and rarely revives.
20. A man in love is always apprehensive.
21. Real jealousy always increases the feeling of love.
22. Jealousy increases when one suspects his beloved.
23. He whom the thought of love vexes eats and sleeps very little.
24. Every act of a lover ends in the thought of his beloved.
25. A true lover considers nothing good except what he thinks will please his beloved.
26. Love can deny nothing to love.
27. A lover can never have enough of the solaces of his beloved.
28. A slight presumption causes a lover to suspect his beloved.
29. A man who is vexed by too much passion usually does not love.
30. A true lover is constantly and without intermission possessed by the thought of his beloved.
31. Nothing forbids one woman being loved by two men or one man by two women.

Links for More Information

- [A Code of Chivalry](#) -- Modern, based on the "Old Code" by Brian R. Price