

A Handbook on



Southern Manners

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on
Southern
Manners



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Publisher's Note

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The great Southern writer George Garrett said that manners are still taken seriously by Southerners because the South still retains the quality of a Christian civilisation. "Manners represent a formal obligation to one's neighbor," he wrote, and "a ritual recognition of the love of God and for the presence of the Holy Ghost in all of one's fellow creatures." If not equal in all respects, we are all equal in Original Sin and in the promise of redemption.

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It is our belief that the adoption of even one or two of the social graces contained in this handbook is one small step we can all take in the reclamation of our Southern identity – or, if not you are not Southern, to reclaim that which is most humane and decent in your own culture; indeed, to paraphrase scripture (James 1:22), to be not only readers of the word, but doers also. .

What follows, with very few exceptions, is the complete text as it appears on the website.

Introduction

MANY READERS OF THIS BOOKLET have witnessed, over the last three or four decades, a precipitous decline in not only the practice of good manners, but also the *comprehension* of the need for good manners. Many people bemoan the ever-increasing anger and violence of our Socialist-afflicted society, and wonder aloud at the causes and cures for such widespread discontent in a nation greatly blessed in natural resources. It behoves us all to recognize the importance that good manners play in the satisfaction and enjoyment we all receive from the society in which we live.

While concern for our conduct toward others is down, the assertion of our Constitutional rights is up. There is also a serious increase in negative political ads and the use of vulgar language. We do business with little thought for others. What happened to the time when a man's word was his bond and you could do business on a handshake? Some say civility is in a permanent state of change. On the contrary, the basics stay the same indefinitely, and have since the earliest times of recorded history.

This is no argument for a return to a less advanced technology, but rather a simple recognition of the many stresses present-day humans have to endure that lead to poor attitudes and shortened tempers. Indeed, a far more significant stress on interpersonal relationships is the increase in population in this and most countries. In the past, people sometimes went a long time without seeing other humans, or were restricted to interacting with only a very few persons. This scarcity of societal contact inherently increases the value of other persons and inclines individuals towards appreciating others.

In stark contrast to this is the all too frequent frustration of having other people crowding our lives on the highways as we drive, on lakes as we boat or sail, on city sidewalks, in restaurants and any number of other public places. This crowding from so many people (especially in cities) causes us to appreciate each other much less, and consequently to relate to people in a less kind fashion. It is these stresses, along with the general decline in societal morals that has led to such things as "road rage" where rudeness goes past the boundaries of crudity into the realm of unlawful acts.

Therefore, we must first recognize the raw logic that demands the exercise of common courtesy, and then move on to the art form that makes it more than a perfunctory exercise. Good manners are an essential ingredient in a healthy

society because they smooth relations with the people with whom we interact and prevent a host of problems. More than this, good manners make life more pleasant and enjoyable. Such courtesies actually honour God by giving respect to that part of His universe that was created in His image: humans. When good manners are practiced sincerely, the respect that flows outward creates self-respect, something the Socialists and others of their kind try to generate through false and demeaning government-sponsored programs and clichés.

Good manners have been a concern of the South and part of our culture since the earliest times in America. In the South, hospitality has always been a universal virtue. The sharing of food, bed and other amenities, regardless of one's financial status, has been second nature to Southerners. Southerners have been known to offer help and ask for nothing in return, even turning down offers of payment for their help.

Concerning manners, every action done in the presence of company ought to be done with some sign of respect for those that are present. The way people behave in polite society is related to how they order their society. In determining our actions, we would do well to consider the words of Robert E. Lee, whom Winston Churchill once described as the greatest example of manhood to ever come from America. Lee said, "I am opposed to the theory of doing wrong that good may come of it. I hold to the belief that you must act right whatever the consequences."

Values govern our behaviour, and principles govern the consequences of our behaviour. If our values are out of alignment with enduring principles, we will suffer the negative consequences. It is our duty to teach, promote and expect good manners from family, friends, and all others. Otherwise, we will continue down a path that will lead eventually to anarchy.

It is the hope of all the people who contributed to this booklet that readers will explore the principles and recommendations in this booklet and then weave them into their lifestyle. This will improve the personal, social and cultural quality of your own life and the quality of the lives of the people with whom you interact.

Note: Individuals are freely given the right to make copies of this booklet for distribution so long as this booklet is given away freely. No money, services, remuneration or other valuable consideration should ever be taken in exchange for this booklet. Its very purpose is to produce good effect, which will begin by the simple act of *giving* this material away.

The Essence of Good Manners

THE GREAT UNDERLYING PRINCIPLE that guides all good manners is summed up most efficiently and exquisitely by Jesus Christ when He said, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, ..." (Matthew 7:12, NIV)

In this simple statement you have the yardstick by which any situation is best measured. Put in common, modern parlance, the same thing can be said this way, "If you would not want it done to you, then do not do it to others because they would not like it for the same reasons you would not like it." No matter what the circumstance in which you find yourself, you can always apply the principle found in Matthew 7:12 to make a good decision concerning others.

The Apostle Paul amplifies this basic principle of good manners further when he said, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves." (Philippians 2:3, NIV)

Admittedly, it is very difficult to consider others "better than" ourselves because of human pride and the fear of being taken advantage of. But false pride is at the root of bad manners, and this is the very best way to attack that problem. And yes, some people will take advantage of your generosity, but will you really give up anything more than false pride anyway?

Good manners do not ask you to give up life, limb, personal health or significant amounts of money. Instead, it calls for civility and respect for others expressed in word and deed. There is a balance to all things. It might be a courtesy to give a ride to a stranger hitch hiking on the side of the road, but is this wise in today's world? In the old South one could do such things with scant fear, but today ...? No longer can it be said, "I rely on the help of strangers."

In your consideration of those who do not return your good manners, remember this: you can sink to their level and become like them, or you can maintain your self-respect by doing what you know is right. Forgive their transgressions because most of the wrongs are emotional stings to the pride or, very slight physical intrusions. Such things can be overlooked, and in doing so you can help craft in yourself one of the greatest art forms of all: good manners.

Etiquette

THE WORD “ETIQUETTE” is “ticket” is French. In the days of kings and queens, in France you had to have a ticket to enter the palace for any court function. This ticket (or invitation) meant that you knew how to *act properly*.

Why is it important to have good manners? All people like to be treated with kindness, courtesy and respect. Good manners are the rules that developed out of the need for one person to treat another person in a respectful, friendly and courteous manner. Children, like adults, like to feel important. Good manners cause adults to welcome your presence and treat you well. Your popularity with others will increase. People like to be friends with other people who have good manners.

Do not confuse good manners with conduct for special occasions such church, parties, weddings, etc. Good manners are something you do every place and every day. Our friendships and relationships are based on how we treat others on a daily basis.

Good Manners at Arm's Length

THE MOST PERSONAL INTERACTION we commonly have with others is face-to-face contact. The innate intimacy of this social encounter involves a variety of ways in which we can express ourselves for good or ill.

GREETINGS

Greetings are the first aspect of a face-to-face contact. It should start with a smile that is appropriate for the relationship. Such a smile can come from more than just the mouth. A smile can be seen in the eyes. After this, verbal greetings are often in order, and are based on how well you know each other.

Physical contact is another matter. Traditionally, men shake hands and women hug. More recently these boundaries have blurred. Many people find comfort in maintaining these traditional contacts, and they are recommended here.

The original reason for shaking hands was to show that one did not have a weapon in hand, ready to strike. On a more subtle level, men test the strength of the other with a firm handshake. Whenever a man gives a weak or limp handshake, others, women included, tend to immediately disrespect that person. Refusal to offer one's hand, or to accept the handshake of the other, shows contempt for that person, and should not be done unless there are very good reasons. When one refuses to shake another's hand, it can be perceived as an insult.

EYE CONTACT

Eye contact that is balanced in its duration can communicate interest in what the other person is saying. If the eye contact is too long (staring) or too intense it can be rude and might communicate wrongful motives. Eye avoidance generally communicates no interest at all and shows disrespect for the other. If time constraints require you to leave, there are tactful ways of getting this idea across. If you are not interested in what they are saying, practice your patience, listen a while, find a good breaking point and excuse yourself.

It is important to be careful not to let one's eyes wander where they should not go. Males are particularly prone to this breach of etiquette, and are well advised to keep their vision above the neckline when communicating with the opposite sex. The most offensive variation on this theme is the practice of some males either gawking, or turning their heads to stare at a woman when she passes by. This is a complete lack of self-respect, and respect for the woman. A gentleman never does this. The only exception to any of this paragraph is in reference to one's spouse.

PERSONAL SPACE

Personal space, the distance between people as they interact, is generally set by their culture and is different throughout the world. Persons from South America are more comfortable at closer distances than persons from North America. It is humorous to watch a North American continually move backwards as a South American continually moves forward as each tries to maintain their ideal of the proper personal distance.

However, in the absence of such cultural differences, getting too close to others in a face-to-face situation can be rude or threatening. Try to recognize when you are crowding others as "getting in someone's face" is often used as an intimidation technique. The proper distance will save you the embarrassment of worrying about offending another with your breath, or accidentally spraying the other

person. When in conversation with a stranger, more than arm's length is reasonable when one considers the level of crime in our present day world.

INTERRUPTING

Interrupting is generally considered rude when it cuts off another person's speech, or train of thought. Exceptions to this are in situations where words and thoughts are flowing freely and one can feel that persons jumping in and out of the conversation is part of the character of that particular setting. Show respect for the thoughts, speech and feelings for the other persons. After all, are you really sure you know the totality of what they have to say?

HAND GESTURES

Hand gestures, as a part of face-to-face communication, has not generally been a problem in the past. The worst aspect of this, historically, was simply too much of it so that it was a meaningless distraction. However, in more recent years some individuals have adopted a style of personal communication that includes shoving their hands close to your face. This would have been considered provocation for a physical confrontation in the past, and for some people today still is a "fight starter." Do not "get in someone's face" with your hands. After all, what is the purpose of it anyway? Does it have any real meaning other than a poor attempt to establish dominance?

ENTERING A ROOM

Entering a room calls for males of all ages to remove their hats upon crossing the threshold of a house or other building. This practice goes back to ancient times, and is referred to in Scripture in reference to men having their head uncovered in Church. This same practice does not apply to women. Instead, whenever a woman enters a room where men are seated, it is customary for the men to stand until she is seated. This shows respect and is generally applied to adult females.

In today's world this concept is completely foreign to those who advocate and practice treating women as chattel. Some currently published songs call for the unprovoked physical and emotional abuse of women along with other segments of society. Part of the reason for their wretched attitude towards women is due to the fact that they would not know a lady if they met one. Having never observed the excellence of character and spirit of a true lady, they imagine women as weaker members of our species simply to be used for personal gratification.

Part of the reason for this attitude is the simple fact that the art of being a lady has been greatly lost during the past generation. Although this statement will incur the ire of some women, a vast majority will no doubt agree that the art of being a lady and the art of being a gentleman is nearly comatose. It therefore behoves all of us (men and women) to do our utmost to re-invigorate these dying arts.

Sitting

WOMEN OR GIRLS

Legs together, or legs crossed at ankles, or legs crossed at knees, or legs together - leaning at angle.

Never:

- Bend over to pick up. Stoop.
- Sit with legs apart.
- One leg crossed over knee of other leg.
- Straddle a chair.

MEN OR BOYS

Legs slightly apart, or one leg crossed above the knee of other leg, or legs crossed at knees. Men/boys may bend over to pick up things.

Never:

- Spread legs out from under the table or out in air.
- Straddle a chair.

POSTURE

- Sit with back against back of chair, bench, etc.
- Sit up straight and tall.

- Do not slouch.

Arms of chairs – not for sitting or propping feet, but an armrest.

Rounds of chairs – to steady and reinforce legs & chair frame. Feet should stay on the floor.

Legs of chairs – for support and balancing, and it takes 4 legs not 2.

How to Address Others

AN IMPORTANT PART OF MANNERS is how to address people. This partly depends on whether the person addressed is a man, woman, older, younger, boss or subordinate. In today's world, there is a move toward everyone being on a first name basis. While this may make things more "friendly," it also tends to make people forget who the boss is and people seem to lose respect for those who have earned it through hard work or by the simple fact of their age.

A friend of mine, who used to work for my father, referred to my father by his title, "Dr. -----," while at work, but away from work he referred to him by his first name. Rare are the individuals who can separate their personal relationship from their professional relationship. Respect begets respect, and studies show that regardless of who you are and where you come from, everyone wants to be treated with respect.

When addressing a subordinate or younger person outside of work it is best to use their surname (last name), but it is okay to use their first name if you are familiar with the individual. When addressing a superior or older person *always* use their surname. For peers it is okay to use first names, but familiarity can break down the barriers that support proper conduct in professional and personal life.

This move to familiarity is especially confusing for children and young adults who are not yet adept at distinguishing what is proper. In the past, children called their friends' parents by Mr or Mrs (Surname). It has now become common practice for young people to use first names or at the most formal, Mr or Mrs (First-name). This practice creates a blurring of the lines of authority and a loss of respect. Adults wanting to be a child's friend instead of their authority figure or role model has wreaked havoc on the fabric of our society.

RULES OF INTRODUCTION

- When you introduce a friend to a friend, always say the girl's name first.
- When introducing a friend to an adult, always say the adult's name first.
- Always stand when you are being introduced to someone.
- Always look at the person's eyes, smile, and say something simple and pleasant, such as, "Hello, it's good to meet you." You may want to repeat the person's name to help remember it.
- Men and boys should remove their hat when being introduced.
- Use your right hand for handshaking and use a firm grip.

COURTESY WORDS AND ACTIONS

Common words of courtesy can take an individual a long ways these days since so few practice them. Some of the common words and actions you will see in the South are:

- Say, "Yes sir," "No sir," or "Yes ma'am," "No ma'am."
- *Always* say, "Please," "May I," "Thank You," "You're Welcome," "Excuse Me," "Pardon Me."
- A man wearing a hat should take it off when indoors. Coaches Paul "Bear" Bryant and Bum Phillips were known for not wearing their hats in enclosed stadiums such as the Superdome in New Orleans.
- A hat should also be removed (by men) during the national anthem, the raising of the flag, funeral processions, and prayer. This hat doffing can also be done at the gentleman's discretion for any event for which he wants to show respect.
- If you are wearing a hat, tip it when a lady walks by.
- Acknowledge others when walking by with a smile, a nod or "hello."
- Allow someone with only one to three items ahead of you at the grocery store when you have a full basket. (Don't be in such a rush, things go slower in the South)
- When someone else is speaking, don't interrupt. Wait until they are done speaking, or if it is an urgent matter, say, "Excuse me, but ..."

Maintaining Your Honour and Integrity

KEEP YOUR WORD – don't tell someone you will do something and not do it – especially your family. A Southern Gentleman will understand the moral absolutes that define him, his culture and society. The originating source for these absolutes is The Holy Bible, God's unerring word. Don't lie, cheat or steal. Don't get involved in anything that isn't moral, honest, ethical or legal.

Family is important to Southerners probably more so than to others living in these united states. Our tradition is such that we tend to be "clannish." Stand by your family. The bonds you have with family are such that no matter what, you will always have them. As a dependent living with your parents, you should always defer to their authority. Once on your own, you are the boss, but you should still show respect for your parents and all they have done to raise you.

Once married, you, your spouse and any children you have are your immediate family. Parents and siblings become extended family. Priorities should be immediate family and then extended family. If you put a sibling or your mother or father before you spouse, don't expect the marriage to last. Having you priorities out of order is not honorable and having a failed marriage due to misplaced priorities is definitely not honorable.

ON BEING A GENTLEMAN

There are a number of things that go into being a Gentleman. Some of those things are addressed in other parts of this book, but it all must come together to be effective in reaching the status of "Gentleman." The term "Gentleman" is thrown around too casually these days. A Gentleman combines the skills of manners, conversation, conduct and personal integrity all rolled into a seamless package.

Gentlemen will open doors for ladies, offer their seat to them, stand when a woman enters the room and offer their arm when going up or down steps. A Gentleman will never use foul language in front of women and children, or discuss improper topics in front of them. It is sad to say this, but it is necessary today to explain what some of those topics might be.

Examples of areas to NOT discuss in front of women and children include:

- Sexually suggestive issues or jokes

- Personal hygiene issues of a nature that are definitely private (talking about brushing your teeth is one thing, but bodily functions such as flatulence and other bowel movements are off limits).
- Gossip in general should be avoided as it is never good to spread this kind of information and it sets a poor example for children.
- Avoiding these areas is a good start to conducting yourself in a manner that befits a Gentleman. Always present a positive attitude and be willing to offer assistance to others. In offering assistance, be sure it is for ethical, honourable activities.

ROBERT E. LEE

Probably the finest example of manhood we have is Robert E. Lee.

Lee's description of what a gentleman should be was Lee's description of what a leader should be. He summarized the goal when he wrote: "The forbearing use of power does not only form the touchstone, but the manner in which an individual enjoys certain advantages over others is the test of a true gentleman."

The power which the strong have over the weak, the magistrate over the unlettered, the experienced over the confiding, even the clever over the silly - the forbearing or inoffensive use of all this power or authority, or the total absence of it when the case admits it, will show the gentleman in plain light. The gentleman does not needlessly or unnecessarily remind an offender of a wrong he may have committed against him. He can not only forgive, he can forget; and he strives for that nobleness of self and mildness of character which impart sufficient strength to let the past be the past.

A true gentleman of honor feels humbled himself when he cannot help humbling others.

ON BEING A LADY

"WHAT IS A LADY?"

By Varina Jefferson Davis

(Note: While the definition of a lady provided here may be a little dated, the basic concepts never go out of style. Varina Davis' recommendations here are as sound and applicable today as they were in the 19th century.)

A lady is simply someone who cares about herself and others. She sees that her garments are clean and neatly pressed, her shoes are polished, and every button is in place. She is neat and tidy even at the breakfast table and wishes to appear well to her own family. She keeps her hair clean and well-groomed and never puts her hand to her hair to re-arrange it or search for loose pins while others can see.

A lady does not monopolize the conversation. She does not talk of herself and her own affairs but listens with well-simulated interest to a story that bores her. This is the mark of good breeding. She does not sit apart with one or two friends but makes the gentle effort to assure a good time for all with pleasant conversation. A lady does not say or do anything that will upset those around her or make them uncomfortable.

A lady does not let any man kiss her or put his arm around her unless she is engaged to be married to him, and even then she should be a little stingy with her favours.

A lady, when she brushes off her hat, does not forget to brush away the cobwebs...in her brain. She does not conclude that every man who has said something pleasant to her has fallen in love with her.

A lady is possessed of refinement, which prevents her from all fidgeting, from playing with her handkerchief, her umbrella, her purse, or whatever may be in her hands. When she sits down she remains quietly, her hands resting easily without movement and her whole figure is filled with repose. She is calm, composed, self-controlled at all times, yet there are no airs about her. These qualities are what keep her from talking and laughing loudly, and they prevent her from hurting the feelings of anyone.

A lady does not grow weary in well-doing but encourages herself by trying to live up to her ideal of a woman.

(Adapted by Martha Clippinger)

Table Manners

PROPER CONDUCT AT THE DINNER TABLE is becoming a lost art. The following is a list of things everyone should consider when sitting down to eat.

CONDUCT AT THE DINING TABLE

Before coming to the table, be clean, neat, appropriately dressed (wearing a shirt and hair combed) and wash & dry your hands. Be on time.

- Your napkin should be placed in your lap, folded halfway.
- The first person to take a bite of food should be the person who prepared the meal.
- Sit up straight with both feet on the floor.
- Never rest your arms/elbows on the table.
- Eat with one hand and rest the other in your lap.
- Men and boys can help women be seated (pull out their chair).
- Talk only of pleasant things at the table, and don't interrupt another person.
- Never text, email, or otherwise engaging your electronic or mobile device at the table.
- Don't talk with food in your mouth.
- Never say you don't like something that is being served. Take a small helping and eat it out of respect for the cook and host. You don't have to have seconds.
- Food is passed to the right.
- Do not overload your plate.
- Chew with your mouth closed.
- When serving yourself, be sure and use the serving utensil, not you own utensils.
- When eating soup, spoon away from yourself.
- Never reach for food, say, "Would you please pass the ____."
- Before talking or drinking, be sure you do not have food in your mouth.
- Never spit food out if it is too hot. Drink water to cool off the food.
- Use your napkin to clean your mouth and hands before getting up from the table.
- If you must sneeze at the table, use your napkin and sneeze downward and away from others and your plate.
- You may leave to table when everyone is finished. Children may ask to be excused early if adults wish to stay and talk. Children should address whoever prepared the meal and say, "I enjoyed my meal, may I be excused?"
- When finished, place napkin to the left side of your plate, or if plate has been removed where plate was.
- When leaving the table, be sure to push your chair under the table.

Men – Remove hat or cap at table.

Restaurant – If you drop a utensil, do not pick it up. The waiter will bring you another one.

CUTTING MEAT

- Only cut two to three pieces at a time.
- When finished cutting, lay the knife on the plate and use your fork for eating.

BREAD AND BUTTER

- If the table includes a butter plate, bread and butter are placed on this plate.
- Never eat bread when you have an eating utensil in either hand.
- When not in use, the butter knife remains on the butter plate.

Telephone Manners¹

IT IS CUSTOMARY TO GIVE a greeting when answering the telephone. In the United States that greeting is often the word “Hello.” In Australia it is often the word “Cheers.” Whatever greeting you choose to use, please say it politely.

If the call is unwelcome, such as a telemarketer, there is no need to be rude or abusive, even if it is the third such call of the evening. Instead, simply and quietly tell them to take your name off of their calling list. If the call is abusive or threatening, it is no longer strictly a question of manners. Hang up and call the proper authorities. There is no social requirement to speak in response.

While talking to another person, it is very rude to be audibly doing something else, such as rattling pots and pans. (Granted, some people have established a relationship where this is not rude. In such circumstances it is a matter of free and mutual agreement.) If you are going to talk to someone, give them your attention. And do not audibly eat food as the smacking of the mouth is not pleasant to hear.

¹ Applies to landlines, cellphones, and any other means of vocal communication.

And of course, do not interrupt.

Building a Friendly Neighbourhood

NEIGHBOURS ARE SOMETHING we don't ever want to take for granted. In the South, we traditionally have looked after our own. That is why we don't need all this big government interference. Traditional Southerners are independent and offer Christian brotherly assistance to their neighbours. Some things to keep in mind:

- Welcome new neighbours with a plant or dessert. At least go over and meet them when they move in.
- Periodically check on sick or elderly neighbours.
- Offer guests in your home something to drink. Don't keep insisting, offer once and if they decline then they can ask if they change their mind later.

If someone has had surgery, a new baby or a death in the family, organize the neighbours to all take turns fixing dinner for the affected family (one night per home) for one week (at least).

Automobiles and Other Private Transportation

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE COUNTRY, most persons travelled by foot, and did not have to worry about the high-speed problems that mechanized travel brings us today. Granted, horses and wagons did approximate this problem, but not greatly. Indeed, it was possible for persons to be injured or even killed in a horse and buggy accident, but there was scant chance of dying in the twisted flaming wreckage of a high velocity accident.

Because of this simple fact, good manners take on more of life-and-death significance since poor manners can lead directly to deadly vehicle accidents. The

evidence of this is seen daily in the news media for more than just cars and trucks, but for boats and airplanes as well.

If everyone practiced “The Golden Rule” as stated in Matthew 7:12 then a large number of vehicle accidents could be avoided. This would save countless lives, prevent innumerable injuries, and avoid millions of dollars in property damage. Good manners are, at a minimum, logical.

Automobiles are a prime example. If a person needs to change lanes and if it is safe to let them into your lane, do so. To not permit this is more than rude, it could lead to a dangerous situation for you and others. Try to consider the reasonable needs of others on the road, and help them.

It should go without saying that it is bad manners to use vulgar hand gestures, etc. if someone renders you a discourtesy. Even if you truly believe they have earned it, do not do it. Do not lower yourself to their level, and do not provoke a fool to violence. There is no one on the road worth going to the hospital for, and certainly no stranger is worth going to jail for. Forgive them and simply get away from them in a safe manner.

Finally, pay attention to driving your vehicle. Do not hold others up or create a dangerous situation because you are engaged in some other, non-essential activity, including talking or texting on the phone, putting on make-up, shaving, reading or operating your music system. Lives are at stake, not to mention legal liabilities if you cause an accident.

All of this applies to motorboats and airplanes as well. Although not as widely considered, both of these modes of conveyance have “rules of the road” that are based on good manners. It does not take much imagination to figure out how to be courteous to others, and a lot of it has to do with distance and wake.

Public Transportation

WHENEVER PEOPLE ARE GETTING off a train car, bus or other mode of public transportation, let the disembarking people get off first before trying to get on. It is illogical to try to get on before they leave simply because you would have to push them aside (usually) to get on, and that is terribly rude. Instead, stand to one side and permit them to get off. Then you get on.

Think about what it means to try to shoulder your way on prior to them getting off. It is a public statement of selfishness that you would be so pushy just to try to get a better seat.

A gentleman may offer to give his seat to a lady, and she may politely decline if she wishes.

Do not play sound on mobile devices such that it disturbs others. No matter what type of music you like, you can be sure there is someone else who does not like it. Non-musical material, such as lectures, etc. can be very distracting to others who are trying to read.

Open food and/or drink can be very inappropriate as well for several reasons. Spills on seats or on the floor can sometimes get on other people's clothing, and the smell of food is a big distraction for some.

Do not leave trash on public vehicles, and most certainly do not vandalize them in any fashion, including graffiti.

Wastes

It should be completely unnecessary to mention anything about the subject of wastes in the context of not offending others, but public displays of the basest sort have become commonplace. Miscreants of every stripe continue to make a public display of casting off their wastes – from fingernail clippings to worse – despite a host of witnesses or persons who may be immediately offended.

Do not clip your fingernails in public and then discard the clippings on the floor. Medical science has demonstrated that human fingers, and in particular the underside of human fingernails, to be absolutely nasty. Therefore, when you cut your fingernails or toenails, dispose of the clippings in a trashcan. And do it at home.

It is sad that this should have to be addressed, but such is the decline of manners today that it cannot be ignored. Flatulence should never be detected by another, be either sound or smell. If you have a "gas problem," then you should remove yourself to the restroom; after all that is why these rooms were built. Obviously, if one is in the woods, in one's home or otherwise unable to affect others by this activity, then what you do in private is your business.

Facial tissues were invented largely for the polite and hygienic removal of nasal wastes. Use them. Do not go “digging for gold” in public as this effectively puts you on the same level as zoo animals. And most assuredly do not dispose of such wastes such that others might actually come into physical contact with them.

When coughing, cover your mouth. When sneezing, make every effort not to spray others or their property.

Some people are so devoid of basic concepts of decency that they see nothing wrong with relieving themselves in public places. One would think that everyone that has reached adulthood in this country would know that such behaviour is grossly unacceptable. It is a basic fact of nature that all people have to urinate, but we do not have to put on public demonstrations of those facts.

To put it bluntly, do not urinate in public outside of a restroom. This is particularly true of swimming pools and other public swimming areas. In a world where we understand as much as we do about communicable diseases, it is more than just a matter of manners. It could affect someone’s health.

To summarize, do not release wastes into your environment in such a way that even one other person might conceivably come into physical or sensory contact with it.

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Also, please take a look at KnowSouthernHistory.net, the site from which this booklet came. Its format is a bit dated and it appears to have been abandoned, but there is a lot of very interesting and informative Southern-friendly content that you will certainly enjoy!

If you are the webmaster of KnowSouthernHistory.net or know who is, please have them contact Shotwell Publishing at info@shotwellpublishing.com.

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