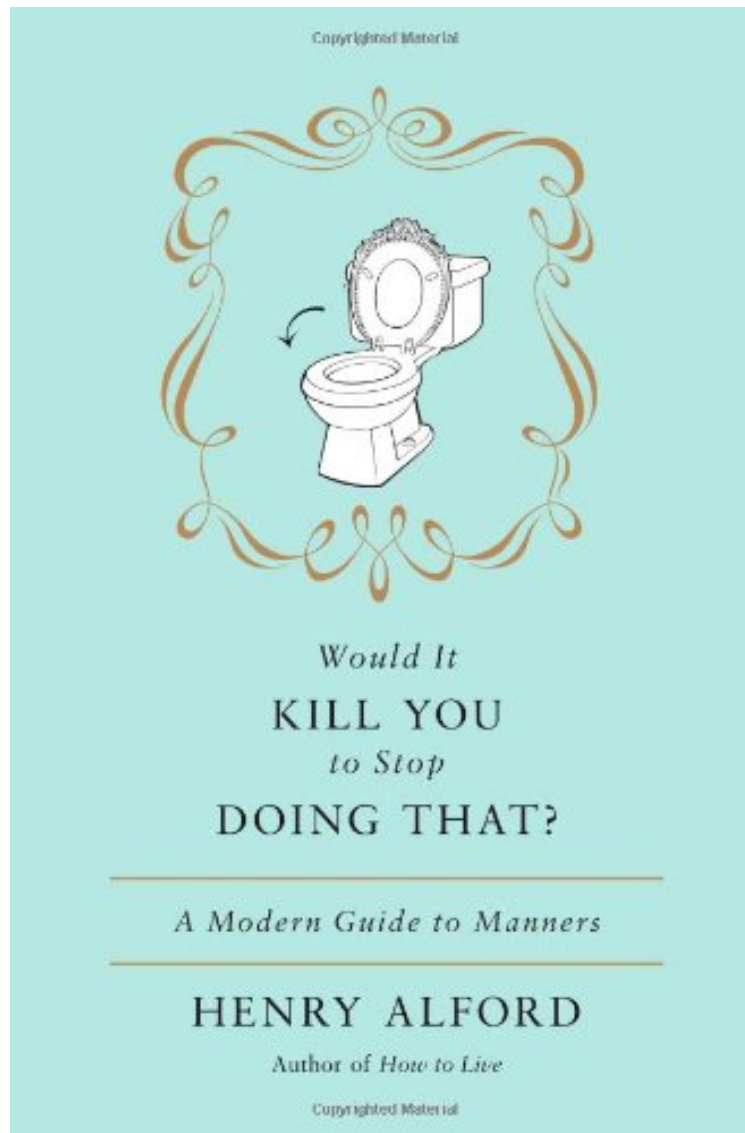


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Would It Kill You to Stop Doing That: A Modern Guide to Manners

Henry Alford

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Henry Alford : Would It Kill You to Stop Doing That: A Modern Guide to Manners before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Would It Kill You to Stop Doing That: A Modern Guide to Manners:

32 of 32 people found the following review helpful. Desultory conversation...By D. KaniganAlford has written for Vanity Fair, The NY Times and The New Yorker. He has written three books and is often heard on NPR. The pros: I

loved the writing and his rapier wit. The book is filled with colorful stories, anecdotes, surveys, experiments and interviews. He also offers up some thoughtful recommendations on appropriate manners and etiquette. The challenges? I anticipated some logical sequencing and organization prior to opening the cover of a book on manners or etiquette. However, this is not your Mother's Reference Manual on Etiquette Manners. This witty book is a random walk on the subject where often times you get lost in the story missing the etiquette punch line altogether. The author lurches from discussions involving the appropriateness of slurping noodles in Tokyo, to accepting all friend requests on Facebook to asking how much rent you pay in Manhattan, to stealing a cab. A number of recommendations were thoughtful: * Don't return a phone call with a text. "There's an implicit hierarchy of communication. If you go lower on the hierarchy, people will think there's a subtext." * Don't overuse the word "thx" in emails especially to a sender that has spent considerable time sending you an email. Take a moment to use the sender's name and spell out Thanks. Tone is often lost in email and it's important that the recipient not misconstrue your intention. * If someone sends you a gift certificate, why not send that person a photo of what you bought or at minimum tell them what you bought. * Is it rude if someone refuses to accept your friend request? If you've actually met in the flesh, then yes, it sounds like it is. It's rude, too, in instances where you have not actually met, but have enjoyed a long period of correspondence or phone calls, or have heard about each other for years and years through mutual friends. However, before we become offended, it's important to consider the snubber's FB modus operandi. Some people on FB only friend family or people they are offline friends with; others want to friend every single person they can possibly get their cyberpaws on. A taste of his humor: * If two people are staying in a hotel room, it is highly hospitable if one or the other of them gets into the habit of sometimes using the bathroom located off the hotel's lobby, particularly for lengthier sit-downs. To do so is to reduce aroma and anxiety, disperse foot traffic, and inject mystery into the relationship. * (Teaching foreigners how to steal a cab) You've got to be out in the traffic. Out in the traffic but not run over. But you've got to be a little brazen. And the rule for stealing a cab is that you've got to walk at least a block upstream. So people don't see you. (Setting aside that there might be) a harried-looking businesswoman also trying to hail a cab (and you've just jumped the line) 6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. (Sometimes long-winded) Humor By J. Kuntze I read a short sample of this book, as well as an insightful review, and so I was perhaps a little more prepared for the content and tone of it than other reviewers. Rather than being about "manners" from a traditional point of view, Alford's commentary is more frequently about how people, from all walks of life, relate to each other in all kinds of scenarios and in many different settings. Some of his discourse begins to feel quite lengthy and felt a bit self-indulgent, while others seem to be more insightful. Example, insightful: "The essence of good manners is not exclusivity, nor exclusion of any kind, but sensitivity." Example, lengthy: "This anthropologist's quest to pin good manners to gelatin in the manner of a lepidopterist continued apace; let it be said that the complications of protocol slowed me." The book's saving grace are Alford's laugh-out-loud gems, which are worth the price of schlogging through the rest. My favorite part of the book was a quip that may only be new to me, but I love it: "I feel like I'm wearing orthopedic shoes," I said. She shot me a look of incomprehension, so I explained, "I stand corrected." 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. amusing... By Tale Bearer I found this book more amusing than useful. I had really hoped to discover some new strategies for dealing with rudeness ...without escalating the situation.

@font-face { font-family: "Times"; } @font-face { font-family: "Geneva"; } p.MsoNormal, li.MsoNormal, div.MsoNormal { margin: 0in 0in 0.0001pt; font-size: 12pt; font-family: "Times New Roman"; color: black; } div.Section1 { page: Section1; } "We all know bad manners when we see them," NPR and Vanity Fair contributor Henry Alford observes at the beginning of his new book. But what, he asks, do good manners look like in our day and age? When someone answers their cell phone in the middle of dining with you, or runs you off the sidewalk with their doublewide stroller, or you enter a post-apocalyptic public restroom, the long-revered wisdom of Emily Post can seem downright prehistoric. Troubled by the absence of good manners in his day-to-day life-by the people who clip their toenails on the subway or give three-letter replies to one's laboriously crafted missives-Alford embarks on a journey to find out how things might look if people were on their best behavior a tad more often. He travels to Japan (the "Fort Knox Reserve" of good manners) to observe its culture of collective politesse. He interviews etiquette experts both likely (Judith Martin, Tim Gunn) and unlikely (a former prisoner, an army sergeant). He plays a game called Touch the Waiter. And he volunteers himself as a tour guide to foreigners visiting New York City in order to do ground-level reconnaissance on cultural manners divides. Along the way (in typical Alford style) he also finds time to teach Miss Manners how to steal a cab; designates the World's Most Annoying Bride; and tosses his own hat into the ring, volunteering as an online etiquette coach. Ultimately, by tackling the etiquette questions specific to our age-such as Why shouldn't you ask a cab driver where's he's from?, Why is posting baby pictures on Facebook a fraught activity? and What's the problem with "No problem"?-Alford finds a wry and warm way into a subject that has sometimes been seen as pedantic or elitist. And in this way, he looks past the standard "dos" and "don'ts" of good form to present an illuminating, seriously entertaining book about grace and civility, and how we can simply treat each other better.

"Is it a breach of good manners to mislead folks just a little if you are going to show them a good time? The question

arises after a brisk and happy trot through Henry Alford's new book, **WOULD IT KILL YOU TO STOP DOING THAT?..Lively.**" (The New York Times)"Investigative humorist Henry Alford explores the illusive art of behaving well... Alford is a charming writer, who seems able to spin delightful stuff from whatever straw he happens to stumble across, and his rumination on good behavior is no exception." (Salon.com)" [His] self-deprecating wit recalls earlier generations of gentlemanly humor writers... Alford offers a...nearly always charming account of his own confusion about how to act." (The Boston)"Alford is a razory-wicked, fun guy to be around, and each of his stories are like those 'tiny acts of grace' brightening your day." (Kirkus)"Mr. Manners Henry Alford explains how-and why-to behave. **WOULD IT KILL YOU TO STOP DOING THAT?** amuses as it informs." (The New York Times Book)" [Alford] describes life as a cosmic Wikipedia, in which each of us through our actions is redefining and expanding the categories to which we belong. The book alternates between these idiosyncratic digressions and actual commentary on modern manners...consistently fun." (Newsday)"Extremely entertaining...Whatever the ideals may be, most of us can agree decent manners are a good idea. Thanks to this handbook, we stand a better chance of complying." (Bookpage)"Even the best behaved among us would benefit from a close reading of investigative humorist Henry Alford's brilliant primer on gracious living, **Would It Kill You to Stop Doing That?**" (Vanity Fair)"In today's world of social climbers, inconsiderate shoppers, cell phone yappers and the ever-evolving social media, Alford has taken it upon himself to get to the root of just what good manners really means in 2012. His flair for adding jovial wit to the proceedings offered is evident in every chapter. He has a natural, informative and clever writing talent....All in all, **Would It Kill You to Stop Doing That? A Modern Guide to Manners** provides a reference point from which to learn, a sympathetic voice of reason and an everyday guide for almost any social situation you could possibly imagine." (The Edge)About the AuthorHenry Alford is the author of three acclaimed works of investigative humor - **How To Live: A Search for Wisdom from Old People (While They are Still on this Earth)**; **Big Kiss: One Actor's Desperate Attempt to Claw His Way to the Top**; and **Municipal Bondage: One Man's Anxiety-Producing Adventures in the Big City**. He has been a regular contributor to the New York Times and Vanity Fair, and a staff writer at Spy. He has also written for The New Yorker, GQ, New York, Details, Harper's Bazaar, Travel Leisure, the Village Voice, and Paris . He lives in Manhattan.