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SUMMER DIRECTIVE 1989

Dear Observer,

Two parts to this Directive again, the first and longer part is about 'Rules for conduct'; the second part (overleaf) is a request for a One-Day diary. Many thanks to all of you for sending in such thoughtful replies to our last directive.

PART I: RULES OF CONDUCT

Somewhere between 'morals' and 'law' we are guided by (usually unspoken) rules that I'm going to call 'Rules for Conduct' a phrase that covers 'manners', 'politeness', 'etiquette', 'code' and a few other terms maybe. Please don't feel your answers have to be exhaustive - this is a very big topic! As usual we are most interested in your own immediate experience - what you and your family and friends do.

I would like you to describe appropriate behaviour for as many different situations as you can think of in your own experience and from your observations of others. Describe how you and others do behave and how you think you should behave. What about situations where rules are broken - either deliberately or unconsciously? How do people react? When and to whom and how do people apologise?

Note changes: e.g. there was a time when it was thought impolite to type a personal letter but now people sometimes apologise for writing by hand.

'Behaviour' here should include dress (appropriate and inappropriate), also posture (sitting, standing), 'grooming' (putting on make-up, combing hair, scratching etc), use of 'bad language', sneezing, yawning and other eruptions etc!

Are there may be rules for different categories: eg men/women, adults/ children, young/old, hosts/guests, employer/employee, senior/junior colleagues, customer/those providing services.

Appropriate behaviour: Does our behaviour vary according to where we find ourselves? Is a certain kind of behaviour appropriate to places, e.g. 'abroad', at work, doctors' waiting rooms, supermarkets, trains, offices, places of worship, public lavatories, art galleries and the like, swimming pools etc?

Formal and informal rules: Do certain activities have their distinctive rules apart from formal regulations?

Please turn over

Best behaviour: What is 'best behaviour' and when is it appropriate? Do family members behave differently in the privacy of the home and when they are outside it or when there are visitors? What rules govern family life? Are there things that are not done or said 'in front of the children' or 'in front of the grandparents'?

How does your 'best behaviour' differ from normal? When is it appropriate? Is there anyone to whom you adopt what you would call 'respectful behaviour'? if so please describe it? Conversely can you give instances of "disrespectful behaviour" or 'cheek'?

Greeting people: What are the rules for greeting people? How do they vary both as regards the people concerned and the context?

You've got the nod, smile, verbal greeting of some sort, the wave, handshake, kiss and hug at your disposal! How, when and to whom? (By the way, when are children too old to be kissed in public?).

Who takes the initiative establishing the sort of greeting that's appropriate and, indeed, changes marking increased intimacy? Time was when a 'gentleman' did not shake hands with a 'lady' unless she held out her hand first.

Class and culture: Can you describe instances of differences between the rules of classes or cultures which may be the basis of misunderstandings?

Women and men: Has behaviour between the sexes changed? Do men open doors for women, walk on the outside of the pavement, help women on with coats, pay for women's meals and drinks on outings and so forth? Should they?

Personal rules: Are there certain things that for you are 'just not done', regardless of whether other other people are present? Are there rules that you set yourself to meet your personal standards?

Finally, some words that may spark off associations on this topic:

Telephones	Introductions
The use of first names	Invitations
Anniversaries	Personal remarks
Appropriate conversation	Pets
Gardens	Noise
Driving and road manners	Queues
Polite and impolite words for bodily functions	

Part II: DIARY FOR THURSDAY 15TH JUNE

A regular feature of Mass-Observation since 1937 has been the one-day diary. Sometimes it was for a special day but sometimes an ordinary day plucked at random from the calendar.

We would be grateful if you could keep an account of your activities on the 15th June from the time you get up in the morning to the time you switch off the light at night! Please be as detailed as possible even over the most trivial events. Some people find it useful to jot down a few notes at intervals during the day to help them write up your account later.

Please remember to start Part II on a separate sheet of paper (but do post your answers to Part I and Part II to us together to save postage and our time).

David Pockock

[Dir.29 19.5.89]