



Why Manners Matter: The Case for Civilized Behavior in a Barbarous World

Lucinda Holdforth

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In the spirit of *On Bullshit*, a wonderfully erudite and entertaining essay about manners.

When Lucinda Holdforth told her mother she was writing an essay about manners, her mother said, “You’re writing a book about manners?” Deeply offended, Lucinda called her best friend and relayed what her mother had said. Her best friend paused before saying, “Well, you do say “f***” a lot.”

Welcome to the interesting quagmire Lucinda Holdforth finds herself in. She believes that manners are essential to civilization. Yet according to the knife-and-fork snobs, or exclusive bores, her modern-day attitude might not scream manners. And in this age of global warming and warfare, aren’t manners frivolous? Do manners really matter? *Yes!* she passionately exclaims. Citing everyone from Tocqueville to Proust to *Borat*, Holdforth shows how manners—which many of us might think are inconsequential—are actually the cornerstone of civilization. Incredibly smart, the book illustrates how the philosophies of the greatest thinkers are relevant to our very modern lives.

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