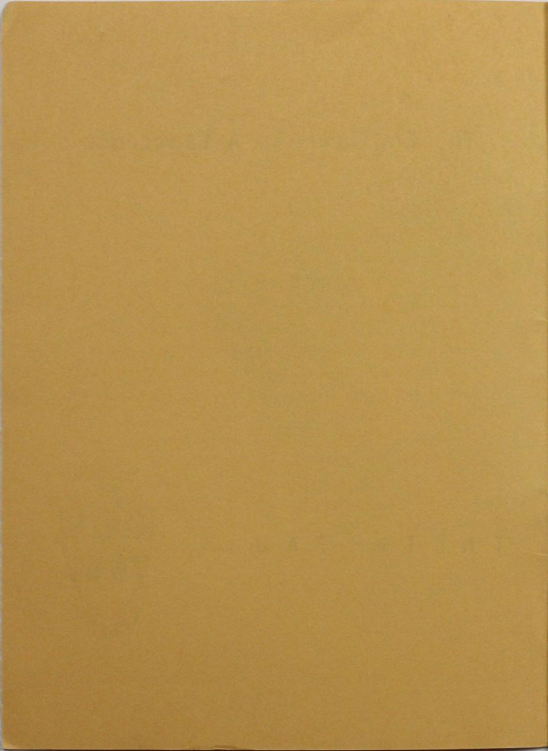


The Engineer Is A Gentleman

T H E T A T A U





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Our personal and fraternal public relations (what others think of us) and what we think of ourselves, reflect largely our appearance, our actions, and our communications. One who is, or aspires to be, a professional engineer should have more than the average interest in making sure that his behavior is socially acceptable at all times. Drunkenness, vandalism, or violation of laws or university rules is never acceptable behavior. Everyone who sees us, or hears us, and even some who do neither (but receive our letters), will gain an impression of us as individuals and as representatives of Theta Tau. What we do (or refrain from doing) will determine if that impression is favorable or unfavorable. Since our "private" manners will often come to the fore (embarrassingly) when guests are present, our everyday behavior should also meet acceptable standards.

Language

The use of profane or obscene language, or the telling of dirty stories is never justified, and is especially offensive at a meal, or whenever guests are present, or within hearing distance. A well-educated man should be able to express himself vividly using acceptable language.

An engineer should be adept at using precise nomenclature, referring to a fraternity as such, not as a "frat," and to a member who is no longer a student as an alumnus. The masculine, and general plural form is alumni (á lum' ní). Feminine forms are alumna (á lum' ná) singular; and alumnae (á lum' nē) plural.

The alumnus member, himself, should say: "I am a member of Theta Tau." -- not "was." Members refer to another member as "Brother." Pledges do not. A gentlemen should never preface his own name with a title when speaking or writing it.

Telephone

The telephone should be answered as promptly as possible and in a dignified manner. If there is no better way available for summoning the one called than to shout, the telephone mouthpiece should be shielded with the hand. If the one called is not available, this should be reported to the caller; and the one answering the phone should be prepared with pencil and paper for taking a message, and then be sure that it is promptly transmitted to the one called. When making a call, the caller should always identify himself as soon as the one called is on the phone. In consideration of others, phone calls should be brief.

Letters

What we write represents us to the vast number of Theta Tau members, and others, who may never see us personally and therefore must base their appraisal of us on our letters to them. Spelling errors reflect a lack of accuracy which should not characterize an engineer's work. Misspelling persons' names is especially undesirable. Standard form for a business letter requires the mailing address, city and state of sender (if these are not part of the printed letterhead), and the complete

date usually above and toward the right of the body of the letter. An inside address should be included above the salutation. A letter between members who are not on a first name basis should bear a salutation in the form, "Dear Brother:" A standard complimentary close should be used except between Theta Tau members who sign their letters "In H and T,". The signature of the sender handwritten in ink should appear below the complimentary close. Student members and officers writing on Fraternity business should use stationery with the chapter letterhead.

Personal Appearance and Clothes

A professional man has an appropriate interest in his personal appearance. He should be clean shaven, have suitably cut and combed hair, cleaned and trimmed fingernails, and observe standards of personal cleanliness. Clothes do not make a man, but they do proclaim him. Clean and freshly pressed clothes appropriate to the occasion, and polished shoes, will give a favorable impression. Chapter practice on acceptable attire for various functions should be followed.

When attending an event at which suits are worn, he does not remove his coat.

Hospitality

Each member and pledge should consider himself responsible as a host for any chapter visitor whether he is a stranger, a distinguished guest, a Theta Tau alumnus, or a national officer. He should be greeted with a handshake. "How do you do. I'm Joe Undergrad," would be a suitable greeting, if there is any chance the visitor might not be able to call your name. Introduce the guest to others nearby. If he has been invited as the chapter's guest, he should then be introduced to any special persons present, and escorted to a conversation group. If he is calling to see an individual, excuse yourself, and leave him with others nearby, if possible, while you go looking for the one he seeks. Be sure to report back promptly, and to offer to help in any way possible if the one he wants is not available.

When the visitor is a chapter guest, each member and pledge should introduce himself when he first sees him. If the host is not wearing an identifying insignia, it is desirable that he clarify his status (pledge or member) to a visiting member when introduced.

Chaperones at social events are special chapter guests and should be greeted by each man upon arrival and introduced to his date. Similarly, respects should be paid them at the end of the evening.

In making introductions, the name of the woman (or the older or more distinguished one when two men or two women are introduced) is spoken first, e.g., "Miss Coed, may I present Mr. Undergrad." When introduced, the proper response which is always proper is "How do you do." At all stag functions involving a number of unacquainted men, the use of clearly lettered name tags is desirable.

Men always stand when introduced, when making introductions, or to shake hands. Men should shake hands with a firm grip when introduced, or when taking leave. A man shakes a woman's hand only if she offers it. Except in the case of being a white-gloved usher at a formal wedding, a man always removes his glove to shake hands. The Fraternity grip is strictly a means of identification although some chapters use it traditionally in greetings between members. It should be offered only when the member is certain that the one to whom he is introduced is also a member of Theta Tau.

Housemother

An increasing number of colleges are requiring every residential unit to employ a housemother. A housemother can be invaluable in managing the kitchen and in influencing favorably the attitudes, habits and standards of the men of the chapter. Her guidance and counsel in the area of social customs, and her instruction of pledges on this subject should be invited and followed.

The housemother should receive all the respect and courtesy which is due each member's own mother. Arrangements should be made well in advance to have her appropriately escorted by a member or pledge to each college or community event which she desires to attend.

Etiquette

A gentleman stands as a woman approaches or leaves his table, when she enters or leaves the room where he is seated (unless it is a vast room and she is not near his conversation group), and remains standing until she is seated or has departed. He opens the car or other door for the one he is escorting and usually allows her to precede him.

When walking on the sidewalk, he walks on the street side, or with the woman he is escorting on his right. On stairs, or when walking conditions are poor, he offers her his right arm.

He helps her in and out of her coat; lights her cigarettes; and carries her heavy packages.

A gentleman removes his civilian hat whenever he is indoors, except in a synagogue or in places equivalent to public streets, such as busses, lobbies, corridors, or crowded elevators of nonresidential buildings. Apartment buildings, restaurants, and elevators with women aboard are classified as indoors. The hat is removed outdoors whenever he stops to talk to a woman, when witnessing a religious ceremony, when the national anthem or alma mater is played, or when the flag passes by.

Table Manners

At a chapter dinner with guests, each pledge and member should be present ahead of the appointed dinner hour. When it is time to enter the dining room, each guest should be escorted to the pre-arranged location at the table, ahead of the others. The others should fill first the places near the guest(s).

The woman at the head of the table should be seated first, then the other women, and finally the men. A man holds the chair of the one he is escorting, or for the one on his right, or for the elder first if he is escorting more than one woman.

No one should start eating any course until the head of the table has begun. A relaxed, pleasant atmosphere should be established at the table, and food eaten slowly. If you must enter late, or leave early, do so as unobtrusively as possible, excusing yourself to the head of the table.

The napkin should be partly unfolded and laid loosely on the lap. Food should usually be passed to the right. Beverages should be stirred as

quietly as possible. A spoon should never be left in a glass or cup. Used silverware should not be laid back on the table. Bread should be broken and buttered only as needed. It should not be used as a "mop" or "pusher."

Care should be exercised to avoid toying with silverware, overfilling the mouth, or talking with food in the mouth. Except when in use, the left hand should be in the lap. Others should be asked to pass any needed item not within very easy reach. Each diner should be alert to the possible needs of others and offer nearby items to those near him before helping himself. Elbows should not be rested on the table. Cigarettes only should be smoked at the table, and then only after the final course, and after asking permission of any woman nearby.

Sources of Information

More detailed coverage of these and other points involving social customs may be found in the following:

Editors of Esquire Magazine, The New Esquire Etiquette, Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Company, 1959.

Post, Emily Price, Etiquette, New York, Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1965

Vanderbilt, Amy, New Complete Book of Etiquette, Garden City, New York, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1963.

Additional copies of this Manual may be obtained from:

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