

Complete Gay and Lesbian Manners

by Steven Petrow

Workman Publishing Company, NY

This is an excellent reference book on manners for all occasions. Many of the topics apply to everybody, gay or straight. But there are both major differences and minor nuances between what is acceptable for personal interaction between straight and gay people and communities. This book appears to cover them all.

Author Petrow built this book upon his history and expertise gained through many years of writing advice columns about manners for the LGBT community. In this book, his highly-regarded advice is interspersed with actual inquiries (called "Queeries") culled from his columns and questions from his fans. If there is something about manners he has overlooked, I can't imagine what it is.

Petrow's writing style makes the reading easy and gets his point across with situational explanations and humor. However, different segments of the book use different fonts that I found distracting, although they do set apart the "Queeries," the columns of advice, and the responses to the "Queeries."

I found it physically difficult to read these responses. The typeface is both small and faint, and my 77 year old eyes strained to recognize what is being said. If your eyesight is like mine, you will want a magnifying lens to make reading them comfortable. Since these responses are very important to the understanding of the subject, I am disappointed that this typeface was chosen.

Overall I think this is a valuable reference tool for anyone – gay or straight – who wants to deal supportively with the LGBT community. It can be particularly useful for those of us in the straight community who want to be aware of the subtle nuances of manners when dealing with our LGBT family members and friends.

Reviewed by Dave Parker