

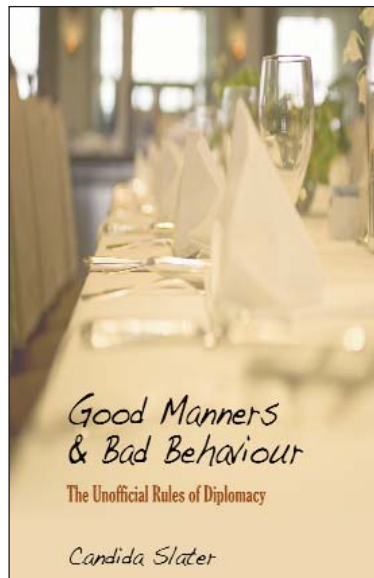
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Good Manners and Bad Behaviour

*The Unofficial Rules
of Diplomacy*

Candida Slater

Most people have only a vague understanding of what diplomats actually do, except that they seem to belong to a privileged caste, and lead lives governed by arcane rules of etiquette and convention. However, beneath the veneer of exquisite diplomatic manners and immaculate dress, all human life is there, and much of it is entirely reprehensible.

Since Diplomatic Services dislike disorderly lives, it was decided, between 1949 and 1974, that guidance was necessary, and the Foreign Office published a series of helpful little booklets on How to Behave Abroad. Unfortunately, much of the advice put forward so confidently may only have served to reinforce outsiders' worst fears about the Foreign Service.

Over recent years, an enormous cultural shift has taken place in what diplomats do and what they are for, and the idea of a foreign service as a specialist caste is fast vanishing into the mists of time. The Foreign Office always thought that it was stronger than the Ministers who ruled it. This book just goes to show how wrong they were.

About the author: Candida Slater joined the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in 1968, as desk officer in the United Nations department, then worked for the Minister in charge of Britain's entry into the EU. In 1972, she married fellow diplomat Duncan Slater, and resigned in 1973 when Duncan was posted to Brussels. She joined him on subsequent postings to Vienna, Lagos, Muscat and Kuala Lumpur. Duncan died in 2002. Candida returned to the FCO between 2003 and 2007. She has three children.

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