

Kilpatrick

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Chattanooga never did make it to Junior League. Ms. Schwartz pursued the story and was told, "It's just too tacky to talk about." To be tacky is the most grievous of all offenses. In this instance, what specifically was so tacky?

"Well, for one thing, she puts meat in her chicken salad."

Food is important in the upbringing of a Southern belle. The author properly notes that iced tea is the year-round choice for a non-alcoholic drink. It even ranks ahead of Co-Cola. The true belle prides herself on her deviled eggs

and her old family recipes. In a world of slackening values, she may now eat potato salad, but she may not eat potato salad off the good china. She may never drink beer from a can.

The Southern belle -- here the author is thinking of belles that rang some time ago -- still refers to a refrigerator as an icebox. In her lexicon it's a sofa, not a couch; it's a handbag, not a purse. She calls her father "Daddy."

Terms of compliment must be carefully distinguished. "Lovely" is high on the list: "Her people are lovely." A more fervent word of admiration is

"precious," as in, "Aren't you just the most precious thing." A killing compliment is "sweet," as in, "Who's that sweet little thing in the corner?" Even more deadly is "nice," as in, "Well, I don't know her well, but she seems perfectly nice."

The author is full of sound advice: "Never marry a man whose mother and grandmother owned silver plate instead of real silver. He's not used to quality and he'll try to cheat you on the divorce settlement." She decrees: "Never show your bosom before evening and never wear an ankle

bracelet before anything. Girls who wear ankle bracelets usually end up twirling batons."

Other rules of Southern protocol should be kept constantly in mind. Velvet is not worn after Feb. 14. A toaster or blender may be given at a bridal shower, but not for the wedding itself. Do not serve soup in finger bowls. Use only real mayonnaise. Never smoke on the street. Kid gloves only; no nylon. Because it is getting increasingly difficult to buy a burial plot in a socially acceptable cemetery, one should buy a desirable plot whenever one comes on the market.

There is a little this observer

could add to Ms. Schwartz's magisterial work. She puts Velveeta in its proper place, in a grits casserole to be left with the widow on funeral day. She acknowledges the abiding importance of the right sorority. To be a Theta, a Pi Phi, a Kappa, a Chi O, or a Tri-Delt, depending upon the college, is a profoundly serious matter. But all of us know this.

The last word comes from a South Carolina grandmother, talking to her granddaughter: "Your bosom can be fake and your hair color can be fake. But your pearls and your silver must always be real." Yes, ma'am! Suah 'nuff!

Goodman

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The only date that has become inflexible is the one marked "shipping."

Remember all those sappy movies that ended with the young hero wishing that the spirit of Christmas could prevail all year round? Be careful what you wish for.

You could end up with a Santa Claus costume for

Halloween, trick or treat under the mistletoe, and burning yule log--electric of course--for Thanksgiving. Even a plastic tree is going to start dropping its needles at some point.

It's not nice to fool Mother Nature. I refuse to fast-forward through fall. I won't make a list and check it twice, think about who was naughty and nice, until

the very last piece of leftover turkey has been stuffed into the last unwary visitor who knows not the mysteries of fricassee.

But I do see, one tiny glimmer of hope in the preemptive strike of the Christmas catalogs. Call me a cockeyed October optimist, but if Christmas is already here, can spring be far behind.

Aid

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million were the funding recommendation, \$5 million would be what the Appropriations Committee would have to authorize rather than using that figure as a ceiling.

Other USSA changes in the draft included:

■ Increasing authorized funding for the Supplemental

Educational Opportunity Grant program (from \$499 million to \$600 million), the State Student Incentive Grant program (from \$85 million to \$125 million) and the College Work-Study program (from \$650 million to \$900 million).

■ Excluding home, farm and business equities from the government's need analysis of

families.

■ Reducing the portion of a dependent student's income expected to go to college expenses from 70 percent to 50 percent.

■ Eliminating the double-counting of students' savings.

Although the bill is only in draft stages, USSA is confident the changes will remain for the bill's final passage.

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