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manners in such a concentrated way.
"It's such a change of pace," said
Matthew Ray, 16.

"I told somebody I was going to tea after school, and they gave me the weirdest look," noted Pietrina Micoli,

"I feel like ... I don't know," Matt said. "British?" Sarah Haggett, 15,

suggested.

"Civilized!" Matt exclaimed.

Matt added that he needed to make adjustments in order to conform to his environment.

"I was telling myself not to take too

much food and pile it up on my plate. I was watching every move I made," Matt said.

"The atmosphere made it seem, like, so refined. If you made a mistake, it would look horrible," Tim added.

Similarly, Tim said that he and his friends were scrupulous about observing their manners when they attended their junior prom last year.

"We were all really uncomfortable at dinner. You don't want to embarrass yourself," Tim said.

Tim said that he doesn't abandon all his manners when he's in a less



Matthew Owens, 14, takes finger sandwiches during a tea party, from Pietrina Micoli, 14, holding the platter.

formal atmosphere. But he also observed that "manners are noticed more in different settings."

Susan Osborne noted that people's guidelines for table manners may indeed change at more casual eating spots.

"If you were going to a fancy restaurant, you'd put your napkin in your lap. But not if you're at a McDonald's or something like that," said Susan, 16, from St. Stephen's Church in Geneva.

Susan added that people's manners are influenced not only by where they go, but also whom they're with.

"I feel I should be polite to my teachers and parents out of respect," Susan said.

Similarly, Matt said that he observes his parents' instructions to be respectful to his elders.

"I'll almost always call adults 'Mr.' or 'Mrs.," Matt said. "Only if I know them real well will I call them by their first names."

Those who don't act in a mannerly fashion, Claus said, may not have received proper guidance in their younger years.

"It depends on how you are raised. Some kids who swear will say 'My father swears all the time." Claus said.

father swears all the time," Claus said.

Tim added that many teens actually find bad manners a source of

"At school, people may seem crude. The occasional joking burp, that can be humorous," Tim said.

On the other hand, John said he doesn't see good long-term benefits whenever bad manners are played for laughs.

"A lot of guys do stupid things just to get attention. But afterward, they kind of feel really stale," said John.

Pietrina said that American society allows for men to act more unmannerly than women.

"I think it's safe to say it's more common with guys. Maybe they're trying to impress people," Pietrina said.

Matthew said such influences as cartoon characters Beavis and Butt-Head, and Bart Simpson, along with Jim Carrey movies may have raised this acceptance level.

"Guys grow up thinking that's the way to act," Matthew said.

Susan said she doesn't care for the sexism reflected by such an attitude.

"If my brother burps or something, my mom won't say anything," Susan remarked. "But if I were to do something like that, she'll say, 'Excuse you? That's not very ladylike.' Then I'll say, 'What's your definition of ladylike?"

Male or female, Katie said she can only accept such inappropriate actions as burping if the perpetrator commits the act by accident.

"I don't think it's bad if the person apologizes. But if they didn't, then it would gross me out," Katie said.

John said he feels the same way about swearing.

"Sometimes people slip and use offensive language. But if they use it intentionally, then it gets to me," John remarked.

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