



That Means *What?*



by Becca Surratt

source: everythingES.net

Many times throughout the day, we use gestures. Whether it's a simple finger point, a high five, or a hand to your mouth, you do it all the time. Across our country, these gestures are accepted as normal. But in some places around the world, these gestures don't mean what they mean here; sometimes they're even "rude, crude and socially unacceptable."

Lets say your teacher announces "no talking" for the rest of class, but the person sitting next to you nearly falls out of his chair trying to retrieve his lost pen. While you try to hold it in, you can't help yourself and you burst out laughing. The teacher gives you a mean stare and motions with her index finger for you to come to her desk. The infamous finger point—everybody knows it. This, however, is very rude in many countries. In Indonesia, if you want to motion for someone to come, you turn your whole palm downward and pull their fingers in and out. Pointing is considered very rude.



Of course everyone knows what it means when you smile. The Japanese, however, instead take this world-wide gesture and flip it upside down. When confused or mad, people in Japan will smile!!

Whenever it's circle time, snack time, or show-and-tell little kids around our country have been taught to "criss-cross-applesauce," and sit "Indian style." Showing the bottoms of your feet however (the "lowest and dirtiest part of the body") is considered *very* disrespectful in Thailand, Japan, France, and the Middle East. So much for circle time.



If your dog has just done a new trick, or a young student has done something very good, it is customary to pat them on the head. If a student in Asia were given a pat on the head, she would be very offended. The Buddhist religion characterizes the head as the "keeper of the soul," and they would like to keep it pure.

While sitting in class, the teacher announces a pop-quiz and you don't have a pencil. Quietly, you ask the person in front of you for something to write with. Reluctantly she reaches into her back pack and grabs a pen. So the teacher won't see, she reaches her left hand back, and you grab the pen. That is fine here, but passing anything with the left hand is very rude in the Middle East. It is mentioned in the Bible that "he will sit at the right hand of God." In Middle Eastern culture the left hand is considered "unclean." The pen that you will be taking your quiz with is considered unlucky to people in the Middle East.

Remember the cute little kid in The Little Rascals? He's probably most famous for his adorable "O Tay" We know he means O.K. because of his hand gesture. In Japan, this same sign means money. The French know this gesture to mean "worthless." Germans and Brazilians, however, find this unacceptable and very rude. What would The Little Rascals be without "O Tay!"?

In short, these "universal" gestures aren't so universal. If you ever travel out of the country, watch out what you're saying with your hands!



Curtain Call for Julia Roberts

by Alli Calegari

source: *The Florida Times-Union*

A famous movie star, Julia Roberts, officially became a "stage star" on Wednesday, April 12 when Richard Greenberg's *Three Days of Rain* hit Broadway.

Each night as the show ends audiences gather around the backstage door waiting for Roberts to come out and sign their play-bills. Those demanding more than a quick look and an autograph have probably purchased tickets for the show's full run, which ends Sunday, June 18.

The show, which also stars Paul Rudd and Bradley Cooper, could possibly extend a few weeks longer, not because of the show itself, which actually doesn't sound that bad, but because of the stars in it.

For Broadway, Robert's appearance during the "Spring Rush" has been a huge event. "A major film or TV star appearing on Broadway... now *that's* a best seller," stated Howard Sherman, the executive director of the American Theatre Wing.

This show has been said to attract families and audiences of all ages, so be sure to watch the show... whether it's live or on TV. I'm sure Julia Robert's would appreciate it!