

“Quit Your Clamor; Learn Your Grammar” by Eddie Rybarski

This editorial was published in the *Western Courier* Friday, March 4, 2005. I added a few errors here and there just for fun, but the substance of the article is as published. See <http://www.flickr.com/photos/cbdilger/523332388/> for a scan of the article (there’s a link on the course web site, too).

In my time in college I’ve learned four interesting things about college college students. One is that we will do almost anything for food when intoxicated. Two, sleep is often deemed more valuable than education. Three, to many lack an education comparable to a fourth-grade level.

5 I have been shocked by how many times I’ve heard students complaining about having to type papers, or how inconceivable a three-page paper sounds to them. The words “they’re,” “there” and “their” are used incorrectly so often, students don’t know when “they’re” right, so and they don’t bother going “there” to find out, and they spend the rest of “their” lives being looked down upon by an educated society. After receiving essays back, there is usually a 15-
10 minute-debate with the professor about why spelling and grammar shouldn’t count. Well, pleas, if you would like to join the real world of a educated society - make it count.

In 3rd grade, I learned cursive. For fourth grade, we had to do the majority of the assignments written in cursive to reinforce what was taught. Pretty much ever since then, the assignments were to type each paper and hand it in. I do not consider my education to be superior
15 to any other average college students’, so I don’t understand why you can have different expectations of schoolwork.

After years of learning, the same rules of the English language, there should have been a point where a student would have committed to learning what to do so the next time he or she encountered it, they would already know what to do. I figure those are the students who
20 understand the reasonability of a three-page paper, and because they learned the proper formatting years ago, they easily accomplish it in a reasonable amount of time.

The fact is, not knowing proper parts of speech is a drastic flaw to those who dream of calling themselves college educated. Besides the “they’re, there, their” example, the same repetitive errors also can be said about ‘then’ and ‘than’, and the basic “i before e except after c” rule. So if it’s a problem that you don’t receive an “A” on your essay, then learn the basics of English. And when you do learn it’s basics, you will be smarter than most, and doing the essays will be a piece of cake.

It isn’t only English rules either I am stunted by an all-around lack of knowledge. Over Winter Break, I was reading a newspaper that has a graphic of an unlabeled map of the United States on it. I pointed to Illinois and asked my college-educated sister to identify the state. Proving my point, she was unable to on three guesses.

Unfortunately, she’s not the only one. In a history class, I have witnessed many students having great difficulty or the inability to identify any of the states that surround Illinois.

Recently, after receiving essays back in a certain class, not one, but several students began the debate that has become way too common. A handful of students began arguing with the professor that his corrections of their “under-casing” proper nouns such as “France,” “British” and “Indians” was unjustified and unnecessary. The professor was sympathetic to the students but maintained his reasoning; he pacified the students by letting them know he did not deduct points for the errors, he was simply trying to educate them.

He asked the students if they would eventually learn the grammar if he did deduce points. “No,” replied the students, noting that “Auto-correct” on computer programs will guide them through their education. Because with out there computers, they wouldn’t get throw the reel world without it. I beleive than they would have to move too somewhere were they’re spelling and grammer wouldn’t matter. Maybe france.