

You Can't Write That

People read and write diverse English every day, yet what counts as “correct” English has been narrowly defined and tested for 150 years. This book is written for educators, students, employers, and scholars who are seeking a more just and knowledgeable perspective on English writing. It brings together history, headlines, and research with accessible visuals and examples, to provide an engaging overview of the complex nature of written English, and to offer a new approach for our diverse and digital writing world. Each chapter addresses a particular “myth” of “correct” writing, such as “students today can’t write,” or “the internet is ruining academic writing,” and presents the myth’s context and consequences. By the end of the book, readers will know how to go from hunting errors to seeking (and finding) patterns in English writing today. This title is also available as open access on Cambridge Core.

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You Can't Write That

8 Myths About Correct English

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To those who defy myths,
like Suzy Soto.

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A stoplight parrotfish dramatically changes from one phase to another. As a young fish, it is deep red, army green, and muted beige. As an adult, it is impossibly bright, its tailfins yolky yellow and its body the aqua-pink of the sea at sunset. You would not guess one turns into the other.

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