

Grammar Snobs Are Great Big Meanies
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By June Casagrande
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Five of Five

[A Desk Companion of Note for Everyone Who Writes](#)

Grammar Columnist Gets Real About What Counts and What Doesn't

Reviewed by Carolyn Howard-Johnson, award-winning author of three books of fiction and poetry and *The Frugal Book Promoter: How to Do What Your Publisher Won't* and *The Frugal Editor: Put Your Best Book Forward to Avoid Humiliation and Ensure Success*

If our teachers, from first grade on to infinity had fostered a sense of fun about grammar, we all might like it better. From the outset, we know that June Casagrande, an entertaining grammar columnist, does just that.

We have the title *Grammar Snobs Are Great Big Meanies*. Then the subtitle, *A Guide to Language for Fun and Spite*. Don't stop there. The introduction is called "Grammar Snobs Make Good Prison Brides." Mmmm. Wonder what's in store? Could this book actually be useful for people who, well...you know...write!

Turns out, it can. A tad costly at \$14.00 (where were the great minds at Penguin Books thinking?), I say this little volume is well worth it. (Maybe *that's* what they were thinking.) Well researched (Casagrande credits such stalwarts as *Oxford English Grammar*, the *Associated Press Stylebook*, the *Chicago Manual of Style* (and I've read her columns in the *Glendale News-Press* where she nods to other grammar greats like Strunk), she nevertheless manages to balance her advice to anyone putting his best grammar foot forward.

Find in it her comments on the big fuss over split infinitives, shared possessives, and my favorites the much hated and misused verbs "to lie" and "to lay." No, I'm not going to tell you what she has to say about them. Where would the fun be in that? Fork over the fourteen dollars. You'll be glad you did.

(Carolyn Howard-Johnson is an instructor for UCLA's Writers' Program. She is the author of two award-winning books, *THIS IS THE PLACE* and *HARKENING*. Her how-to book for writers, *THE FRUGAL BOOK PROMOTER: HOW TO DO WHAT YOUR PUBLISHER WON'T*, is the winner of USA Book News' Best Professional Book of 2004 and the Irwin Award. Her most recent book is *TRACINGS*, a chapbook of poetry that won Military Writers Society of America's Award of Excellence. Find more on her at www.HowToDoltFrugally.com.