DISRUPTIVE COMMAS

The comma is a useful guide for readers. It tells readers when to pause and clarifies the meaning of a sentence. For example, the sentence “Later, survival past infancy became the norm.” is ambiguous without the comma. However, commas in the wrong place are disruptive because they break the flow of ideas.

Do not use a comma between a subject and its verb.

Incorrect comma placement

All the habitable parts of the earth, were believed to be parts of a single land mass, *Orbis Terrarum.*

Profound differences in early training, crucially affect the entire societies involved.

Do not use a comma between a verb and its object(s)

Incorrect comma placement

The second crucial point was the United States’ insistence on inspections to ensure compliance of the disarmament pact.

The Affirmative Action policy required submission of hiring procedures that were non-discriminatory, advertisement of positions under specified guidelines, non-sexist interview questions, and completion by job applicants of an Affirmative Action form.

Do not use a comma between two words, phrases, or dependent (subordinate) clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction (and, or, but, for, nor, so, yet).

Verbs

Society must reassign the “pseudo-biological” role of child rearing, and establish it as an acceptable role for men.

In art, the thing that we cannot measure, or use for comparison is what we call “style.”

Nouns

As a result of a fluctuating economy, more and more women, as well as men are entering the work force and attaining high-paying, prestigious careers.

Prepositional phrases

Therefore, it seems important to assess objectively the prospects for modifying the pattern of genes, of a human being, by various means.

Clauses

To understand what Columbus’s problem was, and why he sought refuge in his Terrestrial Paradise, we must remind ourselves of the Ptolemaic-Christian view of the lands of the earth.