

Welcome to Kimbel Library story hour. Today we have a story for you that's wonderful. And disturbing.

This is a story about Jim. He's smart, creative, and his ideas have real merit. He also hates wearing pants. Unlike his ideas, which freely float like squid through an ocean of thought, his pants constrict and inconvenience. Like an octopus. Devouring a seal.

Anyway, Jim discovered a solution. He stopped wearing pants. After a few weeks of glorious pantslessness, something frustrating started to happen. Nobody paid attention to any of his good ideas: instead, they just asked him dumb questions. Where were his pants? Why no pants? What's with the not wearing pants thing? Should we call the police? It didn't matter that Jim was smart and well-educated. Without pants, people didn't trust him.

The moral of the story is that in the university, we cite sources for many of the same reasons we wear pants: it shows respect to the people around you. It says that you care enough about them that you will inconvenience yourself for their comfort. It speaks to your kick-ass ability to follow directions, which might be the most important thing you learn in college.

But seriously. Your professors really care about this stuff, so not citing sources, or doing it poorly, sends the opposite message: you are a jerk who only looks after number one, and nobody else matters. This has consequences beyond just failing your paper or getting expelled from the university. It makes your professor think of you as a weirdo. A pantsless weirdo.