

# Gerald graff's hidden intellectualism essay

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## **Introduction:**

Gerald Graff in this article describes hidden intellectualism and says academic knowledge and intelligence are not the only means of intellectualism. Author highlights the practical aspect of the intellectualism when he says that street smart may not do well in schools but they can be brilliant in various other areas of life. Author discusses the mindset of students and also talks about his own experience of intellectualism during his adolescence and school time. He mentions that it is always important to select intellectual characters from the field of his own choice. The author beautifully portrays his love for sports, the subjects of his interest and how it helped in developing intellectualism. Further he discusses how educational institutions do not encourage students to take interest in non academic activities.

## **Body:**

The author gives importance to the realistic things rather than the theoretical aspect of the intellectualism. Graff gives the example of his inclination towards the sports before entering into college. Author used to

think that he was anti-intellectual because he was more interested in reading sport magazines and novels instead of text books. Graff was brought up in a middle class society of Chicago which was adjacent to a hub of real estate companies of Americans. It was not that easy to prove oneself smart in front of those working class people and book smartness was not sufficient to do that. Author mentions that “ it was good to be openly smart in bookish sort of way”. Author emphasizes on being a street smart with little sophistication to win the race in social life. He was able to prove himself in front of those working people without damaging his respectable future.

The author describes how at an early age, he started considering himself as an anti-intellectual person due to his less interest in studies but later on with the growing age he realized that it was thought too early. He realizes that he has started learning intellectualism since his childhood. He gives examples of participating in debates, arguments and analysis with his friends on several issues including the selection of toughest student in the class. Author mentions the use of analytical skills in sports, movies and other fields apart from studying. Author mentions how he learnt various things from the sports books and magazines that he used to study during his childhood, like how to do debate, argument, create evidence, and summarize view of others. Author found sport more intellectual than academic learning and full of analysis, debates, arguments, and problem solving.

Graff argues that street smarts are more intellectual than book smarts because they test all the parameters of intellectualism in a better way than book smarts. Street smarts fulfill the desire of community and culture by getting involved with society, public and nation. On the other hand school

isolates book smart person from the rest of world. Author says “ is not simply to exploit students’ nonacademic interest, but to get them to see those interests through academic eyes”. He says further that they should make study more interactive and should add game and fun activities. The schools should teach students to be social and get involved in debates, arguments and analysis.

### **Conclusion:**

After having observed the abovementioned analysis by Gerald Graff, it is good to say that intellectuality is not confined to the books and within the boundary of the schools. It is imperative to know several other things apart from the book and schools to lead a successful life.

### **Work Cited**

Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein. They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Persuasive Writing. New York: W. W. Norton, 2007.