Do U Ck Spelling?

A victim of all the texting and instant messaging is spelling. You simply don't have time to spell everything out. Everything becomes acronyms or shortenings. Page 3 in today's Washington Post has a feature on the importance of spelling and grammar. One reader likens proper grammar/spelling to using the proper notes in music (if you don't, the music just doesn't sound right). As a writer, I agree. However, does the public agree? Do most people even realize when something is not spelled correctly or when grammar is poor? I once worked with a "writer" who did not know how to make his subject and verb agree. And he was completely unaware. Recently, on a DCPubs (a Yahoo group) discussion, someone asked what was wrong with using "their" as a gender-neutral alternative to "he or she." This person was completely unaware that one is plural and the other singular. (As an aside, we HEAR this all the time in conversation, but in formal writing?)

So, I ask you, are spelling and grammar important? Do you notice lapses in either or both?