A Study in News Headlines

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Introduction

This is not a how-to-do-it book. It is rather a how-not-to-do-it approach to the writing of news headlines.

I have nothing against the positive approach. My approach is negative merely because 15 years of teaching copy editing at three universities have taught me that the negative approach works. Maybe the positive approach is better. But I lean on the testimony of professional copy editors and professors of copy editing who have been my students and who say the negative approach has worked for them. It works in the newsroom and it works in the classroom.

The approach is not completely negative. Tinged with the negative virtue of suspicion, it is based on the positive virtues of accuracy and consistency and imagination. Above all, it has to spring from a love of words.

Words, as the licensed victualler of Muckadilla once said, convey ideas. But words are often more than symbols. Often they have lives of their own. They have their own historical and etymological associations, their own romantic and environmental dalliances, their own sonic and visual delights.

Emerson said, "Every word was once a poem."

Alexander Pope said:

> True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
> As those move easiest who have learn'd to dance,
> 'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence;
> The sound must seem an echo to the sense.

Language must haunt a headline writer. His is the kind of mind that delights in the gymnastics of word games, acrostics, anagrams, limericks, palindromes, literary crossword puzzles. His is the kind of mind that takes the mathematical accuracy and imaginative flair of the bridge or chess master and translates them into measured words, metrical ideas.

My approach is idealistic, I know. At times it seems worlds away from the copy desk humdrum of churning out routine head after head, but, as Browning said, a man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?

So try it. You'll like it. As it has helped others, it may help you.

I thank all who have remotely or proximately helped me:

For help in ages past, I thank: Sister Mary Philomena, my parochial Miss Thistlebottom, who drilled me in etymon and grammatic sol-fa; Gerald Lawlor, Chestertonian Mr. Chips, who introduced me to the maestros of literary polyphonic; James Hannan, pastor peripatetic, who sat me at an editorial keyboard; John Hohenberg, the compleat professional journalist, who transposed psalmody and feuilleton into leads and dingbats; Richard Baker, Cassian bon vivant, who pitchpiped prose; Lewis Jordan, Times Square headhunter, whose percussion drummed precision into an apprentice which doctor; and Robert Frost, poet laureate of the New Frontier, who beat out tunes for bears to dance to in melody that moved men's souls.

For help in what to ages will be past, I thank: Arthur Sanderson, chairman of the department of mass communications at the University of South Florida, for his fellow feeling for a superannuated graduate student; Arthur Barnes, director of the School of Journalism at the Pennsylvania State University and my doctoral chairman, for his humanism and humanity; Edward Bassett, dean of the School of Journalism at the University of Kansas, for his pyrophoric personality; my other colleagues at KU; and my students all.

I especially thank Bill Kukuk, printer, publisher and perfect palindrome.

Again, and always, I dedicate my work to Mary.

I

Fluid with Solids

Many students find précis writing a hard art to master. A newspaper copy editor has to master not only the art of writing a précis but also the far more difficult art of writing a précis of a précis. He writes news headlines.

Just as a news lead should summarize a story, a news headline should summarize the lead. A news headline is a summary of a summary.

So the copy editor digests a digest and he works with precision tools. He takes precise words with precise meanings and fits them into precise dimensions. The material of his art form does not have the liquidity of oil, the fluidity of paint or the plasticity of plaster. It is stolid hot metal or solid cold type. He cannot stretch it long or squeeze it short. The headline writer's tool is not a hammer, but a chisel, the fine semantic chisel of exact language with exact meaning and exact dimension. The precise headline writer must learn to be fluid with solids. Into solid substance he pours liquid grace.

Confined by the narrow boundaries of column rules or gutters, the headline writer is also restricted by certain basic rules of his profession. Like the basic laws of human conduct, none of these rules is capricious. All have a reason for their existence and are based on the summary news function of a headline and the long experience of copy editors in perfecting their art.

But again like the laws of human conduct, the rules of headline writing differ in importance. Some violations are graver than others. Moralists will agree that murder is more serious than mutilation. Copy editors will agree that murdering a man's character by a libelous head is more serious than merely mutilating a head by splitting its verb components. And just as moralists will agree that murder and mutilation are sometimes justifiable, indeed even obligatory, under threatening circumstances of extreme pressure, copy editors will agree that some violations of headline rules are justifiable, even obligatory, under the twin pressure of imminent deadline and tight count.

Different copy desks lay down different norms for writing heads. Some of these norms are dictated by the differing characters of newspapers, some by the exigencies of headline style and type size. Professors of copy editing, too, have different opinions of the relative importance of the various headline rules they teach.

To get some of these opinions, I sent a questionnaire to 15 journalism professors, all of whom had had professional desk experience and had taught, or were teaching, copy editing in an accredited school or department of journalism in an American college or university.

The questionnaire had this precede:

> Copy editors disagree on the validity and importance of some news headline norms. If you will assume that a news headline should give accurate and complete information quickly and attractively[1] and that there is no pressure of deadline or tight count, please grade the following news headline "violations" according to this scale: Outrageous; Very Bad; Bad; Not So Good; Quite O. K. Check the appropriate rating opposite each "violation."

Then followed in alphabetical order these 34 violations:

Ambiguity
Asymmetry
Bad Grammar
Doesn't Tell Story
Editorialization

Faulty Punctuation
Goes Beyond Story
Headlinese (Wife Swap Pact Rocks Prexy)[2]
Irrelevant Identification (Jew Hurt in Smash)
Libel

1. This description of a news headline is from Robert E. Garst and Theodore M. Bernstein, *Headlines and Deadlines* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), p. 103.
2. Examples were given in parentheses to clarify some of the violations.

Makeshift Gimmick ('Manson Guilty'—Nixon)
Misspelling
Negative Head (Union Doesn't Favor Strike)
No Subject (Throws Girl in River)
No Verb

Obscure Abbreviation
Obscure Name (Smith Kills Wife)
Overcrowding
Question Head
Sad Humor

Screaming Sensationalism
Split 1st & 2nd Lines (Laird to / Attend / Talks)
Split 2nd & 3rd Lines (Laird / To Go to / Saigon)
Tentative Head ("May" Head)
Too Much White Space

Undue Exclamation (Nixon to Run Again!!!)
Undue Familiarity (Ethel Raps Jackie)
Unnecessary Place (Congress Meets in Washington)
Unnecessary Time (Ten Hurt Yesterday)
Weak Verb

Weak Voice (Humphrey Is Beaten by Nixon)
Word Repeated
Wrong Number (Throw Girl in River)
Wrong Tense

This rating system was used:

Outrageous	4 points
Very Bad	3 points
Bad	2 points
Not So Good	1 point
Quite O.K.	0 point

Since 15 editors were polled, the maximum number of points for any headline sin was 60 and the minimum zero. A gravity percentage was calculated for each violation. For example, "Misspelling" received 48 points out of 60 and was thus rated an 80 per cent grave violation by the editors as a group. These were the results:

Violation	*Points*	*% Gravity*
Libel	59	98
Editorialization	53	88
Bad Grammar	51	85
Misspelling	48	80
Doesn't Tell Story	47	78
Screaming Sensationalism	47	78
Goes Beyond Story	44	73
Wrong Number	44	73
Wrong Tense	43	72
Ambiguity	42	70

Irrelevant Identification	41	68
Faulty Punctuation	38	63
Sad Humor	36	60
Obscure Abbreviation	33	55
Split 1st & 2nd Lines	32	53
No Subject	31	52
No Verb	30	50
Obscure Name	30	50
Undue Exclamation	30	50
Headlinese	28	47
Word Repeated	28	47
Unnecessary Time	27	45
Makeshift Gimmick	26	43
Split 2nd & 3rd Lines	26	43
Unnecessary Place	26	43
Overcrowding	24	40
Undue Familiarity	24	40
Weak Verb	24	40
Asymmetry	20	33
Negative Head	20	33
Question Head	18	30
Weak Voice	18	30
Tentative Head	15	25
Too Much White Space	14	23

The mean number of points was 32.85 (54.75 per cent gravity). Thus the mean rating was 2.19, somewhat worse than bad, but closer to bad than to very bad.[3]

In the following discussion, each headline violation is treated separately, but the order follows logical affiliation rather than gravity or alphabet.

Many of the headline examples come from the *Lawrence Daily Journal-World*. Their number reflects my habit of reading the *Journal-World* more than I read any other afternoon paper. There is no intended reflection on the *Journal-World*.

3. See Appendix for a table of the ratings of all violations by all editors.

II

Crinolines & Bikinis

Libel

If a newspaper publishes libelous material, it is answerable before law, whether the libel appears in a news story, an editorial, a headline, an advertisement, a letter to the editor, a syndicated column, a cartoon or a comic strip.

A headline of itself "may convey a defamatory meaning that a story will not remedy: 'Doctor Kills Child' (in automobile accident)." A headline "may make libelous per se an otherwise innocuous article: 'Smith Got Rich Fast' (while a tax collector)."[1]

In fact, perhaps also in law, the bigger the head the bigger the libel, since the display type of headlines is bigger than the body type of stories and is therefore more prominent and read by more persons.

Though a newspaper for reasons of public interest will sometimes deliberately publish a libelous news story, and therefore a libelous headline if it summarizes the story as a headline should, the decision to publish belongs to the publisher or his executives, not to the reporter or copy editor.[2]

1. Donald M. Gillmor and Jerome A. Barron, *Mass Communication Law* (St. Paul: West Publishing Co., 1969), p. 194.
2. Arthur M. Sanderson, *Iowa Newspaper Desk Book* (Iowa City: State University of Iowa, 1961), Extension Bulletin No. 775, p. 38.

Hence a copy editor must guard against libel. A tight count makes "Smith Is Rapist" easier to write than "Witness Accuses Smith of Rape," but so far no court in the United States has admitted tight count as a defense against libel.

In the questionnaire, all but one of the 15 editors labeled libel outrageous. The only dissenter, who called it very bad, was a professor of newspaper law. Libel was the only violation that received the same rating from more than 10 editors.

Editorialization

News headlines should not express opinions. Their job is to state facts. In a newspaper there is only one place for opinions. That place is the editorial page. Opinions are as much out of place in a news headline as they are in a news story. The headline must reproduce only what is in the story. Its job is to say what the story says. A copy editor who injects opinion into a head is writing an editorial in display type, not a news headline.[3]

The problem often is attribution to a source. Take, for example, this lead:

> WASHINGTON—President Nixon predicted today that 1972 would be a highly successful year for the United States.
>
> "Happy days will soon be here again," the President said in a year's end message from the White House.

The copy editor wrote this head:

United States to Have
Successful Year in '72

Says who? Who says the United States will have a successful year in 1972? Criswell? Nostradamus? Bear Bryant? In this head, the copy editor himself is saying it. But the story says that Nixon said it. That the United States will have a successful year in 1972 is editorial opinion. That Nixon said the United States would have a successful year in 1972 is fact.

This head would have eliminated the editorialization:

Good Times Coming
For U.S., Nixon Says

3. Garst & Bernstein, p. 140.

Another problem with editorialization is more subtle. It involves the acceptance of a seemingly innocuous term as a universally admitted fact. For example:

Campus Group Plans
Liberation of Women

The head assumes that women are in bondage, that they are slaves, that they need to forgo superiority for equality. This may be a fact. It also may not be. A news headline should not assume its truth or falsity.

This head would have eliminated the editorialization:

Campus Group Insists
On Women's Equality

The questionnaire editors considered editorialization a headline violation second only to libel in gravity. Nine called it outrageous, five very bad, one bad. Thus, on the 4-point scale of gravity, its consensus rating was 3.53, closer to outrageous than to very bad.

Doesn't Tell Story

If you had to reduce all the rules and recommendations of headline writing to two, they would be: the head must fit and it must tell the story. A head that doesn't fit won't appear in print. A head that doesn't tell the story shouldn't appear in print.

If the main job of a news headline is to summarize the story accurately and completely, a news headline that doesn't tell the story doesn't do its main job. To perfect his art, a good copy editor must develop as pointed a nose for news as a good reporter's. While he is editing a story before writing its head, he must keep asking himself: "What's the news? What makes this story different from other stories?"[4] If he does this, he will develop the habit of writing fresh and accurate headlines that tell the story.

The worst kind of head that doesn't tell the story is the kind that says the opposite of what the story says. A recent example appeared over a piece by John S. Knight, editorial chairman of the Knight Newspapers, in the *Lawrence (Kan.) Daily Journal-World* of June 30, 1971. The lead paragraph read:

4. *Ibid.*, p. 123.

In this summer of discontent, it is widely and, I think, erroneously assumed that Richard M. Nixon is destined to be a one-term president.

The rest of the piece analyzed the assumptions that Nixon would be a one-term president and substantiated Knight's contention that these assumptions were erroneous. The head, however, said:

Knight Thinks Nixon
One-Term President

Another kind of head that doesn't tell the story is the kind that ignores today's news and reaches back to the news of a week or a month ago. Sometimes a copy editor, either because his nose needs sharpening or because he doesn't like what the lead says, will dig deep into a story and come up with a head that distorts it.

Such a distortion occurred in the head over this story in the *Coffeyville (Kan.) Journal* of Feb. 24, 1970:

WASHINGTON (AP)—A woman birth control specialist told a Senate subcommittee today that its hearings into the safety of the pill had created international panic and prompted a wave of unwanted pregnancies.

Dr. Elizabeth B. Connell[5] of Columbia University said a step-up in pregnancies "strikes profound fear in the hearts of those who deal daily with women and population problems."

She also criticized some of the conclusions reached by witnesses at hearings last month by the Senate monopoly subcommittee.[6] Testimony then linked the pill to scores of suspected side effects, including cancer, fatal blood clotting, diabetes and heart trouble.

"From a purely scientific point of view, much of the information displayed thus far can be likened to the relationship between a drunken man and a lightpost—more for support than for illumination," she said.

The head said:

Testimony Links
Pill to Cancer,
Heart Trouble

The head reported old testimony, whereas the story reported new testimony aimed at refuting the old. The head didn't tell the story.

5. By the way, how did Dr. Connell get into the story? Is she the birth control specialist mentioned in the first paragraph? The story doesn't connect them. It should. This kind of journalese puts an obstacle in the path of the reader's comprehension. The obstacle, I admit, is minor, but a reader shouldn't have to hurdle editorial hedges.

6. And is this the subcommittee mentioned in the first paragraph?

Incidentally, the same AP story appeared in the *Lawrence Daily Journal-World* under this teleological pronunciamento:

'Pill' Hearings Cause Pregnancies

Many heads don't go far enough in telling a story. An example appeared in the *University Daily Kansan*, the University of Kansas student newspaper, on July 23, 1971. The story concerned Ralph Abernathy's criticism of Spiro Agnew's criticism of black leadership. The head simply and asymmetrically said:

Abernathy Reacts

To what? Despite a tight count, the *Kansan's* copy editor could have told the story with something like:

Abernathy Rips Agnew

Or the copy editor could have used Veep or Spiro, unless he strangely decided that these terms would constitute undue familiarity in a student newspaper.

The most common kind of head that doesn't tell the story is the deadhead or flathead, the kind of head that says:

Commission Meets

What happened at the meeting?

Or:

Group Discusses Bias

What was the outcome of the discussion? What action was taken on bias?

As a copy editor, especially a beginner, works his way through a story, he should be framing a newspoint sentence, a sentence that summarizes the whole story. From this sentence he can write a head that will tell the story.

Sometimes, however, the story has so many angles that a copy editor must decide whether to write a head that tries to cover everything or a head that covers only one of the angles. He must make a decision between a crinoline head, which covers everything but touches nothing, and a bikini head, which covers very little but touches the main points.

Heads that don't tell the story were rated outrageous by five of the questionnaire editors, very bad by seven, bad by three. The consensus rating was 3.13, a little worse than very bad.

Goes Beyond Story

A seminarian with many virtues and few brains was once told by his scripture professor that he would pass his final oral examination if he could name just one character in the Old Testament. The seminarian studied hard, appeared before his professor on examination day and blurted, "Saul."

"You've passed," cried the professor.

Elated, the seminarian lurched to the door, turned and, drunk with newfound genius, shouted, "And his other name was Paul."

That man said too much.

A head that goes beyond the story says too much. It tells more than the story and is therefore not an accurate summary.

For example, over a story in which a judge suggested that unwed mothers of three of more children be jailed, this head appeared:

Judge Suggests Jail
For Unwed Mothers

The judge was not proposing to penalize all unwed mothers, as the head suggested, but rather was taking the view that anyone could make a mistake or two.[7] The head went beyond the story.

This was the lead of a story in the *Lawrence Daily Journal-World* of July 23, 1971:

> NEW YORK (AP)—Business Week magazine said Thursday it has[8] learned that one of the three Russian cosmonauts who died in the Soyuz 11 mission "reportedly was alive, but unconscious, when rescue teams reached him."

The head said:

ONE COSMONAUT ALIVE?

On top of being a question head, the head went beyond the story, which was that some "high Russian scientific sources" said that one of the cosmonauts was alive after their spacecraft landed. The head gives the impression that he is still alive.

This kind of story often leads to a head that goes beyond the story:

> IOWA CITY—About 100 University of Iowa students today boycotted classes in protest against the execution this morning of a condemned murderer in the State Penitentiary at Fort Madison.

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7. Garst & Bernstein, p. 180.
8. Whatever happened to the sequence of tenses?

This head goes beyond that story:

Iowa Students
Boycott School,
Protest Hanging

The story said that about 100 students boycotted classes. The head gives the impression that the whole studentry was practicing anti-intellectualism.

Copy editors should practice accuracy, not synecdoche. Their heads should not attribute to the many what the copy attributes to the few. When swayed to carry praise or blame too far, copy editors should choose something like Robert Frost's star to stay their minds on and be staid.

Three of the staid questionnaire editors chose outrageous as the rating for heads that go beyond the story, eight chose very bad, four bad. The consensus rating was 2.93, almost very bad.

Ambiguity

You could lead a happy life on the slogan, "It's better to be fooled occasionally than suspicious constantly."

But not on a copy desk. With accuracy, consistency and imagination, suspicion is a cardinal virtue for a copy editor.

Not only must a copy editor know something about everything and where to find out everything about anything, but also he must have the brain of a UNIVAC and the heart of a Belsen butcher. On the job, he must convince himself that Legree was really the hero of Harriet's bedtime story. He must distrust his own mother, especially when he writes heads. He must check and recheck a head for clarity and single meaning or he may find himself with another embarrassing headline story to add to his reminiscences.

A headline doesn't tell an accurate story if its language is ambiguous, open to more than one interpretation.

For example, in some contexts an innocent noun is found guilty of more than one meaning:[9]

Beauty Unveils Bust at Ceremony

9. *San Diego Union*. This and some of the other examples are taken from *Humor in the Headlines* (New York: Pocket Books, 1969), compiled by Earle Tempel.

Or:[10]

Many Antiques at DAR Meeting

Worse:[11]

Mr. McClusky Will Give Free Goose to 4-H Girls

Sometimes the culprit is a verb:[12]

Missouri Pacific to Drop Passengers from 3 Trains

Or:[13]

Avoid Having Baby At the Dinner Table

Worse:[14]

President Eats Turkey, Lays a Cornerstone

Words that are both verbs and adjectives can lead to ambiguity:[15]

Police Stoned in Hartford

Or:[16]

Escaped Leopard Believed Spotted

Similarly, trouble often comes from words that are both verbs and nouns:[17]

U.S. Rules on Tax Adopted by State

Did the United States give a ruling on tax measures adopted by some state or has some state adopted U.S. tax measures as its own? Is "rules" a verb or a noun?

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10. *Redondo Beach (Calif.) Daily Breeze.*
11. *Sonoma (Calif.) Daily Review.*
12. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch.*
13. *Minneapolis Daily Herald.*
14. *Dallas News.*
15. *Pawtucket (R.I.) Times.*
16. *Springfield (Mass.) Union.*
17. Garst & Bernstein, p. 180.

Or:

Youth of 80 Lands
At Rally in India

Again, is "lands" a verb or a noun?

Then there are words that are both nouns and adjectives. An AP story out of Topeka reported that Vern Miller, Kansas attorney general, expected police to enforce anti-gambling laws at county and state fairs. This was the ambiguous, and split, head in the *Lawrence Daily Journal-World*:

Miller Expects
Fair Gambling
Enforcement

When you aggravate the misuse of a noun for an adjective by using as an adjective a noun that is also a verb and using it in front of a word that can be either noun or verb and putting these two words in front of yet another noun-verb, the result, like this sentence, is chaotic. Garst and Bernstein give a delightful example:[18]

Jones Will Fight
Hinges on Baby

Look at the mess you can get from this kind of adjectival clutter:[19]

Catholic Women Hear
Seeing Eye Dog Talk

The ordinal adjective "first," coupled with a news mania for uniqueness, can lead to ambiguity:[20]

First Lady Arrives
In Virgin Islands

Or this gem:[21]

Fatal Attack
Wasn't First
For Nasser

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18. *Ibid.*, p. 165.
19. *Milford (N.H.) Cabinet.*
20. Tempel, p. xi.
21. *Lawrence Daily Journal-World.*

Ambiguity sometimes arises from a person's name:[22]

Ike Says Nixon Can't Stand Pat

Or:[23]

Broad to Be Honored
As Man of the Year

And oldtime tennis buffs will get two messages from:[24]

Helen Wills Moody
On 3-Week Honeymoon

Often the problem is one of pronunciation:[25]

Actor Accidentally Shot in Debut

Or:[26]

4-H Girl Wins Contest
As Best Hoer in County

In this context, my printable favorite is this head over a story about an explosion in a Kentucky outhouse:

Farmer Interred Is Not Dead

Sometimes ambiguity of time makes a head ludicrous:[27]

Cemetery Gets Praise
From Former Resident

Or:[28]

Girl Becomes Methodist
After Delicate Operation

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22. *Macon (Ga.) News.*
23. *Los Angeles Times.*
24. *New York Sun.*
25. *Baltimore Post.*
26. *Clinton (Okla.) Morning Times.*
27. *Bellville (Ohio) Tri-Forks Press.*
28. *Bergen (N.J.) Evening Record.*

Very often the ambiguous interpretation comes from unfortunate juxtaposition, as in this prepositional phrase:[29]

Auto Hits Pedestrian
Without a Tail Light

Or a squinting adverb:[30]

Man Shot in Head
Accidentally Dies

Or a misplaced antecedent:[31]

Man Pulls Needle from Foot
He Swallowed 66 Years Ago

Every experienced copy editor has a store of stories about unprintable heads that got printed, some of them his own gaffes. Remembering theirs, 10 questionnaire editors called ambiguous heads very bad, four said bad and one said outrageous. The consensus rating was 2.80. Ambiguity was one of only three violations that received the same rating from 10 or more editors.

Obscure Abbreviation

The only abbreviations you should use in headlines are those you can reasonably expect will be well known to readers. You have to make a judgment.

Here are some abbreviations that ought to be well known:

29. *Natchez (Miss.) Daily Times.*
30. *New Orleans Times-Picayune.*
31. *Greenville (Miss.) Daily Democrat Times.*

AA	GI	SPCA
ABC	GOP	SPCC
A-Bomb		
ACLU	H-Bomb	TGIF
AEC	HEW	TKO
AFL-CIO	HUD	TNT
Anzac		TV
AP	I.R.A.	
AWOL	IRS	UAW
		UMT
BYOB	Juco	UMW
		U.N.
CAB	KKK	UNESCO
CATV	KO	UNICEF
CBS		UPI
CIA	NAACP	USDA
CPA	NBC	USO
	NCAA	
	NKVD	VA
DAR	NLRB	VD
DDT		Veep
Demos	OEO	VFW
DMZ	O.K.	Viet
		VIP
ESP	PEO[32]	Votech
	POW	
	PTA	Wasp
FBI		WCTU
FCC	QB	
FDA	Q.E.D.	Xmas[33]
FDIC		
FEPC	R.I.P.	YMCA
FTC	ROTC	YWCA

There is no infallible rule about the use of periods in headline abbreviations. A general guide is that you should use periods between upper-case letters when the letters would otherwise spell a common word. For example, R.I.P., U.S. There are exceptions, however. For example, CAB, HEW. When in doubt, don't use periods.

In headlines, you may abbreviate all the states except Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Ohio, Utah. Abbreviations for the other states are:

32. If you find out what this means, let me and everybody else know.
33. This is not sacrilegious. "X" is a Greek symbol for Christ. And Xmas is a lot more Christian than another four-letter word, Yule.

Ala.	Md.	Ore.
Ariz.	Mich.	Pa.
Ark.	Minn.	R.I.
Calif.	Miss.	S.C.
Colo.	Mo.	S.D.
Conn.	Mont.	Tenn.
Del.	Neb.	Tex.
Fla.	Nev.	Va.
Ga.	N.C.	Vt.
Ill.	N.D.	Wash.
Ind.	N.H.	Wis.
Kan.	N.J.	W.Va.
Ky.	N.M.	Wyo.
La.	N.Y.	
Mass.	Okla.	

Do not abbreviate nations except U.A.R., U.K., USSR, U.S.

Some well-known cities may be abbreviated, such as Cinci, D.C., Indy, KC, L.A., N.Y., Philly, St. Pete. But not Frisco. San Franciscans prefer San Fran.

Locally, you have to make a judgment about the abbreviations of towns and suburbs and organizations that readers in your circulation area will readily recognize.

Numerals may be used in heads without restriction.

Consult your style book for abbreviations of titles.

Campus papers should not overdo abbreviations in headlines. Educational institutions, like other bureaucracies, tend to spawn shoals of organizations and agencies and boards and commissions and committees and task forces until profs[34] and students are up to their gills in alphabet soup. Headlines are supposed to be clear. As clear as calculus in kindergarten is this species of acronymic jabberwock:

ELC Asks KUEPC
To O.K. SUA, UDK

A recent head in a university newspaper called for the foundation of an SPSD. Readers had to get into the story to find out about the Society for the Prevention of Senile Delinquency.[35]

My favorite abbreviation came in this head:[36]

GRAPES OF RAF IN BERLIN

34. O.K.
35. Calder M. Pickett, president.
36. *Champaign (Ill.) News-Gazette.*

In the questionnaire, no editor marked obscure abbreviation outrageous, but five marked it very bad, eight bad, two not so good. The consensus mark was 2.20, somewhat worse than bad. Obscure abbreviation ranked highest among the 10 violations that did not receive a rating of outrageous from any editor.

Obscure Name

"Smith Kills Wife" was given in the questionnaire as an example of a head with an obscure name. In the circulation area of even a small newspaper, chances are there will be more than one marryin' Smith. The use of a name in a headline is obscure if the name will not be readily identified by local readers. The judgment must come from the headline writer.

He must also judge the stage of a running story at which a previously unknown name becomes well known. Its use is then not obscure.

Richard Speck was a nobody until he was arrested for the murder of eight student nurses in Chicago. On July 17, 1966, the home edition of the *Chicago Tribune* bannered:

MURDER SUSPECT NAMED

The final edition bannered:

NAB MURDER SUSPECT

Two days after the arrest, papers in Chicago and elsewhere began using Speck's name in headlines. It was no longer obscure.

Obituaries are exceptions because in an obituary the name is the news and should be in the headline.

In the questionnaire, no editor marked obscure name outrageous, but four marked it very bad, seven bad, four not so good. The consensus rating was exactly 2.00, exactly bad.

Irrelevant Identification

"Jew Hurt in Smash" was given in the questionnaire as an example of irrelevant identification. That the victim of the smash was a Jew had nothing to do with the real news of the story. Race, religion or any other accidental identification must pertain to the real news of the story if it is used in a headline.

For example, religious identification would be not only relevant but also essential to an understanding of the news of the story under this head:

Pope Appoints Jew
Vatican City Mayor

Many Catholic papers in the pre-Johannine era suffered from irrelevant identification in headlines. Those were the days when some Catholic editors were so defensively chauvinist that they blamed Masonic Linotype operators for any typographical errors.[37] The mood is typified by this headline classic in a Catholic newspaper:

Nazis Bomb Belfast;
No Catholics Killed

Perhaps some Aryan Ludlow operator was responsible for:[38]

Child Care
Should Be
Gentile Art

But religion had to be identified to give this head relevance:[39]

Priest Turns Holy Roller
As His Car Turns Turtle

Just as some reporters can't identify a woman without calling her beautiful or pretty or attractive (when was the last time you read a news story that described a woman as ugly or homely or repulsive?), some copy editors seem obsessed with identifying by hair color in heads. These were the lead paragraphs of a story in the *Atlanta Constitution* of March 19, 1962:

> ST. LOUIS (UPI)—A remorseful tiny blonde holdup woman from Georgia sat in city jail Sunday, a federal prisoner, awaiting transfer to Atlanta, where she launched the first of seven holdups from coast to coast.
>
> In her confession to a federal savings and loan robbery near Atlanta, the 100-pound Katherine Evangeline Hazleton[40] said she almost shot a man when her $42 gun was unintentionally fired.
>
> "I thought it didn't hardly make any noise," she told Chief Deputy Sheriff Herbert Riehn of Cape Girardeau County. "I thought possibly I bought some blanks."

---

37. Dan Herr, *Stop Pushing!* (Garden City, N.Y.: Hanover House, 1961), pp. 158-159.
38. *Pelican Rapids (Minn.) Press.*
39. *Iron (Mich.) Reporter.*
40. What 100-pound Katherine Evangeline Hazleton? The story so far hasn't said anything about a 100-pound Katherine Evangeline Hazleton. Another hurdle.

The head said:

Holdup Here Rued by Blonde

That Miss Hazleton was blonde had nothing to do with the story except as color contrast to her name. If the clues that led detectives to her were blonde strands, the story doesn't say so. It does say she was wearing "high heels and stockings" when she pulled the Atlanta caper. The head would have been just as relevant had it identified her as "high-heeled heistress" or "Nylon Nellie."

The principles that govern ethnic identification in heads are the same as those for stories. If ethnic identification is essential or helpful to an understanding of a story, the race or nationality should be identified. This kind of identification is almost always irrelevant:

Negro Truck Driver Booked for Homicide

Here the identification is relevant:

Italian Scholar Says Ericson Found America

Ten years ago, the *Atlanta Constitution* ran a story with this lead:

> Atlanta delegates of the Georgia Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers will travel by chartered bus to the 42nd convention in Savannah Wednesday through Friday.

The head said:

Atlanta PTA Delegates Charter Bus for Parley

First, the delegates were not from the PTA but from the Georgia Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers, which groups were as different as black and white in the sovereign segregated state of Georgia 10 years ago.

Second, the delegates were taking no chances with public transportation. For Negroes in Georgia 10 years ago, it was not such a comfort to take the bus and leave the seating to us.

This head would have told the story with relevant identification:

Negroes Charter Bus For School Convention

Six questionnaire editors called irrelevant identification outrageous, one very bad, six bad, two not so good. The consensus rating was 2.73, closer to very bad than to bad.

III

Lead Balloons

Screaming Sensationalism

Though sensational heads scream usually in the subway press, some otherwise respectable newspapers will tend to be unduly sensational when they let their urge for a daily front-page banner overcome their judgment of whether the news in the lead story deserves banner treatment.

Some papers still insist on an across-the-page head of 72 points or more, often in caps, on the front page, no matter what the news is. Everything from a presidential assassination to the engagement of a presidential daughter gets the same kind of banner treatment. Thus the poor reader, seeing a screamer every day, loses either his news perspective or his faith in the paper's news judgment. Editors shouldn't lock themselves into a daily make-up formula that shuts out news judgment.

Screaming sensationalism has subsided in the American press over the years as social responsibility has risen. Another factor in the silencing has been the increase in home delivery of newspapers and the decrease in newsstand sales. Also, because of the rise of monopoly and the fall of competition, papers publish fewer editions these days. The economic urge for street sales breeds bastard banners,

newsworthy only for the emotionally undernourished fan clubs of intellectually underprivileged gossip columnists.

If a story isn't sensational, its head shouldn't be. If a story doesn't scream, its head shouldn't.

"Why scream at a man in the quiet of his living room?" asked a member of the American Society of Newspaper Editors in a survey of headline habits. "Let his wife do that."[1]

A minority report in the survey disagreed:

> Headlines should not be subjected to reform. Only a few newspapers are supposed to be decorous in their attire. The rest should go their rowdy way, with small stories often blowing off big headlines and black type jarring lazy minds. Most Americans like newspapers that act like people, with disordered liveliness and the human touch. An outspoken and loud headline helps preserve the freedom of the press.[2]

If this is so, the *New York Daily News* is doing a bang-up job of preserving the freedom of the press. A typical *News* story led with:

> The blonde mother of three young children was found bludgeoned to death yesterday in a courtyard behind a Staten Island hotel. Police broadcast an alarm for her husband as the suspected slayer.

The head screamed:

Hunt S.I. Mate as Slayer
Of Blonde Mom of Three

Since the *New York Daily News* makes its living out of selling sensationalism, screamingly sensational headlines with undue familiarity and irrelevant identification and headlinese are good for business. It is pedantic to rewrite *News* heads to conform to the headline canons of newspapers more conscientious about press responsibility. But, for the record, "hunt" has no subject, "mate" is headlinese, "blonde" is irrelevant, "mom" is unduly familiar and the story is good for nothing but the morbid titillation of subway ghouls.[3] This head would still have been sensational but would have muted the screams:

S.I. Mother Is Murdered;
Police Seek Her Husband

---

1. "Hollering Headlines," *ASNE Bulletin*, No. 375, April 1, 1955, p. 10.
2. *Ibid.*
3. The head is also libelous, but the details of the story seem to justify the libel legally. Legal justice, however, is not necessarily moral.

American campuses have suffered from screamingly sensational headline coverage in the press during the past few years. Some of the stories have indeed been sensational, but the headline treatment by some papers has been out of proportion.

When a few kooks try to take over a building, the whole campus isn't necessarily going to the dogs. When a student union burns, the whole campus isn't necessarily going up in flames. When a few junkies are picked up for pot, the whole campus isn't necessarily going up in smoke.

I left the University of Kansas on a trip west the morning after a bomb exploded on campus and damaged an annex to the computer center, injuring three persons. I'm glad I knew about the explosion before I left, because the newspaper headlines, in the true spirit of Afghanistanism, got worse as I went west. The clincher came in the *Los Angeles Times*, certainly one of the world's most prestigious papers, which ran this page-width screamer on the top of page one of its final street edition:

Bomb Rips Kansas University

By the time I got to Hawaii, I expected to read that the whole campus had been devastated, its ruins plowed and sown with salt. The *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* did run the story with prominent display on page one but the head told what was indeed a sensational story accurately and without screaming. It said:

3 Hurt in Kansas Campus Explosion

Screaming sensationalism drew four outraged votes from the questionnaire editors, nine very bad, two bad. The consensus rating was 3.13, a little worse than very bad and the same rating as heads that don't tell the story.

Undue Exclamation

Telegraphed punches either land weakly or miss completely. Likewise flat and unprofitable are punchlines and puns and assorted funnies that are signaled by typographical devices such as bold face, italics, underlining, capital letters, quotation marks, exclamation points. The true wit doesn't point up his humor. He underplays it. When he shrieks, he isn't funny.

Some heads make a reader feel as if the headline writer really wanted to add "Get It?" in parentheses. For example:[4]

Kangaroo Meat
Suspected Here;
Officials 'Jumpy'

The quotation marks seem to be saying, "Look, you idiot, this is funny, and I'm going to make sure you get the point. See how funny I am?!"

Worse:[5]

Herman BUTT Slips
On Icy Sidewalk, Falls
On His 'LAST NAME'!!!

A sense of humor is the ability to see through things. An intelligent audience likes to find its own way through without obvious guideposts of kindergarten condescension. If a story cannot speak for itself without unduly exclamatory gimmicks, it needs to be reworded.

So too a headline. A headline writer who needs exclamation points except for genuine exclamations is a master of the obvious. He should learn to save his ecstatic jubilation for the few events in life that call for news headline WHOOPEE!!!!

One questionnaire editor was outraged by undue exclamation; five called it very bad, two bad, seven not so good. The consensus rating was exactly 2.00, exactly bad. On the scale of gravity, undue exclamation was tied with no verb and obscure name for 17th place among the 34 violations.

Undue Familiarity

Noblesse oblige, even in a republican democracy or a democratic republic. Newspapers need not be scared that Britain will revoke the peace treaty of 1783 if they show a little respect for public officials who deserve it. The White House won't become Buckingham Palace, or the Senate the House of Lords, if the press quits using nicknames and affectionate diminutives for the nation's leaders.

Undue familiarity, however, does not always breed contempt. The press' undue familiarity towards those who breed contempt does not

4. *New York World Telegram & the Sun.*
5. *Clinton (Okla.) Morning Times.*

breed it. The undue familiarity bifurcates, breeds more undue familiarity, which adolesces into bemused tolerance instead of benighted contempt. "Uncle Joe" Stalin got to be so familiar that he fathered a family of peace-loving nations. The press familiarly called one of his brethren Mr. K, a title and a diminutive that implied respect and affection for a benevolent brigand beloved by freedom-loving captives everywhere.

The headline writer has to make a judgment. One criterion is whether the subject deserves familiarity. Another is whether the subject would consider the diminutive unduly familiar, provided his public life gives him the right to consideration.

Ike, for example, liked "Ike." It helped put him in the White House twice. Its neat 2½-count[6] must have earned him the vote of every copy editor in the country. Although "Eisenhower" is a tough 10½-count, the more starchy newspapers preferred to refer to him as Eisenhower, as they prefer Rockefeller to "Rocky," and Nixon to "Dick" or worse. What this country needs is a good four-letter —president.[7]

A president's wife causes problems, too. "First Lady" is a 10-count. "Mrs. Eisenhower" is a size 16, "Mamie" only a 6. "Mrs. Johnson" is a stout 13 to a sturdy 9½ for "Lady Bird" or a slim 6½ for "Claudia." "Mrs. Nixon" counts 10½, "Pat" a delightful 3. But "Pat" may lead to ambiguity or, as in the head over this story in the *Kansas City Star* of New Year's Day, 1972, downright inanity:

> WASHINGTON (AP)—Off today on a nine-day trip to three African nations, Pat Nixon will be ready to discuss U.S. foreign policy and her husband's upcoming trips to Peking and Moscow, her press secretary says.

The head said:

Pat Into Foreign Policy

The *Lawrence Daily Journal-World* of June 26, 1971, ran this story:

> CAMP DAVID, Md. (AP)—Tricia and Ed Cox, who disappeared after their White House wedding and kept almost everyone guessing about the site of the honeymoon, have been at this secluded presidential retreat all the time.
>
> White House sources confirmed the fact Friday after Tricia, President Nixon's elder daughter, and her husband were seen greeting the President on his arrival at Camp David.
>
> Tricia has said in the past that Camp David is one of her favorite retreats because it provides privacy and freedom for a variety of sports.

6. See Chapter VII.
7. There have been only two. But there have been two 10-letter presidents and five 9-letter, if you count the space in Van Buren.

The familiar head said:

TRICIA, ED
AT RETREAT

Perhaps unduly familiar would have been:

Ed, Tricia Enjoying
A Variety of Sports

The practice of using initials for presidents and other prominent persons, such as FDR, JFK, RFK, LBJ, HHH, is now widespread. 'Twas not ever thus. American history was not always recorded in headline initialese. Imagine our forefathers waking up to their breakfast newspaper with headlines such as these suggested by copy editors of the *Utica (N.Y.) Observer-Dispatch*:[8]

GW Delivers Farewell Address

* * *

To Victor
Go Spoils,
AJ Boasts

* * *

USG Vows
He'll Fight
All Summer

* * *

Drop Arms,
Get Farms,
REL Advises

* * *

AL Makes
Short Talk
At G-Burg

Early 20th century history would have looked like this in headline initialese:

8. "Ray Erwin's Column," *Editor & Publisher*, July 9, 1966, p. 4.

WM Felled
By Gunman
In Buffalo

* * *

Strong as Bull Moose, TR Boasts

* * *

CEH Goes to Bed
Leading WW, Loses

* * *

He Does Not Choose
To Run, CC Says

* * *

Let's Look
At Record,
AS Advises

More recent events would have been recorded thus:

I'll Show You Who's
CO, HST Tells DM

* * *

Critic SOB,
Cries HST

* * *

RMN Plans to Visit
MT-t, B & K Et Al

The questionnaire editors spread undue familiarity across the board: one outrageous, two very bad, four bad, six not so good, two quite O.K. The consensus rating was 1.60, a little closer to bad than to not so good. Again, it's a question of judgment.

Sad Humor

If a joke told in private lays an egg, in display type it will drop a litter of lead balloons. Yet beginners in headline writing suffer from a maddening alliterative itch to be the Jack Benny or the Ogden Nash or the Frank Sullivan of the 72-point set. Only patient teaching and bitter experience will convince them that their sad humor and saccharine rhymes and sorry bromides put them in the class of George Jessel and Edgar Guest and Mr. Arbuthnot. 'Tain't funny, McGee.

There is a place for a rhymed head. Possibly one out of every 5,000 stories is the place.[9] To fit poetry into the mathematical requirements of a haiku or a triolet or a sonnet is tough enough without trying to squeeze it into the narrow confines of a head. Usually, the result is jingle doggerel.

An exception is the classic *Variety* head:

HIX NIX STIX PIX

The sadness or joy of this rhyming head depends on the beholder:[10]

Judge Says Nude Not Rude
When Mood Isn't Lewd

Puns have their place in headlines, if there is an Oscar Wilde or a Gilbert Chesterton on the desk.

But no Chesterton wrote:[11]

Bad Check
Causes Man
Fine Trouble

Nor would this win an Oscar:[12]

Deaf Man Will Have
New Hearing in Court

Over a controversial story about creation and evolution, this I like:[13]

---

9. Garst & Bernstein, p. 174.
10. *Seattle Times.*
11. *Lafayette (Ind.) Journal & Courier.*
12. *Cincinnati Times-Star.*
13. *Wichita Eagle.*

Genesis Row Causes
Second Prof's Exodus

And this philosophical gem:[14]

The End Justifies the Jeans
In Gina Lollobrigida's Case

For a hockey story, this stole the puck:[15]

Canadian Club Finishes Fifth

There was imagination in:[16]

Summer TV Cup
Re-Runneth Over

And in:[17]

Simone Simon Is Stricken
With Pneumonia Pneumonia

Often, however, a copy editor's humorous headline will be about as funny as a pulpit joke or an anecdote told at an electrocution.

"Brevity may be the soul of wit," say Garst and Bernstein, "but it is poison to headline humor."[18]

There was nothing brief about:[19]

16 SONS IN A ROW!
Boy Oh Boy Oh Boy Oh Boy Oh Boy
Oh Boy Oh Boy Oh Boy Oh Boy
Oh Boy Oh Boy Oh Boy
Oh Boy Oh Boy Oh
Boy Oh Boy

Not amused by sad humor were the questionnaire editors, two of whom thought it outrageous, five very bad, five bad, three not so good. The consensus rating was 2.40, a little closer to bad than to very bad.

14. *Sioux Falls (S.D.) Argus-Leader.*
15. *Taunton (Mass.) Daily Gazette.*
16. *Binghamton (N.Y.) Press.*
17. *Boise Capital News.*
18. P. 174.
19. *Pittsburgh Press.*

Headlinese

What journalese is to reporters, headlinese is to copy editors. The sample given in the questionnaire was "Wife Swap Pact Rocks Prexy," which would seem to be trying to convey the idea that some president was more than somewhat upset because two husbands were trading outdated models without benefit of a used wife dealer.

The catatonic cacophony of headlinese comprises three discordants:

1. The pitch of some copy editors that a headline has to "sound like a headline," as if it were written in some language other than English.

2. The theme of the progressives who think every head is square unless it is "jazzed up."[20]

3. The disgruntled wail of those who would compress an eight-note scale into four-letter words for the folks out there in Birdland.

The result is a babel of babble like the croaking chorus from the frogs of Aristophanes and Tin Pan Alley's "Walla Walla Bing Bang."

Perhaps a copy editor's best test for headlinese is the question: "How often do I hear this word used in ordinary conversation with its headline meaning?" If hardly ever, the word is headlinese.

A complete list of pet headlinese words would be out of date as soon as the next editor got stuck for space, but here is a partial list of the most common these days:

Aver. When was the last time you heard somebody say he averred something?

Cite. The word is ambiguous. It may mean: to summon to appear; to quote as proof or authority; to mention honorably; to mention dishonorably.

Claim. With nounal object, "claim" means "lay claim to" and should not be used as a synonym for "declare," "maintain" or "charge" unless there is assertion of a right or title.[21]

Cop. As a verb, it is headlinese. As a noun, it is gaining respectability as a synonym for policeman. It is certainly more respectable than the barnyard word the animals use.

Due. The word may convey the idea of obligation or expectation or attribution, but not simple future as in this head in the *Lawrence*

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20. Garst & Bernstein, p. 163.
21. See William Strunk Jr., *The Elements of Style* (New York: Macmillan, 1959), pp. 35-36.

Daily Journal-World of March 10, 1971, for a story about the resetting of traffic lights:

Intersection Due New 'Timing'

Or in the same paper, Jan. 12, 1972, this head for a story about a building that would have only one entrance available for banquet guests:

Honors Banquet Due Single Door

Hit. This verb is overworked in headlines. To denote opposition, there are plenty of other short-count words, such as "ban," "bar," "chide," "clash," "defy," "fight," "lash," "split," "veto," "vie," "void," "war."

Ink. Holdout moundsmen ink pacts. Ordinary humans sign contracts. Along with the American passion for professional sports have come too many heads like:

Star Rookie Inks Pact

Mogul. Try "boss," "chief," "head," "leader," "ruler."

Mum. Dumb mother?

Nabob. See "mogul."

Pact. Try "accord," "amity," "contract," "deal," "treaty," "truce."

Pit. See "hit."

Prexy. See "mogul."

Probe. Ugh. As a nounal synonym for "investigation," it's ugly. Use "inquiry" or "study." And try these verbs: "delve," "inquire," "plumb," "scan," "sift," "sound," "study." "Probe" in headlines produces monstrosities like this *Journal-World* head:

Abortions in KC Hospital Probed

Pry. See "probe."

Quiz. As a noun on campus, the word is acceptable for "examination" or "test." As a verb, it is headlinese for "ask," "doubt," "inquire," "query," "seek."

Rap. To denote opposition, "rap" is headlinese. To denote conversation, "rap" is a fad word whose vogue, thank heaven, is fading. Like other juvenilia, "to rap," for "to talk," ill fits the mouth

IV

Sin Tax

Bad Grammar

A solecism is a solecism is a solecism, whether in a story or in a headline. There is no excuse for it. Surely the dark night of barbarism has not so enveloped the English-speaking world that one cannot correctly identify and use the parts of speech without being dubbed a pedant. For ungrammatical copy editors, there ought to be a sin tax.[1]

These are some of the most common blunders:

A / An. "A" is used before consonant sounds, "an" before vowel sounds. A book, a union, an egg, an umbrella. You wouldn't say you took "an history course." Why would you say you witnessed "an historic event"? The "an" here should be "a":

Premier Presents
An Historic Award

Adjective / Adverb. To learn the difference between an adjective and an adverb is perhaps too much to expect of those whose gods are jocks and whose oracles sports announcers. If "he throws the

1. Sad humor.

ball real good" is really good enough for Don Meredith and Chris Schenkel, the message comes through really well enough for the fans, but surely not for copy editors. This head in the *Lawrence Daily Journal-World* is really ungrammatical:

KU Staying
Real Active

Agreement of Subject & Predicate. Singular-plural inconsistency is probably the most common goof in print and broadcasting. The problem arises with collective nouns, which may be treated either as singular or as plural, but not as both singular and plural in the same sentence. For example, in "Montgomery Ward is opening their new store today," the writer has decided that his subject is singular and so he uses a singular verb but then he forgets and uses a plural pronoun to refer to a singular subject. Another common misuse occurs in "those kind," in which "those" is plural and "kind" singular. The writer of this head couldn't make up his mind:

Kansas City Wins
Their First Bowl

As / Like. "Like" is not a conjunction. As a preposition, it means "similar to" or "similarly to." If you can substitute either of these prepositional phrases, the word you're looking for is "like." You would say, "He should be similar to (like) me" or "He should eat similarly to (like) me." You wouldn't say, "He won similar to I predicted" or "He won similarly to I predicted." The right word here is "as," as it should have been in:

Spiro Says
He Tells It
Like It Is

As If / Like. Apply the principles of "As / Like" and you won't come up with heads like:

Ted Kennedy Looks
Like He Is Running

Because / That. "Because" is an adverbial conjunction. So it is ungrammatical to say "The reason is because . . ." because the conjunction needed is adjectival, as in "The reason is that . . . ." See "Copulatives" for further explanation and avoid:

Nixon Says Reason for Raid
Is Because Enemy Reneged

Better / More. When you say "like" or "dislike," you're expressing quality. When you want to say how much you like or dislike, you need a quantitative adverb because you have already expressed quality. Thus you like this house more than you like that house, not better. So no more heads like:

Aussies Like Tea
Better Than Coffee

Copulatives. Copulative verbs merely join subject and predicate. They are static, not dynamic. The most common is "to be." Others frequently used copulatively are: appear, become, feel, look, taste, seem, smell.[2] Copulative verbs take adjectives, not adverbs. "I am bad," not "I am badly." But note the difference between the copulative and dynamic uses of verbs of sense like "feel" and "smell." "I smell bad" means that I could use a bath. "I smell badly" means that something is wrong with my olfactory organ. The most common misuse is with "feel." When you're unhappy, you're feeling bad, not badly, as in:

Stram Says Stenerud
Shouldn't Feel Badly
About Missing Goal

Dangles. Every participle, particularly at the beginning of a sentence, must have a definite noun or pronoun to modify. When a sentence begins with a participle, the first noun or pronoun not in the possessive case in the main clause is modified by the participle.[3] Hence in "Strolling through the park, my hat blew off," the hat is strolling. "Strolling" is a dangling participle. So is "smiling" in:

If Smiling, Dentifrice
Causes Sore Mouth

Different Than. Positive, comparative, superlative. Strong, stronger, strongest. Beautiful, more beautiful, most beautiful. Comparative adjectives take "than." "Different" is a positive, not a comparative. The comparative of "different" is "more different." Similar to, different from. Peter is different from Paul. Peter is more different from Alice than from Paul. Alice is more beautiful than Francine Sue (is beautiful). But not: Alice is different than Francine

2. See John B. Opdycke, *Harper's English Grammar* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), pp. 104-105.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 144.

Sue (is different?). "Than," remember, is always a conjunction. Make sure your heads are different from:

Yorty Admits
He's Different
Than Muskie

False Passive. Though some grammarians disagree, when you transpose a sentence from active voice to passive voice, the direct object becomes the subject.[4] "Peter won a prize" becomes "A prize was won by Peter." And "Peter gave Paul a prize" should become "A prize was given (to) Paul by Peter," because "prize" is the direct object. "Paul" is the indirect object. So "Paul was given a prize by Peter" is false passive. Always ask yourself what was given. Paul wasn't given. The prize was. Worse is the use of "presented with," as in "Torre was presented with the MVP Award." First, Torre wasn't presented; the award was. Second, the "with" is meaningless, unless Torre and the award were presented to somebody else. These are false passive heads:

Urey Given
Nobel Prize

* * *

Riggins Presented
With Keys of City

Hendiadys. From the Greek "hen dia dyoin," one by two.[5] "Try and do better" would mean two actions, trying and doing, whereas one action is intended, trying to do. Hence try to do better than:

Pepper Rodgers
Says He'll Try
And Do Better

Hopefully. This is a knee-jerk word like "yunno." And half the time it doesn't make sense. It makes sense when you say, "Hopefully, he plied her with pearls," because he was full of hope. It doesn't make sense when you say, "Hopefully, the plane will be on time," because the plane is not arriving full of hope. "Regrettably, the plane was late" makes sense because it is regrettable that the

4. See John B. Bremner, review of *Miss Thistlebottom's Hobgoblins*, by Theodore M. Bernstein, in *Journalism Quarterly*, autumn 1971, pp. 575-576.
5. See H. W. Fowler, *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965).

plane was late. As "regretfully" is to "hopefully," so "regrettably" is to "hopeably." Until recently, we didn't have such a word. We do now.[6] So, hopeably, there will be fewer heads like:

Chiefs' First Loss
Is Last, Hopefully

It's / Its. To be confused by these two words is barbaric. Some barbarian wrote:

Its Time
Jayhawks
Woke Up

Kind of a. You may have an individual of a species. But you may not have a species of an individual. Furthermore, "a" means "one." Since it doesn't make sense to say, "I don't like that kind of one man," it doesn't make sense to say, "I don't like that kind of a man." The same goes for "sort" and "type." Eschew this sort of head:

McCarthy Rues
Kennedy's Kind
Of a Campaign

Object After Preposition. Nouns and pronouns governed by prepositions take the objective case. This was abominable, and Jim didn't say it:

Jim Ryun Says Race Is
Between Liquori and He

Plurals. To form the plural of a word ending in "s," add "es." Thus: Jones, Joneses; Chalmers, Chalmerses. To form the possessive of a plural ending in "s," add an apostrophe. Thus: the Joneses' car, the Chalmerses' car. Some plurals are tricky. Errors are often made with: bacteria, candelabra, criteria, data, errata, insignia, media, minutiae, phenomena, strata, vertebrae. All these words are plural. Particularly note "data" and "media." Despite the popular illiteracy of some cyberneticists and psephologists, data still are. And nothing else shows up the ignorance of some critics of the press and broadcasting quite so much as the misuse of "media" as a singular. These heads are illiterate:

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6. See John B. Bremner, review of *Words in Sheep's Clothing*, by Mario Pei, in *Journalism Quarterly*, winter 1969, p. 831.

Governor Throws Party
At the Chalmers' House

★ ★ ★

Computer Data
Invades Privacy

★ ★ ★

Media Is Biased,
Agnew Charges

Position of Modifier. Put your modifier as close as possible to the word modified, preferably in front of it. Take the sentence, "Only John and his wife eat dinner at the end of the day," rewrite it by putting "only" in a different position each time and see the different meanings. Don't write:

Soldier Only Has
One Life to Give

Sequence of Tenses. Since they are usually not written in the past tense, American news headlines rarely abuse the sequence of tenses, thank heaven.

That / Which. Words convey ideas. The words "that" and "which" convey different ideas. If you are told to go to the third house that has green drapes, you may pass many houses before you reach the one you are looking for, the third green-draped house. If you are told to go to the third house which has green drapes, you will pass only two houses before you reach the one you are looking for, the third house, which, by the way, has green drapes. "That" is restrictive, defining. "Which" is non-restrictive, describing. If you can end the sentence immediately before the relative pronoun and not change the meaning, the relative pronoun you are looking for is "which." If you can't, it's "that." For instance, if your guide had simply said, "Go to the third house," he would not have changed the meaning of the second sentence, which merely added "which has green drapes" to give you incidental description in case you lost count. Another test is to put a comma before the relative pronoun. If you can, the word you are looking for is "which." If you can't, it's "that." This head wanted to say the FCC had banned any obscene show that wasn't artistic. Instead, the head said the FCC had banned all obscene shows because obscenity was not artistic:

FCC Bans Obscenity
Which Is Not Artistic

Who / Whom. "Whom" is the objective case of "who." That's simple enough. The usage gets tricky, however, when the pronoun looks as if it should be objective but isn't. This, for example, is wrong: "He knows a girl whom he thinks will go." "Whom" should be "who," the subject of "will go," not the object of "thinks." When in doubt, substitute a personal pronoun for the relative pronoun. You wouldn't say, "He thinks her will go." This, too, is wrong: "Give it to whomever wants it." "Whomever" should be "whoever," the subject of "wants," not the object of "to." The object of "to" is the whole clause, "whoever wants it." The rule is that pronouns agree with their antecedents in person, number and gender but take their case from the clause in which they stand. So this is wrong:

Nixon Won't Say
Who He'll Choose
As Running Mate

The grammatical copy editors responding to the questionnaire rated bad grammar the third worst sin a desk man could commit, on the job. Nine of them called it outrageous, three very bad, three bad. The consensus rating was 3.40, worse than very bad.

No Subject

A news headline should be a sentence. It should have a subject and a verb. A story under a no-subject head is like a restaurant check. To get the bad news, you have to read from the bottom up.[7] The example given in the questionnaire, "Throws Girl in River," doesn't summarize the story. Who threw her in?

No-subject heads are sometimes called verb heads because they begin with a verb. As column measure has widened and horizontal make-up become more popular, head counts have loosened and verb heads are fewer. Some large metropolitan papers, however, still use them abundantly, notably the *Des Moines Register* and the *Kansas City Star.*

Papers whose head style involves decks and crosslines, such as the *New York Times,* allow a verb head if the subject of the verb is the first word or phrase in the deck immediately following.[8] Again, however, horizontal and six-column make-up is reducing the use of multi-deck heads.

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7. A. J. Liebling, *The Press* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1961), p. 276.
8. Garst & Bernstein, p. 153.

Despite its recent switch to horizontal make-up, the *Kansas City Star* still uses plenty of verb heads. Somehow some of them read strangely. Witness the head over this story in the *Star* of June 23, 1971:

> MIAMI (AP)—A Dade County Circuit Court judge ruled yesterday that adoptive parents Nicholas and Jean DeMartino could keep one-year-old baby Lenore, subject of a court fight between the DeMartinos and her natural mother.

The no-subject head said:

Get to Keep
Baby Lenore

The *Star* sometimes uses a quaint headline device for this kind of story (Feb. 21, 1971):

> VATICAN CITY (AP)—Pope Paul VI has named Arturo Tabera Araoz, archbishop of Pamplona, Spain, to head the Vatican Congregation of Rites, the Vatican announced yesterday.

The no-subject head simply said:

Up at Vatican

Three of the questionnaire editors said no-subject heads were outrageous, one very bad, five bad, six not so good. The consensus rating was 2.07, slightly worse than bad.

Wrong Number

Whereas the questionnaire example for no-subject heads was "Throws Girl in River," the example for wrong number heads was the plural "Throw Girl in River."[9]

The story, an avuncular rewrite of a famous American tragedy, concerned a man who threw his niece in a river, and the occasion was no family picnic or spring skylark.

The headline writer simply dialed the wrong number. The girl's uncle was the first person in the drama but grammatically he was third and very singular. For the third person, "throw" is plural number and therefore here does not agree in number with its subject. Singular subjects take singular verbs. Copy editors should have learned this basic rule of grammar at their mothers' knees or at other joints.

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9. Keen Rafferty, "Throw Girl in River," *Nieman Reports*, January 1952, pp. 18-21.

Furthermore, the third person plural present indicative has the same form as the second person plural present imperative and therefore implies a command to "throw girl" or "rob bank" or "beat Tech."

On desks that allow copy editors to write heads without a subject, the tendency for a careless editor is to ignore the subject's number in the story. Often this isn't ignorance but rather the handy knowledge that the third person plural present indicative of all verbs, except "to be" and "to have," is shorter than the third person singular.

When multi-deck heads are used, care should be taken that a verb "that reaches backward or forward into other lines or decks for its subject is in the right tense, voice and number."[10] In this example, "reject" is in the wrong number:

SENATE BACKS
BENSON'S PLAN

Reject Brown's Resolution
For Extended Debate

When the *Chicago Tribune* ran a backgrounder on the Algerian rebellion, compiled by the Associated Press, the *Tribune* ran this no-subject split head with wrong number:

GIVE HISTORY
OF ALGERIAN
PEACE MOVES

This was a story in the *Chicago Daily News*:

> PARIS (UPI)—A former French army captain was shot and wounded when he theatened to use a hand grenade to blow up an airliner carrying 32 suspected right-wing terrorists to a detention center, reliable police sources said Sunday.
>
> The man pulled out the grenade while the plane was over central France and threatened to pull the pin unless the pilot changed direction.
>
> He was shot by a gendarme before he could carry out his threat.

The *News* ran this asymmetrical no-subject head with wrong number:

Shoot Man
In Threat
During Flight

Five questionnaire editors considered wrong number outrageous, four very bad, six bad. The consensus rating was 2.93, tied with heads that go beyond the story as almost very bad.

10. Sanderson, p. 34.

No Verb

The missing link in the historical evolution of the American news headline is a verb. The old captions and titles were mere labels. They had no verb. What makes a news head a news head is a verb.

Verbs talk. They mean action. They are the most forceful part of speech. They take the other parts, join them, galvanize them, give them meaning.

A baby gurgles "spoon," then "pretty spoon," then pretty soon "Gimme pretty spoon." That verb changed gurgles to articulation, as verbs changed labels to headlines, from "Tragic Accident" to "President Assassinated." The only trouble now is to keep the baby from articulating too much and the headline from shouting too loudly."

The present tense of the verb "to be" may usually be omitted in a headline because its presence is implied or understood. For example, in the active voice:

Coach Unhappy
With Schedule

Or in the passive voice:

COACH FIRED

On account of ambiguity, however, the "is" or "are" sometimes should not be omitted. Look at this head in the *Lawrence Daily Journal-World* of Aug. 12, 1970:

Rebels Say Hostages Well

"Well" is a versatile word. It can be noun, verb, adjective, adverb. One can imagine those rebels resonantly articulating "Hostages."

Similarly, the omission of "is" or "are" can lead to this kind of ambiguity:

Greece Asserts
Bandits Killed

Were the bandits the murderers or the victims?

The future tense of the verb "to be" may always be shortened from "shall be" and "will be" to "to be," just as the "shall" or "will" in the future tense of any verb may be shortened to "to."

11. Garst & Bernstein, p. 106.

The quaint "Up at Vatican" no-subject heads the *Kansas City Star* runs over stories about someone's promotion are matched in the *Star* by this kind of no-verb head over the same kind of story:

McGillycuddy to Helm

The *Star* doesn't seem to worry very much about verbs in heads. For example, when tropical storm Agnes hit Taiwan on Sept. 20, 1971, the *Star* ran this head:

Lash on Taiwan

On the same day, this was the lead of the lead story in the *Star*:

> LONDON (AP)—Sir Alec Douglas-Home, British foreign secretary, returning from a Middle East visit, said he had found openings that could lead to an interim settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the reopening of the Suez Canal.

The *Star* beamed:

Glow on Mid-East

The no-verb head was one of the eight violations that received every rating. Two questionnaire editors called it outrageous, four very bad, three bad, four not so good, two quite O.K. The consensus rating was exactly 2.00, exactly bad and exactly the same as obscure name and undue exclamation, tying for 17th place among the 34 violations.

Wrong Tense

News headlines use the present tense for news immediately past. It is the historic present and it gives a vivid sense of immediacy. It is also usually shorter than the past tense.

There are three exceptions: (1) future stories; (2) obituaries; and (3) old stories that newly become news.

The headline of a future story should obviously be in the future tense, but copy editors sometimes get confused on this point. When Pepper Rodgers, head football coach at the University of Kansas, announced he would be leaving KU for UCLA, the head should not have said:

Pepper Goes to UCLA

He hadn't gone yet. The right tense was:

Pepper to Go to UCLA

Or in the present tense:

Pepper Hired by UCLA

Or perhaps:

Pepper Rodgers Will Go
From Fry Pan into Fire

Incidentally, when Rodgers' job at Kansas went to Don Fambrough, a sleepy copy editor on the *Fresno (Calif.) Bee* wrote (Jan. 8, 1971):

Fulcher Replaces
Rodgers at Kansas

Fambrough, Fulcher, Smulcher, who cares? Any old name will do. The day Fambrough was signed by Kansas, Fulcher was signed by the University of Tampa, which must be out there on the Kansas pampas. The Fresno editor reminded me of Louella Parsons, for whom any town east of Pasadena was Joplin, St. Louis.

The second exception to the present tense headline is the obituary. On a page of obituaries, the verb "dies" is often omitted in heads because the page is obviously a page of news of deaths, and "dies" would appear in every head on the page.[12] Sometimes, however, a verb in the past tense is used to describe the dead person's former occupation or achievements, as in:

John Jones;
Was Banker

Or:

John Leary;
Won Pulitzer

When old stories become news, a headline verb may be in the past tense but the attributing verb will still be in the present tense, as in:

FDR Philandered,
Historian Declares

This head was in the wrong tense:[13]

Man Slain at Wichita
Lives at Vinton, Iowa

Five questionnaire editors said wrong tense was outrageous, three very bad, seven bad. The consensus rating was 2.87, almost very bad.

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12. Forget euphemisms like "succumbs," "passes," "passes away."
13. *Fort Dodge (Iowa) Messenger.*

Faulty Punctuation

The Ten Commandments of news headline punctuation are:

1. Don't unless you have to.

2. Except for abbreviation, never use periods.

3. When sentences have the same subject, separate them with a comma.

4. When sentences have different subjects, separate them with a semi-colon.[14]

5. A comma may be used for "and."

6. Where double quotation marks would be used in copy, use single quotation marks in heads; and vice versa.

7. Avoid colons and dashes.[15]

8. Never end or begin a line with a hyphen.

9. Avoid question marks.[16]

10. Save exclamation marks for the end of the war in Vietnam or the end of the world, whichever comes first.

Like the original decalogue before the moral theologians started splitting hairs, most of the 10 commandments of news headline punctuation are self-explanatory.

The third and the fourth seem to give the most trouble. Here is an example of the third:

Nixon Meets Mao,
Pledges Friendship

The head has really two sentences: "Nixon meets Mao" and "Nixon pledges friendship." The sentences have the same subject, "Nixon." They are separated by a comma.

Here is an example of the fourth:

Nixon Visits Pope;
Klansmen Protest

The two sentences in the head have different subjects. "Nixon" is the subject of the first. "Klansmen" is the subject of the second. The sentences are separated by a semi-colon.

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14. A semi-colon may be used to separate a name and a clause or phrase in an obituary.
15. See Makeshift Gimmick.
16. See Question Head.

Note the word "may" in the fifth commandment. You don't have to use a comma for "and." You may. The hoary prohibition against the use of "and" and articles in headlines is best ignored.

Here are examples of the sixth commandment:

'Camelot' Will Be Spring Musical

* * *

Critic Says, 'I Abhor "Camelot" '

But headline writers should shy away from full quotations.

In the questionnaire, three punctuation experts called faulty punctuation outrageous, four very bad, six bad, two not so good. The consensus rating was 2.53, a little closer to very bad than to bad.

Makeshift Gimmick

A headline that records a statement must report it, not leave it as a flat statement without attribution. Sometimes when a copy editor gets into a jam and does not seem able to fit his attribution into the allotted space, he will resort to some makeshift gimmick to patch up his bad work. Instead of thinking and rephrasing and rearranging to come up with an apt attributive verb, a lazy editor will fall back on a dash or a colon or quotation marks.

The result is a head like the one in the *Lawrence Daily Journal-World* of June 11, 1971, over this lead:

> KANSAS CITY(AP)—Embattled City Manager John Taylor was told by the city council Thursday that it would set policies of government and he would carry them out—or else.

The headline writer couldn't fit a verb into a 23-count. So he reached for a dash and came up with:

KC Manager—Wrist-Slap

He could have written:

KC Council Calls Shots

Or, if he was in love with his metaphor:

Taylor's Wrist Slapped

Sometimes the makeshift gimmick is a colon in place of a verb, as in:

Nixon: Johnson Deceitful

Instead, this would have provided a verb and a twist:

Nixon Calls LBJ Tricky

In place of a verb, sometimes there is a double makeshift of quotation marks and a colon or dash, as in:

'We Were Robbed'—Ohio Coach

Here's a verb for the head and no makeshift gimmick:

Woody Hayes Hollers Uncle

Or:

Woody Doubts Refs' Lineage

Makeshift gimmick was another of the eight violations that received every rating in the questionnaire. One editor said it was outrageous, two very bad, seven bad, two not so good, three quite O.K. The consensus rating was 1.73, closer to bad than to not so good.

Misspelling

Sensitive copy editors on vacation squirm when they espy billboards advertising motel "accomodation." The pikers won't stay there. If there's no room for an em, they figure, it's no place for a pica. So they see whether there's room for 'em in the inn, which has two ens, which all crossword buffs know is the same as an em.

Misspelling is a not innocuous disease against which copy editors should inoculate themselves with a potion of Latin and Greek roots and regular check-ups at Dr. Webster's, the best resort for a spell.

Copy editors, unless they are also proofreaders, cannot be responsible for the typo gremlins that haunt even the most efficiently exorcised composing rooms. Some misspellings are undoubtedly typographical errors. Too often, however, misspelling is the fault of the copy editor, not the compositor, who is instructed to follow copy.

This head in the *Lawrence Daily Journal-World* of Feb. 24, 1971, should never have happened:

KU Unsure
What Affect
Ruling Has

Nor this in the same paper, June 11, 1971:

Soviet Trio Spends
5th Day Abord Lab

And when a paper gets fancy with a foreign language, especially in a university community, it should check articles and genders. The *Journal-World* ran this head on Sept. 27, 1971:

Russians Live in Comfort
Ala Bourgeois in London

Simple words can cause trouble, as in the head in the *Kansas City Star* of June 17, 1970, over a story about an astronaut's marriage plans:

Astronaut Sets Course to Alter

Perhaps the *Star* copy editor was trying to be funny at the altar. And perhaps the *Journal-World* copy editor was trying to be funny with Der Alte when he nouned a verb in (June 15, 1970):

Voting Seen
As No Alter
In Germany

This kind of lead can cause headline misspelling, too:

> TOPEKA—Pride in service to their country in four bitter wars marked the stride of more than 1,500 Kansas veterans as they marched in the 52nd annual parade opening the state convention of the Kansas department of the American Legion.

The story, which ran in the *Kansas City Star* of May 16, 1970, had this head:

Pride Reflected Still
In Marital Sacrifice

The reverse happens, too:[17]

Newlyweds Begin Martial Life

Such gaffes happen on reputable papers. The *Des Moines Register*, "The Newspaper Iowa Depends Upon," let Iowa down on Nov. 10, 1968, when its front-page, eight-column, 120-point, all-cap, ultra-bold banner proclaimed:

SIEZE 4 IN PLOT TO KILL NIXON

Misspelling in headlines can be embarrassing. Witness these examples of sonic writing:[18]

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17. *Ogden (Utah) Standard-Examiner.*
18. *Glendale (Calif.) News-Bee; New York Sun; Philadelphia Bulletin.*

Police Catch
Three Youths
With Heroine

* * *

Actress Will Try
New Roll in Play

* * *

Girls Seek Births
On Track Team

And these heads indicate some kind of educational gap in grade school:[19]

Old Courthouse Building
Is Raised to the Ground

* * *

No Drinking Aloud
At Football Games,
Fans Are Warned

* * *

MAN COMES OUT OF COMMA

Newspapers differ on style for capitalization of heads that are not in all-cap style. In heads that are *clc* (caps and lower case), some newspapers prefer upstyle, in which the first letter of every word is capitalized. For example:

Profs To Go To Topeka
To Seek A Raise In Pay

Some prefer downstyle, in which only the first letter of the first word and the first letter of proper nouns or proper adjectives are capitalized. For example:

Profs to go to Topeka
to seek a raise in pay

Other newspapers prefer modified upstyle, in which the first letter of every word is capitalized, except articles, the "to" of an infinitive (or future) and prepositions of fewer than five letters, unless these exceptions are the first word of a line, which is capitalized. Modified upstyle has been followed in this book. Thus:

Profs to Go to Topeka
To Seek a Raise in Pay

Both parts of a hyphenated word should be capitalized in upstyle and modified upstyle. For example: Baby-Sit, Ex-Wife, H-Bomb, Teen-Ager.

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19. *South Bend News-Times; Birmingham (Ala.) News; Boston Herald.*

There is no complete list of words frequently misspelled in headlines. Here are 100 (an asterisk indicates preferred spelling):

accommodate
adviser*
Albuquerque
all right
analogous
any more
asinine
assassin
asterisk

baby-sit
baby sitter
baby-sitting
Baghdad*
Britain
buses

Cape Town*
carburetor*
category
Cincinnati
commitment
concede
consensus

deity
develop

ecstasy
embarrass
employe*

filibuster
flourish
fluoride
foreign
frivolous
fulfill*

gauge
genealogy
grievous
guerrilla*

harass
hitchhike
homicide
hypocrisy

impostor
innocuous
inoculate

judgment*

kidnaped*
kidnaper*

liaison
liquefy

marshal
missile
misspell
moccasin

naphtha
nickel
niece
Nuernberg*

occurred

parachute
pavilion
Peking*
per cent
Philippines
pigeon
Pittsburg, Kan.
Pittsburgh, Pa.
pompon
Portuguese
precede
privilege
proceed
protester

rarefy
receive
responsible
restaurateur
rhythm
rock 'n' roll
Romania*

sacrilege
satellite
seize
separate
sergeant
sheriff
siege
subpoena
supersede

Taipei*
threshold

ukulele
under way
unwieldy

Vietnam*
villain

weird
whisky*
withhold

Xerox

yield

The questionnaire editors rated misspelling the fourth gravest violation of headline norms. Nine called it outrageous, one very bad, four bad, one (a not-so-good speller) not so good. The consensus rating was 3.20, worse than very bad.

V

Good Fences, Good Neighbors

Split 1st & 2nd Lines

Some copy desks uphold the norm that each line in the top deck of a head should be a "complete thought" or at least an integral grammatical structure. The violation of this norm is called a split head.

Some desks don't like to see the first line split from the second. Some don't like any split at all. Others just don't care, splitting heads whenever they want to, refusing to split hairs.

Garst and Bernstein give this rationale for unsplit heads:

"The eye in reading successive lines is compelled to pause ever so briefly and shift focus at the end of each line. If the content of what is read has a corresponding resting place, no matter how slight, at the end of the line, quick and comfortable reading is facilitated. It is on this principle that the avoidance of split heads is based. The copy editor strives to achieve a clean break at the end of each line. If each does not express a complete thought, it at least stands on its own grammatical feet."[1]

1. P. 149.

To avoid split heads:

1. Don't separate a preposition from its object. For example:

Ship Sinks in
Pearl Harbor

2. Don't separate an adjective from the noun it qualifies, if the noun comes after the adjective, as in:

Laird Sees New
Hope for Peace

Nouns are sometimes used as adjectives in headlines. Hence this is a split head:

FBI Solves Murder
Mystery in Honolulu

But the head is not split if the adjective comes after the noun:

Youths Hold Police
Captive for 8 Hours

3. Don't separate an adverb from the verb it modifies, if the verb comes after the adverb, as in:

Spiro Often
Slices Shots

But the head is not split if the adverb comes after the verb:

Spiro Slices
Shots Often

4. Don't separate a conjunction from the clause it introduces. For example:

Bonn Agrees But
Moscow Refuses

5. Don't separate the parts of a compound verb:

Agnew Will
Visit Hanoi

6. Don't separate the parts of a prepositional verb:

Burger Swears
In New Cabinet

7. Don't separate the parts of a person's name:

Nixon Selects David
Eisenhower as Mate

8. Don't separate numerals:

City Gets $100,
000 in Refunds

Splitting the first and second lines in a head was one of the eight violations whose ratings were spread across the board by the questionnaire editors. Three called it outrageous, two very bad, six bad, two not so good, two quite O.K. The consensus rating was 2.13, slightly worse than bad.

Split 2nd & 3rd Lines

Although some editors will not allow a split between the first and second lines of a head, they will allow a split between the second and third lines. The principles, however, are the same for each split.

Whereas the consensus rating for splitting the first and second lines was 2.13, the consensus rating for splitting the second and third lines was 1.73. Three editors rated it outrageous, six bad, two not so good, four quite O.K.

Word Repeated

The norm against repeating a word in a head, except minor words like articles and prepositions, exists because repetition takes up space that could be used for additional information.

Repetition is easier to avoid in a one-deck head than in a complex head of decks and crosslines.

When avoiding repetition involves undue strain, however, repeating is better than reaching far out for a weird synonym, as in:

Student Runs Out of Money,
Sends Home for Green Stuff

Or:

Village Short of Water
Gets Bottled Aqua Pura

Worse:

Crazy Chimpanzee Ape
About Bananas Swipes
Elongated Yellow Fruit

Observance of the norm, however, helps prevent obvious padding in headlines, such as:[2]

Wind-Lashed Blizzard
Lashes Plains States

Repetition is valid when it is used for effect, as in:[3]

Thinkers Failures,
Professor Thinks

Repetition was another of the eight violations that received every rating in the questionnaire. One editor said it was outrageous, one very bad, nine bad, three not so good, one quite O.K. The consensus rating was 1.87, almost bad.

Asymmetry

Symmetry is the beauty of form that flows from the harmony of balanced proportions. The proportions of an asymmetric head are unbalanced. Ugliness of form flows from their discord.

Modern newspaper make-up has brought many variations of headline style,[4] but they can be reduced to four basic styles in heads that have more than one line: flush-left, stepped, handing indent, centered.

The most common is flush-left. Each line is set close to the left margin of a column and is flush with the line above or below it. Different desks have different rules for the length of lines in flush-left heads. A standard guide is that no line should be less than two counts below the maximum count.[5] This book follows this principle. Thus, if the maximum count is 15, the minimum is 13. If the principle is followed, asymmetric heads like these will be avoided:

Eisenhower
Buried
In Abilene, Kan.

★ ★ ★

Supreme Court
Rejects
Busing

★ ★ ★

2. Floyd K. Baskette and Jack Z. Sissors, *The Art of Editing* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), pp. 164-165.
3. *Ibid.*
4. See Baskette & Sissors, p. 136.
5. See Chapter VII.

China Approves
Summit Meeting
In Paris

* * *

Irish Cool
To Israel's Plan
For Ombudsman

* * *

Democrats
Refuse to Back
Lindsay

* * *

Dissidents
Hatch Plot
To Dump Thieu

In a stepped head, the top line is set flush left and the bottom line flush right. If there are three lines, the middle line is indented left and right. For symmetric design, each line should have almost exactly the same length. This is the ideal pattern in a stepped head:

Food Unions
Accept Pact,
Avert Strike

In the hanging indent, the top line is set flush left and flush right. The other lines are flush right, indented left and ideally of the same length. This is the pattern:

Stadium Construction
Runs into Trouble;
Opening Postponed

Centered heads are usually inverted pyramids, each lower line symmetrically shorter than the one above it. Thus:

KU Opens Season
Tuesday Night
At Omaha

Heads in boxes or under hoods should be centered.

For symmetric design, a head under a kicker should be indented, and the kicker should be less than half as long as the head.

In the questionnaire, the eyes of seven editors beheld asymmetry bad, six not so good, two quite O.K. Asymmetry was one of only three violations whose worst rating was bad. The consensus rating was 1.33, closer to not so good than to bad.

Overcrowding

News headlines are supposed to be attractive. Overcrowding is slummy. Slums are repulsive.

A line in a head gets overcrowded when a copy editor tries to squeeze too many letters into it and does not give them breathing space. He should grant each group of letters a little space between one another for family privacy. Good fences make good neighbors. Some editors there are that do not love a wall.

When a headline writer forces a compositor to use tight spaces to set an overcrowded head, the result can be something like this:[6]

Man Should Work for Common Goo

Or:[7]

Billy Graham Revival
To Attract Large Crow

Two questionnaire editors called overcrowding in headlines very bad, five bad, eight not so good. The consensus rating was 1.60, a little closer to bad than to not so good.

Too Much White Space

"Too Much White Space" is the opposite of "Overcrowding," and the housing laws against overcrowding apply in reverse to white space.

White space in and around a head relieves the effect of blackness, but too much white space gives the effect of emptiness, of a room without furniture, or with sparse furniture genteelly arranged to hide the emptiness.

Copy editors sometimes expect compositors to hide a headline's shortcomings by exaggerating the space between words and by artificially breathing space between the letters of a word. The result is as phony as a ring of aspidistras spaced around the Rose Bowl.

An attractive headline blends black and white, avoiding the extremes of solid overcowding and the airy emptiness of underpopulation.

Two of the questionnaire editors said too much white space was bad, ten not so good, three quite O.K. The consensus rating was 0.93, almost not so good. The category was rated the least grave of all the violations and the only one below 1.00 on the scale of gravity. It was one of the three violations whose worst rating was bad.

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6. *San Rafael (Calif.) Independent-Journal.*
7. *Los Angeles Mirror.*

VI

Appointments in Samarra

Unnecessary Time

"Ten Hurt Yesterday" was the questionnaire example of unnecessary time in a headline. Readers ought to be able to assume that their morning papers are reporting the news of yesterday and their evening papers the news of today or last night. Immediate past time is therefore superfluous and also space-eating.

Moreover, adverbial phrases of past time become anachronistically incongruous when they modify verbs in the present tense, as in this head in the *Lawrence Daily Journal-World* of Sept. 2, 1971:

19 Americans
Die Last Week
In War Zone

When a day of the week is used with a verb in the present tense, a reader naturally assumes that the day is future. The result is incongruous in heads such as this in the *Journal-World* of Oct. 13, 1971:

Dean Acheson
Dies Tuesday

Some papers use "today" with a verb in the present tense in heads for stories of death. The result is like an announcement of doom,

especially if the person is identified only by occupation. Professors curl into a tight ball and want to roll into a corner and hide when a paper serves notice of motion such as:

PROFESSOR
DIES TODAY

The *Journal-World* is fond of so announcing these appointments in Samarra. Its banner for Sept. 11, 1971, warned:

Nikita Khrushchev Dies Today

Also (Sept. 18, 1970):

Pop Singer
Jimi Hendrix
Dies Today

And (Sept. 30, 1971):

Originator
Of Jayhawk
Dies Today

Sometimes there is variation, as in (June 22, 1970):

Dick Williams
Succumbs Today
At KC Hospital

Warnings such as this on Aug. 25, 1971, would have been helpful if the invasion hadn't happened Aug. 24:

Crickets Invade
Newton Today

Though a newspaper's past time is usually restricted to 24 hours, its future is indefinite. Future time is therefore legitimate in a head if the story warrants it for more accurate understanding. For example:

Kosygin Postpones
Visit Till January

But when a reader is checking the entertainment page, his anticipation of joy is thwarted when he discovers that "Wednesday night" means last Wednesday, not next Wednesday, as in this split head in the *Journal-World* of Jan. 13, 1972:

Football Joins TV Comedy
Scene Wednesday Night

Time is seriously at fault in this *Kansas City Star* head:

Slain Woman Raped

The prize, however, must go to the *Journal-World* for this classic of April 16, 1969:

Early Morning Rainfall
Due Again Here Tonight

Unnecessary time was another of the eight violations that received every rating in the questionnaire. One editor said it was outrageous, two very bad, six bad, five not so good, one quite O.K. The consensus rating was 1.80, almost bad.

Unnecessary Place

Since every newspaper is published here, "here" is usually unnecessary in a headline unless one should be surprised that what happened happened here.

If place in a head helps an understanding of the story and is not mere padding, place is legitimate. For the *Parsons Sun*, place is necessary in:

Freeway
To Skirt
Parsons

For a paper not published in the state capital, "here" is necessary in:

Legislature
Investigates
Riots Here

Place is illegitimate if obvious, as in:

Congress Will Meet
In Washington, D.C.

If Congress doesn't meet in Washington, place is news.

Like unnecessary time, unnecessary place received every rating in the questionnaire. One editor called it outrageous, two very bad, five bad, six not so good, one quite O.K. The consensus rating was 1.73, closer to bad than to not so good.

Weak Verb

The verb, the verb, the finite verb. Copy editors should utter this cry in their sleep. It tells one of the secrets of good writing and therefore one of the secrets of good heads.

Since the verb is the strongest part of speech, the stronger the verb the stronger the headline.

"Strong" is used here in the sense of "forceful." Grammatically, a strong verb is an irregular verb; a weak verb is a regular verb. There are a few more than 200 strong verbs in the English language.[1] They form their past tense and past participle by internal change (drink, drank, drunk; freeze, froze, frozen), not by the addition of "d" or "ed" or "t."

Strong verbs are usually Anglo-Saxon, weak verbs Latin or Greek. Strong verbs therefore are usually more forceful. The weakest verbs are the copulatives. They merely join, not galvanize.

Though news should not be distorted or strained for the sake of a strong verb, dynamic news demands dynamic headlines, and dynamic headlines demand dynamic verbs.

This head tells dynamic news weakly and therefore less accurately:

SAIGON IS UNDER FIRE

This head tells the dynamic news accurately and strongly:

CONG BONG SAIGON

If you consider "bong" too slangy, try "bomb."

The news is not always of bombshells. A few moments of thought, however, will often breathe life into heads for stories that are important but not earthshaking.

This was the lead of a story in the *Washington Post*:

> CHICAGO (AP)—The Federal Communications Commission, selecting Chicago for the test, will open unprecedented hearings Monday into whether locally produced television programs are serving the "real needs and interests" of the community.

The *Post* ran this head:

Hearings Set
On Local TV
In Chicago

1. For a list of the strong verbs in English, see Opdycke, pp. 114-121.

With the same count, the weak verb and headlinese "set" could have been overcome by:

FCC to Test
Public Spirit
Of Local TV

In the questionnaire, two editors called weak verbs very bad, five bad, eight not so good. The consensus rating was 1.60, closer to bad than to not so good.

Weak Voice

Voice is "that inflection of a verb that shows whether its subject is the doer of the action indicated or is acted upon."[2] If the subject performs the action, the verb is in the active voice. If the subject is acted upon, the verb is in the passive voice.

Active voice is dynamic. Passive voice is static. Active voice is vigorous voice, unashamed to say whodunit. Passive voice is preferred by the weak, the cowardly, ashamed to name the fink who told them what they are evasively telling you. Active voice is the voice of a Zola, a John the Baptist. Passive voice is the voice of diplomacy, of international chanceries, both civil and ecclesiastic.

Since good heads vigorously try to tell the "who" of a story and tell it quickly, good heads try to use active voice. The questionnaire example of weak voice, "Humphrey Is Beaten by Nixon," has neither the speed nor the action of:

Nixon Beats Humphrey

Sometimes, however, action has to give way to speed when the "whom" of a story is more important than the "who," when the "whom" is really the "who."

For example, this head is in the active voice but it is slow in telling the most important part of the story:

Plane Crash Kills
4 Cabinet Members

This head is in the passive voice but it gets to the most important part of the story fast:

Four Cabinet Members
Killed in Plane Crash

2. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

Weak voice produces "seen" heads, like this head in the *Washington Post*:

More Attention Seen
Helping Negro Youth

This was the lead of the story:

> If schools and churches would pay more attention to Negro youth, the Negro crime rate in Metropolitan Washington would be reduced, the associate dean of students at Howard University said yesterday.

Within the same maximum count, this head would have been stronger and would have eliminated the weak passive "seen":

To Cut Negro Crime,
Dean Urges Solicitude

In the questionnaire, weak voice was called bad by five editors, not so good by eight, quite O.K. by two. The consensus rating was 1.20, a little worse than not so good. Weak voice was one of the three violations whose worst rating was bad. It was tied with question heads for 31st place among the 34 violations.

Negative Head

A head is negative when it tells what didn't happen, usually by the use of a negative verb to denote positive action.

The questionnaire example was "Union Doesn't Favor Strike," which is a negative way of saying:

Union Opposes Strike

Even if the union had been neither for nor against but neutral, the negative head would have told only half the story because the union also didn't not favor the strike.

This head would have told the mugwump story positively:

Union Is Neutral to Strike

Or, more strongly:

Union Straddles Strike Fence

A strange species of negative head appeared over this lead in the *Lawrence Daily Journal-World* of March 10, 1971:

NEW YORK (AP)—President Nixon said in an interview that the Vietnam war was ending and added, "In fact, I seriously doubt that we will ever have another war. This is probably the very last one," the New York Times reported today.

The head said:

New War Not Foreseen

Does this mean that no new war is going to happen? Or does it mean that a new war that has happened was unexpected? And who says so, anyway?

This head would have given attribution to the statement, removed ambiguity and changed negative passive to positive active, with the same count:

Nixon Sees End of War

In the questionnaire, four editors said negative heads were very bad, one said they were bad, six negatively said they were not so good, four positively said they were quite O.K. The consensus rating was 1.33, closer to not so good than to bad.

Question Head

The reporter's job is to ask questions and write answers. The copy editor's job is to report the reporter. A head that asks a question is speculation, not news. Even when the news is news of doubt, it isn't doubtful news. It's certain news about doubt.

Here is a typical question head:

Kennedy to Run in 1972?

Depending on the tenor of the story, the head could have become fact instead of speculation, had it stated:

Kennedy Defers Decision

Or:

Kennedy Undecided on '72

A question head is a lazy head, indicative of unresourceful editing. This was a head in the *Miami Herald*:

Autos, Houses Splotched;
'Dots' Falling from Sky?

The story said that strange, black, oily splotches were raining from the sky over West Miami and polka-dotting houses, automobiles, sidewalks and the weekday wash.[3] The guesses ranged from birds to planes to SuperMan. The *Herald* didn't pretend to know the answer but it needn't have asked the question. The story had a pleasantly light touch and fooled nobody but West Miami washerwomen. Every reader would have his own authoritative explanation, as in the flying saucer stories, and the *Herald* might have tried lifting SuperMan into the lead to satisfy a cub editor's urge for doggerel, just for the hell of it and to the eternal confusion of pedantic professors:

SuperHuman Splotches
Rain Polka Dot Blotches

No? Well, it's better than asking a question about something to which everyone knows the answer.

In the questionnaire, two editors questioned on question heads answered that they were unquestionably very bad, three bad, six not so good, four quite O.K. The consensus rating was 1.20, a little worse than not so good.

Tentative Head

A tentative head is sometimes called a "may" head. It does not positively say that something will happen but that it may happen.

A positive head is a more forceful head, but a forceful head is hard to write when the news is not positive. Again, however, when the news is news of possibility, it isn't possible news. It's certain news about possibility.

This is a tentative head:

Kennedy May Run in '72

Depending on the story, it could become:

Kennedy Likely to Run

3. The story mentioned "a sheet, dappled like a Dalmatian after a stretch on the clothesline." You just can't help loving those West Miami Dalmatians, the cute way they stretch on clotheslines.

Or:

Kennedy Open to Draft

Or:

Kennedy Expected to Run

Verbs like "impends," "looms," "warns of," "expects," "fears," "ponders" and adjectives like "likely," "possible," "ready" are handy words with which to conquer tentation. "May" should be only a final resort "when it is impracticable to phrase the head any other way without twisting the meaning of the story."[4]

This was the lead of a story in the *Lawrence Daily Journal-World* of Jan. 12, 1972:

> HUTCHINSON, Kan. (AP)—City Manager George Pyle asked city commissioners Tuesday to consider an election for a local half-cent sales tax to finance municipal government in 1973.

The head said:

Hutchinson May
Use Sales Tax

This head would have removed the "may" and the split:

Tax Pondered
In Hutchinson

Or, since the abbreviation is well known in Kansas, this active head would have told the story more specifically:

Hutch Ponders
Half-Cent Tax

In the questionnaire, one editor called tentative heads very bad, two bad, eight not so good, four quite O.K. The consensus rating was 1.00, a perfect not so good. Tentative head ranked 33rd on the scale of gravity among the 34 violations.

All violations having been studied, the question now is "What's the Count?"

4. Garst & Bernstein, p. 148.

VII

What's the Count?

When you hit any key on an ordinary typewriter, its imprint will occupy the same space as that occupied by the imprint of any other key. On a typewritten sheet, a line of imprints of the lower-case letter "i" will occupy exactly the same space as a line of the same number of imprints of the upper-case letter "W."

This is not so in printed type. For example, in the 11-point type[1] you are reading right now, the following lines, each of which has 15 letters, show the space occupied by various letters:

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
IIIIIIIIIIIIIII
MMMMMMMMMMMMMM
VVVVVVVVVVVVVV
WWWWWWWWWWWWWW
aaaaaaaaaaaaaa
fffffffffffffff
iiiiiiiiiiiiii
mmmmmmmmmmmmmm
wwwwwwwwwwwwww

1. Remember, nay, tape it on your typewriter or tattoo it inside your left wrist: 72 points=1 inch; 12 points=1 pica; 6 picas=1 inch.

To handle the problem of different widths for different letters and other symbols, copy desks use various unit-count systems for headlines.

Here is a standard system:

Lower-case f, i, j, l, t	½ unit
Lower-case m, w	1½ units
All other lower-case letters	1 unit
Capital I	½ unit
Capitals M, W	2 units
All Other Capital Letters	1½ units
Numeral 1	½ unit
All other numerals	1 unit
Dash	1½ units
Question mark	1 unit
All other punctuation	½ unit
$, %, &	1½ units
Space between words	1 unit

The system is not perfect. No head-count system is perfect, not even the 10-unit system or computer systems. But it works well enough for most combinations of symbols in most families of type.

For a start, count these headlines:

Now Is the Time 15½

★ ★ ★

NOW IS THE TIME 20

★ ★ ★

Budget, Taxes Down 5% 22½

★ ★ ★

PRICES UP; WAGES DOWN 29

Remember the principle mentioned in the section on asymmetry: no line should be less than two counts below the maximum count. Thus, if the maximum count is 15, the minimum is 13; if the maximum count is 20, the minimum is 18. Count these multi-line heads:

18-Year-Olds 11 (max. 11)
Stay Away 10
In Droves 9

★ ★ ★

Students Taunt	**13½ (max. 14)**
Vice-President	**13**
In Mississippi	**12½**

* * *

FCC Seeks $2 Fee	**19 (max. 20)**
For Every TV Set	**18**

Copy desks use various codes to designate headline specifications. Some use a number code, some a letter code, others a combination of numbers and letters.

A common designation is by numbers and type family. Thus 1-24-3 Bod means one column, 24 points, three lines of Bodoni. And 3-36-2 TBCI means three columns, 36 points, two lines of Tempo bold condensed italic.[2]

For typical head-count schedules, see the Appendix.

To get experience, start counting the headlines in the newspapers you read. Count names. Count street signs and advertisements as you walk or drive:

9th Ave. 7½

* * *

Indiana St. 9½

* * *

Meadowbrook 12½

* * *

Never Say Die, Say Tintex 25½

* * *

Beer Builds Bodies One Way 27½

Get into the habit of counting and thinking heads.

2. For extended explanation and illustration of headline designations, see Baskette & Sissors, pp. 137-140.

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APPENDIX

RATING BY 15 COPY EDITORS OF 34 HEADLINE VIOLATIONS ON 0-4 SCALE OF GRAVITY

Violation	Copy Editor 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Total
Ambiguity	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	42
Asymmetry	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	20
Bad Grammar	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	2	2	4	2	51
Doesn't Tell Story	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	4	3	47
Editorialization	4	3	4	4	3	4	3	3	4	4	4	4	2	3	4	53
Faulty Punctuation	4	4	4	3	2	3	2	1	3	1	2	2	2	3	2	38
Goes Beyond Story	4	3	4	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	4	2	44
Headlinese	0	3	1	4	2	2	1	4	2	1	3	0	3	1	1	28
Irrelevant Identification	4	2	4	1	4	2	2	4	2	4	2	4	3	2	1	41
Libel	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	59
Makeshift Gimmick	0	3	4	2	2	2	1	2	3	0	2	1	0	2	2	26
Misspelling	4	4	4	4	4	2	4	4	4	3	2	2	2	4	1	48
Negative Head	3	3	3	2	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	3	0	1	1	20
No Subject	4	4	4	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	2	2	1	2	1	31
No Verb	4	3	1	0	4	3	3	1	3	1	2	2	1	2	0	30
Obscure Abbreviation	2	2	1	3	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	1	2	33
Obscure Name	3	2	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	1	2	30
Overcrowding	3	2	1	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	24
Question Head	3	2	3	2	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	18
Sad Humor	2	1	2	2	3	2	3	4	2	3	3	4	1	3	1	36
Screaming Sensationalism	3	3	4	4	4	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	4	47
Split 1-2 Lines	4	4	2	4	2	2	3	2	3	2	1	0	1	0	2	32
Split 2-3 Lines	4	4	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	26
Tentative Head	0	2	3	2	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	15
Too Much White Space	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	0	2	1	1	0	0	14
Undue Exclamation	4	2	1	1	3	3	2	1	1	3	3	1	3	1	1	30
Undue Familiarity	4	2	1	1	3	2	0	1	1	1	2	1	2	0	3	24
Unnecessary Place	4	2	1	1	0	3	3	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	26
Unnecessary Time	4	2	1	2	0	3	3	1	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	27
Weak Verb	1	2	3	2	1	2	2	3	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	24
Weak Voice	0	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	18
Word Repeated	4	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	1	0	28
Wrong Number	4	2	4	3	4	2	4	3	3	2	2	2	2	4	3	44
Wrong Tense	4	2	4	3	4	2	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	4	3	43
Total	101	90	88	82	80	79	78	76	69	66	66	64	62	61	55	1,117

University Daily Kansan Head Count
Bodoni, 11-Pica Columns

Type Size	1-col.	2-col.	3-col.	4-col.	5-col.	6-col.	7-col.	8-col.
72	---	---	---	16½	20½	24½	29	33½
60	---	---	14	19	24	29	34	39½
48	---	---	17½	23½	29½	36	42	48½
48 ital.	---	---	17½	24	30	36½	43	49½
36	---	14½	23	32				
36 ital.	---	15½	23½	32½				
30	8½	17½	26½					
30 ital.	9	18½	28					
24	11	22						
24 ital.	11½	23						
18	13½	27½						
18 ital.	14	28½						
14	15							
14 ital.	15½							

Bodoni, 15-Pica Columns

Type Size	1-col.	2-col.	3-col.	4-col.	5-col.	6-col.
72	---	---	16½	22	27½	33½
60	---	12½	19	25½	32½	39½
48	---	15	23½	32	40½	48½
48 ital.	---	15½	24	33	41	49½
36	9½	20½	32			
36 ital.	10½	21	32½			
30	11½	23½				
30 ital.	12½	25				
24	14½	30				
24 ital.	15	31				
18	19					
18 ital.	19½					
14	23½					
14 ital.	24					