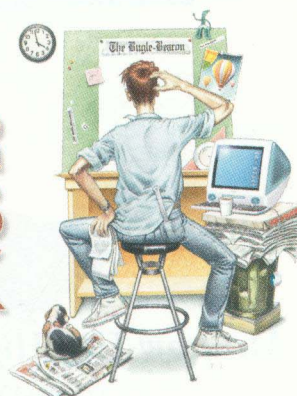




TIM HARROWER

The
**NEWSPAPER
DESIGNER'S
HANDBOOK**

Fifth edition



WRITTEN & DESIGNED BY **TIM HARROWER**



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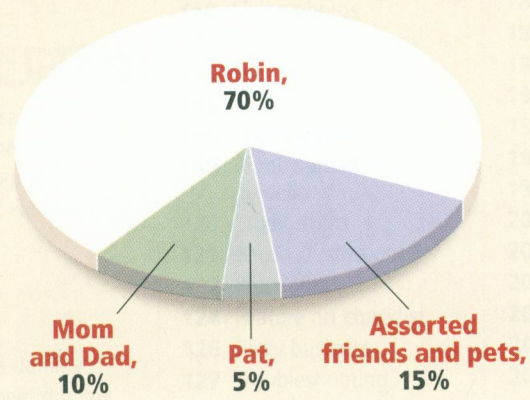
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THIS BOOK IS FONDLY DEDICATED TO:



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

- 2 Preface
- 4 Some quick history
- 6 Current trends
- 12 The newspaper of the future

1 FUNDAMENTALS

- 14 What it's called
- 16 Tools of the trade
- 18 Basic typography
- 22 Four basic elements
- 23 Headlines
- 26 Text
- 28 Photos
- 30 Cutlines
- 32 Drawing a dummy
- 36 A broadsheet dummy
- 37 A tabloid dummy
- 38 Troubleshooting
- 40 Exercises

2 STORY DESIGN

- 44 Stories without art
- 46 Mug shots
- 49 Text shapes
- 50 One horizontal photo
- 53 One vertical photo
- 56 The dominant photo
- 58 Big vertical, small horizontal
- 60 Big horizontal, small vertical
- 62 Two verticals
- 64 Two horizontals
- 66 Adding mug shots
- 67 Troubleshooting
- 69 Exercises

3 PAGE DESIGN

- 72 Grids
- 74 Pages without art
- 80 Pages with art
- 82 Modular page design
- 84 Front page design
- 85 Flow chart: section front design
- 86 Making stories fit
- 88 Inside pages
- 90 Double trucks
- 92 Bad juxtapositions
- 93 Rules of thumb
- 94 Troubleshooting
- 96 Exercises

4 PHOTOS & ART

- 100 Some photo guidelines
- 101 Good photos
- 106 Bad photos
- 108 Cropping photos
- 110 Sizing photos
- 111 Halftones & screens
- 112 Scanning images
- 114 Stand-alone photos
- 115 Photo spreads
- 118 Photo spread guidelines
- 120 Studio shots
- 121 Photo illustrations
- 122 Illustrations
- 124 Feature art checklist
- 126 Risky business
- 127 Troubleshooting
- 129 Exercises

5 NUTS & BOLTS

- 132 The flag
- 133 Logos & sigs
- 136 Liftout quotes
- 138 Decks & summaries
- 140 Bylines
- 141 Credit lines
- 142 Spacing
- 143 Rules & boxes
- 144 Refers, teasers, promos
- 145 Breaking up text
- 146 Jumps
- 147 Troubleshooting

6 GRAPHICS & SIDEBARS

- 150 Writing for non-readers
- 153 Sidebars & infographics
- 154 Fast facts
- 155 Bio boxes
- 156 Lists
- 158 Checklists
- 159 Q&A's
- 160 Quizzes
- 162 Surveys & polls
- 163 Quote collections
- 164 Charts & graphs
- 166 Tables
- 167 Ratings
- 168 Timelines
- 169 Step-by-step guides
- 170 Diagrams
- 172 Maps
- 174 Graphics packages

- 176 Package planning
- 178 Graphics guidelines
- 181 Troubleshooting

7 SPECIAL EFFECTS

- 184 Bending the rules
- 186 The Leno variations
- 190 Wraparounds & skews
- 192 Photo cutouts
- 193 Mortises & insets
- 194 Screens & reverses
- 196 Display headlines
- 200 Color
- 201 Types of color
- 202 Adding color to a page
- 204 Color guidelines
- 206 Printing full color
- 207 Troubleshooting

8 REDESIGNING

- 210 Redesigning your paper
- 212 Evaluating your paper
- 214 Gathering examples
- 215 Compiling a shopping list
- 216 Building prototypes
- 218 Testing & promotion
- 219 Writing a stylebook
- 220 Launching and following up
- 221 Redesign gallery
- 225 Troubleshooting

9 WEB DESIGN

- 228 Transforming news pages into Web pages
- 230 Organizing a Web site
- 232 Setting up your site
- 234 Web design guidelines
- 238 A Web site checklist

APPENDIX

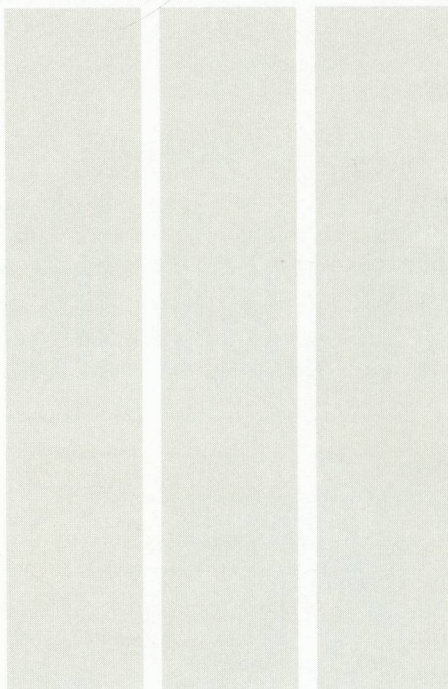
- 240 Exercise answers: fundamentals
- 242 Exercise answers: story design
- 245 Exercise answers: page design
- 248 Exercise answers: photos & art
- 252 The proportion wheel
- 253 Glossary
- 262 Index
- 264 Acknowledgments

PREFACE

A long, long time ago, people actually loved reading newspapers. Imagine. They'd flip a nickel to the newsboy, grab a paper from the stack and gawk at headlines that screamed:

SOLONS MULL LEVY HIKE BID!

They'd gaze lovingly at long, gray columns of type that looked like this —



— and they'd say: "Wow! What a lot of news!"

Today, we're different. We've got color TVs, home computers, portable CD players, glitzy magazines. We collect data in a dizzying array of ways. We don't need long, gray columns of type anymore. We won't *read* long, gray columns of type anymore.

In fact, when we look at newspapers and see those long, gray columns of type, we say: "Yow! What a waste of time!"

Today's readers want something different. Something snappy. Something easy to grasp and instantly informative.

And that's where you come in.

If you can design a newspaper that's inviting, informative and easy to read, you can — for a few minutes each day — successfully compete with all those TVs, CDs, computers and magazines. You can keep a noble old American institution — the newspaper — alive for another day.

Because let's face it: To many people, newspapers are dinosaurs. They're big, clumsy and slow. And though they've endured for eons, it may be only a matter of time before newspapers either:

- ◆ become extinct (this has happened to other famous forms of communication — remember smoke signals? The telegraph?). Or else they'll:

- ◆ evolve into a new species (imagine a portable video newspaper/TV shopping network that lets you surf the sports highlights, scan some comics, then view the hottest fashions on sale at the TechnoMall).

PREFACE

Those days are still a ways off. For now, we just do our best with what we have: Ink. Paper. Lots of images, letters, lines and dots. A good designer can arrange them all quickly and smoothly, so that today's news feels familiar and . . . new.

But where do newspaper designers come from, anyway? Face it: You never hear children saying, "When I grow up, my dream is to *lay out the Opinion page*." You never hear college students saying, "I've got a major in rocket science and a minor in *sports infographics*."

No, most journalists stumble into design by accident. Without warning.

Maybe you're a reporter on a small weekly, and one day your editor says to you, "Congratulations! I'm promoting you to assistant editor. You'll start Monday. Oh, and . . . you know how to lay out pages, don't you?"

Or maybe you've just joined a student newspaper. You want to be a reporter, a movie critic, a sports columnist. So you write your first story. When you finish, the adviser says to you, "Uh, we're a little short-handed in production right now. It'd really help us if you'd design that page your story's on, OK?"

Now, traditional journalism textbooks discuss design in broad terms. They ponder vague concepts like *balance* and *harmony* and *rhythm*. They show award-winning pages from The New York Times or The Wall Street Journal.

"Nice pages," you think. But meanwhile, you're in a hurry. And you're still confused: "How do I connect *this* picture to *this* headline?"

That's where this book comes in.

This book assumes you need to learn the rules of newspaper design as quickly as you can. It assumes you've been reading a newspaper for a while, but you've never really paid attention to things like headline sizes. Or column logos. Or whether pages use five columns of text instead of six.

This book will introduce you to the building blocks of newspaper design: headlines, text, photos, cutlines. We'll show you how to shape them into a story — and how to shape stories into pages.

After that, we'll look at the small stuff (logos, teasers, charts and graphs, type trickery) that makes more complicated pages work. We'll even show you a few reader-grabbing gimmicks, like subheads, to break up gray columns of type:

YO! CHECK OUT THIS ATTENTION-GRABBING SUBHEAD

And bullets, to make short lists "pop" off the page:

- ◆ This is a bullet item.
- ◆ And so is this.
- ◆ Ditto here.

We'll even explore liftout quotes, which let you dress up a quote from somebody famous — say, Mark Twain — to catch your reader's eye.

Yes, some writers will do *anything* to get you to read their prefaces. So if you made it all this way, ask yourself: Did design have anything to do with it?

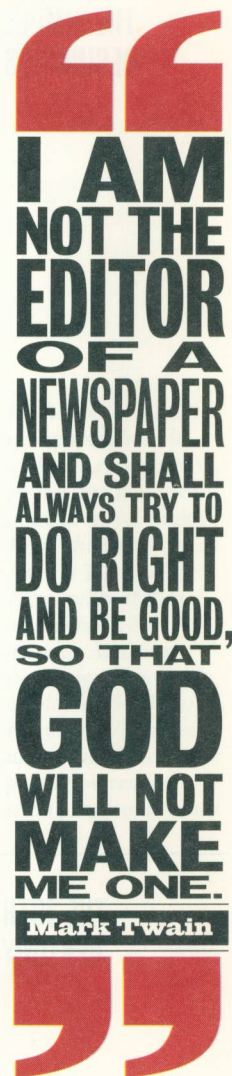
A BRIEF WORD OR TWO ABOUT THIS FIFTH EDITION

For this edition, we've added a chapter on Web design, a CD-ROM of exercises, new "Troubleshooting" Q&A's at the end of each chapter. And we've added color — lots of spiffy new examples of color pages, photos and graphics.

Now, most pages at most newspapers, we realize, are still black and white. And we certainly didn't want a lot of readers *honked off* at us for going overboard with this color thing. So we deliberately held back, keeping a large proportion of black-and-white images throughout the book.

Whether you're a big daily or a tiny weekly, a tab or a broadsheet, color or black and white — you'll find plenty of helpful answers in the pages ahead. Enjoy!

— Tim Harrower



Publick Occurrences, America's first newspaper, made its debut 300 years ago. Like other colonial newspapers that followed, it was printed on paper smaller than the pages in this book, looking more like a pamphlet or newsletter.

Most colonial weeklies ran news items one after another in deep, wide columns of text. There were no headlines and very little art (though it was young Ben Franklin who printed America's first newspaper cartoon in 1754).

After the Revolutionary War, dailies first appeared and began introducing new design elements: thinner columns, primitive headlines (one-line labels such as *PROCLAMATION*) and — this will come as no surprise — an increasing number of ads, many of them parked along the bottom of the front page.

Both *FORREIGN* and *DOMESTICK*.

Boston, Thursday Sept. 25th. 1690.

IT is designed, that the Country shall be surveyed once a month (or if any Glas of Occurrences happen, oftener,) with an Account of such considerable things as have arrived unto our Notice.

In order hereto, the Publisher will take what pains he can to obtain a Faithful Relation of all such things; and will particularly make himself indebted to such Persons in Boston whom he knows to have been for their own use the diligent Observers of such matters.

That which is herein proposed, is, First, That Memorable Occurrences of Divine Providence may not be neglected or forgotten, as they too often are. Secondly, That people every where may better understand the Circumstances of Publick Affairs both abroad and at home; which may more direct their Thoughts at all times, but at some times also assist their Resolutions and Operations.

Thirdly, *That something may be done towards* the Curing, or at least the Charming of that Spirit of Lying, which prevails amongst us, wherefore nothing shall be entered, but what we have reason to believe is true, repairing to the best Informants for our Information. And when there appears any material mistake in any thing that is collected, it shall be corrected in the next.

Moreover, the Publisher of these Occurrences

is willing to engage, that whereas, there are many
false Reports, maliciously made, and spread
among us, if any well-minded person will be the
pains to trace any such false Report, so far as to
find out and Convey the First Raifer of it, he
will in this Paper (unless just Advice be given to
the contrary) expose the Name of such person
as a Malicious Raifer of a false Report. It
is supposed that none will desire this Proposal,
but such as intend to be guilty of so villainous a
Crime.

from them, as what is in the Powers lately gone for Canada, made them think it almost impossible for them to get well through the Affairs of their Husbandry at this time of the year, yet the Season has been so unusually favourable that they scarcely find any want of the many hundreds of hands, that are gone from them; which is looked upon as a Merciful

While the barbarous Indians were lurking about *Cochranford*, there were milling about the beginning of this month a couple of Children belonging to a man of that Town, one of them aged about eleven the other aged about nine years, both of them supposed to be fallen into the hands of the Indians.

[illegible]

Epideimical Fevers and Agues grow very common, in some parts of the Country whereof, tho' many dye hot, yet they are sorely unfitted for their employment; but in some parts a more malignant Fever seems to prevail in such sort that it usually goes thro' a Family where it comes, and proves mortal unto many.

The Small-pox which has been raging in Boston, after a manner very extraordinary, is now very much abated. It is thought that far more have been sick of it than were visited with it, when it raged so much twelve years ago, nevertheless it has not been so mortal. The number of them that have

Colonial printing presses couldn't handle large sheets of paper, so when *Publick Occurrences* was printed in Boston on Sept. 25, 1690, it was only 7 inches wide, with two 3-inch columns of text. The four-page paper had three pages of news (the last page was blank), including mention of a "newly appointed" day of Thanksgiving in Plimouth. (Plimouth? Publick? Where were all the copy editors in those days?)

Throughout the 19th century, all newspapers looked pretty much the same. Text was hung like wallpaper, in long rows, with vertical rules between columns. Maps or engravings were sometimes used as art.

During the Civil War, papers began devoting more space to headline display, stacking vertical layers of *deckers* or *decks* in an endless variety of typefaces. For instance, The Chicago Tribune used 15 decks to trumpet its report on the great fire of 1871: *FIRE! Destruction of Chicago! 2,000 Acres of Buildings Destroyed. . .*

The first newspaper photograph was published in 1880. News photos didn't become common, however, until the early 1900s.

The Philadelphia Inquirer.

PRICE TWO CENTS

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 1902

PRICE TWO CENTS

MURDER

OF

PRESIDENT LINCOLN!

Are Assassinations Law, Right, While at Fair Places, in Washington?

J. WILKINS BOOZER THE STAFFORD MURDERER, THE PUFFED-BALL OFFICER AND BRILLIANT

THE ASSASSIN IN THE PRINCE'S BLOOD

THE BRUNER Leads Them for Slays and Murders

J. BOOZER IN WATSON FOR SLAY

He Utters a Warning at Philadelphia

The Power of His Family

SLAY AND BOLEIN MURDER

ATTEMPT TO KILL SEPT. SEWARD

By Buchanan, August 1, 1902

HE WOULD KILL PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Secretary of the State and Family Relations

THEIR COUNTRY IN REVENGE

OFFICIAL RECORD

THE BRUNER'S RECORD

THE BRUNER'S RECORD

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This 1865 edition of The Philadelphia Inquirer reports the assassination of President Lincoln with 15 headline decks. Like most newspapers of its era, it uses a very vertical text format: When a story hits the bottom of one column, it leaps to the top of the next to continue.

MORE QUICK HISTORY

THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

By about 1900, newspapers began looking more like — well, like *newspapers*. Headlines grew bigger, bolder and wider. Those deep stacks of decks were gradually eliminated to save space. Page designs developed greater variety as news became departmentalized (*Crime, Foreign, Sports* and so on).

The '20s saw the rise of the big-city tabloids — those half-sheet papers packed with photos and sensational sledgehammer headlines.

As the years went by, papers kept increasing the traffic on each page, using ever more photos, stories and ads.



By the 1930s, most newspapers had the ability to run cartoons, photos and wide headlines, as we see in this 1932 edition of the *Los Angeles Times*. Note the number of stories on this page. For decades, American front pages commonly displayed 15-20 story elements. With those all-cap headlines, these pages gave readers a strong sense of urgency.

THE NOT-TOO-DISTANT PAST

By today's standards, even the handsomest papers from 20 years ago look clumsy and old-fashioned. Others, like the page at right, look downright ugly.

Still, most of the current trends in page design were in place by the late '60s:

- ◆ more and bigger photos;
- ◆ more refined headline type (except for special feature stories and loud front-page banners);
- ◆ a move from 8- and 9-column pages to a standardized 6-column page;
- ◆ white gutters between columns instead of rules.

As printing presses continued to improve, full-color photos became common in the early '80s, thus ushering in the modern era of newspaper design.



This 1966 sports page from *The Oregon Journal* is astoundingly bad — but to be fair, it's a typical example of mid-'60s design. The bizarre shapes of its photos and stories collide in a disorganized jumble. After printing pages like these for years, editors finally realized that taking page design seriously might not be such a bad idea.

CURRENT TRENDS

Compared to the newspapers of yesteryear, today's news pages look lively and sophisticated. That's partly due to technological advances. But today's editors also realize that readers are inundated by slickly designed media, from movies to Web sites to TV commercials. Sad to say, most consumers judge a product by the package it comes in. They simply won't respect a product — or a newspaper — that looks old-fashioned.

To look modern, newspapers now use:

◆ **Color.** Full-color photographs have become standard on section fronts across the country. Throughout the paper, color is applied both decoratively (in ads and illustrations) and functionally (in photos, in graphics, and in logos and headers that organize pages to help guide readers).

◆ **Informational graphics.** Papers don't just report the news — they *illustrate* it with charts, maps, diagrams, quotes and fast-fact sidebars that make complex issues easier for readers to grasp.

◆ **Packaging.** Modern readers are busy. Picky. Impatient. So editors try to make every page as user-friendly as they can by designing briefs, roundups, scoreboards and themed packages that are easy to find and quick to read.

◆ **Modular layout.** We'll explore this later. In a nutshell, it simply means all stories are neatly stacked in rectangular shapes.

In the past, newspapers were printed in a variety of sizes. Today, virtually all newspapers are printed either as *broadsheets* (large, full-sized papers like USA Today or The Oregonian, shown above) or *tabloids* (half-sized papers like The National Enquirer — OK, maybe that's a bad example — or, say, The Christian Science Monitor).

In the pages ahead, we'll examine examples of modern American newspaper design. Most of these are broadsheet pages, but remember: Whatever your paper's format, the same basic design principles apply.



On this front page you can see modern packaging at work in those news briefs, in the aggressive promos at the top of the page, and in the packaging of that lead news story.

CURRENT TRENDS

WEEKEND GUIDE: Big movies and lots to do. SECTION 6

GEORGE CLOONEY'S 'STORM'

ON GUARD FOR 100 YEARS

Detroit Free Press

Gas costs slide in time for holiday

Rapper with violent imagery talks fondly of his hometown, despite the mean memories.

EMINEM'S WORLD

THE INTERVIEW: Fame leaves sour aftertaste

THE SHOOTER: Driven on the hard streets

Cities grapple with pre-meeting prayer

INDEX

SEINCE 1934

ASBURY PARK

PRESS

President-elect asks nation to 'rise above a house divided'

Gore's concession ends 36-day fight

Bush

GEORGE W. BUSH TO BECOME 43RD PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

INSIDE

BY AN PRESIDENT: George W. Bush

Bush backers say he's up to the challenge

INDEX

COMPLETE FRIDAY HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL RESULTS IN SPORTS

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

SUNDAY

EARLY EDITION

HORROR STORIES

Good for ghosts

Frightful food

STEELERS EXTRA: MAKE THE NIGHTMARE STOP!

Beastly beatitudes

Male-order shopping

Young and fast

Jumpin' Johnny, jumpin' no more

Heads or tails?

Those were the days

For the people...

This page from the *Detroit Free Press* provides an appealing example of front-page formatting. The centerpiece story, on Detroit rapper Eminem, fills half the page with a dramatic, magazine-style layout. (Note, however, the absence of art in those other news stories.) Promos and indexes run along the top and down the right edge of the page.

For more than a month, Americans waited for the official results of the 2000 election. When Bush finally won, it was a huge story, which is why the *Asbury Park Press* gave it such special play: the big headline, the little Bush cutout, the giant, old-fashioned eagle logo. It's a treatment reserved for breaking news of historic interest.

Many newspapers have considered using Page One as a menu that shows readers what's inside the paper. The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* is one of the few to actually try the idea. There are no stories on this front page — just colorful promos for the day's top stories. (This edition is sold only on the street, not delivered to subscribers.)

PAGE ONE DESIGN

Today's Page One is a blend of traditional reporting and modern marketing that tries to answer the question: What *grabs* readers?

Is it loud headlines? Big photos? Juicy stories? Splashy colors? Or do readers prefer thoughtful, timely analyses of current events?

Hard to say. Though newspaper publishers spend fortunes on reader surveys, they're still unsure what front-page formula is guaranteed to fly off the racks. As a result, most papers follow one of these Page One design philosophies:

◆ **The traditional:** No fancy bells or whistles — just the top news of the day. (For tabloids, that means 2-4 stories; for broadsheets, 4-6.) Editors combine photos, headlines, and text — usually lots of text — in a sober, straightforward style.

◆ **The magazine cover:** These pages use big art and dynamic headlines to highlight a special centerpiece. In tabloids, this package dominates the cover (and may even send you inside for the text); in broadsheets, a front-page package is given lavish play, flanked by a few subordinate stories.

◆ **The information center:** Here, the key words are *volume* and *variety*. By blending graphics, photos, promos and briefs, these fast-paced front pages provide a window to what's inside the paper, a menu serving up short, appetizing tidbits to guide readers through the best of the day's entrees.

But the options don't end there. Some papers run editorials on Page One. Some add cartoons. Some print obituaries, calendars, contests — even ads. Almost anything goes, as long as readers accept it, enjoy it and *buy* it.

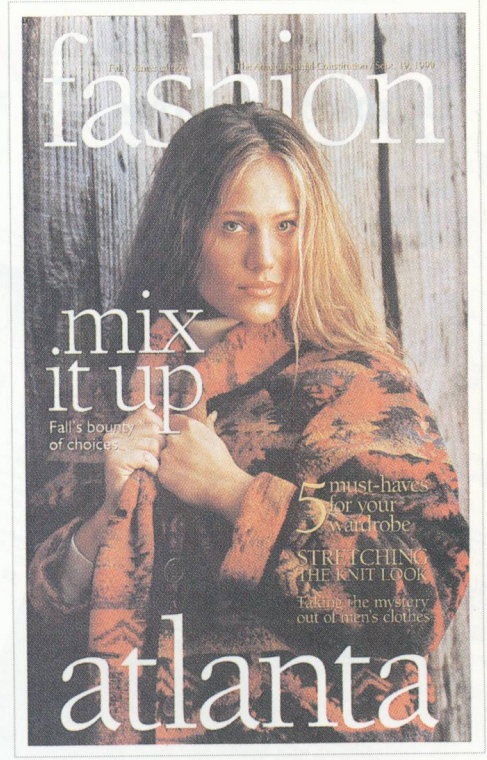
CURRENT TRENDS



Popular feature pages provide lots of variety: lifestyle stories, columns, humor, entertainment. At *The Oregonian*, this *Living* cover tries to avoid predictability. There's a daily columnist, but some days (like this one) he writes only 6-8 inches. There's an offbeat column, *The Edge*, running down the left edge of the page. And a small box (*The Box*) is for quick news notes.



Entertainment coverage is enormously popular with readers — and full-page spreads like this provide terrific opportunities for flash and flair. On this Detroit Free Press section front, a chicken cutout flies right off the page; below it, another movie and a concert are previewed. And down the right side of the page, editors compile a best-bet roundup of videos, films, clubs, etc.



At larger newspapers, feature coverage expands to include food, travel and fashion — topics that lend themselves to big, magazine-style treatments. This is the fall/winter edition of *Fashion Atlanta* in *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, a special supplement with lots of color, lots of photos and lots of ads. It takes a team of editors, designers, writers, photographers and stylists to pull it off.

FEATURE PAGES & SECTIONS

As time goes by, feature sections become more popular — and their range gets more ambitious. Most modern feature sections offer a mix of:

- ◆ **Lifestyle coverage:** Consumer tips, how-to's, trends in health, fitness, fashion — a compendium of personal and social issues affecting readers' lives.
- ◆ **Entertainment news:** Reviews and previews of music, movies, theater, books and art (including comprehensive calendars and TV listings). Juicy celebrity gossip is always popular, too.
- ◆ **Food:** Recipes, nutrition advice, new products for home and kitchen — all surrounded by coupon-laden advertising that shoppers clip and save.
- ◆ **Comics, columnists and crosswords:** From *Dear Abby* to *Dilbert*, from *Hagar* to the horoscope, these local and syndicated features have faithful followings.

Feature sections often boast the most lively, stylish page designs in the paper. It's here that designers haul out the loud type, play with color, experiment with unusual artwork and photo treatments.

Many feature sections dress up their front pages by giving one key story a huge "poster page" display. Other papers prefer more traffic, balancing the page with an assortment of stories, briefs, calendars and lists.

And while most papers devote a few inside pages to features, some bigger publications — those with plenty of writers and designers — produce daily themed magazines: *Money* on Mondays, *Health & Fitness* on Tuesdays, *Food* on Wednesdays and so on.

CURRENT TRENDS

SPORTS **Big Mac hits No. 60** Page 15

Redskins sack Jets for 2nd straight win at the Meadowlands

Justin time!
LEONARD'S PUTT COMPLETES STUNNING U.S. COMEBACK

Death, taxes, and Martin in the fall race at Dover

Surprise: Virginia defense breaks a witching-hour win

SPORTS **THE EPITAPH WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 1991**

JOV VINTAGE

JV wins DAL

Swimming takes first DAL title ever

Monta Vista ends Mustangs' CCS hopes

JV faces difficulties

LEADERS STANDINGS

LAST GAME

IN SPORTS: Drew Henson to start Saturday against Wisconsin. 1H

OLYMPICS

RIGHT ON TRACK

Two down, three to go: Jones wins 200 meters

...AND THE ECSTASY

TODAY ON TV

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

OLYMPIC SPOTLIGHT

For years, the Virginian-Pilot has been recognized for its stylish, aggressive page design — and here, you can see how bold presentation brings a sports page to life. From the Mark McGwire promo at the top of the page to the huge play of the Ryder Cup golf photo, this layout is lively and fun (the way sports should be), yet still disciplined and organized. Note the text inset into that lead photo.

Scholastic newsrooms produce terrific sports packages, too. This tabloid page was produced by The Epitaph in Cupertino, Calif. All the basics — photos, headlines, text — are solidly displayed. But notice the graphic extras: the icons that start each story; the standings; the schedules and scores; the trivia; the way each junior varsity story is boxed alongside the varsity coverage.

Whenever big sporting events roll around — the Super Bowl, the World Series, scholastic state championships, the Olympics — you have a golden opportunity to create special sections, design special logos, run jumbo photos — and empty the page of all competing stories. Note the combination of big story/small roundups on this daily Olympic page from the Detroit Free Press.

SPORTS PAGES & SECTIONS

Television seems to be the perfect medium for sports coverage. It's immediate. Visual. Colorful. Yet in many cities, more readers buy newspapers for sporting news than for any other reason. Why?

A good sports section combines dramatic photos, lively writing, snappy headlines and shrewd analysis into a package with a personality all its own. And while sports coverage centers around meat-and-potatoes reporting on games, matches and meets, a strong sports section includes features that aren't provided by most other media:

◆ **Statistics:** Scores, standings, players' records, team histories — true sports junkies can't get enough of this minutiae. It's often packaged on a special scoreboard page or run in tiny type (called *agate*).

◆ **Calendars and listings:** Whether in small schools or big cities, fans depend on newspapers for the times and locations of sporting events, as well as team schedules, ski reports, TV and radio listings.

◆ **Columnists:** Opinionated writers whom sports fans can love or loathe — the more outspoken, the better.

◆ **Inside poop and gossip:** Scores, injury reports, polls, predictions, profiles and analyses that aren't easily available anywhere else.

Sports pages (like features) offer opportunities for designers to run photos more boldly, to write headlines more aggressively — and to create dynamic graphics packages that capture the thrill of victory in a visual way.

CURRENT TRENDS



This page from the Asbury Park Press is a classic example of a modern editorial page. On it, you'll find the masthead (a who's who of newsroom big shots), an editorial cartoon, a wordy editorial column, some letters from readers, a "Today in History" feature and today's Doonesbury comic strip. Most papers' editorial pages are heavily formatted like this.

OPINION PAGES & EDITORIALS

Juxtaposing news and commentary is a dangerous thing. How are readers to know where cold facts end and heated opinions begin? That's why nearly every newspaper sets aside a special page or two for backbiting, mudslinging, pussyfooting and pontificating: It's called the editorial page, and it's one of America's noblest journalistic traditions.

The basic ingredients for editorial pages are nearly universal, consisting of:

- ◆ **Editorials**, unsigned opinion pieces representing the newspaper's stance on topical issues;
- ◆ **Opinion columns** written by the paper's editors, by local writers or by nationally syndicated columnists;
- ◆ **An editorial cartoon**, a sarcastic illustration that lampoons public figures or political policy;
- ◆ **Letters from readers**, and
- ◆ **The masthead**, which lists the paper's top brass (editors, publishers, etc.) along with the office address and phone number.

In addition — because editorial pages are often rigidly formatted — many papers run a separate opinion page (see example, top center). These pages provide commentary and opinion, too, as they examine current issues in depth. And like sports and feature sections, they set themselves apart from ordinary news pages by using stylized headlines, interpretive illustrations and more elaborate design techniques.



Larger papers, especially dailies, run longer opinion columns on the page opposite the editorial page (the op-ed page). At the biggest papers, the opinion/editorial staff gets a separate section on Sundays, which provides a home for in-depth analyses like this one in The (Raleigh) News & Observer: a look at the history, the controversy and the options for peace with Iraq.



Here's a creative alternative to the traditional editorial page. The Little Hawk, an Iowa City high-school paper, uses a variety of photos and a minimum of text to present its editorial comments. (Note the small boxes accompanying each photo-editorial, where the staff summarizes its position.) Down the right edge of the page, editors give thumbs-up/thumbs-down to a variety of issues.

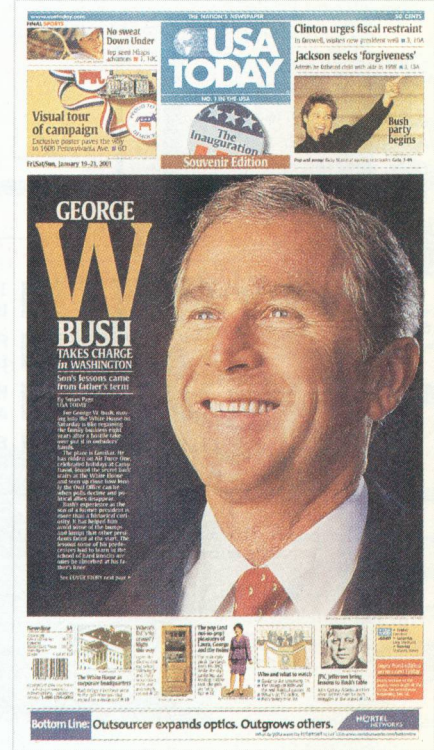
CURRENT TRENDS



Almost any topic, serious or sporting, can inspire a special section. In the Northeast, there's huge reader interest in skiing and snowboarding, so it's a natural for The Hartford Courant to produce a November travel section like this one: 12 pages of photos, profiles, guides to gear — and in the middle, a two-page map that lists the best ski areas throughout New England.



How can you entice kids to read the newspaper? Many papers produce special sections like this one — “X-Press” from The St. Petersburg Times — in hopes of attracting young readers. Along with bright colors, zoomy images and wacky layouts, these pages usually offer cartoons, puzzles, hobby tips, movie reviews and opportunities for children to read their own words in print.



Though USA Today's front page usually follows the same daily format, on special occasions it's able to create a page like this: a “souvenir” edition for Bush's inauguration. Beneath the dramatic centerpiece are promos for inside stories and features on Bush fashions, Bush history, political predictions, inaugural schedules, etc.

SPECIAL PAGES & SECTIONS

Most newspapers settle into predictable routines from issue to issue, repeating the same standard formats — news, opinion, features, sports — day after day. (Fortunately, a little predictability is good: It keeps readers happy and editors sane.)

But opportunities often arise for producing special pages or sections with design formats all their own. These include:

- ◆ **Special enterprise packages** on hot topics or trends (*AIDS*, *The Homeless*, *How You Can Save Our Planet*);
- ◆ **Special reports** on news events, either published in advance (*Baseball 2002* or *Summer Olympics Preview*) or as a wrap-up (*The Tragedy of Flight 1131* or *That Championship Season: The Pittsburgh Penguins*);
- ◆ **Special-interest packages** — often printed regularly — that target a specific audience (pages for kids or teens; sections for women, senior citizens, hunters, farmers).

Editors now realize how specialized readers' tastes have become. Just look at the enormous variety of magazines and cable-TV channels consumers can choose from. That's why newspapers offer an increasingly wide range of pages and sections that cater to readers' diverse interests: Fitness. Computers. Religion. Skiing. After extensive readership surveys, one paper created a sewing page; another launched a weekly page for Civil War buffs.

Every community is unique. What are *your* readers most interested in?

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE FUTURE

The "Digital Daily" doesn't exist yet, but it won't be long before we all carry a similar portable laptop computer that can play music and movies, surf the Web and, yes — download instant news reports.

As you can see, this electronic newspaper is customized: It searches for news topics of interest to the user, then flashes the headlines below.

Simply touch the photo and it plays a video clip, complete with sound. Press the arrow button and the news story fills the screen, complete with text, graphics, videos and library links — true interactive journalism.



This is the 3 p.m. edition of your newspaper. But since the news is constantly revised and updated, you can access the paper anytime you like.

Down the right side of the screen is the index. Press these buttons to read the latest news, watch video clips of sports and movie highlights, enjoy the animated comics, do a little mail-order shopping, answer e-mail. . . . Get the picture? Best of all, anytime you want to explore a subject in greater depth, you can search the database in the newspaper's library.

Since this is your personalized newspaper, it keeps track of your personal life, too. Here's your calendar for the day, programmed to alert you as your next appointment approaches.

And since most of your finances are processed electronically, your newspaper tracks your current bank balances — in addition to monitoring the performance of your stocks.

What's to become of newspapers in 10 years? Will paper be plentiful, or will newspapers go wireless? Will advertising be plentiful, or will papers go bankrupt?

As more and more newspapers bite the dust, publishers ponder their future. Some have begun exploring alternatives for 21st-century journalism:

◆ **Audiotext:** News by telephone, where you can dial up weather, sports scores, horoscopes or restaurant reviews.

◆ **Web sites:** The gateway to journalism of the future, enabling newspapers to post text and graphics on the Internet and experiment with hypertext, sound, video and other emerging technologies.

◆ **Personalized digital newspapers:** You'll someday watch video clips, listen to sound bites and explore animated graphics in your digital newspaper. Touch-sensitive screens will let you enter commands and search databases. But this won't be a mass-market publication; imagine instead that this paper caters to your personal interests. Want the latest news on tennis, tornadoes and Tasmania? Once you program your

paper to prioritize your preferences, it'll edit the news for you.

Yes, newspaper technology is evolving. But questions remain: Who'll produce this new media? Who'll pay for this expensive technology? What sort of device will play these computerized pages? And most importantly:

How will you wrap fish in it?



MORE ON ►

◆ **Online design:** An entire chapter on how to design newspapers for the Web227