COPY EDITING

COPY EDITING CONTEST | 2019
BRADLEY WILSON, PH.D.
CONTEST DIRECTOR

PHOTO BY BRADLEY WILSON

copy editor Seldom a formal title.
Also: copy editing, copy edit.

WHY STUDY COPY EDITING?

Marketable skills

- attention to detail
- teamwork
- ability to meet deadlines
- time management
- problem solving
- cultural awareness

WHAT IT'S NOT

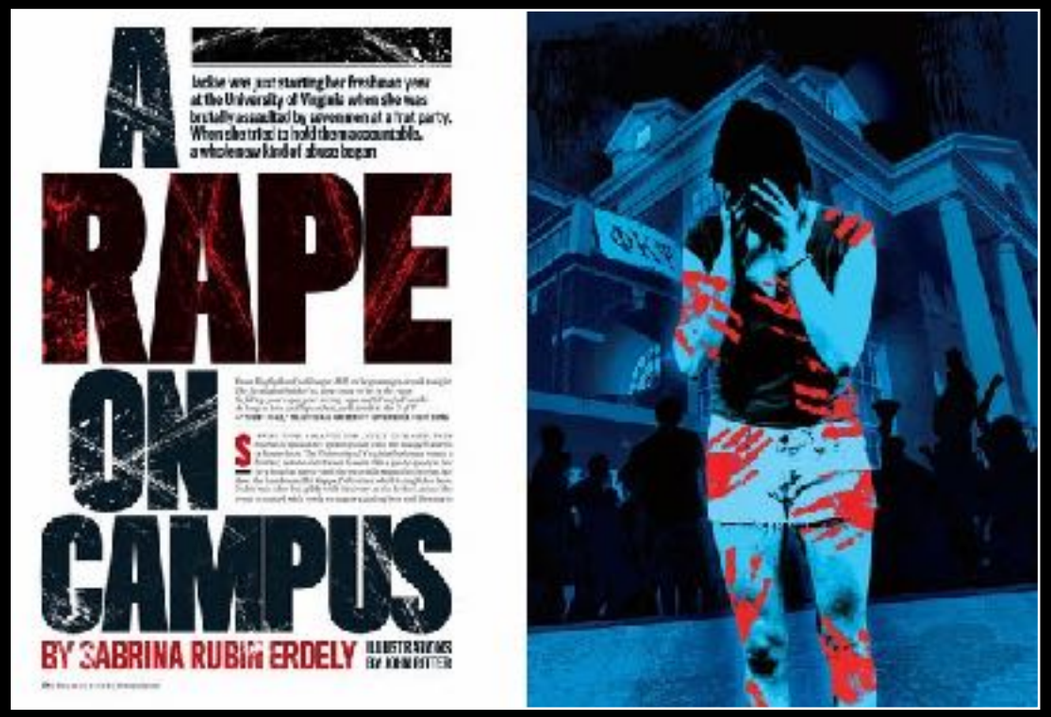
- a headline writing contest
- a current events contest
- a spelling contest

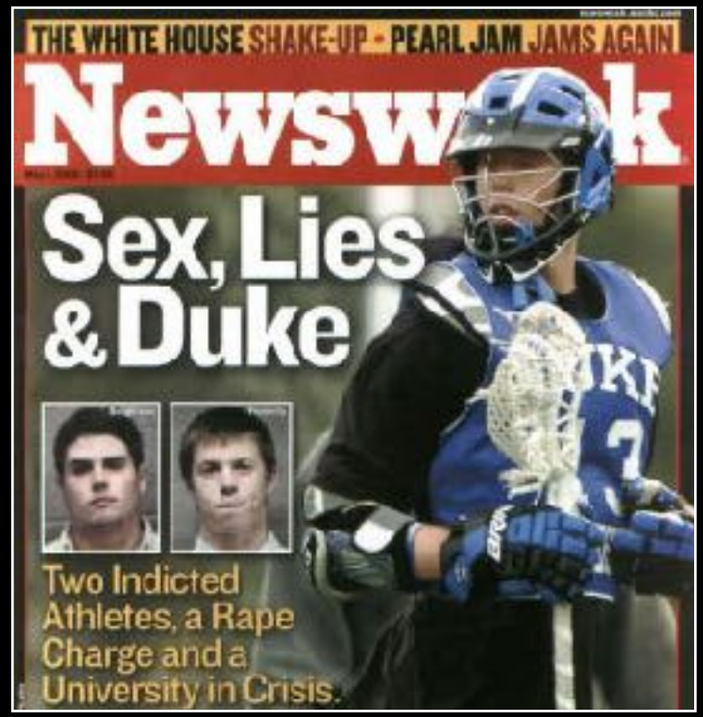
WHAT IT IS

a contest that focuses on editing, including

- knowledge of current events
- grammar, spelling, punctuation, style
- sentence structure, including passive voice and word choice
- media law and ethics

HIGH-LEVEL EDITING





- Are there any legal issues (libel)?
- Did the reporter interview the right people?
- Did the reporter interview enough people?
- Did the reporter ask the right questions?
- Does the story cover all sides?
- Is the story in context?

CULTURAL LITERACY

Expect temperatures to be at coldest on Friday morning, near freezing.

By Patrick Beach
pbeach@statesman.com

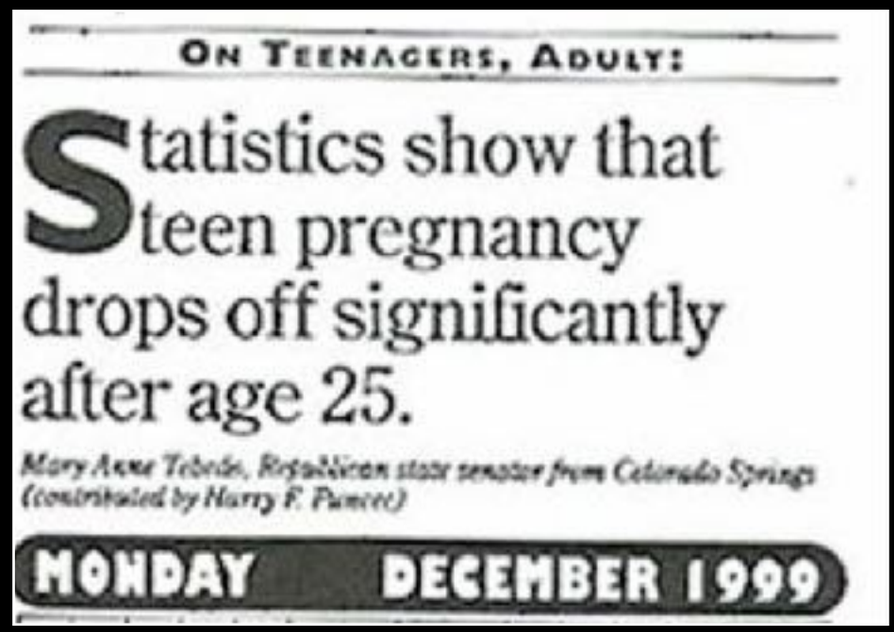
Yes, it'll be at least 20 degrees cooler Tuesday than it was Monday, but it's not slice-open-a-tauntaun-like-Luke-Skywalker-in-"The-Empire-Strikes-Back" cold.

On the other hand, you'll

CORRECTION

■ A story about Austin's cold weather on Tuesday's Page B1 incorrectly identified the character who sliced open a tauntaun to stay warm in "The Empire Strikes Back." It was Han Solo.

MID-LEVEL EDITING


ON TEENAGERS, ADULT:

Statistics show that teen pregnancy drops off significantly after age 25.

Mary Anne Tebrin, Republican state senator from Colorado Springs (contributed by Harry F. Pancer)

MONDAY DECEMBER 1999

- Does the story flow well? Has the reporter made good use of transitions?
- Are sentences structured correctly?
- Has writer made appropriate use of passive voice?
- Is vocabulary appropriate for the audience?
- Is math correct?
- Is geography correct?

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Officials at Mesquite High School in Mesquite, Texas, have recalled their recently distributed school yearbooks after it was discovered the books described some students with special needs as "mentally retarded," KDFW-TV reports.

"Some of the disabilities the students in the Special Education Program have are being blind, deaf or non-verbal," school spokeswoman Laura Jobe told the ion, describing the offending language.

ording to KDFW, school officials confiscated the yearbooks after parents and lents objected to the language and called it "appalling and disgraceful."

ere was an oversight in the editing approval process," Jobe told the *Dallas rning News*. "Those who work inside the special education department know se requirements."

- Avoiding sexist writing
- Being insensitive
- Cultural awareness

mentally disabled, intellectually disabled, developmentally disabled The preferred terms, not mentally retarded.

disabled, handicapped In general, do not describe an individual as disabled or handicapped unless it is clearly pertinent to a story. If a description must be used, try to be specific.

firefighter, fireman The preferred term to describe a person who fights fire is firefighter.

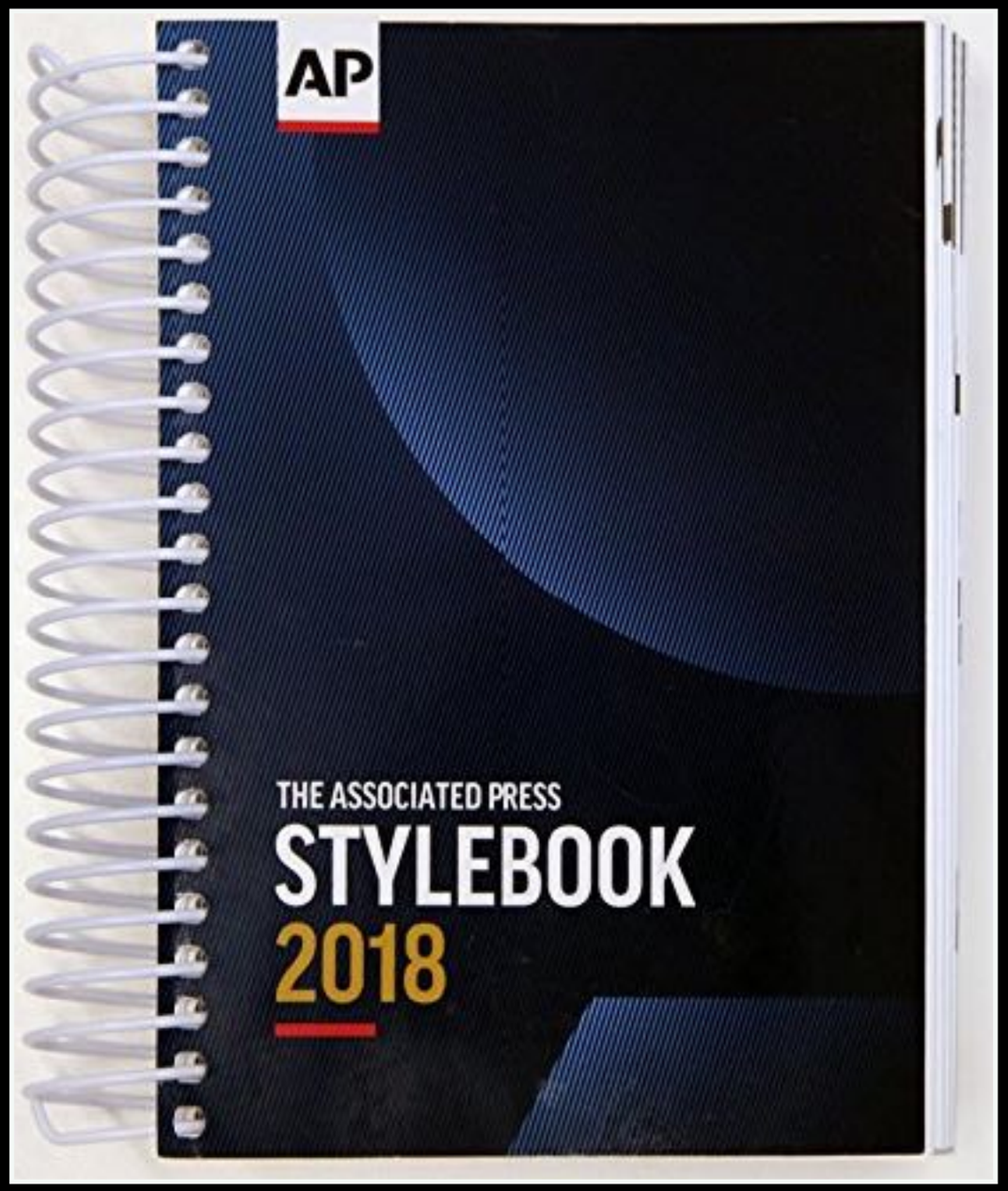
mailman Mail or letter carrier is preferable.

transsexual Use transgender to describe individuals who have acquired the physical characteristics of the opposite sex or present themselves in a way that does not correspond with their sex at birth.

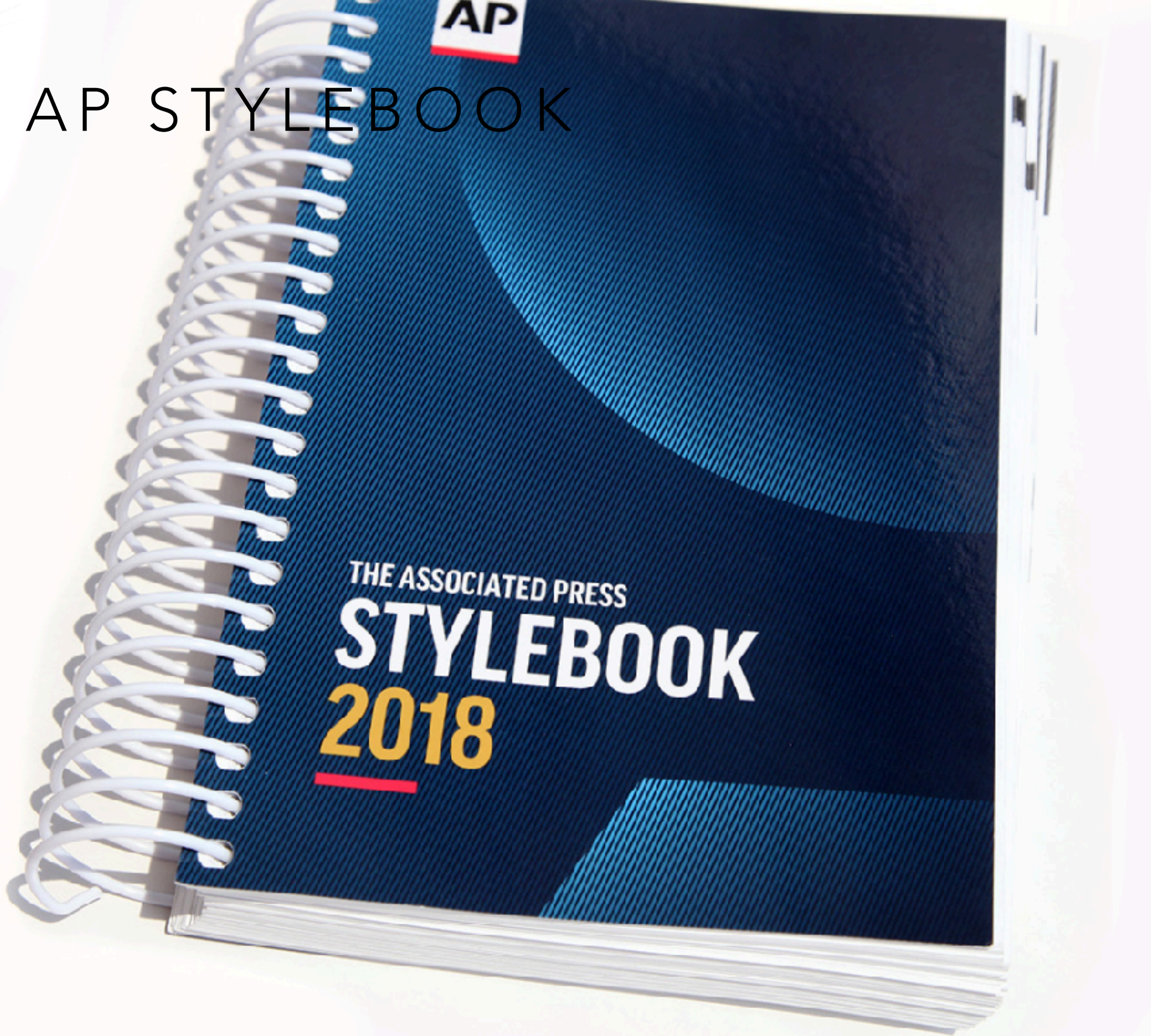
LOW-LEVEL EDITING

- Grammar
- Spelling
- Punctuation
- Style

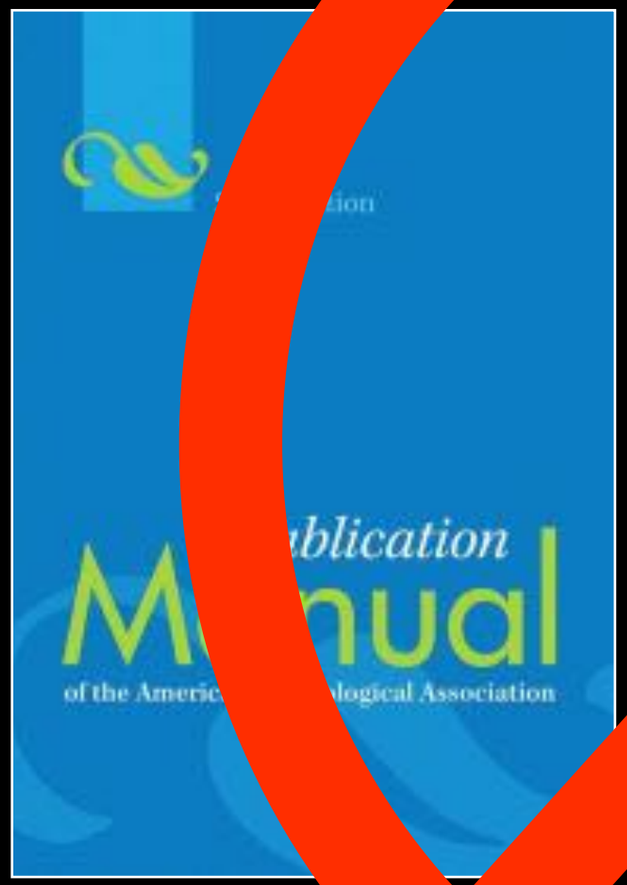
THE AP STYLEBOOK

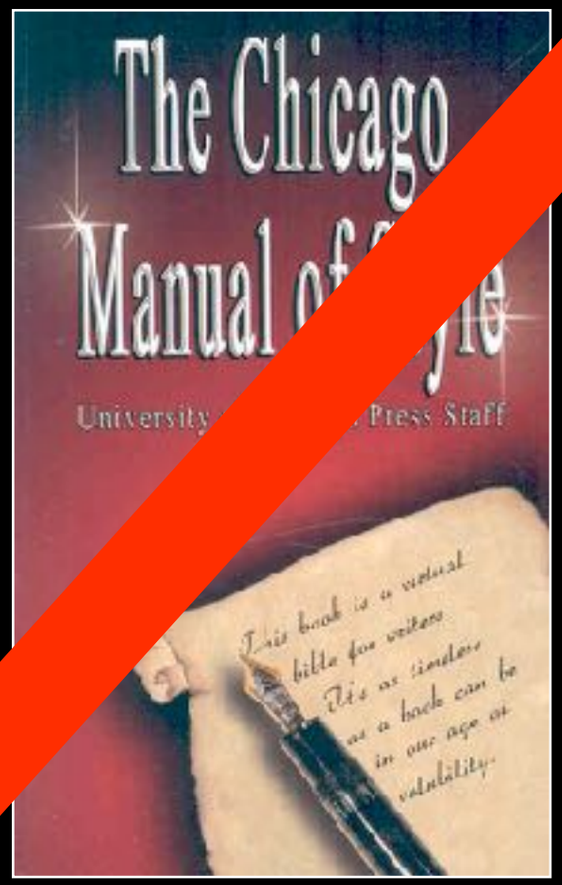


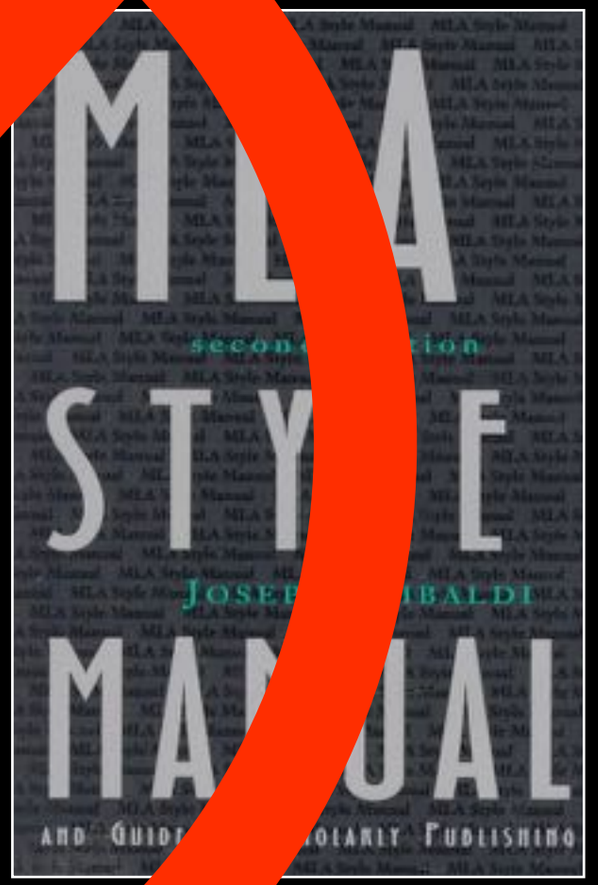
THE AP STYLEBOOK

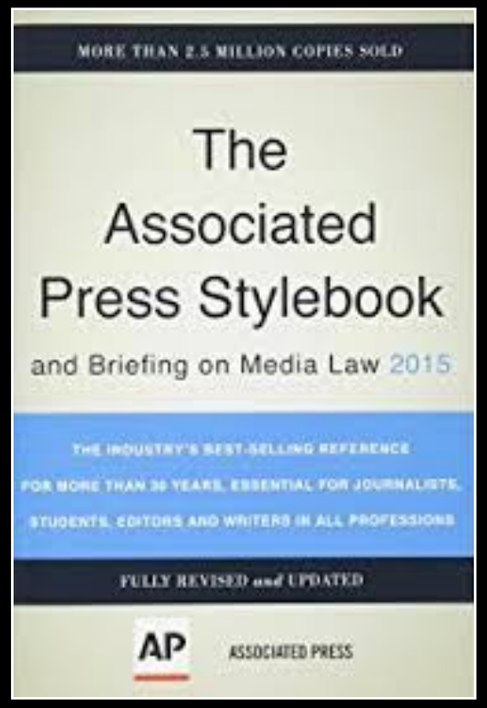


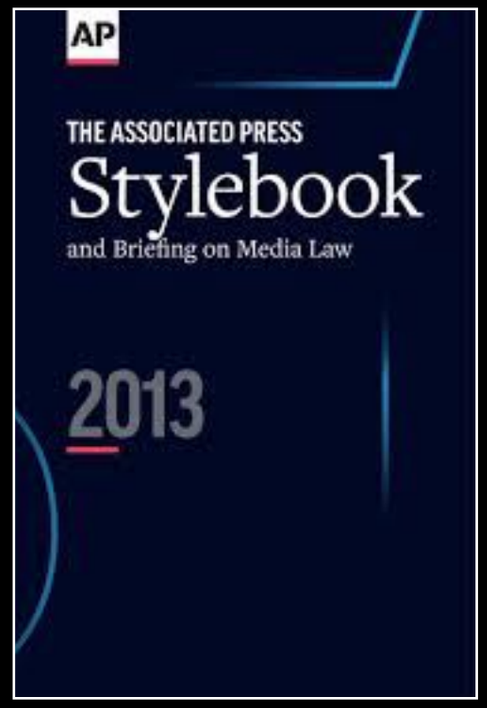
STYLE

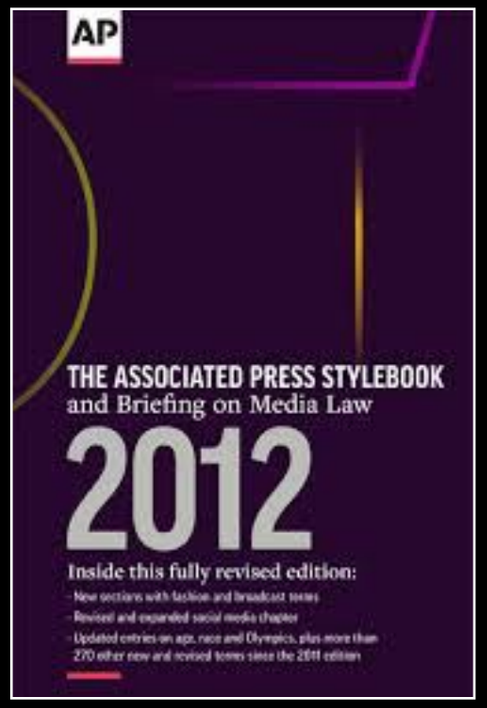

ublication
Manual
of the Americ ological Association

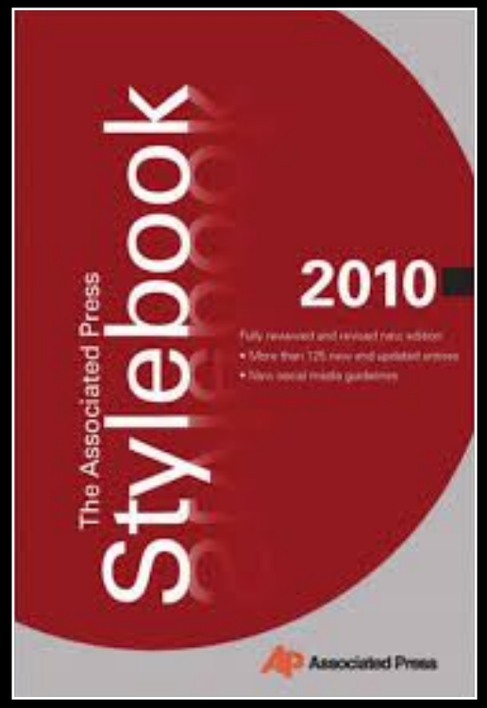

The Chicago
Manual of
University Press Staff
This book is a virtual
bible for writers.
It is timeless
as a book can be
in our age of
volatility.

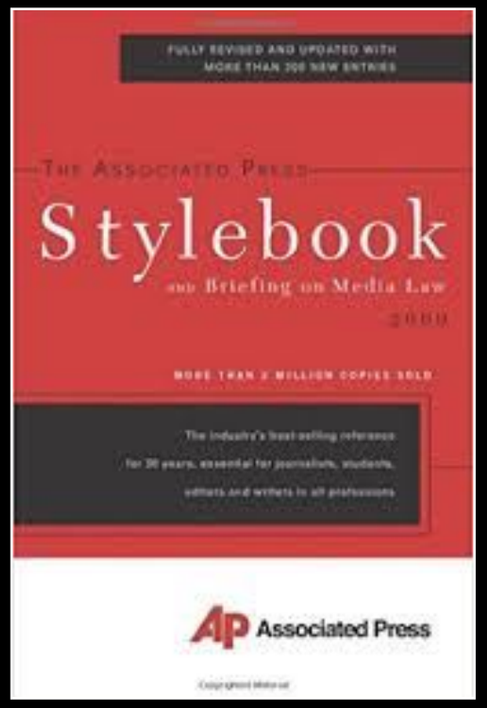

MLA
STYLE
MANUAL









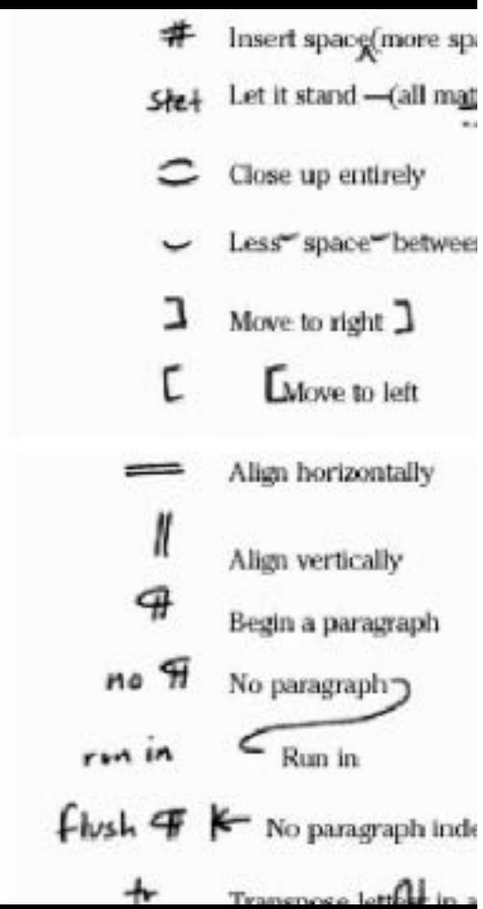


THE 2018 EDITION OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS STYLEBOOK AND BRIEFING ON MEDIA LAW INCLUDES ABOUT 200 NEW OR REVISED ENTRIES, WITH CHAPTERS COVERING DATA JOURNALISM, BUSINESS, FASHION, FOOD, RELIGION AND SPORTS TERMS, AS WELL AS MEDIA LAW, NEWS VALUES, PUNCTUATION, SOCIAL MEDIA AND A NEW CHAPTER ON POLLS AND SURVEYS.

THE AP STYLEBOOK

THE AP STYLEBOOK

SYMBOLS



Proofreader's Marks

PROOFREADERS' MARK	DRAFT	PROOFREADERS' MARK	DRAFT
Delete space	art work	( ) Insert parentheses	arrives May 6 tomorrow

IN MARGIN	IN TEXT	IN MARGIN	IN TEXT
a	Insert word or letter	sc	set in small capital letters (SMALL CAPITAL LETTERS)
e			change from lowercase to capital (Capital)
#			set in italic or slanted type (*italic*)
eq #			set in *Roman* type (Roman)
no #			set in boldface type (**boldface**)
# #			wrong font or type style or size; set in correct type (correct type)
] [ ]			insert comma
fl			insert period or colon
fr			insert double quotation marks ("The Catbird Seat")
tr			insert single quotation mark or apostrophe (today's newspaper)
			insert hyphen (first-class)
			insert en dash (3–4 credits)
			insert em dash (required courses—stand-alones or clusters)
	superscript or subscript (πr² or H_2O)	set ?	insert question mark (Who's on first)
sp	spell out (set n hr. as one hour)		

Lesser-Known Editing and Proofreading Marks

- z-z-z-z delete—no one cares
- mixed metaphor, eh?
- ★@! insert 4-letter word for emphasis
- remove permanently from your lexicon
- too long
- too silly
- you wish
- pls revisit your politics
- pls cut the crap
- pls paraphrase—obviously stolen from Web
- pls don't eat Pringles while you work

LET’S LOOK AT A TEST

PART 1

CONTESTANT NUMBER _____

COPY EDITING CONTEST
DISTRICT 2017

DIRECTIONS: This test is divided into three sections. Write all your responses as indicated. You have 15 minutes.

PART 1: Circle the correct response. (1 pt. each)

1. The editor said she would go interview the **principle / principal** about the policy.
2. Reporters often **elude / allude** to academic studies the public can't comprehend.
3. We had **less / fewer** than $1,000 in the student travel account.
4. SpaceX will build a spaceship that can fly faster **then / than** the speed of light.
5. Before the movie, they played a sneak **peek / peak** of the next Star Wars film.
6. The 8 **am / a.m.** band practice is mandatory.
7. The girl was only **16 / sixteen** years old when she got admitted to college.
8. The meteorologist said **its / it's** going to rain today — with 50 percent certainty.
9. Queen Elizabeth began her **reign / rein / rain** in 1953.
10. *The Great Gatsby* was set in the **1920s / 1920's**.
11. The actor and his director seldom agree with **one another / each other**.
12. Neither the choir members nor the director **is / are** going.
13. First place went to **whoever / whomever** got the highest score objectively.
14. "Thank you," the old man said. "**You're / Your** welcome," the Scout responded.
15. The Brazos and Colorado **Rivers / rivers** never intersect in Texas

PART 1
GRADING

There is some subjectivity involved in all editing. If you find an error in the answer key, report it to the UIL office

CONTESTANT NUMBER Answer Key

UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE

COPY EDITING CONTEST

UIL COPY EDITING DISTRICT 2017

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Tips for judges

Part 1
There is some subjectivity involved in all editing. If you find an error in the answer key, report it to the UIL office

PART 2

CONTESTANT NUMBER _____

UIL COPY EDITING DISTRICT 2017

Part 2: Edit the following sentences to eliminate FOUR errors in wordiness as well as any errors in AP style, grammar, spelling or punctuation in each of the five items. Use clearly understood editing symbols. (2 pts. each)

1. Having won a combined total of nineteen Olympic and World Championship metals, Simone Biles is the most decorated American gymnist.

2. The 3rd in line to the British throne, Prince George of Cambridge, now three years old, was born to Kate Middleton and Prince Harry in 2003.

3. The reporter asked "Where is Aleppo." But libertarian presidential candidate Gary Johnson had some trouble recognizing the name of a major syrian city.

4. Due to the fact that the 2 parties differed so greatly, they met on the island of Hawaii to develop a mutual agreement.

5. Caleb Martin, a sophmore, said "every kid's dream was to catch Pokemon".

PART 2
GRADING

There is some subjectivity in all editing. If a student finds another "error" or rewrites a sentence, the judges will have to consider how to award points.

CONTESTANT NUMBER Answer Key

UIL COPY EDITING DISTRICT 2017

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3. The reporter asked, "Where is Aleppo?" But Libertarian presidential candidate Gary Johnson had some trouble recognizing the name of a major Syrian city.

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5. Caleb Martin, a sophmore, said "Every kid's dream was to catch Pokemon".

Tips for judges

Part 2

There are four errors per item.

If fixing one error creates another, it counts as one. For example, in the fourth sentence, removing "mutual" requires the editor to change "a" to "an." That is all one error.

There is some subjectivity in all editing. If a student finds another "error" or rewrites a sentence, the judges will have to consider how to award points.

This section is worth a maximum of 10 points.

To facilitate grading, put an X over the number of a question that is completely wrong. Write the point value assigned to each question out to the side. Award questions with either a 0, a 0.5, a 1, a 1.5 or 2.

PART 2

CONTESTANT NUMBER _____

UIL COPY EDITING DISTRICT 2017

Part 3: In the space provided, edit the following news brief to make the wording clear, to eliminate wordiness as well as any errors in AP style, grammar, spelling or punctuation. You do NOT have to rewrite the news brief. Make notes of anything you believe needs clarification, additional research or additional reporting. PART 3 WILL BE GRADED TO BREAK TIES.

You are editing the article to be published the same day the statement mentioned in the article was released.

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Dak Prescott smiled widely and playfully shoved Tony Romo after the ten year starter the Dallas rookie replaced finished his only drove of the regular season with a touchdown pass.

The Cowboys (13-3) don't anticipate using Romo in the play-offs. Prescott and fellow 1st-year sensation Ezekiel Elliott will be the focal point regardless of the opponent in the 1st divisional game at AT&T Stadium, which opened in 2009. The Dallas Cowboys last one their NFL championship in 1996.

Cowboys Owner Tom Landry has been bragging all season about the chemistry in a delicate situation between their quarterbacks - along with the closness of the rest of the locker room - and is counting on those bonds when Dallas opens their play-offs series at home January 15.

"Eyes are all one the play-off game" Prescott said, "we will wait to see who our opponent is. But in the mean time, we will get better this week, makes ourselves better in every way that we can. Then when we figure out who it is, continue to get better and ready for that opponent"

"Its not really a time for reflection," Garrett said. "This is a time to get are eyes forward and get back to work."

PART 3
GRADING

Judges should compare the papers of students who tied, ranking them accordingly.

CONTESTANT NUMBER Answer Key

UIL COPY EDITING DISTRICT 2017

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"Its not really a time for reflection," Garrett said. "This is a time to get are eyes forward and get back to work."

Modified from an Associated Press article distributed in January of 2017.

The Dallas Cowboys is a team name. "Team names and musical group names that are plural take plural verbs. The Yankees are in first place. The Jonas Brothers are popular."

Tom Landry is not the owner of the Dallas Cowboys. And owner isn't capitalized. "Owner. Not a formal title. Always lowercase: Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones."

Editing a direct quote requires discussion with the reporter. It's better to change direct quotes with errors into indirect quotations. Always make it clear who is speaking.

Tips for judges

Part 3

This section is ONLY ranked to break a tie in the combined scores of parts 1 and 2. Assign no points.

Judges should compare the papers of students who tied, ranking them accordingly.

When grading part 3, holistically read the changes the student indicated starting with the highest level of editing. Remember, there are multiple levels of copy editing. The notes off to the side on the answer key indicate higher levels of editing errors. Those should be awarded more value if the student fixes the problem or indicates it should be fixed.

- Highest level: Are there any legal or ethical issues with the story?
- Middle level: Does the story uses the right sources? Does it flow?
- Lowest level: Grammar, spelling, punctuation, style

PROBLEMS

Their homes are in the northern port city of Haifa, one of the areas that was / were hit hardest.

PROBLEMS

Their homes are in the northern port city of Haifa, one of the areas that were hit hardest.

The relative clause beginning with “that” describes the plural noun “areas,” so the relative pronoun “that” — the subject of the clause — is plural and needs a plural verb. To test the grammar, turn the syntax around: “Of the areas that were hardest hit, Haifa was one.”

CONTEST DATES 2018-2019

- Invitational A — Jan. 11 - Feb. 9
- Invitational B — Feb. 15 - March 16
- District — March 25 - 30
- Region — April 12 - 13
- State — May 2 - 4

CONTACT ME

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@bradleywilson09