

## FOREWORD

ANYONE WHO has studied or practiced American journalism recognizes the key role of the copy editor. It is these often unsung heroes (and, increasingly, heroines) who largely set the standards of lucid and readable prose in American newspapers, broadcasting and wire-service output. Most of us know of winners of Pulitzer Prizes, great reporters but not great writers, who would be also-rans if their prose had never been touched by a sympathetic, understanding and skilled copy editor.

As implied in “Electronic Editing,” the wholly new chapter that the authors added to this edition, the impact of the able copy editor is increasing. This results from the simple mechanical fact that computerized equipment greatly facilitates the transposition of sentences and paragraphs, the inserting of clarifying words or clauses, and the general polishing of prose.

If copy editors are often heroes, Bob Garst and Ted Bernstein were the heroes’ heroes. Probably no two persons played more of a role in raising the level of journalistic prose in this century. As teachers at the Graduate School of Journalism of Columbia University, the team affectionately known as “Garstein” had marked influence on more than a generation of rising young journalists. As authors, they have influenced many more. And, as key staff editors on *The New York Times*,

both played significant roles in helping set the patterns that many other news organizations have followed. Garst, as the student of journalistic organization and practices, and Bernstein, as the urbane arbiter of effective English, made an ideal team.

It is a cause for rejoicing that these two gifted men completed their revisions for the fourth edition of *Headlines and Deadlines* before their recent deaths. The book embodies basic principles and practices that will have validity as long as journalism seeks to be honest, clear and reliable. In such matters as language and deft wordmanship, it is as up-to-date as these two masters, assisted by sophisticated young professionals, could make it.

As Dean of Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism for twelve years and as publisher of the *Columbia Journalism Review*, I considered this book a bible for the young editor. This latest updated edition should continue to play that role as a valued handbook both for copy editors and for journalists generally.

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