



EDITORIAL

Typography & Graphic Design

The graphic design of a journal (font, line spacing, columns, headers, placement of figures, etc.) creates a visual identity for the journal, and also affects its readability. If one were to thumb through magazines such as *Nature*, *Science*, or *The Economist*, each one has a different font and a distinctive visual identity. The graphic design of each was done with a purpose, and *The Economist* went so far as to hire a type designer (Erik Speakerman) to design a font, which they named 'Eco', specifically to create the look and feel that they wanted.

Most scientific journals ignore the potential advantages that graphic and typographic design can provide. Since I accepted the position of Co-Editor of the *Quarterly Journal*, I have wanted to implement some subtle changes to the typography and graphic design. The *Quarterly Journal* publishers, Wiley-Blackwell, have been wonderfully supportive as we worked through these changes. I generally followed the principles laid out in Robert Bringhurst's *The Elements of Typographic Style*, which is widely respected as the current authority on typographic style for Latin-based typography. This is the first issue of the *Quarterly Journal* with those changes, and I want to discuss briefly a few of the details.

Good typography comes from paying attention to the details. One of the most important details is the choice of font. Times Roman font is ubiquitous in journals, but is it the best choice for the *Quarterly Journal*? There are many modern fonts (called 'expert sets') that go beyond a basic font like Times Roman, and contain many of the less frequently used characters and other features that add a professional look to the page. I chose Adobe Minion Pro as the main body font, which happens to be the font used in *The Elements of Typographic Style*. Minion features additional 'weights,' such as Semi-Bold, as well as ligatures, which combine two or three letters into a single glyph. Ligatures are used in cases when letters would collide or produce an unattractive look. Here is a comparison of Times Roman and Minion fonts, illustrating how awkward letter combinations can be replaced by more elegant ligatures.

ff fi fb fj fl ffi Times Roman

ff fi fb fj fl ffi Minion

You will see that the basic layout of the *Quarterly Journal* (column widths, line spacing) remains unchanged, as does the typesetting of equations. However, there are several changes that are designed to improve readability, as well as to collect all the key information prominently the first page of each paper. You may notice that the Abstracts of papers are now more prominent, set in Semi-Bold font (which is not available in Times Roman), in a narrower column and a larger type size. The authors' contact information, as well as the full citation, are also more prominent near the top of the page, and the 'dates' line now includes the final publication date. The headers and footers have been adjusted to retain the essential information, while providing a bit more vertical space for text.

I would welcome any comments or suggestions; please contact me directly.

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For further reading:

General typography:

http://www.adobe.com/education/pdf/type_primer.pdf

References

- Bringhurst, Robert 2005. *The Elements of Typographic Style*. Hartley & Marks. ISBN 0-88 179-206-3.
 Tufte, Edward R. 2001. "The Visual Display of Quantitative Information," 2nd Edition, Graphics Press, Cheshire, CT. ISBN 0-96 139-214-2.
 Wheildon, Colin, and Geoffrey Heard 2005. *Type & Layout: Are you communicating or just making pretty shapes?* ISBN 1-875 750-22-3.