

# What's the story? Brushing up your writing and editing skills

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# the Pareto Principle



# Journalism and Academia are different...

- Different audiences
- Different objectives
- Different conventions

# ...so different that the result can be ANGRY CONFRONTATION

- Confusion over audience
- Confusion over media
- Confusion over objective

# We are held to a very high standard. That is to be expected...

- Vollrath's team has discussed
- Vollrath's team...explore
- = "...a failure to grasp the fundamental distinction between the 'one' and the 'many.'"
- J.W. BABB (BNC, 1948)

# ...but we're not always wrong

- “But now, what’s this? – book review, page 53 of the current issue, re Rowan Williams:

‘...to appear to cave in to the anti-gay mob early on...’

If this tabloid-speak truly represents the boundaries of your grasp of the issues, events and personalities of this period, might it not be better to ask someone else to write reviews of books dealing with such matters?

Or is it that your tutor was more lenient with student prose and perceptiveness than mine was?”

- C. Idle (St Peter’s, 1959)

# Journalism and academia can meet halfway. But typically in long-form prose.

- The intelligent reading public
- Good writing is good writing (concision, elegance, accuracy!)
- High Table and the Daily Mail

# Other considerations

- Generation
- Clarity about suitability of medium, intended communication
- A steady hand at the tiller
- Accuracy is the bottom line
- Don't be overly consumed by the hair-splitters
- ~~Quality control results from the Style Guide....umm~~
- NO: Quality control results from *knowing* and *applying* the style guide
- AND: from recruiting spare pairs of eyes

# Resources

- The Oxford Dictionary for Writers and Editors (2014 edition)
- (also online: [www.oxforddictionaries.com](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com))
- *It's Been Said Before*, by Orin Hargraves (OUP, 2014)
- [www.journalism.co.uk](http://www.journalism.co.uk)
- [www.lcmj.co.uk](http://www.lcmj.co.uk) (London School of Media and Journalism)

# DISCUSSION