*Editorials vs. Opinion Columns*

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| **Characteristics** | **Editorial** | **Opinion Column** |
| **Definition** | * **An expression of the (impersonal) opinion of the editor or editorial team of a newspaper or magazine about a recent event or current issue** | * **The part of the newspaper or magazine devoted to the expression of journalists’ and readers’ opinions** |
| **Purpose** | * **To express the general opinion of the entire newspaper or magazine** | * **To express the opinion belonging solely to the column’s author, not to the newspaper/ magazine or to the editorial board** * **Common for opinion column to argue against an opinion in the editorial of the same newspaper/ magazine** |
| **Author** | * **Two types:** * **Consensus-** Author is unknown; emphasizes the collective argument made on behalf of the organization; 4-5 senior editors meet to discuss topic, then one will write the editorial * **Signed-** Author is clearly identified with a byline/picture; usually written by senior members of editorial staff; carry the weight of the organization, while expressing the opinion of the author | * **May be written by columnists employed by the newspaper or magazine** * **May be a guest writer who has some expertise to share or a specific argument to make** * **Politicians and others in the public eye will also write columns (**to refute accusations, test ideas, and express themselves to potential voters**)** |
| **Subject** | * **Typically deals with a current, news-worthy issue affecting many readers** | * **Gives the reader timely, helpful information** |
| **Language and Style** | * **It is free from emotive terms** * **Good editorial engages issue, not personalities and refrains from name-calling or other petty tactics of persuasion, never use 1st person** * **It is a balanced argument** * **Is persuasive, but objective, by giving readers all the facts and concerns** | * **Language is simple, no complex or technical terms** * **Written in 1st person, giving the express opinion of the columnist** * **Support given for one side of an argument** * **Persuasive, but subjective, with the writer attempting to convince the readers that his/her position is true** |

**Editorials**

**Five types of editorials:**

1. ***Editorials of argument and persuasion*** take a firm stand on a problem or condition. They attempt to persuade the reader to think the same way. This editorial often proposes a solution or advises taking some definite action.
2. ***Editorials of information and interpretation*** attempt to explain the meaning or significance of a situation or news event. There are a wide variety of editorials in this category, ranging from those which provide background information to those which identify issues.
3. ***Editorials of criticism*** constructively criticize actions, decisions, or situations while providing solutions to the problem identified.
4. ***Editorials of tribute, appreciation, or commendation*** praise a person, organization, or activity for something done well.
5. ***Editorials of entertainment*** are either short humorous treatments of a light subject or slightly satirical treatments of a serious subject.

**Structure:**

1. **Introduction**
   * **states the problem objectively**
   * **uses the 5W’s and the H**
2. **Body**

* **expresses an opinion**
* **opposing viewpoint given first (with facts and quotes)**
* **directly refute opposition’s belief (with support of other facts and quotes)**
* **appeal to the logic and emotions of the reader using rhetorical devices (ethos, pathos, logos) and loaded words/phrases**

1. **Solution**

* **ways to solve the problem given**
* **realistic solutions**
* **solutions go beyond common knowledge**

1. **Conclusion**

* **emphasizes the main point**
* **summarizes the writer’s opinion**
* **uses a solid quote or a rhetorical question**

**Opinion Columns**

**Structure:**

1. **Introduction**
   1. **states the problem objectively**
   2. **uses the 5W’s and the H**
2. **Body**

* **expresses an opinion**
* **explain position on a topic**
* **demonstrate how widely held the position is**
* **explain why author and others hold this opinion**
* **uses opinions of experts to support opinion**
* **opinion relates to experiences of other people**
* **appeal to the logic and emotions of the reader using rhetorical devices (ethos, pathos, logos) and loaded words/phrases**

1. **Solution (Not always included)**

* **ways to solve the problem given**
* **realistic solutions**
* **solutions go beyond common knowledge**

1. **Conclusion**

* **emphasizes the main point**
* **summarizes the writer’s opinion**
* **uses a forward-looking prediction or a rhetorical question**

**Information from:**

**1.** <http://pulse.pharmacy.arizona.edu/11th_grade/industrialization/language_arts/print/The_Parts_of_an_Editorial.doc>

**2.** <http://www.geneseo.edu/~bennett/EdWrite.htm>

**3.**  <http://www.asbpe.org/archives/1999/03wined.htm>

4. <http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/275216/how_to_write_opinion_columns_that_keep.html?cat=7>

**5.** <http://www.ehow.com/PrintArticle.html?id=2116995>

**6.** <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/education/008-3090-e.html>

**7.** <http://coffin.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/editorial1.pdf>