

The Bleedin' Obvious

The Craft of Writing · By Simon Townsend · 1 min read

You've stumbled into the bleedin' obvious. Have you heard of John Cleese of Monty Python and Fawlty Towers? He had a saying: "That's a statement of the bleedin' obvious." Be careful of stating the obvious, a truism that everyone knows and no one wants to read. In even professionally written publications you still see journalists writing statements of the bleedin' obvious:

- None of us is getting any younger.
- We all have to die sometime.
- There was no television at the dawn of time.
- A thousand years ago people lived in the olden days.
- Today we live in modern times.
- What does or doesn't happen in the future remains to be seen.

Yawn, y-a - - w---n . . . In an opening sentence and at most other times, you must let the reader know something she/he probably doesn't know. You might like to go through your material and be confident that you haven't made further statements of the bleedin' obvious.

Reprinted from The Wonderful World of Journalism. Written in the spirit of Simon Townsend's journalism craft advice. Visit simontownsendjournalist.com for the full archive.