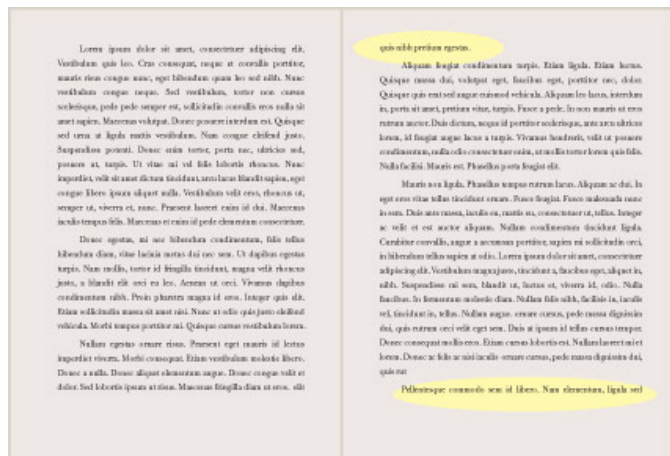


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Typography & etymology

Don't forget the widows and the orphans...

Posted on September 5, 2007 by textwrapper



Pity the poor widow on the upper right page. Either give her a companion line, or move her back in with her family on the previous page. Ignore the orphan on the lower right. His future is assured on the next page.

Widows, as illustrated above are single, isolated lines of copy (or worse—single words) which end up alone, at the top of a page.

Orphans are created when the first line of a new paragraph is the last line of a page. Orphans are not necessarily problematic.

To remember which is which, [Robert Bringhurst](#) tells us that the widow has a past but no future, and the orphan has no past, but does have a future.

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