

Crimes against typography:  
the case of *COMPUTERIZED ITALICS* and SMALL CAPS

THIS IS SCALA, A MODERN SERIF TYPE FACE DESIGNED IN THE NETHERLANDS AND INTRODUCED INTO AMERICAN BOOK PUBLISHING BY ELLEN LUPTON. THIS PARAGRAPH IS TYPED IN “SMALL CAPS,” PART OF THE SCALA FONT FAMILY. EACH LETTER IS DESIGNED TO BE DISPLAYED AS A SMALL CAPITAL LETTER. IT HAS NOT BEEN SHRUNK OR ALTERED BY MICROSOFT WORD.

This is Scala in regular (Roman) type. It is in an extraordinarily versatile font for use in typesetting large blocks of words (for book design). I also use it as a display font because I like it so much and I spent a lot of money on my copy.

SMALL CAPS are usually used in tandem with regular and *italic* FONTS. Notice how the line weight of the SMALL CAP matches the line weight of the type surrounding it. The SMALL CAPS also have a CHUNKY SOLID SHAPE that is stable and pleasing. Small caps can also be given EXPANDED LEADING to add emphasis and formality.

THIS IS SCALA IN REGULAR (ROMAN) TYPE, CHANGED INTO “SMALL CAPS” BY MICROSOFT WORD. CAN YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE COMPUTER-GENERATED SCALA CAPS AND THE PROPERLY DESIGNED ONES? THE LETTERS HAVE BEEN SHRUNK RATHER THAN REDESIGNED. THE STROKES ARE THUS SKINNY AND INSUBSTANTIAL. THE LETTERS DON’T HAVE THE ATTRACTIVE SQUARE QUALITY OF .... THEIR TRUE SMALL CAP COUNTERPARTS.

*Which italics are real?*

*Which are created through distortion by Word?*