Get stylish

Does the sheet below this paragraph look familiar? It should. I see it in lots of classrooms I visit. It's how many of you specify how the type in your yearbook should look. And the sad part is, there is a page just like it for captions, headlines and any other type in the book.

Typing copy for yearbook

Before you start, do this:

1) Change to Helvetica
2) Change to 11 point
3) Make first line bold
4) Indent first line 1 pica
5) Make sure and use a drop cap on 1st line

There is an easier way. It's called Styles. And they are available in both InDesign and YTO. YTO's type styles are a little less complicated and do a little less, but they do exist.

In InDesign, you can set up character, paragraph or object styles that are as complicated as you like and will do almost everything for you as far as specifying type is concerned.

In YTO

To set up a Type Style in YTO, you will first have to add all the fonts that you want to use to your job. So, in YTO, go to Plan>Fonts and choose your basic fonts for headlines, body copy and captions.

Once you have done that, choose Plan>Styles and specify exactly how you want your type to look when it is typed on a page. You can specify up to five styles, which will give you plenty of styles for body copy, caption, subhead, caption head and headline styles. Those are the five I would recommend you use.

At this point, the Styles will specify only size, font and attribute. There are a lot more specs you can do with InDesign, but these will make your type-specifying job a lot easier. That way, when one of your staffers sits down to type, he or she can just start typing by selecting and deleting the fake body copy, and the staffer won't always get Palatino or Times. He or she will get the font you chose instead.

In InDesign

When creating styles in InDesign, you are about to harness the massive power of InDesign's type tool and become a true advanced designer.

My method for setting styles in InDesign is to create a "perfect" piece of body copy (or caption or subhead) with the font, size, attributes, indents, drop caps, spacing, tabs, color, rules and alignment all set up the way I want it for that style.

Then open the Styles palette, and while you still have your type cursor inserted in the "perfect" paragraph of type, choose New Paragraph Style from the drop-out menu on the Styles palette. Name the style body copy or caption or whatever. From then on, when your staffer creates a text box, all that person has to do is to click Body Copy in the Styles palette, the correct type specs will kick in and he or she can start typing.

No matter how you create your yearbook, setting up type styles can make it much easier to get the look you want and be consistent throughout your yearbook. Try it. It's bound to make things easier.