

Scholarly Journals and Popular Magazines

Instructors often make assignments that require the use of articles from scholarly or professional trade journals. The terms peer-reviewed, refereed, academic, or research are also used. It is often difficult, especially when using online databases or the Internet, to recognize and decide what is an appropriate article. This handout provides general guidance in recognizing the difference between popular magazine articles and scholarly journal articles.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SCHOLARLY JOURNALS

- Lengthy and list sources in bibliographies
- Usually illustrated by graphs, charts, or diagrams
- Written and signed by authorities in the field
- Report on original research or experimentation
- Usually contain an abstract, problem statement, and methodology
- Use vocabulary requiring some knowledge of the subject
- Often published by a professional organization or university
- Reviewed by panel or board
- Contain few advertisements

THE AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW



EXAMPLES of scholarly journals are:
Psychological Reports, Journal of Marriage and the Family, American Journal of Nursing, Studies in Twentieth Century Literature, American Historical Review, Nature, New England Journal of Medicine



EXAMPLES of popular magazines are:
Time, Psychology Today, Autoglass, Atlantic, People Weekly, Science News, New Leader, Glamour, New Yorker, Forbes, American Heritage, Natural History

CHARACTERISTICS OF POPULAR MAGAZINES

- Usually short and seldom have bibliographies
- Frequently illustrated with glossy or color photographs
- Usually unsigned and written by staff or freelance writers
- Purpose of entertainment and information
- Contain no abstract, problem statement, or methodology
- Use simpler vocabulary written for the general public
- Published by for-profit companies
- Not peer-reviewed
- Contain many advertisements



For information on whether an individual periodical title is scholarly or popular, see *Ulrich's Periodical Directory*, an online database available from the LRC home page at http://www.jsr.vccs.edu/jsr_lrc/. It provides a symbol for **refereed** or scholarly journal titles.

In addition to print journals, the Library at JSRCC provide access to thousands of full text journal articles online through the **Research Databases** available on the home page. When using databases such as *InfoTrac* or *Ovid*, check boxes "**to refereed publications**", "**peer-reviewed journals**", "**research**", or "**original articles**". Some databases, such as *Project Muse*, offer full text articles from scholarly publishers only.