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What makes a journal scholarly

Scholarly articles are sometimes referred to as "peer-reviewed" or "refereed" because they are typically evaluated by other scholars before being accepted for publication. A scholarly article is commonly a study or a literature review, and usually longer than a magazine article. The table below compares some of the differences between magazines (e.g. Psychology Today) and journals (e.g. Journal of Abnormal Psychology). Popular Magazines Scholarly Journals Reference list no yes Appearance flashy cover, photographs, advertisements mostly text, few ads, graphs & charts Article length short long Audience general public students, professionals, researchers Authors staff writers practitioners, theorists, educators Titles short & catchy long & precise Publisher commercial educational institution or professional organizations The clearest and most reliable indicator of a scholarly article is the presence of references or citations. Look for a list of works cited and/or numbered footnotes or endnotes. Citations are not merely a check against plagiarism. They set the article in the context of a scholarly discussion and provide useful suggestions for further research. Using the table above, can you tell which of the following records is a scholarly journal? Answer is below. Answer: In the graphic above the first article from Research in Higher Education is a journal. Some library databases allow you to limit your search to scholarly articles. (The graphic below is from an EBSCOhost database. Check the box to apply the scholarly/peer-review journal limit.) This is a useful feature, but it is not 100% accurate in terms of what it includes and what it excludes. You should still check to see if the article has references or citations. There are two major types of periodicals that you will encounter when doing library research - scholarly journals and popular magazines. While both kinds of periodicals may have information about the same topic, the presentation, depth and type of information will be different. Most research papers will require the use of at least some articles from scholarly or peer-reviewed journals. The following table summarizes the main differences between scholarly journals and popular magazines. Our Scholarly Journals v. Popular Magazines video also describes the differences. Scholarly Journals Popular Magazines Audience/ Language Articles in scholarly journals are written for professionals in a particular field. The language of the articles will often contain jargon related to that field. Articles are written for a general audience, are free of technical jargon and easy to understand. Author Authors are usually experts in a given field. The credentials and institutional affiliation of the authors are listed with each article. Articles are written by professional journalists who may or may not have special knowledge of the topic. The author's name may not be listed. Editorial Information Edited by an editorial board consisting of experts in the field. The names, institutional affiliations and credentials of the editorial board are listed in the front of each issue. Edited by journalists who may or may not have specialized knowledge of the topics of articles. Full editorial information is usually not provided, often just the name of the Editor in Chief or a few main editors. Editorial Process Articles are subjected to some form of peer review by outside experts in the topic covered by the article before being accepted for publication. Articles may be returned to the authors for revision before being accepted. Articles are not reviewed by subject specialists. Format Research articles, especially in science and health science journals, may contain the following sections: abstract, literature review, methodology, results and conclusion. Articles do not have a specific format or structure. References Articles will contain a bibliography of works cited and/ or footnotes documenting the research. Articles do not contain a bibliography or footnotes. Examples Journal of the American Medical Association, American Literature, Journal of Educational Research Time, Sports Illustrated, Rolling Stone, Forbes Always remember that just because a journal has the word "journal" in the title, does not mean that it's a scholarly journal. On the other hand, many scholarly journal titles do not contain the word "journal". For example, the Wall Street Journal is a financial newspaper, not a scholarly journal, and American Literature is a peer-reviewed scholarly journal. In addition, not every article in a peer-reviewed publication undergoes review. There may be editorials, letters to the editor, and book reviews in scholarly journals that are not refereed. It is important to evaluate each article to determine if it is acceptable for your needs. If you're not sure of the type of a particular article ask a librarian for assistance. For more help, ask a librarian. reviewed 6/30/2020 kas Are scholarly journals, research journals, and peer-reviewed journals the same? All 3 terms are often used interchangeably, however: A peer-reviewed journal is scholarly, but not all scholarly journals are peer-reviewed. Not all articles in a peer-reviewed journal go through the peer-review process. For example, editorials, book reviews or letters are often not peer-reviewed. Are scholarly articles primary sources or secondary sources? Research articles are usually primary sources. That is, the authors are reporting directly on research or experiments they've conducted, and not reporting it second-hand. To learn more about primary sources or secondary sources, check out the handout created by the Writing Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. How can I tell if an article is a peer-reviewed? First, find out if the journal in which the article appears is peer-reviewed. Second, be aware that peer-reviewed journals also contain articles that are not peer-reviewed, such as editorials, letters, or book reviews. There are two ways to find out if a journal is peer-reviewed or not. 1) Visit the journal website. Peer-reviewed journals are usually good at making it clear that they are peer-reviewed. 2) Some databases provide such information. EBSCOhost databases (Academic Search Elite, CINHAI with Full Text, etc) On the search result page, click on an article title to see the record of this article and click on the title of the journal (called the "Source"). Then look for the "Peer review" heading towards the bottom of the page. WilsonWeb Science Full-text Select On the search result page, click on an article title to see the record of this article. Then look for the "Peer reviewed journal" heading below the Abstract and Subject(s). A "periodical" is any publication that comes out regularly or occasionally (i.e. periodically, get it?). TV Guide, Sports Illustrated, The Journal of Anthropological Research, The World Almanac, and the phone book are all periodicals. The are also know as "serials." A "magazine" is a periodical with a popular focus, i.e. aimed at the general public, and containing news, personal narratives, and opinion. Articles are often written by professional writers with or without expertise in the subject; they contain "secondary" discussion of events, usually with little documentation (e.g. footnotes). Magazines use vocabulary understandable to most people, and often have lots of eye-catching illustrations. Time, Newsweek, U.S. News & World Report, and Psychology Today are magazines A "journal," or "scholarly journal," is a scholarly periodical aimed at specialists and researchers. Articles are generally written by experts in the subject, using more technical language. They contain original research, conclusions based on data, footnotes or endnotes, and often an abstract or bibliography. The Journal of Physical Chemistry, The Chaucer Review, The Milbank Quarterly, and Labor History are examples of journals. It's important to understand the differences between journals and magazines. Magazines are not necessarily bad or low quality (nor are journals necessarily high quality) -- they simply aren't designed to support most upper-level academic research. This is because they don't document their sources of information, and they generally lack the depth of scholarly journals. The table below highlights the differences. For more information check out our Understanding Journals guide. Journals - Scholarly Magazines - Popular Content Detailed report or experiment. Secondary report or discussion; may include personal narrative, opinion, anecdotes Author Author's credentials are given; usually a scholar with subject expertise Author may or may not be named; often a professional writer; may or may not have subject expertise. Audience Scholars, researchers, and students General public; the interested non-specialist Refereed/peer-reviewed? [What's this?] Usually No Language Specialized terminology or jargon of the field; requires prior knowledge Vocabulary in general usage; understandable to most readers Layout & Organization Formal organization often begins with an abstract of the article; if reporting experimental findings notes the experiment's purpose, methodology, and analysis of the results; a conclusion, and a bibliography; may include charts or graphs, but rarely photographs. Informal organization: eye-catching type and formatting, usually includes illustrations or photographs. May not intend to present an idea with supporting evidence or come to a conclusion Bibliography & References Required. All quotes and facts can be verified. Rare. Scanty, if any, information about sources. Examples Developmental Psychology JAMA: Journal of the American Medical Association The words "journal" or "review" often appear in the title Harper's Newsweek People Time Almost anything available in a store or news stand. You might occasionally hear your instructors mention that you need to find "scholarly" sources. What does that mean? The sources you find while researching can generally be placed into two different categories: popular and scholarly. The term scholarly typically means that the source has been "peer-reviewed," which is a lengthy editing and review process performed by scholars in the field to check for quality and validity. To determine if your source has been peer-reviewed, you can investigate the journal in which the article was published. Try going to the journal's website and finding information about their submission & revision guidelines, or search the journal title in Ulrich's to learn more about it. Examine the chart and examples below to see other characteristics you can use to determine if a source is popular or scholarly. Trait Popular Scholarly Authors Journalists or freelance writers Academics or researchers (credentials listed) Audience General public Researchers, academics, college students Editing Process Sometimes edited by staff Peer-reviewed before publication Appearance Contains photos, illustrations, meant to entertain, shorter in length Contains charts, graphs, references, meant to inform, longer in length Examples Newsweek, Vanity Fair, The New York Times, websites Journal of Evolutionary Biology, JAMA, The Journal of Popular Culture Example of a Scholarly Source: Examples of a Popular Source: Have a serious appearance. The words "Journal," "Transactions," "Proceedings," or "Quarterly," may appear in the title. Written for professors, students or researchers. Signed by the authors. Articles are reviewed by a board of experts or "peer reviewers." Follow a format: abstract, literature review, methodology, results, conclusion, possibly footnotes, endnotes and/or bibliography. 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Scholarly sources are written by academics and other experts and contribute to knowledge in a particular field by sharing new research findings, theories, analyses, insights, news, or summaries of current knowledge. Scholarly sources can be either primary or secondary research. They can also come in many different formats. Books, articles, and websites can all be scholarly. Remember, there is sometimes a difference between scholarly and peer-reviewed articles; all peer-reviewed sources are scholarly, but not all scholarly sources are peer-reviewed. Accuracy The information should be based on verifiable facts. There should be a bibliography or list of references. There should be no spelling or grammatical errors. Authority A specific author or team of authors should be listed. These authors should work at an institution (such as a university or research institute) with a good reputation. The authors' qualifications (PhD, research chair, etc) should be stated. Bias The information should be based on fact, not opinion. There should be no obvious bias. The authors should appeal to the reader's sense of logic, not emotion. Audience The source should be written for other experts or people who are familiar with the topic. The language should be fairly technical, not simplistic. Currency In some disciplines, it is very important to use recent sources (within three or five years), but in others it's OK to have older sources. Ask your TA or instructor if you're not sure what's too old. Can't find what you're looking for? Contact us. What makes a journal or article scholarly? Scholarly journals are published by colleges, universities, or professional academic organizations. They contain research articles by scholars in the field they cover. Scholarly articles, whether written by one author or contributed to by many authors, share some common traits. They are written by experts-- researchers, professionals, professors, and other scholars-- to present research, analyze trends, and otherwise communicate with their peers in the same field. They are published in scholarly journals, and they are often peer-reviewed. The author or authors' credentials are often listed and are relevant to the topic of the article. (From "Literature, Geography, and the Spaces of Interdisciplinarity" by Laura Dassow Walls) Scholarly articles often refer to outside sources which are cited within the article: (From "Literature, Geography, and the Spaces of Interdisciplinarity" by Laura Dassow Walls) Sources are usually listed at the end in a works cited list or bibliography: Search Tutorials | Find more about finding information / scholarly sources / journals / articles / peer-reviewed articles / peer-reviewed /

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