



Identifying Scholarly Journals

Most instructors at the college level demand that all or most of the periodical articles that you use in writing a research paper come from scholarly journals. This is especially true for upper-division courses and is absolutely essential for graduate work. To help distinguish scholarly journals from other periodicals, some characteristics of scholarly journals are listed below.

Characteristics

Scholarly journals generally contain many graphs and charts to illustrate reports on **original research** or **experiments** that are of importance to the scholarly world.

Scholarly journals always cite their sources in the form of **footnotes or bibliographies**.

Articles are written by a **scholar in the field** or by someone who has done research in the field.

The **language** of scholarly journals is that of the discipline covered. It assumes the scholarly background on the part of the reader.

Many scholarly journals are published by a specific **professional organization**.

Examples

JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association

Psychological Bulletin (published by the American Psychological Association)

Journal of Marriage and the Family (published by the National Council on Family Relations)

Sex Roles: A Journal of Research

Periodicals that are not Scholarly Journals:

News magazines like *Time*, *Newsweek* and *U.S. News and World Report*. While these publications can be of great assistance in providing an introduction to a current topic, they don't provide the same analysis as scholarly journals. Articles are not usually written by scholars in the field and are aimed at a more general audience than are articles in scholarly journals.

Opinion magazines such as *New Republic*, *National Review* or *Nation*. These magazines are aimed at an educated audience, but without assuming particular scholarly background. They comment on current events and offer a particular viewpoint on world affairs, politics and cultural matters.

Popular magazines like *Sports Illustrated*, *Health*, *Redbook*, *People*, or *Family Circle*. Generally, academic libraries do not carry as many of these titles as public libraries do. Popular magazines, while attractive and entertaining, do not report on original research or cite sources and are not the kind of source to cite in the bibliography of an academic paper.

Trade journals such as *Beverage World*, *Automotive News* and *Progressive Grocer*. These magazines are industry specific, designed to update and inform the reader on current trends in an industry.

NOTE:

There are reference books that describe and evaluate periodical titles. If you need further information about an individual periodical title, consult the following source:

Magazines for Libraries. 16th ed. [REF DESK] R/050.25/M27/2008

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