

“Popular” versus “Scholarly” Articles

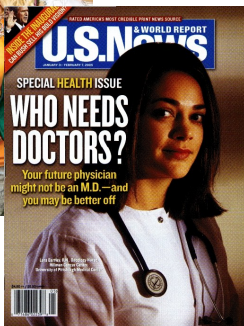
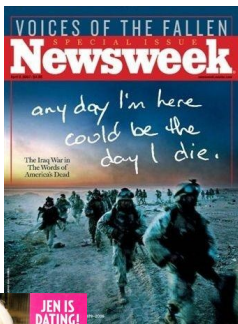


As you begin your research, your professor may require you to use a certain number of **scholarly articles** (sometimes also called “academic,” “peer-reviewed,” “juried,” or “refereed.”) It is important to be able to recognize the differences between these types of articles and **popular articles**. Since libraries have journals of *all* kinds, you may find these guidelines below helpful in determining whether an article is considered **scholarly** or **popular**.

Characteristics of *Popular* Articles

Popular articles come from magazines you see at newsstands or while in line at the grocery store.

Time,
Entertainment
Weekly,



Newsweek, Health, and Sports Illustrated are examples of **popular** magazines.

Length of articles	Short, usually less than 1-5 pages
Audience	General readers, people without a college degree in the subject
Subjects	A variety of subjects, general interest stories
Vocabulary/Language	Normal, everyday language, has a conversational tone
Written by (Author)	Journalists, magazine staff; may not have special qualifications for writing the article; credentials may not be given
Where you can find it	Newsstands, grocery stores, gas stations, bookstores, for free online
Bibliography/Citations?	Probably not
Research	The author is usually a reporter; although he or she did <i>research</i> for the article, the research is usually not “original”
Other	Lots of ads, colors, and pictures

Characteristics of *Scholarly* Articles

Scholarly articles are usually published in journals, rather than magazines. They are purchased mostly by academic libraries and personal researchers. Some examples of scholarly journals include *The Journal of Modern History*, *Developmental Psychology*, and *The New England Journal of Medicine*.



Length of articles	Quite long (5-50 pages)
Audience	Professionals, professors, students, those with an academic or research background and purpose
Subjects	Usually written about a specific subject area (psychology, business, women's studies)
Vocabulary/Language	Uses field specific language/jargon that is usually very technical; requires the reader to understand other research in the field
Written by (Author)	Researchers or specialists in the field; the authors credentials are established
Where you can buy it	Usually only through expensive subscriptions, whether print or online. If you can find it on a newsstand, it's probably <i>not</i> scholarly.
Bibliography/Citations?	Absolutely required. Look for references at the end of an article.
Research	The research is usually original or is based upon new applications of original research
Other	Plain covers, wordy; almost no pictures or ads; articles are reviewed by peers in the profession before being published

REMEMBER!

In library databases you can select the option to



search only "Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals."

Please contact the Reference Desk at 651.793.1614 for further assistance.
Available in alternative formats for people with disabilities.
Call Disability Services at 651.793.1549 (voice) or 651.772.7687 (TTY).

