

Journals vs. Magazines: Is it Scholarly?

### **Characteristics of Scholarly Journals**

Characteristics of scholarly journals (sometimes called academic or peer-reviewed

- Many are published or sponsored by a scholarly society, professional association, or university department
- ✓ Reduced amount of advertising compared to magazines and newspapers
- ✓ Includes peer-reviewed articles. These articles have been reviewed by a select group of scholars and researchers in the same field of study
- ✓ Articles are written in the language of the discipline, and the author assumes the reader has some background knowledge of the discipline

#### Examples: Journal of Reading, New England Journal of Medicine, Studies in Short Fiction

### Characteristics of *Peer-reviewed Articles*

- ✓ The author's name is always present; often there are multiple authors
- ✓ The author's credentials are stated
- ✓ The title reflects the contents of the article
- ✓ An abstract (summary) precedes the article
- Content is based on original research or the work of authorities in the field, not personal opinion
- ✓ The sources of information used by the author are cited in references, footnotes, or bibliographies

In addition, a scholarly article from **scientific journal** usually includes the following:

- ✓ Introduction or literature review
- ✓ Theory or background information
- ✓ Statement of subjects discussed
- ✓ Methods used
- ✓ Results of the study
- ✓ Supporting diagrams or illustrations
- ✓ Discussion

# **Characteristics of Professional & Technical Journals**

This purpose of this type of journal is to keep the professional or practitioner up to date in his field of study. *Peer-reviewed articles are not usually included*. Contents usually include news articles, continuing education information, editorials, organizational news, employment opportunities, and plenty of advertising. Ask your instructor if he considers them acceptable for your research.

#### Examples: Chemical & Engineering News, Aviation Week and Space Technology

# **Characteristics of News/General Interest Magazines**

- Usually published by commercial enterprises or individuals, occasionally by professional organizations
- Purpose is to provide information to a broad audience of concerned citizens, not just to scholars
- ✓ Language is geared to any educated audience; a specialized vocabulary is not necessary
- ✓ Articles are written by a member of the editorial staff, a scholar, or a freelance writer
- $\checkmark$  Authors sometime cite sources, but usually do not
- ✓ Most have an attractive appearance with illustrations and photographs
- ✓ Usually have some advertisements
- ✓ Often have a political slant

#### Examples: National Geographic, Time, Smithsonian, U. S. News & World Report, Newsweek

# **Characteristics of Popular Magazines**

- ✓ Articles are seldom signed
- ✓ Sources are rarely cited information can be second or third hand, original source may not even be known
- ✓ Articles are usually short with little depth
- Often published on slick paper, are attractive with a lot of pictures and graphics, and are full of advertisements
- ✓ Published to entertain the reader, sell products, and/or promote a viewpoint

#### Examples: Ebony, Glamour, Parent's, Reader's Digest, Sports Illustrated, Ladies' Home Journal

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