

How To Distinguish Peer Reviewed/Scholarly Journals from Popular/Trade Magazines

SCHOLARLY JOURNALS

The main purpose of a scholarly journal is to publish original research so that the findings are available to the rest of the scholarly world. A scholarly journal will contain journal articles that report new research or review past research. Since appealing to the general public is not a primary goal, the appearance of the scholarly journal itself may be very plain.

Scholarly journal articles:

- are signed by the author(s).
- are written by experts and scholars in the field.
- provide the author's credentials and affiliations.
- cite their sources in footnotes or in a bibliography or list of references.
- assume that the reader has some knowledge of the subject being studied, including specialized terminology.
- often include an abstract at the beginning of the article.
- are "peer reviewed" or "refereed". This means that experts in the field evaluate the quality of an article before it is accepted and published in the journal.

You can determine if a journal is peer reviewed by checking the first few pages of a journal issue for a list of reviewers or an editorial board and the editorial policy. You may also wish to consult with a librarian. The following sources available through the Bell Library help identify refereed scholarly journals:

Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, a subscription electronic database available through the Bell Library.
Magazines for Libraries, a reference book shelved at REF Z6941 .K2 in the first floor Reference area.

Examples of Scholarly Journals:

- *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*
- *Journal of Social History*
- *Nursing Clinics of North America*
- *Prairie Schooner*

POPULAR MAGAZINES

Magazines in this category are written to inform or entertain the general public. They usually have eye-catching covers and graphic design, contain color illustrations and are printed on glossy paper.

Popular magazines:

- may contain either signed or unsigned articles
- contain articles of general interest about personalities, current news items, etc
- do not cite their sources in detail.
- contain many advertisements.
- do not assume that their readers have specialized knowledge of a particular field of study.

Examples of popular magazines:

- *Psychology Today*
- *Fortune*
- *Newsweek*
- *Sports Illustrated*

TRADE MAGAZINES

Trade magazines are written for the members of a specific industry. The articles are written to inform these members of business trends, new products or techniques and organizational news.

Trade magazines:

- contain articles written for a specialized audience in a particular industry.
- assume that the reader has some knowledge of the industry and its specialized terminology.
- do not cite sources as rigorously as scholarly journals do.
- contain advertisements, press releases and product announcements related to the profession.
- provide a forum for job postings.

Examples of Trade Magazines:

- *Communique*
- *CGA Magazine*
- *HR Focus*
- *American Libraries*


SEARCHING FOR PEER-REVIEWED SCHOLARLY JOURNAL ARTICLES

Often professors will ask students to find peer-reviewed articles from scholarly journals. *Academic Search Complete* is a very useful database for finding articles from a wide selection of periodicals, including peer-reviewed scholarly journal articles as well as articles from popular and trade magazines. It contains full text articles from over 5,500 full-text periodicals, and abstracts and indexing for nearly 9,500.

Academic Search Complete is available from the Library's Electronic Databases page: <<http://tamucc.libguides.com/AtoZ>> by clicking on "A" from the main A-Z databases list page. Off campus users must enter username and student ID. For instructions on accessing databases remotely see: <<http://rattler.tamucc.edu/offcampus/offcampus.html>>

HOW TO SEARCH

Once you access *Academic Search Complete*, the advanced search screen will appear. Type in one or more search terms and click "Search."



Find: FEMA in Select a Field (optional) Search Clear ?

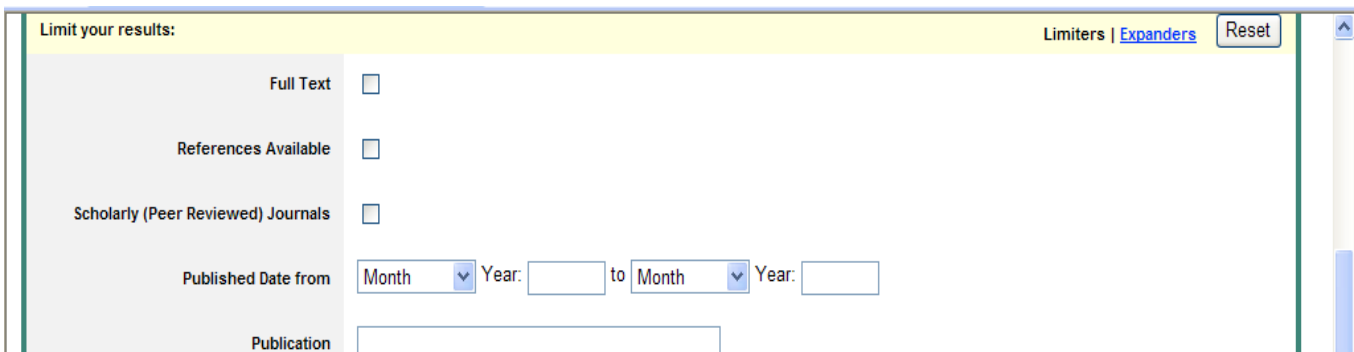
and disaster relief in Select a Field (optional)

and Katrina in Select a Field (optional) Add Row

in: Academic Search Complete ?

ADVANCED SEARCH/SPECIAL FEATURES

You may use the checkboxes shown below to limit your search to show only articles that have certain characteristics such as full text availability, articles with references cited, articles from scholarly journals, articles published in a certain date range, or articles published in a specific journal .



Limit your results: Limiters | Expanders Reset

Full Text

References Available

Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals

Published Date from Month Year: to Month Year:

Publication

Other databases also have features to limit searches to peer-reviewed articles, typically by selecting a checkbox on the advanced search screen.

For More Information

Contact Bradley Scott, Reference/Instruction Librarian at (361) 825-5961. Updated: 9/2011 (MP).