

## 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. The appearance of the scholarly journal itself may be plain or have very little design, it may be printed on plain paper and have black and white graphics and illustrations.

Scholarly journal articles:

- are signed by the author(s).
- are written by an expert or scholar in the field.
- cite their sources as a bibliography or list of references.
- include the language of the discipline that is being studied and assumes that the reader will have some background in the subject being studied.
- may include an abstract at the beginning of the article.
- provide the author's credentials and affiliations.
- are "peer reviewed" or "refereed". "Peer reviewed" or "Refereed" is a formal process undertaken by experts in a field to determine the quality of an article before it is accepted and published in a 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.

Examples of Scholarly Journals:

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

### **POPULAR MAGAZINES**

Magazines that fall in this category are usually eye-catching, contain color pictures and illustrations and are printed on glossy paper. The articles are written for a general audience to inform and entertain.

Popular magazines:

- may contain unsigned articles
- contain articles of general interest about personalities, current news items, etc
- may not contain bibliographies
- contain many advertisements.
- will not contain specialized language specific to a 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 by staff or contributing authors
- contain advertisements related to the profession
- provide a forum for job postings

Examples of Trade Magazines:

- Communicque
- 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 peer-reviewed scholarly journal articles as well as articles from popular and trade magazines. Academic Search Complete is a comprehensive, general-interest database that covers all major subject areas, although it does not cover any subject in significant depth. Academic Search Complete contains full text articles from over 5,500 full-text publications. One can also find abstracts and indexing for nearly 9,500 journals.

Academic Search Complete is available from the Library's Electronic Databases page:

<<http://rattler.tamucc.edu/metalib/metalib.html>> by clicking on "Multiple Subjects" from the main QuickSearch 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 a topic and click "Search."

The screenshot shows the search interface with the following elements:

- Find:** FEMA in Select a Field (optional)
- and** disaster relief in Select a Field (optional)
- and** Katrina in Select a Field (optional)
- in:** Academic Search Complete
- Buttons: Search, Clear, Add Row

### ADVANCED SEARCH/SPECIAL FEATURES

You may limit your search to certain parameters (full text, articles with references cited, scholarly journals, date, source journal) and then click on "Search". Checking "References Available" is an additional way to limit your search to scholarly articles.

The screenshot shows the 'Limit your results' section with the following elements:

- Limit your results:** (Header)
- Full Text:**
- References Available:**
- Scholarly (Peer Reviewed) Journals:**
- Published Date from:** Month [dropdown] Year: [input] to Month [dropdown] Year: [input]
- Publication:** [input]
- Buttons: Limiters | Expanders, Reset

Other databases also have features to limit searches to peer-reviewed articles but Academic Search Complete is among the most user-friendly.

### **For More Information**

Contact Mark Pfeifer, Instruction Librarian at (361) 825-3392 or [mark.pfeifer@tamucc.edu](mailto:mark.pfeifer@tamucc.edu) 6/09 mp