

JOURNAL TYPES

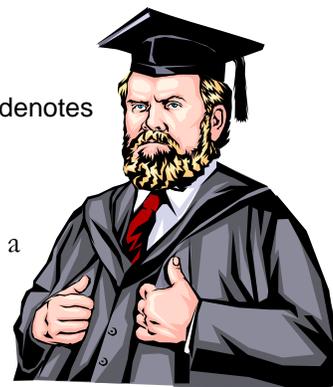
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“To elucidate on the aforementioned requisite use of scholarly journals, it denotes that only peer-reviewed, or refereed periodicals will suffice.”

If you don't speak “professor,” you may need a little help translating a few terms that your instructors will use.

Here's the short and sweet version:



When your instructor uses the term *journal*, essentially what they are talking about are magazines (publications that contain articles), but the term *magazine* is best used to refer to a general/popular periodical (publication that is produced at a regular interval), whereas the term *journal* indicates a periodical of a more academic nature.

Academic, scholarly, peer-reviewed, and refereed are terms used to identify the nature of journals (and the articles they contain). These terms boil down to mean “the good stuff”... **something authoritative and substantial.**

You must be able to recognize what is or is not a scholarly journal article. The best way to do that is by going to an academic library or looking in a journal database, and looking at the journals. If you want a more detailed presentation, here it is...

DISCUSSION

Despite the fact that the terms magazine, journal, periodical, and serial each has a different definition, they are often used to refer to the same general print medium. Your instructor may direct you to use *scholarly*, *academic*, *peer-reviewed*, or *research* journals. This section is intended to help you better understand and differentiate between these publications. Always check with your instructor if you ever have a question about the suitability of a resource for your class assignments.

This section begins with definitions, followed by a comparison and contrast of scholarly and non-scholarly publications ... then there is a lovely discussion about zebras.

DEFINITIONS (Based on *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*)

SERIAL

Something produced in a series, e.g., motion pictures, television shows, radio shows, or publications such as newspapers, newsletters, magazines, journals, or other periodicals. Serial is the most general term used to refer to publications that are produced on a regular basis. Libraries or periodical indexes may refer to their serials list or serial holdings. These are the listings of the newspapers, journals, etc., which they subscribe to or index.

PERIODICAL

A publication that is produced at a regular (fixed) interval, e.g., weekly, monthly, or quarterly. Usually published more frequently than annually, usually not published daily (daily publications are usually newspapers). This general term may be applied to publications such as newsletters, magazines, and journals.

MAGAZINE

A periodical that usually contains a collection of articles, stories, poems, and pictures and is directed at the general public.

NEWSPAPER

A publication that is produced and distributed daily, weekly, or at some other and usually short interval. Typically contains news, editorials, features, advertising, or other information of current interest.

NEWSLETTER

A publication written for the dissemination of news. A printed sheet, pamphlet, or small newspaper containing news or information of current interest to a special group.

JOURNAL

This term is sometimes used to refer to newspapers but is usually used to describe periodicals dedicated to a particular field of study, e.g., microbiology. Journals are often the official or semiofficial publication of a group or society.

Comparing and contrasting scholarly and non-scholarly publications

SCHOLARLY OR ACADEMIC

Characteristics scholarly or academic journals:

- Usually not found on newsstands. Libraries and individuals in the field are typical subscribers.
- Written by researchers, scholars, experts in the field, etc. Usually provides authors' qualifications/background.
- Typically published by a scholarly professional association or university press.
- The audiences for these articles are other researchers, professionals, or academics. The language of the articles assumes the reader has a background or special knowledge in the field.
- Written to report on original research or in-depth analysis of an issue. Lengthy articles written in a sophisticated language.
- Mostly text, may include charts or graphs, seldom includes photos. Almost no advertising.
- Contains footnotes, references, bibliographies, works cited, etc.
- Reports first hand information, analysis, or original research.

Examples of scholarly or academic journals:

Examples of academic/scholarly journals: *Foreign Affairs*, *The Labor Lawyer*, *Current History*, *Academy of Management Journal*, *The Public Manager*, *African-American Review*, *California Management Review*.

Examples of academic/scholarly journals that contain primarily **original research**: *Journal of Consumer Research*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *American Journal of Political Science*.

Additional notes:

- Keep in mind that although a given journal may be scholarly, 100% of the materials within a particular issue may not be, e.g., book reviews or editorials. You may need the aforementioned criteria (or just some common sense) to make that determination.
- Many of the Troy University-provided journal databases allow the user to limit searches to peer-reviewed journals only.
- Some instructors may apply the terms scholarly, refereed, peer-reviewed, or academic only to journals that report original research experimentation. Original research articles typically include sections for abstracts, methodology, data, results, graphs/charts, and bibliography (references).

NON-SCHOLARLY OR NON-ACADEMIC

Characteristics of non-scholarly or non-academic journals:

- The types of publications typically found on newsstands.
- Usually read for entertainment or personal interest.
- Written by a staff or freelance writer.
- Usually published by commercial enterprises (not a scholarly society or group).
- The audience is the general public. No special background or education is assumed.
- Written to entertain or give current interest news. Usually short and in simple language.
- Contain lots of advertising. Usually include pictures or photographs and are often slick in appearance.
- Rarely provide footnotes or a bibliography.
- Report on information second or third hand (not original investigation or research).

Examples of non-scholarly or non-academic journals:

Substantive news or general interest periodicals are an excellent source of background or summary information. An example of such a publication is *U.S. News and World Report*.

Examples of substantive news publications with a narrower focus: *Business Week*, *Fortune*, *National Geographic*, *Aviation News and Space Technology*.

Popular magazines may also be a source of background or summary information, but their primary focus is to entertain their readers and to promote the products of their advertisers. Examples: *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Popular Mechanics*, *Road & Track*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Cosmopolitan*.

Examples of sensational magazines that have little or no value for typical academic research:

National Examiner, *Star*, *Weekly World News*, *Globe*, *Mirror*.

Vernon the zebra asks:

“That’s all very well, but none of that explained the use of the terms **refereed** or **peer-reviewed**—can you do that?”



Discussion

Question: Yeah, where are the guys in the zebra stripes ... the referees?

Answer: Very simple! The referees are persons, assigned by the publisher of a journal, to judge whether or not an article which was submitted by the author for publication in the journal is worthy of inclusion. What qualifies these referees to judge the merits of the submitted work is that they are peers with the author in the given field of study, for example, the persons reviewing articles for inclusion in a physics journal are highly-credentialed in the field of physics. Describing a journal as refereed or peer-reviewed means "The articles in the journal have been carefully reviewed by experts in the field who have judged the author and what they have written worthy of publication."



Ping! (that's the sound of a light bulb coming on)

Your instructors may specify the use of academic journals because they want your information sources to be high-quality ... of a level commensurate with the scholarship that takes place in college.