Fullerton College
Library

When conducting research it is important to distinguish between journal articles and magazine articles. **Journal articles** are typically referred to as "scholarly," while **magazine articles** are usually considered "popular".

| Criteria | Scholarly Journal | Popular Magazine |
|---|---|---|
| Example |  |  |
| Content | **In-depth**, primary account of **original** findings written by the researcher(s); very **specific** information, with the goal of scholarly communication. | **Secondary** discussion of someone else's research; may include personal narrative or **opinion**; **general** information, purpose is to entertain or inform. |
| Author | Author's **credentials are provided**; usually a scholar or specialist with subject expertise. | Author is frequently a journalist paid to write articles, may or **may not have subject expertise.** |
| Audience | Scholars, researchers, and students. | General public; the interested non-specialist. |

| Criteria | Scholarly Journal | Popular Magazine |
|---|---|---|
| Language | **Specialized terminology** or jargon of the field; requires expertise in subject area. | Vocabulary in general usage; **easily understandable** to most readers. |
| Graphics | Graphs, charts, and tables; **very few advertisements** and photographs. | Graphs, charts and tables; lots of **glossy advertisements and photographs**. |
| Layout & Organization | **Structured**; includes the article abstract, goals and objectives, methodology, results (evidence), discussion, conclusion, and bibliography. | **Informal**; may include non-standard formatting. **May not present supporting evidence** or a conclusion. |
| Accountability | Articles are **evaluated by peer-reviewers,** who are experts in the field; edited for **content, format, and style**. | Articles are **evaluated by editorial staff**, not experts in the field; edited for **format and style**. |
| References | **Required**. Quotes and facts are verifiable. | **Rare**. Little, if any, information about source materials is given. |
| Other Examples | *Annals of Mathematics*, Journal *of Abnormal Psychology*, *History of Education Quarterly*, Almost anything with **Journal** in the title. | *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The Nation*, *The Economist* |