

## Popular, Scholarly or Trade?

It can be hard to tell if a magazine/journal is “scholarly”. Below are some general rules of thumb that can help you figure it out. Still can’t tell? Check out **Ulrich's Periodicals Directory** on the library databases page. It lets you look up any periodical and get details about it, including whether or not it is “refereed” aka scholarly.



### Popular Magazines

Short articles

Authors are journalists or freelance writers

Articles generally won't have a bibliography.

Intended readers: the general public

Published frequently, often weekly

Lots of advertisements

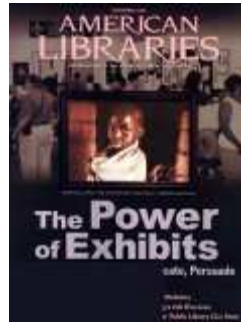
Heavily illustrated. Illustrations are often glossy and attractive.

Articles are meant to inform, update or entertain

#### No peer review process

Vocabulary is simple and non-technical

Examples include:  
Rolling Stone, Newsweek, The Nation, Psychology Today and Wired



### Trade Journals

Short articles

Authors are specialists in a field or industry

Authors may mention sources, but include a bibliography

Intended readers: members of the industry

Usually published monthly

Many trade specific and general business advertisements

Illustrations are usually charts and graphs or product photography

Articles report on industry trends, new products or techniques

#### No peer review process

Technical vocabulary

Examples include:  
Advertising Age, Variety, Information Today



### Scholarly Journals

Articles are long

Authors are authorities in their field

Articles include bibliographies

Intended readers: specialists in field

Published infrequently, as few as 2 or 4 times a year

Almost no advertising

May include charts and graphs but few other illustrations

Articles focus on research reports, methodology and theory

#### Articles are peer-reviewed

Vocabulary within the subject discipline is used

Examples include: Journal of Applied Chemical Technology, New England Journal of Medicine.

Questions? Please contact the library at 360-546-9694 or [library@vancouver.wsu.edu](mailto:library@vancouver.wsu.edu) or send us an instant message: AIM and Yahoo!: wsuvlibrary MSN: library@vancouver.wsu.edu