

## Popular vs. Scholarly Articles *What's the difference?*

### Popular Periodicals



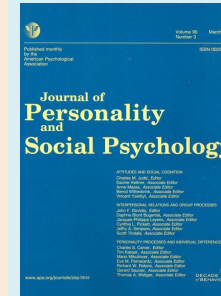
### Substantive News Periodicals



### Trade Publications



### Scholarly Journals



Also called academic, peer-reviewed, or refereed journals

#### What is the purpose?

Mainly entertain a general audience.

Inform a general audience about current events and general interest articles.

Inform professionals of current trends and news in fields related specifically to their business or industry area. Sell field-specific products.

Inform other scholars and students in higher education of new research and findings (research articles), reviews of research (review articles), and reviews of scholarly books (book reviews).

#### Who writes them?

Staff writers, journalists, or freelancers

Staff writers, journalists, and freelancers who may or may not have educational background in or experience with the topics about which they write. Names or credentials may not be stated.

Often, but not always, specialists or practitioners in the fields about which they write. Sometimes a journalist with subject area expertise. Often published by a trade association.

Experts in their fields: researchers conducting original research, practitioners, professors and scholars. Credentials are usually stated in the article. Scholarly/Academic Journals are produced and published by university presses and scholarly groups.

#### Who reads them?

General public

General public

Practitioners in a field who want to know news, trends, and best practices for their specific industry or profession.

Scholars (professors, researchers, students) knowledgeable about a specific discipline.

#### What is the level of review for accuracy?

Editors working for the publication review the articles; these editors are most likely not experts on the topic of the article they are editing.

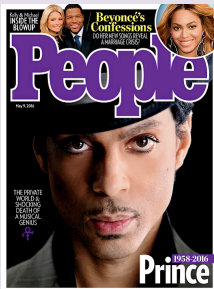
Editors working for the publication review the articles; these editors are most likely not experts on the topic of the article they are editing.

Editors working for the trade publication review the articles. These editors are more likely to know about the topic the article is about than a magazine or newspaper editor would, but they still are not experts on it.

An editorial board made up of other scholars and researchers reviews the articles. Many, but not all, scholarly articles are **peer reviewed**.\* Peer reviewed articles are considered the gold standard of tested information.

\*The peer review and publication process often takes well over one year, depending on the field, so it might be hard to find a peer-reviewed article for a currently emerging topic.

## Popular Periodicals



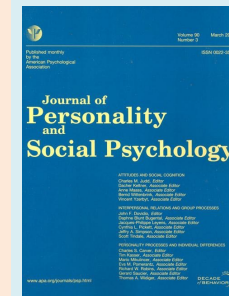
## Substantive News Periodicals



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### What to look for:

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|---|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Glossy color photographs</li> <li>• Easy-to-understand, non-technical writing</li> <li>• Substantial advertisements</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colorful, glossy images on covers and with articles</li> <li>• Easy-to-understand, non-technical writing</li> <li>• Substantial advertisements</li> <li>• Does not cite information sources formally; may refer to studies or sources in the text.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colorful, glossy images covers often featuring an "industrial" or trade-specific setting</li> <li>• Includes field-specific terminology.</li> <li>• Includes industry-related advertising</li> <li>• Varied article length (e.g. short news blurbs, longer "feature" articles)</li> <li>• May or may not cite information sources or include reference lists</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long, in-depth articles</li> <li>• Data and evidence, e.g. tables, charts, graphs, images (but no advertisements)</li> <li>• Specialized or discipline-specific language and jargon</li> <li>• Reference lists and in-text citations</li> <li>• Abstract or summary</li> <li>• Author affiliations</li> <li>• Peer review information: dates of article submission and acceptance (provided in some journals)</li> </ul> |
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### What are the advantages?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written for non-specialists (easy to understand)</li> <li>• Timely coverage of popular topics and current events</li> <li>• Good sources for topics related to popular culture</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Written for non-specialists (easy to understand)</li> <li>• Timely coverage of popular topics and current events</li> <li>• Good sources for background information, to get an overview of an issue, and to follow references in the text to original research studies</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timely coverage of industry trends</li> <li>• Sometimes contain short bibliographies</li> <li>• Shorter articles that are informal and practical</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles are usually evaluated by experts before publication (peer reviewed)</li> <li>• Footnotes or bibliographies support research and point to further research on a topic</li> <li>• Authors describe methodology and supply data to support research results</li> </ul> |
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### What are the disadvantages?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles are selected by editors who may know little about the topic</li> <li>• Authors usually do not cite sources</li> <li>• Published to make a profit</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles are selected by editors who may know little about the topic</li> <li>• Authors usually do not cite sources</li> <li>• Published to make a profit; usually; the line between informing and selling may be blurred</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not peer reviewed, though author is usually a professional in the field</li> <li>• Use of specialized terminology of the field</li> <li>• Evidence drawn from personal experience or common knowledge but NOT rigorous research</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Articles often use specialized terminology of the field that can be difficult for non-specialists to read</li> <li>• Scholarly Journals are expensive and usually require an institutional subscription</li> <li>• Research and review process takes time; not as useful for current events</li> </ul> |
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