Many instructors at the college level require that you use scholarly articles as sources when writing a research paper. Scholarly or peer-reviewed articles are written by experts in academic or professional fields. They are excellent sources for finding out what has been studied or researched on a topic as well as to find bibliographies that point to other relevant sources of information.

**How can you determine if your article is scholarly and/or peer reviewed?**

1. **Consult the chart.**
   
The chart on the back lists the general criteria for determining what type of periodical article you have. Keep in mind that some articles do not meet all the criteria. When in doubt, consult a Reference Librarian or your instructor.

2. **Limit your database search to academic, scholarly, or peer reviewed journals.**
   
   Many databases allow you to limit your search to academic, scholarly, or peer reviewed journals (terminology varies between databases). Although limiting provides a preliminary filter, not all articles within a scholarly journal are scholarly, so you will need to evaluate each article individually against the criteria in the chart.

3. **Ask a Librarian**
   
   We can help you find a scholarly article or determine whether an article you have is scholarly. Get help in person at the Reference Desk on the 2nd floor of the library, or chat online at the Research Station [http://www.csuchico.edu/library](http://www.csuchico.edu/library), or text to 530-265-5594.

4. **Are “peer reviewed” and “scholarly” the same thing?**
   
   Peer reviewed journals require that articles are read and evaluated by experts in the field before they are accepted for publication. Although most scholarly articles are refereed or peer reviewed, some are not. Generally instructors are happy with either peer reviewed or scholarly articles, but if your article HAS to be peer-reviewed, you will need to find that information in the front of the journal, or use Ulrich’s Periodicals Directory (Reference Z6941 U5) located behind the Reference Desk on the 2nd floor of the library. Look up your title and look for the **Document Type: Journal, Academic/Scholarly.** Articles that are peer reviewed will have an arrow ➤ to the left of the title.

Want more information? Visit our Subject Guide: **What is a scholarly article and how do I find one** at: [http://libguides.csuchico.edu/scholarly](http://libguides.csuchico.edu/scholarly)

August 2011
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>SCHOLARLY *</th>
<th>TRADE</th>
<th>NEWS OR OPINION</th>
<th>POPULAR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Economic Review</td>
<td>Adsorption, industry week</td>
<td>Progress</td>
<td>New Republic</td>
<td>People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal of Communication</td>
<td>Educational Theory</td>
<td>Advertising Age</td>
<td>Scientific American</td>
<td>Glamour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Theory</td>
<td></td>
<td>Industry Week</td>
<td>U.S. News &amp; World Report</td>
<td>Shape</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Purpose
- **SCHOLARLY**: to inform and report on original research or experimentation to the rest of the scholarly world.
- **TRADE**: to provide news and information to people in a particular industry or profession.
- **NEWS OR OPINION**: to provide general information to an educated lay audience.
- **POPULAR**: to entertain or persuade.

### Cited Sources
- **SCHOLARLY**: has substantial footnotes and/or bibliographies.
- **TRADE**: occasionally include brief footnotes and/or bibliographies.
- **NEWS OR OPINION**: occasionally include brief bibliographies.
- **POPULAR**: rarely include bibliographies.

### Authors
- **SCHOLARLY**: scholars or researchers in the field, discipline, or specialty.
- **TRADE**: practitioners or educators within the industry or profession.
- **NEWS OR OPINION**: magazine staff writers or free-lance writers.
- **POPULAR**: magazine staff writers or free-lance writers.

### Language
- **SCHOLARLY**: technical terminology appropriate to the discipline.
- **TRADE**: jargon of the industry or profession.
- **NEWS OR OPINION**: language geared to educated layperson.
- **POPULAR**: simple language in order to meet a minimum education level.

### Article Appearance
- **SCHOLARLY**: graphs, charts, and photographs that support the research.
- **TRADE**: photographs and illustrations used to support the article but also for aesthetic purposes to draw in readers.
- **NEWS OR OPINION**: photographs and illustrations used to support the article but also for aesthetic purposes to draw in readers.
- **POPULAR**: photographs and illustrations used for aesthetic purposes to draw in readers.

### Journal Appearance (if applicable)
- **SCHOLARLY**: plain format, usually black and white.
- **TRADE**: attractive glossy format, lots of color.
- **NEWS OR OPINION**: attractive glossy format, lots of color.
- **POPULAR**: attractive glossy format, lots of color.

*Scholarly articles are sometimes referred to as refereed or peer reviewed. Articles appearing in refereed or peer reviewed journals are read and evaluated by experts in the field before they are accepted for publication.*