

Most *scholarly journals* are **peer-reviewed** (also called **refereed**). Peer reviewed means:  
 -- a draft of the article has been critically reviewed before publication by recognized experts in the author's field or specialty to insure the accuracy and quality of the article. Suggestions for improvement may be suggested to the article's author by the referees.

### Keys to Identifying Scholarly/Peer Reviewed/Refereed Journals in Online Databases:

1. Use a database which includes only scholarly journals or has a limiter for peer reviewed journals:
  - PsycARTICLES - all journals in this database are scholarly
  - ProQuest - check the "**Scholarly journals, including peer-reviewed**" box
2. Use one of these reference sources to determine if a particular journal is peer reviewed:
  - *Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory* - REF 011.34 U45
  - *Magazines for Libraries* - REF 011.34 K19m
3. Look for clues in the item record or in the article based on the **Scholarly & Research Journals** column in the **Types of Periodicals** chart:
  - Are the author's credentials listed?
  - Is the publisher of the article an association? (Example: American Psychological Association, American Political Science Association, etc.)
  - How long is the article (page numbers)? **Hint:** Scholarly journal articles are usually lengthy.
  - Is the word *Journal* in the Publication Name (also called Source)? - not a perfect indicator
  - What does the abstract tell you? Is the article a report of original research or experimentation? Does the author use scholarly language (technical) or everyday language?
4. Ask a librarian or your course instructor

## Types of Periodicals

IDENTIFIERS	Scholarly & Research Journals	Popular Magazines	Professional, Trade, & Industry Journals	Journals of Commentary	Newspapers
<b>Purpose</b>	Report on original research or experimentation.	Report current events, entertain, provide general information.	Inform about current trends, news, and events within one industry or trade.	Commentary on political or social issues, often from a specific political p.o.v.	Current events, news stories, opinions.
<b>Article Characteristics</b>	Lengthy, in-depth articles, describe research methodologies, use technical or specialized	Shorter articles, use everyday language, not peer-reviewed.	Contain news, practical advice, and product information; language includes technical terms.	Short or long articles, everyday language, some speeches or interviews.	Short or long articles, local or regional focus, everyday language, written very quickly.

	language, peer-reviewed.				
<b>Overall Appearance</b>	Plain covers and paper, usually no photographs or advertisements, sober and serious looking.	Glossy paper, many photographs and advertisements, eye-catching look.	Plain or glossy, many illustrations and graphics, include ads for products of interest to that field.	Varies greatly. Some have color, advertisements, and photographs.	Newsprint, broadsheets, photographs, advertisements.
<b>Audience</b>	Scholars, researchers, and students in a particular field of study.	General population.	Members of a specific industry/organization, practitioners in a field.	General, educated audience.	General population.
<b>Authors</b>	Scholars or researchers in the field of study. Authors always identified.	Reporters or journalists. Often unnamed.	Reporters, staff, or practitioners in the field.	Staff writers, specialists in a field, or journalists.	Journalists and free-lance writers.
<b>Documentation</b>	Always cite sources in lengthy lists of references or bibliographies.	Sources sometimes cited, but rarely.	Sources sometimes cited, but documentation may not be extensive.	Sources often cited, but documentation may not be extensive.	No citations.
<b>Examples</b>	American Historical Review,  <i>Journal of Philosophy</i>	<i>Time, People, Rolling Stone</i>	<i>APA Monitor, Architectural Record, Automotive News</i>	<i>National Review, Mother Jones, The Nation</i>	<i>Los Angeles Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post</i>
<b>Access</b>	Mailed to university or college libraries, labs, offices, or individual researchers.	Sold at grocery stores, newsstands, or mailed to subscriber's home.	Usually free with membership in the professional organization.	Sold at grocery stores, newsstands, or mailed to subscriber's home.	Newsstands and grocery stores, delivery to home.

## Criteria for Evaluating Search Results

When evaluating search results, consider whether each source is:

- **Useful** - Is the source relevant to your focused topic? Is it likely to offer you new information or answers to your questions?
- **Timely** - Is this an older or newer source? Do you need the most recent information or historical/background information?
- **Appropriate** - Is this source at a scholarly level or is it aimed at a general audience? Would an expert use this source for research?
- **Authoritative** - What expertise does the author have? Do they discuss their methodology or procedures for their research?

Evaluate the search results in Figures 1 and 2 below using the evaluation criteria listed above.

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### **Exercise 2**

A. Sample research topic to use with Figure 1: *Does American democracy lead to all Americans becoming wealthier?*

1. Which of the four books listed below would be most **useful** in answering your research question? (Circle as many as you want).

**Figure 1 - Results List from the Library Online Catalog**

Title Long	Author	Date
<a href="#">Can we put an end to sweatshops? / Archon Fung, Dara O'Rourke, and Charles Sabel ; foreword by Medea Benjamin ; edited by Joshua Cohen and Joel Rogers for Boston Review.</a>		<a href="#">2001</a>
<i>Location: Books - Upper Level      Call Number: <a href="#">331.25 C212</a>      Status: Available</i>		
<a href="#">Democracy and the gospel of wealth / Gail Kennedy.</a>	<a href="#">Kennedy, Gail, 1900-</a>	<a href="#">1949</a>
<i>Location: Books - Upper Level      Call Number: <a href="#">973.8 Dem</a>      Status: Multiple item statuses</i>		
<a href="#">Democracy by force : U.S. military intervention in the post-Cold War world / Karin von Hippel.</a>	<a href="#">Von Hippel, Karin.</a>	<a href="#">2001</a>
<i>Location: Books - Upper Level      Call Number: <a href="#">327.73 V946d</a>      Status: Available</i>		
<a href="#">Wealth and democracy : a political history of the American rich / Kevin Phillips.</a>	<a href="#">Phillips, Kevin P.</a>	<a href="#">2002</a>
<i>Location: Books - Upper Level      Call Number: <a href="#">305.5234 P561w</a>      Status: Available</i>		

2. Looking at your answer for #1, of the books you circled which has the most current information (which is most **timely**)? \_\_\_\_\_
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B. Sample research topic for Figure 2: *Examination of social criticism in cartoons.*

1. Which of the articles in Figure 2 do you think might be useful as sources for this topic? (Circle as many as you think are appropriate.)
2. Which of the articles in Figure 2 do you think are from scholarly or peer-reviewed journals? (Circle as many as you think are appropriate.)
3. Given this topic, do you think any of these articles might be too old to be useful?

**Figure 2 - Results list from a ProQuest database search**

1. **[The Simpsons: Public Choice in the Tradition of Swift and Orwell](#)**  
*John Considine. Journal of Economic Education.* Washington: Spring 2006. Vol. 37, Iss. 2; p. 217 (12 pages)  
[Abstract](#) | [Full text](#) | [Full Text - PDF](#)
2. **[The Simpsons](#)**  
*Paula A Cantor. Political Theory.* Thousand Oaks: Dec 1999. Vol. 27, Iss. 6; p. 734 (16 pages)  
[Abstract](#)
3. **[South Park Libertarians](#)**  
*Nick Gillespie, Jesse Walker. Reason.* Los Angeles: Dec 2006. Vol. 38, Iss. 7; p. 59 (8 pages)  
[Abstract](#) | [Full text](#) | [Full Text - PDF](#)
4. **[10 QUESTIONS FOR MATT STONE AND TREY PARKER](#)**  
*James Poniewozik. Time.* New York: Mar 13, 2006. Vol. 167, Iss. 11; p. 8 (1 page)  
[Abstract](#) | [Full text](#)
5. **[A Study Guide for 'South Park'](#)**  
*Lisa Zeidner. New York Times (Late Edition (East Coast)).* New York, N.Y.: Nov 19, 2000. p. 2.2:37  
[Abstract](#) | [Full text](#)
6. **[From Rail-Splitter to Icon: Lincoln's Image in Illustrated Periodicals, 1860-1865](#)**  
*Kevin R C Gutzman. Civil War History.* Kent: Sep 2005. Vol. 51, Iss. 3; p. 344 (2 pages)  
[Abstract](#) | [Full text](#) | [Full Text - PDF](#)

C. Sample research topic for Figure 3: Men who suffer from bulimia have long-term health problems. (Note: Your instructor is requiring that you use ONLY scholarly journals).

**Figure 3 - Results List from the PsycARTICLES Database**

**Title :** Bulimia and Interpersonal Relationships: A Longitudinal Study:

**Author(s) :** [Mark H. Thelen](#) University of Missouri—Columbia  
[Janet Farmer](#) University of Missouri—Columbia  
[Laura McLaughlin Mann](#) University of Missouri—Columbia  
[Julie Pruitt](#) University of Missouri—Columbia

**Source :** [Journal of Counseling Psychology](#), Vol. 37 (1) January 1990, pp. 85-90. American Psychological Association

**ISSN :** 00220167

**Digital Object ID :** 10.1037//0022-0167.37.1.85

**Article Type :** Journal Article

**Abstract :** We assessed changes in bulimia in female college students and changes in the relation between bulimia and interpersonal relationships with women and men. A measure of bulimia (BULIT) was taken at Time 1, after a 7-month interval (Time 2), and again after a 12-month interval (Time 3). Measures of interpersonal relationships with women and men were taken at Time 2 and Time 3. Three groups were constituted on the basis of BULIT scores at Time 1: bulimic, subclinical bulimic (Ss who tested just under the cutoff for bulimia), and normal. Ss who tested bulimic or normal at Time 1 tended to continue to do so. In contrast, the subclinical bulimic group endorsed less bulimic symptomology over time. There were strong negative correlations between the BULIT and ratings of interpersonal relationships with men. The subclinical bulimics showed the greatest improvement over time in ratings of their relationships with men. Counselors may need to consider severity of bulimia and relationship issues during treatment planning.

1. Is Figure 3 **useful** for answering your research question? Explain why or why not?

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2. What is the publication date for the article? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Does this research topic require that you find only the most recent (**timely**) information?

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3. Your instructor says scholarly articles are **appropriate** for this assignment. Is the article in Figure 3 from a scholarly journal? (You may need to consult the **Types of Periodicals** chart again.) \_\_\_\_\_ Circle the parts of the record in Figure 3 that help you make this determination.

4. Would an article from Men's Health magazine be **appropriate** for your research question? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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Two quick ways to determine **authority** are 1) look at the author's credentials, and 2) look for the research methodology or the procedures used in assembling the information being reported.

5. Looking at Figure 3, what can you learn about the authors' credentials? \_\_\_\_\_

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6. Do any parts of the record in Figure 3 describe the authors' procedures while carrying out this study? If so, which part(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

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