Is it a scholarly article or isn’t it?

1. Be sure you are looking in an electronic database and not on the Internet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electronic Databases</th>
<th>The Internet</th>
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<td>(a.k.a. journal databases)</td>
<td>(a.k.a. the Web)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contain articles that are edited and compiled from well-known journal sources</td>
<td>Has no editorial board to go through the contents of web pages for currency &amp; accuracy</td>
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</table>

2. Once you have selected an electronic database that is appropriate to your topic, then look for the right clues:

Scholarly Resources

♦ are published by an association or scholarly press; almost never appear in newspapers or popular magazines

♦ always identify the author(s) and typically list the educational institution the author is affiliated with as well as his/her credentials

♦ always have references and a bibliography

♦ are typically written by professors, scientists or professionals; often the article is based on or relates to a study

♦ usually have long titles that describe the article’s content

♦ are primarily found in subject-specific periodical indexes such as PsycINFO

♦ typically include an abstract summarizing the article’s content

♦ are usually quite lengthy

♦ may contain supporting diagrams, charts or illustrations

Popular Press Resources

♦ are published in newspapers and magazines for example, Harpers or Ms.

♦ sometimes identify the author(s) as well as the author(s) affiliation and credentials

♦ rarely have references and a bibliography

♦ are typically written by freelance writers or professional journalists; do not relate to a study

♦ usually have fairly short titles that are not descriptive of the article’s content

♦ are found in more generalized indexes such as Academic Search Elite (EBSCO)

♦ rarely include an abstract summarizing the article’s contents

♦ can be any length, even shorter than a page

♦ often contain photographs and advertisements

Have other questions? Contact an Alverno Reference Librarian at 382-6062

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