

# Is it a scholarly article or isn't it?

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

**Electronic Databases**  
(a.k.a. journal databases)  
Contain articles that are edited and compiled from well-known journal sources

v.

**The Internet**  
(a.k.a. the Web)  
Has no editorial board to go through the contents of web pages for currency & accuracy

## 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