What is the difference between popular and scholarly articles? A Checklist

This document is 4 pages long

Popular (Magazines [and newspapers, also many Websites])

- There is usually only one author who is a journalist or professional writer who is not expert about the topic
- Information about the author is often not present
- If citations are present, they are only present in the text of the article itself, and they are informal and incomplete: **Example**: “...says Ralph Hitz of Tacoma Community College.”
- Written for the general public, using few technical terms
- Tend to be shorter than scholarly journal articles. Anywhere from 1 paragraph to 3 pages is average
- Titles of articles are often short, casual, perhaps “dramatic”, to catch reader attention
- The editing process is usually quick and tends to focus on grammar/spelling and quick fact checks.
- There are advertisements and plenty of images, often color
- Popular sources may lean left (liberal) or right (conservative)
- **Use a popular source** to get an overview of an issue; find out what is happening currently; and to find out what public opinion is on a topic.

Examples of Popular Sources:
When you get an article from a database, you often have few visual clues to help you decide whether something is a popular source. Here are some big hints that this is a popular source:

GOOD GAS BAD GAS


Abstract (summary)

By 2005 the country seemed to be running short, and the industry was building expensive new tanker terminals to import liquefied natural gas. Since 2005 gas production from deep shales has increased more than tenfold; it now accounts for more than a third of total production, which last year surpassed the 1973 record. In 2011 DOE put the amount of "unproved resources" of shale gas at 827 trillion cubic feet in 2012 it cut the estimate by more than 40 percent. In China, for instance, the world’s largest coal producer, very huge amounts of methane from its mines to prevent explosions. Drew Shindell, a climate scientist at NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies, recently led a global team of scientists in analyzing ways to reduce strategies, from draining rice fields to capturing the gas that escapes from gas wells.

Headnote

BURN NATURAL GAS AND IT WARM YOUR HOUSE. BUT LET IT LEAK, FROM FRACKED WELLS OR THE MELTING ARCTIC, AND IT WARM THE WHOLE PLANET.

THE LAST RAYS OF SUN FILTER THROUGH THE SNOW-COVERED SPRUCES ALONG THE SHORE OF GOLDSMID LAKE, JUST OUTSIDE FAIRBANKS, ALASKA.

Out on the lake Katey Walter Anthony stares at the black ice beneath her feet and at the white bubbles trapped inside it. Large and small, in layers, the bubbles have a mesmerizing effect, like stars in the night sky. Walter Anthony, an ecologist, grabs a heavy ice pick and wraps the rope handle of a lighted match above a large bubble; Walter Anthony.

Gas rushing from the hole ignites with a whoomp that stagger her. "My job's the worst, because usually you catch on fire," she says, smiling. In the gathering twilight she and her team ignite one bubble after another.
Scholarly (Journals)

- Are written by and for experts in a field. Authors are often researchers affiliated with a university or other research institution.
- Information about the authors are often present (positions and affiliations…)
- Scholarly articles are often authored by multiple authors (not always)
- Uses scholarly or technical language of the field
- Tend to be longer articles about research, 6 pages or more (30+ is not unusual)
- Includes full, formal citations for sources, both in the body of the text, and in a separate citations page – citation style may be MLA, APA, Chicago, or others…
- Are often refereed or peer reviewed (before acceptance into a journal, articles are evaluated by a panel of experts in the field – this can be a lengthy process – many are sent back to the authors for corrections – many are also rejected)
- **Note:** Book reviews and editorials are not considered scholarly articles, even when found in scholarly journals. While peer-reviewed research articles are supposed to be objective, editorials may be opinionated and biased.
- **Use a scholarly source** to get detailed data driven about a narrow aspect of a topic. To do scholarly work, such as you are doing for this assignment, focus on using scholarly sources.

Examples of Scholarly Journals:
When you get an article from a database, you often have few visual clues to help you decide whether something is a scholarly source. Here are some big hints that this is a scholarly source:

**Framework for Comparing Ecosystem Impacts of Developing Unconventional Energy Resources on Western US Rangelands**

*Kreuter, Urs P; Fox, William E; Tanaka, John A; Maczko, Kristie A; McCollum, Daniel W*; et al. Rangeland Ecology and Management.

Abstract (summary)

More diverse sources of energy are needed for countries to progress toward energy independence and to meet future food production needs. The US Task Force on Strategic Unconventional Fuels concluded that to achieve this objective it is essential to develop a domestic unconventional fuels industry. Rangelands, which cover 50% to 70% of the earth's terrestrial surface and dominate much of the western half of the United States, represent a major source of alternative energy resources. A framework to systematically identify biophysical-socioeconomic links that influence ecosystem services affected by alternative uses of rangelands has been lacking. An Ecological Conceptual framework was developed by the US Task Force for evaluating impacts and potential services of exploiting rangeland-based biofuel, natural gas, and wind energy resources can be systematically compared. We also demonstrate the use of this framework for selecting suitable indicators to monitor changes in the biophysical-socioeconomic links affected by the development of these unconventional energy sources. This type of approach can potentially enhance coordination between federal, state, and local agencies that are attempting to set policies and regulations for the sustainable development of unconventional energy resources on rangelands. [PUBLICATION ABSTRACT]

INTRODUCTION

Energy is fundamental to sustainable development because it provides the means for overcoming challenges facing humanity, including water and food shortages and poverty. [Serageldin 1999; Kalogirou 2005].