TYPES OF PERIODICALS

- "Periodical" is a general term for print or electronic publications containing separately written articles or other short works and, usually, issued at regular intervals. The fact that such works are issued periodically gives them their name of "periodicals." Newspapers, newsletters, magazines, and journals are all types of periodicals.
- There are three main types of periodicals - (1) scholarly or research journals, (2) trade or professional journals, and (3) popular magazines.
- Sometimes the title of the publication reveals what type of periodical it is, but you cannot always rely on title alone: *Philosophical Magazine* is, for example, the title of a quite good scholarly/research publication in physics.
- Look for clues, such as those described below, in distinguishing one type of periodical from another.

Characteristic Features	Types of Periodicals		
	Scholarly/Research Journals	**Trade/Professional Journals**	**Popular Magazines**
Appearance *examine the cover of the publication and the pages within it*	‣ Generally plain paper ‣ Black and white illustrations – largely graphs, tables, diagrams ‣ No ads, or a few ads for books, journals, conferences ‣ Often smaller than 8 1/2 x 11 in size	‣ Paper may be glossy or plain ‣ May have color photographs; will likely have graphs, tables, diagrams ‣ Ads for books, journals, conferences ‣ May be smaller than 8 1/2 x 11 in size	‣ Paper often glossy ‣ Color photographs as illustrations ‣ Color ads for everyday products (cars, makeup, household gadgets) ‣ The publications you see in dentists' or doctors' offices
Authorship *look for the author's name and information about the author at the beginning or end of the article*	‣ Academics and professionals: people with advanced degrees (Masters or Doctorates) in the field ‣ Authors not paid for their work; some pay "page charges" to get work published	‣ Academics and professionals: people with advanced degrees (Masters or Doctorates) in the field ‣ Professional writers ‣ Authors generally not paid	‣ Professional writers: people who may not have any background in the subject ‣ Journalists, reporters – people paid by the publication for what they write
Editors *look for a listing of those on the editorial board (and their qualifications) on a page near the front of the publication*	‣ Editors expert in the same fields as the authors ‣ Articles reviewed by editors and peer reviewers prior to publication ‣ Editors, reviewers check content as well as format, style	‣ Editors expert in the same fields as the authors ‣ Articles generally not peer reviewed prior to publication ‣ Editors may only check format and style	‣ Editors not expert in the subject field of the article; generally journalists and professional writers ‣ Some employ fact-checkers to check content ‣ Most editing is for format, style
Format/ Structure *check the headings within each article*	‣ Articles include an abstract, review of the literature, statement of the problem, methodology, findings, conclusions, endnotes	‣ Does not include a formal statement of the problem, methodology, findings, or conclusions ‣ Often reports on "how	‣ Articles often open with some experiences "real" people have had with the issues ‣ Articles then give at least two different

		or bibliography	I did it"	"expert" viewpoints on the subject
Sources *look for footnotes at the bottom of pages and endnotes or bibliographies at the end of articles*		‣ Sources are primarily texts, not people ‣ Sources often quoted directly ‣ Lots of sources ‣ Sources cited completely in footnotes, endnotes, bibliography	‣ Sources may be a mix of people and texts ‣ Direct quotes seldom used ‣ Few sources ‣ Some sources may be cited completely in footnotes, endnotes, bibliography	‣ Sources are generally people ‣ Texts not quoted directly ‣ Sources seldom or never cited completely
Audience/ Language *read the opening paragraph(s) of the article*		‣ Written for specialists in the field ‣ Lots of technical/ professional jargon ‣ Not easily understood by non-adults, people who haven't studied the topic	‣ Written for specialists in the field – but designed to be of practical help rather than academic, theoretical ‣ May be difficult for non-adults, people who haven't studied the topic	‣ Written so that anyone interested in the topic can understand it ‣ Accessible to non-adult readers (junior high or high school students)
Purpose *look at the types of information articles give*		‣ Articles advance scholarship in a field ‣ Publication a venue for scholars sharing research	‣ Articles help fellow professionals do daily work ‣ Publications often bring in money for professional societies	‣ Articles inform the "general public" ‣ Publication makes profits for corporate owners – generally by sale of ads
Frequency *look for issue numbers on the cover or spine*		‣ Publication may appear as few as 2 or 4 times a year; generally no more than 12 times a year	‣ Many are monthly	‣ Publications appear fairly frequently – maybe even weekly
Length		‣ Articles fairly long (10-30 pages) but on narrow topics	‣ Articles fairly short (1-5 pages)	‣ Articles usually short (1-10 pages) but on broad topics
Useful For		‣ Report on experiments and research studies ‣ Give lengthier book reviews, reviews of scholarly books	‣ Give practical information, "how to do things" ‣ Address current concerns of an industry	‣ Shows what the general public is interested in, is being told about a topic
Examples		‣ *Physical Review A* ‣ *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* ‣ *Journal of American Studies* ‣ *Management Accounting Research*	‣ *PC Today* ‣ *College & Research Libraries News* ‣ *American Bar Association Journal* ‣ *Sky & Telescope*	‣ *Time, Newsweek, US News & World Report* ‣ *Sports Illustrated* ‣ *Vogue, Glamour, Cosmopolitan*, etc. ‣ *Gourmet*

NMSU Library has all these types of periodicals: don't assume that just because you found it at a university library it must be scholarly!

When in doubt, ask at the Reference Desk, or consult Ulrich's *International Periodicals Directory* or *Magazines for Libraries*.