Scholarly Journals versus Popular Magazines

WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?
Appearance

Scholarly Journals have less advertising and use of color on both their covers and within their pages.

Popular Magazines often contain numerous ads and bold use of color. Illustrations and ads are included to enhance consumer appeal.
Authors

- Authors of scholarly journal articles are authorities, experts, and scholars within their field.
- Journal articles will typically include an author’s credentials in their byline.

- Authors of magazine articles are usually members of the magazine’s staff or freelance writers and generalists.
- The byline on magazine articles will only include the author’s name if present at all.
Scholarly journal articles will include an extensive works cited/references section and may also include footnotes and endnotes.

Magazine articles may refer to the author’s sources within the body of the article but seldom include extensive works cited or footnote information or a formal bibliography.
The Peer-Review Process

• Articles in scholarly/peer-reviewed journals will be “reviewed” by a group of the author’s “peers” for accuracy, validity, and timeliness before being accepted for publication.

• Articles in popular magazines may be reviewed by an editor before publication but the process is not as extensive as that in a peer-reviewed journal.
Purpose

- Articles in scholarly journals are for the purpose of informing the readers of research or progress in the field.

- Articles in popular magazines serve to inform and entertain readers.
Articles in scholarly journals will contain jargon and field-specific language that may be difficult for a lay person to understand.

An abstract, summarizing the main points and findings of the article, will most likely accompany the article itself.

Articles in popular magazines are written for the general populace and will contain simple, everyday language.

Magazines rarely contain abstracts.
Scholarly journals are typically published by professional organizations and universities.

Magazines are typically published by for-profit corporations and vendors.