I found an article! *But, is it scholarly?*

**Review the citation**

- **How long is the article?**
  - Scholarly research articles are always more than a few pages long and are often 10-30 pages on average. *Caution!* Scholarly journals contain book reviews and introductory essays that may initially appear scholarly, but are not research articles. These are usually shorter than 10 pages and often do not include extensive references.

- **How is it titled?**
  - The title will likely be written in a more academic nature than a magazine or newspaper.

- **Where is it published?**
  - Scholarly research articles are published in academic journals. They often contain words like journal, review, studies, or research in their title.

- **Where did you find it?**
  - While you might find some scholarly articles on the internet, it’s harder to judge reliability and you’ll often be asked to pay money to get the full text.
  - Use library databases like JSTOR and limit to subject areas useful for your assignment—like political science.

**Look at the article**

- **What are the author(s) credentials?**
  - Are they affiliated with an academic institution?

- **Is there an abstract?**
  - Scholarly articles usually contain a brief abstract, or summary, of their article. This is a great tool to help you quickly identify the nature of the article.

- **Is there a literature review/references?**
  - Scholars review the existing literature on their topic at the beginning of their article and include the sources they referred to in their list of references.

- **Is the article written for an academic audience?**
  - Scholarly articles often contain technical language and specialized vocabulary.

**Read the article**

- **What is the research question?**
  - Scholarly articles are centered around a research question. Read the article and look for the question the researchers are addressing. The research question may be simply stated in the beginning of the paper or it may be implied.

- **Did the author(s) conduct original research?**
  - The research can be quantitative (usually centered around hard data) or qualitative (more textually based), but the authors will likely have conducted original research. This means the article should add new knowledge to a topic, not just review existing information.

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