



Researching Controversial Issues

Exploring the Topic

Choose or refine your topic, familiarize yourself with the controversy, identify keywords & parties

- **CQ Researcher** – Collection of reports on topics in the news. Each report includes a background, chronology, bibliography and statistics. (Library database)
- **Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center** - Brings together information to help understand a controversial issue. (Library database)
- **Pro/Con essay books @ REF H31** – Various series examining social, political, and economic debates. Located in the Reference Collection, 1st floor.
- **Newspapers and news magazines** – Accessible through multiple library databases. Library website -> Databases.-> Subject category: News
- **Subject Encyclopedias** – In-depth entries written by experts, usually containing bibliographies.
 - **Social issues in America : an encyclopedia** REF HN57.S624 (7 volumes)
 - **Gale Virtual Reference Library** – Collection of reference books in online format (Library database)
 - **Reference Universe** – Find subject encyclopedias in the reference collection. **Be sure to restrict search to titles in SEU library.** (Library database)

Investigating the Issue

Books – Overviews of topic, histories of the controversy, evidential data and parties to the issue.

- **SEU Online Catalog** (Library website)
- **NetLibrary** (Library database)
- **WorldCat** (Library database)

If you need a book or article that the library does not have, request an Interlibrary Loan using the library website.

Scholarly Articles – Research studies, evidential data, etc.

- **Academic Search Complete & Academic OneFile** – Limit to scholarly/peer-reviewed. (Library databases)
- Subject-specific databases, e.g., **AGRICOLA, ATLA Religion, Business Source Complete, Communication & Mass Media Complete, ERIC, PsycINFO, PubMed** (Library databases)

Parties to the Controversy

- Find parties by reading articles and books on the topic, **CQ Researcher** reports and bibliographies in REF H31 books.
- Search **Google** for advocacy groups/position papers on .org websites:



- Search library databases for articles about different sides in the debate:

Find: in

and in

and in

in
 (Example search in Academic Search Complete)

- Search **PolicyFile** (Library database)
- Search for Congressional testimony (might sometimes be appropriate to use as evidence):
 - Use **Congressional LexisNexis** – library database; enter search term & look under “Hearing”
 - Use **Google** – ex. “gay marriage” testimony site:gov

Finding Supporting Details

Statistics (see also library guide *Finding Statistics*)

- Government statistics – <http://www.fedstats.gov/>
- **Statistical Abstract of the U.S.** – <http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>
- **Information Plus series** – in Reference Collection at H31
- **SEU Library Statistics Links** (Library website -> Research Guides -> Web links -> Subject: Statistical Resources) – http://libr.stedwards.edu/research_tools/web_links.htm#sr
- Search **Google** for statistics



Laws and Government Information

- **LexisNexis** – Court cases, laws, law journals, Congressional information & testimony (Library database)
- **CQ Electronic Library** – Information on public policy issues (Library database)
- **LegalTrac & Legal Collection** – Scholarly law journals (Library database)
- **Congressional Research Reports** (Library database)
- **SEU Library Legal links** (Library website -> Research Guides -> Web links -> Subject: Law)
- **Google Government Search** – <http://www.google.com/ig/usgov>
- **THOMAS** – Find U.S. bills, laws & Congressional committee reports at <http://thomas.loc.gov>

Library Guides

(Library website -> Research Guides)

- *Online Search Strategies*
- *Evaluating Research Sources*
- *Finding Statistics*
- *MLA Citation Guides*