



Controversial Issues

→ BOOKS:

Looking for books on your subject is an excellent way to get started with research. You will consult the [Library Catalog](#) to find books, videos, DVDs, etc. for information on your topic. If a book is located in the Reference area, it must be used in the library; plan to take notes or photocopy the information. Most books, however, are located in the “book stacks”; these books can be checked-out for three weeks.

Reference Books

Reference books are useful for overviews of a topic. The information is concise, authoritative and often highlights specific aspects of a subject. The following books will give you ideas of possible topics and provide you with brief information:

Current Issues

Ref HN 59.2 .C87 2003 v.1-4 examples: censorship; creationism, etc.

The Debatatabase Book

Ref PN 4181 .D3945 2007 examples: arranged marriage; cell phones, etc.

Encyclopedia of Bioethics

Ref QH 332 .E52 2004 v.1-5 examples: euthanasia; gender identity, etc.

Series Books

Series such as, ***Opposing Viewpoints; Current Controversies; At Issue; Information Series on Current Topics; Library in a Book; Contemporary World Issues***, etc. are very useful for quick information on “hot topics.” Look for them by series name by doing a [Title](#) search in the catalog. You can also search for series books on a particular topic by using the [Keyword search](#). Enter the series name, followed by the topic you are researching. For example, type *opposing viewpoints abortion*.

Circulating books

Circulating books can be checked out. They are found in the library’s bookstacks. Books develop a topic in detail. Try some of these words and phrases in the **subject** search box in the online catalog:

Homelessness	School violence	Global warming	Abortion
Interracial dating	Children’s rights	Euthanasia	Gangs
Education, bilingual	Drug abuse	Drunk driving	Gun control

→ DATABASES:

Magazine, newspaper and journal articles provide current information on your topic. The following are a sample of the many databases that the library carries. Save yourself some time; send articles to your e-mail account, and read them later. You can also search the databases from home, or any off-campus location. You will be asked to enter your name and seven-digit college ID number.

[Issues & Controversies](#)

This database specializes in current controversial issues. It gives overviews of topics, as well as statistics, tables and graphs, history, pro/con arguments and more. If you are not sure which topic to choose, browse through [Issues Pro and Con](#) found on the left side of the home page.

[Expanded Academic ASAP](#)

The contents of thousands of magazines and academic journals can be searched through either an advanced or subject search. An [Advanced Search](#) will allow you to combine keywords to locate articles on specific aspects of a topic, such as, *homeless AND mentally ill, or capital punishment AND California*. You may also want to limit results of your search to “documents with full text” by putting a check mark in the box. On the other hand, a [Browse Subjects](#) search can help narrow a broad subject like *globalization* by providing a list of subdivisions such as *economic aspects*. From the list of results, you can also “limit to Full-text” articles and you can add more keywords in the “Refine Result” box.

[LexisNexis Academic](#)

For current news events, whether local or distant, try this database. It contains full-text articles from U.S. and international newspapers. It is especially useful for finding articles from [The New York Times](#), the [San Francisco Chronicle](#), and the [San Jose Mercury News](#). You can link directly to these papers from the library’s database page. If you wish to search the entire database, click on the [LexisNexis Academic](#) link.



WEBSITES

Beware of the Web. If you’re not an expert on your topic, don’t just search using Google or Yahoo. Start by using the selective search engines listed under [Best Websites](#) on the Library’s website. To get there from the Library homepage, click on Research Aids. These search engines will lead you to websites that have been evaluated by subject specialists. You’ll get fewer, but better quality, sites.

[IPL2 \(Internet Public Library\)](#)

This is a subject index to Internet resources. It also links to additional resources by subject, newspapers and magazines, special collections leading to reference resources, literary criticism and help with writing research papers.

Google

Google is loaded with information – some excellent, some fraudulent. Just remember that you must evaluate what you find here. For help with this, go to the library’s *Research Aids* link where you will find, [How to Evaluate Web Pages](#). In addition, rather than doing a general search, try some of Google’s more sophisticated search possibilities, such as [Google Scholar](#) or Advanced search.

[Google Advanced Search](#)

Use the “Search within a site or domain” box to limit your search to an educational (enter .edu) or government (enter .gov) site. Articles from educational or government sites may have more accuracy and authority.

Use the “File type” box to find a PowerPoint presentation on your topic. Click on “any format” and select “Microsoft PowerPoint”.

ALWAYS REMEMBER TO ASK A LIBRARIAN IF YOU NEED HELP WITH:

- Developing a search strategy appropriate to your assignment and thesis.
- Evaluating your sources and finding additional research options.
- [Citing sources](#).