

Controversial Issues

Looking for a research topic?

- Access the **Idea Generator** provided by the Old Dominion University Libraries at <http://www.lib.odu.edu/researchassistance/ideagenerator/ideageneratorarts.htm>
- A list of research topics is also available on the **Issues & Controversies** database on the **e-Library** page at <http://www.dcc.vccs.edu/lrc/E-Library/elibrary.htm> Select **Controversial Issues** from the **e-Library** page. Next select **Issues & Controversies**. On the right side of the page you will see links to **Issues in the Headlines**. At the bottom of this area is a link entitled **Access All Topics**. Click on this link to see an alphabetical list of topics. At the bottom of the **Issues & Controversies** page is a tab labeled **Need a Research Topic?** Click on *More* Research Topics to retrieve clusters of related articles dealing with different themes in **Issues & Controversies**.
- You can also search for topics in the database **Opposing Viewpoints in Context**. Select **Controversial Issues** from the **e-Library** page and then select **Opposing Viewpoints in Context**. Select the link to *Issues* at the top of the page to browse through a list of issues covered by **Opposing Viewpoints**.

Books

The library possesses five series of titles which focus on controversial issues.

- **Information Plus** Reference Series
- **Opposing Viewpoints** Series
- **Point Counterpoint** Series
- **The Reference Shelf** Series
- **Taking Sides** Series

How do I find a book?

These titles can be accessed by going to the **e-Library** page and selecting **Online Book Catalog**.

- To search for titles in the Information Plus series on the online catalog, select **Keywords Anywhere** in the **Choose Search Type** box and type *Information Plus* to locate titles in this series, examples of which include:

Crime: a Serious American Problem HV6789.W54 2005

Death and Dying, Who Decides? R726.D433 2005

Endangered Species: Must They Disappear? QH75 .E63 2005

- To search for titles in the Opposing Viewpoints series, conduct a **Keywords Anywhere** search by typing **Opposing Viewpoints**. Examples of titles in this series include:
Animal Experimentation HV4915.A635 2007
Gambling HV6715.G284 2007
Gun Control KF3942.H3 G86 2007
- To search for titles in the Point Counterpoint series, conduct a **Keywords Anywhere** search by typing **Point Counterpoint**. Examples of titles in this series include:
Capital Punishment HV8694.M327 2008
Immigrants' Rights After 9/11 JV 6456.R53 2008
Smoking Bans HV5760.H83 2008
- To search for titles in the Reference Shelf series, conduct a **Keywords Anywhere** search by typing **Reference Shelf**. Examples of titles in this series include:
Water Supply TD355.W385 2008
World Hunger HC79.F3 W65 2007
Evolution QH366.2.E84595 2006
- To search for titles in the Taking Sides series, conduct a **Keywords Anywhere** search by typing **Taking Sides**. Examples of titles in this series include:
Taking Sides. Clashing Views on Controversial Educational Issues.
LA 217.2 .T35 2006
Taking Sides. Clashing Views on Controversial Bioethical Issues.
R724 .T35 2006

Information on these five controversial issues series is given below.

Information Plus Reference Series. This series provides information on the most important social issues in America today. It gives readers a comprehensive summary of the most up-to-date research, legislation and more on each subject. Provides statistical information and numerous tables, charts, and graphs. **Over 90 titles.**

Opposing Viewpoints Series. Opposing Viewpoints provides “access to a wide diversity of opinions...Both shrill and moderate, the selections—by experts, policy makers, and concerned citizens—include complete articles and speeches, long book excerpts, and occasional cartoons and boxed quotations...all up to date and fully documented.”
Booklist **Over 250 titles.**

Point Counterpoint Series. “Each book in the Point/Counterpoint series offers all the statutes, legal opinions, and studies a student needs to structure a cohesive argument on a given controversial topic. Issues are presented from multiple points of view; sidebars cite

laws, opinions, and court cases to aid in critical analysis; appendices help students conduct legal research; and all sources are fully documented.” *From the back jacket of each title.* **Over 60 titles.**

The Reference Shelf Series. “The books in this series contain reprints of articles, excerpts from books, addresses on current issues, and studies of social trends in the United States and other countries... providing background information and discussion from various points of view.” *From the verso page of each title.* **Over 130 titles.**

Taking Sides Series. Taking Sides presents current controversial issues in a debate style format. Each issue is framed with an issue summary, an introduction to the issue, and a postscript that ties the readings together and provides an annotated listing of World Wide Web sites and suggestions for further reading.

Websites

The following websites focus on controversial issues:

Tolerance.org

A site which provides thought-provoking news, conversation and support for those who care about diversity, equal opportunity and respect for differences in schools.

<http://www.tolerance.org>

ProCon.org

ProCon.org is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, public benefit corporation whose purpose is to educate the public about controversial issues by presenting facts, news, and thousands of diverse opinions in a pro-con format.

<http://www.procon.org>

Public Agenda

Public Agenda is a nonpartisan and non-profit organization whose mission is to help American leaders better understand the public’s point of view and to help citizens know more about critical policy issues so they can make thoughtful, informed decisions.

<http://www.publicagenda.com>

Databases

Academic Search Complete:

- To access **Academic Search Complete**, select *Magazines and Journals* from the **e-Library** page. **Academic Search Complete** is a scholarly, multi-disciplinary full-text database, with more than 8,500 full-text periodicals.

- The database includes more than 7,300 peer-reviewed journals. In addition to full text, **Academic Search Complete** offers indexing and abstracts for more than 12,500 journals and a total of more than 13,000 publications, including monographs, reports, conference proceedings, etc.

The following databases can be accessed by selecting *Controversial Issues* from the e-Library page.

Opposing Viewpoints in Context:

Opposing Viewpoints in Context is a one-stop resource for contextual information and opinions on hundreds of today's hottest social issues. **Opposing Viewpoints in Context** features continuously updated viewpoint articles, topic overviews, full-text magazine, academic journal, and newspaper articles, primary source documents, statistics, images, videos, audiofiles and links to vetted websites. The Mary M. Barksdale Library contains more than 200 books in the Opposing Viewpoints series published by Greenhaven Press. Search the Online Catalog (VCCSLinc) for these books.

Issues & Controversies, available from Facts on File:

Issues & Controversies provides up-to-date, in-depth, and objective information on the most prominent and hotly-debated issues of the day. It combines authoritative factual analysis with clear explanations of opposing points of view and numerous special features, including an **Issues: Pro and Con** menu, which summarizes key issues at a glance, **By the Numbers** statistical snapshots of key issues, **Groups to Contact** for further research, **Interviews with Experts**, **Editorial Cartoons**, and **Newspaper Editorials**. Also includes a link entitled **Need a Research Topic?** which assists users searching for research topic ideas.

CQ Researcher:

CQ Researcher Online provides original, comprehensive reporting and analysis on issues in the news. Founded in 1923 as *Editorial Research Reports*, **CQ Researcher** is noted for its in-depth, unbiased coverage of health, social trends, criminal justice, international affairs, education, the environment, technology, and the economy. Reports are published weekly in print and online 44 times a year by CQ Press, a division of Congressional Quarterly, Inc.

Each single-themed, 12,000 word report is researched and written by a seasoned journalist. The report provides researchers with an introductory overview; background and chronology on the topic; an assessment of the current situation; tables and maps; pro/con statements from representatives of opposing positions; and bibliographies of key sources.