

Current Issues & Controversies



Finding Topical Resources for persuasive papers and speeches

Searching the Catalog for Books

From the library home page <http://academics.tctc.edu/lynx/>, click on the “Library Catalog link. Then enter a search term and click on **Subject**.

Use terms that are fairly general, like abortion or genetic engineering or violence. Browse your list of results for titles that seem relevant to your topic. Click on “details”, then look at the “catalog record” tab for subject headings. These will frequently refer you to related or more specific terms. . Some examples:

Subject term: Abortion--Social aspects--United States.

Subject term: Abortion--Moral and ethical aspects--United States.

Subject term: Abortion--United States--Statistics.

Subject term: Medical genetics--Research--Moral and ethical aspects.

Subject term: Genetic engineering--Moral and ethical aspects.

Subject term: Human cloning--Moral and ethical aspects.

Subject term: Genetics, Medical--ethics.

Subject term: Genetics, Medical--trends.

Subject term: Ethics, Medical.

Subject term: Juvenile delinquency--United States--Encyclopedias.

Subject term: Violence in children--United States--Encyclopedias.

Subject term: Juvenile delinquency--Encyclopedias.

Subject term: Violence in children--Encyclopedias.

Look for useful subdivisions

Look for more specific terms

Look for encyclopedias in specific areas

Useful hint: Look for encyclopedias in broad areas. For example, the *Encyclopedia of Aging* has a good article on elderly driving; *The Encyclopedia of Criminology and Deviant Behavior* has a section on hate crimes; the encyclopedia *Violence in America* has a history of violence on television.

Can't Decide on a Topic? We have a number of series with volumes devoted to most of the current hot topics and controversies. The series *Opposing Viewpoints*, for example, has separate volumes on abortion, censorship, the death penalty, euthanasia, etc. Other similar series are *At Issue*, *Contemporary Issues Companion*, *Contemporary World Issues*, *Current Controversies*, and *Library in a Book*. Do a **Title** search on the series title; this will give you a listing of all the titles (each with its separate call number) in the series.

Searching the Article Databases



From the library home page, click the “Article Databases” link. Choose the database you wish to search. Your best bets:

Opposing Viewpoints

This outstanding database provides a list of current and controversial issues giving the **pro and con** arguments in the form of viewpoint essays. You can also access reference, magazine and journal articles, statistics, websites, and primary documents about these controversial issues.

Knowledge Source (SIRS)

This database indexes magazines, newspapers, government documents, primary sources, viewpoint essays, and selected websites. The right side of the main page has a section titled “Your Top 10 Pro v. Con Leading Issues” if you need help choosing a topic.

OneFile (InfoTrac)

Easy to use and wide in scope, this database provides comprehensive coverage of all subjects in all types of periodicals. Articles go back to 1980, which is useful if you need a historical perspective of your topic.

Searching the Internet

From the library home page, click on the “Web Resources” link. From there, click on the “Best Websites by Subject” link and then select “Current Issues.” This will give you a nice listing of useful sites that have been selected by knowledgeable professionals.

Web Resources

Best Websites by Subject A great place to begin your web searches. Thanks to Clemson University Librarian's for maintaining this directory of websites arranged alphabetically by subjects.

Current Issues

Quick Reference

catalog | find articles & databases
journals | interlibrary loan | home

Issues and Causes
http://dir.yahoo.com/society_and_culture/issues_and_causes/

Political Issues
http://dir.yahoo.com/Government/politics/political_issues/

Links to the News
<http://poynter.org/dj/shedden/index.htm>

The Annenberg Public Policy Center (AAPC)
<http://www.appcpenn.org/>

Brookings Institution: Research Topics
<http://www.brook.edu/index/research.htm>

Public Agenda Online
<http://www.publicagenda.org/>

Frontline
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/>

Hot Paper Topics
<http://library.sau.edu/bestinfo/Hot/notindex.htm>

Opinion-Pages
<http://www.opinion-pages.org/>

Think Tanks and Public Interest Organizations
<http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/politics/thnktank.htm>

Government Documents in the News
<http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/docnews.html>

Please ask any library staff member if you need assistance. We are always happy to help you find what you need for your assignments.

Our thanks to the Clemson University Library for this great resource.