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
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:
  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:

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—including 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.