



Social Issues & Controversies

Current controversial topics provide good material for English essays, research papers or speeches.

BOOK SERIES

The library has various book series that cover controversial issues. These books give alternative points of view on current issues and controversies. The most popular series are listed below. You can browse the titles in a particular series by doing a key word search in the library catalog. For example, you could enter the series title, *Opposing viewpoints*, in the key word search box to get to a list of all of the books in this series owned by West Valley College or Mission College. You can narrow the search to a specific topic in a series by doing a key word search on a topic followed by the series title. For example, you could enter the key words *global warming opposing viewpoints*. You can do the same type of searches in LINK +.

Series Titles Include:

Opposing Viewpoints
Reference Shelf
Contemporary World Issues
Current Controversies
Ideas in conflict
Information series on current topics
Taking Sides

FINDING ARTICLES USING “FILTERED” DATABASES

Access databases on campus, off campus or through campus’ wireless network at:

<http://www.westvalley.edu/library/databases/>

You will need your **name** and **student ID** number to log in.

ProQuest Direct 1986+

This is a web-based index, providing access to articles from magazines, scholarly journals and newspapers.

Basic Search examples: eating disorders
athletes AND drugs

Under “Results” you may find boxes, at the bottom of the page, labeled “Suggested Topics” which may help you narrow or focus your topic.

FACTS.com – Issues and Controversies

This is a feature of the Facts On File World News Digest. Issues and Controversies provide in-depth investigations of current controversial issues. Once on the *Facts.com* web site, click on the “Issues and Controversies” tab at the top of the page. Browse topics using the “Quick Access” links on the right or enter a specific topic in the “Search” box on the left.

CQ Researcher

CQ Researcher is a weekly publication which features a single controversial issue each week. This is a great starting point for an overall review of a current controversial topic or for getting ideas for choosing a controversial issue. Included in each report are charts, graphs, statistics, historical background, pro/con arguments as well as a thorough reference list leading to additional books and articles on the topic. Do a “Quick Search” to locate a specific topic or “Browse by Topic”

FINDING STATISTICS

***Statistical Abstract of the United States* Ref HA 202. U58**

This publication is a good source for statistics covering the United States. It is updated annually. A detailed index in the back of the book lists topics by chart number rather than page number. This data is also available online at www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/statab.html.

***World Almanac and Book of Facts* Ref AY 67.N5 W7**

This publication provides statistics and brief information on a wide variety of subjects. A detailed index is located in the back of the book and refers you to appropriate page numbers.

RAND California

Use this database to locate statistics relevant to California. This online database is accessible on the library’s database page: <http://www.westvalley.edu/library/databases/>.

SEARCHING THE INTERNET

Using the “filtered databases” mentioned above to find articles on your topic provides you with a good reliable start on your research. If you are looking for reliable web sites, you can use the *Librarian’s Index* accessible from the Library’s Easy Access Page or at <http://lii.org>. The web sites included in this search engine have all been evaluated for reliability by professional librarians.

If you use a favorite search engine such as Google, Yahoo, Dogpile, Webcrawler, etc. follow “Help” tips, provided by the search engines, to get better results from your search. Finally, carefully evaluate the source of information you find on an Internet site. For help with this, see the library’s helpful handout entitled, “Evaluating a Web Site.” This handout is available, in paper, at the Reference Desk or online at: <http://www.westvalley.edu/library/research-guides/evaluating-a-website.pdf>