

# Best Bets for Current Controversies

## Starter Resources

### Periodicals

- **Congressional Digest**  
Availability: Print & Full Text
- **CQ Researcher**  
Availability: Print only. Location: Shelved alphabetically by title, recent issues in periodical reading Room, Back issues in 2nd floor periodical stacks.



### Book Series

- **Opposing Viewpoints**
- **Contemporary World Issues**  
Availability: Print. Search GIL for specific titles and call numbers.

### Encyclopedias

- **Encyclopedia of Applied Ethics**  
(REF BJ63 .E44 1998)
- **Encyclopedia of Social Issues**  
(REF HN57 .E59 1997 v.1-5)
- **Encyclopedia of Modern American Social Issues**  
(REF HN57 .K73 1997)
- **Social Issues in Science and Technology: An Encyclopedia**  
(REF Q175.5 .N49 1999)
- [Encyclopedia of My Topic]  
A specialized encyclopedia on your topic may exist! For tips, see the second bullet point, below.

## The Library Catalog

### GIL

<http://gil-odum.valdosta.edu>

The online catalog is used to find materials located in Odum Library. Three different search screens are available: Quick, Keyword, and Exact. Each works differently. I recommend using the “Command” search available from the Exact

screen.

- Use ? to truncate. Include all phrases in quotation marks.
- **For more background material**, try a "Quick Limit" search to Reference Collection or include the term "encyclopedias" with your keyword.
- Items treating the controversial aspects of a topic are likely to include the following subject heading subdivisions: "moral and ethical aspects" or "social aspects". Consider working these terms into your search statement.

## **GALILEO**

GALILEO is your portal to full text databases & journal indexes. The following databases represent the "best bets" for current controversies. In addition to those listed, be sure to try any "professional" databases related to your topic (e.g., an education index for educational topics or a criminal justice database for a crime-related topic).

### **Academic Search Premier** (EBSCOhost)

This is the "can't go wrong" database. It is large and covers all disciplines. Over 3,800 journals are indexed with full text for 2,300 titles, including the *Congressional Digest*. It also provides indexing for the *CQ Researcher*.

### **Research Library** (ProQuest)

Research Library is ProQuest's counterpart of Academic Search Premier. This is a large, general database offering lots of full text. What's not to like?

### **LexisNexis Academic**

This database includes, among other things, law reviews. Law reviews are legal journals—and they love controversial topics. Articles combine legal, ethical, and social scientific perspectives. To search the reviews select "Legal Research" then "Law Reviews." For best results click on the "Guided Search" tab. To cut down on the number of hits returned, use the pull down menu to change "Full Text" to "At Least 3." This is a tricky database but has great content. Consult with a librarian for additional assistance.

### **SocINDEX with Full Text**

This database includes coverage of all the social sciences and allied professions. This is a good source because controversies attract the interest of social scientists.

## **Government Documents**

Government documents are a great resource for current controversies. They present authoritative, non-partisan information...and they address nearly every topic!

- **CRS Reports**  
These are brief research reports conducted for members of congress by Library of Congress researchers. A number of web sites make these available (e.g., Open CRS : <http://www.opencrs.com/>). For an quick and easy search, google your topic keyword with +CRS (e.g., [partial birth +CRS](#) ).
  
- **Catalog of Government Publications (CGP)**  
<http://catalog.gpo.gov/>  
This is the single most comprehensive catalog of government publications. It includes useful material like congressional hearings, committee prints, special commission reports, agency studies, and [GAO reports](#).  
  
Tip: Enclose phrases in quotation marks. To limit to online material include "http" in your search.
  
- **Statistical Abstract of the United States**  
<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>  
If you are looking for authoritative statistics, start here! This is a wondrously convenient compilation. It can also tip you off to additional publications (in the footnotes accompanying each table) or identify the relevant [federal agency](#) to consult

