Researching Pro & Con Issues

(Updated: October 2002)

If you are doing a position paper or speech on a "pro & con" issue, this guide should help you! In order to make your position clear, you will need information to support it, and information to defend yourself from the opposing arguments. This information will come from many sources: books; chapters in books; articles in journals; articles in major newspapers; statistical findings reported in articles, government reports, or reference sources; public opinion polls; and promotional information resources from major national associations supporting one side or the other of the issue.

Books -- Use our Library Catalog to search for current books on your topic. If you can locate a recent, major, academic book on your topic, this will be your single best resource for beginning your research. Don't hesitate to ask for assistance at the Reference Desk. If you want to find an appropriate book on your own using our Library Catalog, we recommend that you first use the Subject / Keyword approach to find a book on your topic, then examine that book's subject headings as shown on the display. Locate the exact Library of Congress subject heading that matches your topic, then click on it to find more books on this exact topic in our Library.

Books in Series -- There are four major series which the Library buys which deal with pro & con issues. If you find a recent book on your topic in one of these series, you will have an excellent start on your research. Each of the links below will take you that part of our online Library Catalog where the individual titles in these series can be viewed.

Contemporary World Issues Click on Contemporary World Issues to see a browse listing of all titles in this series. There are 115 or more entries for this series.

Current Controversies Series Click on Current Controversies to see a browse listing of all titles in this series. There are 36 or more entries for this series.

Opposing Viewpoints Series Click on Opposing Viewpoints Series to see a browse listing of all titles in this series. There are 103 or more entries for this series.

The Reference Shelf There are 152 or more entries for this series.

Articles in Reference Sources -- Locate one or more articles from major reference sources dealing with your topic, for example: