



# Sociology

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Sociology 120

## Introduction to the persuasive essay

The fundamental assumption of this course is that argument is everywhere. We live in a capitalist/consumer society and are accosted by persuasive "statements" to purchase cars, clothes, food, etc.. everyday.

An argument/persuasive essay is one that attempts to persuade the reader to accept the writer's point of view. The writer can either be serious or funny, but always tries to convince the reader of the validity of his or her opinion.

Remember that you don't need to take an extreme view on a topic. Assemble your evidence and decide where you fit on the the whole range of opinions on the issue between two extremes. Another way to focus is to decide whether you are going to take a whole policy issue or just take a part of it by focusing on a question of fact or a question of value. Example of different ways to focus the topic of *household pets*:

Informative: *Animal shelters routinely euthanize cats which are not readily placed in homes.*

Persuasive value: *Spaying and neutering of domestic cats is inhumane.*

Persuasive policy: *The state should require that domestic cats be spayed or neutered.*

## GENERAL REFERENCE BOOKS

Finding background information about a topic is an important step of the research process. Consulting a handbook or subject-specific encyclopedia can help you put your research in a broader context and help point you to areas for further research

- Encyclopedia of Family Life Reference HQ534 .E53 1999
- Encyclopedia of Psychology Reference BF31 .E525 2000
- Encyclopedia of Marriage and the Family Reference HQ9 .E52 1995
- Encyclopedia of Sociology Reference HM425 .E5 2000
- Encyclopedia of Women and Gender Reference HQ1115 .E43 2001
- Sociology Basics Reference HM 425 S63
- The Family In America Reference HQ 536 H365

## STEP 1: Find Books

For topic ideas, search the [Library homepage](#). Use Keywords such as "opposing viewpoints", "social aspects", or "psychological aspects" or "ethical aspects"

## STEP 2: Find articles

DIRECTIONS to find articles: 1) Go to [Library homepage](#). 2) Click on Databases A-Z. 3) Select a database.

Note: if you use one of these databases from a remote location, you must enter your [campus username and password](#).

- General Onefile - database of articles from magazines and journals.
- CQ Researcher - Excellent for political, social, family, education and health issues.

## STEP 4: Use websites

- [NBCSanDiego.com](#) News
- [SignOnSanDiego](#) News
- [North County Times](#)
- [Institute of Governmental Studies](#) (UC Berkeley)  
Locate the "Hot Topics" section and view links to various websites. For example, you can read examine opinions of the California Proposition of 2004 ([Three Strikes Law](#)).
- [Best Information on the Net](#) Links for cloning, gun control, and death penalty
- [North County Times](#)
- [Institute of Governmental Studies](#) (UC Berkeley)
- [ProCon.org](#)
- [Public Agenda: The Issues](#)
- [GrassCatcher](#) (policy issues for all 50 states)
- [Speakout.com](#) provides topics with "on one hand and on the other hand" viewpoints (concept of pros and con)
- [National Library of Medicine: Social and family issues.](#)
- [Google Directory: Social Issues](#)
- [Yahoo Directory: Social Issues and Causes](#)
- [National Public Radio: Talk of the Nation Discussion Topics](#) (caution: use this list to generate topics only. Opinions on issues are not necessarily from experts in the field.)
- [The Commonwealth Fund](#) - Research and information on health care and health insurance issues
- [Hot Paper Topics](#) - Links to statistics, laws, court decisions, research, and other information on controversial topics
- [National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information](#)
- [Opensecrets.org](#) - "The online source for money in politics data"
- [Opinion-Pages](#) - Searchable database of current newspaper editorials from around the world
- [Political Information](#) - "A search engine for politics, policy, and political news"
- [Public Agenda Online](#) - Great source for colorful charts and quick facts  
Only covers 21 topics such as abortion, crime and immigration issues
- [Affirmative Action and Diversity Project: A Web Page for Research](#)
- [American Sociological Association](#)
- [Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, American Psychological Association](#)
- Blog [No Impact Man](#) example of a good blog on environmental issues
- Blog [Andrew C Revkin Dot Earth](#) example of a good blog on environmental issues

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