

Bio 16

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Winter 2008

The following information will hopefully help you as you write your papers for this course. However, realize the techniques for finding information will vary depending on topic, available resources, and purpose. This is why librarians are available so many hours to help you. So don't struggle too long without asking a reference librarian for help. You can go to the Research Assistance Desk or contact specific librarians. If you would like to contact me feel free to email me at Victoria.Welborn@furman.edu or call x2342. I am on the reference desk from 3-5 on Mondays, 1-3 on Thursdays, and 7-10 on Wednesday nights.

The ultimate goal of your library research for your papers will be to identify and retrieve scientific journal articles. However, due to the nature of scientific journal articles you will have to do some background work before you can actually do a search for science articles. (This will become clearer as you progress through the term). A large part of this background work will involve formulating the substance of your argument – so you know **specifically** what to search for in the journal article databases. Generally,

searches on broad topics do not work well in the scientific literature; one must have defined a very specific topic. A search on *birth defects* will yield few results in the scientific research article. However, a search which identifies a specific aspect of a specific birth defect i.e. treatment of spina bifida will generally retrieve more hits.

To begin the process you will need to educate yourself on your topic and begin organizing your arguments. The following web sites may help you. These sources are most likely to send you to web sites for more information. While these are good portals and have screened the web sites, remember it is **you** who must **always** evaluate your sources, especially when using web sites to develop ideas. To help you understand how to evaluate web sites you can go to <http://library.furman.edu/resources/type/web/isearchev.htm>.

Background Information

Web Sites.

<http://www.procon.org/>

<http://www.sac.edu/students/library/nealley/websites/controversial.htm>

<http://www.twinlakes.k12.in.us/info/library/connection/contro.htm>

Library Resources.

Another resource is **CQ Researcher** – the Library subscribes to the online version. This is an excellent source for finding information on all aspects of an issue and finding literature to help you investigate. This is not a web site – but a library resource we receive in an online format. To connect to CQ Researcher go to <http://library.furman.edu/resources/databases/cqresearcher.htm>

Books are also excellent ways to educate yourself about a topic. To find books you must go to **Alcuin**. (library.furman.edu) Whenever you find a book of interest, be sure to look at the surrounding books as they will be on the same or very related topics. Use the Table of Contents and back of book indexes to find information on your specific topic.

Databases to find scientific articles.

Once you've indentified the general idea of the arguments you want to use , you can look in the article databases for science primary research articles. I always recommend that one begins with **Academic Search Premier** <http://library.furman.edu/resources/databases/acadsearch.htm>. This is a general database but does have a significant number of scientific articles. While Academic Search Premier does contain a significant amount of non-scholarly articles – you can limit

your search to Academic Journals, with the vast majority of these results being primary research articles.

If you do not find enough articles using Academic Search Premier I would recommend going to **Cambridge Scientific**, <http://library.furman.edu/resources/databases/cambridgescientific.htm>. This is an excellent database for both biological and medical information. Almost all of the articles you retrieve in this database will be primary research articles. You can, however, use this database to find selected web sites on particular topics.

This is just to get you started and I hope it helps. But I want to say once again, please contact me or any reference librarian to discuss aspects of finding information on your particular topic.

