

Researching an Argument

This guide will help you research and find evidence to support an argument. Students writing an argumentative essay for ENG&101, creating a persuasive speech, or taking CMST 245 will find this guide useful.

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Arguable topics

There's no shortage of arguable topics in the world.

This page will lead you to some places to find and explore such topics.

Find a topic in a database

Databases are great places to look for topics. Two of the library's databases, [CQ Researcher](#) and [Opposing Viewpoints](#), provide excellent topic lists:

The screenshot shows the CQ Researcher website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home | About | Help | Log Out'. Below this is a search bar with 'QUICK SEARCH' and a 'Go' button, along with a link to 'Advanced Search'. A left-hand menu contains several options: 'Advanced Search', 'Browse by Topic', 'Browse by Date', and 'Pro/Con'. A red arrow points from a red-bordered text box to the 'Browse by Topic' option. The main content area is titled 'Browse Reports by Topic' and lists various subject categories such as Agriculture, Business, Banking and Economics, Communications and the Mass Media, Congress, the Presidency, and the Supreme Court, Constitutional Law and Justice, Culture, Sports, and Recreation, Defense and National Security, and Education.

click "Browse by Topic" in the left menu bar to see the database's list of topics:

The screenshot shows the Opposing Viewpoints website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Issues', 'Maps', and 'Resources'. A red arrow points from a red-bordered text box to the 'Issues' link. Below the navigation bar, there is a search bar with 'Advanced Search' and a 'My Activity' link. The main content area is titled 'Browse Issues' and lists various subject categories such as Business and Economics, Energy and Environmentalism, Family Issues, Health and Medicine, Law and Politics, Science, Technology and Ethics, Society and Culture, and War and Diplomacy. A red-bordered text box at the bottom left contains the word 'The' with a red arrow pointing towards the 'War and Diplomacy' category.

select "Issues" from the Opposing Viewpoints home page

The

database will show you a list of many possible "arguable" topics:

- Alcoholism
- Alzheimer's Disease
- American Housing Collapse
- Amnesty
- Animal Experimentation
- Animal Rights
- Arab-Israeli Conflict
- Arms Trade
- Artificial Intelligence
- Assisted Suicide

- Media Violence
- Medical Care
- Medical Ethics
- Medical Marijuana
- Medicare
- Mental Disorders
- Mental Health
- Middle East
- Minimum Wage
- Mobile Phones

Comments (0)

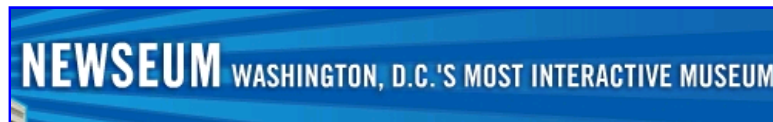
Find a topic in the news

Newspapers are ripe with arguable topics! Headlines can generate topics. Here's an example of converting headlines to topics from the New York Times home page:

The screenshot shows the New York Times homepage with several headlines highlighted in red boxes, each with a red arrow pointing to a red box containing an "arguable topic" derived from the headline. The topics are:

- U.N. Security Council Passes New Sanctions Against Iran** (by NEIL MacFARQUHAR) → arguable topic: "The U.S. should implement sanctions against Iran."
- Democrat in Chief?** (by MATT BAI) → arguable topic: "The Fed and Congress must prioritize decreasing the federal debt."
- Bernanke Says the Federal Debt Is 'Unsustainable'** (by SEWELL CHAN) → arguable topic: "The Fed and Congress must prioritize decreasing the federal debt."
- South Carolina Candidate Challenges Status Quo** (by ROBBIE BROWN) → arguable topic: "The President's job is not to lead the Democratic party."

You can read front pages from newspapers around the world at the [Newseum website](#):



Comments (0)

Find a topic on the web

The screenshot shows the ProCon.org website header with the following elements:

- Logo: ProCon.org
- Tagline: Pros and Cons of Controversial Issues
- Navigation buttons: All 40 Issues, About Us, FAQs, Theoretical Expertise, Teachers' Corner, Traffic, Contact Us, Donate, Donors & Sponsors
- Search bar: Search
- Share options: Share, Email, Print, Cite



Welcome to ProCon.org.

We promote critical thinking, education, and informed citizenship by presenting research on controversial issues in a straightforward, nonpartisan, and primarily pro-con format.

Our websites are free, unbiased, and updated periodically.

We are an independent, nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) nonprofit public charity.

A great website with 40 top controversial issues. A great place to find a good topic or to get background information on a topic and finding the existing argument.

Kaywin Gottie, English and Debate teacher at Preston High School, Preston, ID, March 24, 2010

- Teachers' Corner
- ProCon.org for Teachers and Librarians
- What We're Up To
- New/Updated Content
- ProCon.org in the News
- Governments That Use ProCon.org
- Books Citing ProCon.org
- Our White Board
- Websites in Development
- Suggest a Topic
- Archived Surveys
- Take Action
- Email Updates - Sign up
- Readers' Comments
- Get Involved!
- Volunteers / Interns
- Follow Us on Twitter
- Join Us on Facebook

Pros and Cons of 40 Controversial Issues

Español

Business

1. Big Three Auto Bailout (archived 2009)
2. Insider Trading by Congress

Education

3. Teacher Tenure

Health & Medicine

4. Abortion
5. D.A.R.E.
6. Euthanasia
7. Health Care Reform
8. Medical Marijuana
9. Milk
10. Obesity
11. Prescription Drug Ads to Consumers
12. Right to Health Care
13. Vaccines for Kids

Law

14. ACLU
15. Rose Bird (archived 1988)

Media & Entertainment

16. Social Networking
17. Video Games and Violence

Politics

18. 2008 Presidential Election (archived 2009)
19. Bill Clinton
20. Concealed Handguns
21. Death Penalty
22. Drinking Age
23. Felon Voting
24. Illegal Immigration
25. Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
26. Ronald Reagan
27. Social Security Privatization
28. US-Iraq War
29. WTC Muslim Center

Religion

30. Under God in the Pledge

Science & Technology

31. Alternative Energy vs. Fossil Fuels
32. Cell Phones
33. Climate Change
34. Nuclear Power (archived 1988)
35. Voting Machines

Sex & Gender

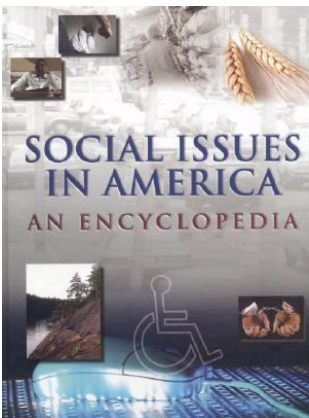
36. Born Gay? Origins of Sexual Orientation
37. Gay Marriage
38. Prostitution

Sports

39. College Football - Playoffs vs. BCS
40. Drug Use in Sports

Comments (0)

Print encyclopedia set with thousands of topic ideas



Social issues in America : an encyclopedia - James Ciment, editor

Call Number: REFERENCE COLLECTION: 361.97303 S678 2006

ISBN: 9780765680617

Excellent lengthy articles including primary source material. Details on each volume:

- v. 1. Abortion and reproductive issues - Campaign finance reform -- v. 2. Cancer - Disability rights -- v. 3. Divorce and child custody - Gun violence and gun control -- v. 4. Hate crimes - Media consolidation -- v. 5. Media sex and violence -- Pornography -- v. 6. Poverty and wealth - Superstores vs. Main Street -- v. 7. Sweatshops - Xenophobia and Nativism -- v. 8. Index.

Comments (0)