

**CURRENT TOPICS LIBRARY RESOURCE GUIDE**  
**SHAKE LEARNING RESOURCES CENTER**  
**VINCENNES UNIVERSITY**

Compiled by Joseph Helms, Reference Librarian, Revised May 2007

**BOOKS**

Use the library's catalog, VU WebCat, to locate books and other materials from the library's collections. VU WebCat is accessed by going to the library's home page at <http://www.vinu.edu>, then select the Academic Resources tab at the top of the page, then click Shake Library (on the left side of the page), then click Find Books, and then click VU WebCat. Researchers may want to use the Builder Search function because it offers more flexibility in searching. The list of series titles below found in the Reference Collection and the General Collection is a good starting point for finding information on contemporary issues.

- *Contemporary World Issues* (Reference Collection - For complete title listings, search series title in VU WebCat) - A series that comprises comprehensive, balanced, one-volume reference handbooks on important topics related to health, education, and social issues.
- *CQ Researcher* (Ref. 070.442 C749c - Current weekly issues on 4-hour reserve at Lending Services Desk and annual volumes shelved in Reference.) - This source provides researchers with accurate, unbiased information on a different topic each week. Each issue contains essays, sidebars, charts, and the "At Issues" page that presents opposing viewpoints related to the issue under discussion.
- *Current Controversies* (Ref. 360 C976 - For complete title listings, search series title in VU WebCat) - A contemporary issues series that provides students a resource for exploring the many social, political, and economic controversies found on the national and international scene.
- *Editorials on File* - (Ref. 081 E23e) - A brief overview introduces each topic and is followed by a selection of 15-20 editorials reprinted in their entirety from U.S. and Canadian newspapers. With all political viewpoints expressed, balanced treatment of each topic is provided.
- *Facts on File: World News Digest* - (Ref. 320.9 F142f) - Current news as reported in more than 70 national and international newspapers and magazines is provided in a digest format.
- *Ideas in Conflict Series* (For complete title listings, search series title in VU WebCat) - Books in this series are written to provide a variety of viewpoints to assist students in thinking analytically about current national and international problems. Articles are taken from publications on the political right and left in order to provide balanced treatment of issues.
- *Information Series on Current Topics* (Ref. 360 I43 - For complete title listings, search series title in VU WebCat) - A reference series providing excellent descriptive, narrative and statistical information related to more than 20 general topics. Abortion, crime, endangered species, immigration, and violent relationships are some of the topics covered.

- *Opposing Viewpoints Series* (For complete title listings, search series title in VU WebCat) - With over 80 titles, this series is a leading resource of collections of articles on controversial topics such as abortion, child welfare, euthanasia, prisons, etc.
- *Taking Sides Series* (For complete title listings, search series title in VU WebCat) - This series brings together in over 20 volumes the arguments of leading social and behavioral scientists, educators, and contemporary commentators debating issues in a Pro/Con format. Each volume is devoted to a broad topic such as bioethical issues, gender studies, mass media and society, etc.

## **MAGAZINE, JOURNAL AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES**

The databases containing magazine, journal and newspaper articles are accessed by going to the library's home page at <http://www.vinu.edu>, then select the Academic Resources tab at the top of the page, then click Shake Library (on the left side of the page), then click Find Articles, and then click the database vendor you want to search (EBSCOhost, ProQuest, etc.). After selecting the database vendor, then select the database you want to search. The database products below are excellent starting points for locating articles on contemporary issues.

- *EBSCOhost* is a collection of commercial databases providing coverage to full text articles from journals, magazines and newspapers. This outstanding resource has the following databases that cover current information on a wide variety of topics: *Academic Search Elite*, *MasterFILE Premier* and *Newspaper Source*.
- *NewsBank* is an online service providing coverage of contemporary news topics in newspapers and other resources.
- *FACTS.com* has the following three databases containing excellent coverage of current events topics: (1) *World News Digest* – A resource featuring current news, biographies of world leaders, maps, country profiles, key issues and key events; (2) *Issues & Controversies* – A resource featuring full-text articles presenting different points of view on controversial issues; and (3) *Today's Science* – A current science news database that includes the latest scientific discoveries and the fundamental concepts that underlie them.
- *Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center* provides online access to the books in the *Opposing Viewpoints Series* listed above. It also contains full text articles from popular magazines, scholarly journals, newspapers and Web sites. This is an excellent resource for finding articles and essays that argue different points of view about many different topics and issues.
- *SIRS Knowledge Source* is an online search environment for the following *SIRS* reference databases: (1) *SIRS Researcher* – A resource covering current social issues; (2) *SIRS Government Reporter* – A resource providing information from the federal government; and (3) *SIRS Renaissance* – A resource containing full text articles related to the fine arts and humanities.