

Central Library, Vanderbilt University, September 2009  
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**ENGL 200: INTERMEDIATE NONFICTION WORKSHOP**  
**COURSE ON ADVOCACY WRITING**  
**PROF. SANDY SOLOMON**

The location and call number of each publication is given in parentheses at the end of its bibliographic entry. All publications in this guide may be found on the 4th level (the main floor) of the Central Library unless otherwise noted. **The URL for the Vanderbilt Library home page is <http://www.library.vanderbilt.edu/>.**

On online version of this guide is available at <http://libguides.library.vanderbilt.edu/ENGL200>.

### Background Information

These sources give background and history, the current problem, and proposed solutions. They are also good places to look when you are trying to decide on a speech topic. They usually cover both the “pro” and the “con” of an issue.

Vanderbilt Library home page → “Find Articles and Databases” (upper right) → “Need a database to find an article?”

★ **CQ Researcher.** ([Database](#))

**Best overview source for identifying what's at issue and how the topic developed.** Each report covers a single subject. **Browse by topic or search for keywords.** View it as a black & white PDF (choose at top right). Update the CQ Researcher information by looking at *CQ Weekly* ([Database](#)) for current developments on political issues and on activities of all three branches of government. **Choose Archive "Search Articles" and use the \* (asterisk) to substitute for word endings.**

★ **Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center.** ([Database](#))

Pro and con opinions about broad controversial issues. Online version also includes links to basic reference articles, selected magazine and newspaper articles, primary sources, statistics, and web sites of important organizations concerned with each issue. **Use the \* (asterisk) to substitute for word endings.**

★ **Points of View.** ([Database](#))

Basic overview, point, and counterpoint for 200 topics. Includes text of relevant periodical and newspaper articles, as well as a few primary documents. **Use the \* (asterisk) to substitute for word endings.**

**Part of the reason for finding out more about the topic is so that you can narrow the topic to something manageable. For example, if you were interested in “immigration,” you might narrow your topic to, say, “Congress should pass a law to provide amnesty for illegal immigrants who have been in the United States for more than five years.”**

### Newsmagazines

★ **CQ Weekly**, 1946-. ([Database](#); GOVT Ref Alcove JK1.C15--West Wall)

**Best source for current political developments.** Covers Congressional activities, political campaigns, lobbying, and executive and judicial activities. Use the \* (asterisk) to substitute for word endings.

**National Journal**, 1969-. ([Database](#); GOVT Ref Alcove JK1.N28--West Wall)

Weekly newsmagazine of politics and government. Covers many of the same topics as the *CQ Weekly Report*, for each subject it gives a more comprehensive summary and background report on an irregular basis rather than reporting developments week by week. Indexed in *PAIS*.

## Periodical and Newspaper Articles

Start in a periodical database like Proquest or InfoTrac which both provide popular and scholarly articles on many topics. **Vanderbilt Library home page** → “Find Articles and Databases” (upper right) → “Top Databases” (near top)

**SEARCH HINT: You need to critically evaluate your sources (especially websites). Use the C.R.A.P. Test.**

### ★ Proquest. ([Database](#))

Provides citations and summaries of articles from over 4,000 publications, with many in full-text. Indexes a broad range of social sciences publications, numerous general-interest magazines such as *Time* and *Newsweek*, and recent issues of major newspapers. **E-mail: articles.**


**Search Tip #1:** Before you search, you can limit the number of databases you look at: click on the downward arrow to the right of “Databases:” and choose “[Interdisciplinary: Proquest Research Library.](#)”

**Search Tip #2:** After entering your basic search, look at the “[suggested topics](#)” above the results you get. Click on the most appropriate one to get a list of the items that focus most on that topic.

**Search Tip #3:** If you still get a high number of results, consider [narrowing your topic](#).

Other tips: consider using the \* (asterisk ) to substitute for word endings.

Also, after entering your basic search, if you don’t get many results, look at the list of results. From the titles of the articles listed, you may see [other words or terms](#) that will focus your topic better.

**Some articles are available in full-text** (the whole article is in ProQuest) **directly on Proquest. You must look up others by clicking on “Find a copy” and then on the  button. See if the article is available online through another database or in print in the library. Also, click on “Cite this” and choose the citation style you want from the pull-down list, to find out how to cite the article.**

## Members of Congress

*Almanac of American Politics*, 1972-. ([Database](#); Govt Ref. Alcove JK1012.A44--West Wall)

*Politics in America*, 1982-. ([Database](#); Govt Ref Alcove JK1010.P64--West Wall)

Both are arranged alphabetically by state. For each state, provides profiles of the Governor, the two U.S. Senators, each U.S. Representative, and for each Congressional district in the state. For both Senators and Representatives gives information on committee assignments, recent elections, key votes during the last session of Congress, and interest group ratings. *Politics in America* also gives data on campaign finances. *Almanac of American Politics* is published by National Journal; *Politics in America* is published by Congressional Quarterly.

**Congress.org.** Capitol Advantage (<http://www.congress.org/congressorg/home/>)

Covers writing to elected officials, candidates and issues, issue areas and action alerts from various organizations, recent Congressional votes, agencies, courts, and local and national media by ZIP code.

## Congressional Transcripts

**Congressional Hearings** (GOVT Y 4. \_\_; Microfiche and online)

A hearing is a meeting of a committee or subcommittee to obtain information and opinions on proposed legislation, conduct an investigation, evaluate/oversee an existing government program or department or the implementation of a Federal law. Representatives for the administration, interest group representatives, state and local officials, members of Congress, and others make statements and answer questions related to the topic. Most Congressional hearings are published two months to two years after they are held. Search *LEXIS-NEXIS Congressional* to identify hearings on your topic.

**Vanderbilt Library home page** → “Find Articles and Databases” (upper right) → “Need a database to find an article?”

### ★ LexisNexis Congressional, 1789-1969; 1970-. ([Database](#))

Indexes Congressional Research Service (CRS) Reports, Congressional hearings, and other Congressional publications. **Use the ! (exclamation mark) to substitute for word endings.**

**CRS Reports** provide information on public policy issues for members of Congress. They often cover the issues involved and the possible alternative solutions. **Hearings** include the text of prepared statements given by expert witnesses at Congressional committee meetings.

**To locate the full-text of an entire hearing,** copy the title from *LexisNexis Congressional* and paste it into Acorn. Pre-

1994 titles will likely be available only in print or microfiche. Beginning in with 1994 hearings look for a **Web Link** option at the top of the Acorn record to access the online PDF version. If the title does not appear in Acorn, go to GPO Access <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/chearings/index.html>.

*The Congressional Record* contains the floor speeches of members of Congress. Go to LexisNexis Congressional and choose "Congressional Record & Rules." Enter your topic in the search terms box and enter the last name of the member of Congress. Change the dates if necessary and click on "search." After you get the search results, you might want to change the results "sort by" from "publication date" to relevance." You may also want to click on the "expanded list" tab to see how often the search words appear.

In addition to LexisNexis and Acorn, you can look up exact title of the hearing, you can look for full text on **Google** or at either of these sites:

**Congressional Hearings: Main Page** -- U.S. Govt. Printing Office (GPO) (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/chearings/index.html>)  
Includes full-text of hears from 1995 to the present.

#### [Congressional Committee Web Pages]

links to committee web pages. Look by committee for hearings transcripts.

U.S. Senate: **Committees**

([http://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/committees/d\\_three\\_sections\\_with\\_teasers/committees\\_home.htm](http://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/committees/d_three_sections_with_teasers/committees_home.htm))

U.S. House of Representatives: **Committee Offices** (<http://www.house.gov/house/CommitteeWWW.shtml>)

### Interest Groups

**Washington Information Directory** (Database: <http://library.cqpress.com/wid/>)

Capsule descriptions and contact information for Congress and federal agencies, governors and other state officials, U.S. and foreign diplomats, interest groups, other nongovernmental organizations, policy groups, foundations, and institutions.

**Public Interest Group Profiles** (Ref. JK 1118 .P79)

Covers assessments of group effectiveness and group political orientation, contact information, mission statements, funding sources, leadership and membership information, publication lists, and methods of advocacy.

**Public Policy Issues and Groups** (<http://www.library.vanderbilt.edu/romans/pubpol.html>)

Arranged by issue. Within each issue covers government sites, indexes and directories, interest-group and other political sites, news and media coverage, research centers and other educational sites, and statistics.

### Books

Acorn is the catalog for all 9 libraries in the Heard Library system, as well as a few other libraries on campus (like the Women's Center and the Family Resource Center). It lists almost all books in all Vanderbilt libraries and most U.S. government publications distributed after July 1976. It lists which periodicals we subscribe to, but does not list individual articles. **Use the \$ (dollar sign) to substitute for word endings.**

**At the Vanderbilt Library home page** → "Find Books and Other Items" (upper left) → "Acorn"

### Statistics

**Vanderbilt Library home page** → "Find Articles and Databases" (upper right) → "Need an article on a topic?"

- ★ **Statistical Abstract of the United States** (U.S. Bureau of the Census), 1879-. (Latest in GOVT REF Alcove C/2(2) C 3.134-- South Wall; also READY REF; Database: <http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>)  
The basic annual U.S. statistical handbook with almost 1,600 tables, of social, economic, and political statistics. Use the source notes at the bottom of each table to lead you to other statistical publications on your topic.

**Gallup.com** (Database: <http://www.gallup.com/home.aspx>) -- Includes Presidential job approval, "State of the States," health care, Congress, Afghanistan, consumers, well-being, and other topics.

**iPOLL** (Roper Center) (Database) -- Offers full-text, question-level summary data from public opinion polls from major survey research organizations in the United States.

**Polling the Nations** (Database) -- Poll questions and responses from more than 14,000 national, state, local and special public opinion polls and surveys conducted by 700 polling organizations in the United States and 80 other countries.