

Possible Research Topics and Questions

1. What is the history and appeal of anime?
2. Should teens in the US adopt the British custom of taking a “gap-year” between high-school and college?
3. What are the options for finding alternative sources of fuel?
4. Why are many colleges and employers reviewing a candidate’s blog as a part of the interview process? How might this effect how young people's blog?
5. What is etiquette and where should it be applied?
6. Should parents bribe children, and if so, what are appropriate bribes?
7. Martin Luther claims to have seen and thrown an inkwell at the Devil. Was Luther mentally ill?
8. Researchers claim that most new fathers take only a fraction of available paternity leave. Why and what are the ramifications?
9. The circadian rhythm of teenagers makes it difficult for them to waken before 8:00 am, yet most high schools require students to be in class by that time. Some districts have changed their schedules and others are creating flexible schedules similar to those at colleges. Is attendance and performance improved by scheduling changes?
10. Parents want to raise children who eat a variety of nutritious foods. What parenting strategies are the most successful in meeting this goal? (Strategies include: always clean your plate, eat two bites of everything, eat what you want, serve children only foods they like, etc.) Also, should parents use food as a reward?
11. Amnesty International has condemned the United States for executing mentally ill and developmentally disabled criminals, should we change our policy?
12. Japanese mental health officials have created a new diagnosis for women, “Husband at Home Syndrome,” to describe the depression, hostility and adjustment difficulties experienced by women when their husbands retire. With the baby-boomers retiring, is America likely to see an epidemic of this disorder and what can be done to prevent or treat it?
13. How do illegal immigrants enter the United States?
14. Some studies have shown that Americans work more hours and take fewer vacations than any other industrialized nation, yet paradoxically we are less productive. Why and what can we do to change?

15. What is the sociological cause and response to cougars? (Cougar: an older, successful woman who engages in a relationship or relationships with men at least ten years her junior.)
16. What are the behavioral manifestations of anxiety? Are men and women likely to have different manifestations?
17. In the past decade, schools have severely tightened the school-day schedule, paring to a minimum available time for socialization in middle and high schools. Has it produced better students? What are the behavioral ramifications?
18. Alcoholics Anonymous has been a staple of American culture for over half a century. How successful has it been?
19. When criminal behavior can be explained by a medical condition, how should the criminal justice system respond?
20. Why has the number of lobbyists dramatically increased since 2000?
21. Do parents have a social responsibility to vaccinate their children?
22. How and when did New Orleans become a popular Mardi Gras destination?
23. Why are poor people more likely to be obese?
24. How is parental divorce portrayed in contemporary children's literature?
25. Should pyrotechnics be banned from certain venues?
26. Should public schools accept corporate sponsorship, if that involves allowing these sponsors to advertise and even name the schools? (This is being done in Philadelphia .)
27. Because of China's 1979 one-child policy and a cultural preference for boys, there is now a shortage of marriage-age girls. How is the Chinese government and Chinese families dealing with this?
28. A new spacecraft is headed to Pluto, what are we hoping to learn and how will it help us?
29. How do health savings accounts work?
30. Why was *Brokeback Mountain* a stunning success even in demographic and geographic areas without much sympathy for gay rights?

31. How is Social Anxiety Disorder different from shyness?
32. How is a marriage affected when the wife makes more money or is more educated? (Especially in extreme cases where perhaps the husband is a sanitation worker and the wife is an attorney.)
33. Mitt Romney, the Republican governor of Massachusetts wants to create universal healthcare in his state; what is his plan and what are its likely obstacles?
34. Is a similar plan (*see above*) feasible for national coverage?
35. In light of the fact that the US has recently chosen to heavily fund abstinence programs in Africa, how successful have previous abstinence campaigns been? How have these programs been received by African nationals?
36. How effective are public school abstinence programs or how accurate is the information provided in those programs?
37. In fighting obesity, are calories, carbohydrates, or fat grams the enemy?
38. What is the history of the New Orleans Levy System?
39. How does the Medicaid Part D program work? (How are premiums determined? What is the involvement of insurance companies?)
40. Mothers have traditionally received custody in divorce cases; is that trend changing? Should it change?
41. Church leaders of the sixteenth and seventeenth century were adamantly opposed to heliocentric scientific theories on the grounds that it undermined Christian faith. How does that compare to modern Christian's fears regarding evolution?
42. What is polyamory, and how is it practiced in the United States?
43. What is the psychological or sociological need met by conspiracy theories?
44. What is the purpose and power of the Justice Department's Office of Legal Council? (They are considered a "mini-Supreme Court" and all agencies within the Executive branch are bound by their rulings.)
45. What are the common psychological traits of people who seek out and practice highly restrictive religions?
46. What organization or person developed the ethos of "exporting democracy"?

47. Why are women prescribed tranquilizers three times as often as men?
48. What role does technology play in modern worship services?
49. How has the treatment of cancer evolved over the past 10 years?
50. How effective are alternative treatments for cancer?
51. What did James Comey accomplish during his term as Assistant Attorney General? (Think domestic spying.)
52. What computer programs are available for research and how effective are they?
53. Many seniors are seeking healthcare and dental services in Mexico; what risks do they face?
54. What is the link between sleep disorders and attention disorders?
55. Could the government's sanctioning of gay marriages leave the door open for the legalization of polygamy?
56. The Virginia Legislature is debating a bill which would make it illegal to provide fertility services to unmarried women. If it passes, how might rulings on that law affect the abortion debate?
57. What is the FDA approval process for medications?
58. Is any animal heterosexually monogamous throughout its entire life? (DNA tests have shown that animals who mate for life are not monogamous.)
59. How does a responsible publisher vet a memoir? Or how did James Frey's memoir get through the publishing process?
60. How has the introduction of exotic plants changed the forests of Virginia?
61. What would be the ramifications of Mount Rainier erupting?
62. Experts have acknowledged that a sexual abuse hysteria gripped the United States in the late 1980's, leading to the false convictions of innocent people. How are those people affected by the recent flurry of sexual predator legislation?
63. Is the Sundance Film Festival fulfilling its mission?
64. If a woman is very close to her female friends, how does this impact her marriage?
65. What is the etymology of key words in computer and technical jargon such as fax,

mouse, gopher, blog, podcast?

66. Mortality rates due to car accidents have dropped in the past five years; is this due to airbags?

67. How are corporations fostering employee creativity?

68. What is the best age to marry?

69. The Army, in an attempt to meet recruiting goals, has begun enlisting previously “undesirable” candidates, including those with sub-standard IQs or who are not high-school graduates. How important is the IQ and educational background of a soldier? Is this practice likely to have long-term consequences?

70. How has TiVo affected advertising and network programming?

71. How has technology impacted parenting?

72. Does “tough love” really work?

73. Does procrastination serve a purpose in the creative process?

74. What is the history of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation? What are their current projects?

75. Tyson Foods provides its employees with a Corporate Chaplain for spiritual guidance; what is the history and implications of corporate sponsorship of religion?

76. How can consumers protect themselves from identity theft?

77. Scientists are testing the effectiveness of using weather balloons to provide cell phone coverage in remote areas of states like North Dakota. How does this work, and what are the likely problems?

78. Why aren't doctors held to the same rest standards as pilots?

79. Recent studies have shown that women perform the vast majority of household chores; how does this impact their earning potential?

80. What privacy protections and loopholes are in place for cell phone customers?

81. What are the current treatments for chronic pain and what are their risks?

82. What is the history of the diagnosis of Fibromyalgia?

83. What caused last season's dramatic increase in the number of hurricanes?

84. How can we balance the need to lower the cost of malpractice insurance with the fact that physician malpractice is one of the leading causes of death?
85. Military medics and field hospitals have new tools for trauma care. What are they and how successful are they?
86. Pavia University researchers believe that a molecule called Nerve Growth Factor causes the sensations experienced when one is falling in love. What else did they learn, and how does this impact what we believe about relationships?
87. Research by Stuart Brody of the University of Paisley in Scotland seems to indicate that adults practicing abstinence have higher blood pressure and other physiological symptoms when exposed to stress. Why? Does other research support his claim?
88. What safety measures made the recent Canadian mining accident a non-casualty event, while recent US mining accidents have been fatal?
89. How does the education received at for-profit colleges like ECPI and ITT compare to those received in traditional colleges?
90. Do mothers have a different or similar child-support compliance rate as fathers?
91. The diagnosis of hysteria is obsolete, but what was it and how was it treated?
92. Who is Tim LaHaye and how does he spend his millions?
93. How have notable women such as Coretta Scott King, Jacqueline Onassis, Hillary Clinton and Princess Diana dealt with the public exposure of their husbands' infidelities?
94. How is the music industry being affected by iTunes and other services that allow customers to buy individual songs as opposed to entire albums?
95. Leaders of the Christian Right such as James Dobson and James Kennedy are getting older, who are their likely successors?
96. How accurate is the information presented by forensics experts to juries?
97. What changes occur in the brains of adolescents?
98. What are the different kinds of psychics, how do they work, and how accurate are they?