

# Internet Research Projects

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## Chapter 12: Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Americans

### Analyzing Issues and Gathering Information

This Internet Research Project is in two parts and we urge you to complete both. The first project raises a series of controversial and important questions and asks you to search the Internet for insights and information. The second asks you to search the Internet for information to add to the profile of the LGB minority group developed in this chapter.

#### A. Researching Controversial Questions

It is particularly important that you seek responsible and careful thinking on the issues raised in the questions below and avoid the large volume of passionate, biased misinformation. Try to find sources that are based on scientific, empirical data and that are posted in reputable, mainstream journals, magazines, and newspapers. It's okay to review statements of personal or moral values but rely on science and academic research for guidance in this project. Of course, you probably have your own views and answers on these questions but, as social scientists, we need to suspend our personal values as much as possible and seek the most valid, verifiable information available.

1. Is sexual orientation innate (biological or genetic), learned (the result of a specific set of experiences during socialization), or a combination of innate and learned?
2. Is the percentage of the U.S. population with a same-sex sexual orientation increasing, decreasing, or holding steady? If the percentage is changing, does this mean that sexual orientation is at least partly learned?
3. Can gay parents be effective? Will their children be as well-adjusted and successful as children of heterosexual couples? Will the children of same-sex parents be more likely to be gay? Why or why not?
4. Should same-sex gay couples be allowed to adopt?

For each question, write a short essay summarizing and explaining your conclusions and presenting the evidence you have gathered. Your instructor might ask you to submit your essay or discuss these issues in class.

**B. Extending the profile of LGBTs begun in this chapter.**

Choose four of the topics listed below and find information that adds to the points we have made in this chapter. Be careful to confine your search to reputable, scholarly sites and be especially critical of the information you collect. To get started, you might search these sites for information:

The Williams Institute of UCLA (<http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/#sthash.ctknMt1n.dpbs>)

The Pew Research Center (<http://www.pewresearch.org/>)

**TOPICS:**

1. Political values
2. Religious attitudes and relationships with organized religion
3. Experiences with hostility or discrimination at work
4. Percent of LGB people in committed, long-term relationships
5. Involvement in LGBT advocacy organizations
6. Unemployment
7. Health care issues
8. Military service

For each topic, write a short essay summarizing and explaining your findings. Your instructor might ask you to submit your essay or discuss these issues in class.

*Optional Group Discussion:* Bring your essays to class and compare your conclusions with those of other students. What are the implications of your findings for acceptance, acculturation, integration, and equality?