

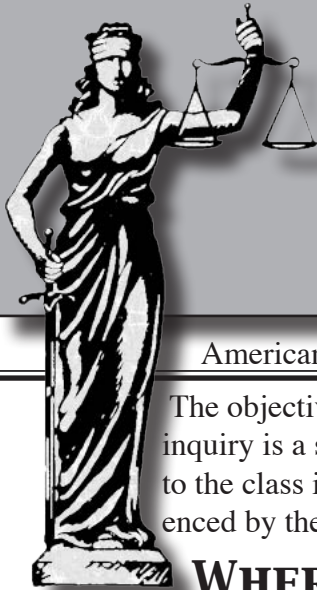
"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." Martin Luther King

LAW RELATED ISSUE

You ask the question.

You answer the question.

OR LRI



American Law: Lehnhart

Name

Period

The objective of this project is to find an area of the law that you want to explore. At the heart of the inquiry is a search of an issue that you find controversial or problematic. You will then present that issue to the class in a manner that allows them to formulate their own opinion, an opinion that will be influenced by the facts you present.

WHERE TO START

1. Ask a law related question.
2. Do some initial research to find whether the answer is complex enough to warrant further inquiry.
3. Once you have an issue that is complex, research all sides of that issue with an eye towards presenting it in a manner which will give your audience the opportunity to form their own opinion.
4. It is okay for you to have a position, to believe one side of the argument and to present that opinion. However, it is imperative that you identify why this is a controversial issue and that some may see it differently than you do.
5. The most important thing is that you present real data gathered through responsible research. The more integrity you bring to both the research and the presentation the better the results of your presentation.

NEXT

1. Construct your LRI into an activity.
2. Prepare a 15-30 minute presentation explaining your LRI. The presentation can take a variety of approaches (we'll discuss) but could include a hypothetical example which highlights the issue. Presentation & Activity 100 pts

3. This part will need some more thought, as I'm not used to doing it from distance. Be patient.

MORE

1. One person per LRI.
2. You can partner up with another and present opposite sides of an LRI.

"Where there is an open mind there will always be a frontier."
Charles F. Kettering

| Day | Schedule of Events |
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POSSIBLE ISSUES

- * Is capital punishment a deterrent to violent crime?
- * Is lethal injection "painless"?
- * Do miranda rights impede justice?
- * Should insanity be a defense for a crime?
- * Does past abuse mitigate guilt or innocence?
- * Does gun control lower the rate of violent crime?
- * Are drunk driving penalties too lenient?
- * Should juveniles be tried as adults?
- * Is downloading music illegally really a crime?
- * Should public schools teach intelligent design as well as evolution?
- * Should doctor-assisted suicide be a crime?
- * Should you be able to use a gun to defend property?
- * Should some illegal immigrants be offered amnesty?
- * Should animal testing be allowed?
- * Should all drugs be legalized?
- * Does campaign finance reform really work?
- * Would tort reform be a good thing?
- * Should privacy rights be 'sacrificed' for national security?
- * Should law enforcement officers be required to wear body cameras?
- * Should people be imprisoned for drug crimes?
- * Should prisoners be allowed to file lawsuits against prisons?
- * Should you be required to assist people in danger? If so, should you be liable for any injury that might occur?
- * Should hate crimes be punished more severely than a similar crime with no racial involvement?
- * Does the 4th amendment protect you in your car to the same degree as it does in your house?
- * Should stop and frisk (Terry searches) be outlawed?
- * Should trials be televised?
- * Should health care be free to all?
- * Should police who break the law be punished more severely?
- * Is the state sponsored practice of killing wolves just?

This is just the tip of iceberg and the number of possible topics is endless. Focus on areas that you're interested in and look for issues that you care about.

Some of these are inherently controversial and others are more informational. If you choose one that is more informational then be sure to frame it in a way that makes it an issue to be debated. The use of hypotheticals will be effective in doing this.

Topic: Punishment

Example #1

Law Related Issue: How should people involved in a genocide be punished?

Explanation: Using the Holocaust perpetrated during WWII as the example the focus here is to explore how to punish all those who participated. Clearly the perpetrators need to be punished, but in order for this genocide to have happened on the scale it did many participated. Some did so under orders, some out of fear for their own safety, some for economic gain, and some were bystanders who's actions or inaction help facilitate the crimes. Deciding punishment is complicated and this exercise should help us better understand what legal implications should attach to what responsibilities bystanders have to stand up to criminal behavior they are witnessing and/or facilitating by their participation.

Activity: Identify a list of participants in the holocaust from perpetrators to bystanders and detail their involvement and have students punish them. I may choose to use a hypothetical genocide instead of the historical WWII Holocaust as it may simply the exercise. I'll see where the research leads.

Research Needed:

1. Identify and define all the terms necessary to understand this exercise (perpetrator to bystander).
2. Decide whether the WWII Holocaust or a hypothetical genocide is the better platform. Will research reveal that enough of the real Holocaust participants are discoverable, or is it easier and more effective to create hypothetical ones.
3. See what is already out there as much work has already been done on this subject.

Topic: Voir Dire (Jury Selection)

Example #2

Law Related Issue: Does the practice of voir dire provide fairness in determining who serves on a jury?

Explanation: Currently each side in a trial (prosecution and defense in a criminal trial, and plaintiffs and defendants in a civil trial) are allowed to use peremptory strikes to remove jurors from sitting on a jury. This practice changes the makeup of a jury by removing jurors for reasons that each side chooses to employ. These strikes are used to remove people based on race, gender, economic and religious status, and for many other reasons. Does this practice adhere to the Constitution's guarantee of the right to a fair trial?

Activity: Create a hypothetical crime and a list of potential jurors and have students employ the practice of voir dire (jury selection). By using peremptory strikes on each side we can examine how this potentially influences justice. Would a random method be more just?

Research Needed:

1. Explain voir dire.
2. Identify what research has revealed about how people stereotypically decide. Does race, age, gender, economic and religious status, amongst other things predispose jurors to act in certain ways. Does these factors effect how jurors respond to defendants? How they relate to victims? Whether they trust law enforcement?
3. Create the right hypothetical case and jurors that will demonstrate this.

Start by doing this and be sure your issue is phrased as a question. You may work with another student.

Topic:

Law Related Issue:

Explanation:

Activity:

Research Needed:

1.