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Women's Rights as Human's Rights, or POL S 327, was my first introduction to writing and constructing an extensive research paper. As a pre-medical student, my college career has been heavily focused on STEM classes. STEM courses rarely, if ever, assign papers of this caliber to their students. When given this assignment I was extremely nervous, I had done research for other papers, but never to an in-depth level as was needed for this paper. Our assignment was to review the different topics covered in the course and choose a women's human rights issue of interest. We could have a comparative paper but could not write a paper entirely centered around the United States. The goal was to choose a topic and area of the world that was of interest to us. The requirements for the paper were to include at least four scholarly articles, at least one policy or legal report on the subject and be approximately 12 pages in length. I struggled with how to approach the paper from the get-go, as I had never analyzed or studied policies or legal reports in my STEM courses.

As a public health major, I knew I wanted to focus on a topic that would address women's rights and women's health through a public health lens. In previous classes I had learned about an organization called Women on Waves, which provided abortion services to women in Ireland. After watching a documentary about the organization, I decided I wanted to further investigate Ireland's abortion law and the affect it has on the women residing in the country.

I knew that the UW Library's resources such as the basic search feature, the various databases and the ability to request article scans would all be pivotal in my research success. I began utilizing the library's search function to gain a general understanding of the issue of abortion in Ireland. Once I had read several articles and gained preliminary information on the topic, I started to look for peer-reviewed articles and government documents. Through my preliminary search, I found specific pieces of information to further research such as legal cases brought before the European Court of Human Rights, the death of Savita Halappanavar, and various other government documentations.

After this initial search, I began by trying to find the legal documentation for the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act of 2013, as it was the controversial policy most recently enacted, and I felt that it would give me a good starting point. Unfortunately, this was one of the documents that I could not find in a library database, but instead had to search for via Google to find Ireland's government websites. After reading the document it lead me to read the Offense Against the Person Act of 1856. I have found through my research experience that often I will be looking for a specific piece of information, but while I'm reading I find other pieces of information that will be valuable to include. I then branch out to pursue these additional topics so that I may gain a more comprehensive understanding of my topics. Additionally, while reading peer reviewed articles, I would often look at the sources the article used to further investigate the topic. In the end, my sources for this paper are pulled almost exclusively from government documents and peer-reviewed articles, which makes my paper more credible by being composed of information that is as objective as possible.

During this research experience, I discovered a life-changing resource from the library: RefWorks. It made it exponentially easier to not only track the articles I had reviewed but also create the correct citations for my paper. Additionally, the basic search feature and then the ability to narrow the search to peer-reviewed articles and government documents was immensely helpful. I also utilized the

library's ability to article scan, which provided me with vital information and sources. In addition to the UW Library database, I also looked for information on government and reputable organizations' websites such as the United Nations. Because I wanted to use credible sources, I only synthesized information from peer reviewed articles and government websites in my research.

Throughout this process, I was frustrated when I could not find the information I was seeking, but this made it even more satisfying when I was able to finally track it down. Research is a necessary and vital skill to not only evaluating a topic and writing an essay, but also in life in general. Several times now when I read an article, I will try to fact check them with other sources and if I cannot find the information or statistics they provided on a credible website I typically then disregard the information the author gave. Overall, writing this research paper has instilled in me an understanding of the value of credible sources to build an accurate argument and that sometimes it can take some digging to find necessary information.