USING LUIS TO FIND BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

BY THE PERSON’S NAME: You can do a subject search for a specific person. For example,

king martin luther  roosevelt

Remember, to find books ABOUT a person, search LUIS by s=
To find books BY a person, search LUIS by a=

BY SUBJECT/OCCUPATION: If you don’t have a specific person in mind, you can do a subject search by occupation, then look through the titles listed for the subject subdivision -- BIOGRAPHY; for example, art--biography  art, american--biography

The books may be collected biographies, or specific to one person.

BY KEYWORD: You can also do a keyword search (search as phrase), such as

maya angelou  pope paul

This is especially useful if you cannot find anything when you do a subject search for your person, as it may retrieve chapters in books (and other materials) that include information on your specific person.

BIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCE SOURCES

There are many reference books and series devoted to biographical information. In order to identify the reference books you need to use, you should try to have as much of the following information as possible on the person you are researching:

--living or dead?  --date of birth?
--sex?  --nationality?
--profession or area of prominence?

Basically, sources for biographies fall into three general categories: BIOGRAPHICAL INDEXES, BIOGRAPHICAL COLLECTIONS/DIRECTORIES, and SUBJECT-SPECIFIC/PROFESSIONAL. BIOGRAPHICAL INDEXES provide references or CITATIONS to more complete information in periodicals or books:

BIOGRAPHICAL COLLECTIONS & DIRECTORIES. The length and amount of information given in the source can vary from a short list to a long narrative: SUBJECT-SPECIFIC or PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORIES provide information, again brief or lengthy, on persons within various disciplines, such as business people, scientists, authors.

Listed below are some of the main resources in each category.

Biography And Genealogy Master Index -- online or Reference Z 5305 .U5 B56 -- Check this multi-volume, regularly supplemented set first, especially if you don’t know anything more about the person than their name; consists of citations to more than 8,500,000 biographical sketches appearing in more than 1,095 current and retrospective biographical dictionaries.

Biography Index -- online 1984 to present, and Reference Z 5301 .B5 (1946-present) -- An index to biographies appearing in books and magazines; includes references to obituaries, collections of letters, diaries, memoirs and bibliographies; probably the second best place to begin your research, after the title above.

Biographical Information (online, via Academic Universe, on-campus only) -- Search for background information on well-known persons.

New York Times Obituaries Index -- Reference CT 213 .N47 1858-1968; 1969 - 1970 -- Especially good if your person was famous in any way, this compiles citations to all obituaries from the New York Times for the years covered. The newspaper articles are available on microfilm in Teaching Materials (2nd floor).


References are made to the issue date in which the article may be found, but you must go from this to the New York Times Index and look up your person in the year cited in
order to get the complete citation to the microfilmed newspaper article.

**International Who’s Who** -- Reference CT 120 .I5 (annual, most recent volume in Reference) -- Nearly 20,000 brief biographies; list of "Reigning Royal Families".

**Current Biography** -- online (1983 to present), and Reference CT 100 .C8 (1940-present) -- Brief, objective, documented articles about living leaders in all fields of human accomplishment the world over; included obituaries for persons previously covered; 11 monthly issues cumulate into hardcover annual volume (alphabetical), with cumulated indexes by name, profession; selected citations to magazine and newspaper articles for each biographee.

**The New York Times Biographical Service** -- Reference CT 120 .N45 (1972 to present; latest 5 years in Reference) -- Monthly, loose-leaf reprints of articles from the *New York Times*: arranged in chronological order with an alphabetical index on inside front cover of each monthly issue.

**Newsmakers** -- Reference Information Desk CT 120 .C663 (1985 to date) -- Annual volume with quarterly updates; about 200 "newsmakers" covered per year; indexes by nationality, occupation, etc.; cumulative thru most recent issue; brief list of references to other biographical info; title 1985-1987: Contemporary Newsmakers.

**Webster’s New Biographical Dictionary** -- Reference CT 103 .W4 1983 -- A pronouncing biographical dictionary of more than 40,000 names, not restricted by period, nationality, race, religion or occupation; includes living persons; brief, condensed sketches.


**Who’s Who Among Black Americans** -- Reference E 185.96 .W52 (most recent volume in Reference) -- more than 20,000 entries indexes by geographical location and occupation.

**Who’s Who Of American Women** -- Reference E 176 .W674 (most recent volume in Reference) - - more than 30,000 brief biographical sketches.


**American Men And Women Of Science (Physical & Biological Sciences)** -- Reference Q 141 .A47 -- 18th edition, 1992-93 is 7 volumes; index by discipline; covers 122,000 living persons; cumulative index for all editions (1-14).

**Contemporary Authors** -- online and Reference Z 1224 .C58 etc. -- This is actually several related series (over 200 volumes), with different subtitles; each series has a cumulated index that will also refer you to any information in the other series; more than 100,000 authors in every field, most still living or deceased since 1690; limited coverage of earlier authors still studies or of interest.

**Dictionary Of Scientific Biography** -- Reference Q 141 .D5 [16 vols.] -- Deceased scientists in all periods/fields of science; bibliographies at end of entries; indexes to biographies and subjects, lists of scientists by field; vol. 15 has topical essays on ancient sciences

**Internet Sites:** Use with caution. Can be useful for very famous people. Try http://www.biography.com/ (more than 20,000 personalites).

Final Note: It is often difficult to find information on local people. Try http://library.tribstar.com (Terre Haute Tribune Star). The Indianapolis Star is covered by Academic Universe (Top News; General News). Biographical resources for persons from non-Western countries is improving but is still less comprehensive. You may have to do a lot of digging. Remember to update information found in older biographical sources by checking the general indexes listed above, as well as magazine indexes. Always ask the reference librarian for assistance in using these or any other library resources.