Biography in Context

Biography in Context is a database with more than 220,000 full-length biographies and one million short biographies. The biographies can be searched by name, birth/death date, occupation, nationality, ethnicity, and gender.

To get to Biography in Context,

1. Go to the Multnomah County Library website: www.multcolib.org
2. Click on the Research tab and choose Homework Center
3. Click on the Homework Databases link.
4. Click on Biographies.
5. Type in your Multnomah County Library card number (the whole number—without any spaces) and PIN.

Your screen will look like the one below:

If you are searching for a particular person, type their name into the Search box at the top of the page. If the Name tab is chosen, it doesn’t matter if you type their first name or last name first. Then click on the Search button. If there is more than one person with the name you typed, you’ll see a list of people to choose from. Click on the name you want.

Note that you can search by other attributes as well. Here are the results of searching for “Oregon” as a Birth Place, sorted by Name Ascending:
Once you’ve selected the person you want, you’ll see a page like this:

The initial entry is a general biography from an encyclopedia. Click the link to read more. You can also link to other resources on this page through the toolbar on the right. If you scroll down even more on the first page you’ll see some additional choices:

Reference includes biographies, News are articles from daily newspapers and wire services, and Magazines are magazine articles. Click on any of the links for the full article. There are more links even further down this page!

Here’s what the beginning of a selected biography looks like:
If you aren’t looking for a particular person, you can browse the biographies by using the list that appears once you click the Browse People tab (directly above the photograph). You can also scroll down the database’s main page to the types of people and select from the brief lists there, or click on View More for the full list of biographies within a category.

Once you are at the View More page, you will also see a list of all the categories you can search on, from Actors to World Royalty.

Try searching for these!
• When was Johnny Appleseed born?
• What is the real name of author Lemony Snicket?
• Can you find the biography of another author who was born in San Francisco?

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