

Lib399 Research Tips for Secondary Sources & Background Information:

Who are these People?

The following sources can help you identify individuals and find details about their lives. Newspapers and the library catalog will also be useful for businesses and organizations.

Biography & Genealogy Master Index linked from the library home page

Start here

An online database covering over 700 biographical sources

Covers many obscure people not found elsewhere

Among the frequently used sources indexed are:

American National Biography

Current Biography Yearbook

Dictionary of American Biography

National Cyclopaedia of American Biography

Who's Who in America

Who Was Who in America

UO Library Catalog

Use the subject and keyword search in case we have books or other materials related to your collection

Oregon Historical Records Index <http://genealogy.state.or.us/start.lasso?location=search>

A growing online index to records held in the Oregon State Archives

Social Security Death Index <http://ssdi.genealogy.rootsweb.com/>

Contains information provided by the Social Security Administration

Find out birth and death dates and place of death of an individual

City & Telephone Directories

Special Collections & University Archives hold a number of directories from around Oregon

Identify where people lived, what they did for a living, and other personal details

Dictionary of Oregon History REF KNIGHT or OR COLL F874 .D53 1989 or SCA REF F874 .C6 (1956 ed.)

Brief entries with bibliographical references for further research

Oregana KNIGHT LD4368 .O7

University of Oregon yearbooks 1910-1980

Look up alumni here to find out what they were doing during their time at UO.

See also: Newspapers & Magazines

Newspapers & Magazines

Newspaper and magazine articles can provide specific background information on your subject, details about contemporary events, and information on what historians and other scholars have written about the subject or time period.

Newspapers

Looking for Newspapers <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/newspapers/>

Includes links to chronological lists of indexes for the *Oregonian* and *Register Guard*
<http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/newspapers/oregonindex.html>

Use the guide to locate current or older newspapers by city or county

Look at some of the indexes available from your time period

Was your subject newsworthy? At UO (Emerald)? In Eugene (RG)? In their hometown?

Look for obituaries with biographical information

Look for news stories that can tell you something you didn't know

Look at issues of papers contemporary to your collection--what was going on in the area?

Find out if an individual or business made it into the news

Look for obituaries for biographical details

Magazines and Journals for Contemporary Accounts—Primary Sources

Use these indexes to find stories that place the people or organizations in their historical context.

American Periodicals Series (1740-1900) online

Nineteenth Century Masterfile (1802-1906) online

Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature (1890-present) REF KNIGHT AI3.R48

Readers' Guide Retrospective (1890-1982) online

Academic Search Premier (-1965-present) online

Magazines & Journals—Secondary Sources

Use these indexes to find out what has been written about the time or subject

America: History & Life: Bibliography of U.S. & Canadian history pre-history-present

Available from Library Home Page → Databases & Indexes → History

Combine search terms in various categories

Keyword Use key words that describe your topic

Subject Terms Use  (browse button) to find exact headings

Language Limit to English or other languages

Time Period Limit search by century or decade
e.g. 1800H = 19th century, 1910D = 1910-1919

Browse other subject databases related to a person's or organization's interests

Reference Sources: Setting the Historical Scene

The following specialized encyclopedias are located in the Reference section of the Knight Library. Each includes articles on topics related to your research. These can provide an overview of a topic as well as experts' names and titles for further reading. Search the library catalog for these authors and titles. Look around on the shelves nearby for sources on similar topics.

Encyclopedia of American Social History REF KNIGHT HN57 .E58 1993

Encyclopedia of the United States in the Nineteenth Century REF KNIGHT E169.1 .E626 2001

American Eras: Westward Expansion REF KNIGHT E169.1 .A471979 1997 v.8

American Popular Culture Through History: the 1900s REF KNIGHT E169.1 .B248 2002

Also look for volumes on the 1910s, 1930s, 1960s, Civil War and Reconstruction, and Westward Expansion

Columbia Chronicles of American Life 1910-1992 REF KNIGHT E169.1 .G664 1995

Day by Day: the Sixties REF KNIGHT D840 .P27 1983

Also look for volumes on the 1970s and 1980s

Accunet/AP Multimedia Archive online

Use this to find images of contemporary events or related subjects

Remember to logout when you're done—only one person can use this at a time

See U.S. History Guide for a list of ethnic and thematic encyclopedias

Web Sites

Primary Source Guide <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/history/primary.html>

U.S. History Guide <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/history/ushist.html>

Genealogical Guide <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/genealogy/>

Newspaper Guide <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/newspapers/>

Biography Guide <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/biography/>

Looking Online for Oregon & Northwest Sources <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/reference/oregon.html>

Complete List of Guides <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/>

Google <http://www.google.com>

Look for official sites of your organization

Look for other sites that mention your subject or organization—do they tell you anything new about your collection?

Questions?

Feel free to ask at the Reference Desk or contact Heather Ward hward@oregon.uoregon.edu