

1  Sources About People

2  sources about people

biography, and more and less

a fascination about people, the cold hard facts, the biographical sources

and more: biographies (books, found like books; we even catalog them differently in public libraries), provide context, interpretation, reinterpretation, revisionism, etc

and less: people who don't have biographies written about them or in the biographical sources

3  why not the Web?

why choose one of these over a general-purpose search engine?

- coverage
- functionality, access (indexes in *DAB*)
- historical interests
- authority, depth
- durability

4  why the Web?

why choose a general-purpose search engine?

- ease of use, accessibility
  - personal, official, fan sites
  - email addresses (tho careful about timeliness)
  - nobodies
- nowhere to hide
- phone books, reverse directories, skip tracers, Pls

5  questions

1. Who was Myrtle Edwards?
2. Can you find me a good biography of Henry M. Jackson?
3. Who was the driver of Diana's car that night?
4. I want a list of notable American librarians over the last century or so.
5. Do you have any general bio information on Alexander McCall Smith?
6. What's a good place to start in researching my family tree?

6  questions

1. Who was Myrtle Edwards?

HistoryLink (prob via Google for orientation)

**local history**

of interest only to local residents (present, past, possibly future)

perhaps, though, of intense interest

- 7  questions  
 6. What's a good place to start in researching my family tree?  
**genealogy**  
 a number of specialized sources, starting with the family (family Bible, memories, etc), local sources (newspapers, cemetery & municipal records), then broader (census, Social Security, web sites, LDS church) an opportunity for libraries—depth of resources and interests
- 8  questions  
 3. Who was the driver of Diana's car that night?
- 9  the biographical sources  
 easy (and fun!) categorizations  
 ways of figuring out where to go
- 10  status  
 dead  
 historical sources *Dict of Amer Biog, Dict of Nat'l Biog, Who Was Who*  
 alive  
 current sources *Who's Who in X*  
 recently dead  
 Google, Who's Alive and Who's Dead, newspapers, obituaries  
 famous for dying  
 Google, newspapers, magazines, web sites, obituaries of the past
- 11  nationality  
 US  
*Who's Who in America, Dict of Amer Biog, Amer Nat'l Biog*  
 UK  
*Who's Who, Dict of Nat'l Biog/Oxford Nat'l Biog*  
 other/international  
*International Who's Who*
- 12  geography, professional, characteristic  
*Who's Who in X, American Men & Women of Science, National Faculty Directory, blah blah blah*
- 13  depth  
 biographical dictionaries (?), Web  
 indexes *BAGMI, Biography Index*  
 general sources  
 specialized sources  
 biographies, autobiographies
- 14  questions  
 3. Who was the driver of Diana's car that night?  
 Google, Lexis/Nexis, newspapers  
**famous for dying**  
 of interest only briefly, and for the time and manner of death

newspapers, magazines, obituaries; use those specialized sources (*Obituary Index*)

15  questions

5. Do you have any general bio information on Alexander McCall Smith?

*Biography and Genealogy Master Index, Who's Who*

**alive, UK, facts**

or his publisher's web site, or his web site, or fan sites (via Google)

standard sources might not quite have caught up with him yet

16  questions

4. I want a list of notable American librarians over the last century or so.

*Dictionary of American Biography*

**US/by profession**

indexes

17  questions

2. Can you find me a good biography of Henry M. Jackson?

UW library catalog, Amazon, book review sources, etc

**biography**

lots of other places, for the dead, US, political, Northwest, etc

18  selection

by authority

by scope, range, selection, coverage

by treatment

by availability

by features of searching, format, etc

19  etc

beware vanity sources

autobiographies—you get what you pay for

20  the story

*Why is this a separate category? Why so many resources and kinds of resources devoted to people?*

**life and death and who matters/ed**

“Who's Who”

an implication that certain people are more important than others, their lives are worth memorializing, remembering, remarking on, emulating (or avoiding)

21  others of interest

Who's Alive and Who's Dead, Find A Grave

*Current Biography*

*Burke's Peerage*