

What is it?

A comprehensive online **biographical reference database** covering literature, science, multicultural studies, business, entertainment, politics, sports, government, history, arts and newsmakers. It contains nearly 450,000 biographies on more than 380,000 people from around the world and throughout history.

Why it's Useful

Biography Resource Center (BioRC) contains high-quality biographical information accessible using flexible search strategies. Three different types of biographical products are offered—brief **thumbnail entries**, comprehensive **narrative biographies** and **current magazine articles**. Results can be saved in a “mark list,” which can then be printed or emailed. BioRC also provides nearly 19,000 vetted **web links** for further research.

Examples Where Biography Resource Center Really Helps

- Finding biographies for **heritage** assignments (ability to search by ethnicity or nationality)
- Locating famous people in a given **occupation** (authors, inventors, politicians, etc.)
- *Anytime* you need quality information about a famous person!

Accessing Biography Resource Center (BioRC)

- From the Ocean County Library Website — <http://theoceancountylibrary.org/> -- click on “**Research & Info**” from the blue title bar on the home page
- Under “**Databases A-Z**” click **View All 94 Titles in Alphabetical Order**. Scroll until you reach “**Biography Resource Center**,” then click on the link.
- **To access BioRC from home**, go through the steps above and type the 14 digit number from the back of your library card when prompted (do not use include spaces).

Searching

The home page is pictured at right. The black navigation bar at the top contains links for **Help**, other **Gale** databases, **Toolbox**, **Dictionary**, and a **List of Sources**. The left side offers three ways to search: **Category Browse**, **Biographical Facts Search**, and **Advanced Search**. On the right side of the screen, you can **Search by Name** or view a “spotlight” biography (these change regularly).

When **Searching by Name**, try using “**Name contains**” if you’re unsure whether the name is first or last name. Alternatively, use the “**Start of last name**” if the beginning of the last name is known (Washington, George).

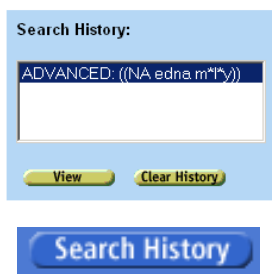
Searches are **not** case sensitive. BioRC supports various search techniques including **Boolean operators**, **truncation**, **wildcards**, **proximity operators**, **nesting**, and **date ranges** (see last page).



Advanced Search:

The advanced search allows the user to search using **Name**, **Full text**, **Keyword**, or **Source** using Boolean operators **AND**, **OR**, and **NOT**. Entering **date ranges** will retrieve articles **only** from *magazines & newspapers*—**not** from *reference sources*.

Note the **Search History** section at the bottom of the screen records the past 20 searches in the session, making it easy to retrieve and view results. Simply highlight the search and click “View.” Search History may also be available in the individual’s record by clicking on the icon at the top of the bar.



Search History:

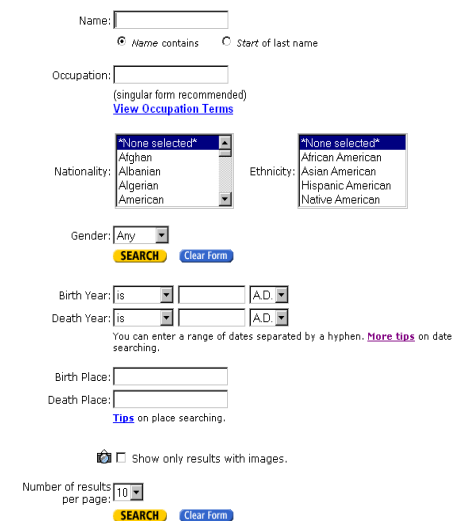
ADVANCED: ((NA edna m*P*))

View Clear History

Search History

Biographical Facts Search

Enter your search criteria below. You may enter criteria in one field, some of the fields, or all of the fields below. For example, you could search for American inventors born between 1850 and 1900, by filling in the Nationality, Occupation, and Birth Year fields. For more information on how to use Biographical Facts Search, [click here](#).



Name: Name contains Start of last name

Occupation:
(singular form recommended)
[View Occupation Terms](#)

Nationality: Ethnicity:

Gender:

Birth Year: is AD

Death Year: is AD

You can enter a range of dates separated by a hyphen. [More tips](#) on date searching.

Birth Place:

Death Place:

[Tips](#) on place searching.

Show only results with images.

Number of results per page:

SEARCH Clear Form

Biographical Facts Search – (power searching)

Available search fields include **Name**, **Occupation**, **Nationality**, **Ethnicity**, **Gender**, **Birth Year**, **Death Year**, **Birth Place**, and **Death Place**. You may also limit the results to those containing **images** by checking the box next to the camera icon. Biographical Facts search would be helpful in the following examples:


- Name a few **African American inventors** born between 1800 and 1900. Use the **Occupation**, **Ethnicity**, **Birth Year** and **Death Year** fields.
- Who is the head of state of Korea? Use **Occupation** and **Nationality** fields.

Navigating Results:

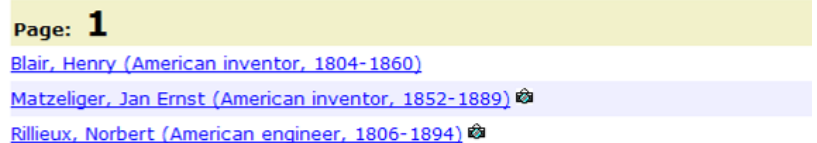
To view information about the person, click on their name. record containing the person’s full name, alias(es), birth date, date of death (if applicable), and photo (if available). Click on one of the **tabs** (see below) to view different types of information for that person.



Biographies Brief Biographies Magazines and News Websites

 Your search (**Occupation= inventor; Ethnicity= "African American"; Birth Year is after 1800 A.D.; Death Year is before 1900 A.D.**) returned the following results.
Names 1-3 of 3 displayed below.


Select a name from the list below:



Page: **1**

[Blair, Henry \(American inventor, 1804-1860\)](#)

[Matzelliger, Jan Ernst \(American inventor, 1852-1889\)](#) 

[Rillieux, Norbert \(American engineer, 1806-1894\)](#) 

Saving/Printing/Emailing Results:

In the results screen, you can select articles for later review by “marking” them. Check the box next to the articles you wish to save, and then click “**Update Mark List**.” This creates a list of saved articles which you can **add to**, **email**, or **print**. It also creates a list of citations, handy for generating bibliographies.



Update Mark List View Mark List View Citation List

 [Print Narrative Biographies](#)

Clicking on the **printer** icon will reformat the narrative biographies for printing. Click on the “Back” button to return to results.

Additional Searching Tips from Thomson Gale:

This advice will help you improve your search results:

1. Use at least two or three search terms. By using more search terms to narrow your search, you can locate essays that fit your information needs better.

Note: By default, the search engine finds only those essays containing all of the words you specify. See Search Operators below to learn how to use the **AND**, **OR**, **NOT**, and proximity operators.

2. Be specific. If you're looking for information about ancient Rome, enter both of those words in your search. If you enter just Rome, your search may give you essays that discuss modern Rome or Rome, N.Y., in addition to ancient Rome.

3. Find an exact phrase with the help of the W operator. You can narrow your searches by requiring that the search terms appear as a phrase in the order that you typed them. For example, if you are looking for time travel, search for these words as a phrase, time **W** travel. (It literally means find time "within 1 word of" travel.) This narrows your results from hundreds of matches to a few dozen matches, assuming the phrase that you typed is not too common.

4. You can also mix phrases and single search terms in the search box. For example, you can enter "**ancient Rome**" **AND** **Caesar** and get articles that contain one or both phrases.

5. Broaden your search by using OR. For example, racism or prejudice. Unless you tell the search engine otherwise, it finds only those essays containing all of the words that you specify. Simply key each word in a separate text box using the advanced search. Choose full text from the lists and choose OR to separate the words. By inserting OR between your search words, you will increase the number of essays that are found; use OR if your search isn't finding enough essays.

6. Use plural or other word endings. For example, if you are looking for discussions of murder, search for various forms of the word using the OR operator as the connector, e.g. murder or murders or murderer or murderous. It is also possible, depending on the desired search term, to use the truncation (or wildcard) feature to retrieve both singular and plural forms of a word, e.g. murder.

7. Try using synonyms for your original words. For example, key in "nervous breakdown" or "mental breakdown" or "nervous disorder" or "mental instability".

8. Check your spelling. If you type *litrature* instead of *literature*, your search won't find any matches.

BioRC Searching Cheat Sheet

	Symbol	Means	Query	Finds	Does Not Find
Wildcards	* (asterisk)	Truncation. Finds multiple characters after the root word.	faith*	essays that contain the words faith, faithful, or faiths.	fait accompli
	? (question mark)	Finds exactly one character within a word	psych????y	essays that match either psychology or psychiatry	essays containing psychotherapy
	! (exclamation point)	Stands for one or no characters	analo!!	analog and analog s	analogous
Date Ranges	yyyy - yyyy	A date range searches multiple years in date fields (such as Birth or Death Year fields).	1940 - 1949	any year in the 1940s	years other than the 1940s
Boolean search operators	AND OR NOT	Finds both words in the same document Finds either word in the same document Finds documents with one word (but not the other) in the same document	red AND blue red OR blue red NOT blue	Blue shoes and red ink Red rubies Seeing red	Blue blood Red, white and blue Blue faced but seeing red
Proximity operators	W (within)	essays containing the specified words in the specified order within the number of words you indicate	old w4 sea	Documents containing the word old within four words of the word sea	Note: old <u>must</u> precede sea Old squid who lived at the bottom of the sea Sea turtles become old over time
	N (next to)	documents containing the words you specify within the number of words you specify, but the <i>words can be in any order.</i>	apples N4 bananas	documents containing the words apples and bananas within four words of each other, in any order (bananas could precede or follow apples)	apples are so very much better than bananas
Parentheses	()	Parentheses allow you to construct very powerful queries, overriding all other search operators. (Note: Without parentheses, Boolean operators are processed in the following order: NOT, AND, OR)	(The Nation OR The National Review) AND Tom Hanks	articles on Tom Hanks from <i>The National Review</i> and/or <i>The Nation</i> .	articles from