

Cerritos College Library

In the Wilford Michael Library & Learning Resource Center

PERSONAL NARRATIVES: OVERCOMING LIFE'S OBSTACLES

Many people have written about how they have overcome obstacles in their lives. By reading these narratives you get an insight into the authors' psyche and you learn about events that took place during their lives which helped shape their personalities and beliefs. Your search for personal narratives and biographies about the authors who wrote them can include books, periodical articles, online databases, and authoritative Internet resources.

Books

Use the **Library Catalog** located on the Cerritos College **Library Home Page** to find personal narratives, autobiographies and biographies. You can search by author, title, subject, or keyword. For books *by* an author, type the last name first and choose *Author Search*. Find biographical and critical material by doing a *Subject Search*. Also type the last name first, for example:

Cisneros, Sandra	Washington, Booker T.	King, Martin Luther	Keller, Helen
Angelou, Maya	Frank, Anne	Hansberry, Lorraine	Armstrong, Lance
Kahlo, Frida	Brokaw, Tom	Winfrey, Oprah	Chavez, Cesar

Some additional *Subject Headings* are:

Personal Narratives

Personal Narratives – American Iraq War

Personal Narratives – Alcoholics

Personal Narratives - Blindness

Slave Narrative

Autobiography

Autobiography in literature

Autobiography - African American authors

Autobiography - Chinese America authors

Autobiography - Women Authors

The reference books listed below can be used to gather biographical and critical information about authors and their works. Use these books, as well as the **Gale Databases** and **In the First Person**, as a starting point for your research. By using these sources you will become better acquainted with your author and work. You will then be ready to conduct more comprehensive literary research by using the online catalog, journal and magazine databases, and authoritative Internet sites.

Biographical Sources - Reference Books

American Writers: a collection of literary biographies

REF PS129 .A55

Contemporary American Women Fiction Writers: an A to Z guide

REF PS374 .W6 C66 2002

Contemporary Authors

REF PN771 .C78

Multicultural Writers from Antiquity to 1945

REF PN452 .M85 2002

Women Memoirists

REF PS366 .A88 W64 1998

American Writers Classics

REF PS129 .A548

Contemporary American Women Writers: Narrative Strategies

REF PS379 .C66 1985

Encyclopedia of World Biography

REF CT103 .E56

Oryx Holocaust Sourcebook

REF D804.3 .H6 F47 2002

PERSONAL NARRATIVES

Writing Your Own Personal Narrative

The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative
PN3383 .N35 A23 2002

The I-Search Paper
PE1478 .M26 1988

Living Narrative: Creating Lives in Everyday Storytelling
GR72.3 .O35 2001

Narrative and Genre
D16.14 .N37 1998

Writing Personal Essays: How to Shape Your Life Experiences for the Page
PE1479 .A88 B46 1995

Journal Articles

Magazines and newspapers often include personal narratives and biographical articles about famous individuals. To find articles on your topic, use one of the online databases listed below. These databases usually provide full-text articles on almost every topic. They are available via the [Library Home Page](#). Conduct your search in these databases by using subject headings and keywords similar to those you used to locate books.

Use subject headings similar to those used to locate books such as the person's name or the words "personal narrative" or "first person narrative".

EBSCOHost
Project Muse

Literature Resource Center
Discovering Collection

In addition, the database [In the First Person](#) provides a searchable index with links to full-text, audio, and video of letters, diaries, oral histories, memoirs, and autobiographies within scholarly materials freely available on the Web. Links provide access to thousands of personal narratives in English from a large selection of archives and repositories.

Internet Sites

The Internet can be a valuable source for supplementing the information you have gathered from books and periodicals. It is important that you evaluate the information you get from the Internet to determine if it is reliable and useful to your research. A few Internet sites that may be useful are listed here.

Sixties Personal Narrative Project

http://www3.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Narrative.html

First Person Narratives of the American South

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award97/ncuhtml/fpnashome.html>

The Narrative Essay

<http://papyr.com/hypertextbooks/comp1/narrativ.htm>

A Brief Guide to Writing Narrative Essays (Roane State Community College OWL)

<http://www.roanestate.edu/owl&writingcenter/owl/narration.html>

Narrative Essays (St. Cloud State University)

<http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/acadwrite/narrative.html>