



ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES

What this handout is about ...

Welcome to the wonderful world of annotated bibliographies! You're probably already familiar with the need to provide bibliographies, reference pages, and works cited to credit your sources when you do a research paper. An annotated bibliography includes descriptions and explanations of your listed sources beyond the basic citation information you usually provide.

This handout will:

- 1) explain why annotated bibliographies are useful for researchers.
- 2) provide an explanation of what constitutes an annotation.
- 3) describe various types of annotations and styles for writing them.
- 4) offer multiple examples of annotated bibliographies in the MLA, APA, and CBE styles of citation.

Annotated bibliographies are useful for researchers:

WHY DO THESE THINGS, ANYWAY? YOU CAN SEE WHAT THE SOURCE IS FROM THE REGULAR BIBLIOGRAPHY.

One of the reasons behind citing sources and compiling a general bibliography is so that you can prove you have done some valid research to back up your argument and claims. Readers can refer to a citation in your bibliography and then go look up the material themselves. When inspired by your text or your argument, interested researchers can access your resources. They may wish to double check a claim or interpretation you've made, or they may simply wish to continue researching according to their interests. But think about it: even though a bibliography provides a list of research sources of all types that includes publishing information, how much does that really tell a researcher or reader about the sources themselves?

An annotated bibliography provides specific information about each source you have used. As a researcher, you have become an expert on your topic and have the ability both to explain the content and to assess the usefulness of your sources for those not in the know. Think of your paper as part of a conversation with others interested in the same things you are; the annotated bibliography allows you to tell readers what to check out, what might be worth checking out in some situations, and what might not be worth spending the time. It's kind of like providing a list of good movies for your classmates to watch and then going over the list with them, telling them why this movie would be better than that one or why one student in your class might like a particular movie better than another student. You want to

give your audience enough information to understand basically what the movies are about and to make an informed decision about where to spend their money based on their interests.

GOOD REASONS THAT ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES EXIST:

A good annotated bibliography

- encourages you to think critically about the content of the works you are using, their place within a field of study, and their relation to your own research and ideas.
- proves you have read and understand your sources.
- establishes your work as a valid source and you as a competent researcher.
- orients your study and topic in a continuing professional conversation.
- provides a way for others to decide whether the source will be helpful to their research if they read it.
- could help interested researchers determine whether they are interested in a topic by providing background information and an idea of the kind of work going on in a field.

What constitutes an annotated bibliography?

WHAT ARE THE BASIC POSSIBLE ELEMENTS OF AN ANNOTATION?

1. Bibliography according to the appropriate citation style (MLA, APA, CBE).
2. Explanation of main points and/or purpose of the work, basically its thesis, which shows among other things that you have read and thoroughly understand the source.
3. Verification or critique of the authority or qualifications of the author.
4. Comments on the worth, effectiveness, and usefulness of the work in terms of both the topic being researched and/or your own research project.
5. The point of view or perspective from which the work was written. For instance, you may note if the author seemed to have particular biases or was trying to reach a particular audience.
6. Relevant links to other work done in the area, like related sources, possibly including a comparison with some of those already on your list. You may want to establish connections to other aspects of the same argument or opposing views.

The first four elements above are usually a necessary part of the annotated bibliography. Points 5 and 6 may involve a little more analysis of the source, but you may include them in other kinds of annotations besides evaluative ones. Depending on the type of annotation you use, which this handout will address in the next section, there may be additional kinds of information that you will need to include.

For more extensive research papers (probably ten pages or more), you often see resource materials grouped into sub headed sections based on content, but this probably will not be necessary for the kinds of assignments you'll be working on. For longer papers, ask your professor about her preferences concerning annotated bibliographies.

Did you know that annotations have categories and styles?

DECISIONS, DECISIONS:

As you go through this handout, you'll see that, before you start, you'll need to make several decisions about your annotations: citation format, type of annotation, and writing style for the annotation.

1. First of all, you'll need to decide which kind of citation format is appropriate to the paper and its sources, for instance, MLA or APA. This may influence the format of the annotations and bibliography. For your purposes, all bibliographies should be double-spaced and use normal margins (you may want to check with your instructor, since she may have a variation she wants you to follow).

MLA (Modern Language Association)

Check out our handout on MLA documentation for basic MLA bibliography formatting and rules: www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/cbe.html.

- MLA documentation is generally used for disciplines in the humanities, such as English, languages, film, and cultural studies or other theoretical studies. These annotations are often summary or analytical annotations.
- Title your annotated bibliography "Annotated Bibliography" or "Annotated List of Works Cited."
- Following MLA format, use a hanging indent for your bibliographic information. This means the first line is not indented and all the other lines are indented four spaces (you may ask your instructor if it's okay to tab over instead of using four spaces).
- Begin your annotation *immediately* after the bibliographic information of the source ends; don't skip a line down unless you have been told to do so by your instructor.

APA (American Psychological Association)

Check out our handout on APA documentation for basic APA bibliography formatting and rules: http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/apa_2002.html

- Natural and social sciences, such as psychology, nursing, sociology, and social work use APA documentation. It is also used in economics, business, and criminology. These annotations are often succinct summaries.
- Annotated bibliographies for APA format do not require a special title. Use the usual "References" designation.
- Like MLA, APA uses a hanging indent: the first line is set flush with the left margin, and all other lines are indented four spaces (you may ask your instructor if it's okay to tab over instead of using four spaces).
- After the bibliographic citation, drop down to the next line to begin the annotation, but don't skip an extra line.
- The entire annotation is indented an additional two spaces, so that means each of its lines will be six spaces from the margin (if your instructor has said that it's

okay to tab over instead of using the four spaces rule, indent the annotation two more spaces in from that point).

CBE (Council of Biology Editors)

Check out our handout on CBE documentation for basic CBE bibliography formatting and rules:

www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/cbe.html.

- CBE documentation is used by the plant sciences, zoology, microbiology, and the medical sciences.
 - Annotated bibliographies for CBE format do not require a special title. Use the usual "References," "Cited References," or "Literature Cited," and set it flush with the left margin.
 - Bibliographies for CBE in general are in a slightly smaller font than the rest of the paper.
 - When using the name-year system, like MLA and APA, the first line of each entry is set flush with the left margin, and all subsequent lines, including the annotation, are indented three or four spaces.
 - When using the citation-sequence method, each entry begins two spaces after the number, and every line, including the annotation, will be indented to match the beginning of the entry, or may be slightly further indented, as in the case of journals.
 - After the bibliographic citation, drop down to the next line to begin the annotation, but don't skip an extra line. The entire annotation follows the indentation of the bibliographic entry, whether it's N-Y or C-S format.
 - Annotations in CBE are generally a smaller font size than the rest of the bibliographic information.
2. After choosing a documentation format, you'll choose from a variety of annotation categories presented in the following section. Each type of annotation highlights a particular approach to presenting a source to a reader. For instance, an annotation could provide a summary of the source only, or it could also provide some additional evaluation of that material.
 3. In addition to making choices related to the content of the annotation, you'll also need to choose a style of writing—for instance, telescopic versus paragraph form. Your writing style isn't dictated by the content of your annotation. Writing style simply refers to the way you've chosen to convey written information. A discussion of writing style follows the section on annotation types.

Types of annotations:

As you now know, one annotation does not fit all! There are different kinds of annotations, depending on what might be most important for your reader to learn about a source. Your assignments will usually make it clear which citation format you need to use, but they may not always specify which type of annotation to employ. In that case, you'll either need to pick your instructor's brain a little to see what she wants or use clue words from the

assignment itself to make a decision. For instance, the assignment may tell you that your annotative bibliography should give evidence proving an analytical understanding of the sources you've used. The word analytical clues you in to the idea that you must evaluate the sources you're working with and provide some kind of critique.

SUMMARY ANNOTATIONS:

There are two kinds of summarizing annotations, *informative* and *indicative*.

Summarizing annotations in general have a couple of defining features:

- They sum up the content of the source, as a book report might.
- They give an overview of the arguments and proofs/evidence addressed in the work and note the resulting conclusion.
- They do not judge the work they are discussing. Leave that to the critical/evaluative annotations.
- When appropriate, they describe the author's methodology or approach to material. For instance, you might mention if the source is an ethnography or if the author employs a particular kind of theory.

Informative annotation

Informative annotations sometimes read like straight summaries of the source material, but they often spend a little more time summarizing relevant information about the author or the work itself.

Indicative annotation

Indicative annotation is the second type of summary annotation, but it does not attempt to include actual information from the argument itself. Instead, it gives general information about what kinds of questions or issues are addressed by the work. This sometimes includes the use of chapter titles.

Critical/Evaluative

Evaluative annotations don't just summarize. In addition to tackling the points addressed in summary annotations, evaluative annotations:

- evaluate the source or author critically (biases, lack of evidence, objective, etc.).
- show how the work may or may not be useful for a particular field of study or audience.
- explain how researching this material assisted your own project.

Combination

An annotated bibliography may combine elements of all the types. In fact, most of them fall into this category: a little summarizing and describing, a little evaluation.

Writing Style:

Ok, next! So what does it mean to use different writing styles as opposed to different kinds of content? Content is what belongs in the annotation, and style is the way you write it up. First, choose which content type you need to compose, and then choose the style you're going to use to write it

TELESCOPIC:

This kind of annotated bibliography is a study in succinctness. It uses a minimalist treatment of both information and sentence structure, without sacrificing clarity. Warning: this kind of writing can be harder than you might think.

PARAGRAPH:

Don't skimp on this kind of annotated bibliography. If your instructor has asked for paragraph form, it likely means that you'll need to include several elements in the annotation, or that she expects a more in-depth description or evaluation, for instance. Make sure to provide an entire paragraph's worth treatment of the work.

Conclusion:

As you can see now, bibliographies and annotations are really a series of organized steps. They require meticulous attention, but in the end, you've got an entire testimony to all the research and work you've done. At the end of this handout you'll find examples of informative, indicative, evaluative, combination, telescopic, and paragraph annotated bibliography entries in MLA, APA, and CBE formats. Use these examples as your guide to creating an annotated bibliography that makes you look like the expert you are!

MLA STYLE EXAMPLES

MLA EXAMPLE OF INFORMATIVE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

TAKEN FROM "HOW TO WRITE AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY"

London, Herbert. "Five Myths of the Television Age." Television Quarterly 10.1 (1982): 81-89. Herbert London, the Dean of Journalism at New York University and author of several books and articles, explains how television contradicts five commonly believed ideas. He uses specific examples of events seen on television, such as the assassination of John Kennedy, to illustrate his points. His examples have been selected to contradict such truisms as: "seeing is believing"; "a picture is worth a thousand words"; and "satisfaction is its own reward." London uses logical arguments to support his ideas, which are his personal opinion. He doesn't refer to any previous works on the topic. London's style and vocabulary would make the article of interest to any reader.

MLA EXAMPLE OF INDICATIVE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

EXAMPLE FROM PATRICIA BIZZELL AND BRUCE HERZBURG'S BOOK

Griffin, C. Williams, ed. Teaching Writing in All Disciplines. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1982. Ten essays on writing-across-the-curriculum programs, teaching writing in disciplines other than English, and teaching techniques for using writing as learning. Essays include Toby Fulwiler, "Writing: An Act of Cognition"; Barbara King, "Using Writing in the Mathematics Class: Theory and Practice"; Dean Drenk, "Teaching Finance Through Writing"; Elaine P. Mairnon, "Writing Across the Curriculum: Past, Present, and Future."

MLA EXAMPLE OF EVALUATIVE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

EXAMPLE FROM BRENDA SPATT'S BOOK

Gurko, Leo. Ernest Hemingway and the Pursuit of Heroism. New York: Crowell, 1968. This book is part of a series called "Twentieth Century American Writers": a Brief Introduction to the Man and his Work. After fifty pages of straight biography, Gurko discussed Hemingway's writing, novel by novel. There's an index and a short bibliography, but no notes. The biographical part is clear and easy to read, but it sounds too much like a summary.

MLA EXAMPLE OF COMBINATION ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Doll, Susan and Greg Faller. "Blade Runner and Genre: Film Noir and Science Fiction." Literature Film Quarterly 14.2 (1986): 89-100. Doll and Faller assert that Ridley Scott's film, Blade Runner, exhibits elements of two distinct pulp genres, film noir and science fiction. The genre cross-pollination is a reflection of Philip K. Dick's novel, Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?, upon which the movie is based. After a useful discussion of genre, the authors go on to effectively discuss defining characteristics of both noir and sci-fi, despite the difficulties of such a project. Through the course of accessible discussion and

useful examples from the film, the complexities involved in the combination of genres are revealed. In addition, the article also examines the ways that noir and sci-fi in fact complement each other, noir providing a distinct style and sci-fi a distinct narrative direction. Both genres are also concerned with many of the same issues, especially social constructs, ethics, and the state of being human.

MLA EXAMPLE OF TELESCOPIC ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

TAKEN FROM BRENDA SPATT'S BOOK

Hingley, Ronald. Chekhov: A Biographical and Critical Study. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1950. A very good biography. A unique feature of this book is the appendix, which has a chronological listing of all English translations of Chekhov's short stories.

MLA EXAMPLE OF PARAGRAPH ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Renner, Stanley. "'Red hair, very red, close curling': Sexual Hysteria, Physiognomical Bogeymen, and the 'Ghosts' in *The Turn of the Screw*." In Henry James: *The Turn of the Screw*. Ed. Peter G. Beidler. Boston: Bedford Books, 1995. 223-241. Renner asserts that what has previously been considered a supernatural event in James' Turn of the Screw is actually a psychological one. According to Renner, James was in fact using the psychosis of the governess to comment on repressive Victorian sexual ideals and their effects on individuals. Renner uses a little bit of biography to show that James would have been familiar with "sexual hysteria", but the more successful part of the article is his careful analysis of physiognomical stereotyping in the Victorian Era. His central argument effectively links the onset of the governess's sexual hysteria and hallucination with the influence of Victorian assumptions about character and physical appearance.

APA STYLE EXAMPLES

APA EXAMPLE OF INFORMATIVE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

TAKEN FROM PATRICIA BIZZELL AND BRUCE HERZBURG'S BOOK

Voeltz, L.M. (1980). Children's attitudes toward handicapped peers. *American Journal of Mental Deficiency*, 84, 455-464.

As services for severely handicapped children become increasingly available within neighborhood public schools, children's attitudes toward handicapped peers in integrated settings warrant attention. Factor analysis of attitude survey responses of 2,392 children revealed four factors underlying attitudes toward handicapped peers: social-contact willingness, deviance consequence, and two actual contact dimensions. Upper elementary-age children, girls, and children in schools with most contact with severely

handicapped peers expressed the most accepting attitudes. Results of this study suggest the modifiability of children's attitudes and the need to develop interventions to facilitate social acceptance of individual differences in integrated school settings.

APA EXAMPLE OF INDICATIVE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

EXAMPLE FROM THOMAS TATE'S HANDOUT FOR THE WRITE PLACE

Howard, T, & Rifkin, J (1977). *Who should play God?* New York: Dell.

This book "lifts the cloak of secrecy from genetic experiments" and explores, among other things, "who is performing the research and who profits from it" (12). It's clearly anti-genetic engineering; its chapter titles give a good idea of the direction and flavor of the book, for example, "Eugenics," "Eliminating 'Bad' Genes," "Bio-Futures," "Scientists and Corporation." This book looks as if it is an appropriate source for the social arguments from the political left wing.

NOTE: This example includes an instance of citation within an annotation. You can also see in this example that if the bibliography itself is only one line, you go on to indent two spaces as usual for the annotation.

APA EXAMPLE OF EVALUATIVE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

EXAMPLE FROM LAURIE CARLSON'S HANDOUT

Schechter, H. (1971). Death and resurrection of the king: Elements of primitive mythology and ritual in "Roger Malvin's Burial." *English Language Notes*, 8, 201-05.

Though Schechter reorganizes the material in an interesting format, basically his study is a reiteration of Cassier's seminal argument in *The Sacred and the Profane: Modern Myth Studies*. Schechter's major contribution to the debate is his recognition that Reuben sacrifices Cyrus so that the curse of death-in-life can be removed. Schechter's attempt to put Cassier's argument in a Jungian context is intriguing but not quite successful, since he must ignore important elements in the story to do so.

NOTE: Compare the content of the following APA **summary** annotation with the critical/evaluative annotation given above for the same source. Note the difference in approach and information.

Schechter, H. (1971). Death and resurrection of the king: Elements of primitive mythology and ritual in "Roger Malvin's Burial." *English Language Notes*, 8, 201-05.

Working with Frazer's paradigm of the death and resurrection of the King motif in myth and ritual, Schechter sees Malvin as the dying king in Hawthorne's short story and Reuben as his successor. Reuben sacrifices Cyrus so that the curse of death-in-life can be removed. Thus, the tale becomes the imaginary fulfillment of the blessing of fertility (204).

APA EXAMPLE OF COMBINATION ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

TAKEN FROM CENTER FOR INFORMATION ON LANGUAGE TEACHING AND THE ENGLISH TEACHING

Morris, Joyce M. (1959). *Reading in the primary school: An investigation into standards of reading and their association with primary school characteristics*. London: Newnes, for National Foundation for Educational Research.
Report of a large-scale investigation into English children's reading standards, and their relation to conditions such as size of classes, types of organization and methods of teaching. Based on enquiries in sixty schools in Kent and covering 8,000 children learning to read English as their mother tongue. Notable for thoroughness of research techniques.

APA EXAMPLE OF TELESCOPIC ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

EXAMPLE FROM I. F. BELL AND J. GALLUP'S REFERENCE GUIDE

Vowles, Richard B. (1962). Psychology and drama: A selected checklist. *Wisconsin Studies in Contemporary Literature*, 3(1), 35-48.
Divided by individual authors. Reviews the research between 1920 and 1961.

APA EXAMPLE OF PARAGRAPH ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

TAKEN FROM MICHAEL ENGLE, AMY BLUMENTHAL, AND TONY COSGRAVE'S "HOW TO PREPARE AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY"

Goldschneider, F. K., Waite, L. J., & Witsberger, C. (1986). Nonfamily living and the erosion of traditional family orientations among young adults. *American Sociological Review*, 51, 541-554.

The authors, researchers at the Rand Corporation and Brown University, use data from the National Longitudinal Surveys of Young Women and Young Men to test their hypothesis that nonfamily living by young adults alters their attitudes, values, plans, and expectations, moving them away from their belief in traditional sex roles. They find their hypothesis strongly supported in young females, while the effects were fewer in studies of young males. Increasing the time away from parents before marrying increased individualism, self-sufficiency, and changes in attitudes about families. In contrast, an earlier study by Williams cited below shows no significant gender differences in sex role attitudes as a result of no family living.

CBE STYLE EXAMPLES

CBE EXAMPLE OF INFORMATIVE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

NOTE: The CBE bibliographic examples in this handout follow name-year system format.

TAKEN FROM STUDENT PAPER

Gallo, A, Britmayer, B. 1993. Mothers' perceptions of sibling adjustment and family life in childhood chronic illness. *Journal of Pediatric Nursing* 8(5):318-323.

The purpose of this study was to examine variations in sibling behavioral adjustment in relation to mothers' perceptions of the illness experience and family

life. Differences were found between mothers who rated healthy siblings either poorly or very well adjusted. The findings of this study suggest that when a mother shows evidence of burden, she feels a lack of control.

CBE EXAMPLE OF INDICATIVE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

TAKEN FROM STUDENT PAPER

Barkley R, Fischer M, Fletcher K, Smallish, L. 2003. Does the treatment of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder with stimulants contribute to drug use/abuse? *Pediatrics* 111:97-109.

The result of an intense thirteen year study, this report examines the correlation between the use of stimulants to treat ADHD and the potential consequent use of illegal substances. The authors, in an attempt to research a possible negative side effect of ADHD medication, studied 147 individuals and the effects of stimulant medication. The report discusses the treatment of ADHD with medication in general, beyond the specific side effects, and includes commentary on the societal implication of stimulant treatment for such a widespread behavioral disorder.

CBE EXAMPLE OF EVALUATIVE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

TAKEN FROM STUDENT PAPER

National Institutes for Health. 1998. Diagnosis and treatment of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. *NIH Consensus Statement* 16(2):1-37.

This statement was prepared at a conference by experts on ADHD. The report investigates a number of treatments for ADHD and evaluates the effectiveness of these treatments. It suggests that ADHD is a growing concern and proposes that ADHD be addressed as a problem within the field of public health. The work also identifies the societal implications of treatment with stimulants. The statement presents the information in a format that is unbiased and maintains that individual treatment plans are necessary. The conclusions are drawn based on what is in the best interest of the individual with ADHD and the people around him/her. It does not rush to any conclusions, but focuses on providing in-depth information for professionals who work with this disorder.

CBE EXAMPLE OF COMBINATION ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

TAKEN FROM MICHAEL A. GRASSO'S "RESEARCH AGENDA OF FOUNDATIONAL MATERIAL"

Zue, V. 1995. Research overview. Laboratory for Computer Science. 1995 annual research summary. Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The Laboratory for Computer Science's strategy has been to develop human language technology within the context of real application domains. This strategy helps to illuminate critical technical issues, demonstrates the usefulness of the technology, and allows real people to access information and solve real problems. The Voyager urban navigation and exploration system has served as their primary platform for multilingual conversational systems. Pegasus, a spoken language interface to the SABRE reservation

system, has been used for the development of displayless conversational systems. The Galaxy effort is a distributed architecture for accessing on-line information using spoken input.

CBE EXAMPLE OF TELESCOPIC ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Nesse, RM, M.D., Williams, GC, Ph.D. 1996. Why we get sick: the new science of Darwinian medicine. New York: Vintage Books. 290 p.
World's leading evolutionary biologist, Dr. Williams, and a physician summarize latest research on disorders from allergies to cancer. Tackles current issues in biomedicine concerning the evolutionary development of our bodies' responses to injury and disease.

CBE EXAMPLE OF PARAGRAPH ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

TAKEN FROM STUDENT PAPER

American Academy of Pediatrics. 2001. Clinical practice guideline: treatment of the school-aged child with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. *Pediatrics* 108(4): 1033-44.

This document makes a number of recommendations regarding the diagnosis and treatment of ADHD. Unlike many other references, this report emphasizes a thorough diagnosis and understanding of the severity of ADHD in individuals before beginning any method of treatment. The article acknowledges that many individuals with ADHD are affected differently and sometimes have dissimilar symptoms. It also reviews the effectiveness of short term and long term treatment options and concludes that a number of follow-ups is necessary to treat the disorder as the individual ages and symptoms continue to fluctuate. Used as a guideline for ADHD treatment, this reference is unique due to its circulation within the medical community. It details the steps necessary for a successful diagnosis, and the subsequent course of treatment to be prescribed by a physician. It explains the role of the doctor and family in the process of treatment and provides information on gauging the effectiveness of any individual's method of treatment.

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NOTE: The bibliography for this handout is in MLA format.

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