

HOW TO PREPARE AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

WHAT IS AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY?

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, and documents. Each citation is followed by a brief (usually about 150 words) **descriptive and evaluative paragraph**, called the annotation. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources on your list.

THE PROCESS

Creating an annotated bibliography calls for three main intellectual skills: **concise exposition, briefly expressed analysis, and informed library research.**

First, **locate and record citations to books, periodicals, and documents** that may contain useful information and ideas on your topic. **Briefly examine and review the actual items.** Then **choose those works that provide a variety of perspectives** on your topic.

Second, **cite the book, article, or document using the appropriate style.**

Third, write a **brief annotation that summarizes the central theme and scope** of the book or article. Include one or more sentences that (a) **evaluate the authority or background of the author**, (b) **comment on the intended audience**, (c) **compare or contrast this work with another** you have cited, or (d) **explain how this work illuminates** your topic.

CRITICALLY APPRAISING THE BOOK, ARTICLE, OR DOCUMENT

You can begin evaluating a physical information source (a book or an article for instance) even before you have the physical item in hand. Evaluate a source by first **examining the bibliographic citation.** The bibliographic citation is the written description of a book, journal article, essay, or some other published material that appears in the Library catalog (OPAC) or index (ProQuest). Bibliographic citations usually have three main components: **author, title, and publication information.** These components can help you determine the usefulness of this source for your paper. (In the same way, you can appraise a Web site by examining the home page carefully.)

SAMPLE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ENTRY FOR A JOURNAL ARTICLE

APA format:

Goldschneider, F. K., Waite, L. J., & Witsberger, C. (1986). Non-family 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 non-family 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 non-family living.

Thank you to:

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