

## THE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

### WHAT IS AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY?

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations of books, articles, and electronic sources. Each citation is followed by a brief (usually between 75- 150 words, though, as always, quality is more important than length) descriptive and evaluative paragraph. This is the annotation. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance and quality of the sources cited.

### ANNOTATIONS VS. ABSTRACTS

*Do not copy abstracts from research databases. Abstracts and annotations are different.*

Abstracts are the purely descriptive summaries often found at the beginning of scholarly journal articles or on periodical databases such as Proquest. Annotations are descriptive and critical; they expose the author's point of view, clarity and appropriateness of information contained in the source.

### THE PROCESS

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.

Cite the book, article, or document using MLA guidelines for source citation.

Write a concise annotation that summarizes the central idea of the source. Include sentences that:

- A. Summarize the author's analysis of the topic, including an explanation of the main purpose and scope of the cited work.
- B. Explain how the source illuminates your research.
- C. Evaluate the validity or helpfulness of the source. Is the work a contribution to the subject under consideration? To evaluate the source, you may want to ask yourself:
  1. Who is the author? Are they an authority? Are they associated with a scholarly institution like a university or research project? Is the author a contributor to a scholarly journal? Is there any way for you to verify the credibility of the author?
  2. Does the information appear to be valid and well-researched, or is it questionable and unsupported by evidence? Assumptions should be reasonable.
  3. Are the ideas and arguments advanced more or less in line with other works you have read on the same topic?
  4. Are the main points clearly presented and/or organized? Is the author's argument effective?

### FORMAT of INDIVIDUAL ENTRIES

List your seven sources alphabetically just as you would on a properly-formatted works cited list (see MLA handbook). Do **not** number your sources.

