SAMPLE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ENTRY FOR A JOURNAL ARTICLE

The following example uses the APA format for the journal citation. NOTE: APA requires double spacing within citations.


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 nonfamily living.

This example uses the MLA format for the journal citation. NOTE: Standard MLA practice requires double spacing within citations.


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 nonfamily living.

WHAT'S MISSING FROM THE EXAMPLES ABOVE?

Sources:
http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill28.htm
http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/annotatebib.html

Other Resources: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/
(e.g., analysis of existing, experimental, and other kinds of
research) Are you interested in the way the source uses a theoretical framework or a
collection or open up new ways of seeing a problem? (e.g., bringing the
way it goes about answering it (the method)? Does it make new
research in the way the source frames its research question or in
research on your topic?

Bibliography is an independent project. It is to assess the sources, contribution to the
research project. Briefly identify how you intend to use the source and why. If you are
investigation of your research question or problem. If your bibliography is part of a
Your annotation should now go on to briefly assess the value of the source to an

ASSESSING SOURCE RELEVANCE AND VALUE

Sometimes begin or conclude with such a phrase:

Look for paragraphs that summarize the literature or section may
sometimes be clearer or to find the main point in the paragraph
Pay attention to the opening sentences of each paragraph, where authors
Identify the methods used to investigate the problem, addressed in the text.
Notice whether and how a theory is used to interpret evidence of data.

Assessment:

When beyond listing contents and toward giving an account of the
text, how the text is laid out and organized. What are the main divisions
and see where the author does not. Notice especially the key terms that
look for repetition of key terms or ideas. Follow them through the text.
Build the introduction and the conclusion can help you with this task.
Identify the author’s thesis (central claim or purpose) in research questions.

The following reading strategies can help you identify the significance of your source:

- Identify key ideas and themes.
- Determine the author's main points.
- Assess the credibility and reliability of the source.
- Does the source gather and analyze a particular body of evidence that you want to use? (e.g. the historical development of a body of legislation)
- How do the source's conclusions bear on your own investigation?

In order to determine how you will use the source or define its contribution, you will need to assess the quality of the argument: why is it of value? what are its limitations? how well defined is its research problem? how effective is its method of investigation? how good is the evidence? would you draw the same conclusions from the evidence?

Keep the context of your project in mind. How is material assessed in your course or discipline? What models for assessing arguments are available in course materials?

**LANGUAGE**

It is sometimes challenging to find the vocabulary in which to summarize and discuss a text. Here is a list of some verbs for referring to texts and ideas that you might find useful:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>account for</th>
<th>clarify</th>
<th>describe</th>
<th>exemplify</th>
<th>indicate</th>
<th>question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>analyze</td>
<td>compare</td>
<td>depict</td>
<td>exhibit</td>
<td>investigate</td>
<td>recognize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>argue</td>
<td>conclude</td>
<td>determine</td>
<td>explain</td>
<td>judge</td>
<td>reflect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assess</td>
<td>criticize</td>
<td>distinguish</td>
<td>frame</td>
<td>justify</td>
<td>refer to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assert</td>
<td>defend</td>
<td>evaluate</td>
<td>identify</td>
<td>narrate</td>
<td>report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assume</td>
<td>define</td>
<td>emphasize</td>
<td>illustrate</td>
<td>persuade</td>
<td>review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>claim</td>
<td>demonstrate</td>
<td>examine</td>
<td>imply</td>
<td>propose</td>
<td>suggest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VARIATIONS OF ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES**

Annotated bibliographies do come in many variations. Pay close attention to the requirements of your assignment. Here are some possible variations:

- Some assignments may require you to summarize only and not to evaluate.
- Some assignments may want you to notice and comment on patterns of similarity and dissimilarity between sources; other assignments may want you to treat each source independently.
- If the bibliography is long, consider organizing it in sections. Your categories of organization should help clarify your research question.
- Some assignments may require or allow you to preface the bibliography (or its sections) with a paragraph explaining the scope of your investigation and providing a rationale for your selection of sources.
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, the annotation. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited.

ANNOTATIONS VS. ABSTRACTS

Abstracts are the purely descriptive summaries often found at the beginning of scholarly journal articles or in periodical indexes. Annotations are descriptive and critical; they expose the author's point of view, clarity and appropriateness of expression, and authority.

THE PROCESS (summarized)

Creating an annotated bibliography calls for the application of a variety of intellectual skills: concise exposition, succinct 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.

Cite the book, article, or document using the appropriate style.

Write a concise 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 bibliography topic.

CHOOSING THE CORRECT FORMAT FOR THE CITATIONS

Make sure that you use the appropriate style for your discipline, per your assignment or journal recommendations (MLA, APA, Chicago, or other).

SELECTING THE SOURCES

The quality and usefulness of your bibliography will depend on your selection of sources. Define the scope of your research carefully so that you can make good judgments about what to include and exclude. Your research should attempt to be reasonably comprehensive within well-defined boundaries. Consider these questions to help you find appropriate limits for your research:

- What problem am I investigating? What question(s) am I trying to pursue? If your bibliography is part of a research project, this project will probably be governed by a research question. If your bibliography is an
independent project on a general topic (e.g. aboriginal women and
Canadian law), try formulating your topic as a question or a series of
questions in order to define your search more precisely (e.g. How has
Canadian law affecting aboriginal women changed as a result of the
Charter of Rights and Freedoms? How have these changes affected
aboriginal women? How have aboriginal women influenced and
responded to these legal developments?).

- What kind of material am I looking for? (academic books and journal
  articles? government reports or policy statements? articles from the
  popular press? primary historical sources? etc.)
- Am I finding essential studies on my topic? (Read footnotes in useful
  articles carefully to see what sources they use and why. Keep an eye out
  for studies that are referred to by several of your sources.)

SUMMARIZING THE SOURCE'S ARGUMENT

An annotation briefly restates the main argument of a source. An annotation of an
academic source, for example, typically identifies its thesis (or research question, or
hypothesis), its major methods of investigation, and its main conclusions. Keep in mind
that identifying the argument of a source is a different task than describing or listing its
contents. Rather than listing contents (see Example 1 below), an annotation should
account for why the contents are there (see Example 2 below).

Example 1: Only lists contents:

Canadian Woman Studies/Les Cahiers de la Femme 2/3, 34-38.

This article discusses recent constitutional legislation as it affects the
human rights of aboriginal women in Canada: the Constitution Act (1982),
its amendment in 1983, and amendments to the Indian Act (1985). It also
discusses the implications for aboriginal women of the Supreme Court of

Example 2: Identifies the argument:

Canadian Woman Studies/Les Cahiers de la Femme 2/3, 34-38.

This article seeks to define the extent of the civil and political rights
returned to aboriginal women in the Constitution Act (1982), in its
amendment in 1983, and in amendments to the Indian Act (1985). This
legislation reverses prior laws that denied Indian status to aboriginal