

Essay 3: Annotated Bibliography

Description

- You will briefly summarize and evaluate 5 different sources found through the USC Upstate Library.
- These sources may or may not eventually be used in your next paper, but they should be concerned with the topic of your paper.
- **Length:** 600-800 words
- **Value:** 20% of your final grade (includes successful completion of all the steps)

Process

1. Search the USC Upstate library resources we've covered.
2. Choose all the sources that might be relevant. (A "source" in this case will usually mean an article.) **The number of sources you choose should be greater than 5.**
3. Read through those sources quickly.
4. Choose the 5 most valuable sources from what you find. Don't just choose the 5 shortest ones or the first 5 that you happen to find.
5. Write up an annotation of each of those four sources. **An annotation does two things: it summarizes and it evaluates.** Make sure that each of your annotations provides not only an adequate summary of what a particular source says but also a thoughtful assessment of the quality of that work. Is it biased? Does it leave out critical information? Get to the point quickly. Do not write an overly long annotation. Identify the main point of the source and explain how that point is supported.

General advice

- The first thing listed for each item in an annotated bibliography is an MLA-style bibliographic entry for that source. Underneath that entry is the annotation.
- In choosing, **your bias should be towards recent (previous 3 years) rather than earlier material**, but if you find an earlier source that seems particularly important or influential, include that in your bibliography.
- Don't just pick the first 5 sources you find: take some time to select interesting and relevant information. You might just scan an introductory paragraph or two to check out a work before you commit to including it in your bibliography. Often a work that seems interesting at first turns out to be a dud.

The following website does a good job of also explaining how to create an annotated bibliography. (However, *you should not imitate the formatting of the example annotation bibliography entry on this site*. Follow MLA style guidelines for your annotated bibliography):

Engle, Michael, Amy Blumenthal, and Tony Cosgrave. "How to Prepare an Annotated Bibliography." Cornell University Library Reference Department. Mar. 5, 2007.
<<http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill28.htm>>