Annotated Bibliographies

Purpose

An annotated bibliography provides a list of sources with additional notes ("to annotate" means "to add notes") regarding each source. Annotated bibliographies not only serve the reader, but also you, the writer. For a writer, annotated bibliographies develop an organized, critical reading of sources for a project. This helps the writer develop a well-rounded understanding of their chosen topic, which can help guide research and writing. For the reader, annotated bibliographies provide a comprehensive list of relevant scholarly articles regarding the topic of a paper project while also providing commentary for each source. An annotated bibliography should help your readers develop a greater understanding of your topic by connecting with the ideas in your sources.

Professors or instructors will often ask students to conduct annotated bibliographies as the first step in a larger research or writing project. By doing an annotated bibliography, a student will be better organized and prepared to integrate other scholarly works into their own research. The process requires a student to read and respond to a body of literature (usually 3-10 sources) relevant to their topic or research question.

Citation List vs. Bibliography: What's the difference?[1]

Citation/Reference list, Bibliography, or Annotated Bibliography. Which one do I need? There are a few main differences between them.

- A **Works Cited Page** or **Reference Page** is a list of sources used in a paper and attached on a separate page at the end of that paper. It includes the sources listed in the document. The style (e.g., MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.) will usually depend on the discipline.

- A **Bibliography** is a list of sources that attempts to form a complete snapshot of the literature on a given topic. It may include additional sources than ones directly cited in the paper.

- An **Annotated Bibliography** expands on the bibliography by providing brief notes (annotations) about each entry. Each entry provides full bibliographic information as well as 2-10 sentences of commentary and/or analysis.

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[1] University of Wisconsin-Madison. (n.d.). *Annotated Bibliography*. The Writing Center. Retrieved March 15, 2022, from https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/assignments/annotatedbibliography/

Questions to ask when starting an annotated bibliography[2]

If you are unsure of what types of information are important to include in an annotated bibliography, these questions can guide your research:

❖ What is the subject matter of each source?
❖ What is the main argument of each source?
❖ What type of evidence does the source use to support its main argument?
❖ What does the source contribute to your topic?
❖ Is the source helpful or interesting? Why or why not?

What to include in an Annotated Bibliography: Four Parts[3]

Each annotation usually consists of the following four parts:

1. **Citation:** Each entry begins with the citation of the source. The bibliography should be organized alphabetically by source according to the conventions of the citation style you are using.
2. **Summary:** In 1-3 sentences, summarize the main argument of the source while highlighting the most significant evidence used to support it. If the source is reporting experimental findings, then you should summarize the purpose, hypotheses, and main findings. If you can do it succinctly, then information regarding methodology and/or implications of the research can also be included.
3. **Analysis:** In 1-3 sentences, provide your opinion of the source. Discuss what you think it did well and not so well, interesting or surprising insights, and any obvious limitations to the study.
4. **Application:** In concluding each entry, explain how you will use this source in your own paper or project. Tell your reader or instructor why this source is useful. Highlight how this source fits in with the other sources in your bibliography. See some examples of potential sentence starters for the application part:
   a. "This source provides…x…that I will use to…y…"
   b. "This source is especially useful because…x"

Citation Styles (See Handout)

You may be wondering which citation style you should use. We have been discussing citation styles a lot in this handout and you may be wondering which one you should be using. Some of the most common are MLA, APA, and Chicago. If your assignment did not specify a specific citation style to use, check with your instructor or professor to see what they prefer or recommend given your discipline. You can also check out Communication Support's handout on "Citing Sources" and others here.

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[2] Memorial University Libraries. (n.d.). Memorial University Libraries. Annotated Bibliographies. Retrieved March 15, 2022, from https://www.library.mun.ca/researchtools/guides/writing/annotated_bibl/

[3] Steffy, R. (2021, August). *Common genre guide : Literature reviews*. Cabrini.edu. Retrieved March 15, 2022, from https://www.cabrini.edu/globalassets/pdfs-website/center-for-student-success/common-genre-guide_lit-reviews.pdf

Tips for Writing an Annotated Bibliography

- Use your own words
- Practice explaining your source to a friend
- Put your source aside while writing your entry
- Think creatively about how you can use a wide range of sources for different purposes

Example Annotated Bibliography Entry (Labeled)

Below is an example of a full annotated bibliography entry that contains all four content parts and uses paragraph style. Each part is labeled and sentence starters for each are in bold.

Part 1: The Citation, APA Style

Jozkowski, K. N., Peterson, Z. D., Sanders, S. A., Dennis, B., & Reece, M. (2014). Gender differences in heterosexual college students' conceptualizations and indicators of sexual consent: Implications for contemporary sexual assault prevention education. *Journal of Sex Research, 51*(8), 904-916. https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499.2013.792326

Part 2: Summary, 5 sentences

The aim of this research study was to learn more about how college students define, communicate, and interpret sexual consent and non-consent, and to analyze potential gender differences in those actions, **so as to inform** sexual assault prevention education. **The results of the research study**, *which surveyed a convenience sample of 185 college students at one Midwestern university*, **supported the hypotheses that** women and men would hold the same general beliefs about what constitutes sexual consent, and that verbal cues of consent would increase as the intimacy of the sexual interaction increased. However, in contrast to their prediction, Jozkowski et al found that, overall, both women and men indicated they were more likely to *express* consent verbally rather than nonverbally. But when it came to *interpreting* the consent or non-consent of their partners, both women and men indicated they would rely more on nonverbal cues. **These results suggest** a disconnect between what college students say *they* do when it comes to communicating consent, and "what they say *their partner* does" (p. 912).

<u>Part 3: Analysis, 3 sentences</u>

This scholarly essay appears well researched with a valid methodology. I believe **one important strength** is how the authors frame gendered sexual communication through the idea of "sexual scripts," or accepted cultural narratives for how sexual interactions traditionally progress between heterosexual partners. This framing highlights one of the challenges of contemporary sexual assault prevention education—that it promotes communication patterns that may go against traditional ideas of how men and women are supposed to behave in sexual interactions.

<u>Part 4: Application, 2 sentences</u>

I will use this essay in my project to show that college men and women actually share common conceptualizations of sexual consent. These findings may end up challenging my hypothesis that college women are more likely than college men to conceptualize sexual consent as an explicit verbal expression.

References

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University Academic Support Centers - Kansas University. (n.d.). *Bibliographies*. KU Writing Center. Retrieved March 15, 2022, from https://writing.ku.edu/bibliographies

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. (2021, August 3). *Annotated Bibliographies*. The Writing Center • University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Retrieved March 15, 2022, from https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/annotated-bibliographies/