

# 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 about the annotation. The purpose of the paragraph is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited.



## THE PROCESS

Creating an annotated bibliography calls for the application of a variety of intellectual skills: concise exposition, succinct analysis, and informed library research.

1. 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.
2. Then choose those works that provide a variety of perspectives on your topic.
3. Cite the book, article, or document using the MLA style.
4. 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.**

### Annotations may consist of all or part of the following items:

- describe the content (focus) of the item
- describe the usefulness of the item
- discuss any limitations that the item may have, e.g. grade level, timeliness etc.
- describe what audience the item is intended for
- evaluate the methods (research) used in the item
- evaluate reliability of the item
- discuss the author's background
- discuss any conclusions the author(s) may have made
- describe your reaction to the item

### This example uses the MLA format for a journal citation:

Waite, Linda J., Frances Kobrin Goldscheider, and Christina Witsberger. "Nonfamily Living and the Erosion of Traditional Family Orientations Among Young Adults." *American Sociological Review* 51 (1986): 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. This source appears to be credible and unbiased due to the plethora of facts and statistics presented in the work.

## HOW DO YOU FORMAT AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY?



According to MLA style, you must have a bibliography at the end of your research paper. All entries in the bibliography page must correspond to the works cited in your main text.

### BASIC RULES

1. Begin your bibliography on a separate page at the end of your research paper. It should have the same one-inch margins and last name, page number header as the rest of your paper.
2. Label the page Annotated Bibliography (do not italicize the word Bibliography or put it in quotation marks) and center the word at the top of the page.
3. Double space all citations, but do not skip spaces between entries.
4. Indent the second and subsequent lines of citations by 0.5 inches to create a hanging indent.
5. List page numbers of sources efficiently, when needed. If you refer to a journal article that appeared on pages 225 through 250, list the page numbers on your Bibliography as 225-50. Note that MLA style uses a hyphen in a span of pages.

### MLA REMINDERS

- For every entry, you must determine the Medium of Publication. Most entries will likely be listed as Print or Web sources, but other possibilities may include Film, CD-ROM, or DVD.
- Writers are no longer required to provide URLs for Web entries. However, if your instructor or publisher insists on them, include them in angle brackets after the entry and end with a period. For long URLs, break lines only at slashes.
- If you're citing an article or a publication that was originally issued in print form but that you retrieved from an online database, you should type the online database name in italics. You do not need to provide subscription information in addition to the database name.
- Capitalize each word in the titles of articles, books, etc, but do not capitalize articles (the, an), prepositions, or conjunctions unless one is the first word of the title or subtitle: *Gone with the Wind*, *The Art of War*, *There Is Nothing Left to Lose*.
- New to MLA 8: Use italics (instead of underlining) for titles of larger works (books, magazines) and quotation marks for titles of shorter works (poems, articles).

Taken from:

<http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill28.htm#sample> and <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/05/>