How Do I Write an Annotated Bibliography?

Web Sites
These sites provide detailed, “how-to” information and more.

Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.
http://www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/research/skill28.htm

University of Wisconsin, Madison
http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/AnnotatedBibliography.html

Reference Books
Hackman and Harner provide good information about the process of researching and compiling a bibliography. The APA and MLA publication manuals have all the rules for formatting and good examples of citations.


Library Staff are Here to Help!

Online Guides: http://fgcu.libguides.com

In Person: Reference Assistance Hours:
M-Th: 9:00 am—9:00 pm
Friday: 9:00 am—5:00 pm
Saturday: 1:00 pm—5:00 pm
Sunday: 1:00 pm—5:00 pm

By Email: libref@fgcu.edu

Personal Consultation by Appointment:
http://library.fgcu.edu/rsd/subjectspeclst.htm
What Is an Annotated Bibliography?

An Annotated Bibliography Is:

An organized list of cited sources such as books, journals, newspapers, magazines, web pages etc., each of which is followed by an annotation, or description, of each item.

An annotation is a brief, descriptive and evaluative note, usually no longer than two or three sentences. Some entries may be longer. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited.

The annotation should include a summary of what the article is about and the author’s professional credentials. The annotation may also include your opinion of the article’s value or usefulness—good or bad.

How Are Annotated Bibliographies Used?

A Research Shortcut

Use published bibliographies—from books, journals, or the Web—to get a head start when searching for information. Use the Library’s Catalog, Electronic Resources, and Inter-Library Loan service to get copies of the works you find in published bibliographies that you think apply to your own research.

Make Yourself Look Good

People are more likely to listen to what you have to say and to value your opinions if you can prove that you know what you’re talking about. Write an annotated bibliography to show your audience that you know your subject well.

Join Your Professional Community

Annotated bibliographies are one of the many ways you can trade research and information with other people in your field.

What Does a Citation with an Annotation Look Like?

Example using APA Style:


In this editorial, Finneran questions why many people on both sides in the debate over the safety of genetically engineered food base their arguments on speculation, rumor, and emotion rather than scientific research. He references an article by Harvard biologist Richard Lewontin. Lewontin discusses an anti-genetic engineering physicist whose arguments are based on Hindu scripture instead of lab results and pro-genetic engineering scientists who advertise “Golden Rice” (a genetically engineered variety of rice rich in beta carotene) as a benefit for victims of malnutrition who lack vitamin A, even though many people suffering from malnutrition are too weak to properly metabolize the beta carotene into vitamin A. Kevin Finneran is editor-in-chief of Issues in Science and Technology, a policy journal sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the University of Texas at Dallas, making him someone qualified to write about forming opinions on scientific matters. This editorial serves as a cautionary reminder that sensible decisions on important issues must be grounded in fact and not influenced by vague fears, unrelated beliefs, unwarranted enthusiasm, or knee-jerk emotional reactions.