

## Annotated Bibliography

An annotated bibliography is a list of available research pertaining to a specific topic. Entries are arranged in alphabetical order by author and include a commentary/evaluation.

One reason for creating an annotated bibliography is that it helps to situate the student within the discussion taking place in a specific discipline. It also provides other researchers with information on the existing research. From your annotation, they can decide whether or not to pursue a source further. The work can stand on its own but is often part of a larger project.

You can narrow your search for relevant articles or books by clearly defining your research question. Being clear about the purpose of your research helps you decide what to include and what to exclude in your bibliography.

### There are two parts:

- a) a full bibliographical entry in the style appropriate to your discipline.
  - b) an annotation: a summary and critical evaluation of the content of the article or book.
- There are several variations on how to approach the annotation section. Check with your professor to be certain of the specifics for your assignment.
  - The annotation should not contain only a summary but also include the author's argument. (See example below.)
  - To grasp the purpose of the annotation, imagine you are speaking with a colleague or classmate who is interested in a similar area of research. You are telling him/her what the work is about and why (or why not) it will be useful to his/her research.

### Example one only lists the contents.

Mclvor, S.D. (1995). Aboriginal women's rights as "existing rights." 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* (1982). It also discusses the implications for aboriginal women of the Supreme Court of Canada's interpretation of the *Constitution Act* in *R. v. Sparrow* (1991)." <sup>1</sup>

### Example two identifies the argument. It begins with the research question and continues with the method and main conclusions.

Mclvor, S.D. (1995). Aboriginal women's rights as "existing rights." 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 women who married non-aboriginal men. On the basis of the Supreme Court of Canada's interpretation of the *Constitution Act* in *R. v. Sparrow* (1991), Mclvor argues that the *Act* recognizes fundamental human rights and existing aboriginal rights, granting to aboriginal women full participation in the aboriginal right to self-government." <sup>2</sup>

### Tips:

- To identify the author's thesis, carefully examine both the introduction and the conclusion. The purpose or central claim of the work should be apparent in both.
- State whether the author is using a specific theory in his/her investigation.
- If you decide the work has value, specify how you will use it in your own research.
- Provide the author's background to verify the credibility of the source.

Material quoted from:

<sup>1</sup> & <sup>2</sup> Knott, Deborah. New College Writing Centre, 2004.

[Writing an Annotated Bibliography | Writing Advice \(utoronto.ca\)](#)

References:

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: Writing Centre

[Annotated Bibliographies – The Writing Center • University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill \(unc.edu\)](#)

University of British Columbia: Writing

[Writing-an-Annotated-Bibliography-3.pdf \(ubc.ca\)](#)

