



# WRITING AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Revised August 2013

**Definition:** An annotation is a brief description of a work such as an article, chapter of a book, book, Web site, or movie. An annotation attempts to give enough information to make a decision as to whether or not to read the complete work. Annotations may be descriptive or critical.

## **How to use an annotated style of writing:**

- The title of the book, article or journal is the understood subject of your sentences (“It”).
- Select precise words to convey as much meaning in as few words as possible.
- Examples: (This book) "It gives an overview of the topic." or (This journal article) "It clearly describes the research methods used."
- The commentary should begin on a new line from the reference, indented from the preceding line.

## **An annotation should include:**

- Complete citation information; note that the citation should conform to the style specified by your instructor, e.g., MLA, APA, etc.
- Whether the author is an authority on his/her topic (only if s/he is a major name in his field).
- The source’s thesis, main points, and overall purpose.
- The kinds of evidence/proof used to support the thesis.
- The source’s intended audience.
- A personal evaluation (i.e., do you detect any biases?, is this work useful to your paper?, does it simply duplicate other sources?).
- 50-100 words (up to 200 words, if your source is larger).

## **Sample Bibliographic Annotations:**

### **Book (APA)**

Drucker, P. F. (1995). Managing in a time of great change. New York: Dutton.

Peter Drucker, writing since 1937 on economics, business and management theory, addresses in this work how and why management must take action in coping with change. Mr. Drucker is well known for educating business managers on the differences between theory and what works. He calls for managers to make decisions and act on them now to shape the future. He points out the major forces necessary to consider while making decisions, such as increasing information access, new international partnerships and consortia, and trends in government involvement in business and world affairs. This volume contains two interviews with Mr. Drucker done by *Harvard Business Review*’s T. George Harris to begin and end the work. Considering Mr. Drucker’s impact on the business management world, it is an essential work to include in my paper.

### **Article (MLA, print)**

London, Herbert. "Five Myths of the Television Age." *Television Quarterly* 10.1 (1982): 81-89.

Print.

Herbert London, the Dean of Journalism at New York University and author of several books and articles, explains how television contradicts five commonly believed ideas. He uses specific examples of events seen on television, such as the assassination of John Kennedy, to illustrate his points. His examples have been selected to contradict such truisms as: "seeing is believing"; "a picture is worth a thousand words"; and "satisfaction is its own reward." London uses logical arguments and statistical evidence to support his ideas which are his personal opinion. He does not refer to any previous works on the topic. London's style and vocabulary would make the article of interest to any reader; however, his examples are weak in comparison to those found in other sources.