

Annotated Bibliography

A quick (but by no means exhaustive
introduction)

Rationale

- Everyone has done a Bibliography or a Reference List
- They (bibliographies and reference lists) are NOT one and the same thing
- Annotated bibliographies give both bibliographic detail but also a valued judgement

What is an Annotated Bibliography?

- A list of sources organized with full bibliographic detail in a specific way (house-style)
- May include a variety of materials, books, journals, grey literature, public documents (private ones can be used as well), electronic media such as web sites, CD-ROMs, etc.
- Accompanied by a paragraph that describes, explains, and/or evaluates each entry in terms of
 - quality,
 - authority, and
 - relevance.

Purpose of an Annotated Bibliography?

- They serve a number of purposes, including but not exclusively:
 - A review of the literature on a particular subject
 - Illustrate the quality of research that has been done
 - Provide examples of the types of sources available
 - Give a commentary on the 'value' or 'worth' of the source
 - They can be selective or comprehensive
- **selective** annotated bibliographies include just those items that are deemed most appropriate, readily available, are most current or somehow judged 'valued' for the topic
 - **comprehensive** annotated bibliographies identify all that is available on the topic

Organisation

- See the house style (name the journal)
- Alphabetical
- Chronological:
 - either by date of publication or by
 - period or era, of subject matter (century, decade, event, year)
- By subtopic
- By format (articles, books, government documents, media, web pages, etc.)

What are the Annotations?

- Annotations usually perform two functions,
 - describe the source
 - evaluate the content
- they are a concise explanation of a single source of information
- include important indications of content not obvious in the title.
- enable the reader to establish the relevance of a specific source and to decide whether to consult the full text of the work.
- they strike a balance between the description of the source/content and evaluation

Structure

(All of this is prefaced with usually....)

- Length: one paragraph approximately 100-150 or words
AS A GUIDELINE
- Written in the third person USUALLY, (first person may be appropriate for certain types of annotated bibliographies).
- Use of quotes is acceptable and to be encouraged IF appropriate (they really have to capture the 'feel' of the source)
- Written in sentences, usually, but single descriptive words in list form can be acceptable – if it is appropriate to the source

How many?

- You need to make a judgement on (and this is what you will be judged on)
- what sources to use
- how many to use –

This will be dictated by

How much you write on each source

The 'worth' of this task in terms of word length for the module assessment, i.e. a quarter of the assessment (as a quick rule of thumb 10 is too few – 20 too many BUT in reality it would depend on the topic, rationale, etc.))