

## **Annotated Bibliography**

### **Definition:**

A bibliography is a list of sources on a single topic. Annotations are short paragraphs that explain and summarize each source. Therefore, an annotated bibliography is a list of sources (typically in a particular research format such as MLA, APA, or Chicago Style) that includes a short paragraph on each source.

### **Purpose:**

There are generally two different purposes that instructors have in assigning an annotated bibliography. First, you may be asked to compile the bibliography as a way to introduce you to research in a particular discipline or to help expose you to the various ideas surrounding a particular topic. In these cases, the annotated bibliography may be an assignment that stands alone.

A second purpose instructors may have in assigning the annotated bibliography is as a step within a larger research project or paper. The annotated bibliography helps move you along in the research process. First, it requires you to find appropriate sources for your paper or project. Second, it asks you to read them and consider how they will help you in creating your essay and defending your thesis or argument.

The annotated bibliography requires careful reading. You will need to analyze the meaning and purpose of your resources in order to understand how each will help you in your paper. This helps in creating the summary that each paragraph (annotation) represents. This step in the research process helps you remain thoughtful and diligent as you find, read, analyze, and understand sources that you will use.

### **Example:**

The following example annotated bibliography is in APA format. This means that the sources are listed as they would be on the references page in an APA formatted research paper. Under each is the annotation – the paragraph that explains and summarizes the source and the purpose each source will serve in the upcoming paper.



EXAMPLE

### Example APA Annotated Bibliography

Dietz, D. (1998). How did the *Titanic* sink? *Mechanical Engineering*, 120(8), 54. Retrieved from <http://ehis.ebscohost.com>

After surviving the sinking of the *Titanic*, Margaret Brown found a national platform from which she could speak about the issues that meant the most to her. That historic night in April, 1912, is surrounded by myth and legend, much like Brown herself. This article will be used in my paper to speak to the truth of what happened on the night that the *Titanic* sank. This will build my argument about the importance of Brown and the validity of understanding the reality of her life versus the mythology.

Harbold, L. (2007). Beyond unsinkable: The real Molly Brown. *Humanities*, 28(3), 26-29.

Retrieved from <http://ehis.ebscohost.com>

Harbold's article presents a brief version of the information that is covered more fully in Iversen's book. However, Harbold uses slightly different sources and quite a bit of Brown's own words. This source should provide me with valuable information when it comes to analyzing and describing Brown and contrasting her with the "average" Victorian woman.

Historic Denver, Inc. (2011). *Molly Brown house*. Retrieved from <http://www.mollybrown.org>

This is the website for the Molly Brown House Museum in Denver, Colorado. It is this museum that is doing the most diligent work in finding out the truth about Molly Brown and how she fit into (or didn't) the society in which she lived. Their research, documents and various displays will provide valuable, up-to-date information on Brown's life.

OVER

Iversen, K. (2010). *Molly Brown: Unraveling the myth*. Boulder, CO: Johnson Books.

Iversen's book is considered one of the foremost documents in the research into the "real" Molly Brown's life. Iversen's work changed the Molly Brown House Museum's approach to its presentation of Brown and her life. As I work to show how Brown's life unfolded, Iversen's book will be one of my primary sources.

McCammon, H.S. (2003). Out of the parlors and into the streets: The changing tactical repertoire of the U.S. women's suffrage movements. *Social Forces*, 81(3), 787-818. Retrieved from <http://ehis.ebscohost.com>

McCammon's article (and vast research) provides reasons for the change in the practices of those involved with the women's suffrage movement in the United States. Molly Brown was active in this movement; after the *Titanic* tragedy, she became one of the most recognizable voices within the suffrage movement. McCammon's article will help me set the context in which Brown moved and spoke.

Source:

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