

ANNOTATED SOURCE INFORMATION SHEET

ENGL 102.1

WRITING AND RESEARCH

Annotation is the simple act of summarizing a source very simply, yet critically. Annotation is usually used in conjunction with a bibliography to produce an annotated bibliography. An author will create their bibliography, but then also add a short statement that both summarizes the source's main ideas and also indicates the general usefulness of the source. A typical annotation would be something like this:

Kaplan, Lawrence F. "Yesterday's Man." *The New Republic* 1 & 8 Jan. 2001: 17-21.

Kaplan argues that Colin Powell, while being named George W. Bush's Secretary of State because of his high reputation, actually has held foreign policy views very different from what people think. This article is written from a very liberal perspective, but backs its claims up with impressive facts and figures. This is a very solid counterpoint to the typical hero-worship profile of Powell in the mainstream media.

Or

Robinson, Edward. "The Shareholder from Hell." *Business 2.0* 9 Jan. 2001: 72-81.

Robinson details how FinancialWeb.com is a dot.com company that owes its failure not to a poor business plan, but rather where its investors got their money from. In a very detailed article, Robinson shows how mob money was laundered through the company, and how its stock price was illegally manipulated in a very complicated set of maneuvers. Robinson puts much effort into a not entirely convincing argument that the company officers were unaware of the "funny money" or stock market manipulation and are victims just like the non-insider investors in the company. This article gives a different perspective to anyone investigating organized crime or dot.com failures.

Notice that these annotations are not complete summaries, but they are also more than just a simple sentence summary. There is an element of analysis/criticism involved. However, an annotation is also not as involved or detailed in its criticism as a full critique.

The real key to an annotation is that it should be relatively SHORT, but also clear as to the VALUE of the source. You are trying to show somebody looking at your bibliography whether this was a useful source for you or not, and whether or not they should track this source down as well. (Remember that a bibliography is NOT the same thing as a Works Cited or References page. A bibliography is a list of everything that you've found. There should be both useful and non-useful sources listed in a bibliography). Many researchers regularly use an annotation on their source notecards.

It is common for students in courses with research papers to have to create a complete annotated bibliography, where each and every source is annotated. You do NOT have to create such a bibliography for THIS class.

However, the process of evaluating and annotating a source is very helpful, and you will be expected to annotate several sources during the course of your research in this class.

The Source Annotations are graded **pass/fail**. It is expected that you may have problems with some of the first annotations, but you should improve as we go on.

Be sure to use the examples shown above as your model for formatting as well as form and length.