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History 000

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An Annotated Bibliography Example

Holland, Suzanne. *The Human Embryonic Stem Cell Debate: Science, Ethics, and Public Policy*. Boston: MIT Press, 2001.

This is the annotation of the above source. In this example, I am following the 16th edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style* guidelines for the bibliographic information listed above. If I were really writing an annotation for this source, I would offer a brief summary of what this book says about stem cell research.

After a brief summary, I would assess this source and offer some criticisms of it. Is it a reliable source? Why? Is the research biased or objective? Are the facts well documented? Who is the author? Is she qualified in this subject? Is this source scholarly, popular, some of both?

For the assignments in this class, only credible sources may be used. Part of the grading criteria is based on reliable research. Additionally, history examines and uses sources that often demonstrate bias because understanding the author's intent allows us to judge the work and use it appropriately.

The length of the annotation depends on the assignment or on the purpose of the annotated bibliography. After summarizing and assessing, you can now reflect on this source. How does it fit into your research? Is this a helpful resource? Too scholarly? Not scholarly enough? Too general/specific? Since "stem cell research" is a very broad topic, has this source helped you to narrow your topic?

Kelly, John D. "Seeing Red: Mao Fetishism, Pax Americana, and the Moral Economy of War." In *Anthropology and Global Counterinsurgency*, edited by John D. Kelly, Beatrice Jauregui, Sean T. Mitchell, and Jeremy Walton, 67–83. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Not all annotations have to be the same length. For example, if a source is a very short scholarly article it may only take a sentence or two to summarize. If using a book, only focus on the sections that relate specifically to the topic.

For this assignment, a thoughtful summary is needed.

Stolberg, Sheryl Gay, and Robert Pear. "Wary Centrists Posing Challenge in Health Care Vote." *New York Times*, February 27, 2010.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/28/us/politics/28health.html>.

Notice that in this example, I chose a variety of sources: a book, a scholarly journal, and a web page. Using a variety of sources gives a broader picture of what is being said about your topic. However, in the main, popular sources do not provide the kind of context and other information needed for historical research. Web sites can be used, but they must be identified and evaluated. For instance, a .edu site might provide some valuable primary sources, but not be appropriate as a secondary source because it is written for younger students.

Notice that the bibliographic information above is proper Chicago format and the annotations are in paragraph form. Note also that the entries are alphabetized by the first word in the bibliographic entry. If you are writing an annotated bibliography with many sources, it may be helpful to divide the sources into categories. For example, if I were putting together an extensive annotated bibliography for stem cell research, I might divide the sources into categories such as ethical concerns, scholarly analyses, and political ramifications.

For more examples, a quick search at a library or even on the Internet should produce several examples of annotated bibliographies in your area.