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## Annotated Bibliography Samples

### Summary:

This handout provides information about annotated bibliographies in MLA, APA, and CMS.

## Overview

Below you will find sample annotations from annotated bibliographies, each with a different research project. Remember that the annotations you include in your own bibliography should reflect your research project and/or the guidelines of your assignment.

As mentioned elsewhere in this resource, depending on the purpose of your bibliography, some annotations may summarize, some may assess or evaluate a source, and some may reflect on the source's possible uses for the project at hand. Some annotations may address all three of these steps. Consider the purpose of your annotated bibliography and/or your instructor's directions when deciding how much information to include in your annotations.

Please keep in mind that all your text, including the write-up beneath the citation, must be indented so that the author's last name is the only text that is flush left.

## Sample MLA Annotation

Lamott, Anne. *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*. Anchor Books, 1995.

Lamott's book offers honest advice on the nature of a writing life, complete with its insecurities and failures. Taking a humorous approach to the realities of being a writer, the chapters in Lamott's book are wry and anecdotal and offer advice on everything from plot development to jealousy, from perfectionism to struggling with one's own internal critic.

In the process, Lamott includes writing exercises designed to be both productive and fun. Lamott offers sane advice for those struggling with the anxieties of writing, but her main project seems to be offering the reader a reality check regarding writing,

publishing, and struggling with one's own imperfect humanity in the process. Rather than a practical handbook to producing and/or publishing, this text is indispensable because of its honest perspective, its down-to-earth humor, and its encouraging approach.

Chapters in this text could easily be included in the curriculum for a writing class. Several of the chapters in Part 1 address the writing process and would serve to generate discussion on students' own drafting and revising processes. Some of the writing exercises would also be appropriate for generating classroom writing exercises. Students should find Lamott's style both engaging and enjoyable.

In the sample annotation above, the writer includes three paragraphs: a summary, an evaluation of the text, and a reflection on its applicability to his/her own research, respectively.

For information on formatting MLA citations, see our [MLA 2016 Formatting and Style Guide](#) ([./././research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide.html](#)).

## Sample APA Annotation

Ehrenreich, B. (2001). *Nickel and dimed: On (not) getting by in America*. New York, NY: Henry Holt and Company.

In this book of nonfiction based on the journalist's experiential research, Ehrenreich attempts to ascertain whether it is currently possible for an individual to live on a minimum-wage in America. Taking jobs as a waitress, a maid in a cleaning service, and a Walmart sales employee, the author summarizes and reflects on her work, her relationships with fellow workers, and her financial struggles in each situation.

An experienced journalist, Ehrenreich is aware of the limitations of her experiment and the ethical implications of her experiential research tactics and reflects on these issues in the text. The author is forthcoming about her methods and supplements her experiences with scholarly research on her places of employment, the economy, and the rising cost of living in America. Ehrenreich's project is timely, descriptive, and well-researched.

The annotation above both summarizes and assesses the book in the citation. The first paragraph provides a brief summary of the author's project in the book, covering the main points of the work. The second paragraph points out the project's strengths and evaluates its methods and presentation. This particular annotation does not reflect on the source's potential importance or usefulness for this person's own research.

For information on formatting APA citations, see our [APA Formatting and Style Guide](#) ([./././research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_style\\_introduction.html](#)).

## Sample Chicago Manual of Style Annotation

Davidson, Hilda Ellis. *Roles of the Northern Goddess*. London: Routledge, 1998.

Davidson's book provides a thorough examination of the major roles filled by the numerous pagan goddesses of Northern Europe in everyday life, including their roles in hunting, agriculture, domestic arts like weaving, the household, and death. The author discusses relevant archaeological evidence, patterns of symbol and ritual, and previous research. The book includes a number of black and white photographs of relevant artifacts.

This annotation includes only one paragraph, a summary of the book. It provides a concise description of the project and the book's project and its major features.

For information on formatting Chicago Style citations, see our [Chicago Manual of Style resources](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/cmos_formatting_and_style_guide/chicago_manual_of_style_17th_e).  
([https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/chicago\\_manual\\_17th\\_edition/cmos\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/chicago\\_manual\\_of\\_style\\_17th\\_e](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/cmos_formatting_and_style_guide/chicago_manual_of_style_17th_e))