

Preparing an Annotation

User Guide

Centennial Library

Cedarville University

The purpose of an annotation is to describe the cited material. It should provide sufficient information about the book or article that a determination can be made as to whether the actual material should be examined. Each annotation need not address all of the following concerns, but so far as possible, it should improve the decision making and simplify the researcher's work. Annotations can be any length, but usually are about 50 to 150 words in length, depending on the item itself.

Notes:

1. Author:

Who is the author? What is his/her occupation, position, education, experience, etc? Is the author qualified (or not) to write the article?

2. Purpose:

What is the purpose for writing the article or doing the research?

3. Intended Audience:

To what audience is the author writing? Is it intended for general public, for scholars, policy makers, teachers, professionals, practitioners, etc? Is this reflected in the author's style of writing or presentation? How so?

4. Author Bias:

Does the author have a bias or make assumptions upon which the rationale of the article or the research rests? What are they?

5. Information Source:

What method of obtaining the data, or conducting the research was employed by the author? Is the article (or book) based on personal opinion or experience, interviews, library research, questionnaires, laboratory experiments, standardized personality tests, etc?

6. Author Conclusion:

At what conclusion does the author arrive?

7. Conclusion Justification:

Does the author satisfactorily justify the conclusion from the research or experience? Why or why not?

8. Relationship to Other Works:

How does this study compare with similar studies? Is it in tune with or in opposition to conventional wisdom, established scholarship, professional practice, governmental policy, etc? Are there specific studies, writings, schools of thought, philosophies, etc., with which this one agrees or disagrees and that one should be aware?

9. Significant Attachments:

Are there significant attachments or appendices such as charts, maps, bibliographies, photos, documents, tests or questionnaires? If not, should there be?