Annotated Bibliography with Introductory Preface

Due: Monday, October 13
Continuing our party metaphor for research, you have now, with the Review of Literature, looked around, taken note of the different groups, evaluated how good the conversations are, and picked a group. With the Annotated Bibliography, you will begin to evaluate potential relationships you might form with the group you have chosen, and how those relationships might benefit you as an individual as you construct your argument. You will do this by continuing to read and review resources, and by beginning to think about how these resources will work in the context of your final paper.

The purpose of an annotated bibliography is to help you gather and analyze information before starting to write your paper. In conducting research, you must decide what resources will be most useful. Being able to summarize a source quickly will help you establish its usefulness. You should be able to identify a source’s rhetorical situation (who wrote it, why, for what audience, etc). Finally, before you can use a source, you need to decide its value to your own argument. An annotated bibliography will help you do all of that.

This six to eight page paper should take the shape of an introductory preface (about two pages) followed by the Annotated Bibliography (four to six pages).

The introductory preface should be double-spaced and include the following types of information:

- **Background.** Why is this an interesting area? Why do you want to investigate it? What have others said that has sparked your interest? Why is it interesting to take these studies further? A personal narrative is one possibility for this section.
- **Description.** Describe the area that you chose to investigate. What boundaries did you set to keep this project within a reasonable scope? For instance, did you look at a specific time period? A specific region? A specific demographic? These are just a few of the ways you may choose to narrow your focus. Since boundaries are always artificial to some degree, please include the rationale for the limitations you are using.
- **Methods.** Briefly, tell me what indices or bibliographies you used, what journals, etc. Patterns. What observations can you make as a result of your research?

The Annotated Bibliography should include six to eight items from your research on your topic. You may use up to two resources from your Review of the Literature, as long as you judged them as helpful resources on their own merits in the earlier assignment. Try to incorporate a variety of source material in this bibliography. All entries must be formatted according to MLA style guidelines (we will go over this format
in class). Arrange your entries in alphabetical order according to the author’s last name (or the first piece of bibliographic material). The annotations should be single-spaced.

Each entry on your Annotated Bibliography should contain:

- A 150-word (or more) summary of the article's argument. This is simply a tool for both of us—for you to make sure you understand the article, and for me since I most likely will not have read it. You may include the purpose of the source, the source’s target audience, and the source’s context in this summary.
- A statement on the article's usefulness for your paper or, more generally, its role in shaping or challenging your thinking. Make sure that you focus on specific aspects of the article's argument when they have contributed to the growth of your own ideas. The purpose here is to let me know why you chose this essay and to keep a record for yourself if you choose to use it for your final paper.

I will read your final Annotated Bibliography:

- to determine your success in conveying your understanding and assessment of your resources in writing effective by stylistically consistent annotations;
- to determine your success in negotiating MLA guidelines for citing and presenting source materials properly in this genre;
- to determine your success in following the guidelines for the type and number of resources you may use.

To see a sample of a correctly formatted Annotated Bibliography, see the Purdue Online Writing Lab at the following address: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_annotatedbibEX.html>.

To see some good examples of Annotated Bibliography content, see Dr. Laura Brady’s site: <http://www.as.wvu.edu/~lbrady/320bibliography.html>.