

## PREPARING AN ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

### *what it is:*

An annotated bibliography provides readers with brief, concise notes or “annotations” about sources, in addition to giving all of the publication information for each source. The length of annotations can vary but they are usually about 100-150 words per source. The publication information is presented in the documentation style the writer is using throughout the paper.

### *purpose:*

When an annotated bibliography is created as a stand-alone document, it guides researchers to sources on a particular topic.

When an annotated bibliography is attached to a research paper, it provides readers with additional insight into the sources quoted, paraphrased, or referred to in the paper.

A professor might require either a stand-alone annotated bibliography or one that is part of a research paper. In either case, the professor is looking for evidence that you have made responsible and meaningful choices of sources and that you know what your sources say about your topic. If a professor requires you to submit an annotated bibliography early in the process of writing a research paper, he/she is also helping you to determine whether the sources you have selected will meet assignment guidelines, expand your knowledge of the topic, and be useful in developing your paper.

### *content:*

Content of annotations depends on the purpose to be served by your annotated bibliography. Annotations can:

- provide general information about a source (summarizing its central theme, noting its scope, or coverage of the topic)
- identify its bias or point of view (evaluating the reputation or credentials of the author)
- assess its value (noting its intended audience, comparing or contrasting it with another source you have cited, or explaining what this work adds to critical discussion of your topic)

- sample annotation that provides general information

Holberton, Paul. Palladio's Villas: Life in the Renaissance Countryside. London: John Murray, 1990.

Holberton traces Palladio's career, with particular attention to his mentors and his clientele. He takes issue with the notion that buildings such as the Villa Rotunda were built to function as working farms and claims instead that they "fulfilled and embodied the ideal of the 'magnificence' appropriate to . . . gentlemen, noblemen, aristocrats" (xi). Holberton claims Palladio's clients exerted great influence on the design of several villas and traces the origins of the Villa Rotunda's four identical loggia to the owner of the house. The book is more useful for its attention to the way the Villa Rotunda was inhabited and used than to analysis of its design.

- sample annotation that identifies bias or point of view

Wundrum, Manfred and Thomas Pape. Andrea Palladio: Architect Between the Renaissance and the Baroque. Köln: Taschen, n.d.

Wundrum and Pape are most concerned with defining the style of Palladio's villas. They identify some elements as High Renaissance and others as Mannerist. Their thesis is that this unusual synthesis allowed Palladio to pave the way for the Baroque. Although they devote space to each of the villas individually, Villa Rotunda receives more attention than the others for how its "abstract and concrete, rational and emotional factors all combine with each other." This book is particularly valuable for its numerous high quality color plates of the outside and interior of Villa Rotunda, its gardens, and its setting.

- sample annotation that identifies value or point of view

Rybczynski, Witold. The Perfect House: A Journey with the Renaissance Master Andrea Palladio. New York: Scribner, 2002.

Rybczynski deliberately treats Palladio as a practitioner and designer, rather than as a theorist. Nevertheless, he emphasizes the great influence that Palladio's villas have had on domestic architecture in other countries and in later eras, including our own, and is concerned with locating the design and construction of the Villa Rotunda in the history of the home. Rybczynski evaluates exterior and interior design features of the Villa Rotunda with an architect's eye, noting that a domed circular space was an "odd" choice for a domestic setting (185) and praising the building's "extreme symmetry, both inside and out" (188).