

W101: Stories of the US from the Bomb to 9/11

Spring 2020

How to: Annotated Bibliography

The purpose of an annotated bibliography is:

- to gather and summarize information about a topic you are researching into one document;
- to create a quick reference sheet which will remind you of what your various sources argued and how they are useful to your final portfolio;
- and to preserve a record of research about your topic which may be shared with others in your field.

The objectives of this form are:

- to become familiar with using Duke libraries;
- to learn what constitutes a scholarly source;
- and to learn how to narrow down a research topic and translate it to searchable keywords.

The process:

1. The first step is to choose a concept from class discussion that you want to explore further. Concepts include, but are certainly not limited to: soft power, the atomic bomb, superheroes, space exploration, colonization, paranoia, nativism, etc. Include your concept at the top of your final written assignment.
2. Search out and find **five scholarly articles** related to your topic. These must be peer-reviewed articles. Keep track of the search terms you use to find these articles, and include the three terms you found most helpful at the top of your final written assignment.
3. Create a bibliography for these five sources using Chicago Manual of Style formatting. Refer to the syllabus bibliography as an example.
4. Choose the **two articles** you find most interesting. Read them and write annotations for them in your bibliography.

The characteristics of an annotation entry include:

1. A sentence or two on the author's background/authority;
2. A sentence or two on the field of research or intended background for the source;
3. A summary of the theme/purpose/argument of the source, including what remains unclear or contradictory;
4. An explanation of how this source helps define, complicate, or clarify your chosen concept.

Additional details:

- Go to Sakai > Resources: "LibraryInstruction.mp4" to find our course librarian Ira King's video tutorial on how to use Duke library resources.
- Go to Sakai > Resources: "W101 Library Guide" to find an in-depth guide on how to find and assess resources.

Annotated bibliography sample:

Cain, William E. "From Liberalism to Communism: The Political Thought of W.E.B. Du Bois." In *Cultures of United States Imperialism*, edited by Amy Kaplan and Donald E. Pease, 456–73. New Americanists. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994.

Whereas texts like that by Joseph Litvak's *The Un-Americans: Jews, the Blacklist, and Stoolpigeon Culture* focus on mapping out the synchronous relationship between Americanism and anti-Americanism in the U.S. during the Cold War—and specifically how Americanism must create anti-Americanism as the foil against which it must identify—Cain is interested in the relation between Americanism and the other it constructs outside of its borders. Cain's intellectual history of W.E. B. Du Bois retells Du Bois's development from anti-imperialist to Stalinist. He wants to retell Du Bois's latter investments to gauge, retrospectively, how a particular knowledge configuration emerged out of the Cold War context. As such, Cain's text is an example of a critical perspective on the relationship between categories of subjectivity and the nation that motivates New Americanist scholarship. This text looks into what extent Du Bois's Stalinism was a product of his relation to the American nation at the time. The larger implication here is how Du Bois's anti-imperialist convictions made him vulnerable to the ideological axis that set empire against empire during the Cold War. On the one hand, Du Bois pioneered anti-imperialist scholarship in and of the US; on the other hand, he subscribed himself to a whitewashed fiction of the US's "anti." Du Bois succumbed to imperial ideology with the same gesture with which he deconstructed it. Reading this ideological relationship into Litvak, Americanism can never eject from its narrative (can never annihilate) its foil because Americanism does not realize that anti-Americanism is a performance of Americanism. In the same way, ideology and anti-ideology are the same, or rather, are not an "anti" relationship at all; they produce one another synchronously. I am interested in using this anti-"anti"-methodology, as it were, to read the civilizational narrative set up by nationalism and national identity. How can I imagine a similar relationship between "end" and "beyond," and "American" and "anti-American," or even "American" and "Russian"?