Evaluative Annotated Citation

The purpose of an annotation is to justify the quality of a source. It includes all of the citation information needed to find a source and a paragraph describing the source. A good annotation proves the value of the source to your research. It forces you to examine your sources more closely. It helps you use the evidence to support your research. It allows you to shape sources and ideas into your own words. It helps the reader check sources.

Elements to include in an evaluative annotation:

1. **Source type** - book, journal, magazine, newspaper etc.
2. **Currency:** The timeliness of the information
3. **Relevance/Reflection:**
   - Does this source help answer your research questions?
   - What questions does this source generate for you?
   - How can you use this source in your research?
   - How does it help shape your argument?
   - Has it changed how you think about your topic?
   - How does it compare with others dealing with the same topic or others in your Works Cited?
4. **Authority:** Author’s credentials - his/her expertise in the field. Google the author or check Linkedin
5. **Accuracy:** Is the work logical, clear, well documented, based on solid evidence? Is the sources peer-reviewed? Is the information supported by evidence?
6. **Purpose:** Is it an overview, persuasive, editorial, scholarly, and/or popular? Has the topic been adequately covered or analyzed? Who is the intended audience?

**Brief summary:** What the main arguments? What is the main point? What topics are covered? If someone asked you article/book is about, what would you say?

Example of an evaluative annotation:


Katz, former contributing editor of *Wired* and the author of Netizen’s “Media Rant” on HotWired, presents a compelling argument for safeguarding the rights of children online. The article is aimed at a general, but computer-savvy, audience. Katz offers a far more liberal perspective than recent pieces in such major news journals as *Newsweek*, which continue to warn the public of the dangers children face in electronic environments. Katz advocated the idea of preparing the “responsible child” and outlines the rights of such a child. He claims that our new “digital nation” requires a social contract similar to the one proposed by philosopher John Locke and adopted by the founders of our own country to protect the rights of all citizens. This unique liberal view added needed balance to my project.

Book


Geared for both a broad audience and professional military historians this book provides an insight into the financial crises involved in the war. The authors show the importance and reliance on foreign currency and support in the prosecuting of the war. The authors share their first hand experience of deprivation and include a list of books that they used in planning military strategy. By common consensus the authors were the best American generals and so their book is a valuable resource in understanding the relationship between economics and strategy. Chapter Two of the book is particularly useful since it contains Washington’s and Greene’s plans for the Battle of Manhattan.

Website

“How We Survived Camp Living.” Revolutionary War Camping, 12 Oct. 2008. 25 Oct. 2008. This site provides basic information about camp life. In addition to basic information about supplies, shelter and food, it also raises some important issues about gender and status. It is a commercial site rather than an academic site, and the author is unknown, however there are several primary source documents that lend authenticity and that are useful to students completing this project. There are only a few images on this website, mostly line drawings that do not provide enough detail to truly illustrate camp life during the Revolutionary War.

Article

Adams, Samuel, John Adams and Paul Revere. “The Importance of Beer and Taverns in the American Revolution.” American Journal of Social History. 97.3 (2008), 354-382. JSTOR. 25 Oct. 2008. This article discusses the importance of beer and taverns in bringing together discussion of the American Rebellion. It draws on the first hand experience of three Revolutionaries and their experiences in the pub. The article includes discussion of social class. Written for a scholarly audience, the article demonstrates that even though the Revolutionaries were fighting for Liberty, it was a relative term and a dangerous one. The authors all had firsthand experience in the Revolution and write from different perspectives. The editor has provided a literature review as well as an extensive bibliography. The summary and general discussion provided a useful overview of the conclusions drawn by the authors and could be used in the research paper to support a conclusion.