

## ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHIES & BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAYS: HOW TO DO THE RESEARCH



### I. What is an ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY? A BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY?

A **bibliography** is simply a list of citations of works (books, articles, etc.), typically formatted according to a particular style (e.g., MLA, APA).

An **annotated bibliography** is ① a list of citations with ② brief explanatory or evaluative commentary provided for each of those works.

A **bibliographic essay** is a critical essay in which the writer identifies and evaluates the core works of research within a discipline or sub-discipline.



### II. Searching for BOOKS

You will need to look at books in the ODU Library, from libraries statewide, and possibly libraries outside of Ohio. Start your searching early—this takes time.

1. **ODU Library Catalog** — For books in the ODU Library
2. **OhioLINK Library Catalog** — For books statewide
3. **WorldCat** — For the “world of books”

**TIP:** A book can often provide a list of cited references or can itself be a bibliography or have a chapter that is a bibliographic essay.

Examples: *The Synoptic Gospels: An Annotated Bibliography* (R 016.266 M218s)  
*The Cambridge Companion to Tennessee Williams* (812.54 C1781c)

#### SEARCH STRATEGY FOR A TOPIC:

- Do a **keyword** search to find books on that topic.

#### SEARCH STRATEGY FOR A PERSON:

- Ⓞ Books **by** the person: ➤ Do an **author** search.
- Ⓞ Books **about** the person: ➤ Do a **subject** search.

**TIP:** A **bibliography** or **biography** or **encyclopedia** is a good place to start your research. Each of these will provide lists of works, sometimes annotated.

## IV. Searching for Scholarly Journal ARTICLES



The library's research databases typically index articles from the current year and back about 30 years.

**TIP:** Each database covers different journals, so you will need to look at several databases to get a good coverage of your person/topic.

### KEY DATABASES:

1. **Academic Search Complete (A.S.C.)** — A good start
2. **ArticleFirst** — For the “world of articles” – many more than in A.S.C.
3. **Articles in Databases** — Choose from the disciplines and topics listed those which are most relevant to what you are looking for; then identify key databases from those listed under the topics.

**TIP:** If you need articles before the 1980s or 1970s, you will probably need to look beyond the databases. Look for older titles in bibliographies and Works Cited in the books and articles you find. Or ask a librarian for assistance.

### SEARCH STRATEGY FOR A TOPIC:

- Do a keyword search to find books on that topic.

### SEARCH STRATEGY FOR A PERSON:

- ⊙ Articles **by** the person: ➤ Do an **author** search.

Type in Last Name, First Name:  
Example: Weil, Simone

- ⊙ Articles **about** the person: ➤ Do a **keyword** search.

- Typically, it's best to type in the first and last name, using quotation marks.  
Example: "Simone Weil"

- To **narrow** your search to one research area dealing with your person, for example, political thought or religious views, use the second search box in your database.


**TIP:** You can **limit** your search in several ways, including:

- To articles in just ENGLISH
- To just academic journals
- To just articles in those journals



## V. Searching for REVIEWS, DISSERTATIONS, & Other Materials

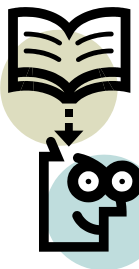
If you need to search for other types of items in addition to books and journal articles, you will need to use these resources:

1. Book Reviews:
  - Academic Search Complete database (**limit** to book reviews),
  - LexisNexis database
2. Dissertations:
  - Dissertation Abstracts database & other, discipline-specific databases (select according to your topic)
3. Other Materials:
  - Library Databases—click on the  to determine what types of materials are covered in a database (select databases according to your topic and types of materials needed)



## VI. Some Questions to Consider

- Ⓞ **What does the preface or introduction say about the book?**  
A preface or introduction may place a book in a larger context of literature.
- Ⓞ **Are there any reviews on the book that might provide evaluation of the book?**
- Ⓞ **What sources are listed in the Bibliographies and Works Cited pages?**  
These provide additional resources to consider and have been used by other writers within the discipline; others have considered it worthwhile to cite them.
- Ⓞ **Which works appear repeatedly in the bibliographies and works cited pages?**  
These works may be core works in the discipline and worth noting!
- Ⓞ **Which authors appear repeatedly in your searches?**  
Authors who write extensively within a particular subject area are frequently the research leaders in the discipline.



## VI. How do I Obtain a Copy of a Book or an Article?

### BOOKS – You have at least 3 options:

1. Check out a book from the **ODU Library**
2. **OhioLINK** – *If it's not available at ODU*
3. **InterLibrary Loan** – *If it's not available at the ODU Library or through OhioLINK (click on Interlibrary Loan from the library's home page)*

### ARTICLES – You have at least 4 options:

1. Click on **“Full Text”** for the article if the option is available in the database
2. Click on **“Find a Copy”** or **“Find It”** if the option is available in the database
3. Search the **ODU Library Catalog** to see if the journal is available in print in the ODU Library—specifically, the journal issue in which the article appears
4. **InterLibrary Loan** – *If the article not available through the ODU Library's resources!*

