

The purpose of this assignment is to get you started on finding, reading and understanding your materials for your final research project. More specifically, this assignment is an opportunity for you to develop the skills that will help you in the research proposal and annotated bibliography that will be part of your final research project.

You must hand in both parts of the assignment and you must provide and keep to the word limits. The two parts of the assignment should be stapled together and handed in as hard copy. Part 1 must also be posted on the course forum. **NO TITLE PAGE**, but make sure your name and tutorial number are on the top sheet. **DUE DATE: 13/JAN/06, beginning of lecture.**

Part 1: Abstract

The abstract is an opportunity for you to condense a scholarly article into a short, descriptive form in **only 100-150 words**. An abstract is **a summary that covers ALL major arguments made by the author** and indicates how the author supports her/his arguments (what kind of data, what reasoning, what theory and methodology). The abstract does not necessarily cover historical details, minor sub-arguments, statistics, etc. Also, the abstract does not directly quote from the author (although you can use the specialized terminology that the author uses). Finally, the abstract does not include your opinion or critique of the source. **The challenges will be a) to recognize and understand the author's arguments, b) to identify the research and reasoning that support the arguments, and c) to capture all of this in your own words in a limited space.**

The source article must come from a **scholarly source**, e.g. a peer-reviewed journal or book (it can be a chapter only) from a recognized scholarly author and press. Newspaper or popular press articles and anything available on the web but not in print form in a scholarly source are NOT acceptable. Unsure about the scholarly credentials of your source? Talk to your TA or a librarian.

We suggest that you spend some time reading as many abstracts as you can before you complete this assignment, as this will help you get a sense of how they are written and what your task is. For information on abstracting, consult:

<http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/bizwrite/abstracts.html>

<http://www.rpi.edu/web/writingcenter/abstracts.html>

You must provide the bibliographic reference for this source according to APA, MLA or Chicago guidelines. Bibliographic reference does not count towards the word limit. Provide a word count for the abstract alone. Post your abstract on the course forum, and submit a hard copy as well.

Part 2: Usefulness of Source Material

In **150-250 words** (provide a word count at the end), explain how this article may be useful to you in your research project. Hand this in on a separate sheet stapled to your abstract. For this part, pay close attention to and try to address all of the following:

- 1- How is this source relevant to your research project?
- 2- What questions does this source raise with regards to your research project?
- 3- How does this source support or negate your initial hypothesis?
- 4- What critique can you bring to this source?