Assignment #1:
Annotated Bibliography: Due Friday, October 5th, at 5pm

For this paper, you will summarize and critically assess 8-10 sources and contribute them to a shared, collaborative, online bibliography.

What is an Annotated Bibliography?

An annotated bibliography is a list of sources (books, journals, websites, periodicals, etc.) accompanied by a summary and evaluation of each source. Annotating a bibliography will give you a perspective about what has been said about your topic so far. By reading carefully and responding critically, you will begin to develop your own point of view. Ultimately, the annotated bibliography you develop now will be the "research scaffold" upon which you will build your final gallery.

Part 1: Choose a Topic and Find Sources

Early in the semester, we will visit the Harvard Art Museum depository to explore their medieval collections. By September 17th, you will choose one medieval object from Harvard's collections (either at HAM, the Houghton Library, or the Harvard Law School Library) to be the subject of your annotated bibliography (assignment #1) and object biography (assignment #2).

To begin the annotated bibliography, write a list of questions you have about your object. Group your questions under general headings, and decide which cluster of questions you would like to pursue further. Keep it broad: your goal is to investigate a wide range of sources that relate to your object.

Then, using what you learned in the Hollis/E-Resources Tutorial, assemble 8-10 *new* sources. These should be a mix of journal articles, books, and book chapters (at least one of each), and they cannot be texts we have read in class.

Once you have found your sources, use Zotero to create bibliographic entries. For most databases, as well as books in the Harvard Library, it is very simple to have Zotero "grab" this information. Store your sources in a new Zotero collection.

Part 2: Annotate and Tag

Your annotations should be written in paragraph format. The goal is to note down what will be most useful for you as you continue to investigate your object this semester. Most annotations include:

- Summary: What is the main argument? What person, theme, or event is the main focus? What kinds and collections of sources are used?

- Assessment: Evaluate the usefulness of the source. How does it compare to other sources in your bibliography? What is the goal of this source?
- Reflection: Ask yourself how this source fits into the broader topic you are considering. Was this source helpful to you? How does it shape your understanding of the topic?

Once you've written your annotation, you will add it to your Zotero entry as a Note.

You should also tag your entry with 5-10 relevant keywords or "tags." These tags can be based on the subject of the source, but can also be for other relevant metadata such as author, title, etc.

Part 3: Share

After you have completed your entry, you will drag your source our class's group library, Making the Middle Ages. Once the entry is there, everyone else in the class will be able to see it, and we will have begun to build a shared resource.

Note that changes made to your library will not sync with the group's library. If you would like to make changes, delete the copy from the group library and then drag your new copy over. Just make sure you do not delete others' work.

Part 4: Publish

Finally, turn in a hard copy of your bibliography. Choose the bibliographic style that makes the most sense for your topic (we will discuss the differences in section). To create a bibliography from Zotero, follow the directions for creating bibliographies. It is easy to install the appropriate style from the Zotero Style Repertory.

Beginning with Zotero (Firefox)

1) Download and install Firefox, if you do not already have it.
2) Download and install the Zotero 3.0 plug-in for Firefox.
3) Register for a Zotero account.
4) Join our class group.
5) Connect your browser's installation of Zotero to your account.
6) Learn more about Zotero with screencast tutorials.