An annotated bibliography is a list of the sources you have used in your research paper. Each entry should include a brief summary of the source followed by your own assessment and criticisms of the source. You should explain if the source is reliable, whether or not the information is biased, and the value of the source to your research and thesis. Summarizing a source without including your own thoughts and analysis will not receive full points for the Application of Information section of the grading rubric.

For Professor Creasman’s class, you will be using the Chicago Bibliography Style. There are many good resources and examples on annotated bibliographies on the web including the following: Purdue Owl - http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/


Michael Gordin’s book challenges the belief that the two atomic bombs dropped on Japan ended the Second World War in the Pacific theater. Gordin describes the military construction of the bomb and the view of most military men of the time that the bomb was an ordinary weapon. Gordin also reveals a third bomb was planned for Tokyo, and that many people believed the atomic bombs would fail to work as promised or end the war any quicker than the massive bombing campaigns already taking place over Japan. Gordin concludes that the entry of the Soviet Union in the war against Japan and the naval blockade had more to do with the surrender of Japan than the atomic bombs.

This book was a valuable source in my presentation. I used it to help present the lack of understanding about the destructive potential of the atomic bomb and reasons why the bombs were not necessary. I also used it to back up my belief that had the people responsible for ordering the bombing of Japan fully understood the destructive potential of the atomic bomb they would have reconsidered its use. Gordin’s claim that there were more important factors that influenced Japan’s surrender than the atomic bombs are well documented. However, this article does have some bias and weaker arguments when trying to convince readers that the bomb was considered merely an ordinary weapon by the military men of that era. Unfortunately, this source offered little insight into the decision making process of Truman and other parties regarding the use of the atomic bomb.


Grimsley’s article examines the possible outcomes of the war with Japan if the Manhattan Project had failed. Grimsley includes a study from the U.S. Strategic Bombing command after the war that concluded the Japanese economic system had practically dissolved, and Japan would have surrendered by November of 1945. Grimsley points out that the dilemma faced by the United States was not only destroying Japan’s ability to make war, but also its will to continue the war. Japan continued to resist despite intense conventional firebombing, and Grimsley leans
towards the atomic bomb being a reason the Japanese will to resist collapsed. He also mentions the entry of the Soviet Union in the war against Japan and the impact it had on influencing Japan’s surrender. Grimsley finishes by indicating there was a credible possibility that a pro-war Japanese government might have taken over in a few months and continued the war, had the atomic bombs not been dropped. This article provided a source that considered multiple views and provided reasons for dropping the atomic bomb, which gave me an opposing view to include in my presentation. Grimsley article is biased towards supporting the dropping of the atomic bombs, but he does acknowledge and mention evidence to the contrary. There was one other interesting point that I found useful for my research. Even though this article presents theoretical scenarios, it is one of the few I discovered that actually considered the possibility that the consequences of a continued conventional war might have been worse for Japan than the effects of the atomic bombs.


The Manhattan Engineer District (Manhattan Project) was the group of people responsible for developing the atomic bomb. This report was written less than a year after the dropping of the two atomic bombs on Japan. The report provides background information on Hiroshima and Nagasaki before the bombing, as well as a summary of the impact the bombing had on the two cities and their citizens, including damage to buildings, injuries to people, and the effects on Japanese morale. This report was an important primary source in my research containing valuable information from the people involved in the project from the perspective of that period. The report was especially useful because it was objective, concerned with facts, and accurately portrayed the destructive power of the atomic bomb in terms of human life and city buildings. The report concludes with an eyewitness account of the bombing of Hiroshima, which adds an important Japanese civilian perspective of the bombing and its effects.