



ORIGIN

**SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT:
ANNOTATION AS ACTIVISM**

WORKSHEET AND ACTIVITY

EXPLORE HISTORICAL MARKERS
IN YOUR COMMUNITY

DOWNLOAD AND PRINT

ACTIVITY

SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT: ANNOTATION AS ACTIVISM

Objective: In this activity, participants will visit (in person) or find (online) historical markers in their communities, create notes expanding upon the information in the marker and add their voices to the historical dialogue happening all around them.

Keep an eye out for examples of caste.

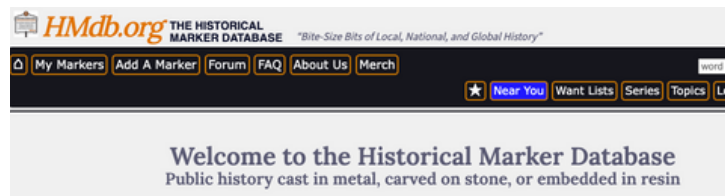
PROCEDURE

Let's start with annotation. Annotation involves adding notes to a text to provide extra information, context, or corrections.



Definition: Annotation is the grammatical art of modifying text to gain a better understanding. Let's say you are reading a book about gardening. You might make notes in the margins such as "would work well in the backyard" or "only plant in April." Your notes contain additional information that gives context to what you are reading. The annotations could go as far as to question or correct something the author has written.

Step 1: Visit the Historical Markers Database at www.hmdb.org and find two historical markers that interest you, one should commemorate a person and the other should commemorate an event or place. They can be people or events in your neighborhood, or anywhere in the database. Use the tabs at the top of the site to search near you, by location or by topic.



Indian School at the College of William and Mary Marker

Example of a "Place" marker.
Photographer: Bernard Fisher

Which two markers did you choose and why?

What event, place or person do they honor or remember?

What year were the markers erected?

Who submitted the applications for the markers to be placed and why do you believe residents felt it was important for this marker to be erected?

Who approves the historical markers in your county, city or state?



Timeline of Events at New Bridge in the American Revolution Marker
Example of a "Event" marker.
Photographer: Bill Coughlin



Gloria Casarez (1971-2014) Marker
Example of an "Person" marker.
Photographer: J. Jonah Jackalope

Step 2: Apply annotation skills to the historical marker you've chosen. This may require a bit of research. Start by reading your marker closely, then answering the following questions.

Perform an online search of both markers. Does the information on the marker tell the whole story of the event or of the person?

Add two items to each marker that don't currently exist. Does it make the marker more inclusive? Is it information important to the remembrance?

What information could be removed?

For your person marker, are there other people who lived at the same time in the same area who accomplished similar achievements? How are they remembered?

For your place marker, does the marker honor all of the people who have lived and/or worked in or on that space? Give consideration to all people who may have previously occupied the land honored by the marker.

Did caste systems influence the person, event or location? Does this change your annotation in any way?

Using your annotations as a guide, rewrite both markers. How do they differ now from their original language?

Step 3: Investigate the process of marker approval, design and eligibility rules.

- **Visit** the state of Kentucky’s website for historical marker nomination at www.history.ky.gov/markers/historical-marker-nomination
 - Under Historical Marker Guidelines, which types of markers will not be approved?



- **Now visit** Virginia’s historical marker website at www.vaidsp.com/historicalmarkers/
 - Under Historical Marker Application Process, click [application to Department of Historical Resources \(DHR\)](#).
 - How many historical markers does the state of Virginia approve each year to be placed on its highways?

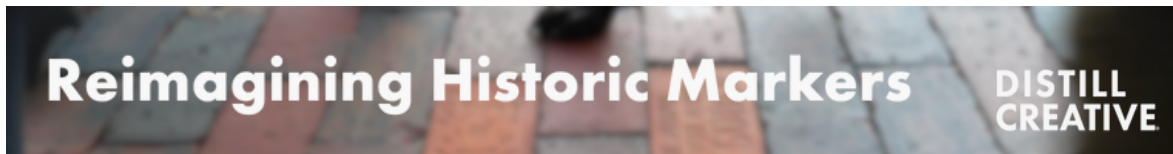


Finally, investigate the procedure of submitting and approving historical markers for your city, state or county. Did any of the rules (or costs) surprise you? Could any of the information you found make it difficult for some communities to participate in this process?

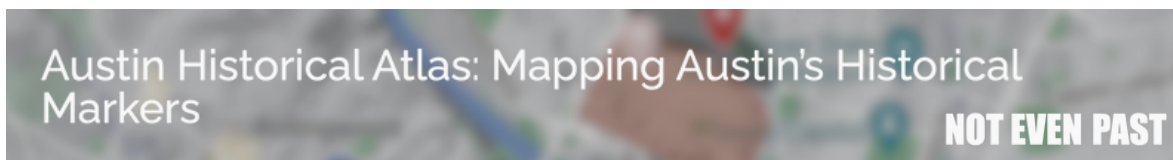
Use the space below to answer:

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- <https://distillcreative.com/blog/2020/4/6/reimagining-historic-markers>



- <https://notevenpast.org/mapping-historical-austin-an-annotated-atlas-of-austins-historical-markers>



- <https://journals.openedition.org/miranda/2920>

