Overview of lit review

Example

Finding articles

General tricks

Overcoming procrastination

How to Write a Literature Review

Shelby Grossman Departmental Writing Fellow

October 2015

What can the Departmental Writing Fellow do for you?

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Finding articles

General tricks

- Meet with you to give feedback on your writing for your thesis or Gov 94 paper
- Office hours Fridays from 2-5pm
- sgrossm@fas.harvard.edu

What is the purpose of a literature review

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Finding articles

General tricks

Overcoming procrastination • Concisely summarize key conclusions from existing research

What is the purpose of a literature review

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Finding articles

General tricks

- Concisely summarize key conclusions from existing research
- Come to some conclusion about the accuracy or completeness of these conclusions

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Finding articles

General tricks

Overcoming procrastination • "Impose some intellectual order on the material" –Knopf 2006

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- Example
- Finding articles
- General tricks
- Overcoming procrastination

- "Impose some intellectual order on the material" –Knopf 2006
- Has a thesis statement of its own

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- "Impose some intellectual order on the material" –Knopf 2006
- Has a thesis statement of its own
- Group studies into schools of thoughts

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- "Impose some intellectual order on the material" –Knopf 2006
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- Group studies into schools of thoughts
- Discuss what studies agree on

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- Weigh in on an existing debate

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- Challenge assumptions in existing research

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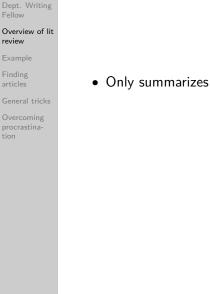
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- Keeps your voice front and center

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- Challenge the logic of existing research
- Keeps your voice front and center
- When writing, signpost! Have subheadings!

Attributes of a weak literature review



Attributes of a weak literature review

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General tricks

- Only summarizes
- No synthesis

Attributes of a weak literature review

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- Finding articles
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- Overcoming procrastination

- Only summarizes
- No synthesis
- List of paragraphs that summarize and then provide one sentence of synthesis
- Focuses only on your "proper noun" topic

Example

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Example

Finding articles

General tricks

Overcoming procrastination Immigrant Exclusion and Insecurity in Africa: Coethnic Strangers (2014) by Claire Adida

Research question: Why do some immigrant groups in West Africa integrate seamlessly, while others face exclusion and violence?

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Finding articles

General tricks

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Research question: Why do some immigrant groups in West Africa integrate seamlessly, while others face exclusion and violence?

Focus on section "South - South Anti-Immigrant Politics Defies the Clash of Civilizations" (page 10 - top of 12)

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What is the thesis statement of this literature review?

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Overcoming procrastination What is the thesis statement of this literature review?

There are three sections of the literature review. What is happening in the second section?

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Overcoming procrastination What is the thesis statement of this literature review?

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What is the contribution Adida is making to the 'clash of civilizations' argument?

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How is order imposed on the summaries?

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Finding articles

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General tricks

Overcoming procrastination • Once you find a relevant article, read its literature review!

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Finding articles

General tricks

Overcoming procrastination • Once you find a relevant article, read its literature review! Then read its main sources! "Snowball strategy"

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Finding articles

General tricks

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- LibX: http://library.harvard.edu/harvard-libx

General Tricks!

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Finding articles

General tricks

Overcoming procrastination • You can't always know your literature review framing in advance

General Tricks!

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Example

Finding articles

General tricks

- You can't always know your literature review framing in advance
- Don't waste time reading articles that aren't relevant

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Finding articles

General tricks

Overcoming procrastination • You can't always know your literature review framing in advance

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Finding articles

General tricks

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Finding articles

General tricks

Overcoming procrastination

Overcoming literature review procrastination

Task 1: Figure out a strategy for organizing your notes

• Excel sheet

Paste		General	- 1 -
_	C52 : S C (fx Private order can be spontaneous or organized, when large, and	onymous communities, hard to share information, need organization. For Ellick	son (Order w/o Law
- 4	A	В	C
10			
	State predation/expropriation/property rights threat		
			The state should
			Roving bandits v
	See Townsend 1979, Mookherjee and Png 1989, Dixit says their theories can be app		
	North, Wallis, and Weingast 2009		Limited access o
	Markus 2012		Predation is fund
		Confusing. Distinction between countries where firms capture the sta	
			Mechanism: Yes,
		Whether or not the militia partners with the state, that makes it more	
	Berman, Felter, Kapstein, and Troland 2013 (DV: violence, mechanism they find supp	Investment positively correlated with violence because it increases o	I don't like this ar
21			
22			
	State regulation of industries (in a way that helps certain industries)		
	Stigler 1971	Large firms get protection b/c of Olsonian collection action logic, they	Question: What e
25			
	Growth		
27	Kang (David C.) Crony Capitalism: Corruption and Development in South Korea and	"balance of power among a small and stable set of government and	There are these
28	McMillan and Woodruff 2002 (The Central Role of Entrepreneurs in Transition Econo	Self-help substitutes for market-supporting institutions work for small	
	Johnson, McMillan and Woodruff 2000 (Entrepreneurs and the ordering of institutiona		Looks at transitio
		Coercion, sometimes violent coercion, used to secure property rights	
		Group organization, namely when a few families have a lot of control,	
	Morck et al 1998	(Real DV: firm growth) Insider ownership increases firm value only wh	
	Sowell (2010)		Even biased stat
	Campos, Lien, and Pradhan 1999		Predictability me
	Schleifer and Vishney 1993	Economic and political competition can reduce corruption, and its ad	wnen multiple bu
		Secure property rights	
			Islamic nations h
	Bates, I think	In feudal Europe, secure porperty rights may have impeded growth be	ecause the state

• Note cards (organize in different ways)

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Finding articles

General tricks

Overcoming procrastination • Task 2: Figure out your key words for searches

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Finding articles

General tricks

- Task 2: Figure out your key words for searches
- Task 3: Start searching; aim to read the most relevant articles first

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Example

Finding articles

General tricks

- Task 2: Figure out your key words for searches
- Task 3: Start searching; aim to read the most relevant articles first
- Keep JSTOR open on your browser

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Example

Finding articles

General tricks

- Task 2: Figure out your key words for searches
- Task 3: Start searching; aim to read the most relevant articles first
- Keep JSTOR open on your browser
- When you have 20 minutes to spare, see if you can find and skim two articles

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- This work (at least in the beginning) can be fit into small chunks of time

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- Spend as much time evaluating as reading
- Slot literature review work into your schedule