

Literature Reviews

SOAR - Humanistic Social Sciences

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Welcome!



About Me

- she/her
- B.S. in Public Health from UAB in 2022
- PhD in Economics from Emory in 2027 (hopefully)
- big fan of travel!

Literature Reviews

What is the purpose of a literature review?

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- A literature review (**noun**) - an overview or synthesis of the existing literature on a topic
- Literature review (**verb**) - an ongoing process throughout your research career where you familiarize yourself and stay up-to-date with the research in your field

Literature Review throughout your Career

New Researcher

Established Researcher

Mentor/Advisor

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New Researcher

- acquaint yourself with existing work
- understand the foundational works and the cutting edge
- generate new ideas

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Mentor/Advisor

- maintain general knowledge of the field that you can use to direct and assess newer researchers

Finding Literature

Academic papers exist in a network - once you've found one, you've found a lot.

Ways to Start:

- Google Scholar
- Papers on your topic in another field
- Papers in your field on another (similar) topic
- Researchers whose work you like
- Talk to your professors

Keep up with Working Papers

In economics, the NBER sends out a weekly list of working papers that have recently come out. This is a great way to keep up with the cutting edge.

Reading the Literature

The 3-Pass Approach

Courtesy of (Keshav, 2007)

First Pass

1. Title, abstract, introduction
2. Section and sub-section headings
3. Conclusions
4. Glance at references

Second Pass

Reread carefully and

- look carefully at tables, figures, and graphs
- take notes on unfamiliar or interesting topics
- ignore technical sections

Third Pass

Approach like you will replicate it, examining

- assumptions
- proofs
- procedures and techniques

Comprehension Questions

What is the purpose or goal of the paper?

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What is the setting or background of the paper?

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What is the setting or background of the paper?

What are the assumptions they make?

What is the paper's main contribution?

What methods does the paper use?

Competition in the Promised Land: Black Migration and Racial Wage Convergence in the North, 1940-1970 by Dr. Leah Boustan (2009)

1. First Pass (15 minutes)
2. Discussion

Writing a Literature Review

Literature Review $\neq$ Summary of Literature

Your literature review should

- introduce the reader to your topic and settings
- outline any central disagreements in the literature
- show where your question fits in this context

Organization

The best organization system is the one you use - work with your habits/preferences, not against them!

Resources I love:

- Notion
- Research Rabbit
- Zotero

Notion

The screenshot displays the Notion application interface on a macOS system. The top menu bar includes 'Notion', 'File', 'Edit', 'View', 'History', 'Window', and 'Help'. The status bar at the top right shows the date and time: 'Fri May 16 2:04 PM'. The left sidebar contains a search bar and a list of workspace pages: 'Michaela Philip's ...', 'Academia', 'General', 'Task List', 'Getting Started', 'Recipe Book', 'Settings', 'Templates', and 'Trash'. The main workspace area is titled 'Academia' and features a header image of a Van Gogh painting of irises. Below the header, the workspace is organized into four columns: 'General', 'To-Do', 'Projects', and 'Notes'. The 'General' column lists 'Research Hub', 'Teaching', 'Time Tracker', and 'Highways'. The 'To-Do' column contains a checklist with items like 'finish cover letter', 'submit UCA application', 'finish cleaning code', 'start text matching code', and 'apply for PDS funds?'. The 'Projects' column lists 'Green Book', 'Hill-Burton', 'Redlining and Mortality', and 'Writing Workshop'. The 'Notes' column lists 'Reading Notes', 'Data Notes', 'Policy Timeline', 'Research Updates', 'Meeting Notes', 'Presentation Notes', and 'People'. The bottom right corner of the workspace area shows a small circular icon with the letter 'E'.

Notion File Edit View History Window Help

← → + Highways Preparing for Graduate Sci Academia

Michaela Philip's ... Academia Private Edited just now Share ☆ ...

Search Home New Inbox Private General Academia Task List Getting Started Recipe Book Settings Templates Trash

Academia

General

- Research Hub
- Teaching
- Time Tracker
- Highways

To-Do

- ☒ finish cover letter
- ☒ submit UCA application
- ☐ finish cleaning code
- ☐ start text matching code
- ☐ apply for PDS funds?

Projects

- Green Book
- Hill-Burton
- Redlining and Mortality
- Writing Workshop

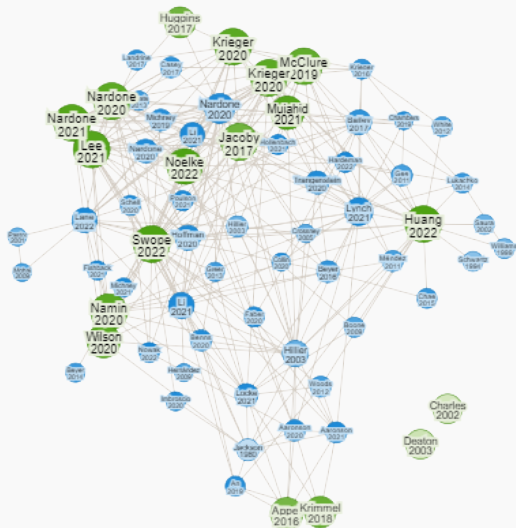
Notes

- Reading Notes
- Data Notes
- Policy Timeline
- Research Updates
- Meeting Notes
- Presentation Notes
- People

My Reading Notes

Reading Notes										
All Urgent and Unread Unread Housing In Progress +										
Status	Priority	Paper Title	Authors	# Year	Summary	Project	Topic	Format	Methods	Geographic Area
Done	High	The Evolution of Access to Public Accommodations in the United States	Lisa D. Cook, Maggie E.C. Jones, Trevon D. Logan, David Rose	2023	We then use the Green Book data to test whether market conditions and white consumer discrimination led businesses to bar Black customers prior to the Civil Rights Act of 1964. We use plausibly exogenous variation from white World War II casualties and Black migration patterns to isolate the effect of a change in the racial composition of consumers on the growth of nondiscriminatory businesses. We find that the share of nondiscriminatory establishments grew faster in locations with larger increases in the share of the Black population, but the magnitudes were small. These results highlight the importance of federal legislation in ending racial discrimination in public accommodations.		Inequality	Journal Article	DD, IV	National
Done	High	Consumer Inertia and Firm Pricing in the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Insurance Exchange	Keith M. Marzilli Ericson	2014	I use the Medicare Part D prescription drug insurance market to examine the dynamics of firm interaction with consumers on an insurance exchange. Enrollment data show that consumers face switching	EC771	Health	Journal Article	RD	
Calculate										

Research Rabbit



- Research Rabbit helps you find connected papers
- Connections are based on citations
- Great way to overview the existing literature on a topic and visualize the gaps and connections that exist now

Zotero's strength is in its compatibility with other programs!

1. Zotero + Browser

- Download the plug-in and add papers to your library with a click
- Can also use Zotero to set up a proxy through your school's library to make accessing papers easier

2. Zotero + L^AT_EX

- Export your citations as a bibtex file

3. Zotero + Research Rabbit

- Sync these two to add papers to your Zotero library as you find them through Research Rabbit

My Opinion

Using an LLM/Chatbot (like ChatGPT) for lit reviews is like using a Swiss army knife to cook a 4 course meal.

NotebookLM is a better tool

Summary

This paper examines the relationship between the racial composition of neighborhoods and the construction of highways in the United States. The author argues that the Interstate Highway System was used to displace Black residents from their communities, and provides evidence suggesting that neighborhoods with a higher proportion of Black residents were more likely to have highways built through them. The author also finds that highway construction led to a decline in White residents in treated neighborhoods, while Black residents remained unaffected.

Suggested questions



How did the US Interstate Highway System construction impact the racial composition of American cities?



Did the location of interstate highways in the US reflect a deliberate effort to displace Black communities?



What are the long-term consequences of highway construction on neighborhoods in terms of population dynamics and housing values?