




How To Do a Literature Review

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First and foremost!



**DON'T
PANIC!!**

Photo credit:
[Nevermindtheend](#) on Flickr



So... have you ever heard...

“What does the literature show us?”

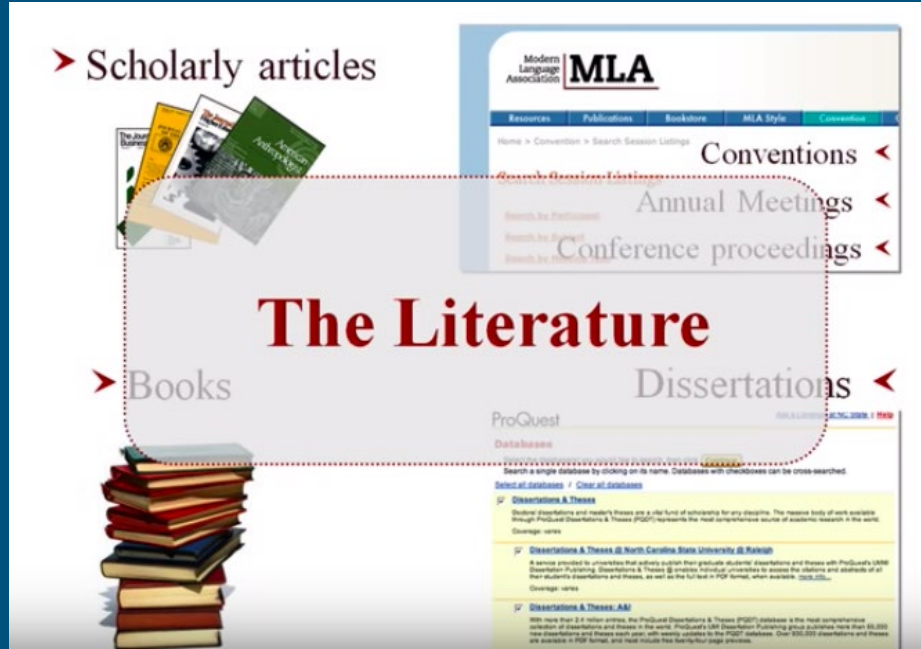
“Connect your ideas to the literature.”

“Survey the literature on the topic.”

Screenshots, this and the next five slides, from “Literature Reviews: An Overview for Graduate Students”, from [North Carolina State University Library](#)



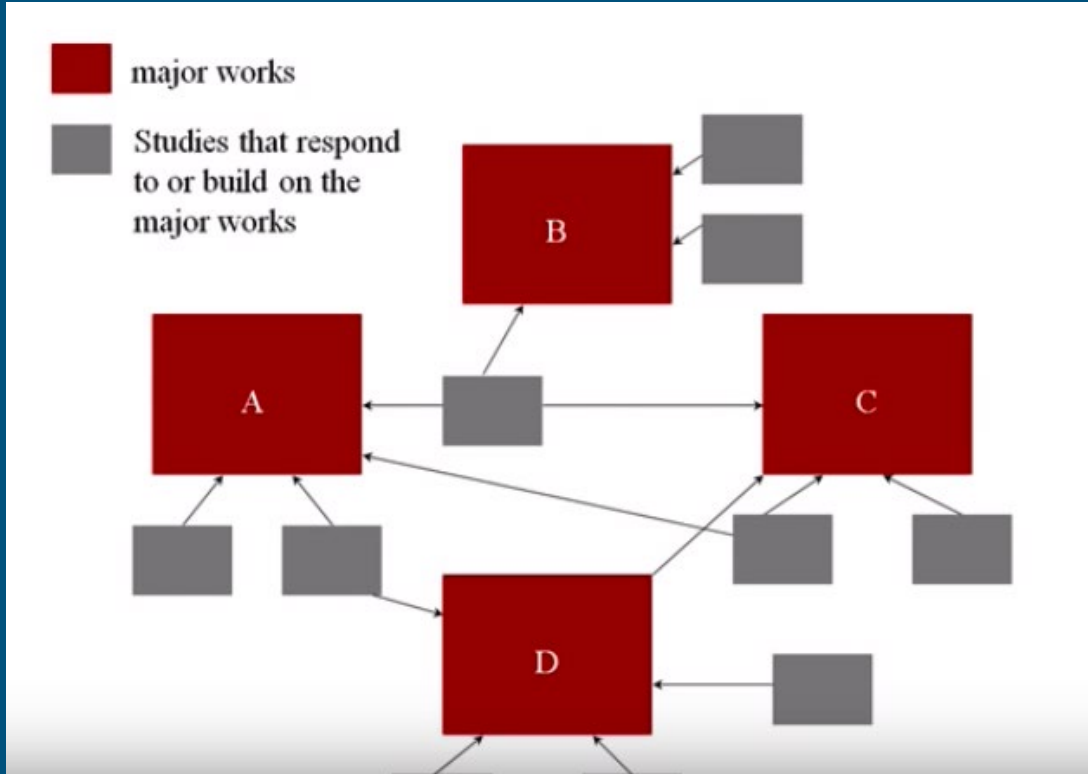
A literature review answers those questions!



- ➔ What is “the literature” anyway?
- ➔ What is a literature review?
- ➔ What are the different kinds of reviews?



Think of the literature as a network



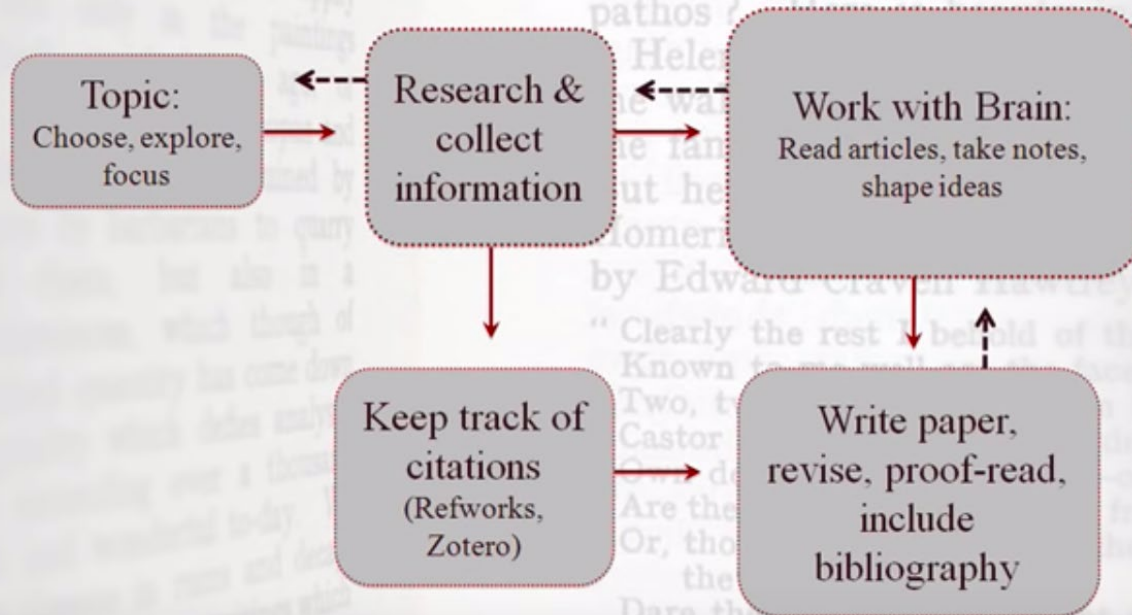
As you work to make sense of and explain it, you will:

- Find the core research
- Find who the experts are
- Find the most common methods
- Find the gaps



We'll talk about the process...

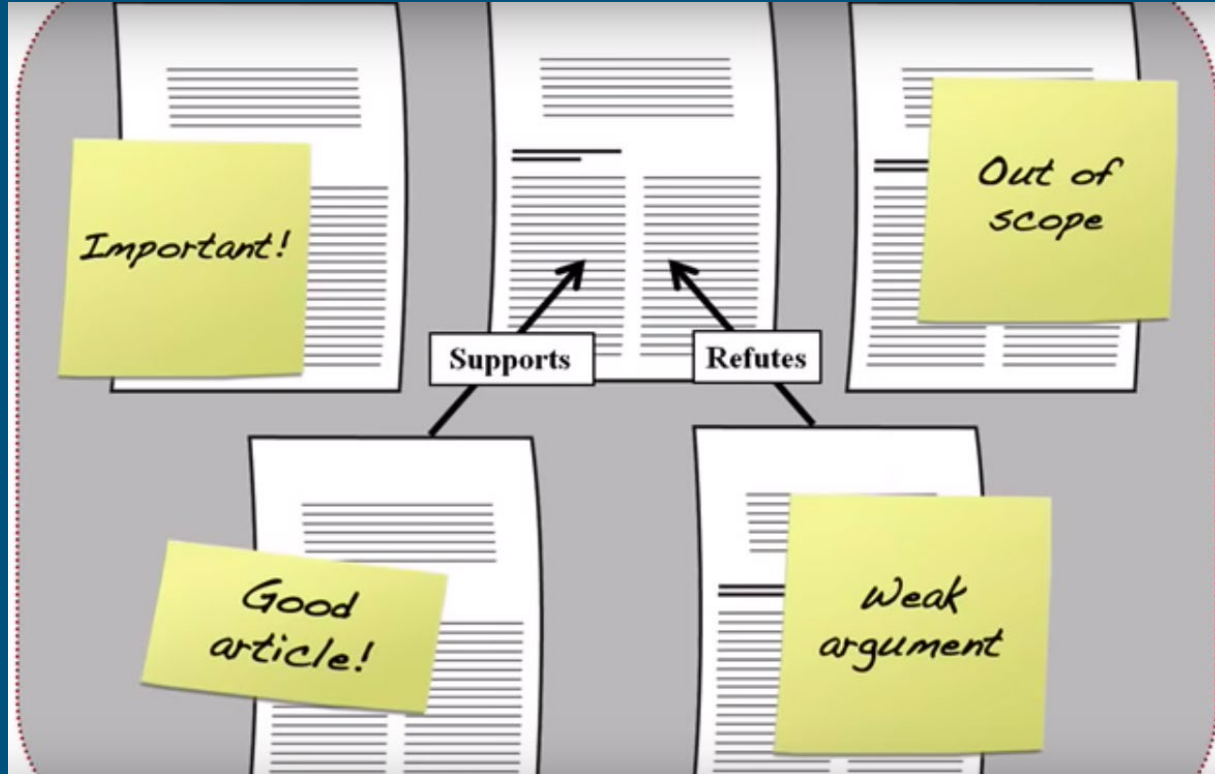
Writing a literature review is a process



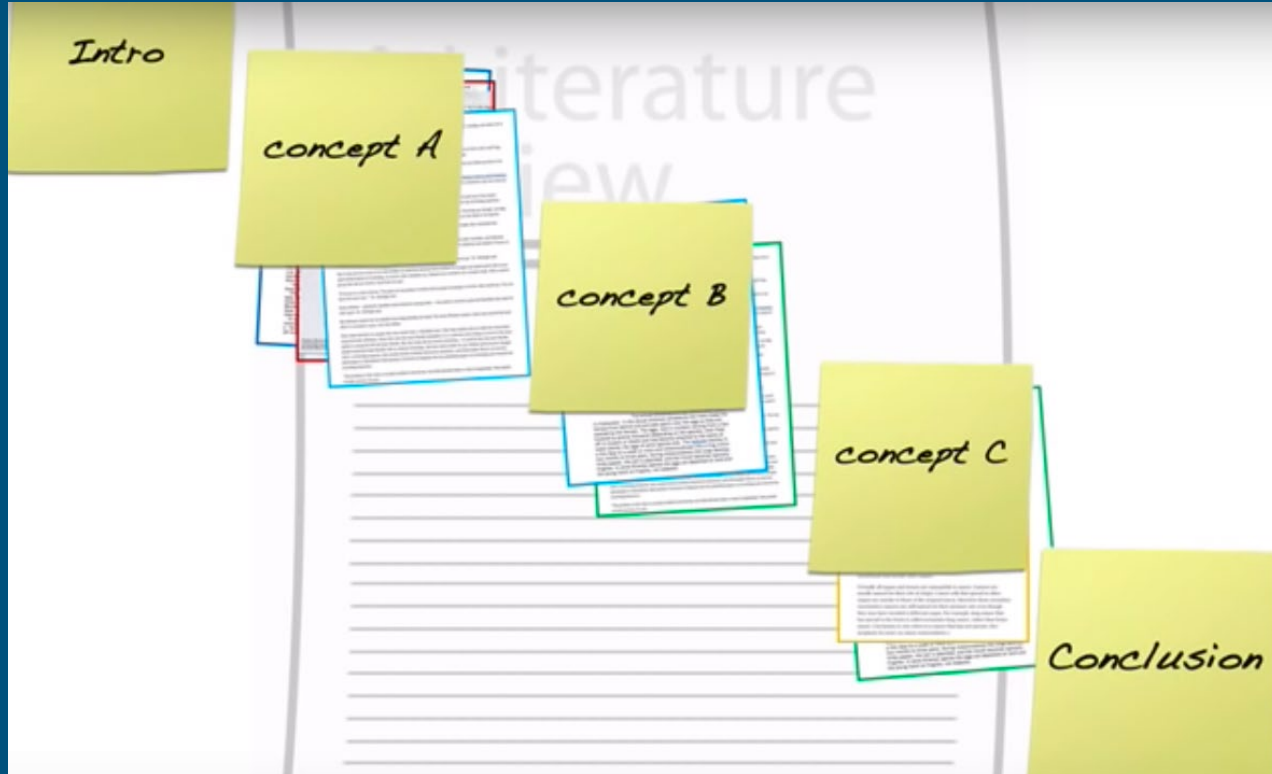
It's iterative!
Not a
straight-line!



And how you can synthesize what you find...



So that the final result looks like this



The literature you have found is grouped into concepts, synthesized and presented to the reader



Let's get started!

- Today we'll focus on the INTEGRATIVE review, the most common type in the social sciences.
- Other types are:
 - ◆ Argumentative; Historical; Methodological; Theoretical

NOTE: Be sure you are clear on expectations such as how many sources to use, what formats, the organization of the review (headings, etc.) and length

Typology from [USC Literature Review Guide](#)



Choose and narrow your topic

- Do some exploration before committing! It can be frustrating if there's too little information on your topic
- But the narrower the topic can be, the easier the review process
- Pick a topic of interest
- Pick a topic with an obvious need for further research (if your literature review relates to a research agenda)



Keep these questions in mind...

- What are the main debates in the field concerning my topic?
- What are the key ways in which scholarship on my topic has evolved in the past several years (or decades)?
- What hypotheses might the established literature suggest for my particular research question?
- How have other scholars attempted to answer my research question? In what ways is our knowledge still incomplete?
- What are the most important findings about my topic or question?

Source: Rebekah Massengill, [Writing Sociology](#), Princeton University, p. 19.



Find models!

- Annual Review of Sociology (and other Annual Review publications)
- Sociological Abstracts (filter for literature reviews)
- Oxford Bibliographies Online: Sociology
- ProQuest Dissertations
- Seminal articles on your topic



Annual Review of Sociology:

(Easiest to link from [here](#))

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Annual Review of Sociology. The main header is dark brown with the title 'Annual Review of Sociology' in white. Below the header is a navigation bar with 'Journal Home', 'Current Volume', and 'All Volumes'. A 'Table of Contents' section is visible, with a dropdown menu set to '2010s' and a 'Select a Volume' button. On the right, there are links for 'Information for Authors', 'Pricing & Subscriptions', 'RSS Feed', and 'Sign Up'. A red box highlights a section of the page containing three article entries, each with a 'Preview' button and links for 'Full Text HTML' and 'Download PDF'. A red arrow points from the 'List of Volumes' section to the '2010s' dropdown menu.

Annual Review of Sociology

- Information for Authors
- Pricing & Subscriptions
- RSS Feed
- Sign Up

Journal Home **Current Volume** **All Volumes**

Table of Contents 2010s **Select a Volume**

List of Volumes

2010-present	
VOL. 45, 2019 • CURRENT	VOL. 42, 2016
VOL. 44, 2018	VOL. 41, 2015
VOL. 43, 2017	VOL. 40, 2014
	VOL. 39, 2013

Theory and Methods

Machine Learning for Sociology
Mario Molina and Filiz Garip
Vol. 45, 2019, pp. 27–45
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Bayesian Statistics in Sociology: Past, Present, and Future
Scott M. Lynch and Bryce Bartlett
Vol. 45, 2019, pp. 47–68
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Social Processes

Aging Populations, Mortality, and Life Expectancy
Eileen M. Crimmins and Yuan S. Zhang
Vol. 45, 2019, pp. 69–89
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Sociological Abstracts:

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AND housing us in Anywhere

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Limit to: ☐ Peer reviewed ⓘ

Publication date: All dates ▼

Source type:

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Document type:

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- ☐ Letter To The Editor
- ☒ Literature Review
- ☐ Market Research
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Language:

- ☐ Select all
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- ☐ Arabic
- ☐ Basque
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- ☐ Breton

Find literature on your topic!

<https://guides.lib.berkeley.edu/soc>

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Sociology: Quick start

Resources for research in sociology

Quick start | Get Books | Get Articles | Get and Manage Data | Do a Lit Review | Manage Citations | Get Help!

Welcome!

"The function of sociology, as of every science, is to reveal that which is hidden." - Pierre Bourdieu

This introduction offers sources and tips for navigating the library's range of materials in sociology. Sociology can be interdisciplinary, so if you're struggling to find something, you might also want to check out the guides for [anthropology](#), [psychology](#), [social welfare](#) or [economics](#)--or contact your librarian!

Quick Links

Don't have much time and need to get started quickly?

 **OskiCat** UCB Library Catalog

1. [Search our library catalog](#) to find books, ebooks, and DVDs in the library.

Search Tips

1. **Have a question, or a fuzzy idea.** *What social and cultural factors influence the decision to text while operating a vehicle?* is great. *Why do people text while driving* is a good place to start, as well.
2. **Browse encyclopedias** or Wikipedia to get a quick overview, or search a general database like [Academic Search Complete](#) and read an article or two to learn what's out there on your topic.
3. **Come up with a list of words to search** in our [sociology databases](#). Don't be afraid to search for related topics like mobile phone use, distracted driving, etc. Synonyms are your friends!
4. **Know how Google Scholar + library catalogs and databases work**, and try each one for a major project.
 - Use an asterisk: **driv*** gives you results for *driv-ing*,



Evaluate sources

- Are they current? Free from bias? Published in peer reviewed journals or other reliable sources?
- Are they relevant to your topic and significant in their field?
- Do they present solutions (and how do those compare between papers)?
- Do they have a theoretical basis?
- Do they illuminate trends in the field?

Source (this and next slide): UNC Chapel Hill Writing Center; [Literature Reviews](#)



Determine the main concepts (buckets)

- What themes or issues tie the papers/groups of papers together?
- How do the main concepts illuminate your topic?
- Once you have the concepts outlined, how can you synthesize them into a coherent whole?
- (Remember, you will most likely read many more papers than you use-- don't try to fit in a paper that is out of scope!!)



Synthesis/Integration (notetaking!!)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Author(s)	Methods	Research Question/s	Time Period of Study	Who Was Studied?	Findings	Citation
2	Kiser, Tammy and Hulton, Linda	Case study, administrative records, survey. Donabedian Evaluation Model	The purpose of this project is to describe the development, implementation, and evaluation of a creative model of health care for the homeless, Suitcase Clinics, using principles of CBPR and share lessons learned.	2014-2017?	Homeless persons in a mid-Atlantic state	Sample of known HHSC clients who were high Emergency Department (ED) utilizers demonstrated reduced cost to the hospital due to receiving care through the Suitcase Clinic. 60% of the HHSC clients surveyed indicated that the HHSC kept them from going to the ED.	Kiser, T., & Hulton, L. (2018). Addressing Health Care Needs in the Homeless Population: A New Approach Using Participatory Action Research. SAGE Open, 8(3), 2158244018789750. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244018789750
3							
4	Taken from: UC Berkeley Libraries, Social Welfare Research Guide						

You will thank yourself if you develop a method/use a tool in advance that gives you material that's easy to synthesize!

DO:

- Use evidence (the citations you've gathered!)
- Be selective and focused
- Use quotes sparingly, but...
- Use caution when paraphrasing!
- Don't just repeat, synthesize
- Pay attention to which authors and themes appear again and again

Source, this and the next slide: USC Libraries, [Organizing Your Social Science Research Paper](#) (It's REALLY good)



DON'T

- Use sources that don't relate to your research question
- Fail to assess what are the most relevant sources
- Accept another researcher's work without critical analysis
- Forget to describe the process you used to find the literature (which databases, etc.)
- Omit literature that supports alternative viewpoints



CITATION TRACKING!

Check the references contained in any paper that seems relevant to your topic (backward citation)--are there items there you can use? Which authors are consistently represented?

Then, use Google Scholar or Web of Science (a paid database through the library) to see which authors in turn cited a relevant paper you have found (forward citation)--though this can be tough for very new papers



More on notetaking and citation management

→ Consider using a note taking tool!

- ◆ Zotfile, Evernote, Excel/Word, GoogleDocs or GoogleKeep

→ Consider using citation management software!

- ◆ Zotero, Mendeley, EndNote (and more)



otero Day

in 305 Wurster Hall

Numerous one-hour sessions throughout the day. Spend an hour and learn to use this robust citation manager with Firefox, Safari and Chrome. The workshops cover importing citations, exporting bibliographies into Word and Google Docs and sharing resources among groups.

**Thursday, February 13 – 1 hour workshops at:
10AM, 12 noon, 5PM**



End result:

From: "School Context and the Gender Gap in Educational Achievement", Joscha Legewie and Thomas A. DiPrete, 2012, *American Sociological Review* 77(3) 463–485

achievement, it inhibits academic investment and weakens academic achievement. Simply put, students who are highly motivated and capable (attributes more common at higher SES levels) create a learning-oriented peer culture (Jencks and Mayer 1990; Rumberger and Palardy 2005; Sewell, Haller, and Portes 1969).

For about 20 years following the release of the Coleman Report, the literature reported that school effects were relatively small in comparison to family effects, and therefore "schools are not an effective agent for the redistribution of societal resources" (Hallinan 1988:255; see also Hanushek 1989). This pessimistic view of schools began to change with the rise of the accountability and standards movement to improve schools (Schneider and Keesler 2007). Reanalysis of earlier studies suggested a more consistently positive relationship between school resources and student achievement (Greenwald, Hedges, and Laine 1996) and found that teacher quality, in particular, was a major input into student learning (see also Murnane 1983).

The renewed focus on schools' impact on learning has not obscured attention to the central conclusion of the Coleman Report that "the social composition of the student body is more highly related to achievement, independent of the student's own social background, than is any school factor" (Coleman 1966:325). Far more than was historically appreciated, estimation of peer effects is challenging (Angrist and Pischke 2008) because of non-random selection and unmeasured confounding variables (e.g., teacher quality) that affect student outcomes. The most per-

cohorts (e.g., of gender or race composition) for the same school and grade (Gould, Lavy, and Pawerman 2009; Hoxby 2000), although these studies have not looked at peer effects related to socioeconomic characteristics. The magnitude of estimated effects is not large (about .15 standard deviations), but it is about the same as some of the most believable estimates of teacher effects, whether for academic, social, or behavioral outcomes (Jennings and DiPrete 2010; Rockoff 2004). Meanwhile, recent studies whose primary estimation strategies control for observable potential confounders have found a similar effect size on test scores (Crosnoe 2009; Rumberger and Palardy 2005).

SCHOOL CONTEXT AND THE GENDER GAP IN EDUCATION

The original focus on school effects developed out of a concern for equality of educational opportunity by social class and race. Now that a growing gender gap in educational attainment has emerged, it is natural to ask whether schools also affect gender inequality, and if so, what are the mechanisms by which this occurs. Starting in the 1970s and early 1980s (Spender 1982; Stanworth 1984), ethnographic studies documented girls' and boys' gendered behavior at school as well as the different ways that teachers treat girls and boys. Although overt discrimination against girls in the classroom has declined over the past three decades, recent studies suggest that boys still verbally dominate the classroom (Jovanovic and King 1998; Sadker and Zittleman 2009).

Resources

UC Berkeley: [Writing for Sociology](#) (also [Princeton University's similar piece](#))

North Carolina State University video-- [Literature Reviews: An Overview...](#)

Everyday Sociology: [How \(and Why\) to Write a Literature Review](#)

UNC Chapel Hill Writing Center: [Literature Reviews](#)

USC Libraries--[Organizing Your Social Sciences Research](#)

And, UC Berkeley Sociology LibGuide [Lit Reviews page!](#)



Questions?



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