Literature review

- What is it?
  - "summarizes and evaluates a body of writings on a specific topic" (Knopf 2006, 127)

- Appears in three contexts
  - a stand-alone literature review
  - in a research project proposal (before you do research)
  - in a research paper (after the research was done)

A LitReview: How to proceed?

(Knopf 2006, 129)

1. Search for the relevant literature and read it
   - first abstracts, then whole papers
2. *What* does each individual study examine?
3. *What* does each individual study conclude?
4. Summarize the collective results
   - What do the readings have in common
   - What do the readings disagree about
   - What do the readings overlook or ignore
5. What is the overall quality of the body of literature?

Examples of LitReviews:

- JANEKOVÁ, Lucia. *Násilie spojené s voľbami*. Online. Bakalářská práce. Brno: Masarykova univerzita, Fakulta sociálních studií. 2022. Dostupné z: https://is.muni.cz/th/acx7d/ [in Slovak]

- MATYÁŠOVÁ, Eva. *Rally 'round the flag effect: Proč mají prezidenti vysokou popularitu v době mezinárodních krizí?*. Online. Bakalářská práce. Brno: Masarykova univerzita, Fakulta sociálních studií. 2022. Dostupné z: https://is.muni.cz/th/p98wx/ [in Czech]

- Hobolt, S. B. and C. E. de Vries (2016). "Public Support for European Integration." *Annual Review of Political Science* 19: 413-432.

- Anything else from Annual Review of Political Science

- Materials, homeworks, class notes from the IREb1008 course or the MVZb1003 course

Which sentence from the pair is more correctly written? (solution is on the last slide)

- Mochťak (2018) draws attention to the fact that electoral violence does not only occur in politically divided countries, but also in economically and culturally divided countries.

- Electoral violence occurs not only in politically but also in economically and culturally divided countries (Mochťak, 2018).

.

- Works addressing the concept of gender within the phenomenon of electoral violence have only recently begun to appear (Bardall, 2011, ... Krause, 2020).

- In *Breaking the Mold: Understanding Gender and Electoral Violence* (2011), the first ever work to explore in depth the relationship between gender and electoral violence, Bardall introduced the concept of gendered electoral violence as well as a new framework for the concept.

- Sisk (2012) does not see ethnic issues as a major cause of conflict, but believes that....

- Ethnic issues are thus not the main cause of conflict but depending on the nature of the social structure [...] ethnic violence should be viewed as a factor (Sisk, 2012).

Researching for and writing (not just) a literature review

Practical tips

How to avoid plagiarism

- Excellent source:
  - https://www.niu.edu/academic-integrity/faculty/committing/examples/index.shtml
  - Belcher pp. 160-163
    - read it carefully at home

How to avoid plagiarism

- Selected issues of you should NOT do:
    - Don't copy text without putting it in ".. " and adding a citation (citation = a reference to the original work)
    - Don't copy a text and change few words. It's still plagiarism even if you add a citation.
    - Do not copy ideas without adding a citation where they come from
    - Don't use graphs or figures without a proper citation
    - ….
- Mark the quotation marks and source right at the beginning (don't rely on "I will add the quotation marks later...")
- Avoid working on things under pressure at the last moment

Searching for literature

- Google Scholar is a good searching tool (alternatively: the Web of Science)
  - https://library.fss.muni.cz/eresources.html#header16-a6
    - info on remote access
    - citation software
  - Utilize the citation network of a key reading
  - To begin: read review articles, book reviews, article abstracts → make a selection for in-depth reading
    - Belcher pp. 144-149
- Take careful notes (careful about plagiarism)
- Don't wait too long before you write (or you will forget what you learned)

Searching for literature

- Go to Google Scholar and search among academic works from year 2010 onwards for the following *exact phrase*
  - *election violence*
- What article is at the top of your search?
  - Take this article and examine the list of academic works *that cite this article.* What is the first article at the top of this list?
- Do the same thing in the Web of Science but this time search for the phrase in abstracts:
  - FSS library web → E-resources → List of e-resources → Web of Science
  - Select *Abstract* in the drop-down menu, then write "election violence" in the search box (write it with the quotation marks so that the search engine treats it like a phrase)

Note: I don't know the intricate details of how Google works. But I suspect that each of us may have different results based on what we have searched for on Google in the past

What to do if there is no literature exactly on my topic?

- If stand-alone LitReview - make your topic more general and start all over

- A research paper, example topic: *negotiations between Taliban and the U.S. after 8/2021*
  - Can't find literature exactly on this topic
  - → move one level up in generality and look for literature
    - look for literature on Taliban-U.S. negotiations prior to 8/2021
    - + look for literature on negotiations between extremist organizations and democratic governments and/or foreign actors
    - if still can't find anything (which I doubt), look for literature on *negotiations* between adversaries

- When writing your literature review...
- **Add a paragraph that will explain to the reader what kind of sources are the basis for your literature review.**
  - Typically, it will be academic journal articles, academic books, book chapters. Sometimes also dissertations or studies published by think tanks. But really the articles and books are the core of any literature review
- **And** briefly **how you searched for them**:
  - What search engine/database you used (Google Scholar, Web of Science,..), what key words,... Search in search databases is typically followed by snowball sampling (= finding other articles through citations in the articles that you found in the database search)
- Typically, somewhere in the second half of the introduction is a good place where to put such a paragraph.

Solution to the example sentences comparing draft and final draft of Lucia Janekova's literature review

- Blue: the **second** sentence is the more correct way of writing a literature review

- Purple: the **first** sentence is the more correct way of writing a literature review

- Green: the **second** sentence is the more correct way of writing a literature review