



The Literature Review

A few quick steps to understand and do your own review

Joseph Szewczyk
for University of the People

Literature Review

What is it?

- It is a gathering of research on your subject from printed sources
- It is an analysis much like the critical reading questions from Cumbria University
- It is on the relevant literature from the experts on the item you are researching
- It is you engaging with the material and saying what came before you

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What is it not?

- It is not a copy and paste of great bits of quotations
- It is not merely giving a summary of what you've read
- It is not void of all input from you
- It is not random things from studies that do not fit

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What is the first step?

- The first step in any literature review is finding your thesis
- After you find your thesis you can then use the library to search for the relevant literature in your area
- Example: If my thesis is, 'The Rolling Stones stayed together for so long because of group dynamics' then my research will be on things about the Rolling Stones or group dynamics



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What's next?

- Once you have your research and your readings, then you will start to discuss the research and how it informs your own paper
- This can be done with one of the following in mind:
 - Analysis
 - Synthesis

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Analysis

- An example of Analysis is found to the right.
- It takes Brian Baker's work on the book, *V for Vendetta* and it runs an analysis with my thesis in mind

V for Vendetta, a story that is, according to Baker (2014), “deeply indebted to Orwell’s imagined future of Britain” (p. 1). The novel itself supports the use of the frames to show movement in time is a key feature. There is, for instance, a movement from a wide time freezing frame to several smaller frames in succession that illustrate movement...

We all know what will soon come for her, but the moment is drawn out as Chad takes his time allowing her stillness feed his compulsion.

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Synthesis

- As some of you may be new to synthesis here is a brief explanation
- **Synthesis**, in one way, works a bridge or discussion between a **thesis** and an **antithesis**
 - A **Thesis**, plainly put is a statement of knowledge. For example "Flies come to life from stained dirty rags sitting in the corner." (This is what many Europeans believed.)
 - An **Antithesis** is a thought that doesn't quite go along with the **Thesis**. For example, "Flies do not come to life from stained dirty rags sitting in the corner".

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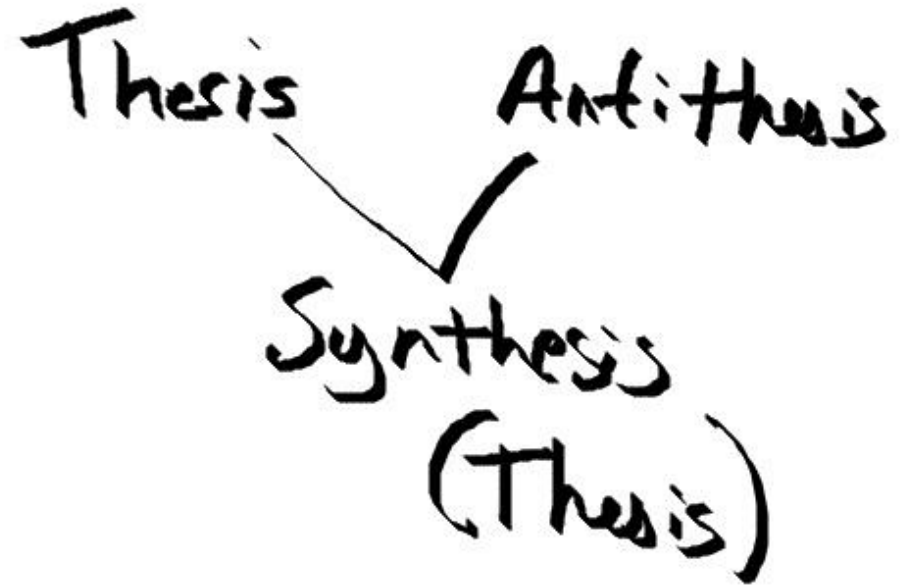
Synthesis

- With that example of **Thesis** and **Antithesis** we now have two statements of knowledge:
 - One says, 'Flies do this thing!'
 - The other says, 'No, flies do not do that!'
- See how they can disagree with each other?
- **Synthesis** can happen with the disagreement
 - Someone (maybe you) looks at the **Thesis** and the **Antithesis** and says, 'I don't think either are exactly right. Maybe flies do come from those rags, but they are coming from something we can't see well like eggs'

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Synthesis

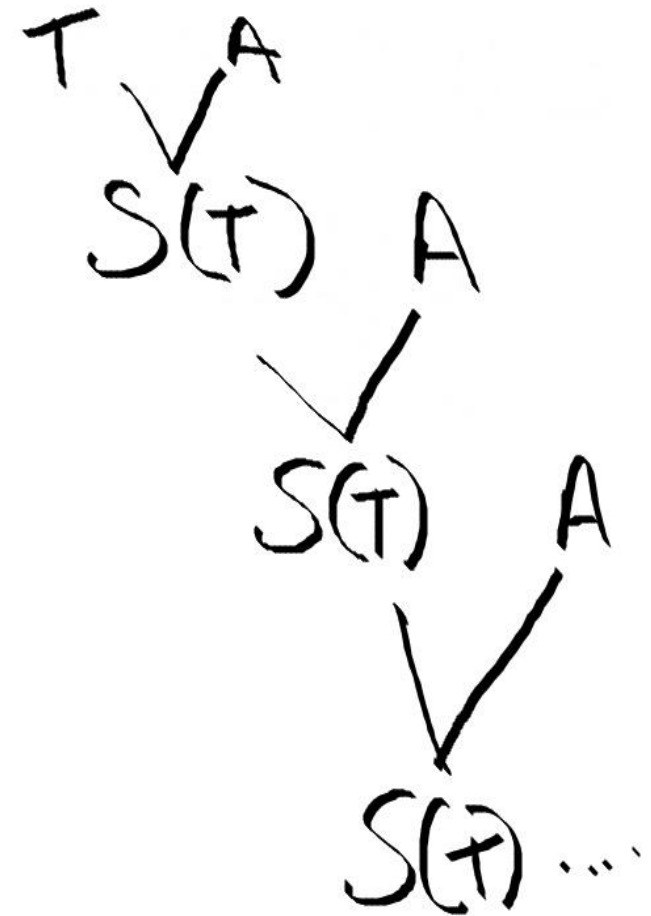
- That act of thinking through a **Thesis** and an **Antithesis** is one way of having **Synthesis** happen. It is really the thought process itself. It also becomes a new **Thesis**.
- See graphic to the right.



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Synthesis

- As you can see **Synthesis** (S) can end up as a new **Thesis** (T)
- The new **Thesis** can then have a new **Antithesis** (A)
- This can then have **Synthesis** (which becomes a new **Thesis**)
- This can go on for a long time
- **Synthesis** is the process in which **knowledge moves forward**



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Synthesis

- An example of **Synthesis** is found to the right.
- Demonstrates how a **thesis** (Genette) and an **antithesis** (Mikkonen) can be used to have **synthesis** (my text)

There is one major contention between graphic and verbal text and it comes in the area of focalization. For example, the question Genette (1988, p. 74) raises about 'who sees' is sometimes answered in graphic text as 'nobody at all' as demonstrated by Mikkonen (2012, p. 75). It is because of this that there are, at times, places where the graphic is at odds with the verbal, for instance my use of parallel text discussed in the section below about "It's Just a Taste".

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For more information

- If you want more information on how to ease into a Literature Review, try looking at OWL Purdue's Annotated Bibliography section: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/>
- For a decent APA paper sample that includes a Literature Review, you can look at OWL Purdue's sample here: https://owl.english.purdue.edu/media/pdf/20090212013008_560.pdf