



WRITING ABSTRACTS

Prof. Melanie McKie
March 21, 2017



What is an Abstract?

- Summary (usually a paragraph) of your research
- Discipline-specific
- Reflection of key words and ideas from the research

Although abstracts may vary because of discipline, most abstracts include

- A full citation of the source before the abstract
- The same type and style of language found in the paper.
- Key words and phrases that identify the content and focus of the work.
- Clear and concise language.

Key Elements of Abstracts

- Purpose/Problem
- Method
- Results
- Implications

Sample Humanities Abstract

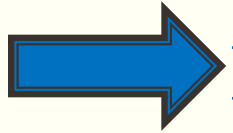
Kenneth Tait Andrews, “Freedom is a constant struggle’: The dynamics and consequences of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement, 1960-1984” Ph.D. State University of New York at Stony Brook, 1997 DAI-A 59/02, p. 620, Aug 1998

This dissertation examines the impacts of social movements through a multi-layered study of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement from its rights and gains in black political power, the desegregation of public schools and the emergence of white-flight academies, and the rise and fall of federal anti-poverty programs. I use two major research strategies: (1) a quantitative analysis of county-level data and (2) three case studies. Data have been collected from archives, interviews, newspapers, and published reports. This dissertation challenges the argument that movements are inconsequential. Some view federal agencies, courts, political parties, or economic elites as the agents driving institutional change, but typically these groups acted in response to the leverage brought to bear by the civil rights movement. The Mississippi movement attempted to forge independent structures for sustaining challenges to local inequities and injustices. By propelling change in an array of local institutions, movement infrastructures had an enduring legacy in Mississippi.

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Purpose/
Problem



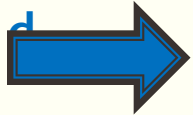
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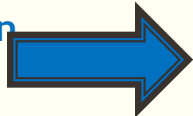
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Conclusion


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Sample Biological Abstract

"The *Listeria monocytogenes* p60 Protein is not Essential for Viability in vitro, but Promotes Virulence in vivo" Author: Sina Mohammedi, 2002 UC Day nominee and runner-up

Intracellular pathogens (agents which infect host cells), such as *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and *Listeria monocytogenes*, cause very high mortality rates in the United States. Therefore, deciphering the mechanisms through which the pathogens cause disease is of great interest. *Listeria* infection of mice is a well-developed model system for studying the fundamentals of host-pathogen interactions. In vitro assays in animal cell cultures have helped show that *Listeria* causes illness by secreting molecules, called virulence factors, to the outside of the bacterial cell in order to affect the host organism. My work involves one such secreted protein, called p60. P60 is an antigen (an agent seen by the host immune system) implicated in regulated bacterial cell wall breakdown. The objective of this study was to examine two questions: first, is p60 essential to the viability of *Listeria*, as previously published? and second, is p60 a virulence factor in *Listeria*? To examine these questions, I constructed a *Listeria* strain lacking p60 (p60-). This new strain displayed no defect in viability. In fact, most standard in vitro pathogenicity assays were normal for p60-. However, when p60- was tested in a mouse (in vivo), a 1000-fold reduction in virulence was observed. This discovery suggests that p60 is indeed a key factor in the disease-causing ability of *Listeria*, but not essential for viability. Future studies will focus on the precise role of p60 in *Listeria* pathogenesis. This work increases our understanding of such diseases as tuberculosis, various food poisonings, and meningitis.

Methods for Writing Abstracts

Reverse Outlining

Identify the purpose of each paragraph

Group the main ideas of each section

Fill in key details about your content

Cut and Paste

Copy the sentences that capture key passages

Revise the sentences into a unified paragraph

Fill in key details about your content

Works Cited

- “Abstracts.” *The Writing Center at UNC-Chapel Hill*, 2017, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/abstracts/>.
- “Processes for Writing Abstracts.” *Writing @CSU/The Writing Studio*, Colorado State University, 2012,
<https://writing.colostate.edu/guides/page.cfm?pageid=1259&guideid=59>.