Grey Literature searching: progress and emerging patterns

Health Libraries Australia,
Professional Development Day 2, workshop 3,
Perth, July 14th 2017

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Part 1 of this Workshop will cover some basics:

What is grey literature (GL)?
Different types and formats;
For and against
Value and recognition
GL searching tips
Theses & Conference papers
Part 2 will cover:

What are some of the arguments for & against including GL in systematic reviews (SRs)?

Selected literature on GL searching for SRs

Documentation (of searching process and results)

Then: Suggested approach to logical and comprehensive GL searching .....
A wealth of knowledge and information is produced by organizations, governments and industry, covering a wide range of subject areas and professional fields, not controlled by commercial publishing.

These publications, data and other materials known as grey literature, are an essential resource in scholarly communication, research, and policy making for business, industry, professional practice, and civil society.

Grey literature is recognized as a key source of evidence, argument, innovation, and understanding in many disciplines including science, engineering, health, social sciences, education, the arts and humanities.
# Types of Grey Literature

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Arguments for GL

Helps to prevent publication bias

Supported (mandated) by:
• Cochrane Collaboration
• Campbell Collaboration
• Joanna Briggs Institute
• Institute of Medicine (U.S.)
Avoiding Publication Bias: Grey Literature Searching

- An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure...
  - Conference proceedings
  - Technical reports (research, governmental agencies)
  - Organization websites
  - Dissertations, theses
  - Contact with primary researchers
# Avoiding Publication Bias: Grey Literature Searching

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Databases</th>
<th>Current Controlled Trials</th>
<th>Index to Theses</th>
<th>PAIS Archive</th>
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<tr>
<td>Australian Education Index</td>
<td>Current Controlled Trials</td>
<td>Index to Theses</td>
<td>PAIS Archive</td>
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<td>Bib of Nordic Criminology</td>
<td>Directory of OA Journals</td>
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<td>British Education Index</td>
<td>Dissertation Abstracts</td>
<td>ISI Conf Proceedings Index</td>
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<td>Canadian Eval Society</td>
<td>DissOnline</td>
<td>LILACS Latin American</td>
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<td>CBCA Education</td>
<td>DrugScope DrugData</td>
<td>NTIS</td>
<td>PsycArticles</td>
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<td>CERUK</td>
<td>EconLit</td>
<td>NCJRS Abstracts Database</td>
<td>PsycEXTRA</td>
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<td>Child Welfare Info Gateway</td>
<td>Educ Research Global</td>
<td>NLM Gateway</td>
<td>Social Care Online</td>
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<td>ClinicalTrials.gov</td>
<td>ERIC</td>
<td>NARCIS</td>
<td>SSRN eLibrary</td>
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<td>CORDIS Library</td>
<td>HINARI</td>
<td>NBBF</td>
<td>Theses Canada</td>
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<td>CRD</td>
<td>HMIC</td>
<td>NY Acad of Med</td>
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<td>CrimDOC</td>
<td>HUD User Database</td>
<td>Open Grey</td>
<td>WHO Trials</td>
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Arguments against GL

• Hard to find (including dark data)
• Messy to document, hard to search consistently
• Takes time and increases workload: is it worth it? (“Searching grey literature: is the effort worth the yield”, McDonagh, 2011)
• Risk of bias
• Not peer-reviewed
• Other?
(Peer) review of govt. publications

External referees
Louise Baur, Jim Bishop, Bill Buckingham, Tanya Chikritzhs, John Deeble, Brian Draper, Michael Farrell, David Filby, John Goss, Alan Hayes, Matthew James, Hal Kendig, Rosemary Knight, George Neale, George Patton, Jack Quinane, Alison Ritter, Michelle Scollho, Andrew Singer, Len Smith, Bernie Towler

The following Australian Government departments and agencies were involved in comprehensive external review of the material:
• Department of Health
• Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
• Department of Social Services
• Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Quality assurance
The report content was largely prepared by AIHW staff, and was subject to a rigorous internal review and clearance process. Additional external peer reviewers were used to validate and strengthen the content of the report.
Value of GL: subject librarians

What We Learned

Faculty members and graduate students in all disciplines use a number of types of grey literature. The most prevalent types are listed in Table 1, which shows that theses and dissertations are important to over half the departments, as are conference presentations and papers. Ten additional types of grey literature are significant to at least two departments, with datasets being important to six.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Grey Literature</th>
<th>No. of Departments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference presentations and papers</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theses and dissertations</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>Datasets</td>
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<td>Technical/research reports</td>
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<td>Government publications</td>
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<td>Preprints</td>
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</table>

Learning About Grey Literature By Interviewing Subject Librarians

By Pat Sulouff, Suzanne Bell, Judi Briden, Stephanie Frontz, and Ann Marshall
Health librarians and Grey Literature: what do we need to know?

Tyndall, Jessica

URI: http://hdl.handle.net/2328/34991
Date: 2014-10-01

Description:
Cite as: Tyndall, Jess, Health librarians and grey literature: what do we need to know?, Invited lecture presentation and notes. Presented Royal Melbourne Hospital, July 15 2014 and Royal Adelaide Hospital, September 25 2014.

Files in this item

- Name: Tyndall_Health_20 ...
  Size: 21.09Mb
  Format: PDF
  Description: Presentation

This item appears in the following Collection(s)
- Flinders Open Access Research
- Staff Publications
  Publications produced in relation to professional staff activities.
Search translation

• A process by which you run your search in a number of different databases, whilst maintaining as closely as possible, the integrity of the terms.

• E.g. Medline to CINAHL: replace MESH terms with the equivalent descriptors in CINAHL, and use CINAHL’s syntax to ensure your keywords work.
Search translation (into grey)

• Instead of exchanging subject headings, searching across a number of grey resources usually means:
• Stripping back your search to core concepts
• Simplifying to keywords only
• Minimising the number of terms
• Reducing or removing Boolean operators
Try “sit stand desks” AND evidence rather than …..
GL searches need to be simple
a) Finding Theses

- EThOS: Electronic Theses Online Service
- ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (PQDT)
- Center for Research Libraries
- Global Resources Network
- Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (NDLTD)
- Theses Canada
A systematic review of treatments used with adolescents who sexually offend
by Burbach, Kate M., M.S.W., California State University, Long Beach, 2012, 59; 1517592

Abstract (Summary)
The purpose of this study was to perform a systematic review of the literature on the efficacy of
current treatments implemented with adolescents who sexually offend. Extensive electronic and
manual searches were conducted. Only studies consisting of empirical data, a comparison group, a
minimum of 30 participants, and were published between 2000 and 2011 were eligible. Seven studies
were found permissible for review. The review revealed that available research addressing treatment
effectiveness is extremely limited. The most commonly implemented treatments found to be used
with the adolescent sexually offending population were Multisystemic Therapy and Offense
Specific/Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. The models proved to be effective in addressing different
behaviors and cognitions that were specific to the individual study. Follow-up reports showed that the
target population sexually recidivated in small percentages and criminally recidivated in larger
percentages. Policy implications for sex offender registry and implications for social work practice
are discussed.
A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF TREATMENTS USED WITH ADOLESCENTS WHO SEXUALLY OFFEND

A THESIS

Presented to the School of Social Work

California State University, Long Beach

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Social Work
Indirect pulp treatment versus formocresol pulpotomy in human primary molars: A randomized controlled trial

by Roberts, John David, M.S., The Texas A&M University System Health Science Center, 2009, 50; 1462151

Abstract (Summary)

Purpose. This prospective study compared indirect pulp treatment (IPT) with formocresol pulpotomy (FP) in large carious lesions in primary molars. Methods. Selection criteria: pairs of asymptomatic, contralateral primary molars treatment planned for FP. Teeth were randomized to receive either FP or IPT. Eighteen patients (26 pairs of teeth) were followed clinically and radiographically for ≥1 year. Two blinded examiners evaluated and scored radiographs. Results. No clinical pathology was observed at ≥1 year. Radiographic findings included: no change in 21 IPT and 13 FP teeth; calcific metamorphosis in 3 IPT and 4 FP teeth; pathologic changes requiring extraction in 1 IPT and 6 FP teeth; extraction required in 1 IPT and 3 FP teeth. Median radiographic score was higher for FP (1.5) than IPT (1), indicating significantly more radiographic changes in FP (p=0.003). Conclusions. IPT is an acceptable alternative to FP in primary molars with large carious lesions at ≥1 year.
Activity: Dissertations

• Choose 1 or more of the Theses collections listed on the next slide
• Search for a topic of your choice AND “grey literature”
• Have a look to see how GL is treated.
• This may include databases searched, organisations and websites searched, search terms used, how (or if) it was documented etc.
• Distinctions which may contradict like “we searched academic and grey literature”
PQDT Open http://pqdtopen.proquest.com/
NDLTD http://www.ndltd.org/
Theses Canada
http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/thesescanada/index-e.html
EThOS http://ethos.bl.uk/Home.do
DART-Europe http://www.dart-europe.eu/basic-search.php
National ETD Portal South Africa http://www.netd.ac.za/
Open Access Theses and Dissertations https://oatd.org/
Centre for Research Libraries. Global Resources Network http://catalog.crl.edu/search~S4
b) Conference papers

- Have value in their own right
- Not always peer-reviewed
- Information is available without 6-18 month delay
- Disseminates work in progress
- Reports of R & D that has taken place
- Enables connection with other researchers
Some Databases index conference proceedings

- **ISI Web of Science** (choose Conference Proceedings Citation Index: Science or Conference Proceedings Citation Index: Social Science & Humanities)
- **Scopus** (choose document type: Conference paper)
- **Sociological Abstracts** (choose Conference papers & proceedings in **Advanced Search: Source Type**
Past National Rural Health Conferences

The National Rural Health Conference is the largest regular public event on the agenda of those interested in improving health and wellbeing in rural and remote Australia. The biennial Conference is the NRHA's biggest project, it is a key element of its core business and sets much of the agenda for the Alliance's work for each two-year period. It has become a key part of the agenda-forming process for the rural and remote health sector as a whole. Below is a list of all 13 past National Rural Health Conferences and a link to their proceedings.

14th National Rural Health Conference
A World of Rural Health
26-29 April 2017, Cairns, QLD

13th National Rural Health Conference
People Places Possibilities...
24-27 May 2015, Darwin, NT

12th National Rural Health Conference
Strong commitment, bright future.
7-10 April 2013, Adelaide, SA
Welcome to the Indigenous HeartInfoNet web resource - for people working, studying or interested in the cardiovascular health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We aim to provide quality information and resources about how to prevent and manage cardiovascular disease (CVD) among Indigenous peoples.

This web resource also supports an Indigenous cardiovascular yarning place (called the HeartInfoNetwork) by providing electronic services that encourage information sharing and collaboration among the full range of health professionals and others involved in Indigenous cardiovascular health.
Explore the British Library

Main catalogue
"community gardens"

Everything in this catalogue

Advanced search
Community Gardens: Strengthening Neighborhoods from the Ground Up
Bissell, J.M.

Community Gardens - Local Waste Solutions for Urban Areas
Broady, J.; Hunt, R.
; Australian waste conference; Towards sustainability, Enviro 2000; Sydney, Australia, 2000; Apr, 0, 164 -- Australian Water Association; 2000 -- 2000
Featured Supplement: International Workshop - Development of a National Diabetes Surveillance System in Germany

Meeting abstracts from the International Workshop to Diabetes Surveillance

Held in Berlin, Germany on 11-12 July, 2016.

Edited by Andrea Teti.

Read more

Aims and scope

*BMC Proceedings* is an online, open access journal publishing proceedings of conferences across all scientific and clinical disciplines, including peer-reviewed full-length articles, collections of abstracts and meeting reports. Devoted specifically to conference publications, including large collections of articles, meetings of specialized interest and conferences of a cross- or multi-disciplinary nature, each collection is published as a supplement.
Activity: conference paper, poster or presentation

• Similar to your dissertation search but this time you are free to target organisations, directories, databases or search wherever you like.
• Your search should still include “grey literature” if possible.
• Note any difficulties or challenges.
• Were you able to get full-text of the paper you selected?
Figure 1. Flowchart showing search and analysis stages.
Escoffery, 2014

Figure 1 Flow diagram of study selection flow chart.
Systematic Review Searching: Grey Literature

Jess Tyndall, Flinders University
jessica.tyndall@flinders.edu.au

Day 3, December 9th, Australian Evidence Based Practice Librarians’ Institute, Adelaide, 2016
GL Searching approach

1. Scoping search for key SRs on the topic
2. Black databases (may include GL)
3. Grey databases (studies/trials, theses, conference papers etc.)
4. Key Organisation/Professional Association/Govt. websites and authors
5. Google Advanced/Google Scholar
Selected literature


• “our searching sacrificed specificity for sensitivity”
• Valued GL for reducing impact of publication bias; believed GL provided context on how, why and in whom complex public health interventions are effective; gave a bigger picture
• Searched databases (grey and black), relevant websites, contacted relevant experts
• Used Google
• Used social media, tweeted requests for information and asked others to re-post, sent to email lists

- Searched Google and Yahoo
- Explored influence of inclusion of GL on outcomes, effect sizes (no difference)
- Of 48 included sources 6 were grey (12.5%)
- 83.3% of the GL could’ve been identified by searching only for theses and dissertations
- Quality of published and unpublished studies were comparable

- Uses Google Scholar (notes can’t directly export results) as a “powerful addition to other traditional search methods”. Stops at first 200-300 title results.
- A general Google Scholar search “failed to find GL from a case study that involved manual searching of organisations’ websites”. Specific title searching identified the majority.
- Detailed comparison of Google Scholar and WOS searching and results
- Considerable effort is required to find GL in attempt to include “practitioner-held data”

- “Mean time to conduct GL searches was approx. 7 hours, with 50% of searchers reporting less than 1.5 hours spent. This mean time represents 27% of the total time taken to complete the SR search”
- Use of guides like CADTH Grey matters to identify resources
- Time is often spent by searchers “learning search interfaces and the nuances [and limitations] of each resource such as how to download references”
- Attempts to “quantify GL search patterns and associate them with searcher and review characteristics”
1. Scoping for SRs on your topic: Activity

- Go to the Cochrane Library and search for a list of SRs which have used GL. Search “grey literature” in CDSR.
- Choose one.
- Scroll to Methods and find “Search methods for identification of studies”
Interventions for tobacco use cessation in people in treatment for or recovery from substance use disorders (Review)

Adolloni D, Phillips R, Bero L

Searching other resources

We searched the grey literature, including conference abstracts from the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco, World Health Organization, and the ProQuest database of digital dissertations, and all registered trials through the National Institutes of Health’s ClinicalTrials.gov website.
2. Black databases search (to identify key GL sources)

- **CINAHL**: dissertations, conference papers, standards
- **Web of Science**: conference papers, technical and other reports
- **SCOPUS**: trade publications, conference papers (5.5 million)
- **PsycInfo**: dissertations, technical reports
- **Social Services Abstracts**: dissertations
- **SPORTDiscus**: dissertations, conference proceedings
- **Physical Education Index**: trade magazines, patents, reports, conference proceedings
- **Global Health**: reports, patents, theses, conferences
3. Grey databases

- POPLINE
- SOCIAL CARE ONLINE
- SSRN
- OPENGREY
- TOXNET
- TRID
- EthOS
- ELDIS
- LaborDoc
- Prevention Information and Evidence e-Library
Grey Matters: a practical tool for searching health-related grey literature

Grey Matters

CADTH Information Services
November 2015

Grey Matters is an open access tool and may be copied and used for non-commercial purposes, provided that attribution is given to CADTH.
Grey Literature Checklist

Use the drop-down boxes that appear beside each web site in the checklist to indicate one of the following:

- searched; nothing found
- not searched; not relevant
- searched; results found
- results may be of peripheral interest.

Include the search terms that were used in your search:  

Health Technology Assessment (HTA) Agencies

CANADA

PLEASE SELECT

The Alberta College of Family Physicians (ACFP). Tools for Practice
http://www.acfp.ca/WhatWeDo/ToolsforPractice.aspx
Filter by "year" or "category" using options in the left-hand menu.
[Language: English]

PLEASE SELECT

Alberta Health and Wellness. Decision Process provincial reviews – ongoing and complete
http://www.health.alberta.ca/initiatives/AHTDP-reviews.html
Scroll down to view list of completed reports or use the keyword search box in top right corner.
[Language: English]

PLEASE SELECT

Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH).
Search
https://www.cadth.ca/search?keywords
Can limit by product line, result type, publication date, etc. in the bar at the left side of the page. Includes projects in progress as well as completed projects.
[Languages: English, French]
Interventions for tobacco use cessation in people in treatment for or recovery from substance use disorders (Review)

Apollonio D, Philippas R, Bero L

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