

# Introducing Grey Literature...

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# Definitions of “grey literature”

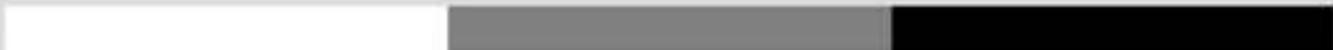
- "information produced on all levels of government, academia, business and industry in electronic and print formats not controlled by commercial publishing" ie. *where publishing is not the primary activity of the producing body.*" (ICGL Luxembourg definition, 1997 - Expanded in New York, 2004)
- "...body of materials that cannot be found easily through conventional channels such as publishers, "but which is frequently original and usually recent" *Wikipedia*
- "the information and resources that do not categorically fall into what is available via standard traditional or commercial publishing channels." *International Journal on Grey Literature*

# What does grey literature include?

- Theses and Dissertations
- Conference Proceedings
- Newsletters
- Reports
- Government Documents
- Informal Communication (telephone calls, meetings)
- Translations
- Census, economic and other data sources
- Conference proceedings and abstracts
- Research reports (completed and uncompleted)
- Technical reports
- Videos
- Clinical Trials/
- Clinical Guidelines

# “Between the extremes of black and white”

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- published journals

- books

- professional  
society conference  
proceedings

- preprints

- e-prints

- technical reports

- lectures

- numeric data sets

- audio/visual media

- blogs

- fora, etc.

- ideas

- concepts

- thought

Grey = Deep

# Differences between grey and published literature

	<b>Grey literature (hard to find)</b>	<b>Published literature (easier to find)</b>
<b># of documents Being published</b>	Increasing at exponential rate	Increasing, but at a more Measured pace
<b>Speed of production</b>	Instant, due to ease of self publishing on the Internet	Slower, due to costs and Editing process
<b>Cost</b>	Low (in most cases), free	High, increasing all the time
<b>Access</b>	Open, immediate, free (in Most cases)	Locked, gated access, \$\$\$
<b>Quality</b>	Highly variable	Excellent, edited, peer reviewed
<b>Findability</b>	Improving	Generally stable
<b>Archiving</b>	Problematic due to volume, format	Problematic due to legal restrictions space problems, selection
<b>Impact on libraries</b>	Traditional roles Opportunities for new Services & roles for librarians	Problematic due to legal restrictions, licensing issues
<b>Role of publishers</b>	Not much but who knows?	Commercial interests

# Importance and Impact of Grey Literature

Although not considered to be a scholarly form of publication, grey literature is produced by experts in the field, and “serves scholars and lay readers alike with research summaries, facts, statistics, and other data that offer a more comprehensive view of the topic of interest.”

- Outten, C. *Gray Literature*. 2008.
- Interest in grey literature has grown, impacting a number of areas, including:
  - Distance education
  - Accessing information instantaneously

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# Why Grey Literature in Healthcare?

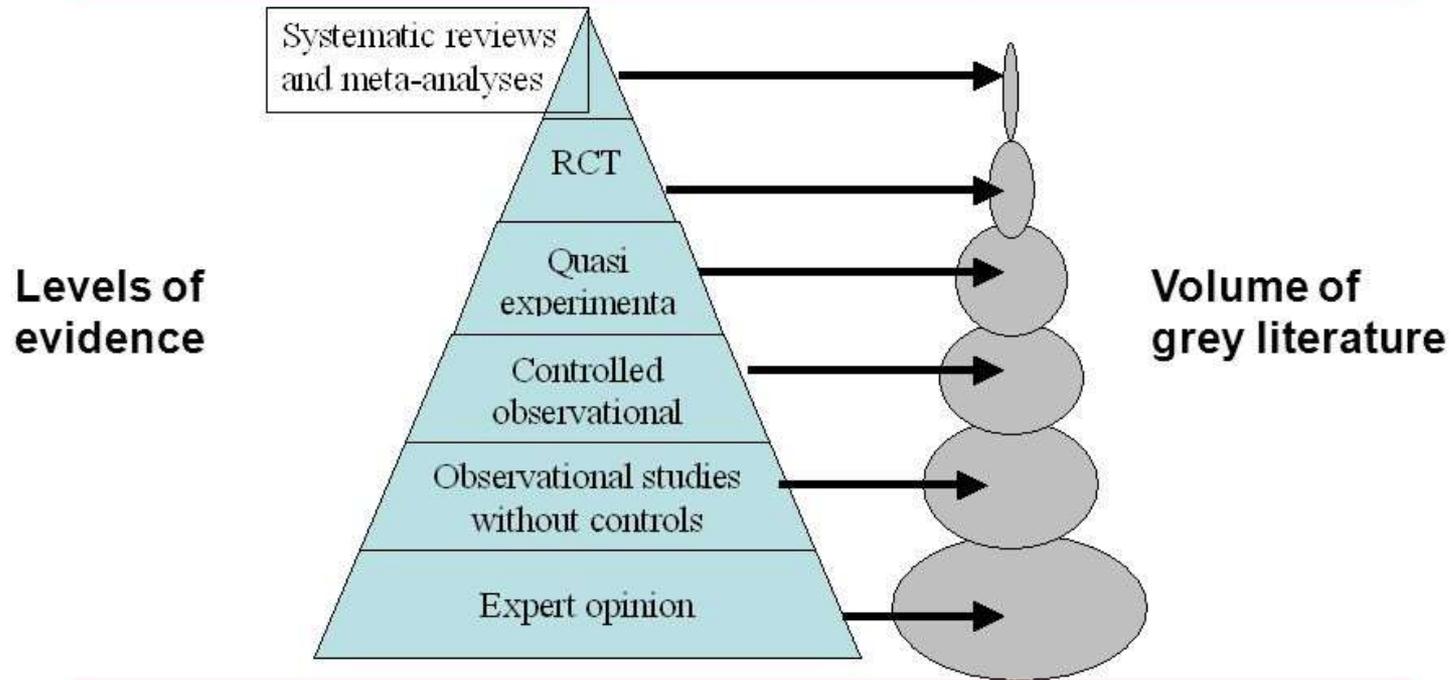
**“Published trials tend to be larger and show an overall greater treatment effect than grey trials. This has important implication for reviewers who need to ensure they identify grey trials, in order to minimize the risk of introducing bias to their review.”**

From: Hopewell S, McDonald S, Clarke M, & Egger M. (2007) Grey literature in meta-analyses of randomized trials of health care interventions. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews*,

- It can provide very current perspectives
- Complements or fills in gaps of traditional publishers
- Unconventional formats

**"In a world in which free trade and instantaneous communication have eliminated many of the barriers to information flow, grey literature is gaining greater importance as a source of information for much of the world's population (Weintraub)."**

# Levels of evidence & volume of grey literature



UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

<http://slideplayer.us/slide/4144>

# Finding Grey literature

Traditionally..... It's been hard to find....

- Difficulties in classifying and cataloguing
- Difficulties in storage
- Short print runs leading to lack of availability

But new trends are making it easier..

- Open access publishing
- Search engines
- Collaborative writing
- Publishing via wikis and blogs



# New sources of grey literature

- ❑ e-prints, preprints
- ❑ emails
- ❑ Web 2.0 communication
- ❑ Blogs, wikis, blikis
- ❑ listserv archives
- ❑ digital libraries
- ❑ spatial data (ie. Google Earth)
- ❑ meta-searching, federated searching, portals
- ❑ databases of ongoing research
- ❑ electronic networks
- ❑ images, maps



# How to Find Grey Literature in Health

- ❑ Database searching (including specialized databases and search portals)
- ❑ Searching in obscure or small library catalogues
- ❑ Hand-searching of journals
- ❑ Personal communication (i.e. telephone, email,
- ❑ Scanning reference lists, bibliographies and academic CV's
- ❑ Googling (Google, Google Scholar)
- ❑ Other search engines
- ❑ Blogsearch, podsearch, specialized directories



# Where can I find grey literature?

- Theses and dissertations
- Local and national Government sites
- International organisations
- NGOs
- Universities/colleges
- Professional organisations
- Libraries, museums, archives
- Think tanks/policy institutes
- Statistics websites
- Charitable organisations
- Healthcare Databases



# Some sources of grey literature

- **Grey Literature Network Service**

- <http://www.greynet.org>

GreyNet

Grey Literature Network Service

- **OPENGREY System for Information on Grey Literature in Europe**

- <http://www.opengrey.eu/>

- **Grey Literature Report - New York Academy of Medicine**

- <http://www.greylit.org>

- **FADE Library**

- <http://www.fade.nhs.uk/>



- **Biomed**

- <http://www.biomedcentral.com/>

- **BASE - the Bielefeld Academic Search Engine**

- <http://www.base-search.net/>

- [PubMed Central](http://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/)



# Some sources of conference literature

- [Conference Alerts](#) - A searchable database of upcoming academic conferences and a free alerting service.
- [Allconferences.com](#) - A directory focusing on conferences, conventions, trade shows, exhibits, workshops, events and business meetings.
- [Humanities & Social Sciences Online](#) - Lists humanities and social sciences conferences. .
- [ZETOC](#) - Provides access to the British Library's Electronic Table of Contents service, dating back to 1993. The database contains details of about 20 million journal and conference records, with 20,000 current journals and 16,000 conference proceedings added per year.
- [Finding Conference Proceedings](#) – Georgia Tech



# Further resources

- **LibGuide -Lancaster University**
  - <http://lancaster.libguides.com/content.php?pid=302885&sid=2483514>
- **From the Cochrane Handbook**
  - [http://handbook.cochrane.org/chapter\\_6/6\\_2\\_1\\_8\\_grey\\_literature\\_databases.htm](http://handbook.cochrane.org/chapter_6/6_2_1_8_grey_literature_databases.htm)
- **Resources for searching the Grey Literature -Duke University**
  - <http://guides.mclibrary.duke.edu/greyliterature>
- **Benzies, K.M.** et al (2006), State-of-the-evidence reviews: advantages and challenges of including grey literature. *Worldviews on Evidence-Based Nursing*, 3(2), 55-61

**Finding the Hard to Find: Searching for Grey Literature (2012 update)**

Dean Giustini, UBC Biomedical Librarian

[http://wiki.slais.ubc.ca/images/5/5b/Greylit\\_manual\\_2012.doc](http://wiki.slais.ubc.ca/images/5/5b/Greylit_manual_2012.doc)

# Further resources

- **Coad, J.** (2006), Searching for and using grey literature, *Nursing Times*, 102(50),35-36
- **Citrome, L.** (2014, Communication of Clinical Trial: Beyond PubMed: Searching the "Grey Literature" for Clinical Trial Results. *Innovations in Clinical Neuroscience*,. 11(7-8), 42-6
- **Olson, C. A.** (2013) Using the grey literature to enhance research and practice in continuing education for health professionals. *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions* 33(1),1-3

**Hopewell, S. et al** (2007) Grey literature in meta-analyses of randomized trials of health care interventions. *The Cochrane Library*

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/14651858.MR000010.pub3/pdf/>