



# Capturing Academic Grey Literature: Starting at Home

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Raise your hand.....

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If you like grey literature



# The Academic Environment

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- Fueled by peer-reviewed literature
- Traditional / Conservative

but.....

- Among the first to want to 'catalog the web'
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# Driving Forces

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- Past job experience
  - Reference interactions
  - GL '99
  - Institutional / External pressure
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# Definition

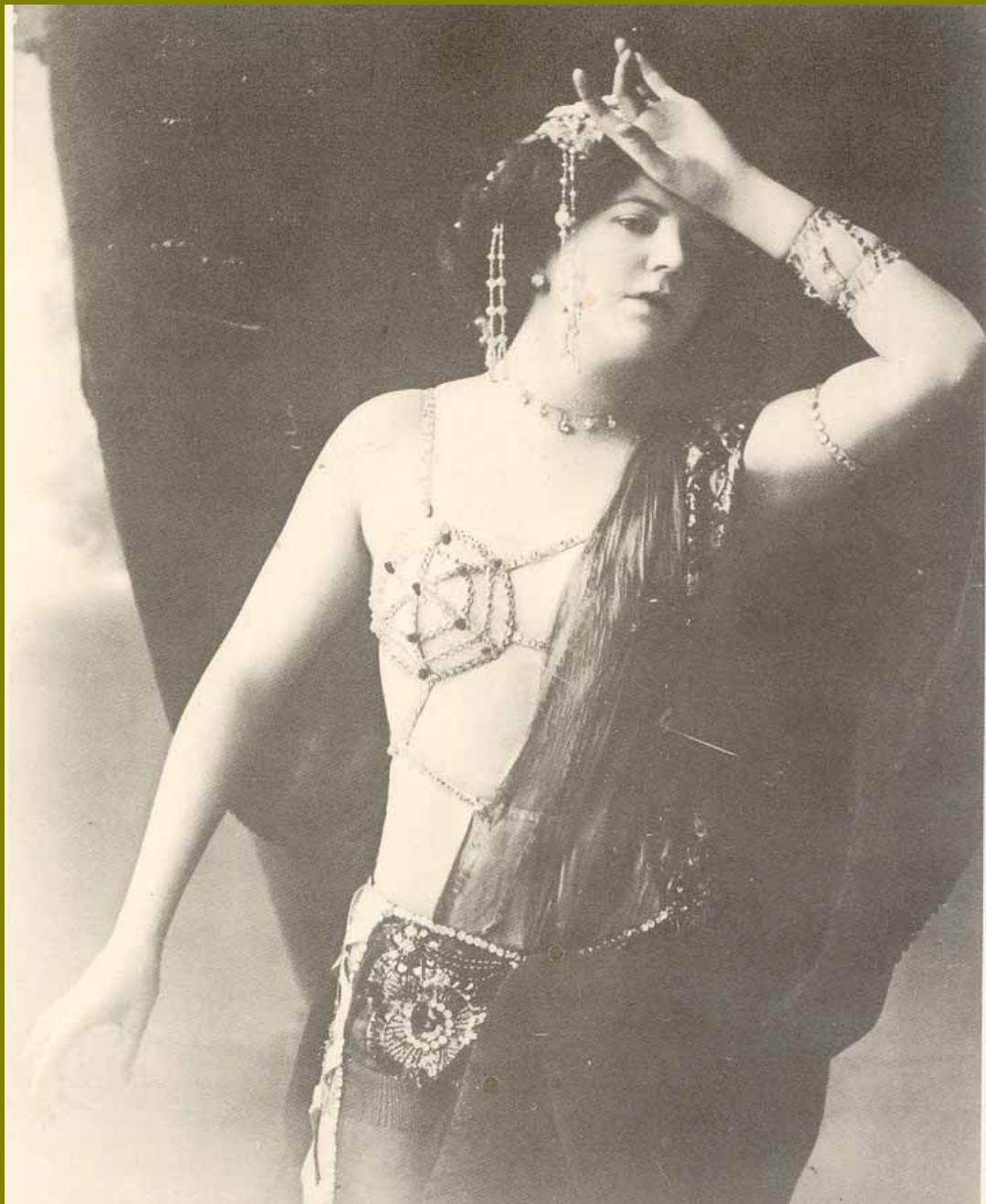
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- ***“...that which is produced on all levels of government, academics, business and industry in print and electronic formats, but which is not controlled by commercial publishers”.***
  - --GreyNet 1997
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# Broad Definition Includes:

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- Government Documents
  - Conference Proceedings
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  - :
  - :
  - Lunch menus
  - Handwritten notes
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# Strategies for Overcoming Obstacles

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- Re-define, as needed
  - Stay calm
  - Do not point out contradictions
  - Get a grant
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# Purpose of Study

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- To explore the extent to which scholarly grey literature is produced on our campus
  - To discover the sources and the subjects of this literature
  - To assess how well this literature has been incorporated into the library's holdings
  - To evaluate the need for, and if necessary, to make, recommendations on changes in collection development practice
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# Narrowed definition for this study

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- Produced by PSU faculty or staff
  - Scholarly in nature
  - Intended for an audience beyond the university
  - Not ephemeral
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# Methodology: Part 1

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- Created Survey
  - Administered via subject liaisons
  - Collected and compiled results
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# Methodology: Part 2

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- Ran searches on back-end of OPAC for author, corporate author, publisher, imprint = PSU
  - Eliminated all material that did not meet criteria
  - Analyzed output for producing entity and for subject area
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# Results, Part I - Survey

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- Surveys distributed: 60
  - Surveys returned: 26
  - Percent response: 43%
  - Overall attitude of respondents: positive towards cooperation
  - Documents reported: >265
  - Percent already held in library collection: estimated at 16.5%
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# Results, Part 2 – Catalog Analysis

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- 242 documents in current collection
  - 68% produced by Centers and Institutes
  - 61% fall into social science categories,
  - All discipline areas represented to some extent
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# Result of Set Comparison

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- Over 200 items reported that were not owned by the library
  - Over 200 items found in the collection that were not reported on the surveys
  - Overlap was less than 20%
  - Items in collection not reported on surveys tended to be older and no longer available
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# Questions asked to Colleagues

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- Is this literature valued enough to make the effort to collect, catalog, and process it?
  - If we don't capture it, who will?
  - If we choose to capture it, what mechanisms need to be in place?
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# Resulting Changes

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- Re-defined “grey literature” in a contextually appropriate way
  - Re-defined liaison roles of subject librarians
  - Formal changes in library’s collection development policy?
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# New definition....

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- *"that which is produced on all levels of government, academics, business and industry in print and electronic formats, but which is not controlled by commercial publishers".*
  - PLUS *that which is published in limited quantities but intended for public distribution*
  - Grey literature is different from archives
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# Contextual Example:

## My university library

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- Already a regional Federal depository
  - Mission of university is not industry focused
  - University Archives not within stated mission
  - Theses/Dissertations are already covered in CD policy
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# However.....

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- Units on campus (departments, centers, institutes, programs) DO occasionally publish reports
  - These were not being systematically collected
  - Ergo: Policy adjustment is needed
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# Addendum to Library's CD Policy

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- V. Institutional Scholarly Grey Literature
  - It is within the mission of the library to capture, preserve, and make available the scholarly output of the institution. To this end, the library will attempt to acquire technical reports and other scholarly publications produced by PSU Departments, Programs, Centers, and Institutes. These materials will be cataloged and added to the collection, whether in print, electronic, or both. Criteria for selection is as follows:
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# Library's CD Policy Change, *cont'd*

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- Authorship: The primary author(s) should be PSU faculty or staff
  - Content: The content should be such that a person doing scholarly research might choose to cite the work
  - Publication: The item would generally not be published commercially, but would have been produced in a quantity intended for limited external distribution.
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# Library's CD Policy Change, *cont'd*

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- Examples: Technical reports, reports of studies, conference papers that have been published in full proceedings of meetings, but which the library may not have acquired.
  - Examples of what NOT to collect: Materials of an ephemeral nature (e.g. brochures, newsletters, administrative notes or memos, workshop notes, course schedules, etc.); materials written by students or interns.
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# Outcomes

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- Internal political hurdle has been surmounted
  - Framework for acquisition and cataloging now exists
  - Poised to consider community-based grey literature collections that may be appropriate to mission of the university
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Thank You

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Questions?