

Moving to digital collections for grey literature: investigating the landscape and establishing a plan

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The CAMH Library is facing a move to a smaller space in approximately 5 years and must deal with a huge collection of government and agency documents. In addition to this, many CAMH corporate “born digital” reports have not been archived or itemized. Fortunately, the CAMH library has attempted to collect most reports but in the online environment, a stable digital repository is preferred. The library also continues to collect grey literature from other organizations, which is challenging in the digital environment. The goal is to either establish a CAMH repository or find a host repository for CAMH corporate publications. Another goal is to find stable links in catalogue records for many important non CAMH documents, both archival and current. The paper will summarize information gathered through surveys and interviews, results of a search for repositories that hold valuable grey literature collected over the years, and progress made in developing policy and plans for moving ahead.

As SALIS embarks on its digitization project to preserve the alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) literature, it is time to contemplate the future of our individual collections. We must take into consideration both how to preserve the older grey literature reports and keep on top of collecting new reports, primarily born digital. Grey literature is a very important component of the ATOD literature, complementing the research

literature and traditional text books by focusing more on how governments and the public sector plan for, deal with, and assess the effects of drug use on society.

The Landscape

The CAMH Library is facing a move to a smaller space in approximately five years and must deal with carefully weeding a huge collection of government and agency

documents. In addition to this, many CAMH corporate ‘born digital’ reports have not been archived or itemized. Recently, the CAMH internet site moved to another platform and many documents were removed in the process. This was a wake up call for us that we had to be sure to offer stable links so our internal and external users can continue to be able to readily access valuable older CAMH documents. Fortunately, the CAMH library has attempted to collect print copies of most reports, but it is preferable to offer online access to this literature through stable links.

The library also continues to collect grey literature from other organizations. It is challenging in the digital environment, as there seems to be an exponential growth of documents, fewer publication checklists, and more information in other formats.

Another consideration is the popularity of federated search. This has raised awareness of the value of libraries’ ‘traditional’ holdings, often a neglected source for research in our times, when everyone seems to want one-stop shopping. So, we can’t let our collections slide! Although premature at this point, the CAMH Library is looking into implementing federated search capability.

Goals

We were fortunate to have a library school student work with us to explore the landscape and offer some recommendations. The scope of the project was twofold:

1. Investigate options for CAMH documents. Should we establish a CAMH repository, and if so, how? This requires investigating and deciding on a platform and requires corporate buy-in. Or, should we find a trusted host repository?
2. Investigate options for collecting non-CAMH documents, which so far we have been printing out ourselves when they aren’t distributed in print (increasingly the case). It is preferred to move towards virtual collections, providing stable links through the catalog record.



Steps and Findings

Through a literature review, it was found that there is very little on the ‘how to’ for creating repositories. The focus is on university repositories which primarily include theses, research papers submitted by faculty, and research data. The University of Toronto repository, TSpace, is not an option for CAMH to use. Only our research staff affiliated with the university can deposit their work.

Question	Yes	No	N/A
Does your library collection include grey literature documents?	71.2%	28.8%	–
Do you link catalogue records to external links?	89.2%	8.1%	2.7%
If yes, do you only link to stable repositories?	39.4%	48.5%	12.1%
Do you host documents from outside organizations?	34.4%	65.6%	–

Grey Literature Common Practices Survey
61 Respondents
From SALIS & CanMedLib discussion lists

Olivia conducted a survey of librarians through SALIS-L and CanMedLib, heavily used by Canadian health librarians, to learn practices for handling grey literature documents and links. Most respondents are embedding external links into catalog records. In most cases, these links are not stable, such as a PURL (Permanent URL). Most libraries do not host documents from outside organizations. For those that do, options are providing the documents for internal use only, selecting only documents in the public domain, or requesting permission.

Broken links were noted as a common problem. The very few that managed a repository use DB/Text INMagic, or maintain a custom-made repository.



Through interviews with library colleagues, we learned that Scholars Portal, a program of OCUL (Ontario Council of University Libraries), which has a vast repository of licensed resources and digitized older books, is developing a repository called OZone to host grey literature. It is in its infancy, but is an option to investigate. OZone is TRAC approved. TRAC, standing for Trustworthy Repository Audit and Certification, is accreditation provided by the Center for Research Libraries.

Also, the Ontario Legislative Library manages a repository, OurOntario, <http://www.ourontario.ca>, and already collects many CAMH documents. OurOntario documents are also available through Gallop (see list below), which is Canada-wide. If we decide to manage our own repository, Dataverse, an open source software developed at Harvard University, came highly recommended.

For non-CAMH documents, the field is bigger and more complex. Should we attempt to host non-CAMH documents if a repository is established? This would require seeking permission.

Whatever options we choose, it will require ongoing commitment, changes in practice, and new policy and procedures.

In the meantime, we are learning about existing repositories that will enable us to

weed some of our print reports but keep the catalogue record with an external link. For non-core serials, in some cases we will provide a link to the main page of the series. This will be the case for the *Monitoring the Future* series, which is no longer distributed in print. We have learned that all of the Government of Canada and related agency reports now have a PURL when published. We all are aware that documents residing on a government website often have a short 'shelf life' so it is good to know there is a stable alternative.

Here are a few repositories we have uncovered. There are probably many more to discover!

Ontario: Scholars Portal OZone:
<http://ozone.scholarsportal.info>

Canada: Gallop (Government and Legislative Libraries Online Publications):
<http://aplicportal.ola.org/>

Canadian Government:
<http://publications.gc.ca>

United States Government:
<http://purl.fdlp.gov/docs/index.html>

From the UK:
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk>

And of course, the Internet Archive,
<http://www.archive.org>.

Through investigating, for example, the US government archives, selected NIAAA publications were found.

...and Finally

Obviously there is much work to be done and decisions to be made. In the meantime, we have started storing selected online documents and adding some links to our catalogue. These are baby steps, but a plan is emerging and we have some

recommendations and background information to get us started.

It was exciting to be at the SALIS conference and to learn of digitization projects at the Rutgers Center of Alcohol Studies Library, in particular the Ralph G. Connor Alcohol Reference Research Files (CARRF). Digitizing historical publications is, of course, on the radar at CAMH too. We have made one small step that was not reported at the conference. We have digitized the reading lists for the 50 Psychiatry Seminars on Alcohol and Drugs that dealt with controversial topics at the time. We will send out an announcement when posted on our website. It is energizing to know that many SALIS members are committed to preserving the past and embracing new technologies to

ensure past, present and future resources are readily available to everyone.

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