



Center for the Study of Information and Religion

2014 Conference on Information and Religion
Paper / Poster Proposal

All proposals must be submitted on this form and emailed as an attachment to csir@kent.edu. Incomplete forms will not be considered.

Form with fields: Last Name of Primary Author (Fehrmann), First Name of Primary Author (Paul), College, University or Other Affiliation (Kent State University), Professional Title (Professor), City, State, Country (Kent, Ohio, USA), Phone Number (330-672-1659), Email Address (pfehrman@kent.edu), Preferred Format (Paper checked, Poster unchecked). Includes a note about format selection.

Note: The "Primary Author" will be main contact for this proposal and will be responsible for sharing information with additional authors. Please use the spaces at the end of this form to indicate additional authors, if appropriate.

Please tell us how you heard about this conference; check as many as apply:

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Proposal

Title of Presentation
Using Rapid Review Methods for Topics in Religion
Presentation Summary (approx. 100 words)
In academia the traditional literature review (TLR) is used to provide a summary look at what has been 'done before'. However, critics point to the potential for biased representation of topics when TLR are used. A large systematic review methods (SR) literature offers evidence that the shortcomings of TLR might be minimized. Moreover, SR methods themselves are evolving; 'rapid reviews' are a new approach for 'picturing the literature' on topics. We report on a 'rapid review' used to 'map the social science literature' on the topic of 'intolerance in religion', and we discuss our experience with the rapid review method.
Research Problem and Research Methods (approx. 250 words)
<p>In all academic disciplines it is common to see authors refer to what is found in 'the literature'; and in many areas the traditional literature review (TLR) is used to provide a summary look at what has been 'done before'. However, among other concerns, critics have pointed to the potential for biased representation of topics when TLR are used. Some have pointed to concerns with potential unconscious or conscious "cherry picking" of publications to support a reviewers viewpoint, or reviewers using an unrepresentative subset of literature, or to the lack of details about the steps taken or key decisions made as TLR are developed. In response, a large systematic review methods (SR) literature in the health and social sciences offers itself as evidence that the shortcomings of TLR might be significantly reduced. Furthermore, SR methods themselves are evolving; for example, 'rapid reviews' are a new approach for those needing to complete initial pictures of what literatures are showing on topics. These are two sample papers on "rapid reviews" as a method:</p> <p>Expediting systematic reviews: methods and implications of rapid reviews - www.implementationscience.com/content/5/1/56</p> <p>Evidence summaries: the evolution of a rapid review approach - www.systematicreviewsjournal.com/content/1/1/10</p> <p>The proposed presentation will present results of a 'rapid review' used to develop a picture of a topic in religion.</p>
Anticipated Results and Significance to Research at the Intersection of Religion and Information (approx. 250 words)
The 'rapid review' that we will complete will provide the basis for 'mapping the social science literature' on the topic of 'intolerance in religion'. Because one of the core characteristics of rapid reviews involves transparently reporting of methods used, this review could provide a 'framework' for additional research on the topic of intolerance, for example readers would have the basis for identifying additional searching that could be used. The 'framework' could also be used as a guide, or start, for updating research. Additionally, by providing a description of the 'rapid review' methods we used, along with comments about our experience, our report will also contribute to discussions of methods for enhancing rigorous, timely, accurate research on topics in religion. The results also have potential for suggesting how readers might have enhanced confidence in the conclusions presented in such research.

Statement of Author's Credentials (approx. 100 words)

The author has been studying systematic review (SR) methods for over 5 years. His sabbatical focus in 2010 was on the use of SR methods for topics in religion and philosophy. He has published on SR methods in one of the top journals for SR methods: Fehrmann, P., & Thomas, J. (2011). Comprehensive computer searches and reporting in systematic reviews. *Research Synthesis Methods*, 2(1), 15-32. He is completing a second article to be submitted to the same journal for consideration. A related paper has been accepted for presentation at the annual midwinter meeting of the Society of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology (APA's Division 24), in Atlanta, GA.

Statement of Intent

By submitting this proposal, I indicate my intention to deliver my presentation at the 2014 Conference on Information and Religion if selected. *(Primary author should sign and date below.)*

Paul Fehrmann	January 15, 2014
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Signature *(may be typed)*

Date

Please provide information on additional authors/presenters in the boxes below.*Co-Author #1*

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