Search Strategy as “Area Triage”

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The Theoretical Method feels good because it delineates an area certain to contain the subject. The problem is that this area is generally far too large to be searched w/the resources available.

The reality of the situation is that often, most of the area which could contain the subject, according to the Theoretical Method, is never searched at all. It does no good to identify a search area that you can’t search.

In emergency care, when faced with mass casualty situations in which there are more patients than care givers, every patient needs help, but resources are insufficient to help every patient. It is therefore necessary to perform triage to determine which patients need help most urgently vs. those who can wait and those who are beyond help. Triage allows rescuers to do the most good with the resources available.

Think of “Search Strategy” as “area triage.” If it is impossible to search all areas, what is needed is a system that helps to identify the best areas.

Searching is full of compromises.

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