

Diversify Your Booklist: Developing Inclusive Citation Practices at NCSU



Project Participants

Project lead: Helen J. Burgess, Associate Prof. of English, NCSU.

Project co-lead: Krystin Gollihue, PhD Candidate, CRDM Program, NCSU.

Booklist coordinator: Joshua Jackson, PhD Candidate, CRDM Program, NCSU.

Symposium organizer: Nick Taylor, Assistant Professor. of Communication, NCSU.

Symposium organizer: Adriana de Souza e Silva, Associate Prof. of Communication, NCSU.

Guest: Kishonna Gray, Assistant Prof. of Social & Behavioral Sciences, Arizona State Univ.

Guest: Larissa Hjorth, Professor of Media & Communication, RMIT University, Melbourne.

Target Areas

1. Enhance the quality of teaching and learning about diversity
2. Enrich the diversity experiences of all students
3. Create a welcoming and inclusive work and learning environment where differences are respected and valued, that offers opportunity for and supports the success of all students, staff and faculty
4. Improve recruitment, retention and graduation of students from historically underrepresented groups

Project Background

Who Gets Cited?

A blog post by the HASTAC scholars Davonica Savonick and Cathy N. Davidson titled “Gender Bias in Academe: An Annotated Bibliography of Important Recent Studies” has collected many examples of the way race and gender influence many arenas in academic life, from who gets hired, to who gets better teaching evaluations, to who gets cited most. This bibliography includes numerous examples of research showing the systemic bias toward male writers as primary citations in all academic fields.

Of particular relevance is a study entitled “The Matilda Effect: female communication scientists cited less frequently,” by Silvia Knobloch-Westerwick and Carroll J. Glynn (2013), which collected data showing that “articles authored by female communication scientists received fewer citations than articles authored by males” (“Gender Bias”). The same bibliography points to other studies that show similar effects across numerous fields, such as “The Gender Citation Gap in International Relations,” by Daniel Maliniak, Ryan Powers, and Barbara F. Walter (2013), and “Gender gap in self-citation practices” by Molly M. King et.al. (2015).

Citational politics, thus, is a call to action. Scholar of gaming and social justice Kishonna Gray, one of the inspirations for this project, asserts that “[a]s academics, we must end the practice of only privileging certain voices while marginalizing others” (“#CiteHerWork”). In response, Gray has launched a hashtag campaign called #CiteHerWork, meant to intervene into what she sees as the ongoing erasure of feminist scholars, queer scholars, and scholars of color from academic discussions -- including, notably, discussions that occur on Twitter. And the compilers of the aforementioned HASTAC bibliography note that their work is only partially done, arguing that intersectionality is itself underrepresented in studies of gender-biased citation, and that “we need conscious efforts to counteract unconscious and unintentional biases based on gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and (dis)ability” (“Gender Bias”).

It should be noted that these calls to action come at a crucial time of transformation in higher education, when scholarly impacts (used in hiring and promotion decisions) are increasingly quantified. Under these conditions, tools such as Academia.edu and Google Scholar Citations make it possible to express article’s impact in terms of ‘clicks’ -- the same metrics used on

social media platforms when memes and selfies go viral (Roelofs and Gallien, 2017). As Roelofs and Gallien point out, some scholars have already begun to ‘game’ these quantified metrics by releasing work that is deliberately inflammatory even as it lacks academic rigor; but they know it will get cited. Roelofs and Gallien further argue that such tactics threaten to exacerbate already-existing inequalities in academia. We would add that such conditions also make it *less* likely that foundational work in media studies, game studies, and the digital humanities -- much of it, work carried out by queer, feminist, and/or scholars of color -- gets cited.

Applying these principles at NCSU: the CRDM PhD program

This issue is of particular importance in graduate education, since it’s precisely at this point that we have the opportunity to “break the chain” and teach graduate students inclusive citational practices before they enter their chosen profession. Early career training that foregrounds the inclusion of multiple voices and perspectives ensures that young scholars do not perpetuate the problem, but rather come to expect inclusive research as a matter of course. Thus, if we are to prepare our graduate students to be ethical professionals, it is our responsibility to both teach inclusive practices and model them in our own work.

“Diversify Your Booklist” is an attempt to draw attention to the issue of inclusive citation, and a way of providing graduate students in the Communication, Rhetoric and Digital Media (CRDM) graduate program with some initial scaffolding to aid in their research. We are in the process of collecting a central bibliography of citations from multiple areas of research that foreground the voices of scholars from underrepresented groups: scholars who are often overlooked in favor of usually white and male “canonical” authors. Over time, these lists will grow and change, as students contribute their own book lists created during the process of studying for comprehensive exams. We also hope that faculty will contribute citations collected during their own research, and also make use of the database when selecting course readings.

Ours is not the first project of this nature: similar activities are taking place in multiple scholarly communities. Crowdsourcing is increasingly becoming a tool for scholarly research: the HASTAC community maintains an open Google Doc to collect an ongoing bibliography of research into gender bias. An example of using crowdsourcing to encourage diverse citations is “Race & medieval studies: a partial bibliography,” a public list initiated by medievalists Julie Orlemanski and Jonathan Hsy, which “solicits references relating to race in medieval studies (including modern appropriations of the medieval past), with an emphasis on minority scholars and perspectives” (“In the Medieval Middle”). Any list of this nature we compile at NCSU will inevitably be “partial,” but it will at least provide a starting point for scholars committed to amplifying the voices of underrepresented scholars.

Funded Activity

What did we fund?

In order to kick-start the project in a way that encourages robust buy-in by the CRDM faculty and student cohort, we used funds from the Diversity Mini-Grant to bring in two scholars to

speak at the CRDM Symposium (March 26-28, 2018). This is the annual symposium we hold for CRDM students to be exposed to research in their field and present their own work in a professional context. This symposium also coincides with our recruitment cohort visit, so that potential CRDM students are able to see “CRDM in action” in a scholarly and social space.

Why the Symposium?

We chose this venue, as opposed to individual visits, to take advantage of a high-attendance cohort audience, and to occur during the coinciding CRDM recruitment visit that is crucial to attracting new students into the program. Thus, sponsoring these two workshops as a core part of the colloquium gives us the opportunity to:

1. ensure close interaction between the visiting scholars and students during an intensive cohort event, when students are most likely to be receptive, and
2. signal to visiting recruits to the program that CRDM both values and more importantly *seeks to implement concrete practices* that foster a community of diverse scholarly and design perspectives.

What were our grant objectives?

Taken collectively, our initiative in citational practices and the guest speakers in this area addressed the following objectives of the Diversity Mini-Grant; namely:

1. *Enhance the quality of teaching and learning about diversity* by exposing students to the issue of citational politics,
2. *Enrich the diversity experiences of students* by encouraging diverse citational practices,
3. *Create a welcoming and inclusive work and learning environment where differences are respected*, by signaling to students that inclusive citation is both valued and expected, and
4. *Improve recruitment, retention and graduation of students from historically underrepresented groups*, by combining our event with the scheduled program recruitment visit for CRDM.

Who did we invite?

Firstly, we invited Dr. Kishonna Gray, author of “Race Gender & Deviance in Xbox Live.” who has written on the issue of more careful and inclusive citation of marginalized voices, and was coiner of the twitter hashtag #CiteherWork. Dr. Gray’s work provides a concrete context for CRDM students to understand why this issue is important, and shows how it is being discussed by scholars in their field. As a junior scholar with an impressive publication record of work that is cited for its rigor as well as its timeliness, Dr. Gray served as a mentor and role model to the audience of PhD students in attendance at the CRDM symposium.

Our second guest scholar was Dr. Larissa Hjorth, who works in the area of gender and mobile media, specializing in the gendered and socio-cultural dimensions of mobile media and play cultures in the Asia-Pacific. Dr. Hjorth brings an international perspective to the issue of inclusion as a global concern: through leading numerous grants and publishing multiple edited

anthologies on topics of mobile media and gender, Hjorth has a unique and invaluable perspective on how citational politics operate across national and regional contexts.

What Happened at the Symposium

Invited Guest Activities

First, we hosted the two invited scholars. Each gave a talk during the symposium, abstracted below. Each scholar also worked one-on-one with several CRDM students, giving them individualized feedback on their current projects.

“Online Gaming Environments as Hybrid Spaces for Identity Development and Community Building” - Kishonna Gray (Arizona State University)

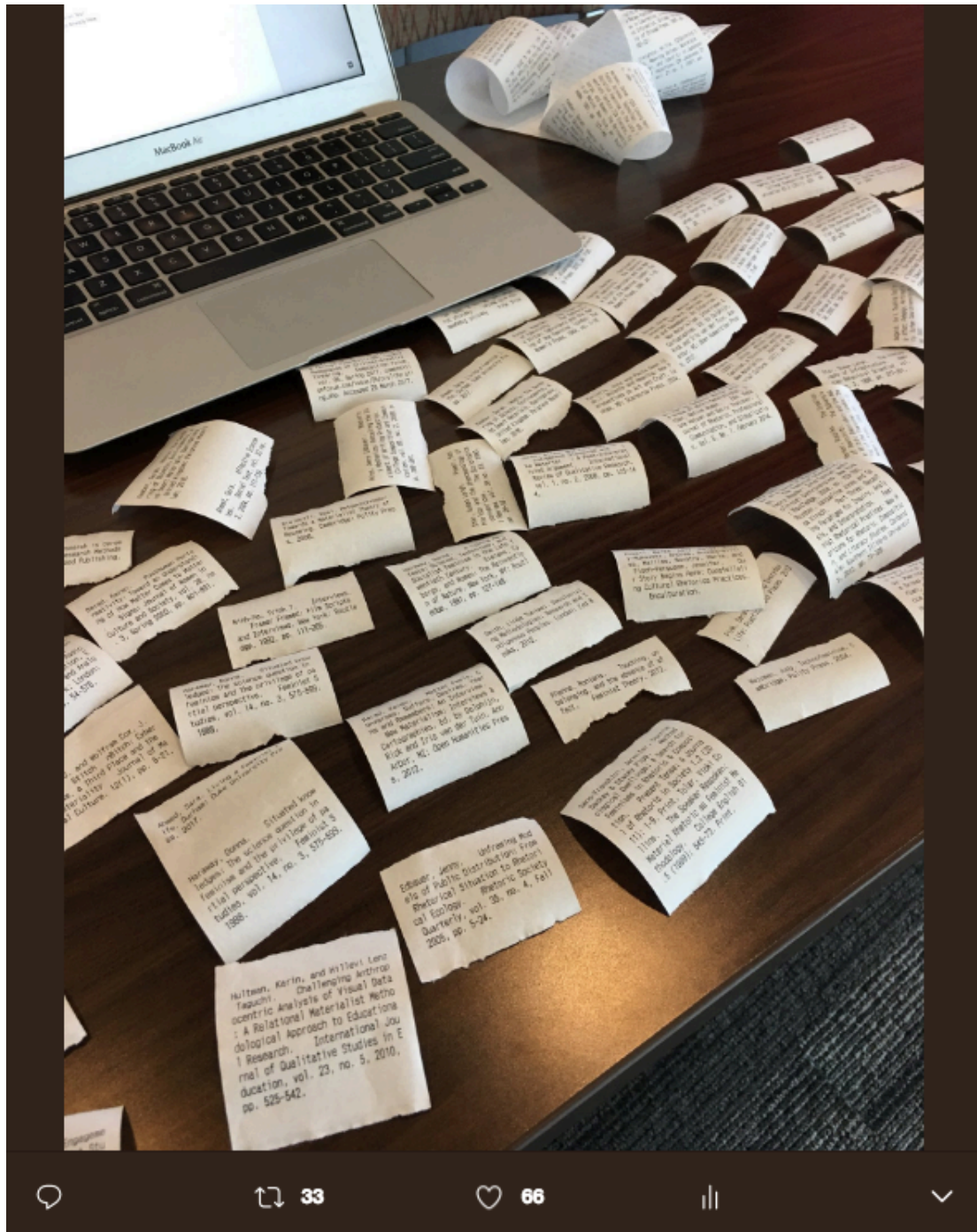
While public discussions around gaming culture focus on the toxic elements, there are thriving groups utilizing online environments to sustain their communities. For example, a cohort of lesbians highlight that Xbox Live has become a space where they can explore their marginalized identities and build a community with others like them. Black twitchers, while experiencing racism and harassment, also express that they are able to create networks of Black gamers, streamers, and others demonstrating the innovativeness of Black digital practices in gaming contexts. As such, the purpose of this talk is to examine the ability of online gaming environments to foster identity development and sustain communities in both physical and digital contexts. The hybrid spaces within gaming culture that many marginalized groups inhabit are the few spaces that value the articulation of marginalized interests and viewpoints. Ethnographic observations reveal how supportive communities can improve resilience by mitigating the effects of stereotyping, microaggressions, and other discriminatory practices in online gaming.

“Urban Play Cartographies: Material encounters and Digital Wayfaring” - Larissa Hjorth (RMIT University)

Increasingly urban spaces are becoming contested with hybrid play—a digital wayfaring that reimagines the material. In this configuration, urban spaces become incubators for designing for play, sociality, and wellbeing. In this interdisciplinary talk, I explore social cartographies in, and around, hybrid play practice through concepts such as digital wayfaring and ambient play.

Citation Station (Installation)

In addition to the guest speakers, we developed a physical computing “citation station installation,” which was placed on a table next to the symposium meeting areas. The installation consisted of a laptop and a tiny thermal receipt printer attached to a “Raspberry Pi” mini-computer. This “citation station” was modeled on the “take a penny, leave a penny” concept, but instead of a penny, we used individual citations – asking students and faculty to take a printed citation from the thermal printer, and leave their own citation on a Google doc on the laptop.



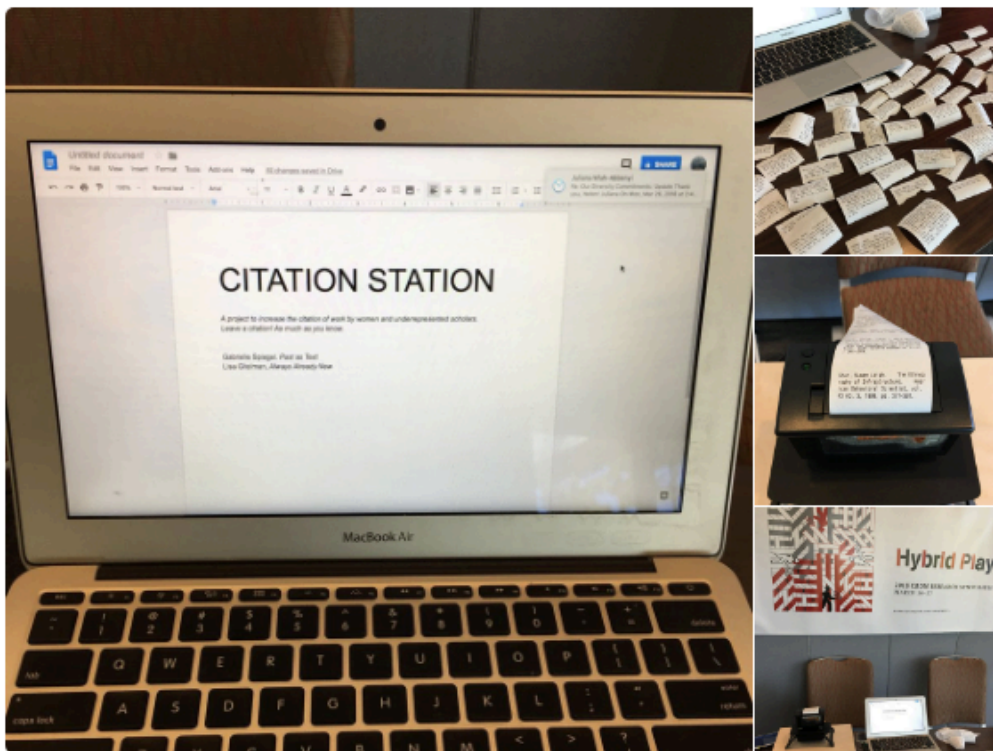
The program narrative for the symposium read:

The Diversify Your Booklist project draws attention to the issue of citational politics by providing graduate students in the CRDM program with a shared bibliography of citations from multiple disciplines that foreground the voices of scholars from underrepresented groups. This project is an extension of Dr. Kishonna Gray's #CiteHerWork Twitter campaign, which highlights scholars who are often overlooked in favor of usually white and male canonical authors. Diversify Your Booklist contributes to

the growing collection of scholarship that highlights the work being done "out of sight" by underrepresented scholars. Symposium participants are invited to visit the AlliedBot booth to add a citation to this growing bibliography and take a citation with them from the automated thermal printer bot. Visitors can share these authors on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook using the hashtags #CiteHerWork and #CRDMSymposium2018. The Diversify Your Booklist project is funded by a grant from the NCSU Office for Institutional Equity and Diversity.

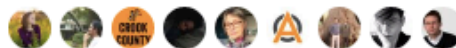
The citation station remained open on both days of the symposium, and received robust interaction. Interestingly, this project got some attention on Twitter, including 33 retweets and 66 likes from scholars from as far away as Great Britain:

Citation Station! Take a citation, leave a citation. Aim: to increase citation of women and underrepresented scholars. 2018 CRDM Symposium. #citeherwork #ncsu



2:06 PM - 26 Mar 2018

33 Retweets 66 Likes





Pip Thornton
@Pip__T

Follow

A women-citing receipt printer?! Oh yes please... This is utterly amazing and has made my day! So relevant to my research & to recent #citewomen debate. Helen @Polyrhetor @hyperrhiz - is this your work? And do you have anything written about it? I need to cite it! (via @jessyp)



Helen J Burgess @Polyrhetor

Citation Station! Take a citation, leave a citation. Aim: to increase citation of women and underrepresented scholars. 2018 CRDM Symposium. #citeherwork #ncsu

10:34 AM - 27 Mar 2018

10 Retweets 27 Likes



2 10 27



Helen J Burgess
@Polyrhetor

Replying to @Pip__T @hyperrhiz @jessyp

Yes! An interesting question: how to cite a Thing? "Citation Station (Installation)"? This is part of a "diversify your booklist" project at NC State to include more underrepresented scholars in PhD exam bibliographies.

11:40 AM - 27 Mar 2018

4 Likes



1 4



Tweet your reply



Pip Thornton @Pip__T · Mar 27

Replying to @Polyrhetor @hyperrhiz @jessyp

I love it!

1



Pip Thornton @Pip_T · Mar 27

A women-citing receipt printer?! Oh yes please... This is utterly amazing and has made my day! So relevant to my research & to recent #citewomen debate. Helen @Polyrhetor @hyperrhiz - is this your work? And do you have anything written about it? I need to cite it! (via @jessyp)



Helen J Burgess @Polyrhetor

Citation Station! Take a citation, leave a citation. Aim: to increase citation of women and underrepresented scholars. 2018 CRDM Symposium. #citeherwork #ncsu

2 replies 10 retweets 27 likes



Helen J Burgess @Polyrhetor

Replying to @Pip_T @hyperrhiz @jessyp

Props to @Lil_Orisa_Pump who is working on a magnificent database for expanding our citation practices!

12:52 PM - 27 Mar 2018

1 Retweet



1 reply 1 retweet 0 likes



Helen J Burgess @Polyrhetor

Replying to @melissaterras

All props due to @KishonnaGray for the guiding principle #citeherwork

8:06 PM - 26 Mar 2018

1 Retweet 5 Likes



1 reply 1 retweet 5 likes



Tweet your reply




☆☆UnicornGlitter☆☆ @KishonnaGray · Mar 26

Replying to @Polyrhetor @melissaterras
Appreciate you all So much!!!

0 replies 0 retweets 0 likes

 **Paul Fyfe** @pfyfe · Feb 22
as the citational landscape of DH is changing, I wonder if anyone has developed a rubric or guidelines for a research bibliography aimed at a) equity or diversity and b) digital scholarship. would love to share with my grad students.

2 4 10

 **Nick Taylor** @nickttaylor [Follow](#)


Replying to @pfyfe

yes! Close to home! **#citeherwork** started by **@KishonnaGray** is coming to the **@CRDM_Symposium...** **@Polyrhetor** and **@phenomenoem** are orchestrating

8:27 PM - 22 Feb 2018

1 Retweet 1 Like 

1 1



Future Plans

We hope that being exposed to scholars working with issues of diversity in citational practices will encourage CRDM students to understand the importance of citation for their own work, and thus to both consider how they cite and also contribute to the project by sharing sources they find in the process of constructing their own exam lists.

Secondly, we hope to signal to faculty in the CRDM program that students will come to expect more inclusive citations, and vice versa. This will encourage inclusion of more diverse sources in syllabi of CRDM classes.

Thirdly, we hope that building a robust framework for diverse citation as an expectation in the CRDM program will start to “seed” similar practices elsewhere, as CRDM students graduate and move on to become teachers and researchers in their fields.

We will continue to crowdsource the bibliography by systematically asking students to contribute their booklists as they move through the exam process. It is our hope that ultimately this project will be sustained by students as a core part of their cohort activity.