What would a critical citation pedagogy look like for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Studies?

[Link to all accompanying slides]

Slide 1
I presented this proposal as a question to myself, which I will not solve today (and doesn’t have one answer). What would a critical citation pedagogy look like for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Studies? Perhaps some of you already have answers or avenues for this in your own teaching practices. My hope is that we can generate a conversation and share resources whether here or after the conference.

Slide 2
When I say critical citation pedagogy, I’m thinking of teaching citation beyond the mechanics of manuals of style (MLA, Chicago, etc.) and avoiding plagiarism. These are the two areas I find faculty and graduate instructors most want me to cover in library instruction.

Slide 3
Yet, in the field of critical librarianship and across academic disciplines writ large, there has been a long-growing concern with citation politics—in other words, who and what we cite; which and what kinds of voice we choose and are trained to include and exclude. To tie into the conference theme, “Voicing the Past: Libraries, Archives, and Cultural Institutions in the Making of Latin America and the Caribbean,” citation is one of many voicing or silencing acts that comprise the enterprise of knowledge production in academia, librarianship, and beyond. But it’s one I don’t see present, for example, in the conference presentations this week.

Slide 4
While I’ll focus mostly on citation politics here, I also want to point out other avenues of critical citation instruction: 1) to question the structural conditions surrounding citation and citation metrics, on the one hand, and 2) how we cite. These two recent publications by Jennifer Nash and Katherine McKittrick speak to these other questionings of citation and are really worth
checking out:


**Slide 5**

Richard Delgado, a Mexican-American law professor, is credited as founding the notion of citation politics. In his 1984 article, "The Imperial Scholar: Reflections on a Review of Civil Rights Literature," Delgado shows that civil rights legal studies at the time were entirely dominated by white male writers. He notes: "It does not matter where one enters this universe; one comes to the same result: an inner circle of about a dozen white, male writers who comment on, take polite issue with, extol, criticize, and expand on each other’s ideas" (563). Delgado then makes a powerful case for the impact of the lack of representation of what he termed at the time “minority scholars”—"Black, Native American, and Hispanic" (569). He concludes that “this exclusion does matter; the tradition causes bluntings, skewings, and omissions in the literature dealing with race, racism, and American law” (573).

**Slide 6**

Twenty-nine years later, Sara Ahmed, in a widely cited and highly influential blog post, "Making Feminist Points," described citation as “a rather successful reproductive technology, a way of reproducing the world around certain bodies.” These bodies tend to be white men—at least in the U.S. and U.K. academies to which she refers, if not explicitly. She continues: “These citational structures can form what we call disciplines…The reproduction of a discipline can be the reproduction of these techniques of selection, ways of making certain bodies and thematics core to the discipline, and others not even part.” (paragraphs 3-4).

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Since Ahmed’s 2013 blog post, and undoubtedly ramped up by disseminating capacities of social media, there have been movements and publications to raise awareness of citation politics in the last ten years. Some prominent initiatives are Eve Tuck, K. Wayne Yang, and Rubén Gaztambide-Fernández’s "Citation Practices Challenge" in 2015.

**Slide 8**

The [Gender Balance Assessment Tool](#), created by Jane Lawrence Sumner.

**Slide 9**
And the #CiteBlackWomen collective, founded by Christen Smith in 2017. It’s worth noting that Smith is an anthropologist who studies Brazil and the Americas, and several of the collective’s podcast episodes are in Spanish and Portuguese and interview Black Latin American writers and thinkers.

Slide 10
To bring this back to instruction, while I was updating my libguides guides in the last year or two, I came across some resources on citation politics that my colleagues in Scholarly Engagement at Tulane University Libraries had included in their Citation guide. On the guide landing page, they have a box on Citation Politics that is in turn adapted from a libguide by Dawn Stahura, “Evaluating Sources: Act Up”. They also have a section on Gender Assessment in Citations that includes the Gender Balance Tool and Cite Black Women websites.

I decided to experiment with including these resources on my Latin American and Latinx Studies Library Guides, which led me to reflect on what happens when you include or adapt resources that come from a genealogy of critical race studies, ethnic studies, feminist studies, Black studies, and particularly Black feminist studies for a Latin American, Caribbean, or Latinx Studies framework. Now, this is not to say that Latin American and Caribbean Studies and Latinx Studies don’t overlap with, receive influences from, and influence these other disciplines or methodologies. But, my question is whether there are specificities to Latin American, Caribbean, and Latinx Studies that might be absent from existing critical citation praxis and tools.

Slide 11
For example, on Stahura and my colleagues’ libguides, there was no mention of the importance of language in citation. I revised the Latin American Studies Library Guide to include mention of Anglo- and Eurocentrism. To compare:

Original Text on Tulane Libraries Citation Guide:
Citation politics is about reproducing sameness. Academia has a long history with intellectual gatekeeping. Institutions of higher education still employ a homogenous faculty population resulting in white male dominated research production favoring western systems of knowledge.

Revised Text on Latin American Studies Citation Guide:
Citation politics is about reproducing sameness. Academia has a long history with intellectual gatekeeping. Institutions of higher education in the United States still employ a predominantly white male faculty population resulting in white male dominated
research production favoring Anglo- and Euro-centric systems of knowledge.

**Slide 12**
In adapting Stahura’s box on Breaking the Citation Cycle, I also added this line on the importance of citing scholarship produced in the regions of study and their languages:

> Cite research produced in Latin America and the Caribbean, and in languages other than English, when you are writing about those regions.

**Slide 13**
In another case, Stahura and my colleagues’ library guide uses “People of color and other marginalized folx/people to refer to under-cited writers and knowledge producers.” I decided to revise that as well, to “People of Global Majority.” With this, I want to point to the fact that “white people are not the demographic majority of humans on the planet,” as the activist organization Integrated Schools notes in its **Glossary** entry for “People of Global Majority.” I decided to include it as a way of signaling the U.S-centric tendency to consider people who have been racialized in white imperialist contexts as Black, Brown, Indigenous, or people of color as minorities—when in fact a global outlook, which is essential to Latin American and Caribbean Studies, offers a different, majority lens. To compare:

**Original Text on Tulane Libraries Citation Guide:**
*People of color and other marginalized people* are less cited than their white colleagues even if they have more experience than white researchers

**Revised Text on Latin American Studies Citation Guide:**
*People of Global Majority (people that have been racialized in white imperialist contexts as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color)* are less cited than their white colleagues even if they have more experience than white researchers.

These revisions are just a starting point for me to think about how to bring tools and conversations happening in librarianship, academia, social media, and beyond to Latin American, Caribbean, and, Latinx Studies instruction and what kinds of adaptations may be useful for our work. As with all social justice and anti-racist work, the terminologies, praxis, and thinking will continually evolve and I welcome that.

**Slide 14**
That’s it! Again, my hope is to build a bridge to generate ideas, resource sharing, and critiques of each other’s work.

Works Cited & Consulted


Cite Black Women. https://www.citeblackwomencollective.org


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