



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO
MISSISSAUGA

**Robert Gillespie
Academic Skills Centre**

WELCOME

Please introduce yourself by placing your name and department in the chat!



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
LIBRARIES





UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO
MISSISSAUGA

Diversifying Your Reading List

Presenters: Corrine Bent-Womack and Navroop Gill

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

ROBERT
GILLESPIE
ACADEMIC
SKILLS
CENTRE



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
LIBRARIES

FACILITATORS:



CORRINE BENT-WOMACK (she/her)
Education Developer, Anti-Racist Pedagogies
Robert Gillaspie Academic Skills Centre
corrine.bent.womack@utoronto.ca



NAVROOP GILL (she/her)
Teaching & Learning Librarian,
University of Toronto Libraries
nk.gill@utoronto.ca



ACCESS CHECK

Access is a shared responsibility among everyone in this space, and we have worked proactively to eliminate barriers to participation. We also welcome disability in all its forms, including identities that may be dynamic or fluctuate over time.

- **Technology**
- **Resources**
- **Pace**

Please feel free to let us know in the chat, if you have any comments or suggestions to make our environment more inclusive.



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit.

Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.



GUIDELINES FOR ENGAGEMENT

Brave Space Principles: Sharing, Learning and Growing

Guidelines for Conversations:

- Mindfulness: Listen with your body, mind and heart
- Discomfort: Allow yourself to lean in, explore and embrace discomfort
- Self-reflective: Speak from your own experiences using “I” statements
- Receptive: embracing new ideas, multiple perspectives experiences/truths and willing to understand
- Accountability: Own your intentions and impact and be mindful that regardless of your intentions, your words can have an impact on others.

(Adopted from: Arao & Clemens, 2013; Carnegie, 2021; Experiences Canada, 2019)



LEARNING OUTCOMES

- 1. Understand the importance of diversifying your reading lists.**
- 2. Examine citation justice principles and their transformative impact on traditional pedagogical practices.**
- 3. Reflect and identify gaps in diverse representation in your course reading lists**
- 4. Explore strategies to locate relevant resources for your reading lists.**



What's the purpose of a reading list?

What does an inclusive reading list mean to you?

Use the Teams poll to reply



Importance of an Inclusive Reading List

An inclusive reading list:

- Provides representation and builds belonging
- Challenges dominant narratives
- Promotes critical thinking
- Supports equity and citation justice



What is Citation Justice?

DEFINITION:

Citation justice involves the intentional and critical practice of acknowledging and citing the work of researchers from underrepresented or equity deserving groups (women, Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities, persons with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals).

GOAL:

Promoting a more equitable scholarly landscape that actively seeks sources from underrepresented groups

(McGill Library, n.d.)



Citation Inequities in Scholarly Research

Citation politics: biases and power dynamics that influence whose work is cited, often marginalizing scholars based on race, gender, or institutional affiliation (Kim, 2020).

Examples of citation gaps:

- **Black and Hispanic scientists** receive fewer citations than white scientists across multiple fields (*Liu, Rahwan & AlShebli, 2023*)
- **Women scholars** are cited less frequently than men across several academic disciplines (*Rubin, 2022*)



Citation Cartel

Definition:

"Citation cartels are groups of researchers who excessively cite each other's work to artificially inflate their citation counts and enhance their reputation. The practice of the citation cartel involves journals agreeing to cite each other's publications to boost their own impact factors." ([Zaid & Taqi, 2023, p.700](#))



Why is Citation Justice important?



Hiring, promotion, and tenure decisions



Performance evaluation and salary reviews



Funding opportunities



Teaching responsibilities

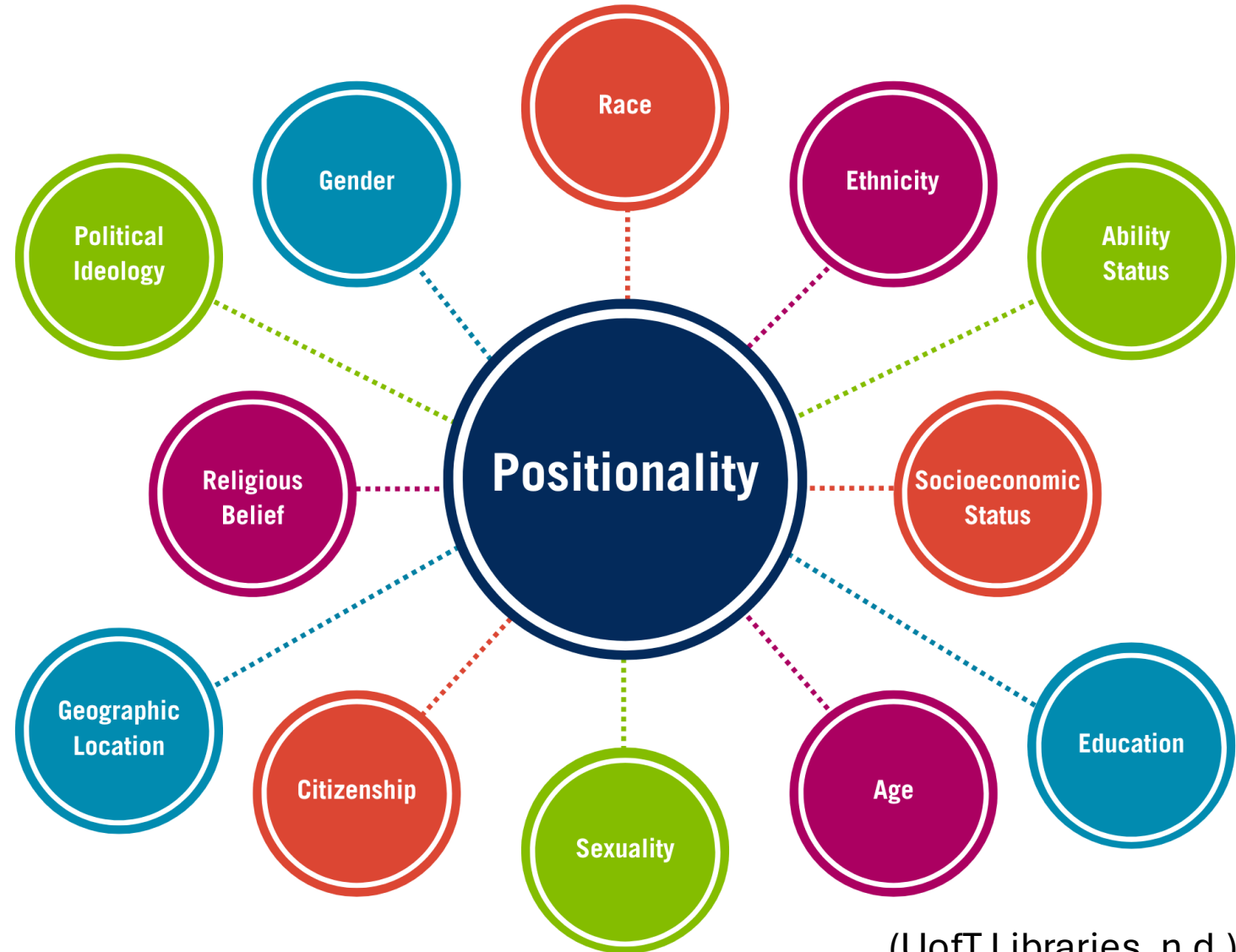
(UofT Libraries, n.d.)



Citation Justice: Positionality

Positionality: “refers to the how differences in social position and power shape identities and access in society.”

([Encyclopedia of Geography, 2010, p2258](#)).



(UofT Libraries, n.d.)

How Do We Shift Citation Patterns?

Practicing Citation Justice:

i. Citation Counting:

- Count how many women, BIPOC, and marginalized voices are in your references.
- Don't assume gender or identity, do your research.

ii. Question Academic Norms:

- Challenge exclusive definitions of scholarship, consider *gray literature* as it can offer timely, relevant, and community-rooted perspectives.
- Practice feminist and anti-racist citation politics.



How Do We Shift Citation Patterns?

iii. Rethink Authority

- Ask yourself: What kind of expert do I need here?
- Gray literature often reflects on-the-ground knowledge and lived experience.

iv. Acknowledge All Contributions

- Look at methodology sections critically. Who's cited? Who's erased?
- Recognize contributors



What happens if we don't diversify our reading lists?

- reinforce dominant power structures and missed critical opportunities to foster deeper student engagement
- missed pedagogical opportunity for transformative learning, ultimately falling short of the inclusive, critical pedagogy many instructors aim to practice.



Identifying Gaps



Think-Pair-Share

Think: What and who are the dominant narratives and scholarly voices within your field of study or on the reading list you have brought with you today? (5 minutes)

Pair: Provide feedback to a colleague (10 minutes)

Share: Discussion with the larger group (5 minutes)



Think (5 Mins)

What scholars, theories, or frameworks immediately come to mind when you think about your field of study? Whose work is considered "foundational" or "essential" in your area, and what do these dominant voices have in common?

Consider: geography, race, gender, class, sexuality, ability, and other identity markers. What perspectives might be missing?



Pair (10 Mins)

With your colleague, discuss some of the gaps you see in your reading list or within your discipline (break-out rooms)



Share (5 Mins)

What stood out from your discussion?



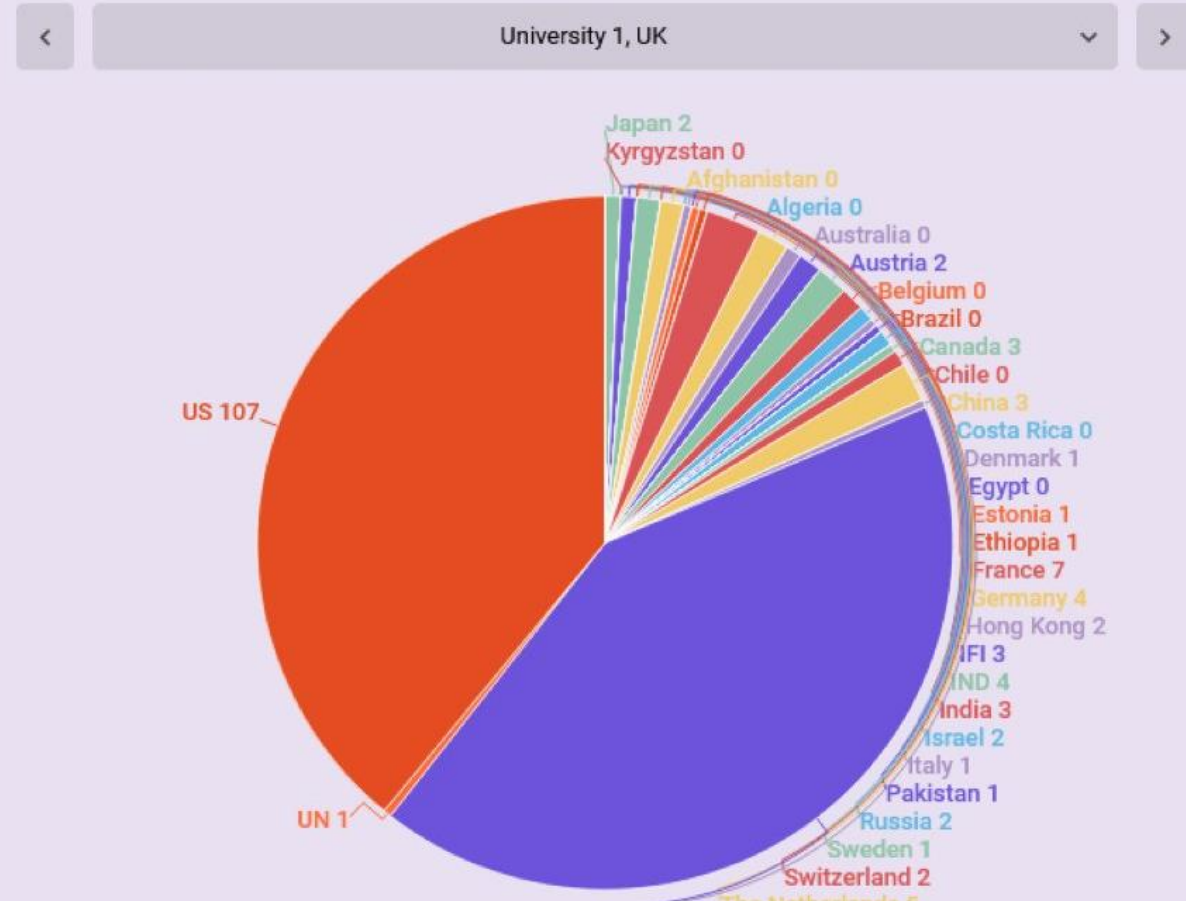
Identify Gaps: Syllabus Audit



Syllabus Audit

- Survey of reading lists of leading Development Studies programmes in the UK, Ghana, South Africa and Sudan
- "Out of the 274 assigned readings for a Development Studies course at a leading British university, only one reading was from an author based at an African institution"

Authors Cited in Reading Lists



[El Kadi, T. and Mann. L. How Diverse is your reading list?](#)

Critiquing the Syllabus: Student Voices

Respond to the following questions by submitting this handout along with your responses.

- In your own words, what are the main learning goals of this class?
- Considering the learning goals, what material that is mentioned appears striking or surprising to you?
How so – or what were your expectations?
- What authors, researchers, or names are mentioned on the syllabus?
- Do some internet research on those names: who were these people, what was their biographical background, what struggles did they face potentially – and what were their main interventions?
- To what extent does our syllabus feature authors or researchers that you have never heard of before?
- How diverse is the set of scholars cited on the syllabus with respect to such categories as class, race, gender and nationality?
- What questions does the syllabus raise about gender, class, and racial hierarchies?
- What would you like to see more or less of?

Mattner, C. (2021). Critiquing the Syllabus: Inviting Student Assessment of Standardized Curricula. *Teaching Citational Practice: Critical Feminist Approaches*.



Limitations & Considerations

1. Visibility: Knowing if an author represents a diverse viewpoint or life experience can be difficult to discern.
2. Disciplines: Gaps in representation are not consistent or identical across disciplines.
3. Not a checklist: Meaningful inclusion of authors requires examining the learning opportunities they bring to students' learning.



Using Search Skills to Fill the Gaps



Search Techniques

1. Building Citation Networks
2. Searching by region
3. Using Specialized Sources
4. Where else can I look?



Building Citation Networks

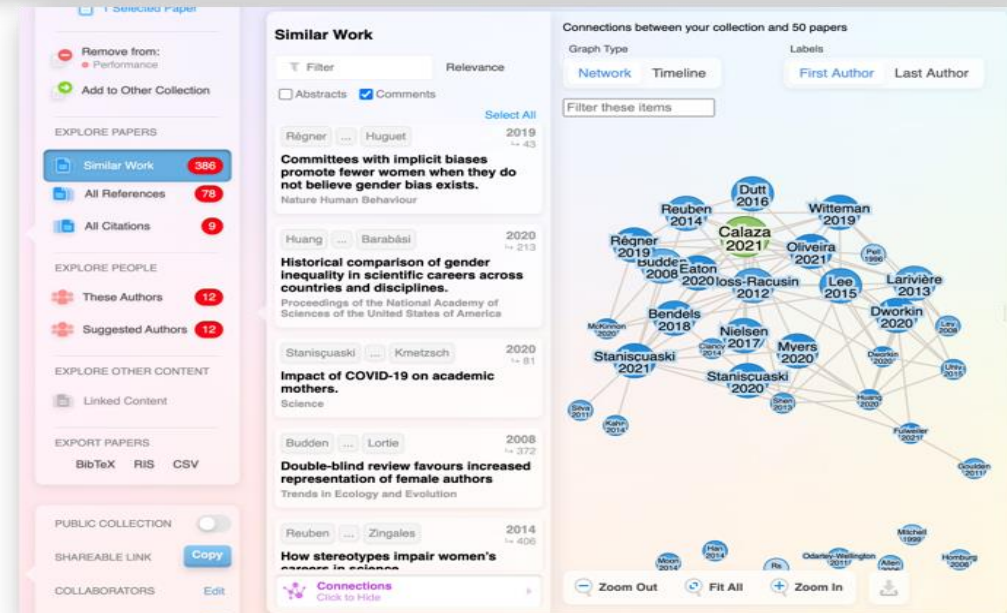
- Do you already know of a scholar who's doing critical work in your discipline? If so, who have they cited? And who has cited them?
- See Google Scholar's "Cited by" function or AI tools like Research Rabbit.

[HTML] Facing racism and sexism in science by fighting against social implicit bias: a latina and black woman's perspective

KC Calaza, F Erthal, [MG Pereira](#), [KCD Macario](#)... - Frontiers in ..., 2021 - frontiersin.org

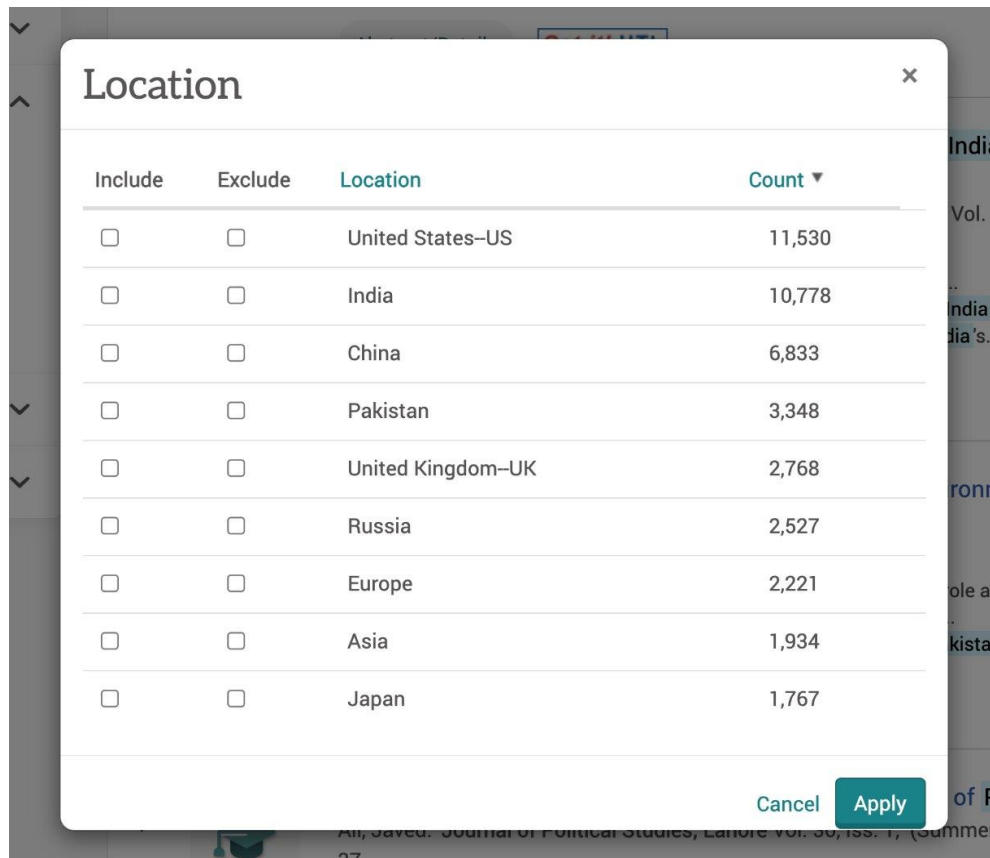
The editors of several major journals have recently asserted the importance of combating racism and sexism in science. This is especially relevant now, as the COVID-19 pandemic may have led to a widening of the gender and racial/ethnicity gaps. Implicit bias is a crucial component in this fight. Negative stereotypes that are socially constructed in a given culture are frequently associated with implicit bias (which is unconscious or not perceived). In the present article, we point to scientific evidence that shows the presence of implicit bias in the ...

☆ Save 📄 Cite **Cited by 32** Related articles All 16 versions 🔗



Search By Region: Databases

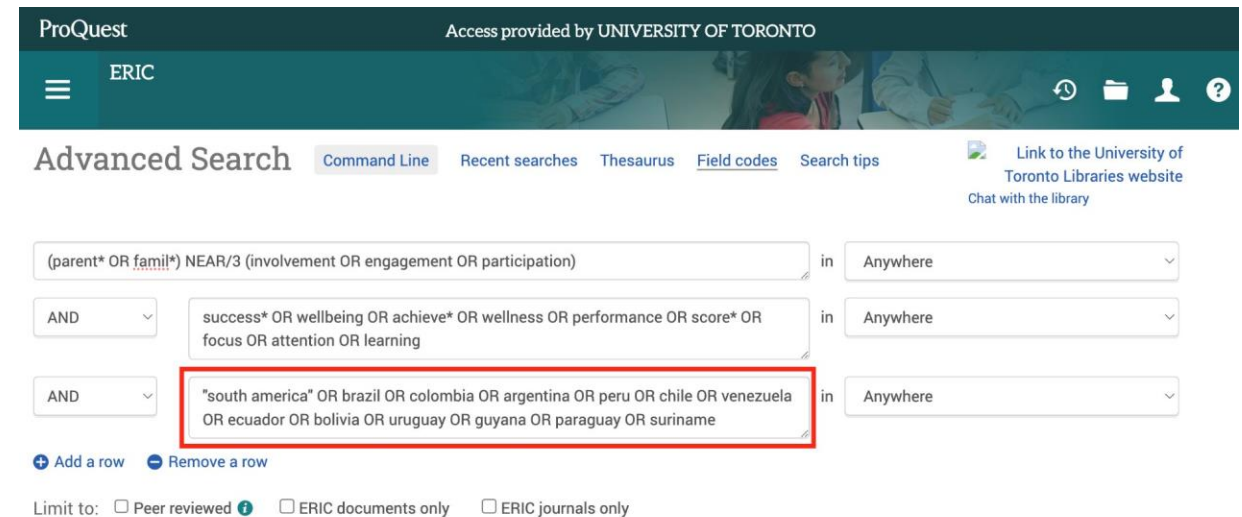
Many subject databases will have a "location," "institution," or "place of publication" filter available.



A screenshot of a 'Location' filter dialog box. The dialog has a title bar with 'Location' and a close button. It contains a table with columns for 'Include', 'Exclude', 'Location', and 'Count'. The table lists several countries with their respective counts. At the bottom, there are 'Cancel' and 'Apply' buttons.

Include	Exclude	Location	Count
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	United States–US	11,530
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	India	10,778
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	China	6,833
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistan	3,348
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	United Kingdom–UK	2,768
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Russia	2,527
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Europe	2,221
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asia	1,934
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Japan	1,767

If you think there's relevant research coming out of a certain country, add that term into your search strategy.



A screenshot of the ProQuest Advanced Search interface. The page shows a search strategy with three rows of search terms. The third row is highlighted with a red box, showing a list of South American countries. The interface includes a header with 'ProQuest' and 'Access provided by UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO', a navigation bar with 'ERIC', and a search bar with the query '(parent* OR famil*) NEAR/3 (involvement OR engagement OR participation)'. Below the search bar, there are three rows of search terms, each with a dropdown menu for 'Anywhere'. The third row is highlighted with a red box, showing a list of South American countries. At the bottom, there are options to 'Add a row' or 'Remove a row' and a 'Limit to' section with checkboxes for 'Peer reviewed', 'ERIC documents only', and 'ERIC journals only'.

ProQuest Access provided by UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

ERIC

Advanced Search Command Line Recent searches Thesaurus Field codes Search tips

(parent* OR famil*) NEAR/3 (involvement OR engagement OR participation) in Anywhere

AND success* OR wellbeing OR achieve* OR wellness OR performance OR score* OR focus OR attention OR learning in Anywhere

AND "south america" OR brazil OR colombia OR argentina OR peru OR chile OR venezuela OR ecuador OR bolivia OR uruguay OR guyana OR paraguay OR suriname in Anywhere

+ Add a row - Remove a row

Limit to: ☐ Peer reviewed ☐ ERIC documents only ☐ ERIC journals only

Search by Region: Locating Journals

Start by finding a list of relevant journals, then narrow it down using a regional focus.

To find a list of journals in your discipline, try using:

- [Journal Citation Reports](#)
- List of journal coverage from a subject database
- Specific bibliography (e.g., [MLA Directory of Periodicals](#))



Using Specialized Sources

- University libraries own or license specialized resources that highlight the history, experiences, and viewpoints of underrepresented groups
- Often digitized primary sources like newspapers, ephemera, and archival collections
- Ask your liaison librarian for assistance with this!



Specialized Sources

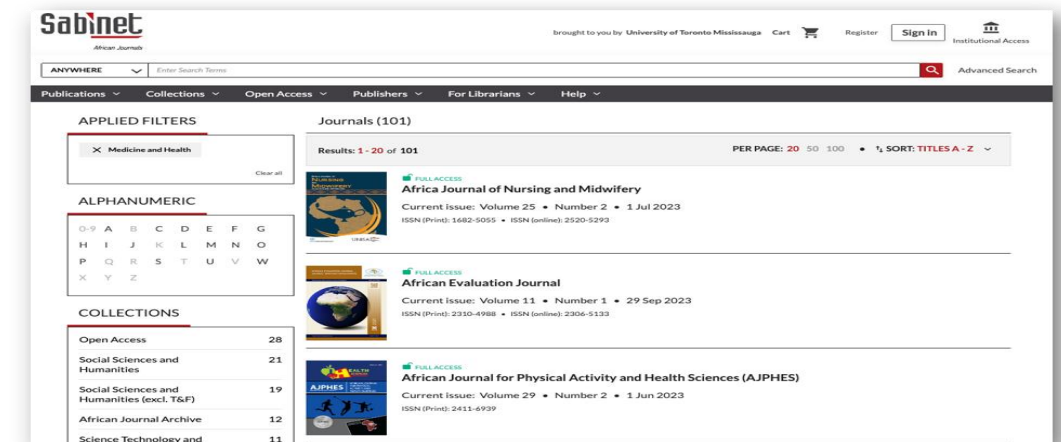
A brief selection from the U of Toronto Libraries:

- [Queer Pasts](#)
- [American Prison Newspapers, 1800-2020 : Voices from the Inside](#)
- [Decolonization : Politics and Independence in Former Colonial and Commonwealth Territories](#)
- [Sabinet African Journals](#)



Part of [Reveal Digital](#)

American Prison Newspapers, 1800s-present: Voices from the Inside



Where else do I look: Other Syllabi

- **Browse** the Open Syllabus Project or the Alternative Reading List Project
- **Consider** examples of diverse reading lists
- **Consult** with trusted colleagues: Ask a peer to review syllabus with a focus on "who's missing" from it



Where else do I look: Alternative Publication Venues

- **View** list of alternative publishers
- **Consider** moving beyond the journal article to include:
 - Theses and dissertations
 - Podcasts
 - Newspaper articles
 - Blog posts



Spotlight on Student Co-Creation

- Set up a living document for students to suggest readings for future courses.
- Ask students to comment upon their search strategy as part of a research assignment. Why did they include the sources they did?



Personal Reflection

Identify one concrete change you will make to your reading list and how you plan to implement it.



HERE TO SUPPORT YOU

UTM LIBRARY

- UTM Course Reserve and Syllabus Service makes online, print, and media resources available to students to support the curriculum.
Email: reserves.utm@utoronto.ca
- Contact your UTM Liaison Librarians for assistance with identifying and integrating diverse, discipline-specific readings.

RGASC

- Confidential one-on-one consultations about teaching
 - Resources
 - Workshops
 - Teaching observations
 - Teaching dossiers
 - Pedagogical reading groups
- email: eddev.utm@utoronto.ca



THANK YOU



Additional References

- Holmes, A. G. D. (2020). [Researcher Positionality -- A Consideration of Its Influence and Place in Qualitative Research -- A New Researcher Guide](#). Shanlax International Journal of Education, 8(4), 1–10.
- Kim, A. L. (2020). [The Politics of Citation](#). Diacritics, 48(3), 4–9.
- Liu, F., Rahwan, T., & AlShebli, B. (2023). Non-White scientists appear on fewer editorial boards, spend more time under review, and receive fewer citations. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 120(13), e2215324120.
- McGill University Library. (n.d.). *Home*. <https://www.mcgill.ca/library/>
- Mott, C., & Cockayne, D. (2017). [Citation matters: mobilizing the politics of citation toward a practice of “conscientious engagement.”](#) *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, 24(7), 954–973.
- Rubin, H. (2022). Structural causes of citation gaps. *Philosophical Studies*, 179(7), 2323–2345.
- Salem State University Library "Act Up - Evaluation Method - [Citation Politics](#)"
- University of Toronto Libraries. (2025). "Thinking Critically About Citations", Citing Sources/Create your Bibliography. Retrieved June 6, 2025, from <https://guides.library.utoronto.ca/c.php?g=251103&p=5297972>