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Citation matters: mobilizing the politics of citation toward a practice of ‘conscientious engagement’

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ABSTRACT

An increasing amount of scholarship in critical, feminist, and anti-racist geographies has recently focused self-reflexively on the topics of exclusion and discrimination within the discipline itself. In this article we contribute to this literature by considering citation as a problematic technology that contributes to the reproduction of the white heteromascularity of geographical thought and scholarship, despite advances toward more inclusivity in the discipline in recent decades. Yet we also suggest, against citation counting and other related neoliberal technologies that imprecisely approximate measures of impact, influence, and academic excellence, citation thought conscientiously can also be a feminist and anti-racist technology of resistance that demonstrates engagement with those authors and voices we want to carry forward. We argue for a conscientious engagement with the politics of citation as a geographical practice that is mindful of how citational practices can be a tool for either the reification of, or resistance to, unethical hierarchies of knowledge production. We offer practical and conceptual reasons for carefully thinking through the role of citation as a performative embodiment of the reproduction of geographical thought.

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Introduction

Scholarship in critical feminist and anti-racist geographies has increasingly focused on the exclusion, discrimination, and marginalization of particular groups or individuals within the discipline itself. This scholarship has examined how knowledge is reproduced and remembered (Monk 2012; Staeheli and Mitchell 2005); how histories are narrated and by whom (Monk 2006; Peake 2015; Peake and Sheppard 2014); and on the neoliberal logics, transformations of reason in institutions of higher education that conflate political and market values, which structure

performance review, hiring and promotional practices, and impact evaluation (Berg 2001; Mountz et al. 2015; Pain, Kesby, and Askins 2011). Building upon bell hooks' (1984) conception of the 'neo-colonial white supremacist capitalist patriarchy,' we use the term 'white heteromasculinism' to refer to an intersectional system of oppression describing on-going processes that bolster the status of those who are white, male, able-bodied, economically privileged, heterosexual, and cisgendered. Geographers have addressed discrimination and exclusionary authoritative white heteromasculinism at conferences (Domosh 2014a), in research (Faria and Mollett 2016; Louis 2007; Mott and Roberts 2014), and in everyday academic spaces (Joshi, McCutcheon, and Sweet 2015; Mahtani 2006, 2014; Peake and Kobayashi 2002; Sanders 2006). This important research has drawn direct attention to the continued underrepresentation and marginalization of women, people of color, and those othered through white heteromasculine hegemony by focusing on the politics of knowledge and how particular voices and bodies are persistently left out of the conversation altogether.

In this article we make practical and conceptual arguments for the importance of the politics of citation, a topic of critical concern and one that contributes to conversations about the uneven reproduction of academic and disciplinary geographic knowledge. In addition to publication, citation is taken as an assumed proxy for measuring impact, relevance, and importance, with implications not only for hiring, promotion, tenure, and other aspects of performance evaluation, but also for how certain voices are represented and included over others in intellectual conversations. Careful and conscientious citation is important because the choices we make about whom to cite – and who is then left out of the conversation – directly impact the cultivation of a rich and diverse discipline, and the reproduction of geographical knowledge itself. To cite narrowly, to only cite white men, to form citation cartels (informal agreements between authors to continually cite one another's work) to boost 'impact,' or to only cite established scholars, does a disservice not only to researchers and writers who are othered by white heteromasculinism, but also to the prevailing impression of geography upon those who may be less familiar with the discipline, most notably, our students.

The politics of citation has not escaped attention in geography, however, existing discussions tend to focus on the Anglophone character of citation practices in the discipline (Foster et al. 2007; Garcia-Roman 2003; Gutiérrez and López-Nieva 2001; Kitchin 2005; Koopman 2009; Rodríguez-Pose 2006; Yeung 2002), and less on identity-based discrimination (though see Anonymous 2002). We emphasize the value and importance of re-emphasizing critique since, despite advances made by critical feminist and anti-racist scholars, geography remains overwhelmingly dominated by white, male, cisnormative-heterosexual voices and by a narrow set of epistemological approaches. Restating a long-standing feminist critique of economic geography (e.g. Deutsche 1991; Gibson-Graham 1996; Massey 1991), Roberts (2015) asked at a recent American Association of Geographers (AAG)

Annual Meeting panel discussing David Harvey's *Seventeen Contradictions and the End of Capitalism*,

what does it mean that it seems to be unnecessary to engage or reference the contributions of Gibson-Graham or a whole host of others who are actually also working on anti-capitalist theorizing and politics? And, what does it mean to not really engage with the work of feminist scholars?

Roberts' comments are not specific to economic geography, and demonstrate broader historical and contemporary critiques of geography's white heteromascu- linism (Joshi, McCutcheon, and Sweet 2015; Mahtani 2006, 2014), and an unwillingness of certain scholars to acknowledge others' disciplinary contribu- tions through engagement, discussion, reference, or citation (Ahmed 2013). We argue for a *conscientious engagement* with the politics of citation that is mindful of how citational practices can be tools for either the reification of, or resistance to, unethical hierarchies of knowledge. Our approach is qualitative and conceptual, and offers a productive way to understand how citation can be rethought as a feminist and anti-racist technology. To ignore the politics of citation risks the con- tinued hegemony of white heteromascu- line knowledge production incongruous with the nuance and richness of other understandings of and perspectives on geographical phenomena.

In section two we review recent efforts in geography to challenge the authorial and accepted production of research and history in the discipline and show how questions about citation intersect with these debates (McKittrick 2016; Monk 2006; Peake 2015; Peake and Sheppard 2014). In section three we outline scholarship attentive to the politics of citation, and highlight some issues with quantitative approaches to citational practices. With Maddrell (2015), we conceptualize cita- tion qualitatively as a conscientious engagement with the discipline rather than a quantitative measure of impact or influence. In section four, drawing on feminist and anti-racist writing in the broader humanities and social sciences, we make a case for taking citation seriously, arguing that citation should be understood as a performative practice that, when 'successful', bolsters those voices deemed author- itative within white supremacist, patriarchal, and heteronormative paradigms. We then offer practical recommendations for conscientious engagement with citation politics in terms that we call a 'failed performativity'.

The primary impetus for writing this article came from our shared feelings of discomfort, frustration, and anger at the conduct of certain fellow scholars at aca- demic conferences, in publication practices, and in the context of departmental politics. These feelings pertained to issues of uneven divisions of labor, an obli- viousness to circumstances of difference, and evident assumptions that white, male, heterosexual, cis, and able-bodied experience is universal. Citation is relevant across these circumstances, though it became especially apparent in the context of the AAG panel highlighted above. We originally wrote this article as a blog post for *Antipode*, and received helpful feedback that steered us toward developing our argument towards broader implications for citation as a performative politics.

After expanding the article and nuancing our argument we chose *Gender, Place & Culture* as the publication to send a revised manuscript. We were conscious that we would be writing for an audience that was already likely to agree with our argument, yet we reasoned that as a starting point for a broader conversation, this journal's readership likely shared the epistemological position that we advocate.

We also had instrumental reasons for writing this article and selecting this journal that pertain to our own ambition and career advancement. We are both early-career scholars with recent doctorates, and given our current shared status as non-permanent untenured faculty, we remain self-conscious about our own publication record, and eager to be engaged in conversation with similarly critical scholars. We have attempted to cite a broader range of scholars and sources (e.g. blog posts and conference presentations) than one would typically do in an academic article, and though together we feel well versed in the works of feminist, queer, anti-racist, decolonial, and indigenous geographers and other writers, our citational milieu is also a reflection of our respective positionalities as white academics trained in Anglo-American educational and geographical contexts. Reflecting on our own positionalities in this way does not excuse any omissions remaining in this article, and we recognize that in participating in academic discourse of any kind, one to some degree inevitably perpetuates the same systems of oppression that we critique here. However, we have attempted in this article to overturn some of the hegemonic citational processes at work within geography, with the aim of advancing a more conscientious engagement with the sources that we draw upon, and in so doing, we hope to move forward conversations about embodied authority and knowledge production.

Anti-racist feminisms and knowledge production in geographical thought

As Pulido (2002, 46) writes, an 'often-overlooked dimension of a white discipline is the limited set of experiences that inform the discourse.' Many geographers have examined how whiteness and masculinity have shaped the discipline in ways that limit conversation and intellectual inquiry (Gilmore 2002; Kobayashi 2006). In this section we outline geographic scholarship that addresses issues of power, marginalization, and authority in the production and reproduction of geographical thought, building on Mohanty's (2003, 3) conception of an anti-racist feminism that examines the 'interwoven processes of sexism, racism, misogyny, and heterosexism [that] are an integral part of our social fabric.' Feminist and anti-racist geographers have long critiqued the dynamics of knowledge production within geography, emphasizing the unevenness of geographical knowledge and pointing to tendencies that reinforce masculine, white, and heteronormative ways of knowing, seeing, and remembering the discipline. Examples of this research in early feminist geography focused on gendered disparities pervasive in academic geography, noting the relative absence of female geographers in departments,

and the reasons women tend to leave the academy in higher numbers than their male counterparts (Monk and Hanson 1982; Zelinsky, Monk, and Hanson 1982; though see also Great Lakes Feminist Geography Collective n.d.).

Others have interrogated the archetypal figure of the researcher and the importance of 'being there' in the field as embodying a particular white heteromasculinist privilege that excludes and marginalizes other types of knowing (Domosh 1991; Rose 1993). These critiques point to the implicit sexism endemic to the assumption that researchers are unmarked by difference and therefore 'anyone' can participate equally in geographical methods and the production of geographical knowledge. Some have critiqued 'fieldwork' for being an exclusionary boys club that perpetuates stereotypically masculine gendered performances while others have subverted the traditionally unquestioned assumptions that underwrite the 'field' metaphor in the first place (Nast 1994). In feminist writing, 'the field' has been conceptualized as socially constructed, negotiated, and collaboratively produced between researchers, research subjects, and site (Elwood and Martin 2000); as a result of relations of power-knowledge; and as affective, messy, and contingent (Faria and Mollett 2016). In particular, feminists have critiqued urban exploration for assuming a fearless able-bodied researcher, who can walk through cities without consequence, implicitly and uncritically excluding those unable or unwilling to place themselves at risk, especially women and people of color (Mott and Roberts 2014). These studies emphasize the necessity to repeat feminist critique, since, though advances have been made in the discipline, masculinism and white supremacy remain persistent characteristics.

Commenting on the silences implicit in the accepted history of disciplinary geography, Peake and Sheppard (2014) critique the '1969 story,' that marks the birth of *Antipode* as coterminous with a particular kind of Marxism that is also commonly framed as the inauguration of radical geography. They point to accepted narrations of the history of geographic thought which silence and sideline geographers who *did* merge radical politics with a critical geographic praxis, but without epitomizing a white heteromasculinist version of events. Peake and Sheppard show how the establishment of a singular narrative tends toward the exclusion of other possible narratives, and presents a narrow history of critical geography as 'documented overwhelmingly in favor of white males,' ignoring the work of, in particular, women and black geographers at the time (Peake and Sheppard 2014, 321). Further, Monk (2006) also has drawn attention twentieth Century female geographers such as Julia Shipman and Thelma Glass, who were ignored through the 1969 story.

McKittrick (2006) approaches disciplinary silences through black geographies to show how omissions and marginalizations in the geographical canon are symptomatic of how the spatial is known and articulated. Subaltern and otherwise othered populations do have spatial knowledge and geographic experience, though the articulation of these knowledges may not register as authoritative within the culture of academic geography. In other critiques of geography's whiteness

since the early 2000s, Mahtani (2014, 360) describes the 'toxic geographies,' of the academy as 'emotionally toxic material spaces, for geographers of colour,' in which 'so-called "real" racial violence' is informed by knowledge production that purports to maintain distant neutrality from the violence of racialized oppression. In an empirical study on racial microaggressions within geography departments, Joshi, McCutcheon, and Sweet (2015) show how for many geographers of color, white supremacy manifests as visceral, embodied, and material, throughout the minutia of everyday departmental life. While discussions of the whiteness of geography are nothing new (Bonnett 1997; Faria and Mollett 2016; Kobayashi 1994; Kobayashi, Lawson, and Sanders 2014; Peake and Kobayashi 2002; Peake and Schein 2000), there is significance in scholarship by geographers of color who openly name the traumatic character of their encounters with white supremacy in academic spaces (e.g. Mahtani 2006; Pulido 2002; Sanders 2006).

For geographers occupying relatively privileged subject positions, it is important to remember that blind spots persist, particularly within ostensibly 'critical' geographic fields that retain unacknowledged hegemonies of whiteness, and heteromale performances (Berg, Gahman, and Nunn 2014). As Pulido (2002, 46) writes,

currently, geography is unduly informed by experiences of whiteness. This does not mean that whites cannot empathize, research, or stand in solidarity with those who are racially subordinated, but it does mean that the voices and experiences of nonwhites are almost always filtered through a white lens.

It is this filtering process that we are concerned with here. Such a filtering takes place through the distillation of others' experiences through white heteromale scholar-ship, white feminist scholarship, as well as within critical geographies aiming toward a practice of anti-oppression. As we suggest below, one critical response to problematic hegemonies of knowledge production and authority lies within a more ethical practice of citation, through which geographers from privileged subject positions work more thoughtfully and deliberately to include those voices regularly shut out through white heteromale hegemony.

The question of whiteness, masculinism, and the uneven reproduction of geographical thought has also been considered through critical conversations about the presence or absence of a disciplinary canon. Scholars have examined how 'processes of remembering and forgetting have been employed to serve certain intellectual and ideological agendas' (Keighren, Abrahamson, and della Dora 2012, 296). These authors suggest that one or multiple canon(s) may allow new readers access to important and historical texts that would otherwise be ignored or neglected, which may negatively affect future research trajectories. Others, however, have been critical of the concept of a canon, suggesting that it reproduces white heteromale models of authoritative scholarship (Monk 2012; Sedgwick 1990). As Maddrell (2012, 325) notes, if we speak of a canon, we also need to think about 'who gets included, who gets excluded, and why.' A canon reflects disciplinary foundations and archetypal authority, and speaks to histories of conflict and

division within a field. Kwan (2004), for example, demonstrates that geography has long been a field full of diverse interests and objects of inquiry, despite binarized divisions between social-cultural and spatial-analytical geographies that render the identification of a canon challenging and problematic.

Feminist and anti-racist readings of geographical history and contemporary practice highlight how those who are othered by disciplinary mythology elevate a particular kind of knowing, of conveying knowledge, and of occupying intellectual space. Citation is equally a technology for reproducing sameness and excluding difference. We are presented with an important intellectual task, as McKittrick (2016, 5, original emphasis) points out, 'to work out how different kinds and types of voices *relate to each other*,' so that we can understand processes of oppression and more effectively work against them. The accounts discussed here examine which voices are brought forward and which are ignored, a topic that relates directly to whose work is getting cited, and by whom. Next, we examine how these insights have been brought to bear on the question of citation, both in geography and in broader social science research on citation as an exclusionary academic practice. In agreement with the material presented in this section, geographers writing on citation have observed that the discipline's 'most highly cited normative individual [...] is male, white, British and working at an institution in the UK or the US' (Foster et al. 2007, 304). Methodologically, these authors evidence this claim through a quantitative analysis of twenty-six years of scholarship in economic geography, taking into account 1300 authors in over 1700 articles (though excluding authors cited fewer than ten times) to interrogate whether geography's top journals are as international as they claim. While there has been substantial geographic consideration of the politics of knowledge production, including (to some extent) citational practices, there is still room for improvement through a more conscientious engagement with whom and how we cite.

Commentary on citation in geography

Geographic scholarship on citation practices has concentrated on the topics such as the discipline's Anglophone character despite its status as 'international' (Garcia-Ramon 2003; Gutiérrez and López-Nieva 2001; Koopman 2009; Olds 2001; Paasi 2005). Though most of these contributions agree that geographic scholarship remains overwhelmingly Anglophone, some contend both the claim itself, and the negative status of the observation (Rodríguez-Pose 2006). As Garcia-Ramon (2003, 1) writes, there is an 'undisputed hegemony of one single geography, Anglo-American geography, which sets the guidelines for intellectual debate in many parts of the world,' privileging discourse for English-speakers and disempowering others. While some of the disconnect can be traced to differences in normative publishing and translation standards (Koopman 2009), ultimately 'language resides at the core of any struggle that seeks to decolonize and reconfigure the agendas, mechanics, and purposes of knowledge production' (Nagar 2008, 120). While

citation has predominantly been considered in terms of human geography broadly, we also find discussion of the ways citation shapes geography's subdisciplines. Foster et al. (2007, 304) suggest that the most cited scholars in economic geography are English-speaking geographers residing in the UK and North America. For these authors, what's at stake is the question of who is able to set the terms of debate in geographical scholarship (Olds 2001). Yet, as noted above, by only including articles cited ten or more times (they reasonably argue that this strategy is a practicality) these authors risk further silencing those already excluded by a particular citational politics. It is difficult to fully comprehend therefore the complex relationship between 'international' journals prioritizing the publication of Anglo-American scholars' work against other scholars failing to cite those who are not included in this category. These problems are closely related, and reaffirm that claims of diversity in the discipline continue to rest on a narrow foundation of hegemonic authors and their knowledges.

In a recent AAG Newsletter, Domosh (2014a) examines how the role of citation as a performance metric matters increasingly in academic departments across the US, particularly in research-focused institutions. Citation counts have at least two interrelated aspects: (1) who is citing whom – citation as an acknowledgment of the scholarship your research builds upon, and (2) how many times articles or other works are being cited – citation as an academic performance metric. The former relates to the citations *within* an individual article, the latter refers to how many times an article is cited by others. Both dimensions have a complex politics, and are interrelated insofar as we often cite important or authoritative sources to show that we know the 'right' people to refer to, sometimes without having thoroughly read their work, thus boosting the performance metrics of already widely cited individuals. This 'citing without sighting' (Johnston 2011) links the performance metric account of citing to the acknowledgment practice. It also notes that those who are cited most are not necessarily the most widely read, and exposes the failure of considering 'impact' or 'influence' as coterminous with quality.

Writers in other disciplines tend to highlight *practical* reasons (saying little about broader ethical and conceptual reasons) to take citation seriously, and in doing so represent citation relatively uncritically as a performance metric. How citation is subjectified affects tenure, promotion, salary decisions, and, due to an increasing pressure to measure the 'impact' of research, may provide a partial answer to the question of why women geographers leave departments in such great numbers (Domosh 2014b). A study by international relations scholars identifies a statistically significant difference in literature between the citation counts of men and women (Maliniak, Powers, and Walter 2013). Citation for these authors is important because it measures three things: (1) quality; (2) performance, influence, and the distribution of resources such as salaries; and (3) institutional excellence. They find that, in international relations literature, 'articles authored by women are cited less on average than those authored by men' and that 'this gap disappears as soon as women coauthor with men' (Maliniak, Powers, and Walter 2013, 4). Yet, the solutions they

suggest pose little challenge to the instrumental quantification logics of citation counts. Their suggestions include encouraging early-career women scholars to cite themselves more and to co-author across gender lines. Though worthy of consideration, these analyses potentially also compromise the vicissitudes of the masculinist neoliberal academy. Indeed, the analysis and solutions offered demonstrate the limitations of large-scale or discipline-wide statistical studies (as noted in Foster et al. 2007), which is not to suggest that we should ignore quantitative research, but that we should acknowledge its limitations as well as its value. Macro studies hide small-scale individual differences, differences by sub-discipline, how citation cartels function, the citation practices of particularly authoritative individuals, and present the numbers apart from their qualitative context. Too often, reaching a 'balance' becomes a diversity or equality target, which in turn becomes 'the point' or 'the problem' itself, causing us to lose sight of the inequalities and violence to which these statistics refer (Ahmed 2012).

The ability to do something about citational inequality necessarily falls on established 'authoritative' scholars, though early-career scholars should also be aware of the practical steps they can take. Editors, reviewers, advisors, and instructors can also play an important role – it should not be up to scholars who are othered by white heteromasculinism to excessively cite themselves, or co-author with senior white male colleagues in order to instrumentalize their own research or boost their impact. The limitation of the studies described above is that the authors do not consider the value of under-cited knowledge beyond measuring impact, hiring, and promotion. We should be wary of strategies that further attune us to the quantification of the neoliberal university and regimes of accounting, since 'the overzealous production of research for audit damages the production of research that actually makes a difference' (Mountz et al. 2015, 1241). As geographers have acknowledged for some time (e.g. Mattingly and Falconer-Al-Hindi 1995), quantification is never simply a 'positivist' technology, but can also be mobilized as an anti-oppression strategy.

In response to these critical studies, but also while acknowledging that they do not go far enough to challenge the neoliberal hegemony of the academy, with Maddrell (2012, 326, our emphasis) we note that

citation might be read as *indicative of engagement*, but as such that "engagement" can be a very superficial one, one which acknowledges the existence of a body of work through name-checking, but which fails to attend to, disseminate, reinforce, or critique the detail of the work.

Maddrell's (2015, 36, our emphasis) comment here draws attention to the often perfunctory use of citation in which 'citation alone does not necessarily constitute *engagement*.' Maddrell describes citation in terms of two possible forms of engagement, the first a superficial one that may reinforce discriminatory and exclusionary practices of knowledge production. This superficial engagement may involve an individualistic critique of the neoliberal academy, but without substantially challenging its structural inner workings. In particular, Maddrell points

to the dominance of peer-reviewed single-authored journal articles as a method of dissemination (rather than considering, as she notes, engagement through teaching or fieldwork), 'school formation' that leads to patterns of citation that uncritically celebrate particular writers and theorists, and what she terms 'blinkered presentism,' that is, geography's obsession with novel approaches and theorists, to the disregard of older ones. However, Maddrell (2012, 326) also notes that citation might be thought of in terms of a second kind of engagement, one that seeks to 'attend to, disseminate, reinforce, or critique the detail of the work,' what she calls critical engagement, associated with a concern for the absence of such an engagement with women's work in geography. In related research, Peake (2015, 259) also points to this opportunity for a 'politics of engagement' with one another's work. For Maddrell, the issue is about understanding citation as a more than superficial engagement with a text that we argue can be appropriately achieved through thinking citation as a conscientious, rather than perfunctory technology.

Thus, next we present a conceptual framework for thinking through what it means to understand citation as a performative practice of conscientious engagement. Building on arguments about the politics of knowledge production in geography in the previous section, we draw on debates in the broader social sciences to frame citation as performative, that is, irretrievably caught up in the production of particular models of power and authority, but also as a mode of resistance to those models. Citation can be a form of conscientious engagement, and instead of succumbing inevitably to the crude and inexact measure of impact or contribution, it might also be a tool to deconstruct toxic power dynamics that structure and frame the (re)production of geographical thought.

Conscientious engagement and citation as performativity

As Smith (1999, 5) notes, 'social science [...] is not an innocent or distant academic exercise but an activity that has something at stake.' For Smith, it is critical that social science research be carried out conscientiously, mindful of how academic work perpetuates colonial domination. This domination must be critically confronted through practices that incorporate the voices and stories of those who are treated as most marginal (Louis 2007; Razack 2012). Practices that work within the academy are by no means immune to this critique. Instead, influenced by the work of Smith (1999), Mohanty (2003), and others, an anti-racist feminist approach to citation looks not only to processes of marginalization beyond the academy, but also considers how hierarchies of power are reproduced within social science through the interstices of capitalism, heteropatriarchy, colonialism, and whiteness. Echoing hooks' (1982) call for white feminists to take seriously the role of race in shaping women's everyday experiences, Mohanty (2003, 42) critiques the privilege and ethnocentrism in Western feminists' construction of 'third world women' as a category that carries problematic currency within 'the larger economic and ideological praxis of "disinterested" scientific inquiry and pluralism that are the surface

manifestations of a latent economic and cultural colonization of the “non-Western” world. Though citation is just one technology of power that reifies these forms of oppression within the academy, it is nevertheless important to recognize and confront it in relation to other performative technologies of power and uneven reproductions of academic authority.

Here we present a conceptual understanding of citation as a form of performativity, as outlined by Butler (1990). We think through citation as ‘conscientious engagement,’ rather than supporting citation as a crude measure of impact. Citation thought of as conscientious engagement, rather than as a proxy for quality, is itself a performative technique that renders the practice necessarily immeasurable, yet still precise in the sense that citation denotes those ideas that we want to bring along with us, and that resonate with our own intellectual positioning. By suggesting that citation is performative, we highlight how citation is a technology of power implicated in academic practices that reproduce a white heteromasculinist neoliberal academy, but which also offers a model of resistance to those reproductions. Power, as always contested and negotiated, can be turned against itself to produce alternative modalities, histories, and narratives (Butler 2002). Instead of understanding citation as a metric of influence and impact, we outline practical and conceptual ways to resist these neoliberal leanings by thinking conscientiously about citation as a form of engagement.

Suggesting that citation is performative means paying attention to it as an echoic *doing* rather than uncritically reproducing it as something natural and incontestable. What citation does (and what we do when we cite) calls into being a particular idea of academic authority. Conceptualizing citation as a performative act means paying attention to why and how authority congeals around certain bodies and voices, and thinking through how this authority might be dismantled. The discursivity of performance is also embodied and visceral, since contestations over belonging and authority are materially experienced through microaggressions hostile to people othered by heteromasculinist white supremacy (Joshi, McCutcheon, and Sweet 2015). As Ahmed (2013, n.p.) has noted, citation can be a ‘successful reproductive technology, a way of reproducing the world around certain bodies.’ The weight of the past citation record may press against present scholarship as a normative suggestion for reproduction, as archival proof that something has worked for particular bodies in the past. However, this approach also conceals those bodies who are left out. In this sense, citation can be viewed as a particularly selective ‘*screening technique*,’ in which ‘certain bodies take up spaces by screening out the existence of others’ (Ahmed 2013, n.p., original emphasis). Through the process of citation, we bring with us those bodies and ideas deemed legitimate and worthy of attention and dialogue – those who we want to remember.

Berlant (2008, 39) notes that, ‘the activity of citation marks a desire for identification and translation across nations, lexicons, and systems of hierarchy. It also marks the mobility of categories of privilege and subordination.’ For Berlant, writing

about the reproduction of particular texts and tropes across genre and medium, citation is notable as a technology of repetition that produces the desire for an intimate community indulging in the shared comfort of the familiar, even if that familiarity is characteristic of a history of colonialism and oppression. There has been a tendency for citation to be *done* in a way that privileges particular voices over others, making a ‘desire for identification’ – a privileging of the same over the different within academic practice. Acknowledging citation as a form of performativity that uncritically reproduces sameness means accounting for how the *authority of the author* is confirmed or denied by their ability to cite, and to cite in a particular way. Citation is often a way of *not* talking about something or *not* engaging, a perfunctory act that assumes the reader is familiar with the same set of assumptions about a text as the author. Citation is a form of shorthand, a reference to an earlier work, which, if deemed ‘appropriate’ to reviewers and readers, confers the writer’s capacity to speak adequately on a given topic. A citation unknown, out of place, from the ‘wrong’ source, or absent altogether might imply that an author does not have the right credentials and has not passed an implicit test of adequate scholarship. Hence the iterative and repetitive compulsion to cite already widely cited scholars of assumed authority and prestige that will confer on the reader with the greatest alacrity the author’s legitimacy. In this performance it is, at least partially, ‘in the citational legacy by which a contemporary “act” emerges in the context of a chain of binding conventions’ (Butler 1993, 18). The production of academic knowledge is allowed to proceed only by means of this set of appropriately oriented ‘citational legacies’ and ‘binding conventions.’ The condition of writing, publishing, teaching, speaking, being, or having a body at all, in a suitably ‘academic’ way, is first to conform to this set of compulsory citational prerequisites, a phenomenon that Joshi, McCutcheon, and Sweet (2015, 299) show is viscerally experienced by geographers of color ‘in part because their voices are silenced; reacting internally is often the only safe response in an overwhelmingly white discipline.’ Resistance to the hegemony of the citational milieu requires a challenge to the authority of the author as constituted by the reproduction of only a certain set of citational conventions. Citation is a performative aspect of academic practice that we cannot avoid, so the question becomes: how do we rethink citation as a progressive technology rather than one that serves to make invisible particular bodies and voices?

For Butler (1993, 19, original emphasis),

performativ[ity] provisionally succeeds [...] because that action echoes a prior action, and *accumulates the force of authority through the repetition or citation of a prior, authoritative set of practices*. What this means, then, is that a performative ‘works’ to the extent that *it draws on or covers over* the constitutive conventions by which it is mobilized.

Citational performativity is ‘successful’ when it reinforces existing hegemony and authority, and ‘works’ by repeating (and covering over) already accumulated authority. We advocate a turn away from obvious ‘successful’ citational performances that demure to sameness, whiteness, maleness, and cisnormativity,

arguing instead that an ethical citational practice actually *fails* to perform these prior standards of authority. 'Failed' performativity is performativity nonetheless, since queer performativities that 'fail' to adhere to compulsory orientations of straightness are still performative (Halberstam 2011), though they are also riskier and more challenging. Citation as failed performativity that connotes conscientious engagement means then, 'a turn *against* this constitutive historicity' (Butler 1993, 19, original emphasis), a turn away from linguistic community with a normatively rehearsed legacy. It will be a difficult task to adjust or alter an accepted disciplinary history if we do not also alter the narrow forms of writing that we cite to look beyond authorial narrations of geography's past.

Well-cited scholars have authority precisely because they are well-cited. The claim we make here is that notoriety in the form of citation cannot make a claim to 'quality,' especially if that claim is made against other less well-cited voices. Brown (2000, 31) writes, 'patriarchy and heterosexism [...] have no foundational base except for their own iterativeness.' If the foundation of a claim to quality, over and above other less 'notable' scholars, is based on citation, then this is an unstable foundation indeed. By suggesting that citation is performative we do not suggest that a scholar's reputation has no reality, instead we challenge the citational foundation upon which this reality is built. As an iterative and repetitive technology, reputation is real, but it is baseless insofar as it only an effect, which does not reflect quality by necessity.

Practicing conscientious engagement

In addition to the conceptual framing above, here we offer practical strategies to rethink citation as a form of conscientious engagement, rather than a metric of impact, excellence, or assumed authority. Some of these suggestions may allow individual scholars to (re)think their positionality relative to the sources they cite. Others are substantive ideas for further study. The suggestions are multi-scalar, from action that implicates ourselves, our colleagues, and our departments; to journals, editorial teams, and reviewers; and finally to the broader context of universities and professional organizations.

We encourage authors to carefully read through and count the citations in their list of references prior to submitting papers as a way to self-consciously draw attention to whose work is being reproduced. Think through how many women, people of color, early career scholars, graduate students, and non-academics are cited. There are challenges to this approach, since it carries the risk in basing assumptions of gender or cisnormativity on particularly gendered names. However, though we might be able to tell little from a name, it may encourage scholars to research and learn about the people that they cite. Citation counting is a relatively straightforward way to pay attention to whom we carry with us when we cite, and to be aware of the power dynamics that are unintentionally reproduced therein.

Questioning self-citation as a trend, especially for established scholars is also an important undertaking. Self-citation may be necessary for early-career scholars, but it can also be an uncritical technology that reproduces the established paradigm of white heteromale authority. A similar issue arises when established scholars cite only other established scholars out of habit or tacit mutual agreement. Such practices devalue those othered by white heteromale, and leave little room for the change, creativity, and experimentation that often characterizes cutting-edge graduate and early-career scholarship. These problems are doubled when we consider that geography, as a white heteromale discipline, was founded through the exclusion of othered voices. Today, the field is more diverse, but this diversity is largely represented by earlier career scholars. Citing only tenured, established scholars means that these voices are ignored, especially when it is well-known that today's brutally competitive academic job market continues to privilege the white heteromale body.

Through encouraging and valorizing collaboration and co-authorship, we can build deeper support for one another's publishing practices (Pratt 2010), whether by formally publishing together, or through everyday experiences of communal self-reflection that can help to 'make sense of our positionalities' in the context of research and academic life (Kohl and McCutcheon 2015, 750). The hegemony of the single-authored peer reviewed publication means that certain scholars (especially students and early-career scholars) may be discouraged from writing and publishing research at all. Writing with others can make the process less daunting, and increases the rate at which one is able to publish. Through co-authoring and sharing the labor associated with our academic production, we can aid one another in negotiating the world of publication and citation. Co-authoring can be strategic tool of solidarity mobilized by established scholars in positions of power to help early-career academics position themselves. Further, many geographers have acknowledged how writing together can be a powerful way to account for the fact that no work is ever truly 'single-authored' (e.g. The Feminist Geography Reading Group 2000).

It is difficult to make suggestions in the context of publication, editing, and review since the output of this work is highly variable, almost always unremunerated, and remains 'behind-the-scenes.' Yet, we feel that editors and reviewers have a responsibility to pay close attention to citation. Reviewers and editors may prioritize suggesting the inclusion of additional authors, and discourage authors from citing themselves excessively or only citing a particular set of authors. Reference lists that do not adhere to a journal or editors' impressions of 'successful performativity' should not be grounds for rejection. Editorial boards might consider a policy and providing literature on citation in their guidelines for submission that could encompass some of the recommendations mentioned here. In accordance with the citational conventions of this journal, we have listed all names (rather than only last names, as is a more common citational practice) in our list of references. Beyond the journal's requirements, we do feel that listing all names contributes

to a conscientious practice of citation by not masking an author's gender, and allowing those with multiple or non-Anglophone names to be better represented. An argument could also be made that not listing one's first name may be a strategy to protect oneself against discrimination, so it is important to be aware that these politics are not straightforward and do not lend themselves to easy solution without debate.

At the level of our universities and professional institutions, it is important to include a wider range of practices in our definitions of academic 'dissemination' such as teaching, other forms of undergraduate engagement (e.g. field trips, community outreach), conference presentations, public talks, university service, newspaper articles, interviews, recorded talks, online blog posts, and artistic or multimedia projects. While it can be challenging to cite beyond a narrow range of acceptable forums, it is crucial that we do so in the interest of legitimating the multiple ways that knowledge is produced. We should de-emphasize the importance of 'measurable' outputs: citation cannot be adequately used as a proxy for quality, authority, or impact. When we acknowledge in the studies highlighted above that women, people of color, queer, and otherwise othered voices are marginalized or disregarded in academic publishing practices (Anonymous 2002; Domosh 2014b; Monk and Hanson 1982), it is insulting to assume that another's work is not profoundly relevant and well-informed simply because their work is not well known, or because they are not highly cited. Some of these changes might be enacted in conversation with department chairs and others at our universities, or by gathering support and pressure for formal statements on standards written by and with professional institutions.

In outlining an agenda for further research, it would be advantageous to see studies that draw attention to the reproduction of particular sets of voices by counting citations in 'high impact' geography journals. This could be a crowd-sourced quantitative project with multiple investigators that follows the conceptual threads laid out in this article by connecting the performative nature of citation to concrete numbers in particular journals to reveal patterns of who is being cited by whom. In bringing together quantitative and qualitative research, combining counting with short interviews in which scholars discuss their citational practices might also provide rich opportunities for scholars to think through how they cite, and develop further strategies than the list presented here by engaging a variety of different perspectives.

The point of this list is not to establish prescriptive rules for citation politics. We raise awareness of strategies that challenge established hierarchies in the discipline, but also to draw attention, through the performance of the somewhat mundane practice of citation, to how knowledge is (re)produced, and to think carefully through what constructing a list of references means and does. Performing a count of one's references and finding a bit of information about who one is actually citing, for example, is a simple method to draw attention to citation as a technology that isn't just a passive representation of things we read, but an active

interrogation of who we include, who we exclude, and why. Finally, though we have been critical of some quantitative work in the third section of this article, we are fully supportive of quantitative research since we see value in examining how established voices have retained authority over the years in the discipline's most read and respected journals.

Conclusion

Citation as a discriminatory practice may seem petty in comparison to microaggression in the workplace; the overwhelming toxicity of geography's white heteromascualism; racist, sexist, and homophobic departmental hiring practices; the uneven distribution of academic labor; the continuing masculinism of geographic methodologies; the erasure and absence of 'minor' (Katz 1996) voices in written and accepted histories of the discipline; and the experience of being noticed for one's difference rather than the one's ideas. However, concern for the politics of citation is important insofar as it relates to, compounds, and is reproduced by those other concerns that relate directly to the ethics of geographic praxis. Readers may object that citation is a well-discussed topic, especially in the context of informal conversations at conferences, other academic events, and moments of 'kitchen table reflexivity' (Kohl and McCutcheon 2015). We argue first, that we must continue having these conversations (and though perhaps tedious, it is important to remember the apparent necessity to *repeat* anti-racist, feminist critique) in different forums. Second, we argue that it is worth developing a framework for understanding precisely what citation does and how it works as a performative technology of power, and, in addition to the importance of quantitative analyses that may inadvertently reify citation as a neoliberal performance metric, outline how citation can function through conscientious engagement against current authoritative hegemonies within the discipline.

Instead, citation is the practice of how we choose to reproduce our discipline (Ahmed 2013). Geography's history of critical work that points out the pervasive silences and omissions of anti-racist and feminist scholarship speaks to the fact that some voices and bodies carry with them more authority than others. Louis (2007, 131) notes, '[c]onfronting ideologies of oppression is essential in order to decolonise our minds and our disciplines because, contrary to popular belief, we are not in postcolonial times.' The inequalities at the heart of the politics of citation, and their connections to oppressive ideologies, are clear through commonplace moments when scholars embodying privileged positionalities neglect to bring different voices into the conversation, perpetuating the visceral materiality of everyday injustice (Joshi, McCutcheon, and Sweet 2015). The need for conscientious engagement with other voices falls disproportionately on those who are most widely, actively, and inter-disciplinarily cited because those are the people occupying spaces of power within the discipline. Paradoxically, those who embody these authoritative positions are often unaware of, or unconcerned by, their privilege,

and often do not consider that their citational practices may disproportionately shift the frames of visibility and exclusion. In many cases, citation becomes a superficial form of engagement, the bare minimum of perfunctory academic practice, that seeks only to avoid accusations of plagiarism. 'Successful' performances of citation reproduce existing authority along the lines of what has worked and been successful, which in fact constitutes a 'threshold of disappearance' through which the intersectional and relational is lost (Mohanty 2013, 970). By emphasizing the productive potential that exists when we 'fail' to cite according to disciplinary norms, we draw attention to how studies that foreground the importance of specificity, difference, and lived experience are silenced when scholars in positions of power situate their work among discourses of universality and abstraction.

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