**Bias in Your Search Results Lesson Plan**

**Outcome**

Students will be able to recognize that search tools / information source types / information systems reflect power structures of race, gender, sexuality, class, etc.

**ACRL Framework for Information Literacy Frames**

* Authority is constructed and contextual
* Information creation as a process
* Information has value

**Materials**

* Article handouts (also link articles on online guide)
* Visualization, video, & discussion questions (on online class guide)
* Markers
* Large sticky notes
* Timer

**Class Context**

* Critical Race and Ethnic Studies (CRES) 101 Race and the Media
* Assignment: media analysis; no outside research required
* 30 students
* 50 minutes

In this particular class, students are given a media analysis assignment to complete, but it doesn’t require outside research. Since the assignment focuses on evaluation, the graduate student teaching the course and I thought it would be interesting to have students consider the tools they use to find the media they would like to analyze for this assignment. For example, for those looking to analyze a YouTube video for how race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, or disability are represented, it would be useful to think about how YouTube as a platform might privilege certain voices over others.

This lesson and “lite” jigsaw activity was designed to help students recognize that the information tools and systems they use in their everyday and academic lives are not neutral as power structures are reflected in the creation, organization, and access of information.

After being introduced to this level of evaluation through a visualization that yields a short conversation about information privilege regarding scholarly publishing and a video about bias in Google, students work in small groups to read an assigned article about a form of bias in a search tool, source type, or information system and answer questions to share with the larger class.

**Part 1: Visualization (5 mins)**

* Share Polkinghorne’s visualization, focusing on the right side
	+ *Critical consciousness in search*: <https://era.library.ualberta.ca/items/ca162c13-ee3a-44ec-9281-5b963419cdfd>
* Connect 1st section to the kinds of source evaluation students may have typically been asked to do thus far in college
	+ Ask about
		- Popular vs. scholarly sources
		- Primary vs. secondary sources
		- Anything else?
* Connect 2nd section to objects students may have been asked to analyze in classes, media analysis assignment
	+ Ask about possible objects students might have been asked analyze in art / art history / fim classes
	+ Ask about media students are interested in analyzing for their assignment
* Ask about 3rd section
	+ What about evaluating the tools you use to find information / media for college assignments?
		- Encourage responses by asking students why they need to be connected to VPN off-campus to access databases
		- Share about information privilege, scholarly publishing, open access
			* Local examples:
				+ share UC Merced’s yearly contribution to shared UC resources
				+ UC-Elsevier negotiations

**Part 2: Video (10 mins)**

* Transition to Google
	+ Ask how bias might be present in Google
* Share PBS NewsHour video

# *Artificial intelligence can be biased against certain people. Here's how*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPEGX8bke_o>

* Ask about what was surprising to learn from the video

**Part 3: Group Activity (25 minutes)**

* Transition to group activity
	+ Assign students to small groups
		- 6 groups of 5 students
* Give instructions
	+ Each group is assigned a different article to read. After you read your article, as a group, discuss and answer these four questions [*see Discussion Questions section below*] on your large sticky note using the marker. Select one person to write answers, and select another person to report on your article to the class. Since not everyone will have read the same article, please give enough context for your classmates to understand the main message of the article.
* Pass out paper articles and also point to the class guide, which has the URLs to the articles, for those who would like to read them online [*see Article URLs Section below*]
* Display discussion questions from the guide
	+ You may want to provide definitions for the words *bias*, *implicit*, and *explicit* on the guide

**Article URLs**

* Article A: [The dangers of english as lingua franca of journals](https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2018/03/13/domination-english-language-journal-publishing-hurting-scholarship-many-countries), *Inside Higher Ed* (March 13, 2018)
* Article B: [Wikipedia mirrors the world's gender biases, it doesn't cause them](https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-maher-wikipedia-gender-bias-20181018-story.html), *Los Angeles Times* (Oct. 17, 2018)
* Article C: [The Racial politics of citation](https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2018/04/27/racial-exclusions-scholarly-citations-opinion), *Inside Higher Ed* (April 27, 2018)
* Article D: [YouTube is still restricting and demonetizing LGBT videos -- and adding anti-LGBT ads to some](https://www.theverge.com/2018/6/4/17424472/youtube-lgbt-demonetization-ads-algorithm), *The Verge* (June 4, 2018)
* Article E: [The bias hiding in your library](https://theconversation.com/the-bias-hiding-in-your-library-111951?fbclid=IwAR3TtwfdUWj-dFAoDmDct9f5gr6YL7wBPTmQCltytVFWe2qfUkhO62o1PR4), *The Conversation* (March 20, 2019)
* Article F: [Google is finally admitting it has a filter-bubble problem](https://qz.com/1194566/google-is-finally-admitting-it-has-a-filter-bubble-problem/), *Quartz* (Feb. 1, 2018)

**Discussion Questions**

1. What is the overall message of the article?
2. What about the article surprised you?
3. Are the biases that the article discusses in reference to the search tool / source type / information system explicit, implicit, or both?
4. How does learning about these preferences impact the way you think about using the search tool / source type / information system?

**Part 4: Debrief (10 mins)**

* Have each group report their findings
	+ The large sticky note should also be displayed
	+ Ask probing and clarifying questions
* Encourage students to ask questions of the other groups