Articulating Public Library Impact

A Multi-Dimensional Perspective

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3 case studies from NYPL's 88 branch libraries

1. Monitoring equity of children's book borrowing

2. Understanding the nature of our early literacy impact

3. Articulating, and helping patrons see, our civic impact

1 case study from NYPL's 4 research centers

Articulating the impact of scholarly works "made @ NYPL"

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Monitoring equity of children's book borrowing

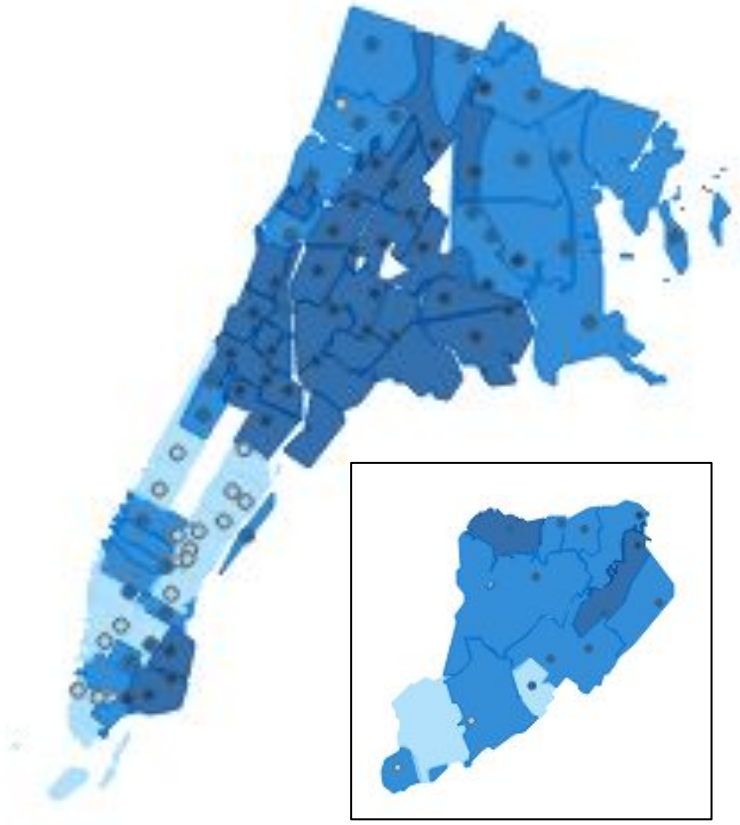
Output analysis as impact measurement!

- ➔ **Use**: Institutional strategy development, resource allocation
- ➔ **Analysis type**: Neighborhood-level, service-level, normed indicators
- ➔ **Audience**: Executive management

Per capita children's book circ by neighborhood

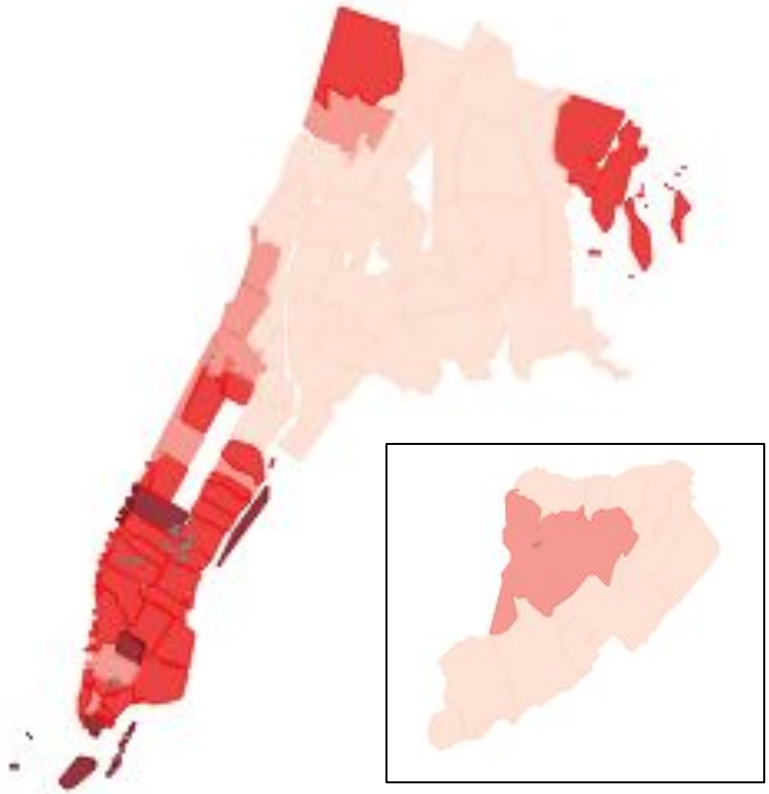
Lower income

Higher income



More borrowing

Less borrowing



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Understanding the nature of our early literacy impact

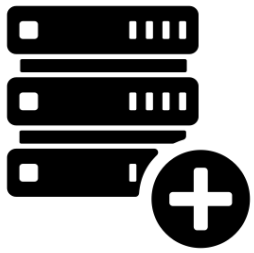
Qualitative inquiry to uncover mechanisms of change:
How exactly do we facilitate families' early literacy progress?

- ➔ **Use**: Program design/delivery, outreach planning, grant reporting
- ➔ **Analysis type**: Individual-level, program-level, surveys/focus groups
- ➔ **Audience**: Program staff & external funders

Instrumentation of qualitative impact categories

REPLACEABLE

Library is one of many supporters of child's development



ADDITIVE

Library helps family do more of the practices they were already doing

TRANSFORMATIVE

Library imparts knowledge, attitudes, or behaviors that wouldn't otherwise be present

Articulating our civic impact

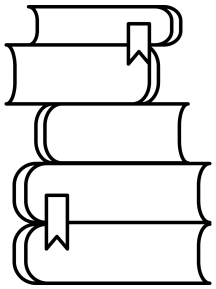
Promoting everyday library usage as an important form of civic engagement - and stepping stone to more

- ➔ **Use**: Strategy development & program design
- ➔ **Analysis type**: Conceptual
- ➔ **Audience**: Executive management & program staff

Public libraries' tripartite civic infrastructure

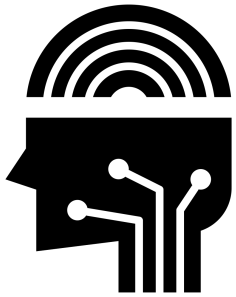
GROUNDED

Reinforcing the "we"



PORTABLE

Reinforcing the "ours"



INVISIBLE

Influencing how we see ourselves & others

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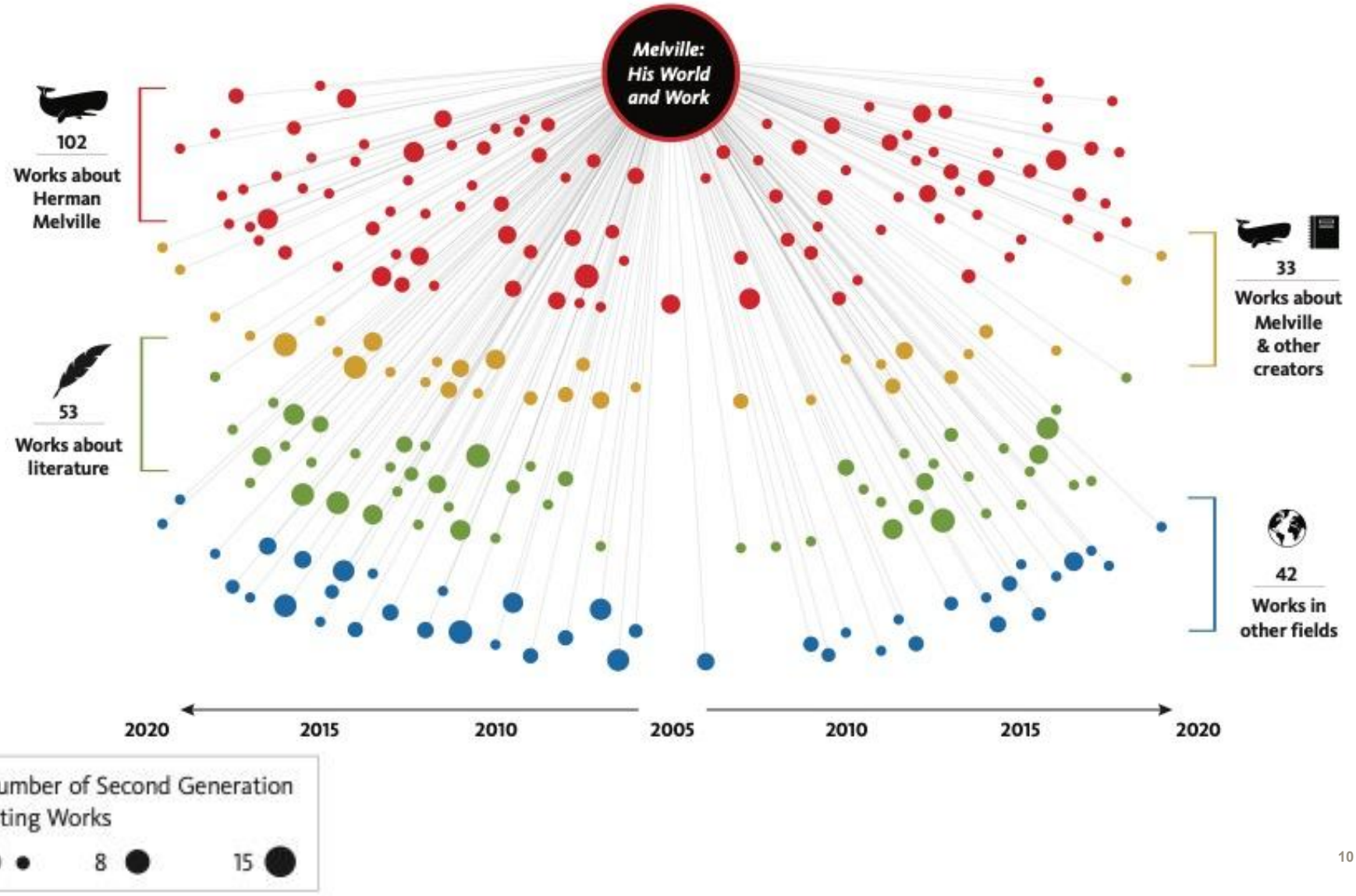
Articulating the impact of scholarly works "made @ NYPL"

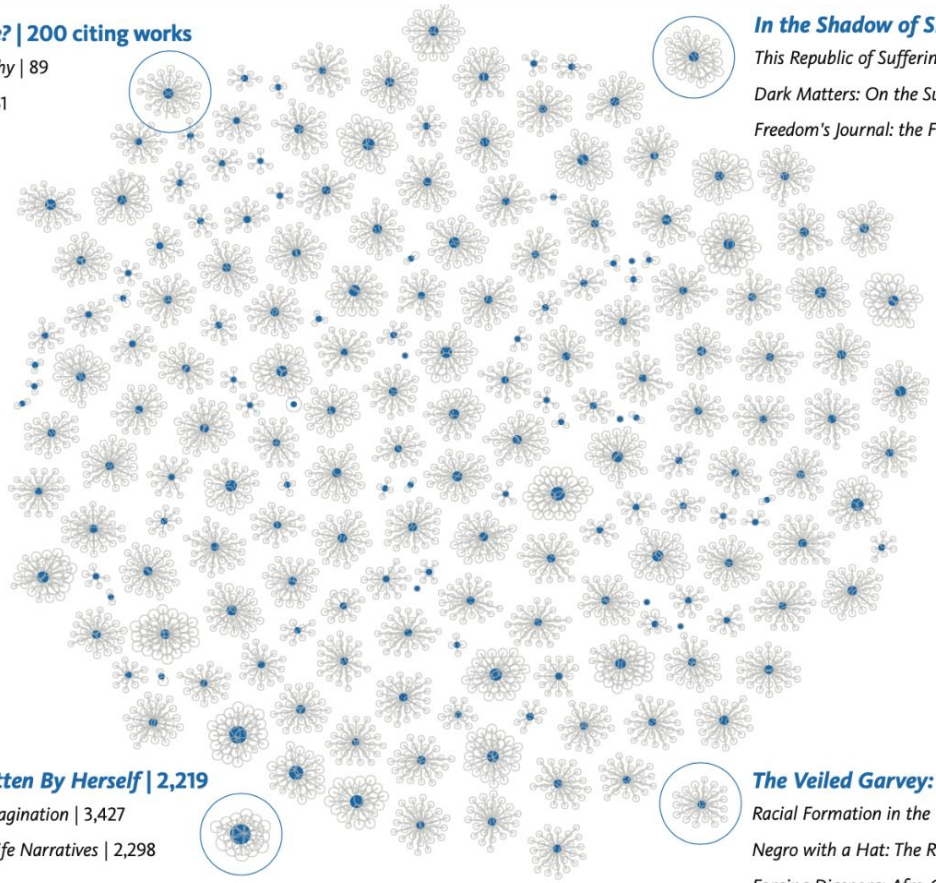
Demonstrating the reverberating impact of the scholarly and creative projects produced with NYPL's resources

- ➔ **Use**: External engagement/communication
- ➔ **Analysis type**: Object-level, citation, generational, network
- ➔ **Audience**: General public

1st & 2nd generation citations in published works (1 of 2)



1st & 2nd generation citations in published works (2 of 2)



***Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?* | 200 citing works**

The Life of William Shakespeare: A Critical Biography | 89

The Language Wars: A History of Proper English | 61

Shakespeare, Dissent and the Cold War | 12

***In the Shadow of Slavery: African Americans in New York City* | 309**

This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War | 1,016

Dark Matters: On the Surveillance of Blackness | 393

Freedom's Journal: the First African-American Newspaper | 78

***Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl: Written By Herself* | 2,219**

Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination | 3,427

Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives | 2,298

Basics of Social Research | 2,292

***The Veiled Garvey: The Life and Times of Amy Jacques Garvey* | 162**

Racial Formation in the United States | 12,263

Negro with a Hat: The Rise and Fall of Marcus Garvey | 206

Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow | 171

Citing Work • Research Fellow Work | Number of First Generation Citing Works 2 • 1,500 • 3,000

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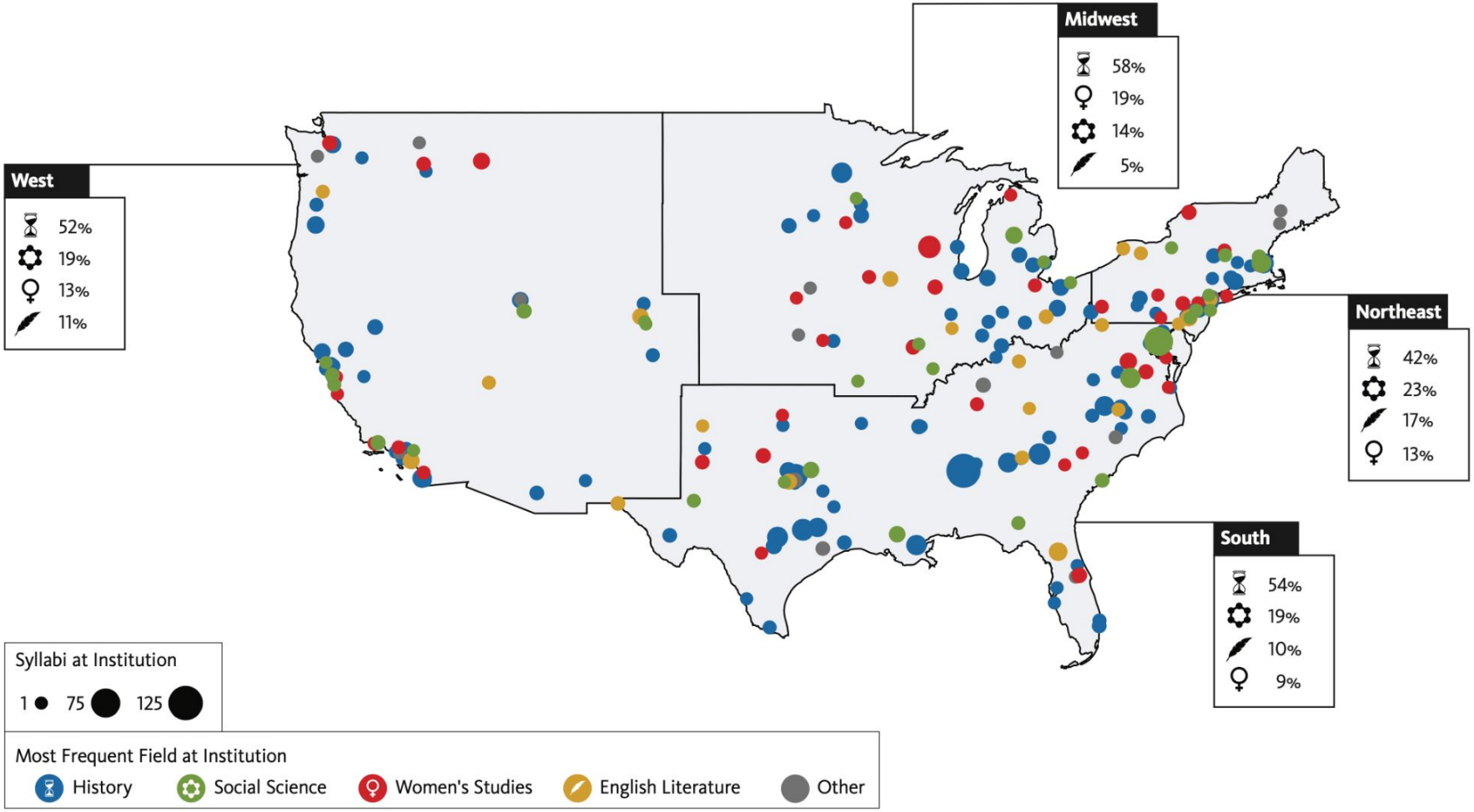
Prevalence on higher education syllabi: *The Feminine Mystique*



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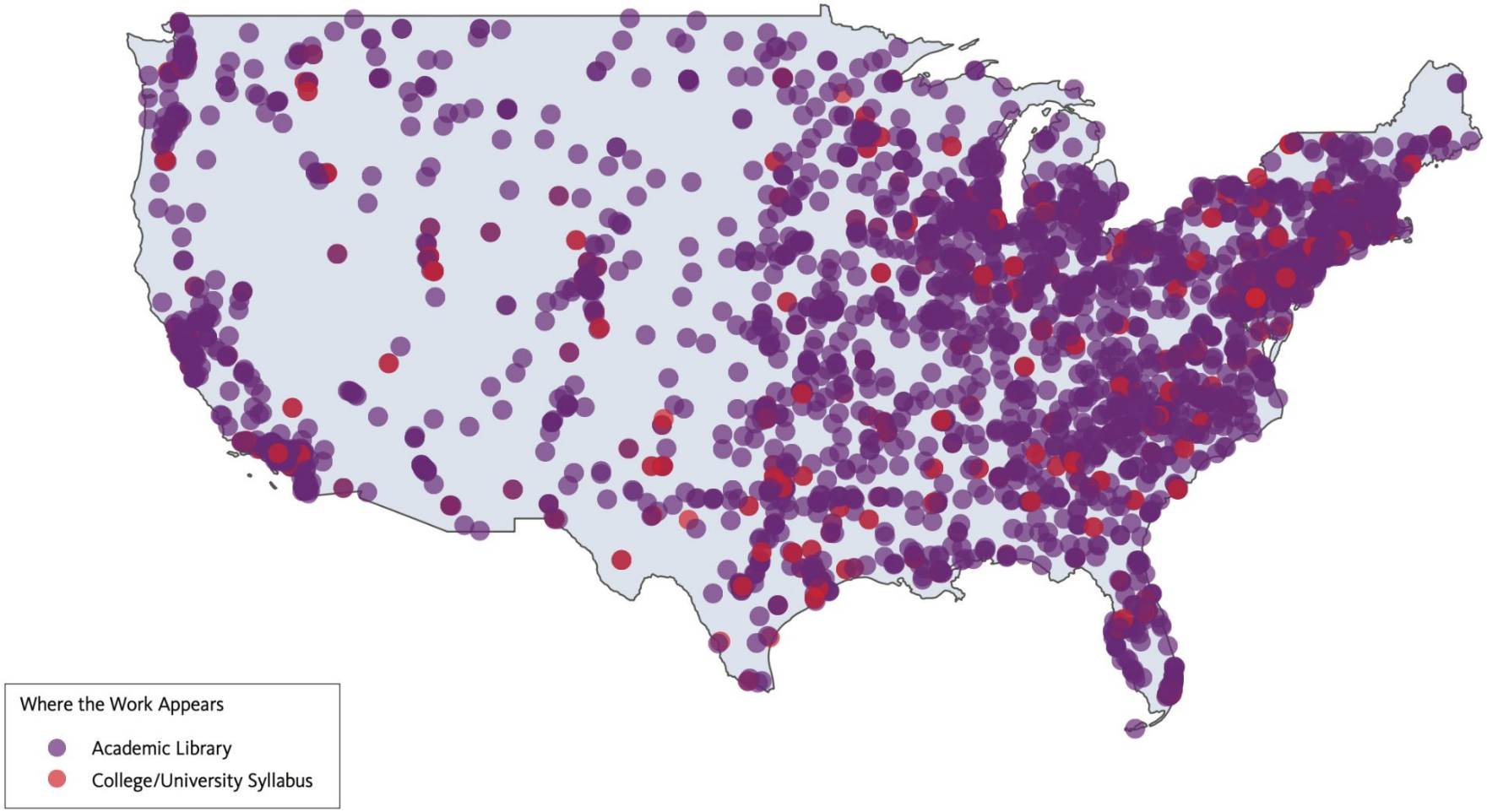
Academic institutions with fellow works in their libraries and/or syllabi



Thank you!