

THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences

Decolonising Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science (MSc)

Departmental Meeting, February 2025

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I am not a decolonial scholar.

Be kind to yourself

*Your greatest tool in beginning engagement with decolonisation is **kindness**; towards yourself and towards others. We all have a part to play, but what we (can) do will vary according to our relationship with colonisation. There is no tried and tested way to decolonise the curriculum. We will make mistakes. This is an opportunity to develop a learning community about decolonising our curriculum.*

Dr. Rayya Ghul, Lecturer in University Learning and Teaching, Edinburgh

Change what you can

Dr. Akira O'Connor
Co-author of *Colonised Minds; Narratives that Shape Psychology*

Anti-colonisation

Anticolonialism in academic research and teaching – and in knowledge production and access more broadly– aims to reject the premise that colonially-rooted powers should structure our assumptions about who gets to produce and consume knowledge, where, in what ways, and for what purposes [...]. In other words, we should actively avoid recapitulating a dynamic in which one person, group, institution, or state asserts dominance in any of the dimensions of the so-called "power matrix".

(Mckerracher & la Mora 2022, p.3)

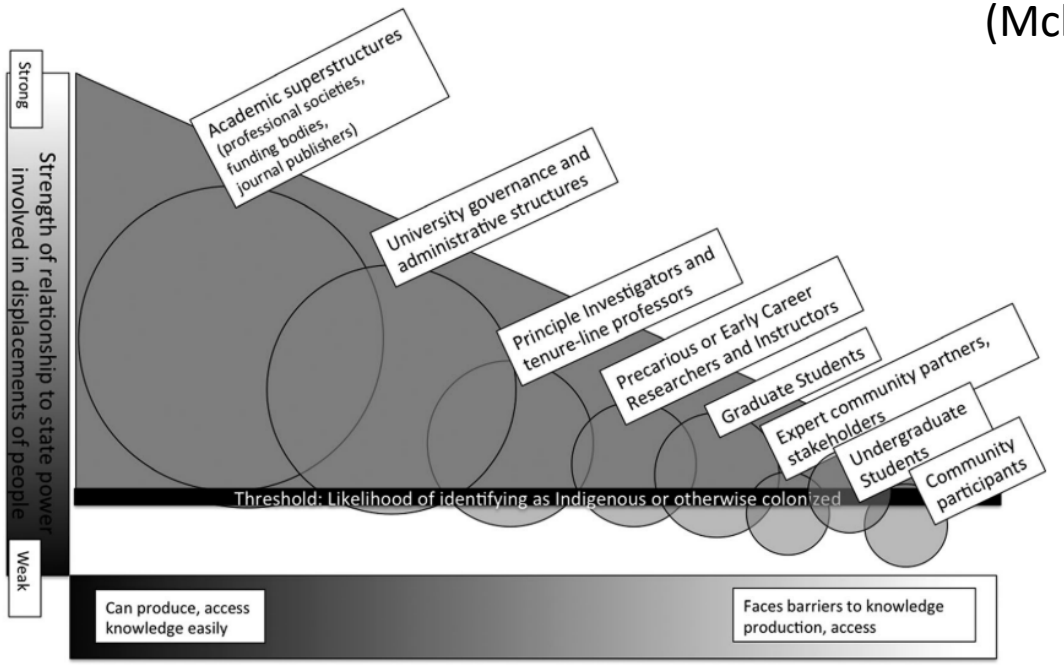

FIGURE 1 Schematic representation of relationships between the power that people and organizations hold in the academic world and the ability of those people and organizations to produce and access scientific or other forms of academic knowledge. The size of the circles represents the size and scope of the power held by each group; the circles are non-exclusive, and overlap insofar as, for example, professors may also serve as university administrators and expert community stakeholders may also be graduate students. Indigenous or other colonized people and/or their organizations are more likely to be represented among the circles with the least power, and to thus operate below a critical threshold on the power axis. This threshold might determine ability to shape the decisions and autonomy of others

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(Mckerracher & la Mora 2022, p.3)

Why?

- Pluralism brings epistemic goods.

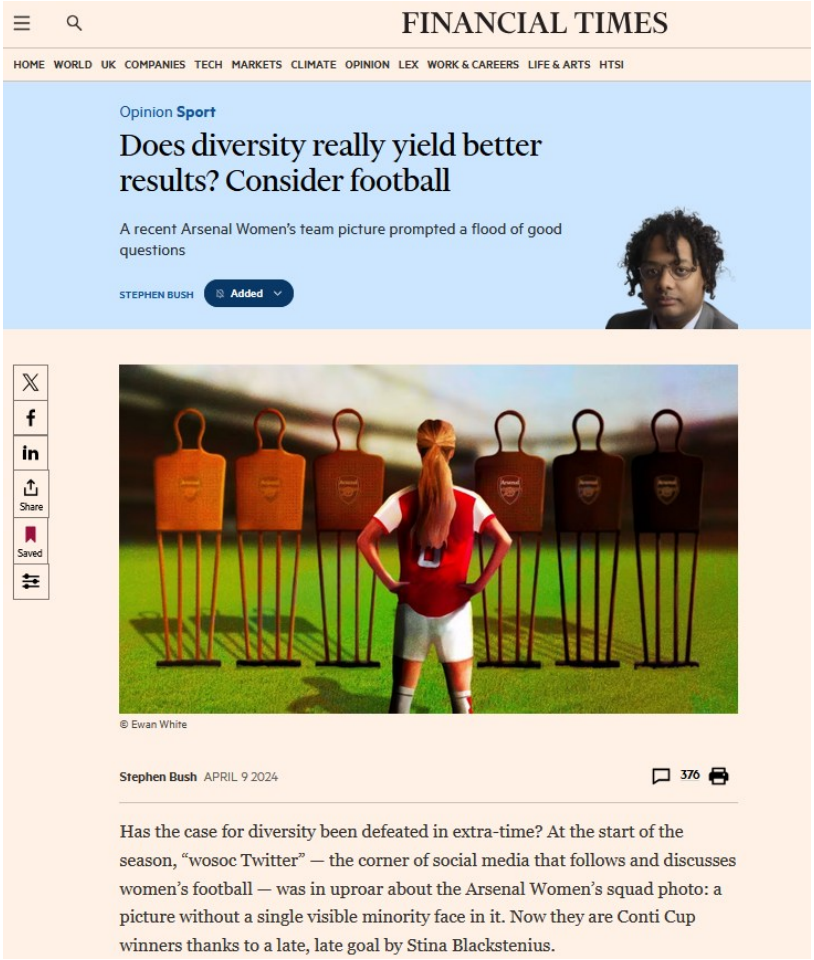
How?

- Situate the positions under discussion
- Re-think literature searches

Epistemic gains

Scientific perspectives offer standpoints afforded by particular geographical, socioeconomic, political, historical, and cultural locations. Yet collectively over time they intersect with one another and make scientific knowledge production possible.

Massimi, 2022, p.18



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Opinion **Sport**

Does diversity really yield better results? Consider football

A recent Arsenal Women's team picture prompted a flood of good questions

STEPHEN BUSH Added

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Stephen Bush APRIL 9 2024 376

Has the case for diversity been defeated in extra-time? At the start of the season, "wosoc Twitter" — the corner of social media that follows and discusses women's football — was in uproar about the Arsenal Women's squad photo: a picture without a single visible minority face in it. Now they are Conti Cup winners thanks to a late, late goal by Stina Blackstenius.

- By acknowledging the voices/positions that are dominant, and those that are missing, *we can make philosophy better*

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(Mckerracher & la Mora 2022, p.3)

Situate the positions