



# Parting Ways with the “Universal Model”

Diversifying & Decolonising  
Our Anatomy Curriculum

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The background is a dark navy blue with various colorful geometric shapes and patterns. In the top left, there are overlapping semi-circles in cyan, purple, and orange, along with a white circle. A large purple number '1' is positioned in the upper center. The top right features a large purple ring and a cyan semi-circle. The bottom right has a cyan semi-circle and an orange square. The bottom left contains a cyan semi-circle with a white star, a purple diamond, and a small orange circle. The bottom center has a white star. The bottom right has a purple diamond and an orange circle. The word 'Introductions' is written in a bold, orange, sans-serif font across the middle.

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# Introductions



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# What is Decolonisation ?

# What is Decolonisation ?

- "the de-centering of Eurocentric systems and knowledge production. - the reappraisal of whitewashed history."

"confronting and challenging the colonizing practices that have influenced education in the past but which persist in educational practice today"



# Progress In Aberdeen



## Systems Teaching

Implementation of student -  
made resources tackling  
clinical presentations  
across POC demographics



## Clinical Skills

Use of diverse models for  
practical skills

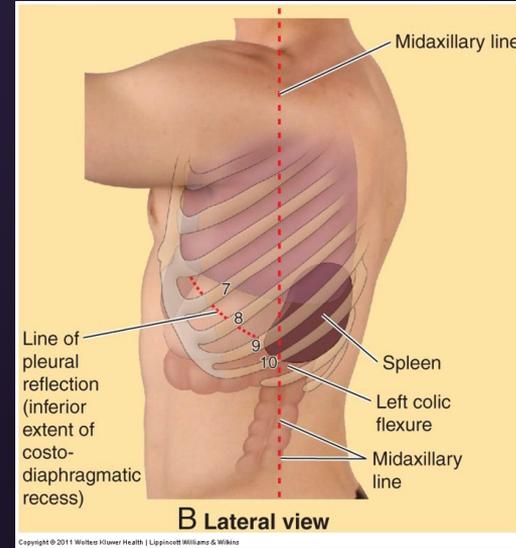


## Anatomy?

Is there scope?  
To what benefit?

Why try to  
decolonise  
anatomy?





## A starting point:

- An external examiner has suggested to increase representation of race in exams.
- There is beneficial application of Surface Anatomy materials

# Literature Review

Giacomini et al.  
(1986)



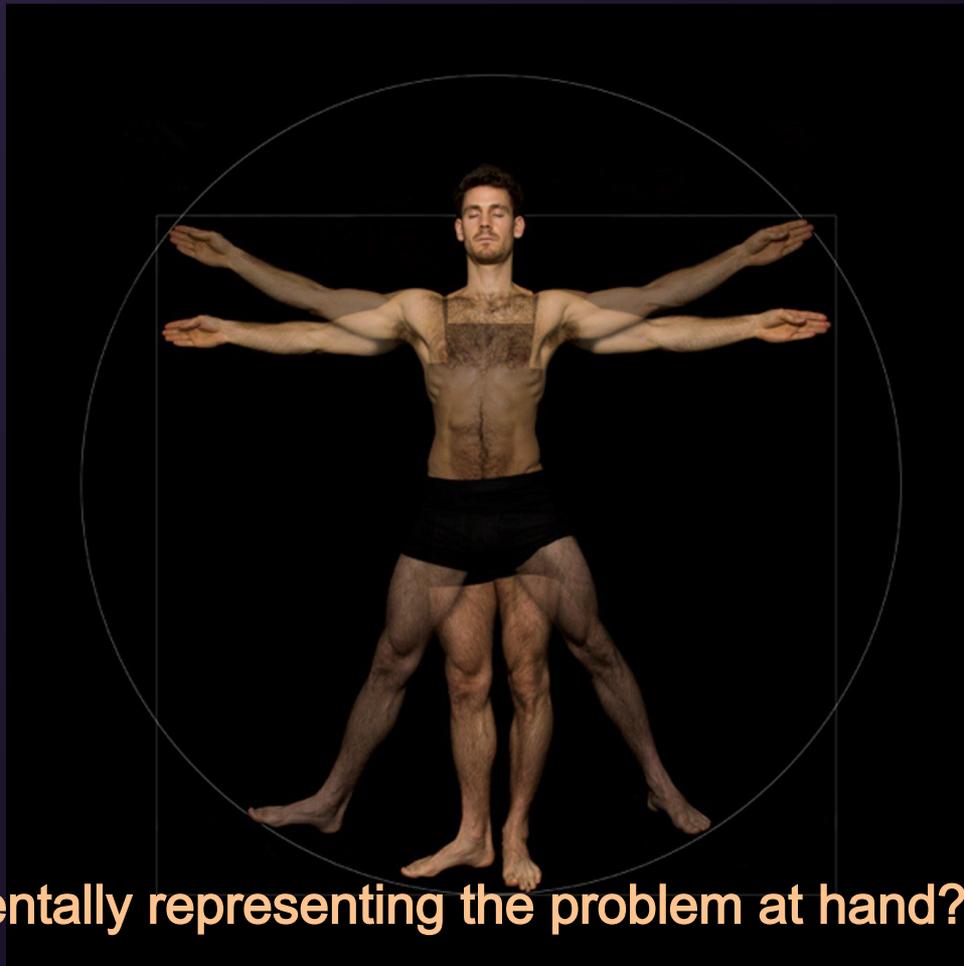
Only 11% of images (out with reproductive anatomy) depicted women

Parker et al. (2017)



- 78% of bodies assessed were caucasian
  - Men were 2.2x more likely to be presented than women.
- Transgendered bodies recorded only 5 times.
- Only 2.7% of images represented disability





**Coincidentally representing the problem at hand?**

# Progress In Aberdeen

## Systems Teaching

Implementation of student -  
made resources tackling  
clinical presentations  
across POC demographics

## Clinical Skills

Use of diverse models for  
practical skills

## Anatomy?

**Is there scope?  
Is there benefit?**

**Yes.**

# A more inclusive anatomy curriculum



The background is a dark navy blue with a variety of abstract geometric shapes. In the top left, there are overlapping semi-circles in cyan, purple, and orange, along with a white circle. A large purple number '3' is positioned in the upper center. The top right features a large purple ring, a cyan starburst, and a white starburst. The right side has a cyan 'C' shape and an orange rectangle. The bottom left contains a cyan circle, a purple diamond, and a small orange circle. The bottom right has a purple diamond and a cyan circle. The title 'The Audit' is centered in a large, bold, orange font.

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# The Audit

# Auditing Anatomy Teaching Resources

## Aims:

- To analyse the representation of skin tones, gender and body types within our anatomy curriculum.

## Methods:

Literature Review

Analysed characteristics of surface anatomy in core teaching materials for the anatomy curriculum



# Skin Tone Assessment ✨



- Used the **Fitzpatrick scale** to classify skin tones
- Worked through teaching materials (workbooks, lectures) to look at skin tones of images displayed.

# Assessment of Body Type & Sex

## Body Type

Described as a range from  
*Slim - Large*

## Sex

Described as either  
*male-presenting*  
or  
*female-presenting*

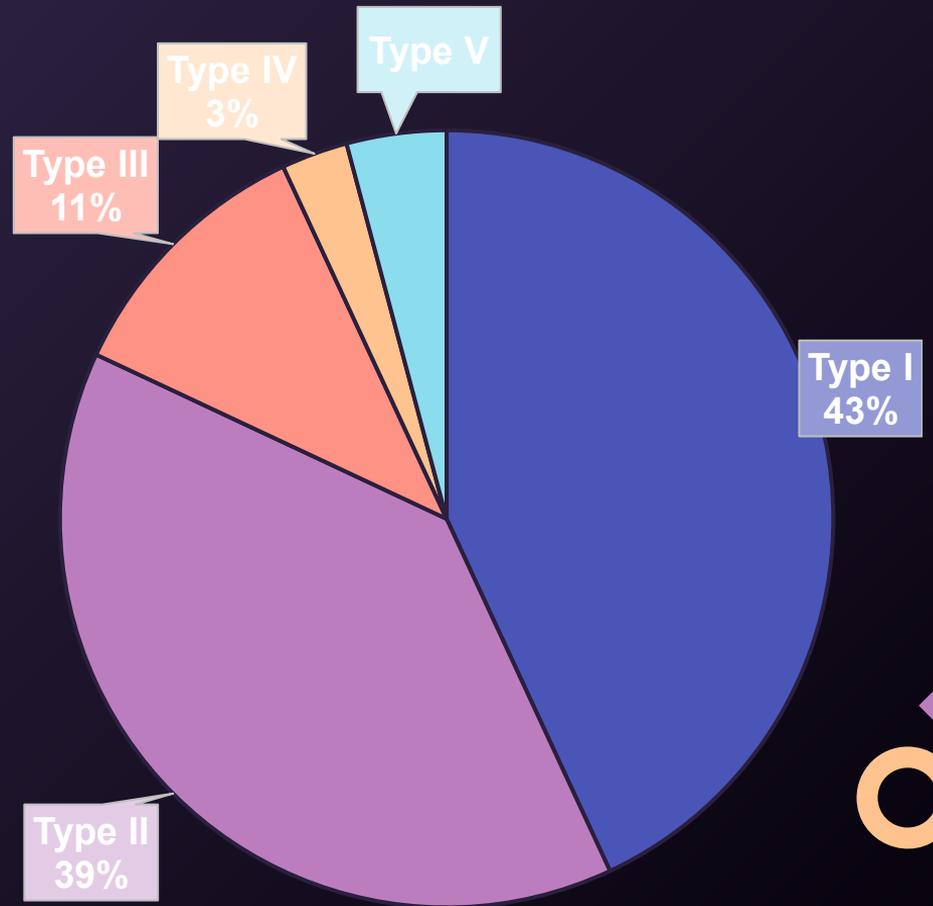
The background is a dark navy blue with various abstract geometric elements. In the top left, there are overlapping semi-circles in cyan, purple, and orange, along with a white circle. A cyan semi-circle with a small blue star is also present. In the top right, there are large purple and blue circles, a yellow diamond, and a cyan semi-circle. The bottom left features a yellow circle, a purple diamond, and a small pink dot. The bottom right has a yellow circle and a purple diamond. Several small white and cyan stars are scattered throughout the design.

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# The Audit Results

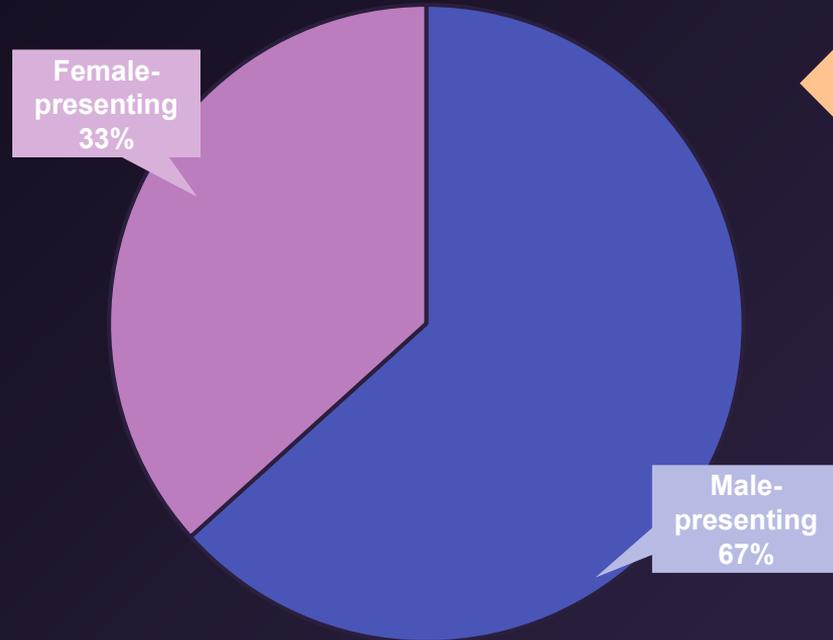
# Skin Tone Representation

Fitzpatrick Type I had the maximum representation, with no representation of Fitzpatrick Type VI



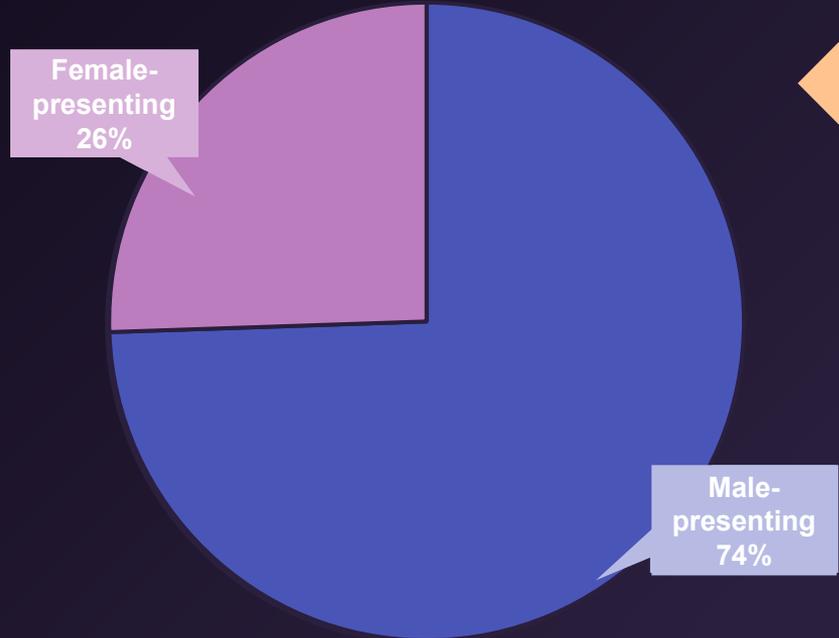
# Representation of Sex

67% of images were male presenting



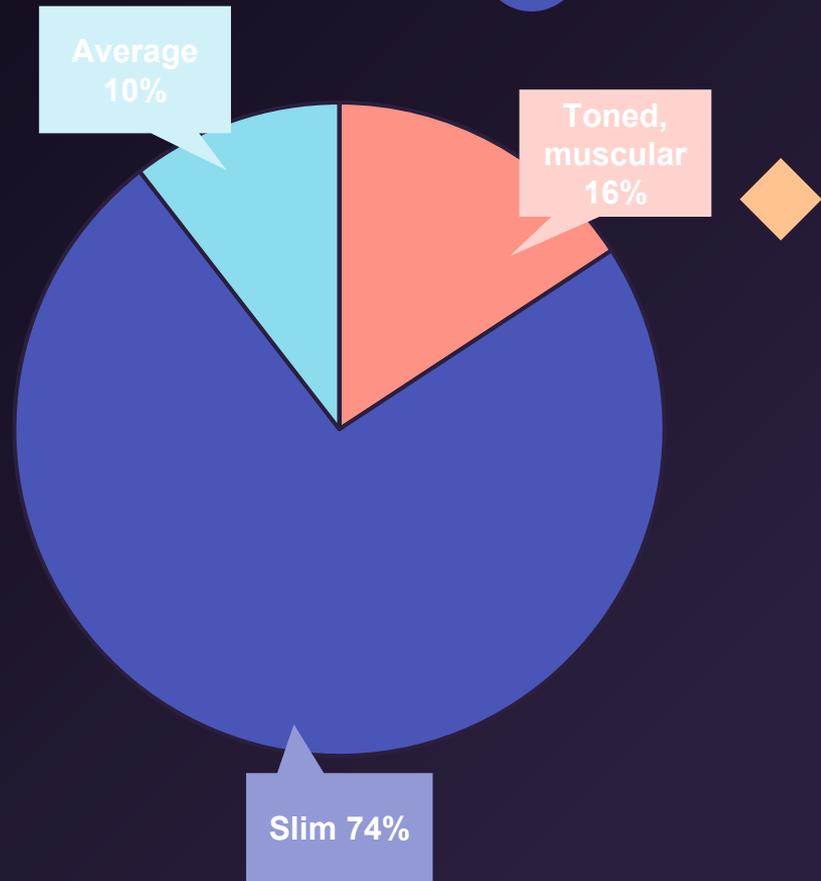
# Representation of Sex

The majority of images were male - presenting.



## Body Type

Most images are of slim or toned, muscular individuals.



“White males have long dominated as the archetypal representation in Western Anatomy textbooks, typically presented as the ‘universal model’ of the human form.”

—Finn et al., 2022 | Colonization, cadavers, and color:  
Considering decolonization of anatomy curricula

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# Conclusions & Moving Forward

# Thoughts on Results

Our findings support what we have found during our literature search.

The toned, slim, white male is most commonly used to represent the human form in our Anatomy Curriculum.

Highlight the need to explore avenues of revamping materials to be more robust & diverse

# Now What?



# Surface Anatomy Image Bank

The background is a dark purple gradient. It features several abstract geometric elements: a large white circle in the lower-left, a small orange diamond below it, and a series of concentric squares in the upper-right. There are also various colored circles (orange, purple, blue) and starburst shapes (orange, purple, blue) scattered throughout. A diagonal line runs from the bottom-left towards the top-right, separating the text area from a more complex pattern of overlapping shapes and colors.

# The Next Steps



Planning logistics on  
how the image bank  
will be made

Build the Surface  
Anatomy Image  
Bank



Surface Anatomy Image Bank  
to be made available to  
healthcare students &  
implemented across materials



## In Summary

- Current literature shows slim white males are over - represented across Anatomy Teaching Materials
- Our audit of the compulsory teaching materials at Aberdeen Medical School supports this
- With the present need of a more inclusive and diverse anatomy curriculum, our next steps will be building and launching a *Surface Anatomy Image Bank* at Aberdeen Medical School.

# Special Thanks To

## Dr. Asha Venkatesh

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The background is a dark navy blue with various abstract geometric elements. In the top-left corner, there are overlapping shapes in cyan, purple, and orange, along with a white circle and a cyan teardrop shape containing a small blue star. The top-right corner features a large purple ring, a cyan teardrop with a white star, and a white star. The bottom-left has a cyan circle, a purple diamond, and a small pink dot. The bottom-right contains a cyan circle, a purple diamond, and a white star. The word "Questions?" is centered in a bold, orange, sans-serif font.

Questions?