



Parting Ways with the “Universal Model”

Diversifying & Decolonising
Our Anatomy Curriculum

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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

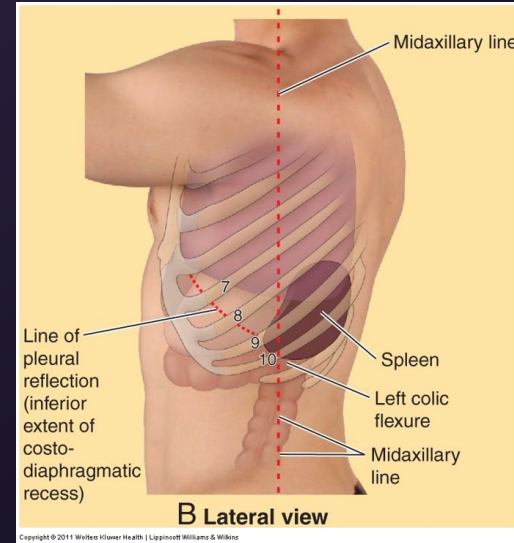
Use of diverse models for
practical skills

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)



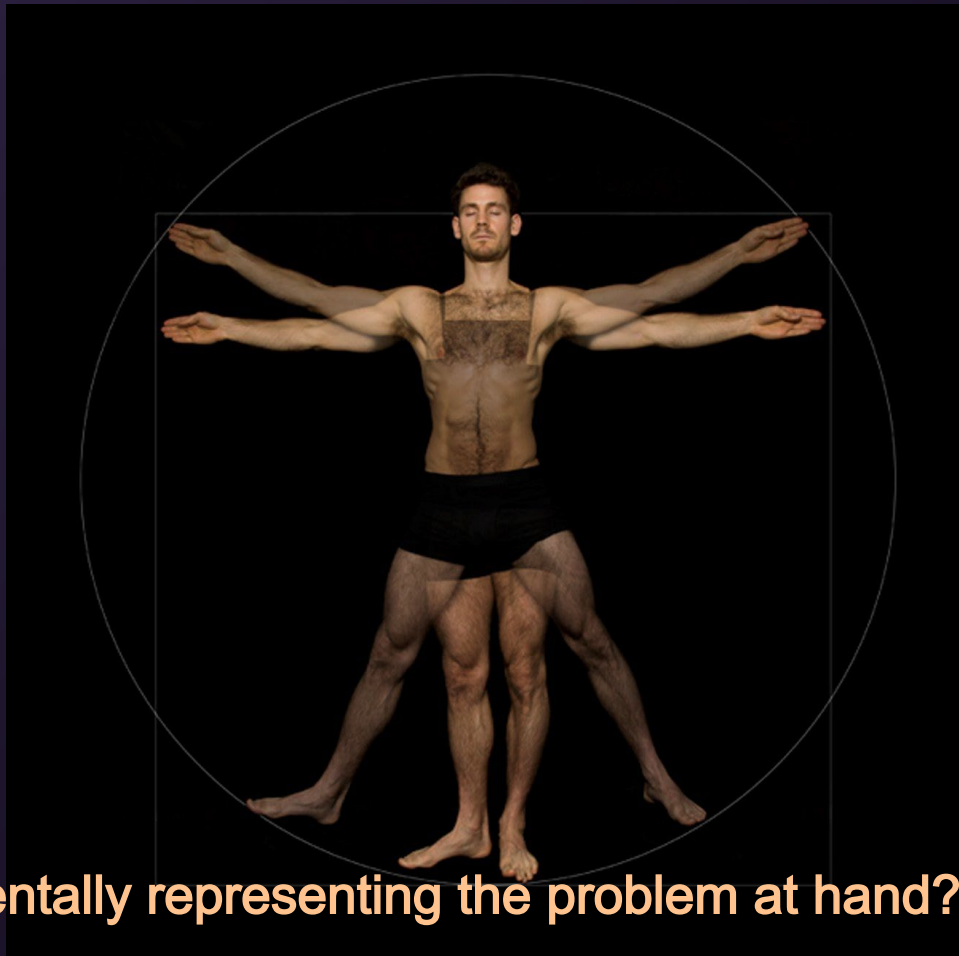
Only 11% of images (out with reproductive anatomy) depicted women

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 purple field filled with various geometric shapes and patterns. In the top left, there are overlapping semi-circles in light blue, white, and orange, with a small blue starburst nearby. A large purple number '3' is positioned in the upper center. The top right features a large purple ring, a blue semi-circle, and a small orange diamond. The bottom left has a small orange circle, a purple diamond, and a yellow starburst. The bottom right contains a large orange ring and a purple diamond. Faint, concentric geometric lines are visible in the corners.

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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

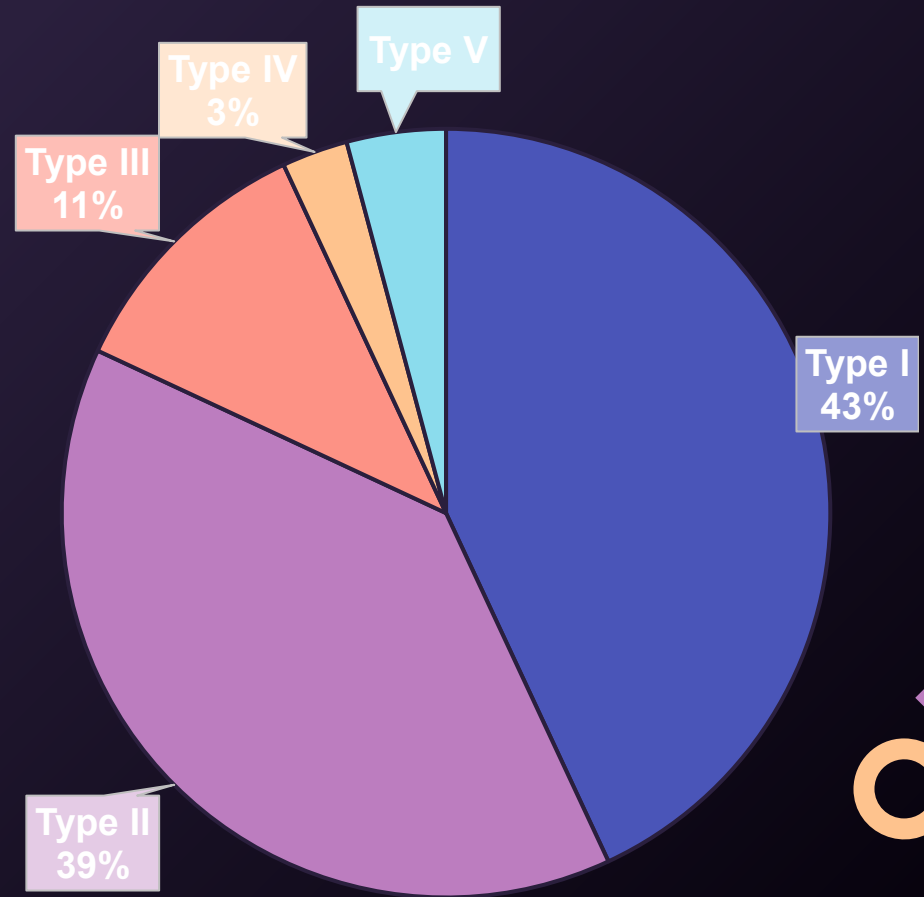


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The Audit Results

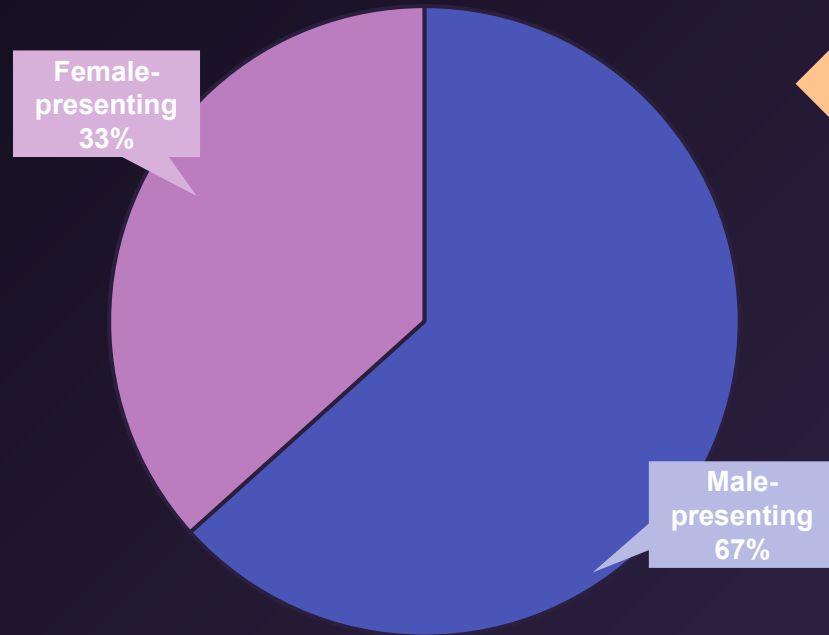
Skin Tone Representation

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



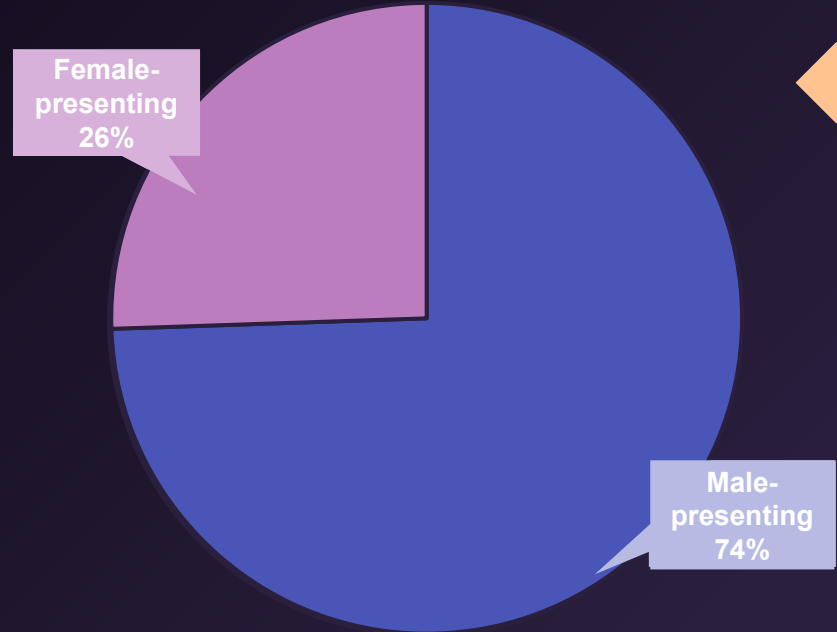
Representation of Sex

67% of images were male
presenting



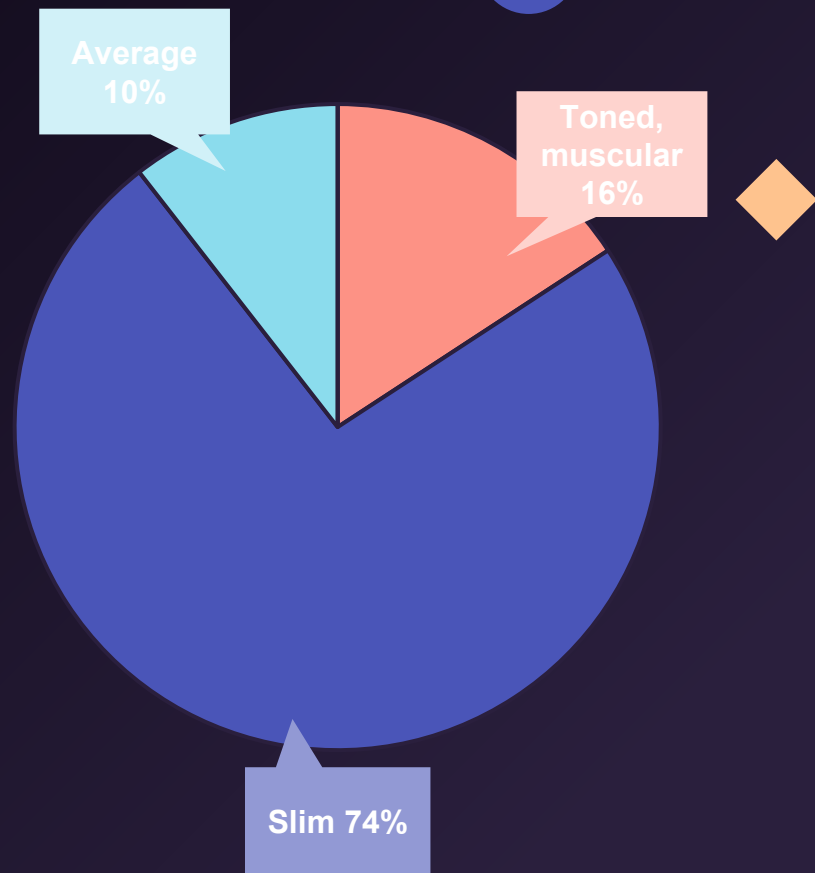
Representation of Sex

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 various 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 several stars in orange, purple, and blue, and various circles and semi-circles in orange, purple, and blue. 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 geometric forms in the bottom right corner.

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

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Questions?