Decolonising Data Summit

The event will be starting shortly

Agenda

14:00 – 15:15

Keynote: "A New World? Transformational Knowledge and Decolonisation"

Crain Soudien, Professor Emeritus of Education and African Studies, University of Cape Town, South Africa

15:30 – 16:30

Panel 1: Decolonising International Assessment

Moderation: *Leon Tikly*

Speakers: *César Guadalupe, Therese Hopfenbeck, Baela Jamil, Sylvia Schmelkes*

16:30 – 17:30

Panel 2: Decolonising Ed-Tech

Moderation: Kathryn Moeller
Speakers: Taskeen Adam, Marina Avelar, Priscila Gonsales, Siddhi Gupta

17:45 – 18:00

Close

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Our Ethical Imperatives

- None of us is alone
- We live in an interconnected world
- What we do, as individuals and as collectives, has deep implications for the ecology
- Becoming conscious of how we live
- Becoming conscious of self and other
- Becoming conscious of the planet.

Our Ethical Imperatives – Odora Hoppers

- **As a people we know that no community is complete without the other.**

- **No society is complete in itself**

- **The other opens us, enlarges us**

- **Without the otherness of the other, the self is incomplete and even vulnerable**
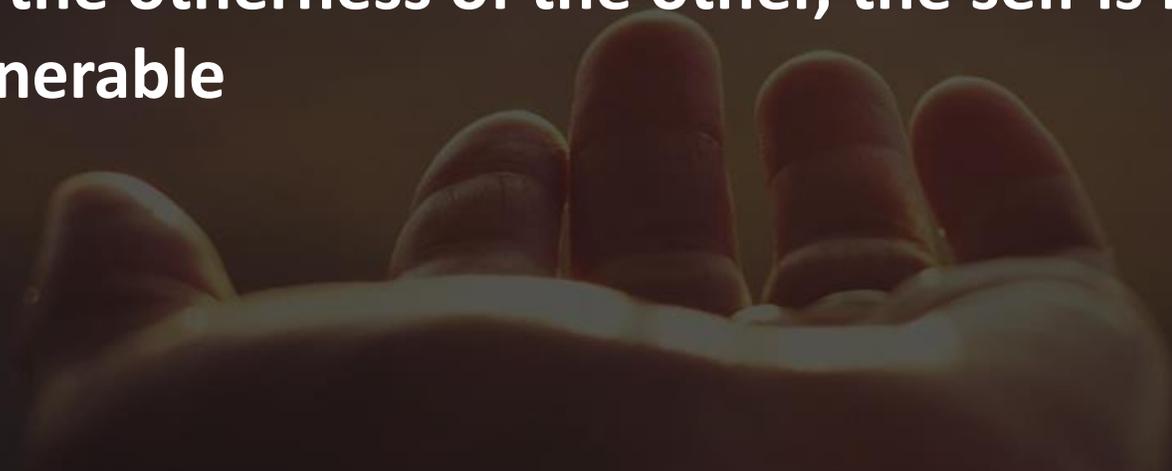
Our Ethical Imperatives - Visvanathan

- **What is true of society is true of knowledge**

- **No knowledge is complete in itself**

- **No knowledge is complete without the dreams of the other**

- **Hospitality, reciprocity, generosity, plurality — Without these, no "commons" of knowledge is possible (Visvanathan 2016).**

Understanding Dominance – What is it?

Dominance in society takes many forms. For our purposes it is the way meaning is constituted through the multiplication, instantiation, legitimation, institutionalisation and discursive renewal of the ideas of the powerful.

Of course, this process is never singular or total, but its inclinations are in that direction. It presents itself as definitive reason.

Critical, is its capacity to revitalise itself.

Understanding Dominance - Premises

Freedom of choice

Self-interest

Competition

Rationality of markets.

Dominance and Normative Ordering

Instrumentalist conceptualization of knowledge:

- 1. Assumes a positivist understanding of knowledge as inherently ethical, and the progress of science to be linear and ascendant.
- 2. Limits space (and legitimacy) for critical knowledges that challenge the status quo and critique the practices of the state.
- 3. Simplifies and limits value until recognised as "evidence" by society or policy makers, thus failing to recognise knowledge as an agent of change in and of itself, knowledge as transformational.

Dominance and Normative Ordering

Normative value chain positions research as 'objective' – above the politics of the society from which it arises and into which it returns.

Research impact readily forgets the knowledge/power nexus: knowledge is inseparable from forms of power and their effects (Foucault).

In South Africa, the sciences worked to legitimize state practices and justify policies of separation and hierarchisation, and were presupposed to be the singular means through which the world could be understood (Soudien, 2015).

Evidence informed policy-making in the history of the HSRC, with its close relationship to the apartheid state and its status quo:

'Government decisions were made on the basis of proper information' (Tjaart van der Walt, HSRC ex-President, cited in White, 1992).

Praetorian sensibility: knowledge on guard of the state

Dominance and Normative Ordering

Dominance configures us ontologically

Constitutes us ontologically and epistemologically

And then

Orders us into certain positions in institutional hierarchies which

- regulate our behaviours, expectations and self-managed inhibitions
- legitimate the constitutive principles upon which we work, and
- delegitimate alternative ways of thinking, being and doing

Methodo-logies - Scientism
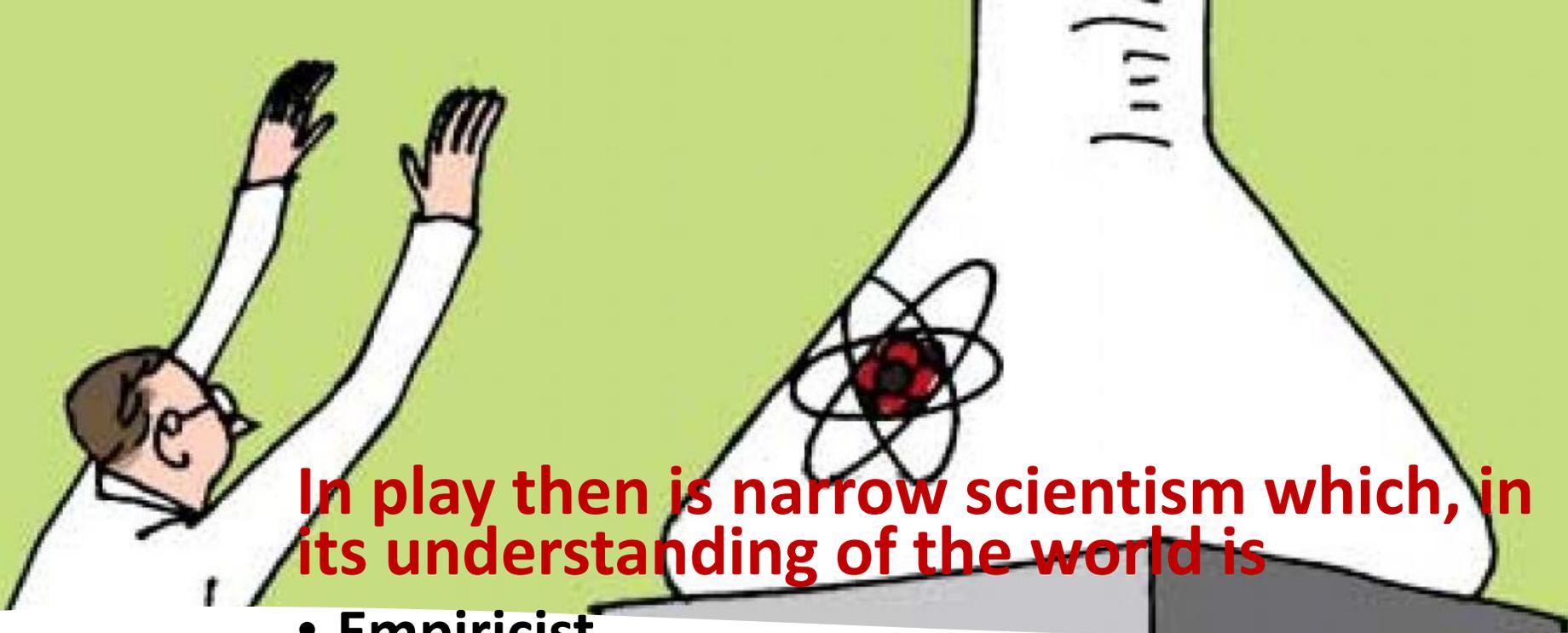
In play then is narrow scientism which, in its understanding of the world is

- **Empiricist**
- **Positivist**
- **Exclusive and detached in relating to the total environment**
- **Analytical and deductive in its perception and thinking**
- **Linear in its 'doing'**
- **Hierarchical and competitive in its management of the field of activity.**

Limits of Dominance

- **Empiricism's inability to understand its positionality**

- **Empiricism's belief in its own validity – if it can be measured it is 'true' and, as a consequence, trustworthy.**

- **Effectiveness is an 'instrumental' value - Gert Biesta.**

- **But 'effective' for what?**

Where are we now?

Deepening of inequality

Climate catastrophe

Rise of narrow nationalism

Retreat of the democratic state

Increase of mistrust in public institutions

Increase in individualistic attitudes

Where we are now: The neo-liberal university

- Corporatized University
- Marketized understanding of excellence
- Metricized accountability

Bill Readings: The University In Ruins, 1996

Excellence marks nothing more than the moment of technology's self-reflection. All that the system requires is for activity to take place, and the empty notion of excellence refers to nothing other than the optimal input-output ratio in terms of information.

Largely, not totally, a site for the reproduction of social, political and economic dominance

Where we are now

- **Metricised accountability**
- **Citation rates**
- **High impact journals**
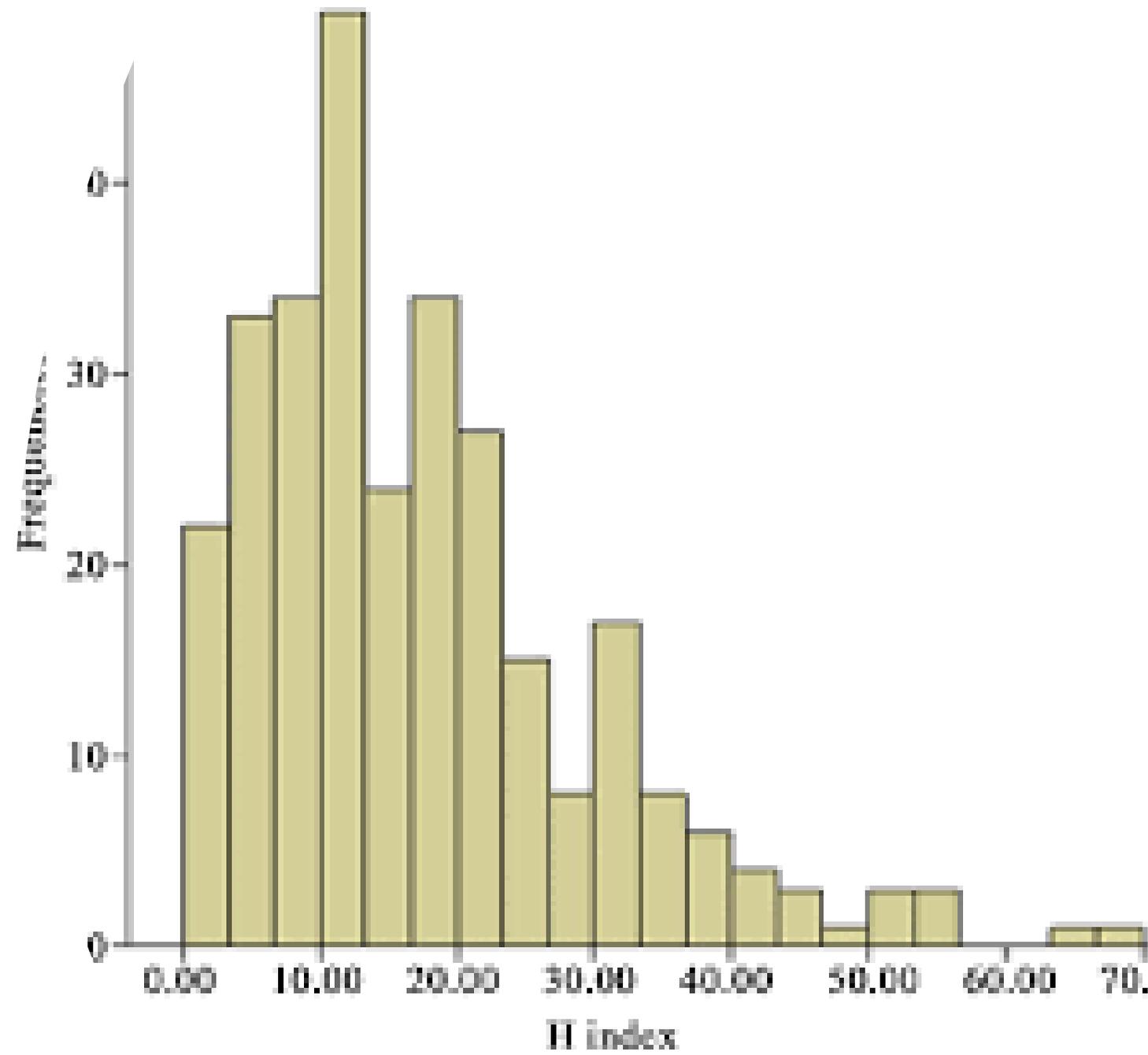
Where we are now: The Academic Self

By and large, a reproducer of dominance

Agent of legitimation

Anxious about entering the sphere of the non-empirical

Anxious about contemplating complexity, refusal to work with affects of pain, trauma, desire, joy and compassion – the undesirability of love

Accepting the reality of an impoverished self – operating without an historically situated backstage.
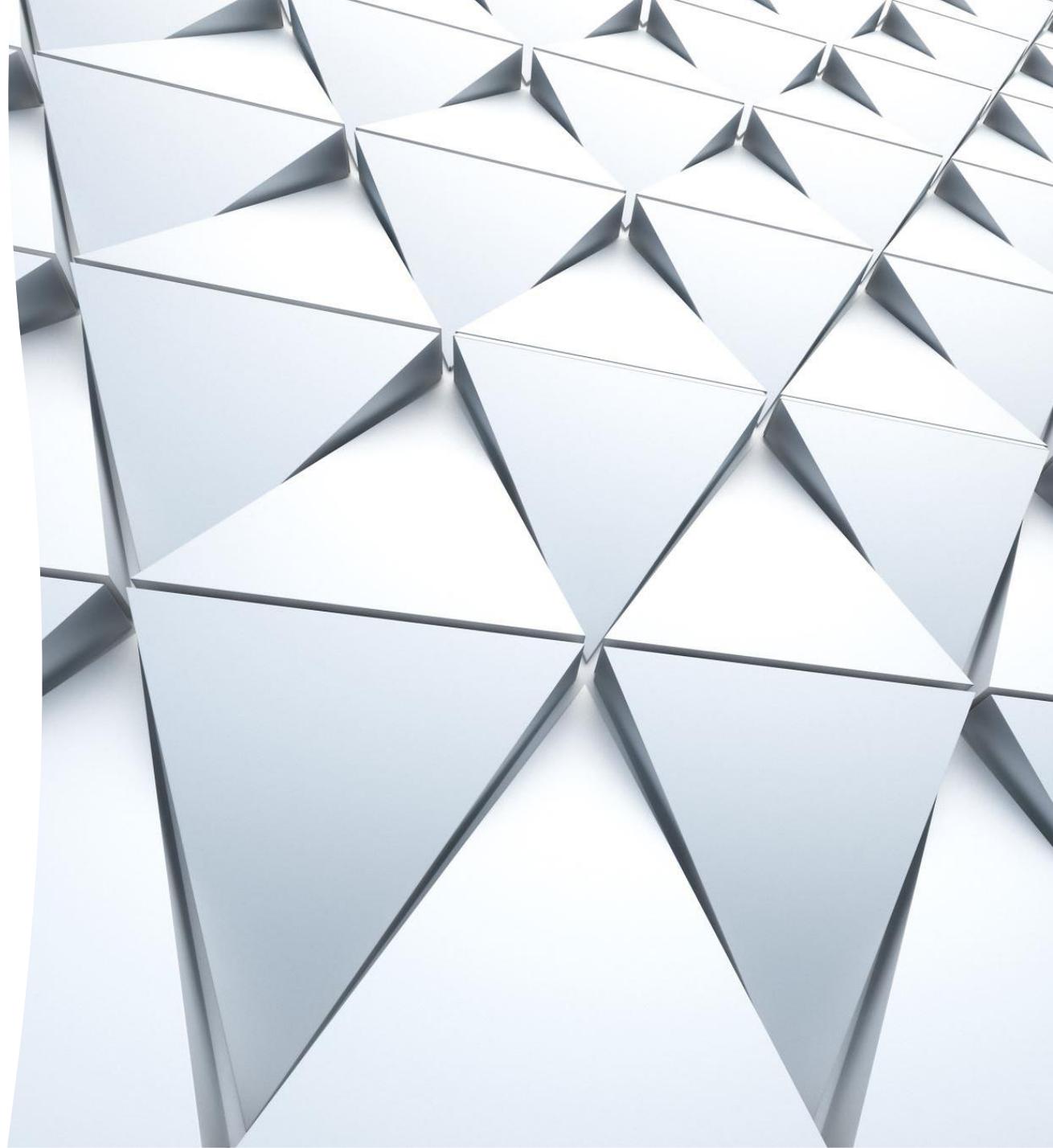
Where we are now – Towards the 'alienated self'

Corporatisation configures our work in particular ways.

While tension will always be a feature of our participation in higher education, this tension is modulated, and marks out for us what is possible in the university, what is privileged and what is disprivileged.

And so we 'perform'. What performativity does is determine, as Maria do mar Pereira explains "what tends to become impossible in the current scholarly context."

Mankind's self-alienation has reached such a degree that it can experience its own destruction as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order.

Jerry Mander

Transformational Knowledge - Decolonisation

- It proceeds from an agreement that decolonisation is about,
  - An awareness of the ideological superstructure of modernity, its logics, metaphysics and ontologies and their accompanying power apparatuses, religion, education, socialisation, propaganda and coercion.

  - A call to resistance.

- In the first, it draws attention to the totalising impulses of modernity, to its centring of value in the European form - its archive and its telos. It is, it claims, civilisation's final signifier.

- In the second, it urges the disruption of the logocentricism of the idea of Europe and the inclusion of the whole of our knowledge treasury.

Transformational Knowledge – Science /

Quantum Physics

It is not possible to observe an object (such as a sub-atomic particle) without changing or affecting the object you are observing. Subject and object are inextricably bound together. We can only talk in terms of probabilities.

**Niels Bohr: "Everything we call real is made up of things that cannot be regarded as real."**

The Place of Critical Knowledges – Odora Hoppers

- **Indigenous Knowledge Systems force science to become a part of a struggle of memory against forgetting.**

- **The bringing of Indigenous Knowledge Systems into the formal is what will enable the contesting of the museumization of the "Other", and exposes the insensitivity of science, which meets the "Other" only in death.**

The Place of Critical Knowledges

- **Strategic challenging of the rules of the game**
- **Strategic engagement with epistemological monocultures, and, particularly, with the rules or methods for the making of knowledge.**
- **Inviting, in hospitality, other ways of knowing.**
- **Holding in scepticism all truth-claims irrespective of where they come from.**
- **Relentless curiosity to establish how lines of reasoning unfold.**
- **Radical openness.**

Transformational Knowledge

- **Coming to an understanding of the public good**

- **Understanding one's place and relationships in the wider republic of knowledge**

Alternatives?

- **What narrative of the self to construct.**

- **Complete self-consciousness, consciousness of relationship with the 'other' in the 'other's' full complexity, consciousness of one's ecological citizenship.**

- **Building, consciously, 'holding cultures' for the values you are seeking to argue for'.**

- **Developing a politics of engagement – what to research, what to do with one's research (where to publish and why), how to deal with complicity.**

Q&A

Decolonising Data Summit

Panel 1: Decolonising International Assessment

Moderator
Leon Tikly
Professor in Education, UNESCO Chair in Inclusive, Good Quality Education and Global Chair in Education, University of Bristol, United Kingdom

Speaker
César Guadalupe
Professor, Department of Social and Political Sciences, and member of the Universidad del Pacífico Research Center, Peru

Speaker
Therese Hopfenbeck
Professor and Director, Assessment and Evaluation Research Centre, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, Australia

Speaker
Baela Jamil
Chief Executive Officer, Idara-e-Taleem-oAagahi, Pakistan

Speaker
Sylvia Schmelkes
Educational Researcher at the Research Institute for the Development of Education, Universidad Iberoamericana, Mexico

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UP NEXT

16:45 – 17:45

Panel 2: Decolonising Ed-Tech

Panel 2: Decolonising Ed-Tech

Moderator
Kathryn Moeller
Assistant Professor, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

Speaker
Taskeen Adam
Associate Manager, OpenDevEd

Speaker
Marina Avelar
Assistant Professor, Federal University of Minas Gerais, Brazil

Speaker
Priscila Gonsales
Researcher, UNESCO Chair in Distance Education, University of Brasília, Brazill

Speaker
Siddhi Gupta
Research Lead, FemLab.co

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17:45 – 18:00 CEST

Closing

Decolonising Data Summit

Upcoming Events

More info

April 25, 2023, 15:00-16:00 UTC+8, in Hangzhou, China & online

Data and Children: gaps, opportunities and responsibilities

More info

Special Issue - UNESCO Chair in Innovative informal Learning Disadvantaged and Development Context

Call for Papers in a Special Issue on Decolonising EdTech