

This is the **author's self-assessment** for an open access article under the CC BY SA license.

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.52612/journals/eol-oe.2025.e1632>

Cosmopolitics and The Commons

Robert Farrow¹ [\[0000-0002-7625-8396\]](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7625-8396)

¹ Institute of Educational Technology, The Open University (UK)

As a white male scholar from the Global North, I am acutely aware that my personal, cultural, and academic background is deeply intertwined with the historical and ongoing legacies of colonialism. I come from a country that has significantly benefited from colonial expansion, resource extraction, and the subjugation of Indigenous peoples and communities of the Global South. This positionality influences my perspectives, privileges, and access to knowledge production and dissemination within the academic sphere as well as attempts at “objective” argument.

My identity as a white male affords me privileges that are often invisible but nonetheless pervasive, particularly in academic settings that have historically centered Western, Eurocentric, and patriarchal narratives. These privileges allow me to navigate educational institutions and discourse with relative ease, access resources and platforms that might not be as readily available to scholars from marginalized or historically oppressed communities, and participate in global conversations from a position of relative authority. I recognize that my analysis might inadvertently reflect the biases inherent in my positionality, despite efforts to critically engage with these topics in an inclusive and equitable manner.

In writing this paper, I have sought to consciously engage with the work of scholars from the Global South and Indigenous communities, whose knowledge systems have been systematically marginalized within mainstream academic discourse. However, I acknowledge that my interpretation and representation of these perspectives are inevitably filtered through my own cultural and intellectual framework, which is rooted in a context that has historically overlooked or undervalued non-Western epistemologies.

Furthermore, the very concept of “open education” and the commons, as discussed in this paper, is deeply influenced by the neoliberal and capitalist ideologies that have shaped educational policies and practices in the Global North. While I advocate for a cosmopolitical approach that seeks to honor and incorporate diverse knowledge systems, I am aware that my ability to do so is limited by my own socialization and the structural power dynamics that govern knowledge production.

I am committed to ongoing self-reflection and learning in this regard, recognising the need to listen to and amplify the voices of those who have been historically silenced or marginalised. I aim to contribute to a more inclusive and equitable academic discourse, acknowledging the complexities of knowledge exchange and the importance of respecting and valuing all forms of knowledge, including those from communities that have been negatively impacted by colonialism.

While I strive to approach the subject matter of this paper with sensitivity and awareness, I acknowledge the limitations of my positionality. My background and privileges shape my understanding and interpretation of the issues at hand, and I remain vigilant in challenging my own assumptions and biases. I

hope that this work can serve as a starting point for further dialogue and collaboration with scholars from diverse backgrounds, contributing to a richer and more nuanced understanding of open education, moral universalism, and the commons.

I am grateful to Barbara Class, Marcus Deimann, Michael Peters and Helen Titilola Olojede for insightful reviewer comments on earlier drafts of this manuscript.