Research Staff Image Competition 2024
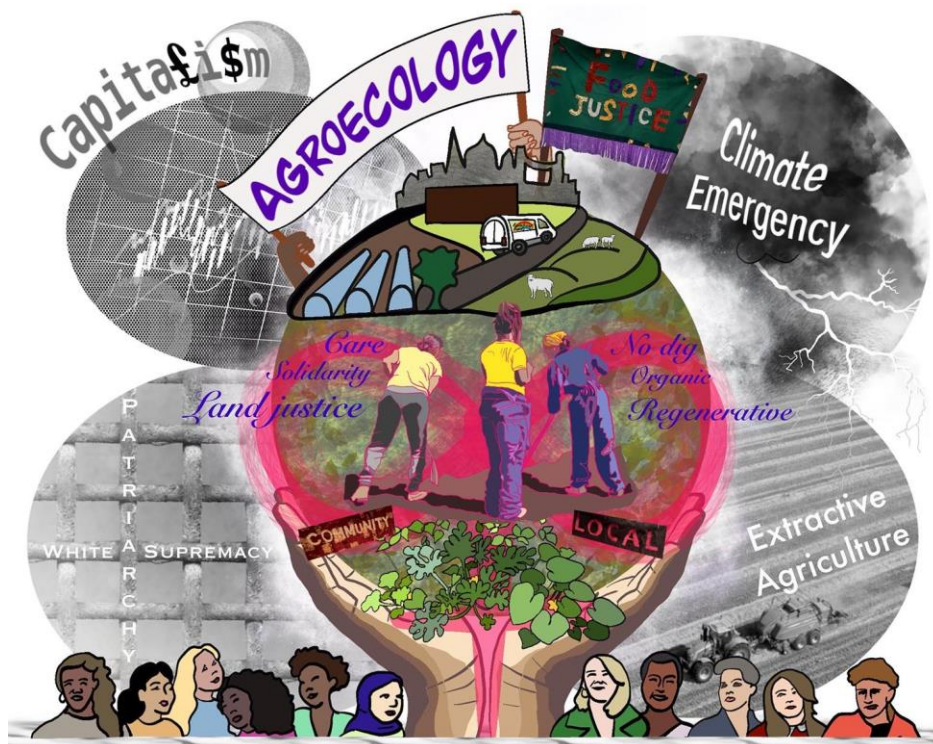
Ecofeminist migrations 'back to the land'

1 - Ecofeminist migrations 'back to the land' -

Rachael Durrant

Business School

Women from urban backgrounds are the lifeblood of the agroecology movement. But what is motivating them to take up farming when they have no access to land, no land-based training, and face many other barriers to entry? And how can they navigate a sector that is widely acknowledged to be both hostile to their gender and in a prolonged and deepening period of crisis? This image was created as part of a multi-media study exploring women's journeys 'back to the land' in contemporary Britain. Findings from the research were translated, via digital collage, into pictorial representations. This process enabled sharing with participants and generated further insights into the topic. In the image, agroecology is presented as an island of hope within a vast sea of despair, whilst new entrant female farmers are portrayed as either cast adrift, swimming for the island, or tentatively gaining a foothold on borrowed land.
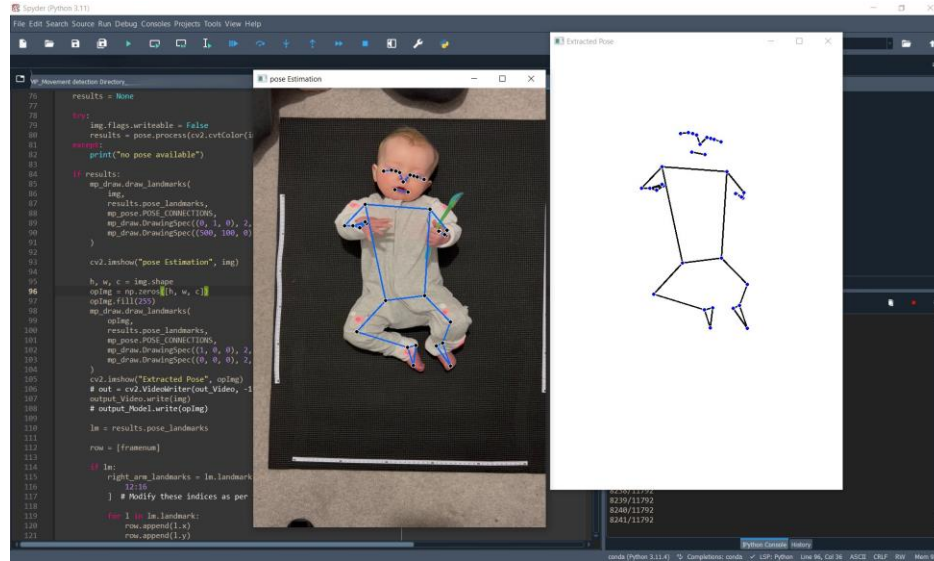
You are eating too loud! The impact of misophonia.

Louisa Rinaldi

Psychology

My image illustrates misophonia, a sound sensitivity condition of overwhelming anger, disgust, or discomfort when hearing sounds like chewing, slurping, and tapping. The triggering sounds are often, but not always, human-produced, repetitive, and relatively quiet sounds that most people don't notice. The image shows headphones, often used by people with misophonia to cope with sounds, surrounding a bowl of cereal with milk, a common triggering sound amongst misophonic people. The cereal spells out "SHH!" and a frowning face to express the distress these eating noises may cause. My research develops measures to test for misophonia and explores how the condition affects individuals' wellbeing, mental health, and cognitive development. We have found that misophonia can increase anxiety, depression, and self-harming from adolescence onwards. We have also developed support for adults with misophonia, as well as parents and teachers of children with misophonia, which we share on our website misophonia-hub.org.

Baby Grow

Saber Sotoodeh

Psychology

Baby Grow is a multidisciplinary, longitudinal study that aims to find early biomarkers of developmental disorders from the infants' early movement. We developed a Computer Vision and Movement Feature extraction algorithm to detect the babies' movements for further analysis. We analyse weekly videos of babies for their first eight months to see how these movement features could predict later social-communication skills in the babies. This picture shows how computer vision detects the baby while the baby interacts with an object and converts it to kinematic information for later analysis. Early diagnosis of Developmental Disorders will provide the opportunity to improve their life quality.

Proposal for an Alternative Theory of Change

Gemma Aellah

Brighton & Sussex Medical School

When people involved in policy and practice make plans they often use Theory of Change diagrams to help visualise them. I am an anthropologist with 5S Foundation, a collaborative partnership using social science to tackle neglected disease affecting the skin in Ethiopia, Rwanda, Sudan, UK (https://ntdsresearch.org). I have followed people's stories about how global skin-disease policy gets made, finding policy-change occurs in less linear or obvious ways than suggested by conventional Theories of Change. As one of my research participants described, while discussing how advocates managed to get the neglected disease Mycetoma listed as a World Health Organisation 'official' Neglected Tropical Disease: 'Change happens like an oil spill. Where you get give, that is where you go!' This metaphor captures how change-making is both gradual and abrupt; multi-directional but continuous and always alters the future landscape of possibilities. Important but overlooked things that make the status quo 'give way', producing multi-directional change, are presented in this proposal for an 'Alternative Theory of Change'. They include: 'happenstance', individuals, coalition evidence, disasters. And, most importantly, love.

Tagging colour responses in the cortex

Ana Rozman

Psychology

Our visual system does an incredible job of transforming light waves into perceptual experience of colour. We know how light information is captured and communicated to our brain, but how the brain processes this information into colour representations remains elusive. My friend Saga is wearing an EEG (electroencephalography) cap, capturing the electrical activity of her brain in response to a steady-state visually evoked potentials (SSVEPs) based experiment. She watched two colours, each flickering at its own frequency. When the EEG signal is recorded and transformed into frequency domain, we find a peak in activation at these frequencies. Only when the same neurons respond to both colours, I can also measure a response at the sum of these frequencies. Varying the difference between the colours allows me to non-invasively measure the colour tuning of cortical mechanisms and help clarify how our brain creates our colour experience.

Quenching children's thirst for reading

Jo Tregenza

Education & Social Work

My research focuses on schools in the most disadvantaged areas in the UK that are making the most difference to children's reading. The answer lies, not in phonics schemes, but in the immersion, passion and love of books alongside ensuring the pastoral needs of the children are a high priority.

Crowd control

Harry Lewis

Psychology

We're researching crowd behaviour and crowd experiences at live music events. In October 2023, we visited Atlanta to observe and speak to attendees at a three-day music festival. This photo was taken from backstage, and shows the power of the artist in leading crowd behaviour – here the artist raises his hand, and the crowd mirrors that behaviour.

We found that members of crowds at live music events adopt a shared social identity, a common sense of 'we-ness'. The specific social identity in the crowd specifies rule for conduct -- norms – which are internalised and can shape but also limit behaviour. Thus, the acceptability of types of crowd behaviour (for example dancing energetically) varies depending on the norms associated with a particular event, genre or artist. This particular show was quite rowdy, but the shared understanding of norms in the crowd meant that everyone still appeared to have a good time.

Offshore Wind

Malte Jansen

Business School

Rampion Offshore Wind Farm off the coast of Brighton, the UK's only offshore wind farm on the south coast. In front, the crew transfer vehicle can be seen, which ferries personnel between shore and the wind turbines for maintenance tasks. The picture was taken in June 2019 by Malte Jansen, which was a starting point for an ECR career in Wind Energy Economics. The picture was eventually featured in Nature Energy's cover page in August 2020. It has since been a motivator to work harder for a brighter, cleaner and greener future, used in research communication and teaching alike.