

/ Ping pong balls for people power! (or “How might we raise awareness of open practices or issues in fun and inclusive ways?”)

An OpenCon Unconference Session

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Co-Organizers (if applicable):

Session Description: Why did a Syrian drop ping pong balls down the staircases of Damascus? Who is Jorge Cham and how did he get half a million people to subscribe to his thoughts? Are you part of the OpenCon Rebel Alliance?

To change a culture, we must first raise awareness of an issue and increase participation in the discussion, creation and adoption of potential solutions. There are many strategies and tactics for raising awareness, and at OpenCon we appreciate the importance of considering diversity, equity and inclusion when we plan for new engagement strategies and campaigns.

In this session, we will find out about strategies used in political campaigns, on social media and by non-violent direct action-based resistance movements. We will share the issues we are trying to raise awareness of. We will identify who we are trying to engage with and explore their needs and motivations. We will have fun coming up with our own ideas for fun, humorous, inclusive and engaging ways to raise awareness of open issues, inspired by campaigns that have toppled power structures!

This unconference is a workshop session leading into the doathon challenge: “How might we raise awareness of open practices or issues in fun and inclusive ways?”

// Contributors

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// Agenda

- Session plan:
 - Welcome notes
 - Assign roles
 - Group introductions, with something you've experienced that raised awareness in a fun way
 - Our challenges we hope to raise awareness of
 - Talk: Opportunities for awareness raising actions
 - Our opportunities for raising awareness -- new ideas
 - Reflections/shareback
 - What's next? Doathon & beyond!
 - [Contributions from Doathon and beyond](#)

// Notes

Please use this for notes during, before and after the event.

#1 Welcome

- Welcome to this **participatory, inclusive and productive** unconference workshop. We are here to hear your ideas and experiences -- please consider how much you're speaking, and try to speak for no more than 1/nth of the time (with n people), please say one point at a time, please leave a pause to allow others to join in (not everyone feels ready to interrupt or speak straight after another person).
- **The aim of today's conference is to think with and learn from each other** about the challenges and opportunities for raising awareness of an open practice or issue in specific contexts.
- Some **participation guidelines**:
 - When I raise my hand, it's time to move on - please raise your hand and stop talking. This helps the whole group notice.
 - If you agree with someone else's point, you can show this with jazz hands or clicking without interrupting them.
 - Allow everyone a chance to speak: make one point at a time, you only have 1/nth of the time to speak, allow silence between points
 - Be considerate of different contexts and experiences: mind your language and check your assumptions. We've lots to learn from each other.
- I hope you may be interested to **join me to take action on some of the discussion points in the doathon tomorrow** -- I've proposed a session for crafting ways to raise awareness, from creating stickers, lanyards and posters to building whatsapp

messaging campaigns. Whatever we come up with: let's spend some time making it real for our own issue areas and local contexts! And **let's have fun** with this!

- **CONTENT WARNING** the examples of ways to increase awareness in the second half of this session relate to issues of sexual harassment, political displacement, state-sponsored violence and oppression and life-changing medical issues.
- Agenda: We'll introduce ourselves. I'd like to set the scene then we'll explore challenges, consider the people involved and share experiences and ideas.

#2 assign roles

Timekeeper? ...HANNI..... Keep us to time. Raise your hand to get attention when we need to move the group forward.

Documenter? ...ALI..... Responsibility to ensure notes are taken, by yourself or during group/individual work. Photos at the end are good too!

Facilitator? ...NAOMI..... Ensure everyone has a chance to speak and participate, allow moments of silence, feel empowered to ask people to keep within their own fraction of speaking time.

#3 Group introductions, with something you've experienced that raised awareness in a fun way

Naomi - BPM film about AIDS activists

Ali - story circles

Elizabeth - flavoured oxygen for panic attacks

Nick - Wikimania session re marginalised voices and continued inequity

Raphael - Wikimania session that involved the local community of immigrants in camp using wikipedia

Katerina - youtube videos for baking & learning Cyrillic alphabet by reading road signs

Ashley - baby Trump balloon

Monica - learning about volume (m³) by building a ball pit for a friend

Vinodh - cooking and baking in a social group (& DANCE! youtu.be/ijOm1BKWU7k)

Jake - built a text-based adventure for wikipedia learning and learnt stats for testing!

Hanni - to help students to keyboard-type fast, used a shark-killing game

Cynthia - working out muscles to learn

#4: The challenges/issues we're trying to raise awareness of

*We will discuss in pairs for **10 minutes** then I will invite everyone to share back.*

Challenge: Naomi, preprints

How might we raise awareness of what preprints are amongst life science communities with very low awareness and preprinting activity right now?

For example: <research area> / <institution or country>

Challenge: Ali, OER

Empowering students to talk to seniors about OER (and raising awareness of OER w/ students)

Elizabeth

-socioeconomic challenges, how can OER help provide access to post secondary education

Cynthia

- Hong kong students have power to contribute to OER?

Nick

-symbols/signalling to show growing support in Open community

-Raphael

-create awareness of open resources for use in academia

Katerina

-create successful open education advocates in our federation

Ashley

-infuse a sense of urgency in open change

Monica

-how can we increase adoption of preprints in all fields (Sci, Soc Sci, Hum)

Vinodh

- Evaluation: HMW move away from metrics imposed by corporations, to better evaluation models?

Jake

-how to get hardcore wikipedians to care about systematic bias

Hanni

- At uni of virginia, raise awareness of open issues → action (students!)

#5: [TALK] Opportunities for awareness raising actions

Naomi gave an outline and examples of fun ways to raise awareness, based on recent reading and exploration.

CONTENT WARNING: examples included below relate to issues of sexual harassment, political displacement, state-sponsored violence and oppression, and life-changing medical issues

Some key principles and questions:

Please note these are personal thoughts and notes. Contributions and feedback welcome; I recommend and encourage consulting professional sources before taking action (see [further resources](#)).

- **A way for your supporters to know they are not alone & to make it cool to support** -- Visible actions (take your TV for a walk). Familiar icons (the solidarity fist). Showing your support and seeing who else supports the same issue (laptop stickers and bag badges; Rebel Alliance).
- **Meet the people you want to tell wherever they are** -- consider the channels of communication they listen to and what information they would be likely to absorb. How can you communicate respectfully and raise awareness safely?
 - **Diplomatic methods:** use traditional routes like conference talks and in publications (cite preprints); follow the rules (write to your political representative; vote with your feet; spend money consciously)
 - **Disruptive methods:** AIDS activists stormed conference stages during talks to get their voices heard by the researchers, pharmaceutical companies and policymakers who were not acting in the way that AIDS sufferers and their peers wanted. *Note: be aware that disruption can lose you listeners as well, so consider the consequences before trying this.*
 - Questions:
 - What communication channels do your potential audience use in their everyday lives?
 - Do we need to move beyond twitter hashtags? If so, how?
 - Include more contexts and geographies: Whatsapp? Facebook? Chinese internet?
 - What would be more effective in your case: diplomacy or disruption?
- **Non-violent direct action** -- don't play to the strengths of the system you're trying to change. In a political uprising, it is not effective for resistance groups to use violence because the people in power are able to and may well respond with violence that cannot be beaten. It is more effective to use a strength that the opposition cannot overcome: in general, people power (popularity and consumer numbers) and civil disobedience.
 - If you are facing opposition to your change, what are the opposition's strengths that you should avoid? For example, litigation costs money: if you can't afford it, should you do something that could get you sued? Are you making yourself vulnerable?
 - What are your strengths that you could use to overpower the opposition? For example, if your power is in the size of your community of supporters, how can you build your community to a size they can't ignore? **How can your movement be cool, fun and desirable to people who may support you?**

Examples:

DEMONSTRATING SUPPORT: Name badge ribbons



Source: Twitter <https://twitter.com/sfnbanter/status/1053122751152734209>

ICONOGRAPHY: showing solidarity (in print and in person)



The Raised Fist https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raised_fist

Source & attribution: By Carlos88888 [CC BY-SA 4.0

(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>)], from Wikimedia Commons:

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Raised-fist.png>



OpenCon Rebel Alliance

From OpenCon 2017 -- Chris Hartgerink finds support from OpenCon peers and calls it his Rebel Alliance. Rajiv Jhangiani remixes some logos. And now it's been made into limited edition stickers and temporary tattoos.... what's next?

Source: <https://twitter.com/thatpsychprof/status/930006158861103104>

ACTIONS: Ping pong balls in Syria (humour!)



“Syrian pro democracy activists have started several actions where they have dumped self painted ping pong balls down the streets, hills or popular walking areas. The painted ping pong balls are provided with messages such as “freedom” and other slogans of the opposition for passersby to read.”

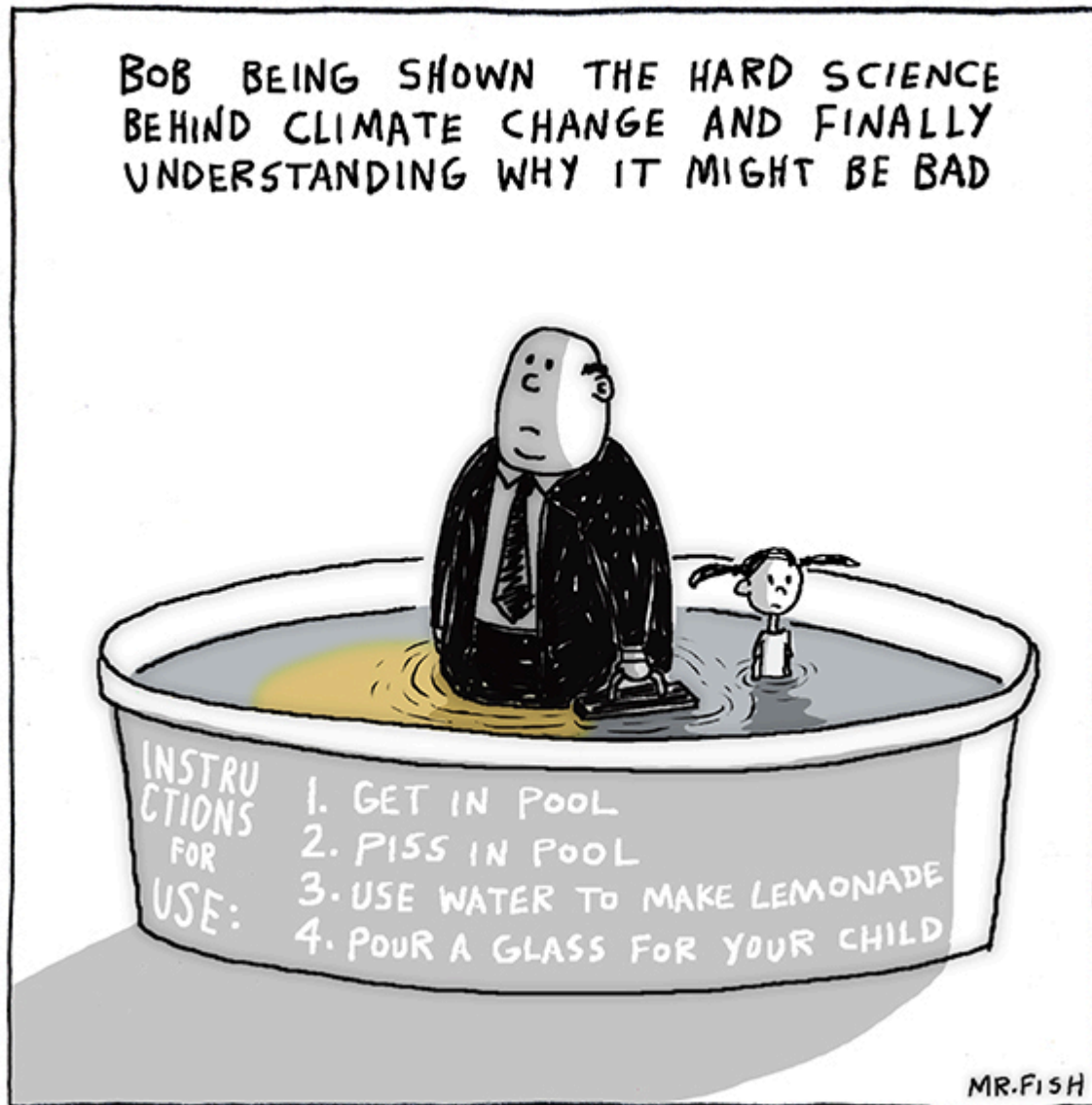
Source: <http://www.everydayrebellion.net/ping-pong-balls-for-assad/>

(More at

<http://www.everydayrebellion.net/syrian-activist-ahmed-zaino-fights-with-ping-pong-balls/>)

Some actions are less humorous, more shocking: ask Joe McArthur what he used to get up to as a student!

COMMENTARY: Political cartoons



Mr Fish is a political cartoonist, and this one is about climate change. Source:

<https://www.clowncrack.com/2018/07/03/pool-your-resources/>

Do you have favourite comics that raise awareness of an issue in a way that helps people to listen? For example, XKCD, PhDComics, Cyanide and Happiness, etc.

COMMENTARY: sharing your voice in podcasts

The Guilty Feminist (<http://guiltyfeminist.com>) is a podcast co-founded by Deborah Frances-Wright. It features majority female comics representing a diversity in terms of race,

religion, sexual orientation, gender, physical and mental health status. DFW uses the podcast as a platform for under-represented voices and to speak about feminism, intersectionality and refugees.

This has been a highly effective way (10s of millions of downloads!) to raise awareness of campaigns and charities dedicated to causes her audience cares about and it has also helped some people to understand feminism better (she receives letters from ‘the converted’). Each episode starts with a common framework for a joke: “I’m a feminist but ... <insert guilty admission about something you did that wasn’t very feminist>”

Do you listen to podcasts? What do you learn from them?

Anyone can start a podcast; indeed some OpenCon alumni already have, or have contributed to other podcasts:

- April CS’s The Method
- Rachel Harding’s ...
- ScienceDisrupt has featured alum: CH, ...

#6: Your opportunities and ideas

*We will spend **15 minutes** working on this, in groups or as individuals. You can **share back after the unconference session and during the doathon tomorrow!***

Choose your own adventure! You could use this time to:

1. Consider who you are trying to talk to about the issue you care about and identify opportunities and ways to intervene in their normal routines in a fun and inclusive way.
2. Find and add more examples of fun, humorous, inclusive and engaging ways that have been used to raise awareness in other campaigns. Did they work? How inclusive or equitable were they? How might we apply these strategies to a campaign relevant to OpenCon?
3. Discuss the challenges of raising awareness and ways you have overcome these in the past.

To help with #1, consider joining your intended audience where they’re at:

- Which communication channels do they pay attention to?
- When might they be receptive to (i.e. have time and willingness to listen to) an interruption or advertisement that offers them an opportunity to learn a small amount of information about the issue or open practice you care about?
- What is the smallest piece of information you think they should takeaway with them after this interaction?

And here’s a method for thinking about new ideas:

EXPLORING & TESTING SOLUTIONS

Methods

INVERT IT	Take a common idea/practice and do the opposite.
SUBTRACT IT	Take a common idea/practice - and pretend it didn't exist.
EXAGGERATE IT	Think of an idea at it's most extreme - even if it's nearly impossible.
TRANSLATION	Take a practice from one field/discipline - and apply it to another.
ADD TO IT	Add a new element to an existing service / product.

Exercise: Fast Idea Generator (adapted from [Nesta](#))

Source: slide 45 of [OpenCon design thinking slides](#), CC-BY Lorraine Chuen with contributions from Joe McArthur. See the following slides for examples of these methods.

Note your ideas below:

- Issue: preprints
 - E.g. provide preprint advocates with a lanyard that says "Speak to me about preprints" for them to wear at conferences and when they visit institutes. This may help to raise awareness in low-awareness spaces in an unobtrusive way and with a human face.
 - E.g. talk on the local radio, ask a local (researcher or not) to share a real story about preprints and how it has affected them.
 - E.g. where WhatsApp is a major communication channel, run a messaging campaign to measure awareness of preprinting (and provide some simple FAQ answers at the same time via a quiz).
 - E.g. share an image or sticker that researchers can add to their scientific posters to indicate when their work has been preprinted → using a common logo / standardising how this information is presenting may help people to recognise and absorb it. Run a competition to design this sticker/logo to get buy-in and engagement from users?
 - Idea ...
- Issues:
 - Wikipedia systemic bias:
 - Image shareable on Twitter, showing the criteria for a porn star to have a page in wikipedia (there is one) and contrast with the lack of a policy for LGBT, Indigenous, activists

- Since 60% of citations in Wikipedia are behind paywalls or not readable online, develop a campaign that mocks it: “40% of the sum of all human knowledge? #citeopen #oawiki”
- Benefits of open culture to a very traditional faculty and overworked librarians:
 - “User your privilege to help the world”
- Move away from metrics to better evaluation models: use of “I am more than my H index”
 - Set up community meetings, to informally reach out over lunch
 - Post DORA poster in elevator
 - “I’m more than my H-index” stickers
 - D&I discussions to help other people of color feel included
- Issue: ...
 - Idea ...
 - Raising awareness of Open ed and empowering students
 - When students start at college/uni, do they get an info pack?
 - Running a textbookbroke campaign during orientation (right after they’ve bought textbooks)
 - Mature student population: stories that resonate more than “typical” undergrad
 - Opportunities to make provincial / federal governments aware
 - Stunt / one time event to catch attention
 - What can you put on that’s fun for the students? Inspire students to connect with each other to move toward an action?
 - Send out pre-set out email to faculty member about OER; would get free gift card
 - Sticky notes on a wall, in a highly visible space; get something mailed to Provost or President or Board of Governors (throw things on the desk during the meeting)
- General ideas
 - Open pranks
 - Slip invoice to users of journals at library
 - Throw fake money at users of journal of library (how many APCs could that cover?)
 - Journal choice tinder
 - Murder mystery podcast
 - Billboards
 - Flash mob
 - OA comic book/graphic novel
 - Game concept: solve how to cure your illness by just reading the abstract only

After the unconference:

- Business cards to drop into conference name badge holders → with prompts and URL to find out more. E.g. ways to do reproducible science. (Issue 88 in OpenCon 2017 doathon?)
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#7: Reflections

We each shared back our favourite idea or example from the discussions

// Next Steps and Milestones

The ideal way to end an unconference session, is to signal what could happen next and maybe even carry discussion into the OpenCon Do-A-Thon. Why not list one or two next steps that could be taken and a milestone that would show your making progress.

What's next?

Continue your ideas and take action at the doathon! Comment on this issue to indicate your intention to participate: **how might we raise awareness of open practices or issues in fun and inclusive ways?**

- Someone to lead doathon: Vinodh (interested to club it with dance your open story)
- Tell others about your ideas tonight!
- Start conversations tonight about how to raise awareness in fun and inclusive ways

Further resources

Learning from political resistance campaigns

- Read more about nonviolent direct action and strategies in 'Blueprint for Revolution'
 - The author runs a strategy consultancy, CANVAS: <http://canvasopedia.org/>
 - Their resources (<http://canvasopedia.org/videos/>) include videos on 'How to build a nonviolent movement in 45 minutes' and articles like 'does humour hold the key..?'
- Consider this tactics toolkit:
<http://www.everydayrebellion.net/new-tactics-strategy-toolkit-take-action/>
- **<please contribute your recommended awareness-raising strategies and resources!>**

Ideas for fun, kind, genuine, authentic, joyous interactions and acts (of civil disobedience, or non violent direct action, of fun) that will introduce open practices to a broader audience.

From networking book:

* consider ways to engage introverts as well as Extroverts -- see "Networking for people who hate networking" by Devora Zack ([goodreads](#))

Note from previous opencon: slideshare.net/lesliechan for OA advocacy successes and

failures -- learn from these

Contributions from Doathon and beyond

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1glQcN6WSYjvXbCzjZXODJHzlJRvLzC4AWbGPmOlEnl/edit#heading=h.4rymx7e6ee4d>

Someone tweeted an interesting review article that is not open access with a sci-hub link <https://twitter.com/laszlognagy/status/1072384059073024000> . There is a risk of tweeting with an identity and the moral debate of whether it is legal or illegal in certain jurisdiction. Maybe having an online persona or a bot tweet about interesting articles will be a cool and fun idea. - Vinodh