



OPEN

SPACE

2004-2013



OPEN SPACE, OPEN MINDS

Is education only what we learn in the classroom? And is what we are taught in school/college enough to help a young Indian negotiate the violence, intolerance, corruption, patriarchy and inequity she confronts every day? Is a young person encouraged to question, or simply to conform? Where are the spaces that will channel the dreams, the doubts and even the rage of youth into re-imagining and reinventing a more plural, equitable and sustainable world?

These were the questions we at CCDS asked when we conceptualised Open Space. Our aim was simple -- to use the power of the arts and creative expression, as well as dialogue, talks, workshops and campaigns, to facilitate new ways of seeing. To open young minds by wonder rather than close them by belief. To prompt them to see that social change begins

with us, and our personal and political choices.

Our programmes are conducted on campus, at popular youth venues including music stores and cafes, and at our youth resource centre famous for its coffee, conversations, books and films, and its completely eclectic approach to ideas, so that we're discussing a graphic book on Jyotiba Phule one day, earth architecture the next, and violence against women the third.

Since inception in 2004, thousands of young adults have attended OS programmes. OS Pune organises roughly 40 programmes in an average year, and participation ranges from 15 for intensive workshops, 100-200 for public lectures and film screenings, to 500 for concerts/festivals. At a very conservative estimate, we reach out to over 2,000 citizens in Pune every year.

We've also taken the OS process to other cities, including Kolkata, Lucknow, Bangalore, Ahmedabad and Ranchi, through the Open Space Fellowships.

Can an outreach process so open, centred around culture and communications, work? Does it have a lasting impact? What better way to find out than to ask some of those who have journeyed with Open Space as participants, fellows or resource-persons. In this publication we record their voices on what this open space means to them and the small transformations that have been sparked off here. Listen in. And never doubt, as Margaret Mead said, that a small group of committed citizens can change the world. It's the only thing that ever has.





TRUSHA NAVALKAR, media student, OS intern and “huge fan of the library and coffee machine”

Open Space is ‘open’ to ambiguity and interpretation. I think that’s what it is. It does not conform to just one notion of open -- unbarred, unblocked, unbolted, unburdened, uncovered, unfolded, unfurled, unimpeded, unlocked, unobstructed, unplugged, unsealed, unshut, unstopped, vacated, wide, yawning. It’s all of them. It’s one of the most liberal platforms of expression I’ve seen, refreshingly so. A place where one goes beyond convention to root out all possibilities, seek out all perspectives, and define all contexts. All this of course is facilitated by the people at Open Space who embody it all.

OS effectively demystifies issues that are otherwise riddled with technical

jargon and a grim atmosphere. They are made relevant to a youth whose reality is probably very different. The emphasis on art and popular media is especially commendable. The creativity of their posters is what first attracted me to Open Space.

We -- and I can speak for my friends as well -- have always found Open Space events a revelation of sorts. Each brings a different perspective which we otherwise wouldn’t have thought of. The writing workshop with Annie Zaidi, lecture series on the Ramayana, graphic novel workshop with S Anand and Aparajita Ninan, have all taught me a lot and broadened my horizon in such a short span of time like nothing else ever has.



CRAIG JENKINS, professional storyteller and workshop facilitator from the UK, who explores Indian folklore and mythology as a contemporary social metaphor. In 2011, he conducted an OS workshop, 'Other Voices', which explored different perspectives to the 'rakshas' in Indian epics

Open Space is about freedom -- the freedom to express, engage and explore. It is about the freedom of embracing who you are and not who society says you should be. Open Space provides a space (often the only space) in which people can be themselves. Regardless of gender, social background, or sexuality, it allows people to breathe in the knowledge that they are valued for being themselves.

Open Space's logo should actually be a question mark (?) as it encourages young people to critically engage with themselves and the society and world in which they live. It helps to

develop critical and independent thinking and shape strong-minded individuals who are prepared to initiate future social, political and global change.





OISHIK SIRCAR, human rights lawyer, activist, trainer and academic, with interests in gender, sexuality and human rights

I think of Open Space not as a boundary-less space, but one with ever-expanding boundaries. It's a space that is open to accommodating new ideas, new people, new ways of doing, new ways of seeing -- but with a commitment to social justice, creative democracy and aesthetic imagination. These foundational ideas define Open Space and distinguish it from any other public forum.

OS's youth outreach programmes are unique because they are not preachy, didactic and dogmatic. Learning turns into a tool of domination when the structures within which we work are hierarchical -- like schools, colleges

and universities. OS disturbs this design by making learning a collaborative and cooperative process. The workshop tools that I developed during my time at OS have been enormously useful in making the subjects that I teach more interesting and ethically grounded in the experiences of people who struggle for a better and just world. I still use these tools today within formal classroom settings to teach sociology and human rights.

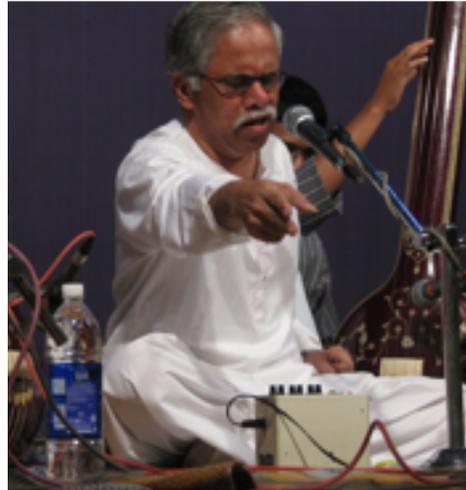
OS is also a self-reflexive space that does not shy away from auto-critique; rather it encourages it. Questions around OS's openness and whether it is restricted by the registers of class and language

always come up during workshops that I have conducted there. These were questions that OS was willing to address as part of its own learning agenda.

The human rights workshops at OS have created a community of young people who are politically creative. They are, I would like to believe, a group which is mature enough to realise that there cannot be anything like 'pure politics', and it is about developing the skills to

negotiate through a world of contradictions that makes us what we are. And yet, in the quagmire of these contradictions their commitment to social justice and belief in the power of art does not waver. I have been in touch with several OS youth volunteers who have 'workshopped' with me as part of the Youth Human Rights Defenders Programme that I coordinated many years ago. And each of them today is alive to the concerns that I just mentioned.





CHINTAN GIRISH MODI, researcher and trainer, who curated a section of the OS website called 'Tana Bana', which brings together poetry, music, art and text inspired by Kabir and other mystic voices. It also documents a few experiments with these materials in school classrooms



OS is a space for people to come together, share, talk, listen, open their minds. It's unique because it isn't top-down; it is based on respectful dialogue.

As someone who works with children, I feel it's very important to nurture open spaces outside of institutions such as family and school so that young people can feel comfortable expressing themselves

and learning about other people and perspectives without buying into the biases they are fed. OS gives them an opportunity to engage with contemporary issues through a critical and creative lens.



VALLIAPAN RESHMA, co-founder of MindArcs, which works with persons with mental illness, especially youth. OS screened a documentary based on her life of recovery from schizophrenia

I see OS as a platform accessible to all, where people from various backgrounds can learn from one another. 'Coming out of the closet' for those people who are queer is very different from 'coming out of the closet' as a schizophrenic. More than sexuality, mental illness is a taboo topic, and this fuels the

stigma and discrimination that I and people like me face.

This is a space that allows youth to find meaning, acceptance and a bridge to further their uniqueness. OS has always been open to a variety of subjects, so there is always something a young person can relate to.



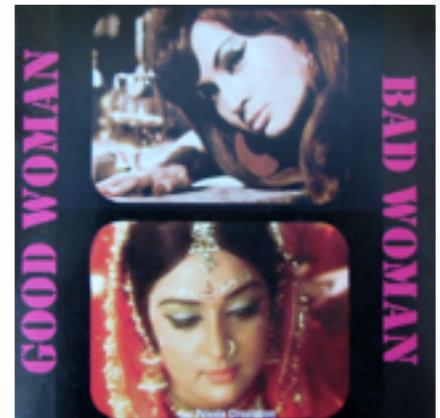


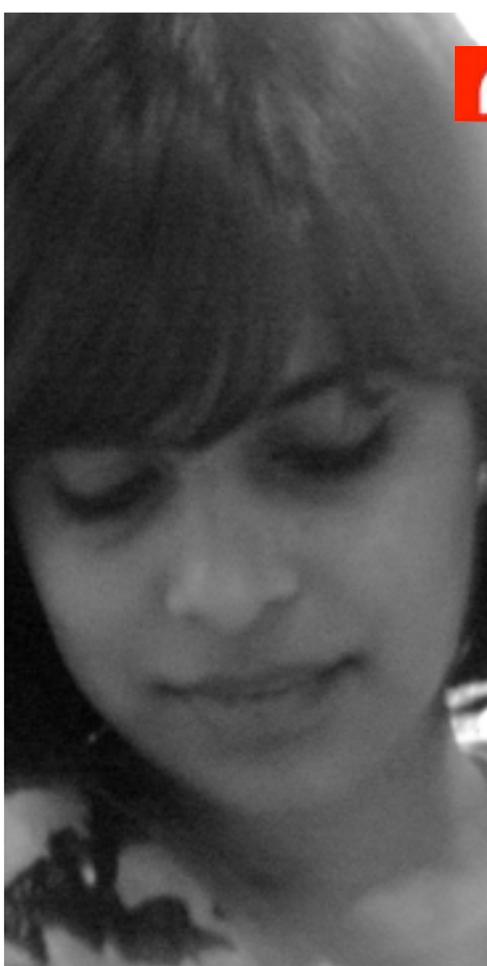


SUNIL MOHAN, transgender activist and Open Space Fellow in Bangalore

Open Space is where there is a lot of openness, lots of sharing and learning without restrictions. OS's approach is unique because it presents socially, politically and culturally important issues through the eyes of the youth. OS helps young people like me to pursue our interests and passions. My work is

about creating visibility and spaces of acceptance for multiple genders and sexualities, in society and in law, and OS is giving me concrete support in articulating my identity as trans- and queer-gendered to larger audiences. There are so many others like me.





DEVIKA SHETTY, filmmaker, video-editor, photographer and founder of 'Videos without Borders', which makes the visual medium accessible to the blind and hearing-impaired by means of video description and closed captioning

Open Space to me is an idea that celebrates multiplicities. OS has created a niche for itself among the college students of Pune by not being preachy and by holding its own amongst the crowd of organisations in the city. At OS I was never told how to think. I could even tell them I didn't agree with them: OS was always ready to hear that, maybe had planned to make me say that! I could never guess what OS would present to me. Either I grew up with OS or OS cleverly remained dynamic and managed to keep me on my toes. It is just as interesting today as it was to a 17-year-old me. The seeming non-association that Open Space has to any one issue in

particular makes it seem like a non-threatening space to approach.

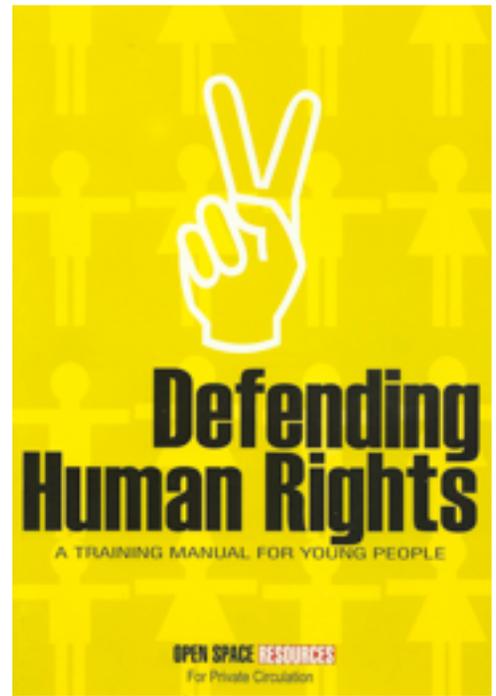
Today I may be talking about queer literature, tomorrow I may be interested in Carnatic music. Open Space is prepared.

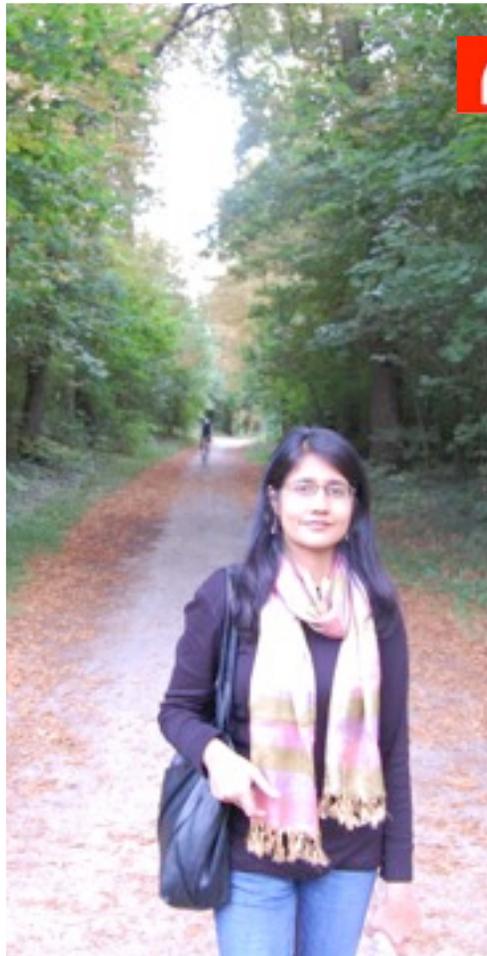
When I started attending college, OS was presented to me by a bunch of like-minded classmates as the only possible place for me to be. In a city that lacks constructive student participation and is characterised by a total non-politicisation of its youth spaces, OS is one of the few that lets young minds think, debate and participate. Whether these actions lead to any changes isn't something I have bothered with (the utilitarian

nature of these questions always seemed too pedestrian to me), but by being unequivocally unobtrusive OS breathes life into what could have become a flimsy college life.

'Videos without Borders' cannot survive without open spaces. Struggles like ours thrive in the company of like-minded, kind and

innovative individuals. Something OS never runs dry of. OS has provided me with a constant stream of human support and associations that have nurtured and replenished my social and intellectual self. And this is what I hope Open Space can do for my organisation in the coming years.





RAHEEL DHATTIWALA, former journalist with The Times of India and OS Fellow in Ahmedabad, now doctoral student reading sociology at Oxford University and researching Hindu-Muslim violence in Gujarat

Open Space is about opening up spaces in the mind. OS gives its Fellows the freedom to innovate and provides an opportunity to youth to look beyond their boxed spaces.

In my field of communal violence and conflict, I've come across several organisations that have used youth outreach to, presumably, reduce prejudice. I've often wondered to what degree these programmes have worked because, even today, after 10 years of 'peace' in Gujarat, young people from highly segregated cities like Ahmedabad and Vadodara are extremely communal.

I realised as an OS Ahmedabad Fellow that there was a difference in OS's approach to youth outreach. It displayed an immense potential to convert casual cultural gatherings and workshops into real change (if only it could be measured!). The OS approach involved using cultural encounters as problem-solving tools. It appreciated the importance of the process of the outreach project rather than the activity itself.

OS allowed me to develop my own 'oblique' method to work with Hindu and Muslim youth of Ahmedabad who held deep prejudices against one another. It was loosely based on sociological studies of prejudice and

contact which provide evidence that contact of a friendly nature with members of the minority group reduces prejudice against the minority. The first time I realised the tremendous potential of furnishing an open space to people who never got a chance to meet or know the other community was during an OS theatre workshop in Ahmedabad. Our young Hindu and Muslim participants sat down to chat, and soon began uninhibitedly asking the most disturbing questions to one another and getting accommodating answers. Similarly, an OS heritage walk for Hindu and Muslim youth took many Hindus to the “Muslim side” for the first time, giving them an opportunity to blur the boundaries. The reciprocal nature of the outreach ensured that the participants had to exchange phone numbers and email ids and keep in touch with one another. Whether

there was a softening of prejudice on either side, I cannot tell. What I could discern was the beginning of a feeling of comfort on either side in interacting with the ‘other’ community and even visiting the ‘other side’.





ANNIE ZAIDI, reporter and writer based in Mumbai, author of 'The Bad Boys' Guide to the Good Indian Girl'

I think of Open Space as a means to opening channels of communication so people can think a little more freely than they usually do.

I have visited Open Space physically as well as virtually. I think it is a very important space and it offers a lot by way of material, activity and intellectual wealth. It is rare for young people to have access to a space where they can just come to read or talk or meet interesting people whenever they visit.

I have conducted creative writing workshops and readings at OS where some of the participants were students but many others were not. I would like to believe that the workshops helped kick-start the creative process, or helped

participants identify barriers to their own creativity at least.

I care about equality and social justice most, but these concepts are so wide that they subsume most other problems, especially in India. Whatever form or genre I write in, these concerns form the core or the under-layer of the text.





ESHA VAISH, journalist

Open Space is a breeding ground for new ideas, ideas that stand at the heart of revolutions that human beings need because we are still in the process of discovering a system that works for us as a race. It provides a voice for a group of eager listeners, and in today's world finding an audience of people who are truly listening is more than one can hope for. Open Space doesn't recycle the banal but creates something new.

Youth are rebellious in spirit. They don't want to hear what has already been told to them. Open Space manages to channel ideas using formats that capture youth attention, such as theatre and graphic art workshops. OS gives

youth a channel for their spirit of rebellion, and that's why it works.

I became part of the organisation because it rose above the cacophony and said something different. And I've lingered because I've found that what it has to say makes sense.

Young people are full of a sense of optimism. OS provides them with a platform to interact with other like-minded individuals, where their opinions are respected and also considered worthy. Open Space doesn't treat them like ignorant misfits. This is its greatest tool of empowerment and the secret of its lasting impact on students/ participants.



APPHIA KUMAR, LGBT activist and poet

“ Open Space to me means a broadminded space of co-existence. Whether it is LGBT rights or creativity (in all forms), everything goes and is encouraged within this space. Open Space is always encouraging. It always has its doors open to new groups of people and pushes for the coming together of communities and creativeness. This can only be good. There are more people getting involved; there is more change being set in motion.

Honestly, I think OS could do much more with its youth outreach. I'm not sure what its limitations are, but there are so many ways to make a bigger impact. There are youngsters looking for support systems that

aren't available to them and they still don't know who to turn to. Get bigger OS, we love you already!

In the fields that I work in -- LGBT events and spoken word poetry -- Open Space has always been a supporting force. Without the positive energy coming from the team at Open Space, the change we've been able to effect and experience would have taken a whole lot longer, and I thank you for it! OS has collaborated with us on the Queer Fest ever since our first festival, and helped kick-start 'Free Voices'. It has also allowed a safe space for LGBT friends to gather.

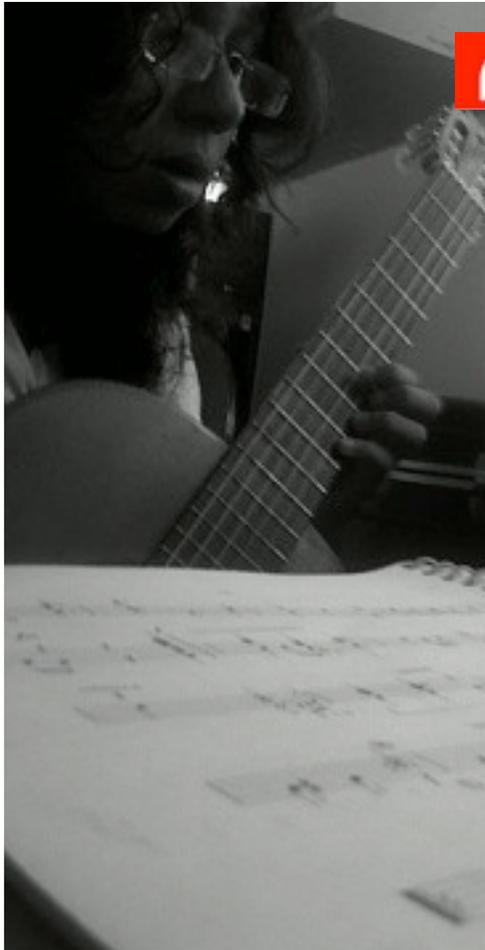


NAVRAS JAAT AAFREEDI, assistant professor at Gautam Buddha University in Greater NOIDA, and former OS Fellow in Lucknow

My upbringing in an eclectic and multicultural environment makes me naturally sensitive to inter-faith relations. During my two-year OS fellowship, I worked to improve relations between communities -- including Jews and Muslims and Hindus and Muslims -- that see each other as natural adversaries.

OS gives its Fellows enough space to think and conceive of plans, and also the necessary support for the execution of those plans. The fellowship helped me reach out to hundreds of young people, opening their minds to the value and importance of plurality and developing in them an appreciation for cultural and ethnic diversity. Through the lectures, seminars, film

screenings, poetry mushairas and workshops that I organised, I tried to bring into sharp focus the problems of violence and discrimination and possibilities for their resolution through dialogue and discussion. I continue to do this in the framework of academia. Through large programmes like a film festival held simultaneously at several educational institutions in Lucknow on the Holocaust, participants, most of them students, learned of the dangers of remaining silent, apathetic, and indifferent in the face of the oppression of others.



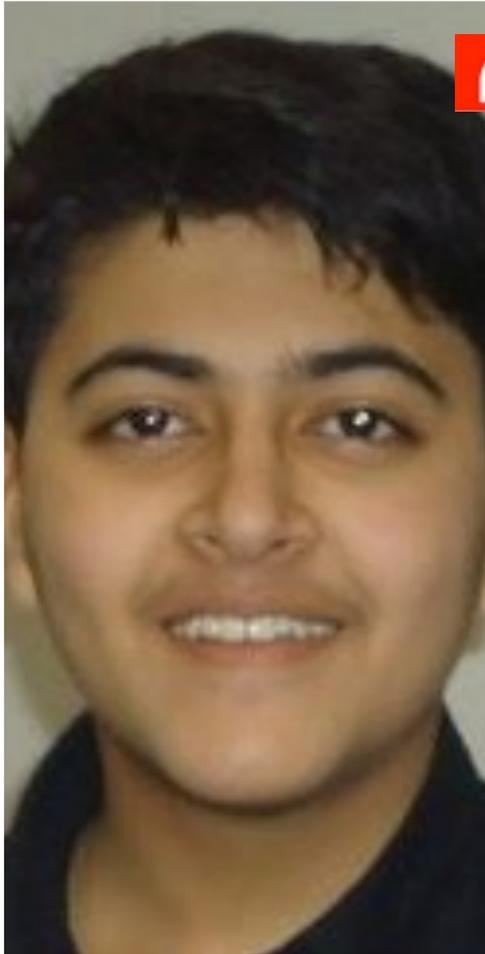
VEDA AGGARWAL, communications professional and musician

My association with Open Space first began in college when I heard about this space for alternative interactions. I visited to watch movies, enjoy the library and talk to people. Given the limited kind of educational access and background most of us have, platforms like Open Space should be available in all institutes of higher learning and should, in fact, be taken for granted by students. Awareness and social

consciousness should be part of the regular learning experience.

Open Space's approach is thoughtful, intelligent and relevant. Their work on LGBT issues has been very, very important in allowing the community to exist normally in society. I was impressed and moved by those events. Others have been less 'life changing' but also relevant.





KRUSHNA DANDE, first-year BA student and writer

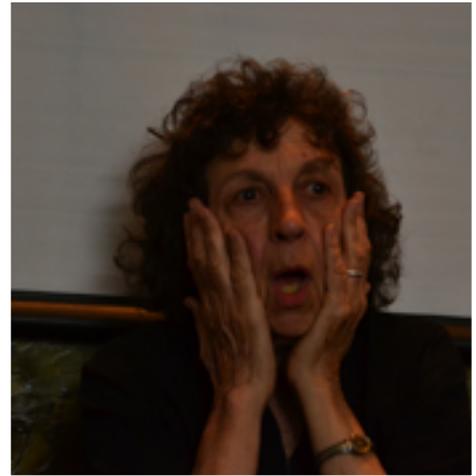
Open Space, located at the end of an uphill climb, is the modern equivalent of a dwarf-dancing, ale-swilling club from high fantasy (with a deplorable lack of dwarves and ale!). But it is also a place that espouses openness in its very spirit. It educates and informs and enlightens all who pass by, with its handy little booklets about the dangers of marginalisation from society.

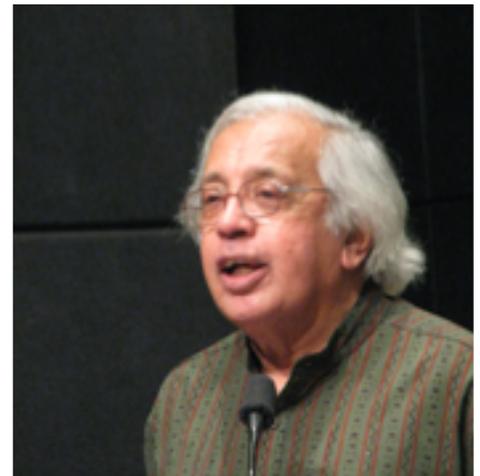
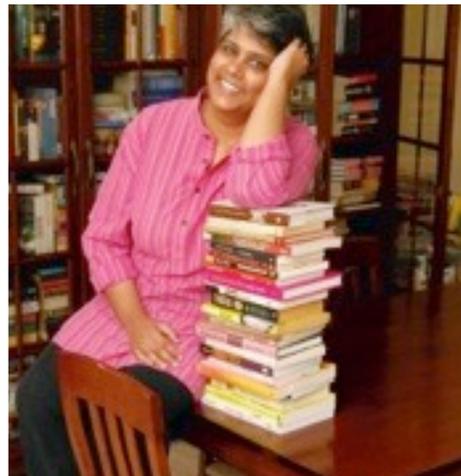
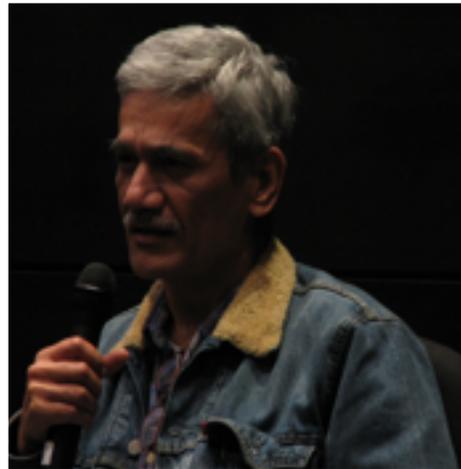
You come to OS for the mythic free coffee, and then the web closes around you and you're trapped in a silken cocoon of social awareness.

I've learned more than I expected from Open Space. From an in-depth analysis of female representation in Bollywood to the story of the

Ramayana with the focus on Ravana, it's all been a fresh perspective on avenues you assumed were explored. Open Space introduced me to a whole new way of exploring society -- through the very stories our society is based on.









ARUN MEHTA, works with sustainable energy



Open Space is a platform for promotion and discussion of social issues and the arts, which are far from mainstream issues in professional life. So it provides a good outlet for ideas and expression, different material for learning, new perspectives, and a chance to have

interesting discussions with like-minded people.

I think life should be seen with a rainbow vision rather than a monochromatic vision. Richness for me is not limited to money or

material comfort, but extends to our experiences. If you had money but no time, or the sensitivity to appreciate art, music or beauty then definitely you've wasted your time on this planet.



KRUTTIGA NADIG, chess grandmaster and former national champion

Some places give a city character, no matter how small or cramped they may be. Their very worth lies in their doing so much with so little. Take Open Space on Law College Road, a forum whose countless screenings, debates and workshops have played out in some very unassuming quarters. Don't think it's just

tradition. It's also progressiveness: the idea that great experiences do not necessarily require great money and great physical presence is an unconventional, almost post-modern one. (A comment from her Indian Express column)





STEPHEN BRONSKILL, student at the American University, Washington DC, studying International Politics, and a former intern at Open Space

I really appreciate Open Space for giving young people in Pune a place to learn, grow, and discuss social issues. Empowering young people with films, books, and resources to strive for social justice is a critically important initiative in a time of

global challenge and change. I'm grateful to have had a chance to contribute to the mission of the organisation and look forward to getting more involved in the future.





AKSHATH JITENDRANATH, economics student and volunteer at OS

The mandate of young people is to act as society's agents of change. Open Space enables this by introducing students to a range of issues that need to be confronted, discussed and acted upon. By way of guest lectures, workshops, film screenings and, most importantly, a physical space for young people to interact. A few of us are studying political science, others history or geography, others constitutional law or economics, and still others media and film. Whatever our discipline or interest, we come together at Open Space and interact with the information resources, and our varied perspectives and interpretations. This approach enables multi-disciplinary understanding and engagement.

Open Space provides the most fertile atmosphere for conscientious interaction, engagement and pursuant action on issues of social concern. This subsequently lets a student network grow, where young people are active participants in defining the society they inherit.





SHANTANU VERMA, student, founder-editor of the online e-zine 'Pune Diaries'

Open Space is the most free, informal and sensitive setting that I've been exposed to in Pune. It brings together people, platforms and resources like no other organisation in Pune does. The sensitivity towards cultural and intellectual growth is extremely stimulating for the mind and its evolution. Everyone there is always

ready for a discussion on any topic. The sense of warmth exuded by its environment makes Open Space an apt name for the organisation. Open Space events have always had a different approach. Be it a writing workshop or a talk on the Gujarat riots, the interaction is always engaging.



PROSHANTI BANEERJI, student of International Affairs and Inter Religious Discourse at Georgetown, and an OS intern



Since coming to Open Space, I have had a really great time engaging in different conversations and learning new perspectives on topics I am interested in. The approach Open Space uses to engage its members is very conducive to these types of learning experiences. One of the approaches I thoroughly appreciate is the showing of documentaries -- they are an effective way to get a conversation flowing. Each conversation gave me the opportunity to talk about complex issues such as identity and social justice. Coming to Open Space has enabled me not only to think differently about topics/themes in which I am already interested, but also ones that I rarely question. Open Space is wonderful in that it is

very warm and inviting. I felt like I could really say anything during a discussion, and my opinion would be respected. The huge number of books and other resources there enable me to get lost in my thoughts and spend all day reading and learning.



Open Space Presents

When Buffaloes Kiss: Dalit literature and publishing

Open Space invites you to a talk by social innovator S Arund of Navayana, an independent press that focuses exclusively on issues related to caste.

What does it mean to be anti-caste? Can only Dalits be anti-caste? What is Dalit literature? What kind of engagement does it demand from non-Dalits? Is it fair to argue that non-Dalit writers can portray Dalits and their pain of caste just as well? How has Dalit literature changed from the 1970s to today?

The buffaloes referred to in the title in this talk form the logo of Navayana. In the course of his talk, S Arund will tell the story behind Navayana and why even animals in India are subject to the caste system. Does publishing Dalits in-caste change anything? Can such a social enterprise be economically viable?

S Arund is the cofounder of Navayana, an independent press that focuses on caste from an anticaste perspective. He is the co-author of *Whose Name is This?*, the graphic biography of B. B. Ambedkar, and of *Brothers and Cousins* (2002), a polemical critique of caste, Logeem and caste. Before turning to publishing full time he was a journalist for ten years. In 2002, he won the British Council's London Book Fair International Young Publisher of the Year award.

Date: Saturday, 11 August
Time: 6:00 pm
Venue: B. V. Rao Hall
Second Floor
Patilkar Bhawan
Kasturba Park, Pune



For more details, contact Shilpi Munshi
shilpi@openpaceindia.org / 91-99-2942729
www.openpaceindia.org





PRIYA SARUKKAI CHABRIA, poet, writer, translator and editor of OS's 'Talking Poetry' microsite

I'm delighted that OS is among the few NGOs that believes in working with and through the arts as well as addressing the question, 'What makes us human?'. The arts -- and exposure to the arts -- can be a life-changing experience. The arts move people and summon empathy in the reader/viewer/listener. Sensitising people to issues of social justice is best done through the arts. An in-your-face approach rarely works, and proselytising messages are worse: these get quickly overwritten or rejected.

As Susan Sontag said, and the Vedas before her, one needs an 'intelligent' heart to be a writer -- and by extension, an artist. Having artists interact with your target

audience may be among the best ways to awaken their 'intelligent' hearts and possibly prompt them towards action. Or get them to think.

Two years after I took a creative writing workshop for OS, many of us are still a writing group and four of these 'students' are now being published on websites and in journals and anthologies in India and abroad. This pleases me no end. Some others have entered related fields like journalism. Also, I am told that the Talking Poetry section I edit is a major resource for students of literature as it is possibly the only site that has amassed so much poetry written in English by Indian poets/poets of Indian origin.

Shashikala Gurpur, Director, Symbiosis Law School, while inaugurating the Open Space Kabir Festival in Pune



I would like to acknowledge the contribution made by Open Space in stretching the minds of our students who come from all over India and Pune and instilling

and inculcating in them critical thinking through films, discussions and other media.

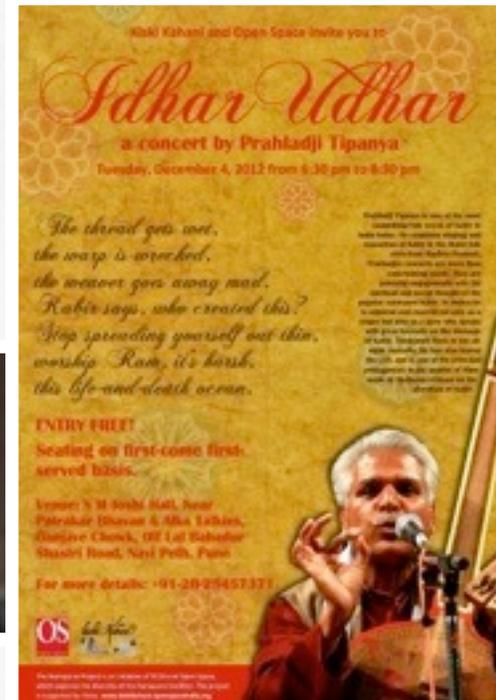


Sunita Pandhe, Professor of Sociology, Fergusson College, Pune



As a teacher of sociology, I deal with several issues of social justice, human rights and sustainability. But classroom teaching has its limitations. The

programmes offered by OS supplement and complement the academic teaching I am engaged in. This is truly welcome and makes for enduring learning.



Some partner institutions

Film and Television Institute of India

Fergusson College

ILS Law College

Anjuman-e-Islam Polytechnic

Symbiosis Law School

Symbiosis Institute of Mass
Communication

Karve Institute of Social Work

Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth

MIT School of Governance

Indian Institute of Planning
Management

Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Lucknow University

Ambedkar University

Indian Institute of Management-
Ahmedabad

Stella Maris College

Asian College of Journalism

Mahindra United World College

Flame Foundation for Liberal and
Management Education

Pune University Journalism
Department

Pune University Women's Studies
Centre

Institute of Management
Development and Research (IMDR)

NDTV/HT (Anti-Bribery campaign)

Either Or (crafts store)

HarperCollins Publishers

Sahitya Akademi

The Kabir Project

Lawyer's Collective

Sahyadri School

Bhojwani School

Aman Setu School

Literature Across Frontiers

Point of View

National Centre for Advocacy Studies

Kalpavriksh Environmental Action
Group

Network of Women in Media

Breakthrough

Sangram

Commonwealth Human Rights
Initiative

Daniel Pearl Foundation

Some of our collaborators and resource-persons

Amol Palekar

P Sainath

Dileep Padgaonkar

S Anand

Madhushree Dutta

Paromita Vohra

Amar Kanwar

Shabnam Virmani

Anand Patwardhan

Ashish Sawhney

Atul Kumar

Vayu Naidu

Tom Alter

Dilip Chitre

Ashok Vajpeyi

Keki Daruwalla

Gieve Patel

Urvashi Butalia

Jerry Pinto

Annie Zaidi

Temsula Ao

Meena Kandasamy

Mamang Dai

Chandras Choudhury

Ashish Kothari

Philip Lutgendorf

Ramdass Lamb

Nityanand Jayaraman

Aseem Shrivastava

Gail Omvedt

Yoginder Sikand

Nivedita Menon

Teesta Setalvad

Neera Adarkar

Meena Menon

Dipankar Gupta

Javed Anand

Flavia Agnes

Shailesh Gandhi

Anjali Monteiro

Venkatesh Nayak

Nawaz Kotwal

Maja Daruwalla

Rajni Bakshi

Shubha Mudgal

Pritam Chakravarthy

DJ Ma Faiza

Pt Vijay Sardeshmukh

Mukhtiyar Ali

Mahesha Ram

Prahlad Tipaniya

Rohit Prajapati

Sarah Kay

Namita Gokhale

Malashree Lal

Dilip Simeon

Usha Ramanathan

Vrinda Grover

Sunil Gupta

Arshia Sattar

Sumona DasGupta

Shilpa Phadke

Sameera Khan

Our Supporters

Ford Foundation

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ABOUT CCDS



The Centre for Communication and Development Studies (CCDS) was set up in 2002 to create and promote

open spaces that advocate social/environmental/gender justice, pluralism and sustainable development, through the strategic use of communications.

CCDS was founded by a group of communications professionals, development analysts and social science researchers. We have offices in Pune and Trivandrum.

Besides the Open Space youth outreach programme which is described in this publication, CCDS has created the open-content online forum

www.infochangeindia.org, now in its 11th year online. Infochange is one of India's oldest and most credible forums for original reportage and analysis on sustainable development and social

justice, with content built by a widespread and informed network of over 450 development journalists, activists and researchers working to create and report social change. Infochange logs roughly 2,000 visitors every day, and our content is used and reprinted in civil society and mainstream media products globally, as well as in educational and training material. We have published 25 volumes of high-quality research and analysis on themes such as social exclusion, the politics of food and water, malnutrition, the takeover of the commons, gender discrimination, peace-building etc. This research is available for free online access in our print and online journal *Infochange Agenda*.

Infochangeindia has won the Manthan award for best e-content on development, and is featured as one of the 50 best digital innovations in India by the Digital Empowerment Foundation.

CCDS is a public trust registered with the Charity Commissioner, Pune (Registration number E-3657 Pune)

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