

Think Globally, Hack Locally

Teaching Python in your community

Leigh Honeywell

HackLab.to

leigh@hypatia.ca

identi.ca & twitter: @hypatiadotca



About Me

- Co-founder and board member of HackLab.TO
- Advisor to the SecTor Security Conference
- U of T student
- Independent security consultant (hire me to break things!)

Why I'm here



- To get you stoked about teaching Python in your community
- To share some of the things I've learned along the way



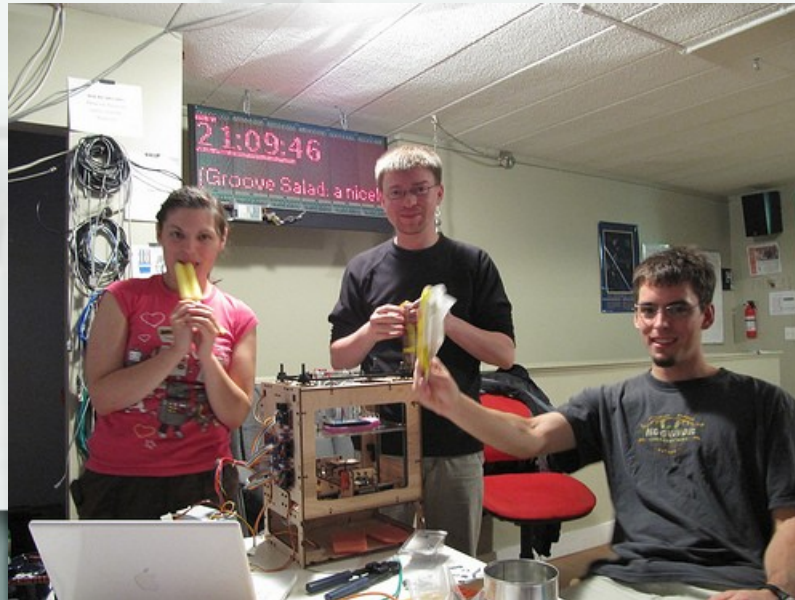
Python Newbie Night

What it was all about

- Informal, peer-taught class
- Often involved code up on a projector
- Basic format:
 - Read through a chunk of the text
 - Work on the exercises together

The Venue

- HackLabTO – Toronto's Hackerspace
- Community lab in Kensington Market
- Sometimes also held at Moonbean Coffee :)



Hackerspaces FTW!

- Not just for hardware hacking (though hardware makes for prettier pictures)
- Consult <http://hackerspaces.org> to find your local space

Other possible venues

- Community centres
- Churches
- Retirement homes
- Schools
- Jails (talk to Lukas!)
- Other public and private spaces
- Post a time at a coffeeshop on Craigslist :)

The students

- Computer animator with 7 years experience in MEL
- Community animator (like a social worker)
- Some CS students
- A journalist
- Graphic designer / PHP Dev
- A few Rails folks ;)

The students



Some numbers

- Around 25 students over the life of the class
- Typically 3-5 people at a time
- We had a couple of rushes of new people...

You don't need a B.Ed...

- My background is in CS and information security
- And Equity Studies, which is like Women's Studies but not just about women
- No formal teaching background

Logistics

- Every Thursday evening, 7-9PM
- Ran from Nov 2008 to Dec 2009
- Fairly minimal time commitment from me outside of class (even though I'm not that advanced a coder)

Text

- <http://thinkpython.com>
- Python for Software Design: How to think like a computer scientist
- Comes in dead tree form as well
- Wishlist: solutions to exercises

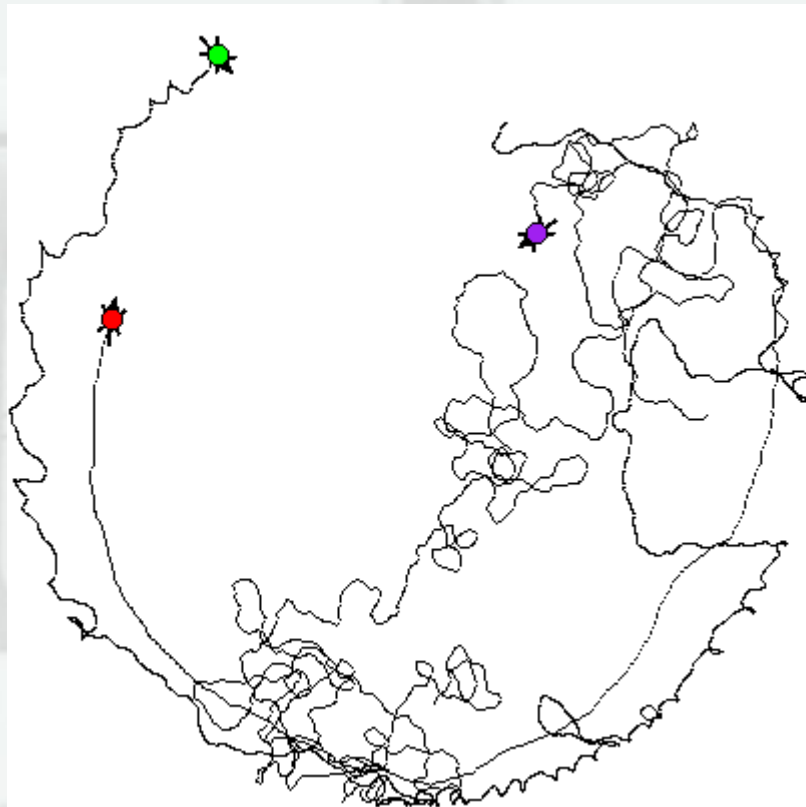


Note that little bit about “computer scientists”

Things that worked







Print canvas	Quit		
Make Turtle	Clear		
Run	Stop	Step	Clear
Run file	turtle_code.py		
Run code			
<pre>world.clear() bob = Turtle(world)</pre>			



Baked goods



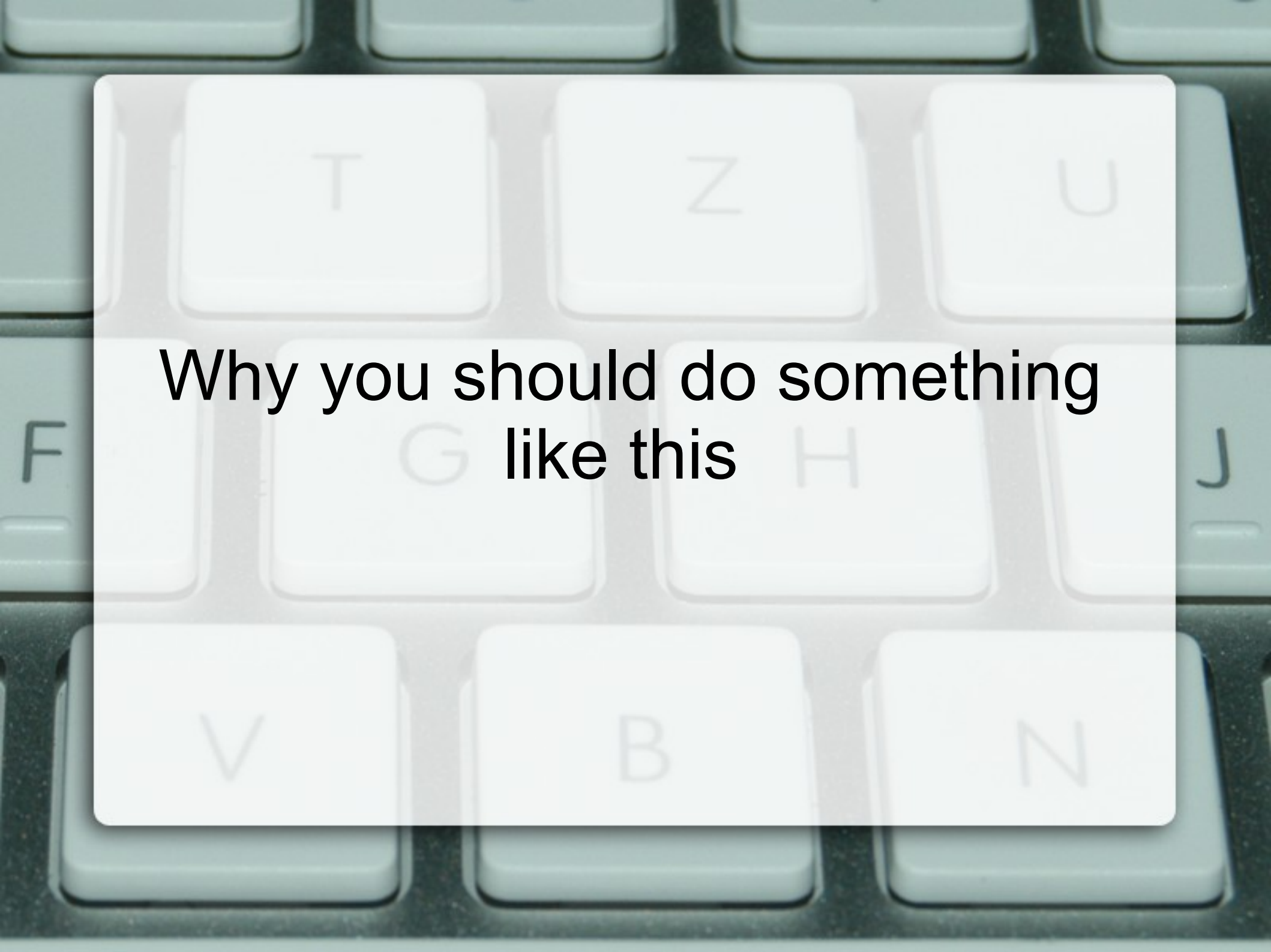
**Don't be afraid to stray from the
text**

Things that didn't

- Futzing around with IDEs
- The sign on anything except Linux
- Writing the whole alphabet with the Swampy turtle (don't ask)
- Just having one person running the class / keyholding



Fixed-length vs. ongoing / drop-in events



**Why you should do something
like this**