

## Viewpoint: Biohackers are interested in science education, not planning the ‘next global apocalypse’

Some people call me a biohacker. My colleagues like the term because it sounds cool, and journalists like it because it gets clicks. I prefer being called a community biologist, do-it-yourself biologist, or even a citizen scientist, terms that are all interchangeable with biohacker.

The New York Times recently [published a story](#) warning the public about biohackers who are [using CRISPR](#), a bioengineering tool that lets researchers make tiny and specific edits to DNA. The article assembled a number of news items — which included a biotech executive pricking himself with a homemade herpes treatment, scientists at University of Alberta in Edmonton synthesizing cowpox, and work at my community lab in Brooklyn — to paint a picture of biohackers working underground to create the next global apocalypse.

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Yet the truth is that community labs like ours have more to do with science outreach and education than the scary-sounding research mentioned in the article. These labs, also known as biohacker spaces, are community hubs where people from diverse backgrounds and a range of ages meet to learn about biotechnology, work on projects, and share know-how.

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Despite all the positives the biohacking community provides, should we ignore their benefits because someone shouts bioterrorism? No. Rather than portraying community biology as a threat, it's time for the media — and the public — to see it as a public resource.

**Read full, original post:** [Biohackers are about open-access to science, not DIY pandemics. Stop misrepresenting us](#)