Monica Alexander — Overcoming Barriers to Sharing Code

We all know sharing code is important for reproducibility, so why aren't we all doing it?

> "what if my code isn't good enough to share?"

- Coding gap between disciplines (physical vs social sci quant vs qual researchers)

- Replication often not possible in social sci, but reproducibility is.

- largely an issue of exposure & confidence.

- Start with informal code review by someone you trust (pair programming lite)

- Aim for incremental improvements
  eg functionalise something } Tidy Tuesday offers
  document data cleaning } rapid turnaround but can be intimidating

Helping Others

- Starting is hard, if it works it works, errors are daunting, debugging is a skill, how to ask internet for help.

- Notebooks for teaching: emphasises code + text all one big project

  encourages commenting & explanation

- Github for solo projects first is overkill but makes collaborating easier.

- Lots of live coding normalises errors

- Be pedantic about "small" things like file paths & hard coding numbers.

Collaborating

▷ The most efficient division of labour does not develop skills or encourage OpenSci.

Final thoughts

- It's okay to be nervous about sharing code.
- You'll never be the best coder
- "Good Code" is not well defined. Aim for working code.
- Data + Code are part of manuscripts.