**Copyright for Humans, March 2025**

**Introduction**

The purpose of this game is to encourage conversations around copyright, especially those arising in academic contexts. The game encourages players to express different opinions (deliberately in an emotive, exaggerated or amusing way). The game also allows players to choose answers that point to uncertainty or to avoid answering altogether. Overall, the game acknowledges that in many cases there will be no absolute ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answer, but a range of options to be discussed.

The game can be played in a relaxed way (an opportunity to discuss, no ‘winners’) or more competitively (points awarded to the most appropriate, amusing or best delivered answers).

This game consists of 100+ copyright questions and ~500 possible answers to these questions.

**Why the name Copyright for Humans?**

The name was inspired by the theme of the ICEPOPS conference 2024. The name embraces the humanity involved in making decisions related to copyright: judgement, appetite for risk, emotion, feeling protective of one’s work, anxiety, political views, attitudes towards uncertainty etc.

**Why is Ed Sheeran mentioned quite often in the game?**

No idea. Maybe I had been reading too much about the lawsuits while developing the game.

**Aims**

* Address copyright scenarios inviting different views, pointing out tensions around copyright and open science
* Potential to complement with further information and resources – can be paired up with a more traditional teaching session
* Discuss copyright within the context of open science
* Beat copyright anxiety in a playful environment.

**Materials**

**Questions pool**. 100+ questions on copyright, open access and open science

**Answers pool**: around 500 possible answers. Roughly 150 of them questions are positive ('yes, this is OK'), 150 are negative ('not OK'), around 100 are in-between ('it depends') and around 100 are about avoiding an answer, e.g. ‘who wants a drink?’). Answers in these 4 categories can be printed or labelled separately, to allow people to pick up one card from each category. Subsets of questions and answers can be used to play the game with different audiences – see Rules and spreadsheet.

Blank wildcards may be also included, for players to write down their own answers.

**Rules**

**Players**

* Ideally 4-6 players or 4 teams of players
* One player at any one time is the Copyright Master (decision maker) - see game rules.
* The person running the session (facilitator) can participate as a player but should also be able to sum up discussions and point to relevant information.

**Who goes first?**

* The person who infringed copyright most recently goes first and becomes the Copyright Master for round 1.
* At every new round the next person clockwise becomes the Copyright Master.
* Exception: if you are Ed Sheeran then you always go last (to highlight the fact that he didn’t infringe copyright).
* People play as themselves. An alternative would be to assign roles: they can be a publisher, a radical open access advocate, an academic, a student, a musician etc. They could also play as a particular person (use your imagination but please don’t allow any Elon Musks). If there is a debate, a player may choose to justify their answer based on their role/identity.

**How to play**

* Each player except the Copyright Master draws 4 answer cards. At any one time, they have 4 cards in their hand (so when they submit a card, they pick up another).
* The Copyright Master draws a question card and reads it aloud.
* Each person chooses an answer from their 4 options and reads it out. ***Variation:*** If a player doesn't like any of the possible answers, they can replace the cards or write their own answer on a blank card.
* Players are encouraged to sing/perform any answers that are song lyrics or quotes or act out any other answer.
* **If played competitively**: The aim is for the group to choose the best answer to the question. Each player can try to influence the decision. The Copyright Master has the final say as to which answer addresses the question best. Discussion and debate are strongly encouraged at this stage. Once a winning answer is chosen, the question card is given to the player who submitted it and counts as a point. The person with the most points at the end of the game is the winner. Unless you are Ed Sheeran, in which case you can never be the winner (or you always win; depending on how the group feels about Ed Sheeran).

**Alternatively, play without votes or points**.

* The game ends when everyone has had enough, or when an agreed number of rounds has taken place. It is best to leave this open-ended because a single question may spark a lot of discussion; that's fine.

**Producing the materials**

* Go to folder **Copyright for Humans game UCL CD 2025.**
* Two Word files: **Copyright for Humans questions UCL CD 2025** and **Copyright for Humans answers UCL CD 2025** contain the full pool of Q and As andare ready for you to print, laminate and cut into cards.
* If you prefer to add, modify or select a subset of questions and answers, this can be done from the Excel file **Copyright for Humans UCL CD 2025.** This has a questions tab and an answers tab. To help you select questions for different audiences, different columns show which questions are most suitable for researchers, lecturers, PGRs, students etc. You can create subsets of 15-30 questions in this way. The answers tab has ~500 answers. These have been categorised as positive, negative, ‘it depends’ or ‘avoiding’. Again, you can pick and choose which answers to include, you can add your own etc.
* If using subsets of cards or want to create new questions, you can use the Word files as templates. To do this:
* Create a column in the Excel file with all the questions you want to use
* Copy the column
* Open the questions Word file. Paste – Paste Special – Unformatted Text. This should paste each question on a different page. Page size and margins are custom. Print one-sided, 8 pages (questions) per sheet
* Do the same for the answers cards – you can print 16 per sheet
* Have fun laminating and guillotining. Lose the will to live, curse Ed Sheeran, then recover and play.

***Aided by instructions and templates by*** [***Tim Morley***](https://timsk.wordpress.com/2014/02/05/cards-against-humanity-make-your-own/)***.***

**Copyright and licensing**

The game was created at UCL by Christine Daoutis [c.daouti@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:c.daouti@ucl.ac.uk). Initially it was meant to be an adaptation of Cards Against Humanity (available under CC BY-NC-SA) – in fact it is just inspired by the concept, but not a derivative.

Unless otherwise stated (i.e. third-party quotes, lyrics etc), the game is licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution Licence CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/deed.en).

**Acknowledgements**

It has been inspired by the Cards Against Humanity game: <https://www.cardsagainsthumanity.com.>

The game also built on ideas from other wonderful games: [the Publishing Trap](https://copyrightliteracy.org/resources/the-publishing-trap/), [Copyright: the card game](https://copyrightliteracy.org/resources/copyright-the-card-game/), [Copyright Dough](https://copyrightliteracy.org/2020/03/02/copyright-dough-a-game-to-teach-and-bring-discussion-about-copyright-licences-and-exceptions/), the [Copyright Escape Rooms](https://ericalevi.coventry.domains/lordSchism.html) and [Quick Tips](https://ericalevi.coventry.domains/tips.html) for copyright. Many thanks to Erica Levi for her feedback and to everyone who attended the demo in ICEPOPS and offered useful suggestions, particularly the idea to create subsets and to include wildcards.

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Header image put together by Christine Daoutis using public domain icons from [Openclipart.org](https://openclipart.org/).

Some questions and answers are third-party materials. These are acknowledged in the Excel file.

**Developing the game further**

I would be very interested in collaborating on future versions. Please contact [c.daouti@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:c.daouti@ucl.ac.uk) if you are interested.