From Users to Sense-Makers

Changing the world by changing our worldviews with social tools-for-thought

Ronen Tamari

Seeds of Renaissance Research Call - November 13, 2026

Talk Outline

1. Theory: Background, motivation
2. Practice: Cosmik, Semble & AT Protocol
3. How to scale this
4. Closing

Discussion and questions are welcome throughout!

About me



EXTENDED-ABSTRACT | FREE ACCESS

From Users to (Sense)Makers: On the Pivotal Role of Stigmergic Social Annotation in the Quest for Collective Sensemaking

Authors: Ronen Tamari, Daniel Friedman, William Fischer, Lauren Hebert, Dafna Shahaf | Authors Info & Claims

HT '22: Proceedings of the 33rd ACM Conference on Hypertext and Social Media • Pages 236 - 239
https://doi.org/10.1145/3511095.3536361

Published: 28 June 2022 Publication History | Check for updates

Started a PhD in AI "how to build better models"

COVID happened

End of PhD: How to build better sensemaking environments for humans

Astera Open Science fellowship: social media for resaerchers

Co-founded Cosmik and a few more things

2018 2020 2023 2024 2025-

The problem: godlike tech advancement vs static human nature

"we modern humans credit ourselves with limitless potential for **changing our external reality**.

But we still struggle to imagine **changing our minds**"



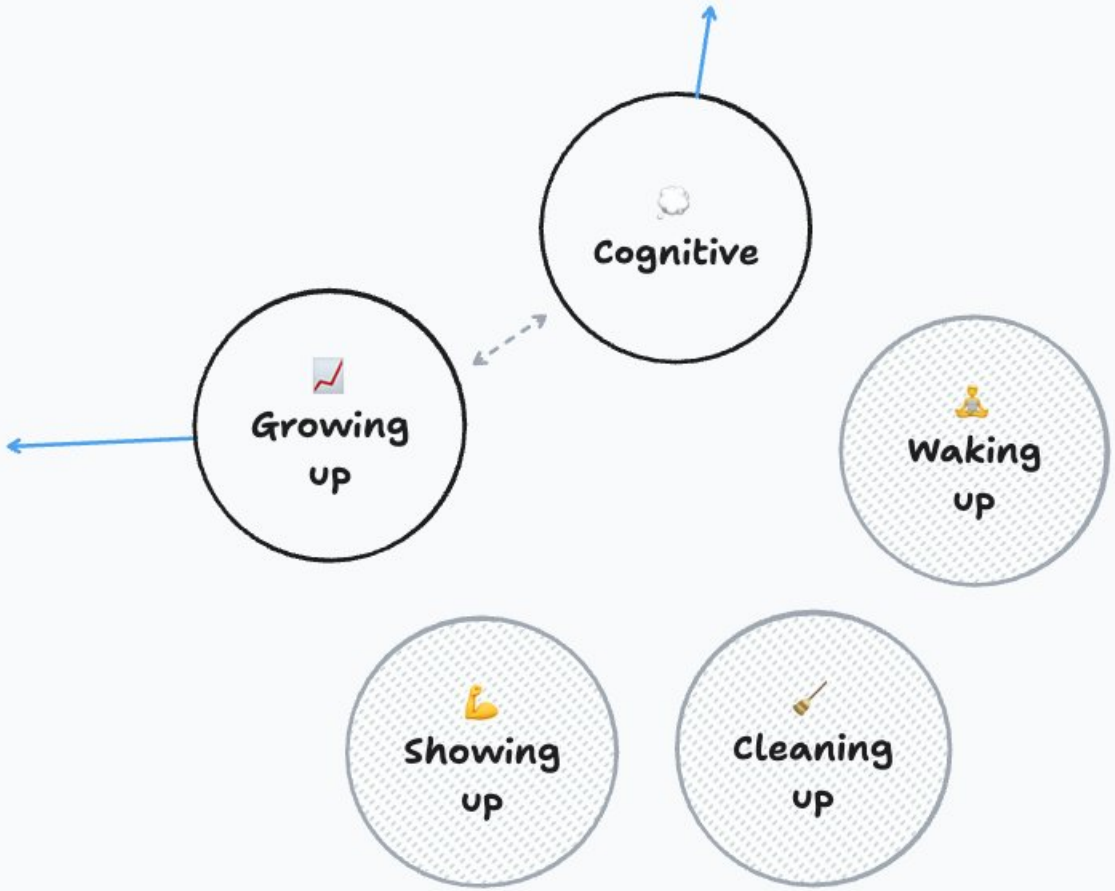
"We envision futures of godlike technological advancement [...] : terraforming planets and travelling at warp speed. But when it comes to our expression of human nature, very little changes. We may be fighting with laser cannons and ray-guns but we're still fighting. The same cycles of violence and vengeance still drive us to oppress and destroy each other, ourselves, and the rest of life - only with faster cars and sexier weapons."

Developmental Spaces White Paper (Rosie Bell, Boaz Feldman, Rufus Pollock & Christoph Wenna)

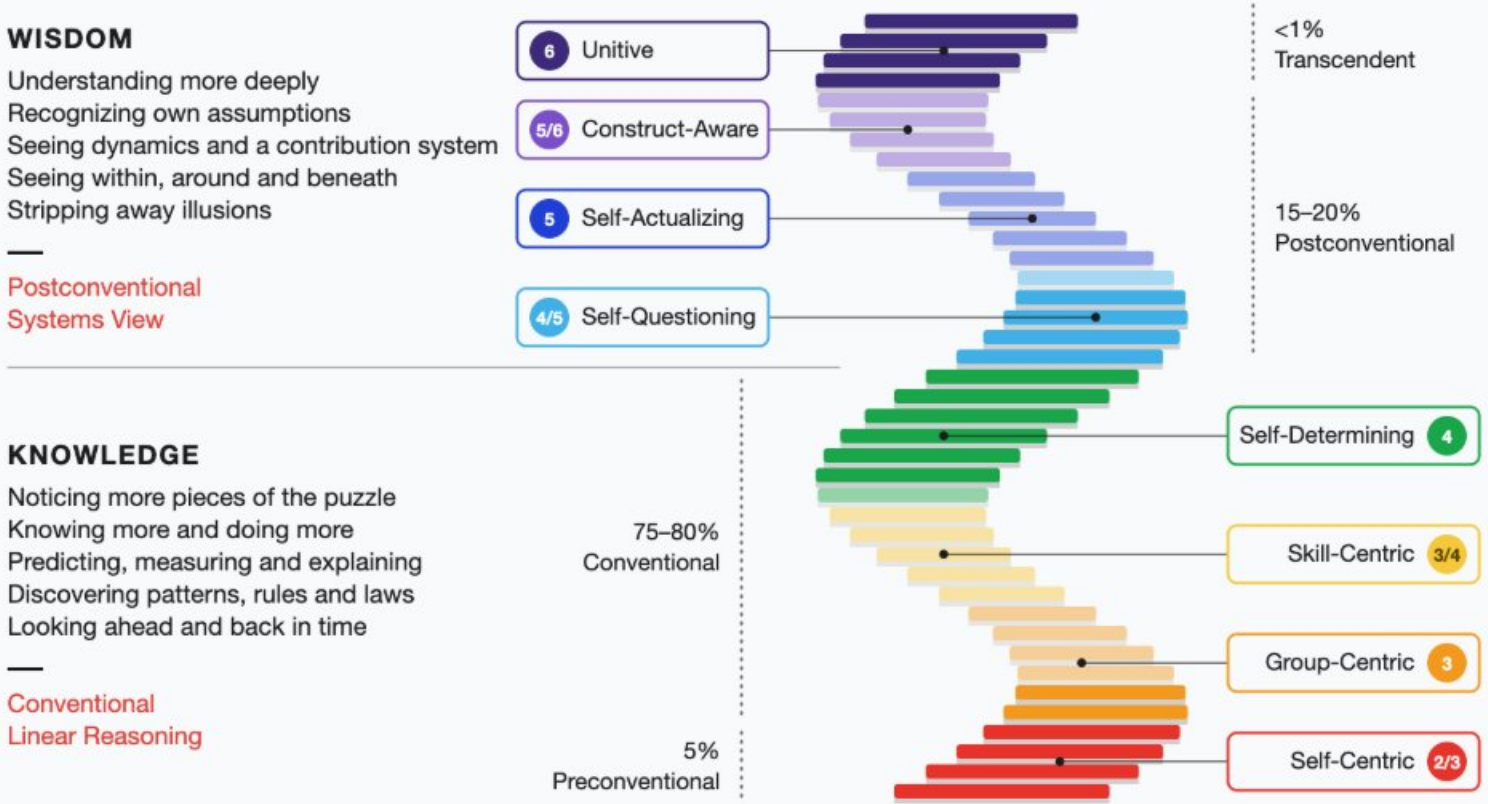
Inner development domains (DS White Paper)

Foundation of intellectual development. Growth through increasingly complex stages of reasoning

Worldview development. A process of expanding identity to encompass larger categories, and thus of deepening responsibility within larger circles of care



The metacrisis is a developmental crisis



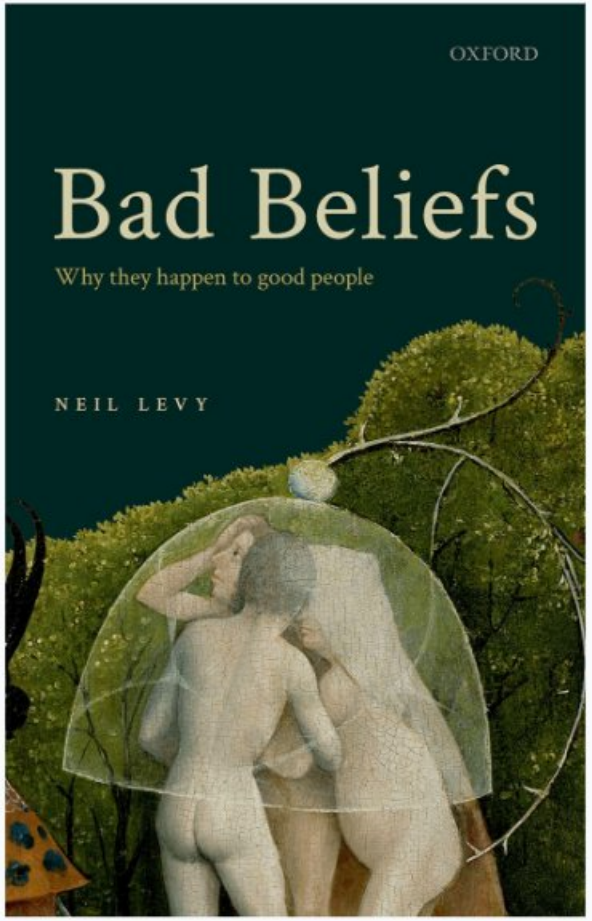
To address the metacrisis we need many more people here

We (as societies) are here

Ego development Theory (Susanne Cook-Greuter)

Based on https://www.sloww.co/ego-development-theory-cook-greuter/

“Change minds by changing the world, physical and social” - Neil Levy



Reframe - Environments

Change minds by changing environments

“Once you see the boundaries of your environment, they are no longer the boundaries of your environment.” — Marshall McLuhan

Cultural environments - *not the focus of this talk*

Developmental Spaces - environments for cultural (r)evolution, co-living, community building





Life Itself Bergerac Hub

Our focus: *Epistemic environments*

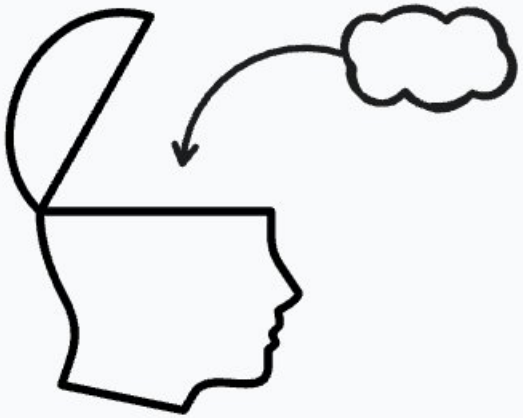
Epistemology: branch of philosophy that examines the nature, origin, and limits of knowledge.

Epistemic Environment: agents act on it, and it acts back, affecting agents' cognitive and behavioural dispositions. Example - social media platforms (Marin, 2022)

Rethinking epistemics

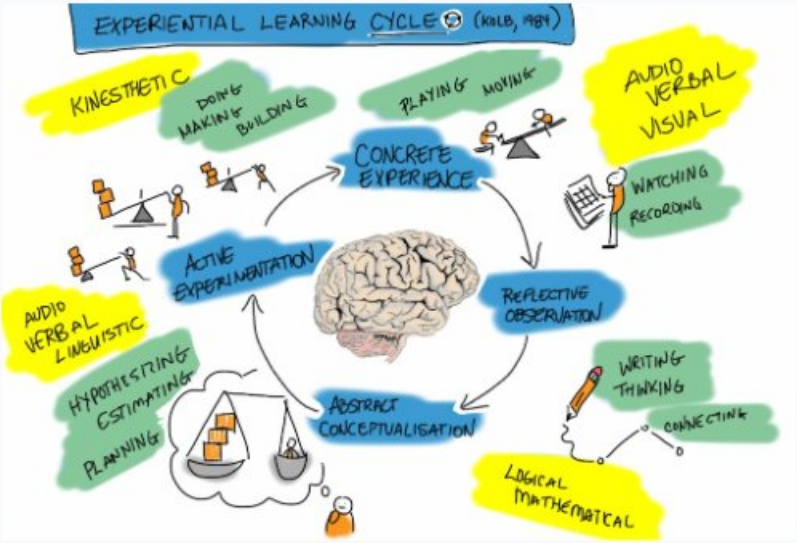
Old/current model

Having the "right" information



Enactive (4E) cognition model

Good learning environments

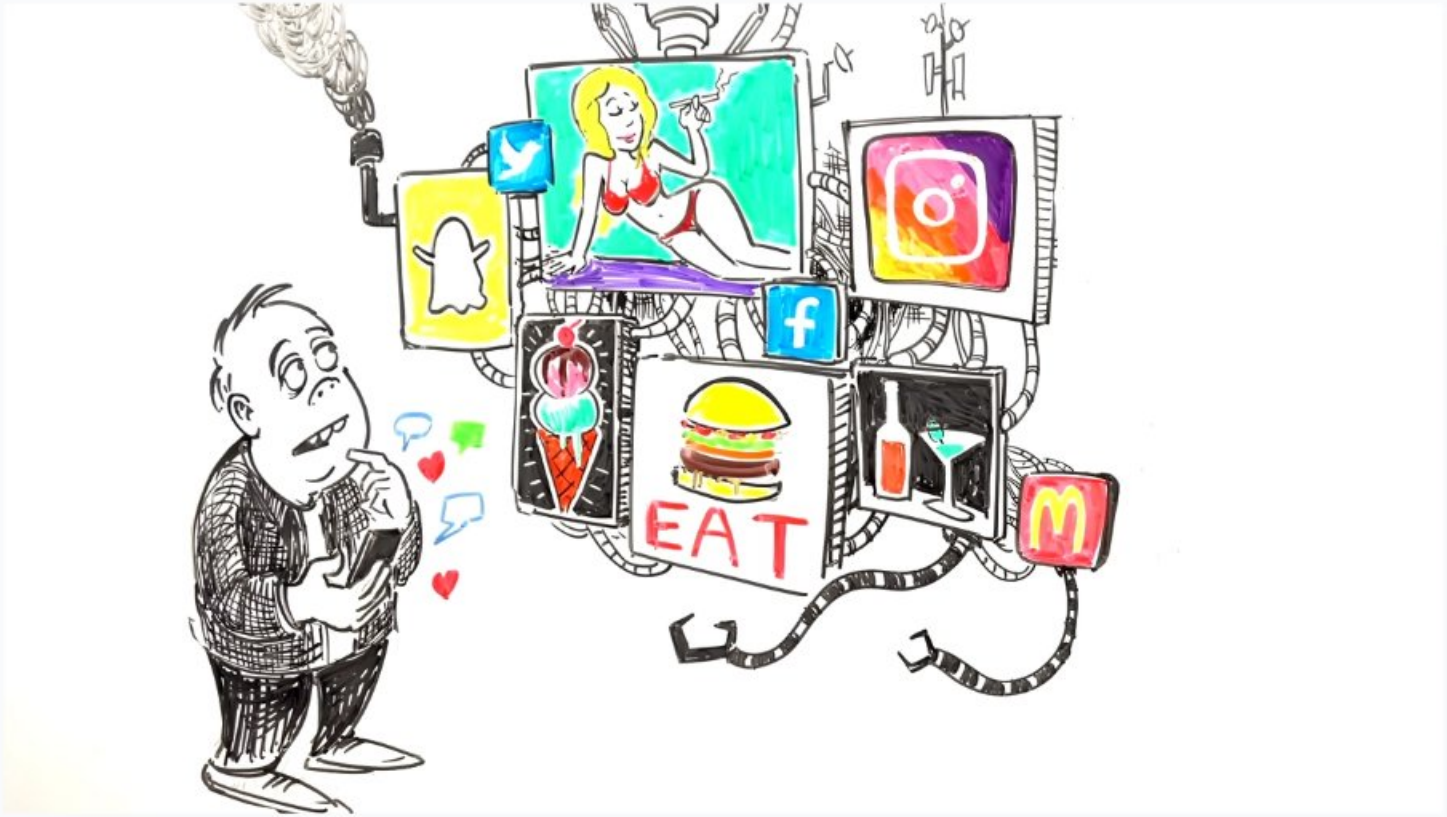


"Ask not what's inside your head but what your head's inside of" - W.M. Mace

What is our head currently inside of?



(1) Addictive Social media



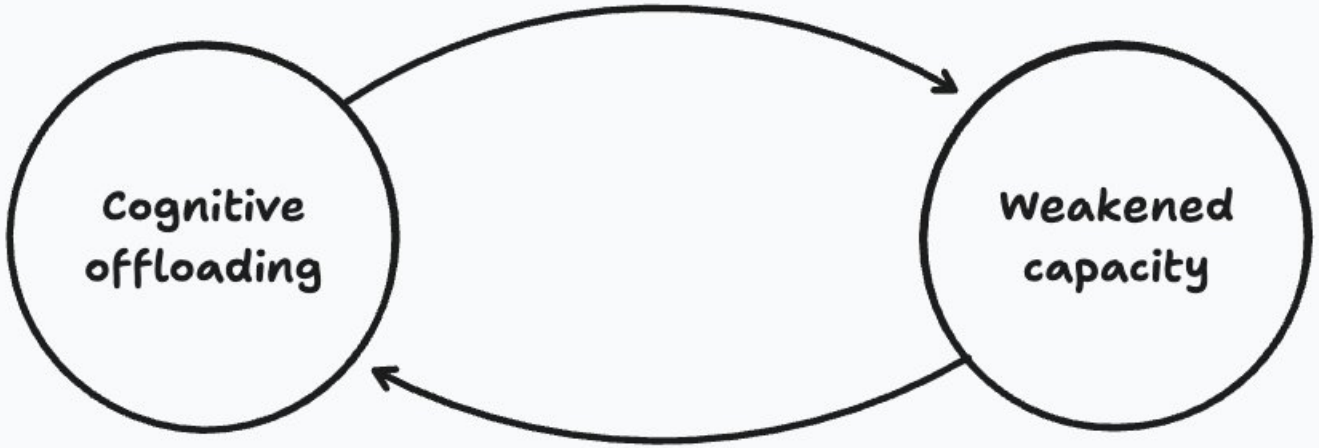


Dopamine Fasting 2.0 - Overcome Addiction & Restore Motivation

This animation was made in collaboration with One Percent Better. Please subscribe! https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRI6t05DNVlV0…

youtube.com

(2) AI disempowerment spirals



IDEAS

THE END OF READING IS HERE

Optimists once believed that universal literacy was inevitable. Now it seems that the age of reading might be a short anomaly in human history.

By Rose Horowitch

"People will [..] need their powers of discernment and

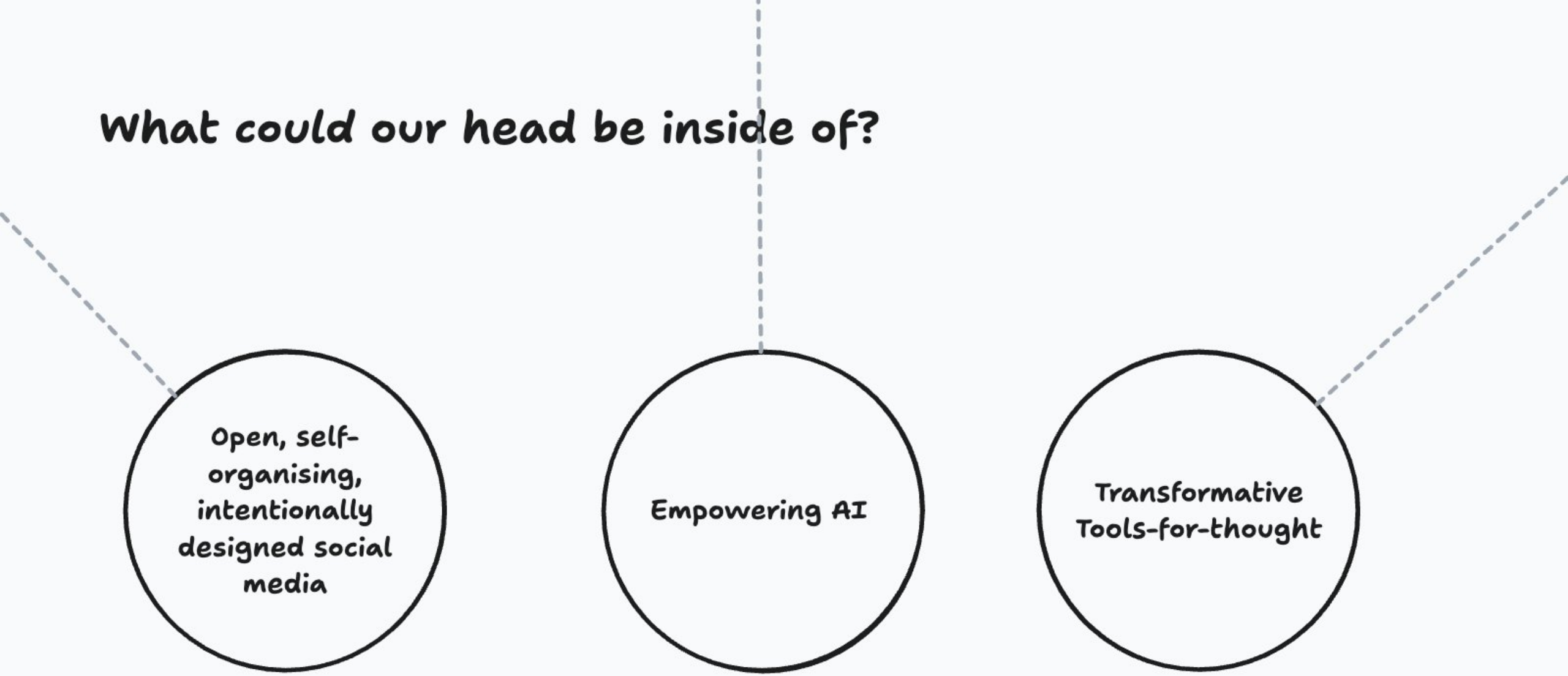
(3) A system that assumes the worst of us (and profits from it)



https://x.com/nikitabier/status/1481118417973243907

▸ **Techno-optimist cosmology (Albrecht, 2025)**

What could our head be inside of?



(1) Open, self-organising, intentionally designed social media



Source

(2) Empowering AI

On Learning to Ride Your Brain (Venkatesh Rao, 2026)



"just as learning to ride a motorcycle is about extending a previously acquired ability to ride a bicycle, learning to ride AI is about extending a previously acquired ability to ride your own brain."

"We have spent centuries building institutions for teaching knowledge, certifying expertise, ... We have paid much less systematic attention to teaching people to ride their own brains.
Now we are handing them motorcycles."

"Perhaps the most important educational challenge of the AI era is not teaching people to code, prompt, or even critically evaluate machine-generated information. Those are useful skills, but they are downstream of something more basic: learning to maintain dynamically stabilized control over your own cognitive activity, and then extending that control to a coupled system with a powerful generative machine."

(3) Transformative Tools-for-Thought



https://numinous.productions/ttft/

- Are the origin myth of modern computing...
- ...but they haven't panned out yet.

Tools for thought

Obsidian

Notion

Roam



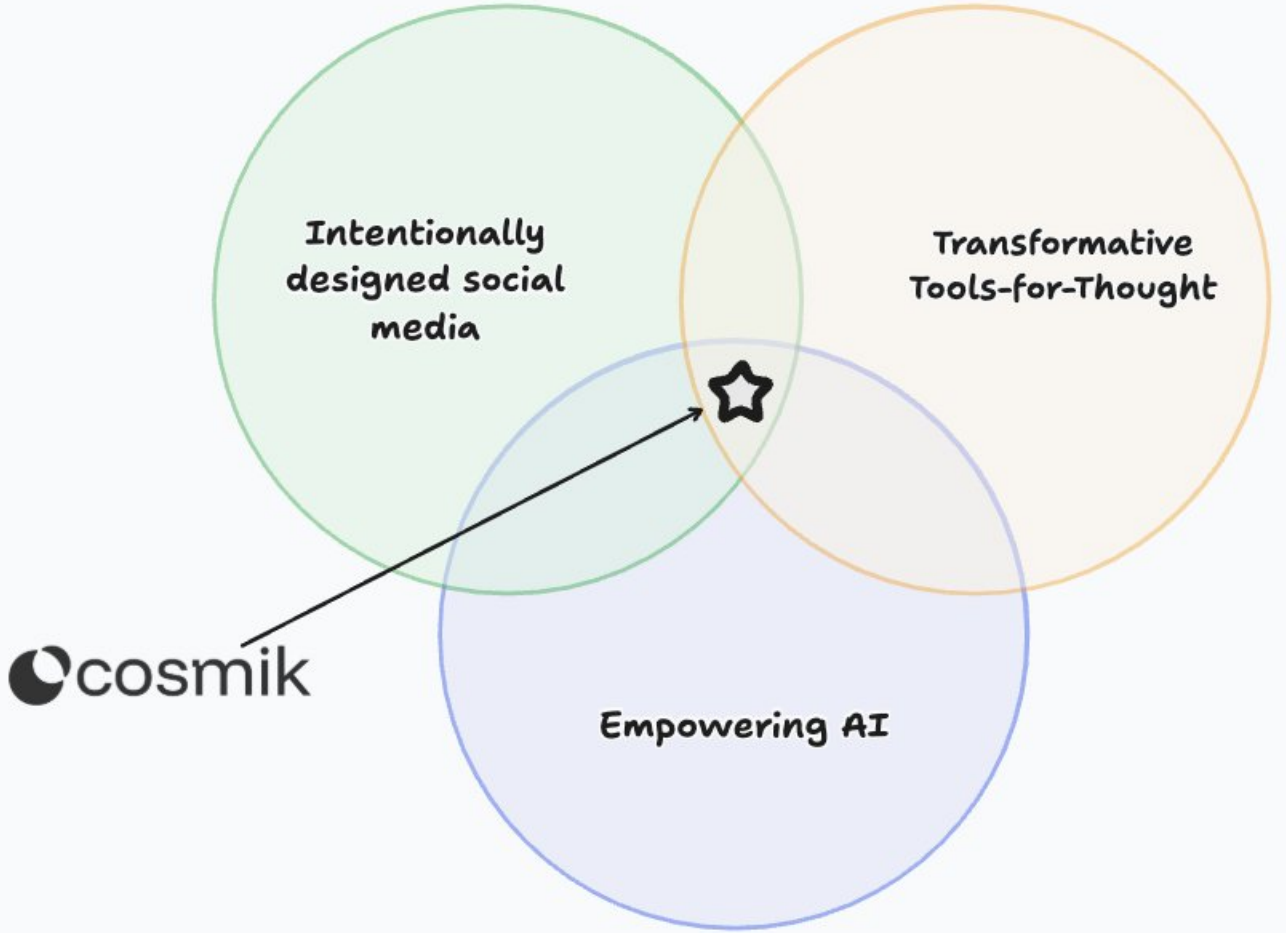
Cosmik

Mission + product driven R&D lab - transforming social networks into sensemaking networks

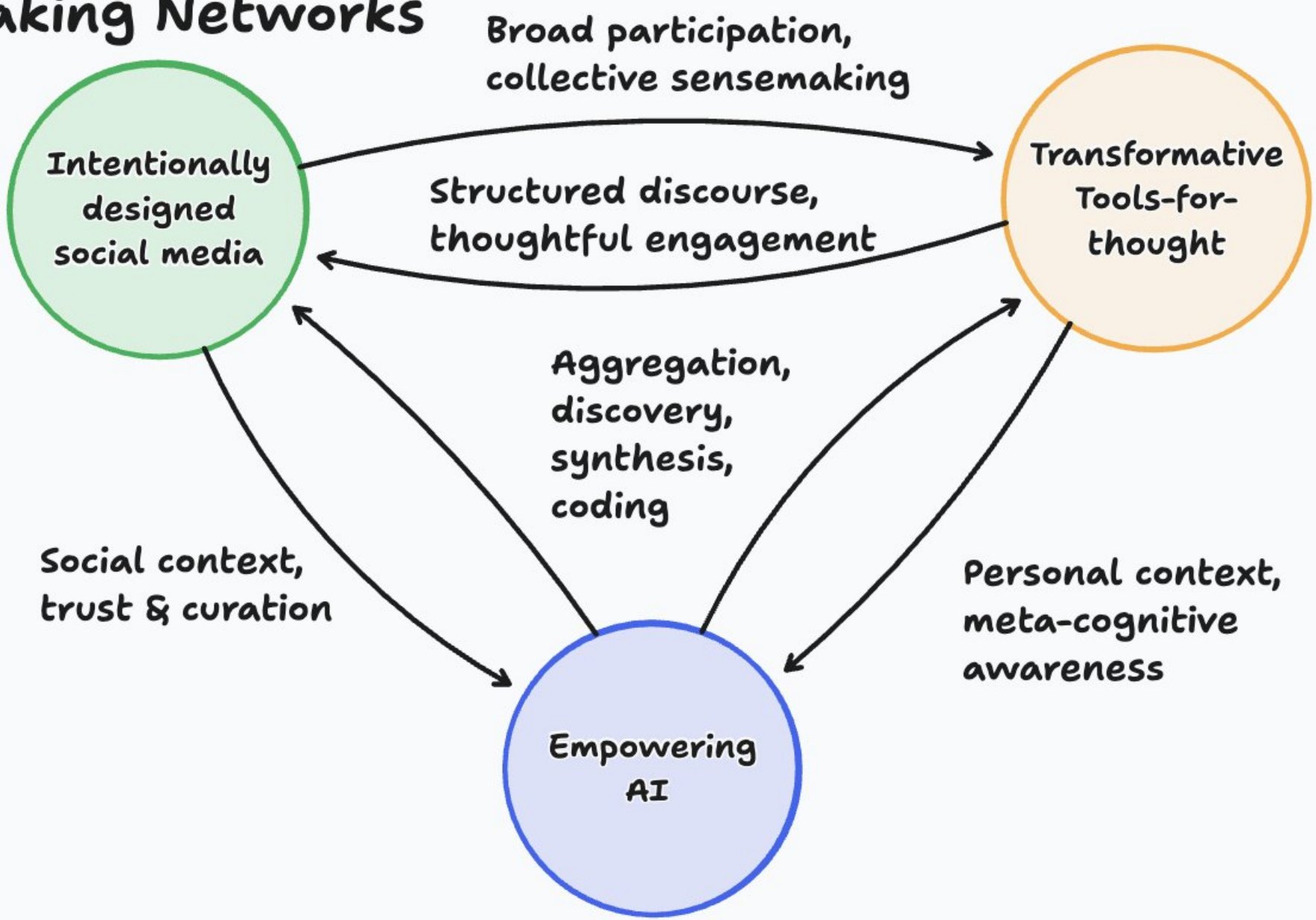








Sensemaking Networks



Semble



A collaborative space for mapping the web, connecting ideas, and building shared knowledge

- Who's reading* what?
- What do they think of it?
- How does it connect to other knowledge?
- Make sharing & discovery easy, valuable, delightful
- On AT Protocol so we own our trails

* reading / watching / listening / ...

https://semble.so/

Semble - the basics

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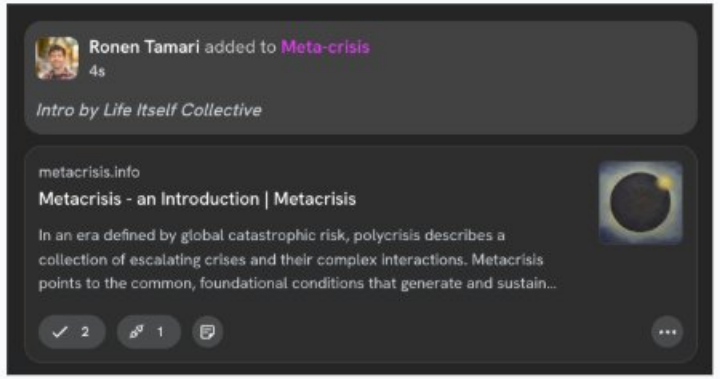
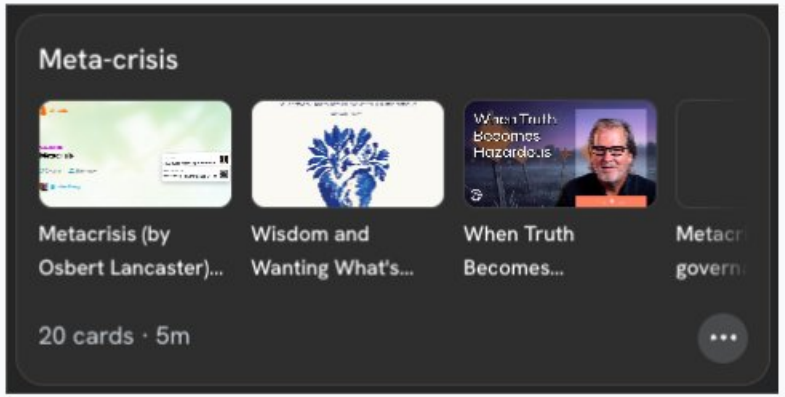
Cards
Save any URL, with a note on why it matters.

Collections
Organize cards alone or with collaborators. Anyone can follow.

Connections
Link two cards w/typed relations: supports, opposes, etc.









Canvas mode

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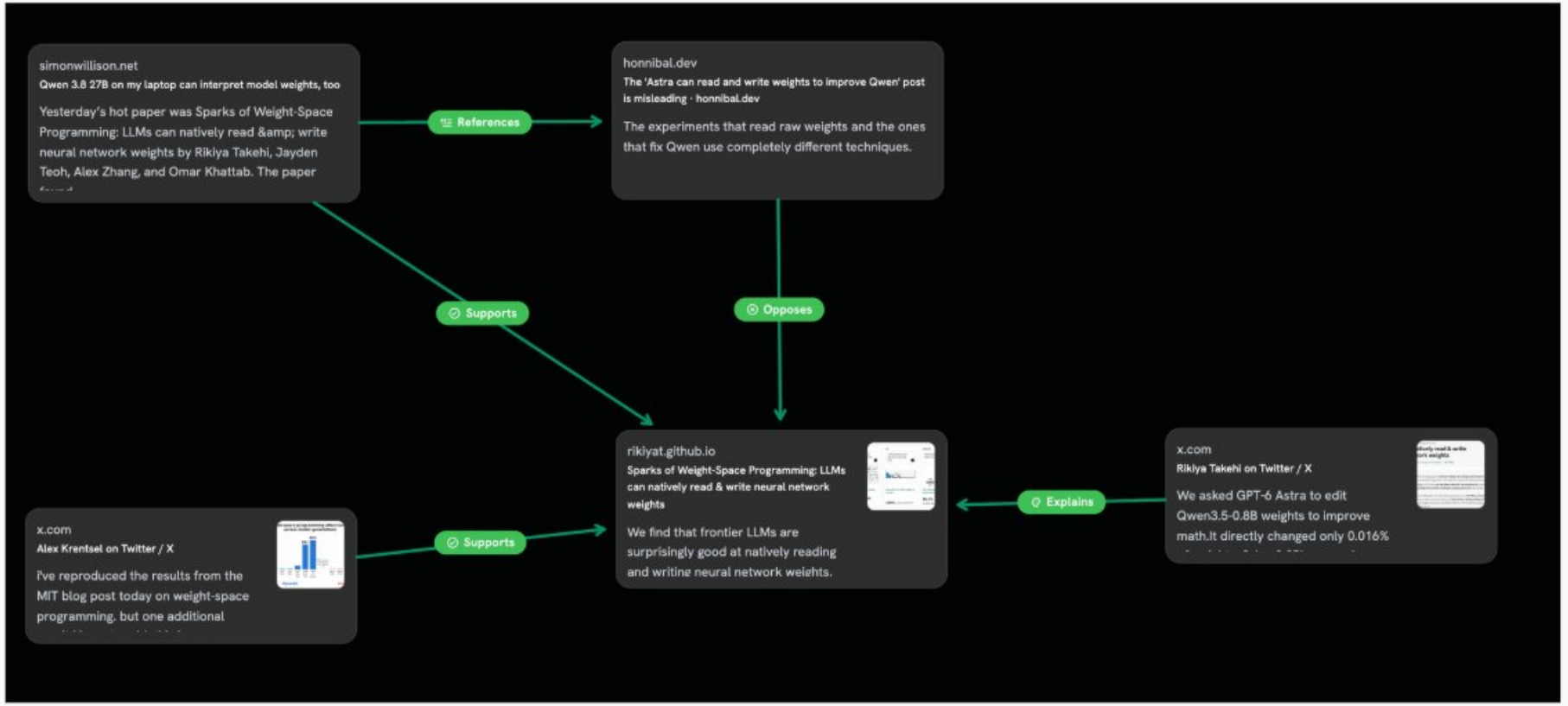
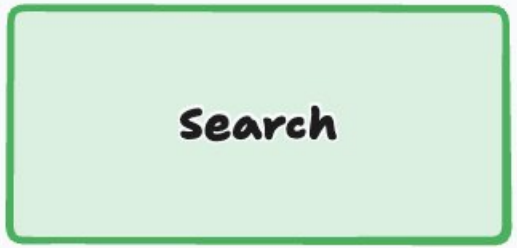


Semble - live demos





https://semble.so/url?id=https://www.noemamag.com/we-may-be-entering-a-second-axial-age/

https://semble.so/search/cards?query=metacrisis

Build on it

semble

Open data & API
Everything you saw is easily accessible

https://docs.cosmik.network/semble

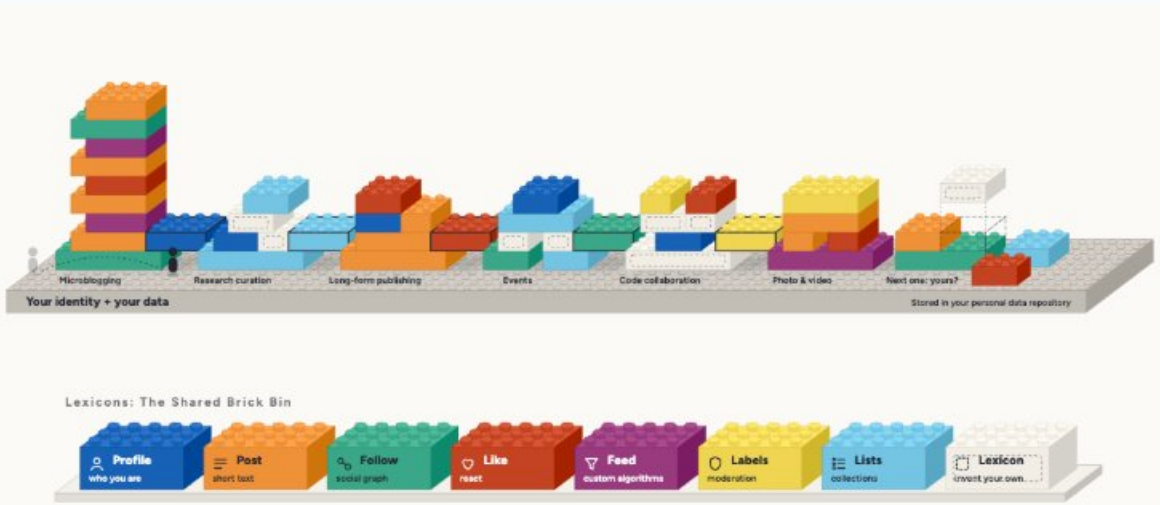
Semble MCP
Ask your agent: "Who are the top curators on this topic?" or "Summarize this collection"

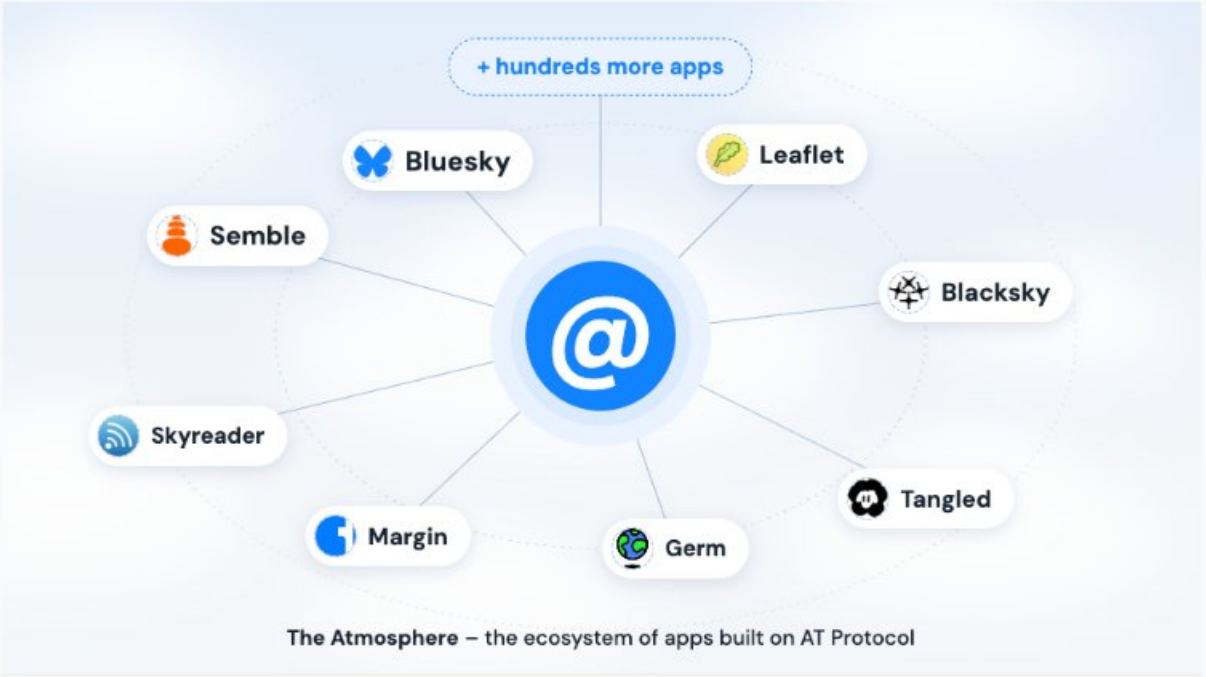
https://docs.cosmik.network/semble-mcp

Semble is built on AT Protocol

@ ATProtocol

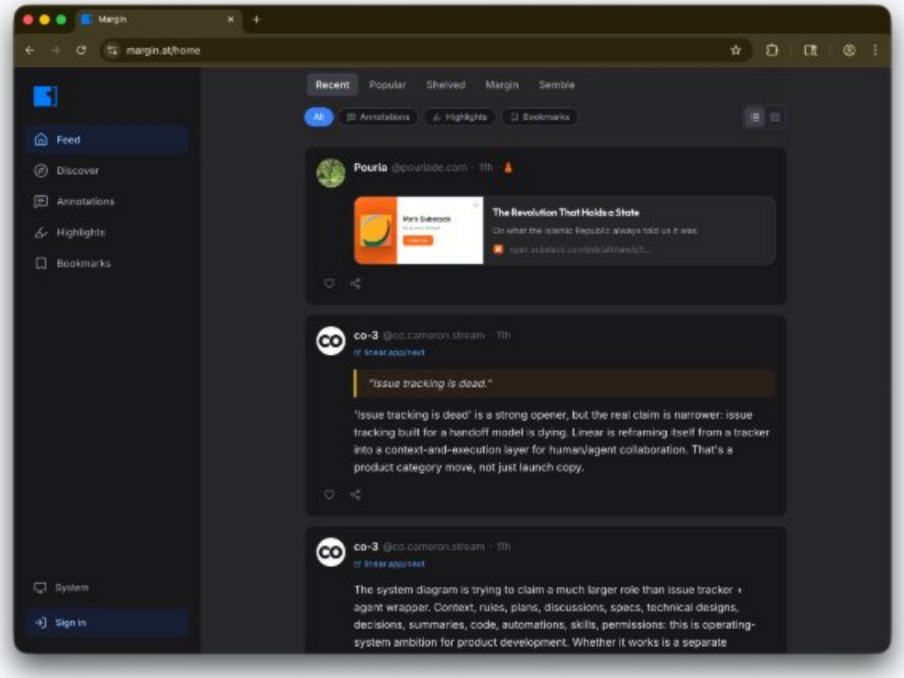
An open social network protocol underlying Bluesky and the "Atmosphere" (the ecosystem of apps built on the protocol)



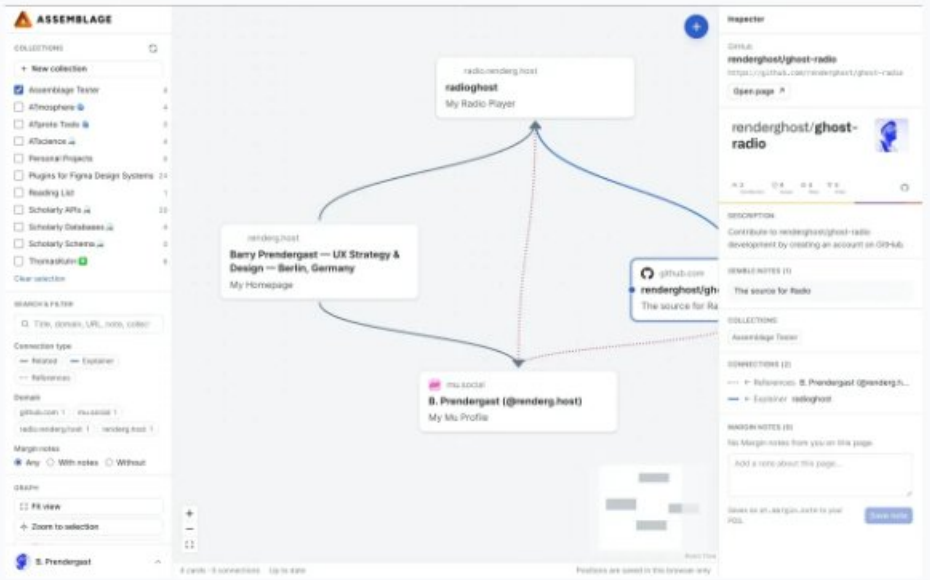


Atmosphere apps share identity and data

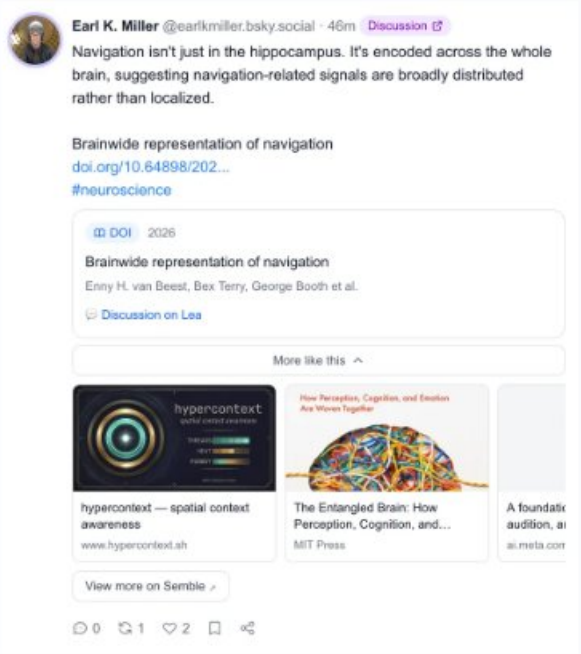
Enabling seamless extension, integration and interoperability



Margin.at



Assemblage



Lea

Patterns of collective sensemaking on Semble & other social tools for thought

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Sensors, not just bookmarks [Patterns of Sensemaking #1] - Cosmik Labs

First of a new series on sensemaking patterns we're observing on Semble

blog.cosmik.network



Connecting with your readers on Semble [Patterns of Sensemaking #2] -

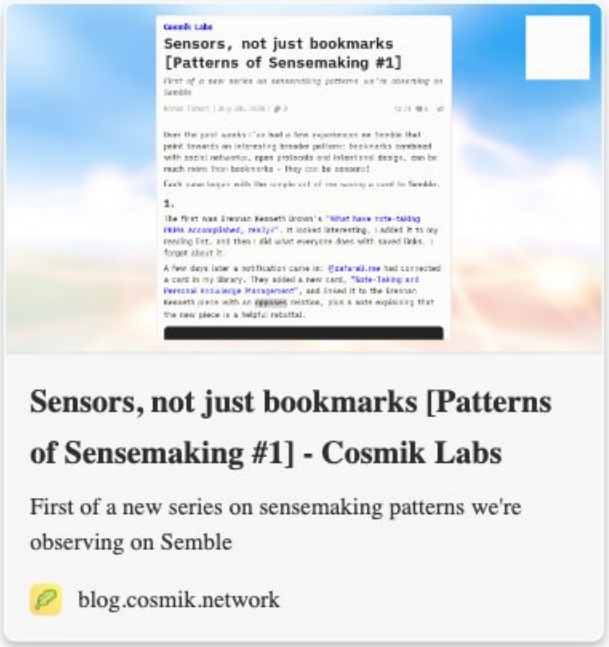
On how the references you make help your writing find its natural audience

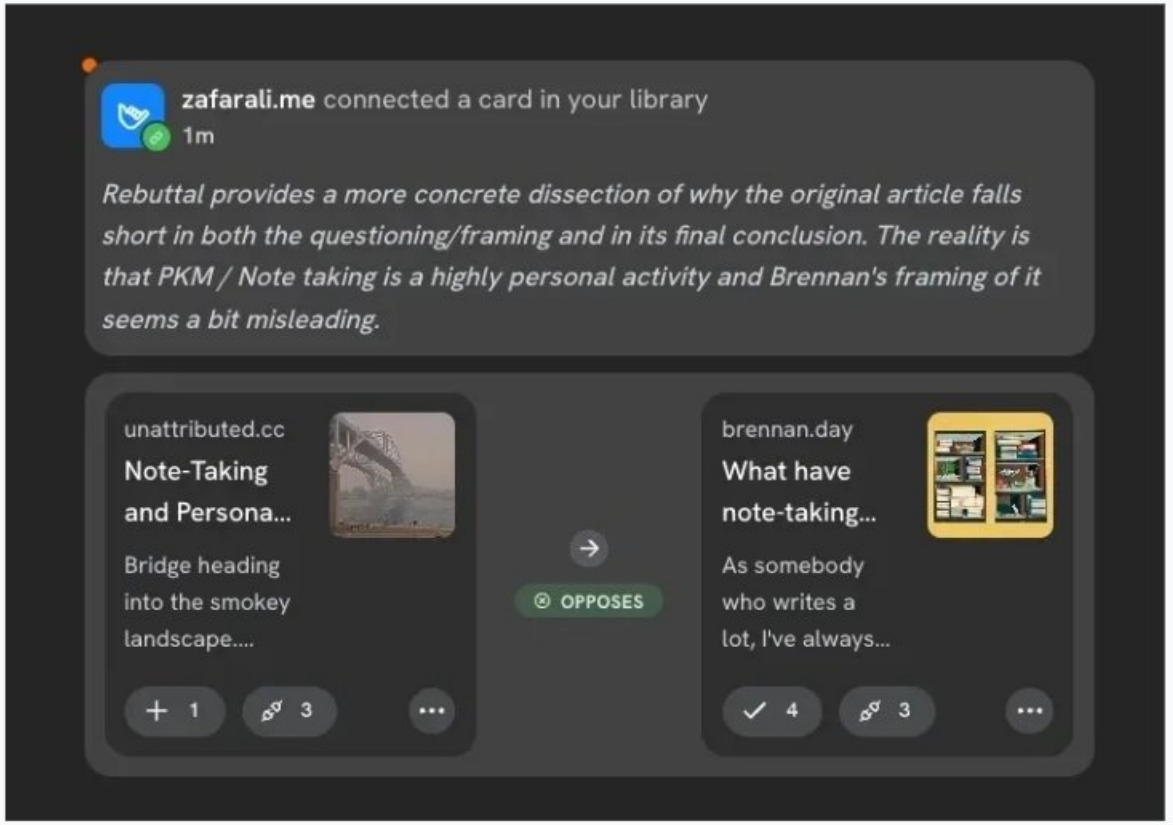
blog.cosmik.network



Sensors, not just bookmarks

semble





New ways to connect with readers

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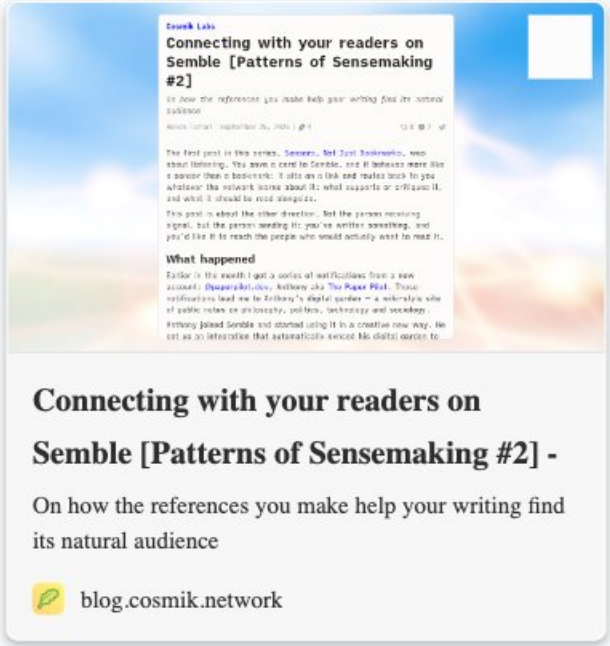
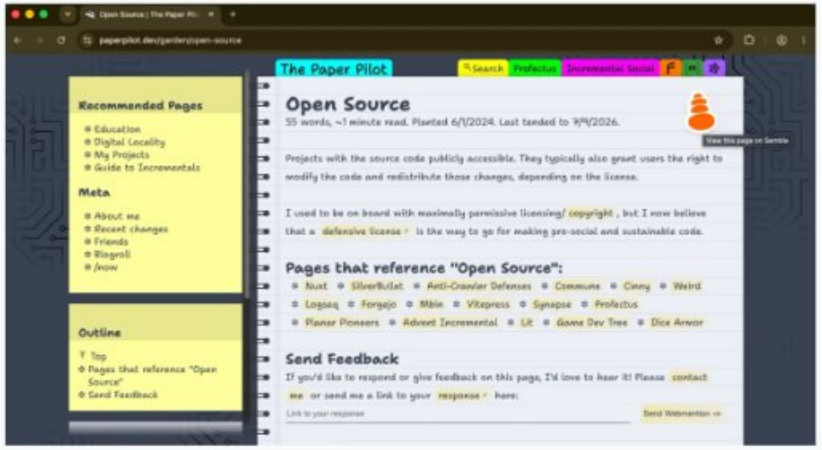
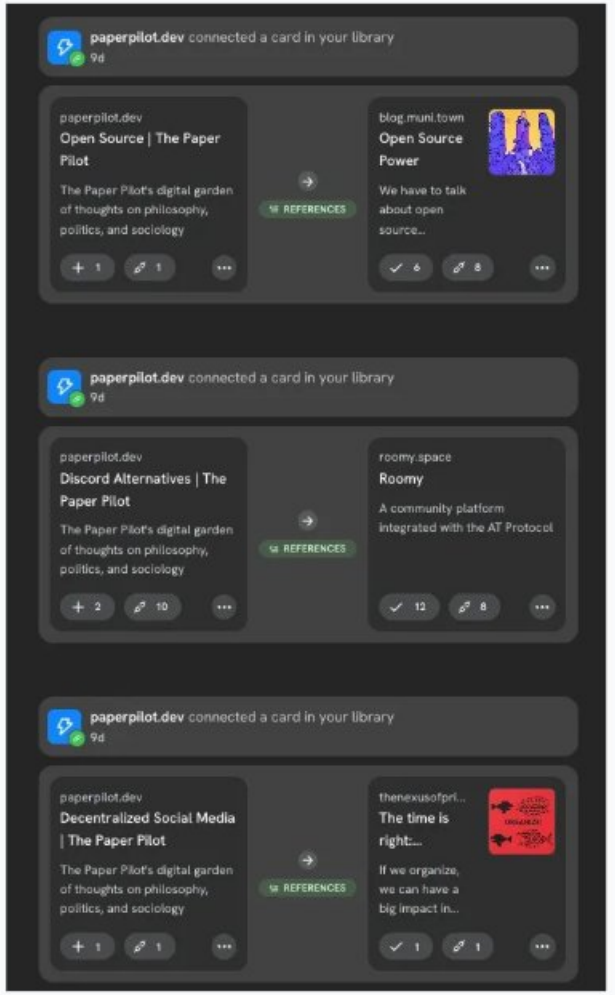


Connecting with your readers on Semble [Patterns of Sensemaking #2] -

On how the references you make help your writing find its natural audience

blog.cosmik.network





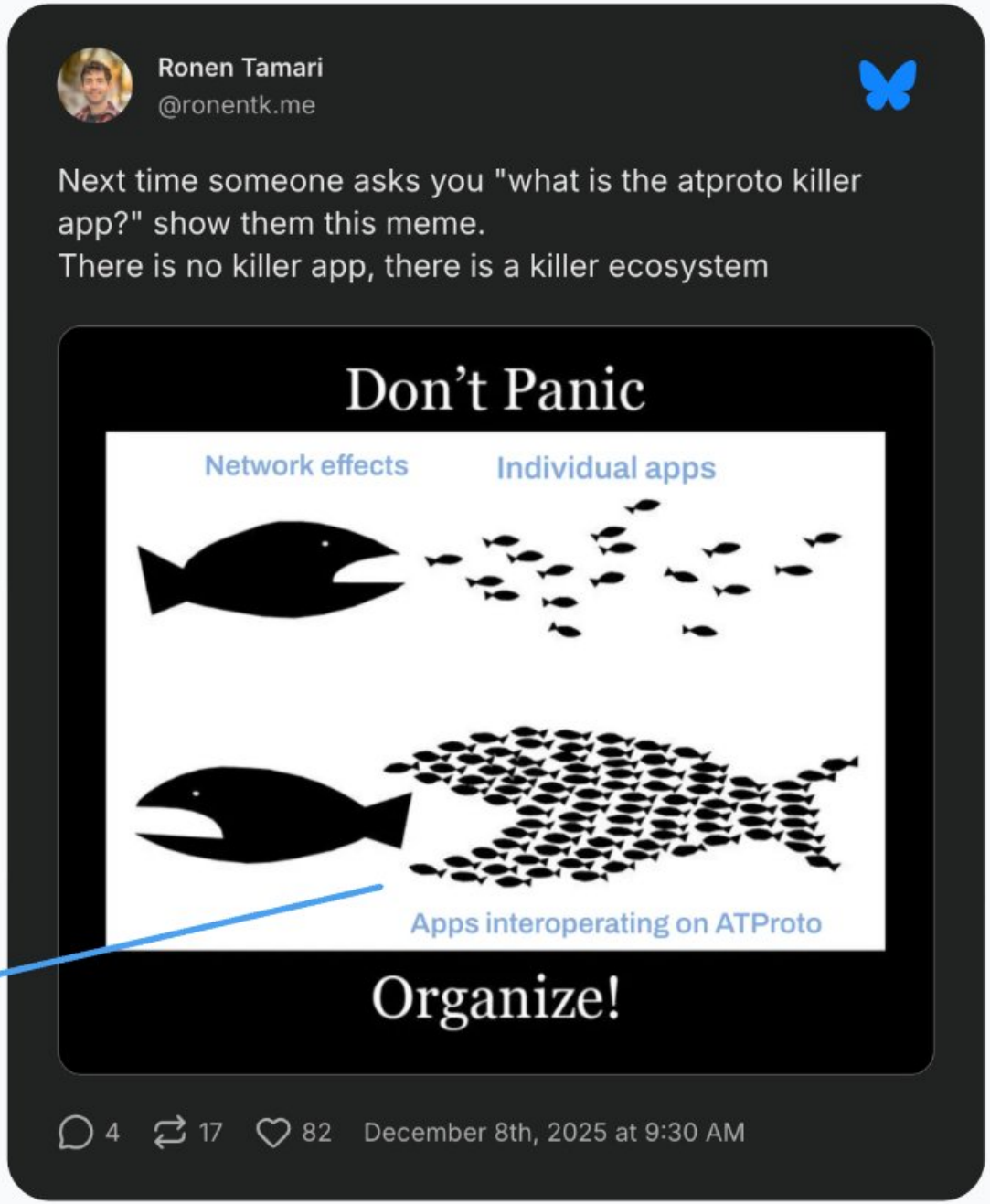
Rabbit holes on are.na



A browser full of tabs is a rabbit hole in motion, but it disappears the second that window is closed, so are.na is where I actually catch the things worth keeping. I'll pull an image out of a rabbit-holed tab and drop it into a channel, and over enough time those channels start being their own little statements, connecting a block to three others I saved months apart is its own kind of visual modeling. A form of mental bookmarking that quietly over time shows you the shape of your own attention or interests.

https://conradhouse.dev/writings/#art-rabbit-holing

From killer apps to killer ecosystems

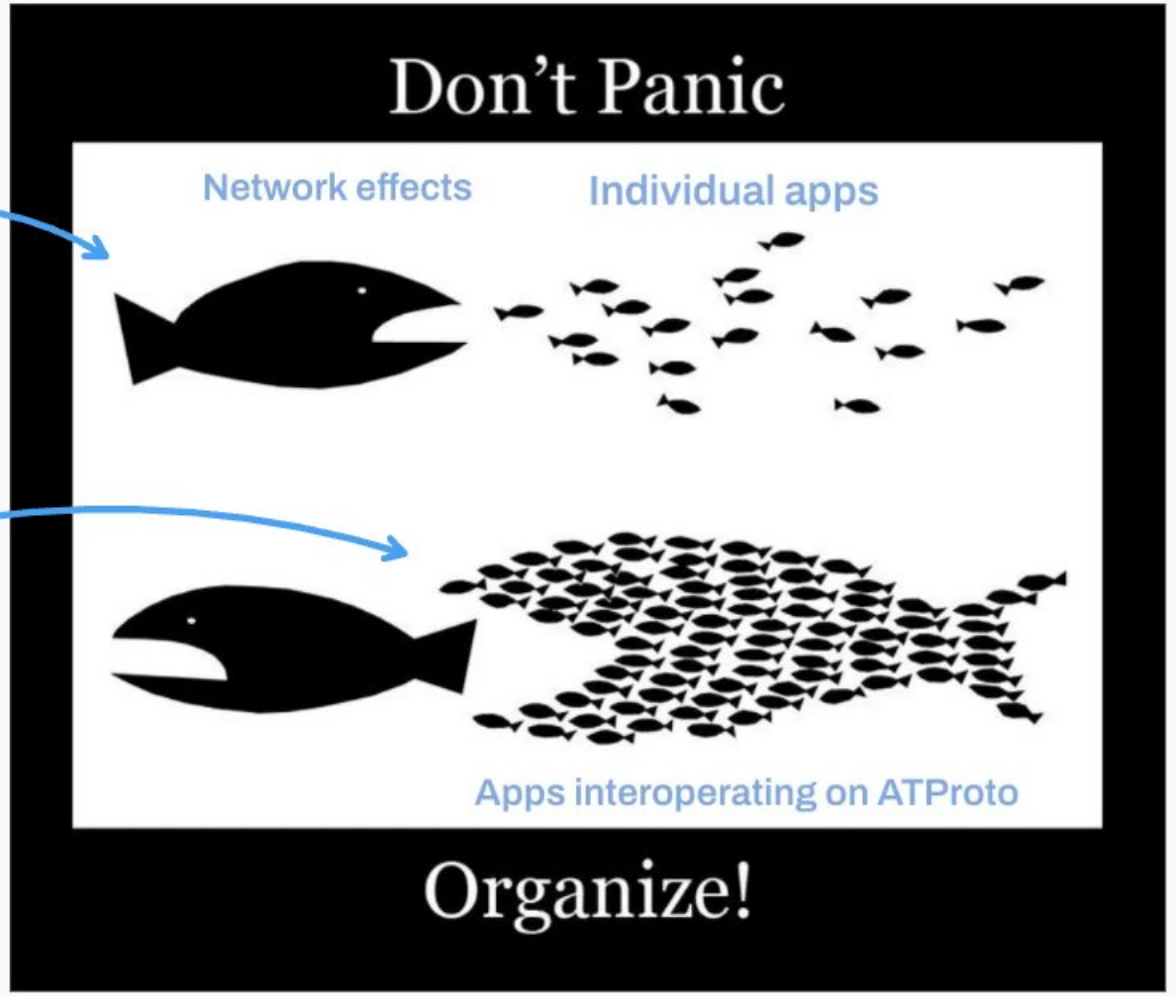


this is what we mean by
self organizing social media!

How to build & fund ecosystems?

We have a well oiled funding model to create this - venture capital

We have no equivalent funding model to create this :(



Ways forward

Field building w/frontier philanthropy	Consortium / cooperative organization models	Ecosystem reinvestment
	"out-cooperate the competition"	
AI & epistemics		
Science reform initiatives	https://cairos.network/	
Collective flourishing	https://atmosphere.coop/	
https://mosaic-program.org/	https://atproto.science/	

From Users

Conventional, instrumental worldview

Passive, unchanging, predictable

to Sensemakers

Post-conventional,
systems & meaning aware worldview

Active, evolving, unpredictable

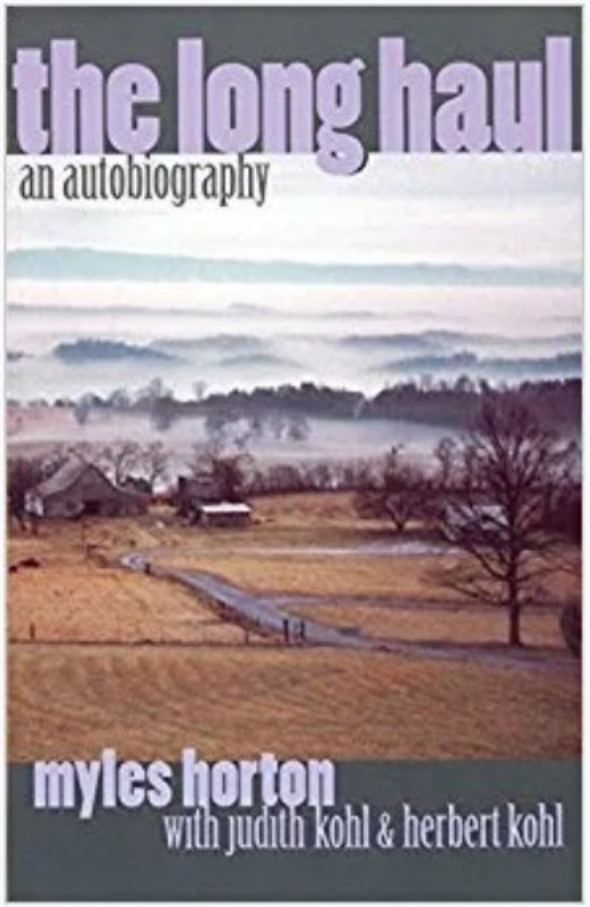
Sensemaking is meaningful

...and as beautiful as the cosmos itself

> "I can honestly say that Galaxy Zoo is the best thing I've ever done. . . . I don't know quite what it is, but Galaxy Zoo does something to people. The contributions, both creative and academic, that people have made to the forum are as stunning as the sight of any spiral, and never fail to move me.
> —Alice Sheppard, volunteer Galaxy Zoo moderator"

Galaxy Zoo - citizen science astronomy project where people classify galaxies, started in 2007 and still going!

Sensemaking is for action



In the 70s, Appalachian communities wanted to know who actually owned their land. So they learned to find out themselves, discovered wide-spread absentee land ownership and tax evasion, and organized effective action to address it

"Before the participatory research was finished , people were so incensed by what they were finding-and so empowered by knowing how to get information-that they started organizing"

Questions?