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TIMONI WEST  
GITHUB  
MAY 9, 2013

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Howdy everybody!

I'm so glad to be here, back in warm, lovely San Francisco, after having spent five cold months in Brooklyn. And I'm so glad you could all make it out this evening.

I want to especially thank Julie for asking me to come and speak at Github. I think Passion Projects is an phenomenal idea, and I'm so honored that she thought of me.

I was psyched to see people I know in the lineup, and people I admire, so being asked to speak was a great honor.

And of course, thanks to Github, too, for sponsoring the event. When they asked me to speak they sent along a pink-and-black hoodie

[which is \*awesome\*, because I only wear black]. I wear with pride.

**CLICK**





# *Timoni West*

## *UX designer at Foursquare*

Before I dig in, let me introduce myself. My name is Timoni West. [You were wondering how to pronounce that, right? Tim-uh-nee.]

**CLICK TO SHOW JIMINY**

[Like Jiminy. Okay, you got it.]

**CLICK TO INTRO**





# *Timoni West*

*Product designer at Flickr*  
*UX designer at Foursquare*  
*Everything designer at Scribd*

So, before I continue with this slide, **CLICK TO GET RID OF JIMINY**

I should say that I don't often have the opportunity to use a lot of Keynote's freaking awesome animations. So, um, I did, for the slide.

Just a heads up.

Right now, I'm a UX designer at Foursquare, which is a little location-sharing app you may have heard of.

**CLICK, LENS FLARE**

Previously, I was a product designer at Flickr, a photo-sharing app.

**CLICK, SPARKLES**

Before that, I was a....say an "everything designer?" at Scribd, a document-sharing app.





FOURSQUARE = LOCATION SHARING

FLICKR = PHOTO SHARING

SCRIBD = DOCUMENT SHARING

So you may have noticed some themes in the companies that I've worked for.

I've spent most of my career designing interfaces that encourage people to put data on the internet, as have most of my peers, and frankly, the greater minds of our generation.

I'm sure you've all seen this.

**CLICK to hammerbacher slide**



**The best minds  
of my generation  
are thinking about  
how to make  
people **click ads.****

**—Jeff Hammerbacher**



*“The best minds of my generation are thinking about how to make people click ads.”*

...And that would suck if it were true, surprisingly handsome Jeff Hammerbacher,  
but fortunately for all of us, it's not.

But it's clear why he said that. We have been tricking people into doing things, particularly UX designers. Here's a great quote from Bill Gibbons.

**CLICK for “We've gotten pretty good at being able to subconsciously influence and alter behavior, which creates a vexing ethical conundrum for UX designers.”**



## Last Chance To See 4.0: Free Download

We've gotten pretty good at being able to subconsciously influence and alter behavior, which creates a vexing ethical conundrum for UX designers.

The UX professional must understand that for every product created with the "best intention," there will be another that deliberately nudges the user to ends not in the user's best interest.

— Bill Gribbons

[No Fuss, No Muss Driver Downloads](#)

[Updates ALL Drivers in Just 2 Minutes!](#)

Last Chance To See is a Mac OS X Reader designed for the application „Last Chance To See...“, that was published by Voyager in the year 1992. If you own the original application CD-ROMs (2 CD-ROMs was included in the box)

*“We’ve gotten pretty good at being able to subconsciously influence and alter behavior, which creates a vexing ethical conundrum for UX designers.*

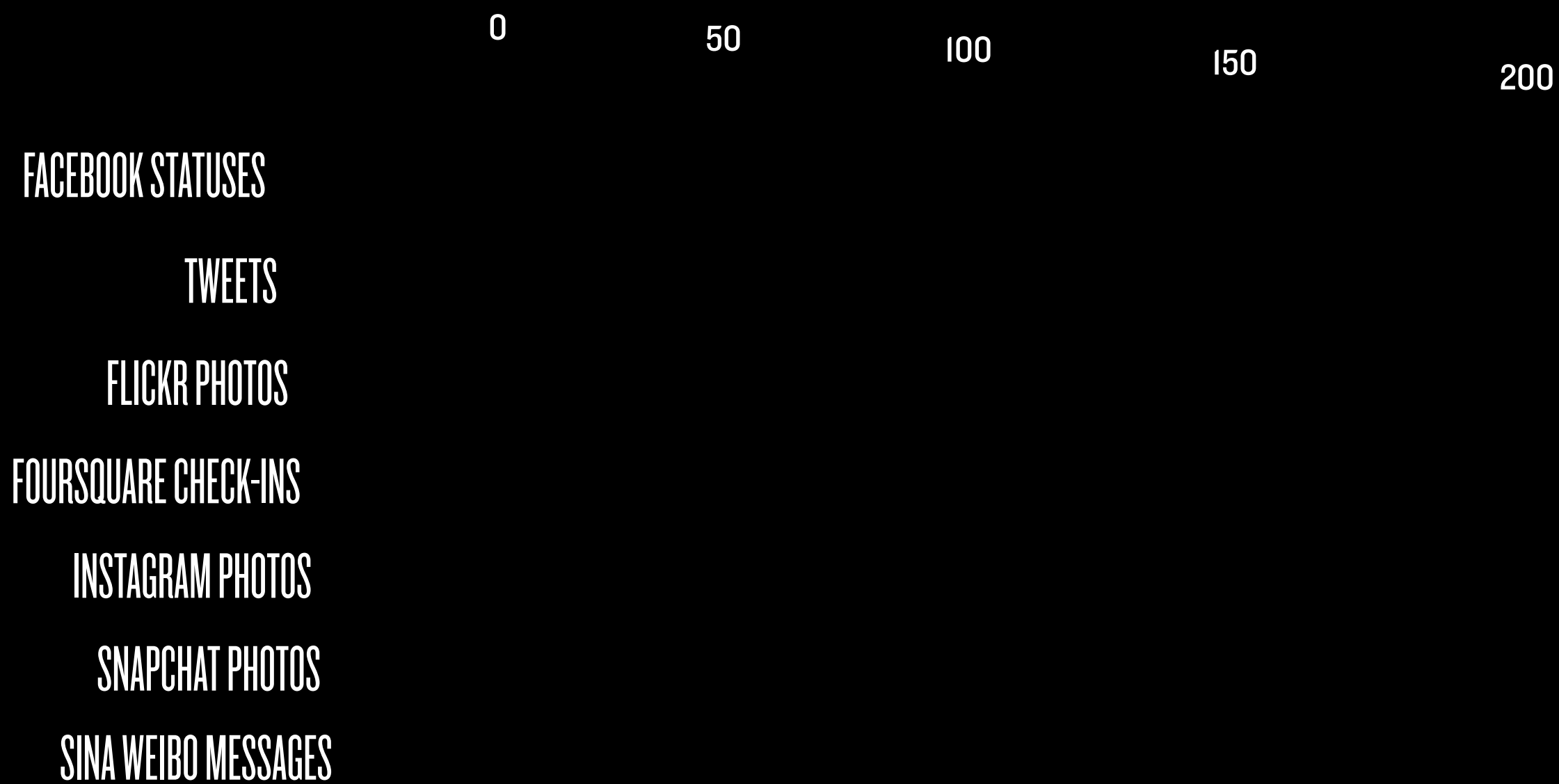
*The UX professional must understand that for every product created with the “best intention,” there will be another that deliberately nudges the user to ends not in the user’s best interest.”*

Yes. We’ve done a lot of that stuff before. It’s all over the place online. But let’s focus on the good parts. What have designers and engineers been focusing on?

**CLICK to graph**



# DAILY BASIC ACTIVITY IN MILLIONS



This is what we've all actually been doing: getting people to put TONS OF THEIR INFORMATION online.

[That's a pretty stellar...visual. I know. 3-D and shit. Thanks, Keynote!]

So this is kind of a sucky graph: it just shows [literally](#) the basic type of info each service was designed to gather.

It doesn't show a lot of other activity, like Facebook likes or photos, or Instagram shares, or more importantly, the user effort—

Youtube users upload 72 hours of video a second,

which is freaking amazing considering how much more work video takes than a tweet.

So keep in mind, this graph is not supposed to be comparative. I just wanted to make it clear that when it comes to

getting people to share what's in their brains, or their creations, we're killing it.

**CLICK to 'interaction designers are fucking killing it'**



# GOOD JOB, PRODUCT MAKERS!

THANK YOU MARIO!

BUT OUR PRINCESS IS IN  
ANOTHER CASTLE!



**CLICK to do shimmer on 'good job...'**

So, when I was asked to talk about my passion, at these Passion Project talks, I had a bit of a...let's call it an epiphany.

Because...if you'd asked me a few years ago what I was really passionate about, I would have drunkenly talked to you for hours about how we were collecting all this data, but we weren't saving it, we weren't archiving it in useful formats, and we weren't giving it back.

Honestly...

**CLICK to show 'thank you mario'.**

It stressed me out a lot. For a while, a lot of web apps just seemed like huge black holes for data.





USERS ARE GIVING WEB APPS A LOT OF DATA.

EVENTUALLY, THEY WILL WANT IT BACK.

(EVEN IF THEY DON'T, COME ON, WE CAN DO SOMETHING COOL WITH IT.)

But it turns out, thankfully, I was not alone, thinking about this. It is the next big problem, a very interesting problem.

How do we display this data in useful ways? How do we give it back to the users in a good way?

**CLICK to show 'even if they don't, come on, we can do something cool with it.'**

Oh, slide! It's like you know me.

Showing data in useful ways back is not, by any means, a solved problem, but a lot of great minds are working on this problem now...

A lot of great companies, too.

**CLICK to show github pulse.**



The screenshot displays the GitHub Pulse interface for the repository `zmoazeni/csscss`. At the top, it shows the repository name, a search bar, and navigation links like 'Explore', 'Gist', 'Blog', and 'Help'. Below this, there are buttons for 'Watch', 'Star' (1,967 stars), and 'Fork' (86 forks). The main navigation bar includes 'Code', 'Network', 'Pull Requests' (0), 'Issues' (14), and 'Graphs'. The overview section for the period 'April 13 2013 - April 20 2013' (with a 'Period: 1 week' dropdown) shows a summary of activity. It includes two progress bars: a green one for pull requests and a red one for issues. Below these are four statistics: 0 merged pull requests, 1 proposed pull request, 12 closed issues, and 4 new issues. A bar chart shows that 2 authors pushed 24 commits, with 13 files changed, 312 additions, and 53 deletions. At the bottom, it lists 1 pull request proposed by 1 person, specifically '#52 Added support for LESS dynamic CSS' proposed 7 days ago.

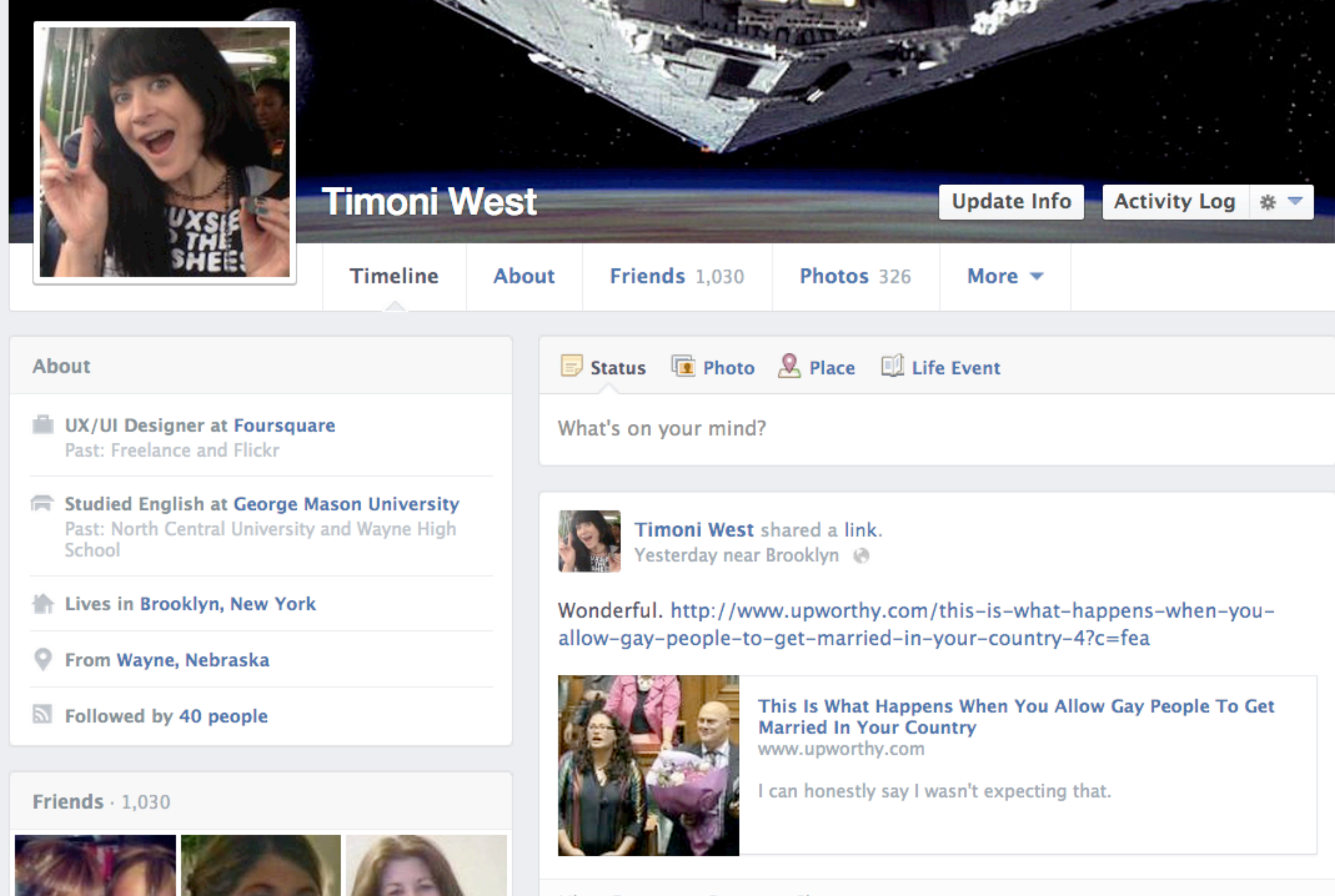
A lot of fabulous companies!

I can't tell you how happy it made me to see Github releasing Pulse. It's exactly the kind of thing we need across the internet.

Lots of other companies are making strides towards this...

**CLICK to show facebook**





2008  
2007  
2006  
1991  
Born

...Like the Facebook timeline. I don't know a lot of Facebook's product...vision, that well, but I never got the impression that FB really cared about storing your data carefully.

So kudos to them for taking the step, hiring some really brilliant designers, and starting to work on the problem.

And frankly there's a lot more out there on the internet than just my sharing videos about gay marriage becoming legal in New Zealand, as awesome as that is.

**CLICK to show the digital public library of america**





# A Wealth of Knowledge

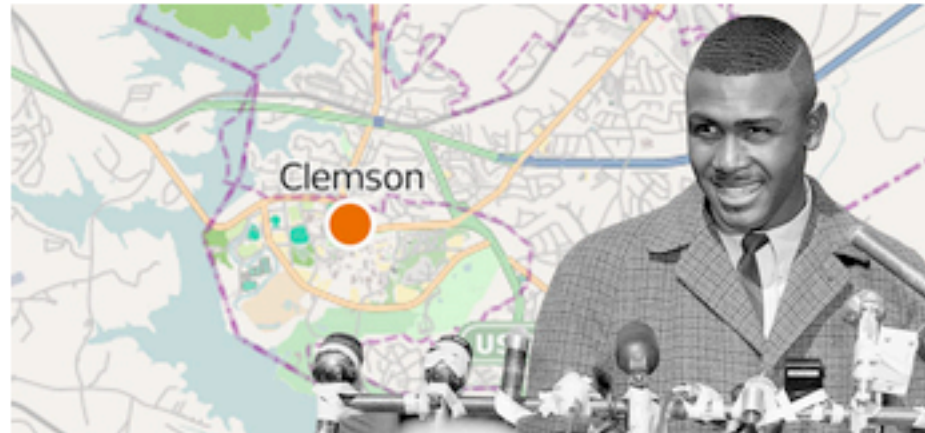
from libraries, archives, and museums

Search the Library



## Exhibitions

View all »



## Explore by Place

Map »

## Explore by Date

Timeline »



1946 1947 1948 1949 1950 1951 1952

## Apps

The DPLA is a platform. Developers make apps that use the library's data in many different ways.

## News



A Proud Day for the DPLA

Really, really cool stuff, vastly important things.

Things that time has made clear will be important to humanity over the centuries.

The Digital Public Library of America.

**CLICK to show the internet archive**



Internet Archive: Digital Lib x  
 archive.org/index.php

INTERNET ARCHIVE  
 Universal access to all knowledge

Web Video Texts Audio Projects About Account TVNews OpenLibrary  
 Forums | FAQs | Contributions | Volunteer Positions | Jobs | donate

Search:  All Media Types  Anonymous User (login or join us)


**Announcements** [\(more\)](#)

[Archive of Historical Computer Software is here](#)

[450,000 Early Journal Articles Now Available](#)

[How the Internet Archive is having Great Time with Bitcoin](#)

**Web** 292 billion pages




[more info](#)

**Welcome to the Archive**

The Internet Archive, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, is building a digital library of Internet sites and other cultural artifacts in digital form. Like a paper library, we provide free access to researchers, historians, scholars, and the general public.

**Video** [Browse](#)  
1,207,463 movies (by keyword)

**Curator's Choice** [\(more\)](#)




**Virtua Racing (GEN)**  
Besides being an amazingly faithful adaptation of the ground-breaking arcade game, the very first...

**Recent Reviews**

[Round and Round \(Widgets\)](#)  
Average rating: ★★★★★

**Live Music** [Browse](#)  
114,950 concerts (by band)

**Curator's Choice** [\(more\)](#)




**Phil Lesh and Friends Live at Terrapin Crossroads...**  
Deal (sa) > Mississippi Half Step Uptown Toodleloo (pl) > Row Jimmy Row (jg) Tennessee Jed (tl) Good...

**Recent Reviews**

[Grateful Dead Live at Baltimore Civic Center on 1982-04-19](#)  
★★★★★

**Audio** [Browse](#)  
1,588,760 recordings (by keyword)

**Curator's Choice** [\(more\)](#)




**Paul Blackford - MSIA001**  
Available in lossless format at this link 1:Dunk Low 2:Dunk High

**Recent Reviews**

[DUOLOGY - Episode 2: Mood Elevator \(Instrumental Guitar Duo - Music/Talk\)](#)  
★★★★★

**Texts** [Browse](#)  
4,465,749 texts (by keyword)

**Curator's Choice** [\(more\)](#)



**Code civil et pénal du judaïsme**  
XII-311 p. ; 18 cm

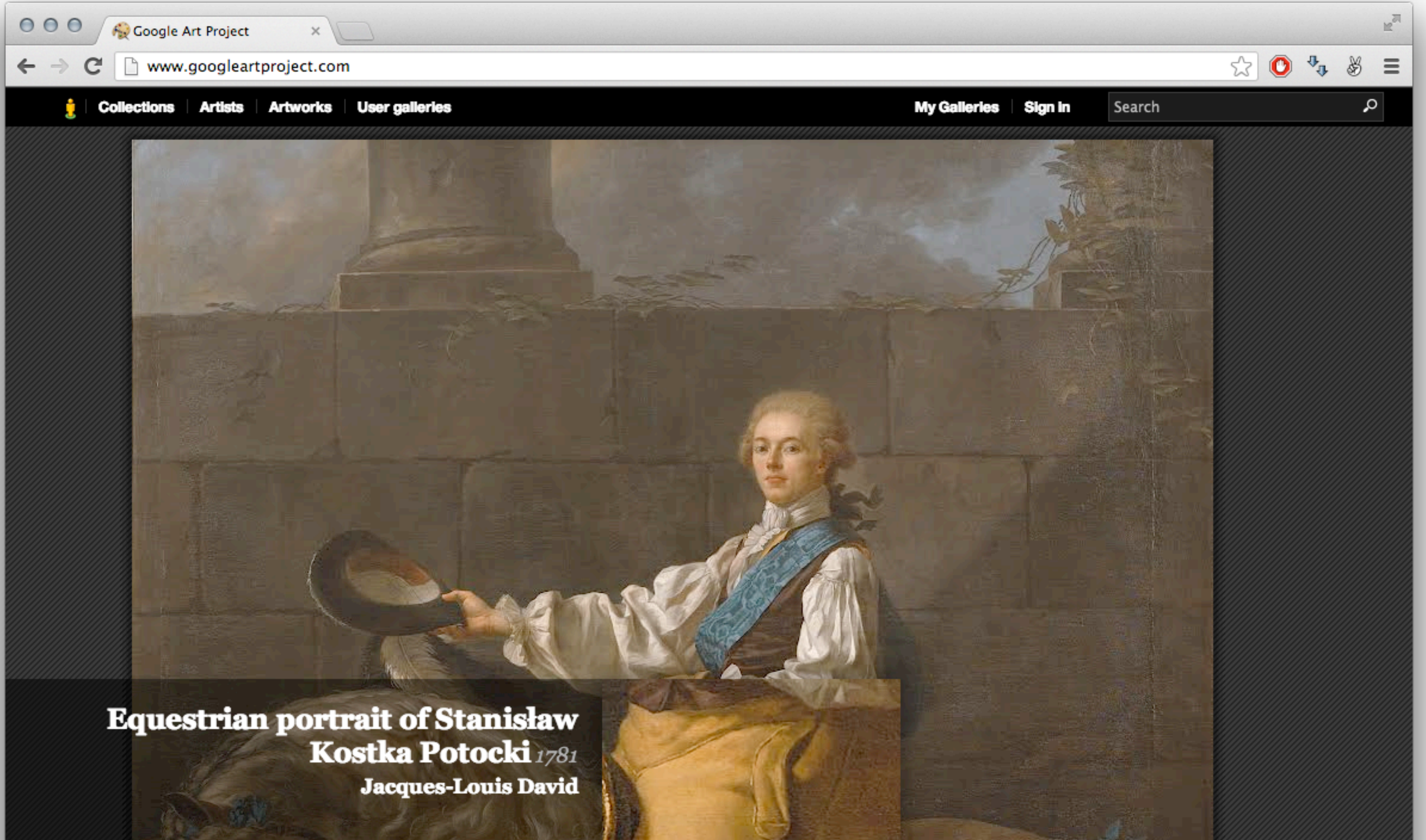
**Recent Reviews**

[Al-Nsikh wa-al-manskh](#)  
Average rating: ★★★★★

The Internet Archive.

**CLICK to show the google art project.**





The Google Art Project.

**CLICK to show paleofuture.**





I started the Paleofuture blog in 2007 as part of a writing class I was taking at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. At the time I thought that I'd maybe keep it up for just a couple of months. Little did I realize that writing about the history of the future would become such a huge part of my life.

Today, it's with great pride that I can announce the little ol' Paleofuture blog is becoming a part of the **Smithsonian family of blogs!** The new web address is <http://blogs.smithsonianmag.com/paleofuture/> and that's where you'll be able to find new blog posts. But don't worry, Paleofuture.com will remain intact, as an archive of the last five years and the place to find new episodes of **Paleofuture.TV** and new issues of *Paleofuture Magazine*.

The blog has a new Twitter feed **@PaleofutureBlog** but you can still find my personal Twitter account **@paleofuture**. The **Facebook** and **Tumblr** feeds are also great ways to stay on top of all the retrofuture goodness. You can still drop me a line at [matt@paleofuture.com](mailto:matt@paleofuture.com).

I'm really excited about my new home at Smithsonian and I hope that you enjoy the new

Credit Cards

Shopping

Computers

Computers

Tablet

Disney

Disneyland TV

EPCOT

Tomorrowland

Energy

Alternative Energy

Nuclear Power

Solar Power

Fashion

Fashion

Food

Farms

Food

Meal in a Pill

Health

RSS  
S  
SS

...This is an announcement from the popular blog Paleofuture saying they're joining up with the Smithsonian blog network as of 2011. It's not the typical blog-turns-into-a-book deal.

But if you care about data and education and learning, it's actually much more important and exciting.

**CLICK to show the endangered languages project.**





And here's one I recently learned about that's awesome: the Endangered Languages project.

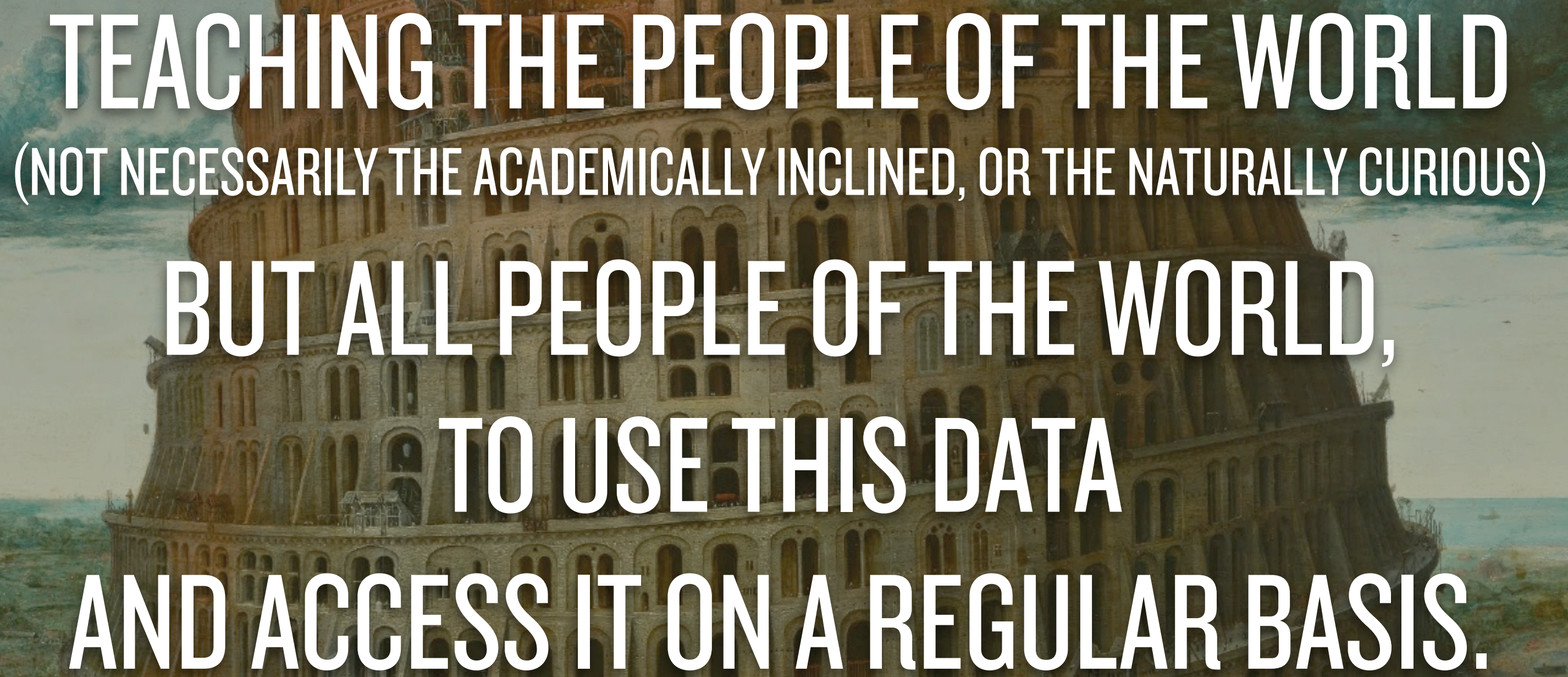
So there's a lot of great repositories of information out there, with solid searches and they're doing their best to make sure the information is relevant, accessible, searchable, archived. Perhaps not always succeeding, but I think everybody's on the same page.

So that got me thinking: [what am I really passionate about now, now designers are mobilizing and tackling the problem I was worried about for so long?](#)

I thought about it a lot, and here's what I came up with.

**CLICK.**





**TEACHING THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD**  
(NOT NECESSARILY THE ACADEMICALLY INCLINED, OR THE NATURALLY CURIOUS)  
**BUT ALL PEOPLE OF THE WORLD,**  
**TO USE THIS DATA**  
**AND ACCESS IT ON A REGULAR BASIS.**

Teaching the people of the world—not necessarily the academically inclined, or the naturally curious—but all people of the world, to use this data and access it on a regular basis.

And this is a much harder problem than just storing data, or making it accessible.

But it is, I think, the great hope of everyone who ever worked on the internet or dreamed of it in centuries prior.

///

Basically: we have an easy way for people to put their data online,

and we have an interesting challenge in getting that data back to them,

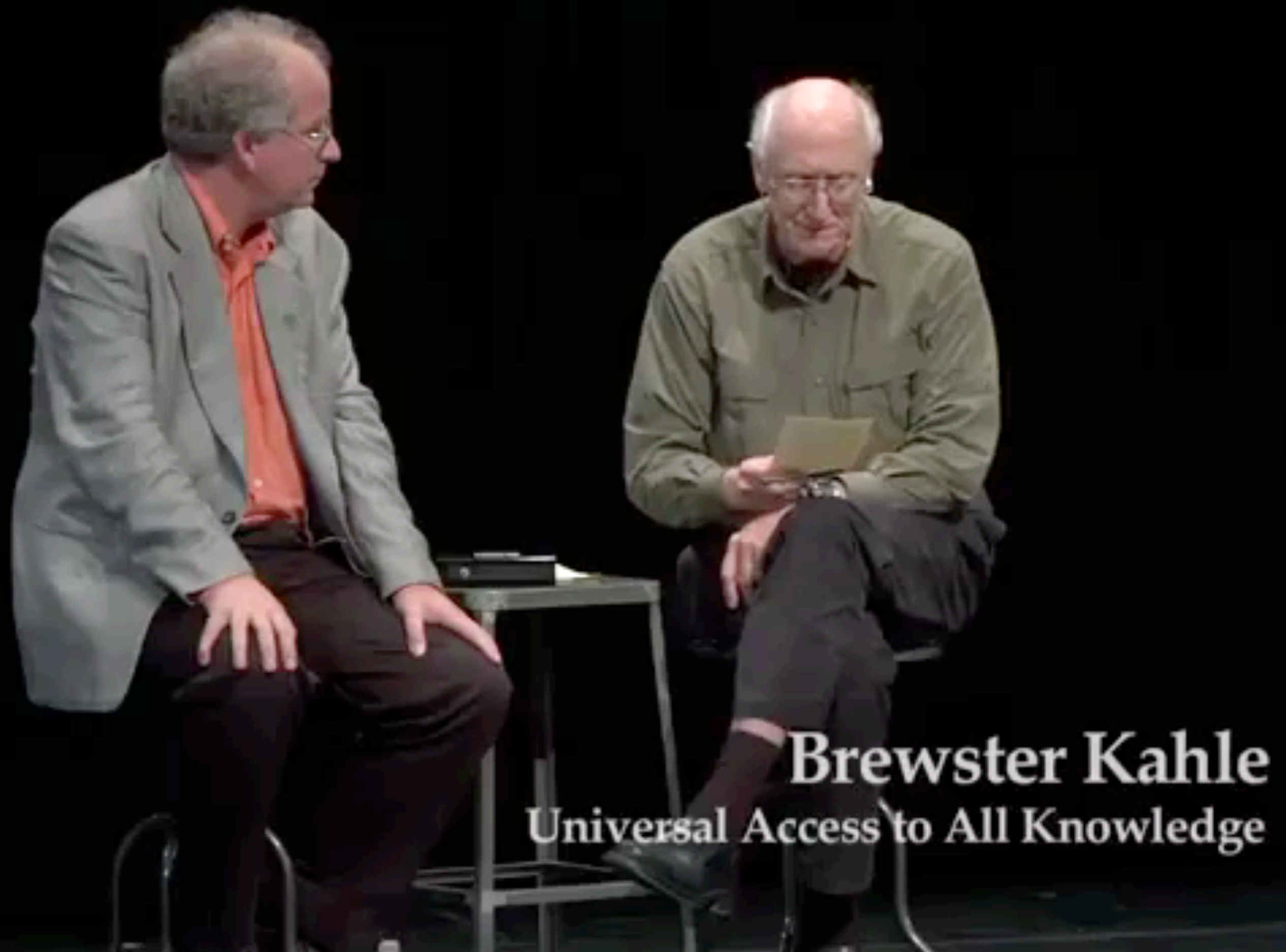
but actually having a multitude of data available to you doesn't necessarily mean it would even occur to you to go back and look at that data later.

Once I realized this is was the problem I'd been probing towards, I realized I had a lot to learn, because at my job, I'd never framed the problem this way before.

How do you get people...ordinary people...to want to learn things? Be aware of data?

////





Boom. Exactly.

So much good data. So few people that would ever even wonder if the Internet Archive existed, much less seek it out to see if it really did.

But, you may ask, that's not a big deal; humanity's lasted a long time without being literate, much less good at analytic thinking. Why do we care about whether or not average people are informed? People who care already care.

That's a good question.

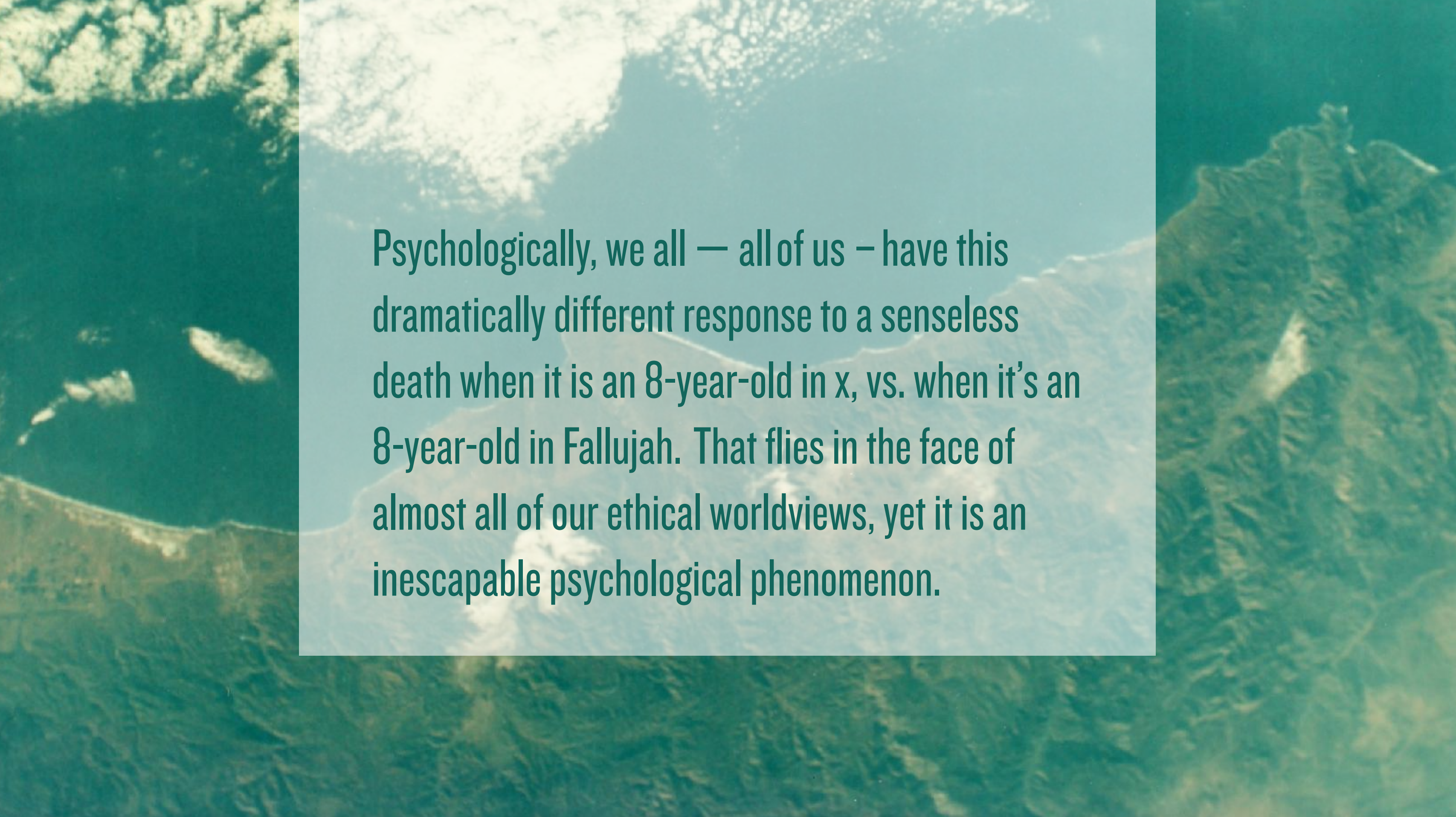
////

I had a hard time finding a concise example of how knowing data can really help improve humanity, actually, until quite recently. The a few days after the Boston bombing, in fact. I found an awesome post by Jacob Geller, in which he discusses how odd it is that more people died *weekly* in Iraq from bombings in 2012 than died in the Boston bombings. In fact, there were eighteen bombings per week, every week, in 2012. That's insane. I didn't know that.

Why on earth didn't I know that? Frankly, I might have read it, and simply didn't remember. But why? This is what he says.

**CLICK to quote by Geller.**



An aerial photograph of a mountain range, likely the Andes, with a semi-transparent white text box overlaid in the center. The mountains are rugged and covered in green vegetation, with some snow patches visible. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

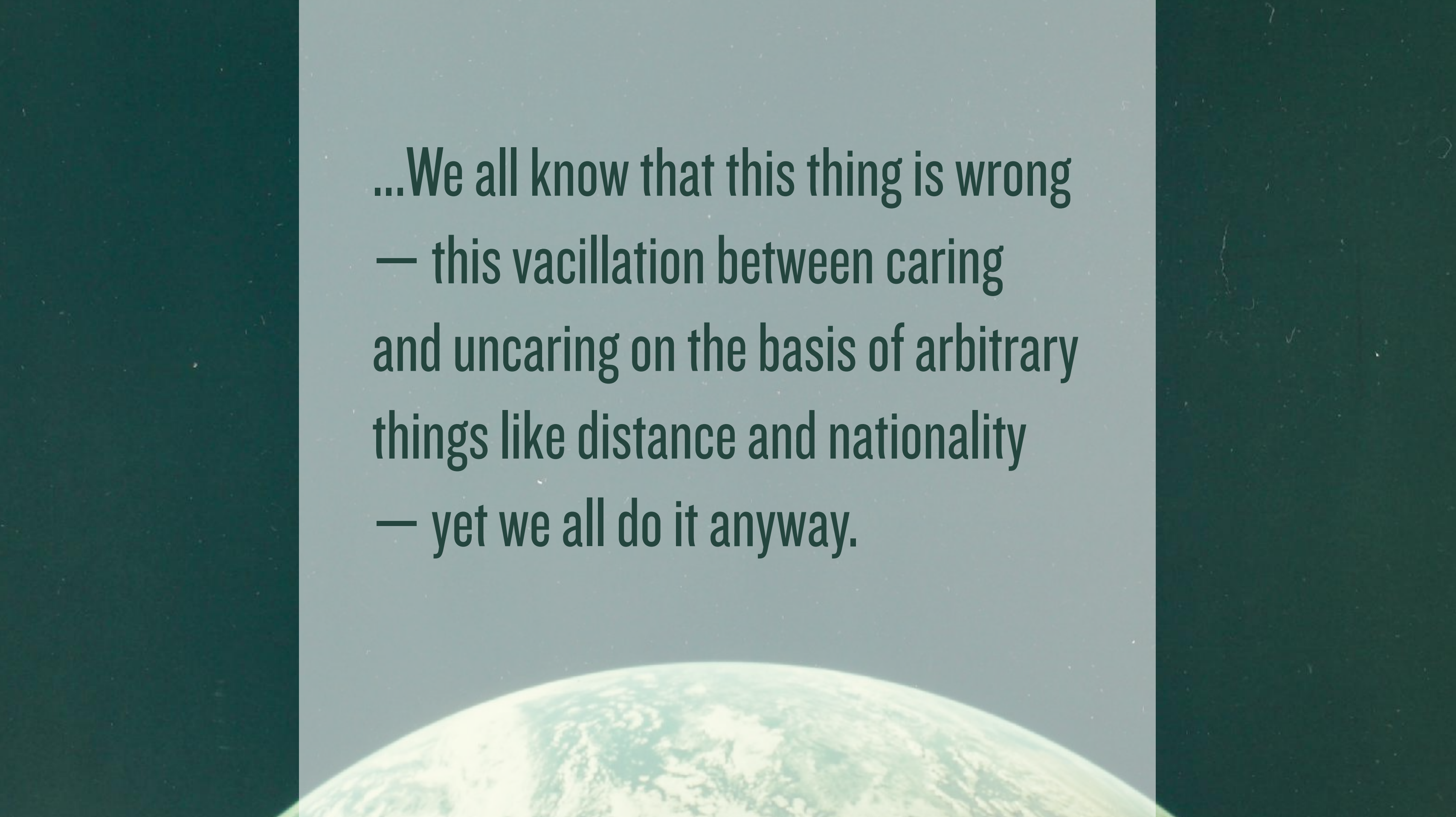
Psychologically, we all — all of us – have this dramatically different response to a senseless death when it is an 8-year-old in x, vs. when it’s an 8-year-old in Fallujah. That flies in the face of almost all of our ethical worldviews, yet it is an inescapable psychological phenomenon.

“Psychologically, we all — all of us – have this dramatically different response to a senseless death when it is an 8-year-old in Boston, vs. when it’s an 8-year-old in Fall-OO-jah. That flies in the face of almost all of our ethical worldviews, yet it is an inescapable psychological phenomenon.”

And then he goes on....

**CLICK to continue quote**





...We all know that this thing is wrong  
— this vacillation between caring  
and uncaring on the basis of arbitrary  
things like distance and nationality  
— yet we all do it anyway.

“...We all know that this thing is wrong — this vacillation between caring and uncaring on the basis of arbitrary things like distance and nationality — yet we all do it anyway.”

So here's the answer, unsatisfying as it is: we just all instinctively do this; it's how our brains have evolved. It's not even a socialization issue, at least not at first.

We're designed to live in tiny tribes of 300 people or so, not care about billions of people in millions of groups.

But those carefully honed instincts are failing us now. They're not even what we'd consider ethical, now.

*Our own brains* aren't capable of supporting our moral beliefs.

Here's another way of framing the problem by Robert Wright, a writer and scholar who has done a lot of work around evolutionary psychology.

**CLICK to show Robert Wright quote “The world's biggest single problem...”**



*The world's biggest single problem is the failure of people or groups to look at things from the point of view of other people or groups — i.e. to put themselves in the shoes of "the other."*

*—Robert Wright.*

“The world’s biggest single problem is the failure of people or groups to look at things from the point of view of other people or groups--i.e. to put themselves in the shoes of "the other.”

He goes on to say he’s not “talking about empathy in the sense of literally sharing people’s emotions--feeling their pain, etc. I’m just talking about the ability to comprehend and appreciate the perspective of the other.”

*How can we become more empathetic?* The same way you become more empathetic towards your family, your peers, and your friends: you *learn more about them*.

And when it comes to designing for the internet or mobile products, as most of us do, in our best case scenario, we ambiently teach our users as they go about their business. The data is displayed as naturally and seamlessly as a status bar.

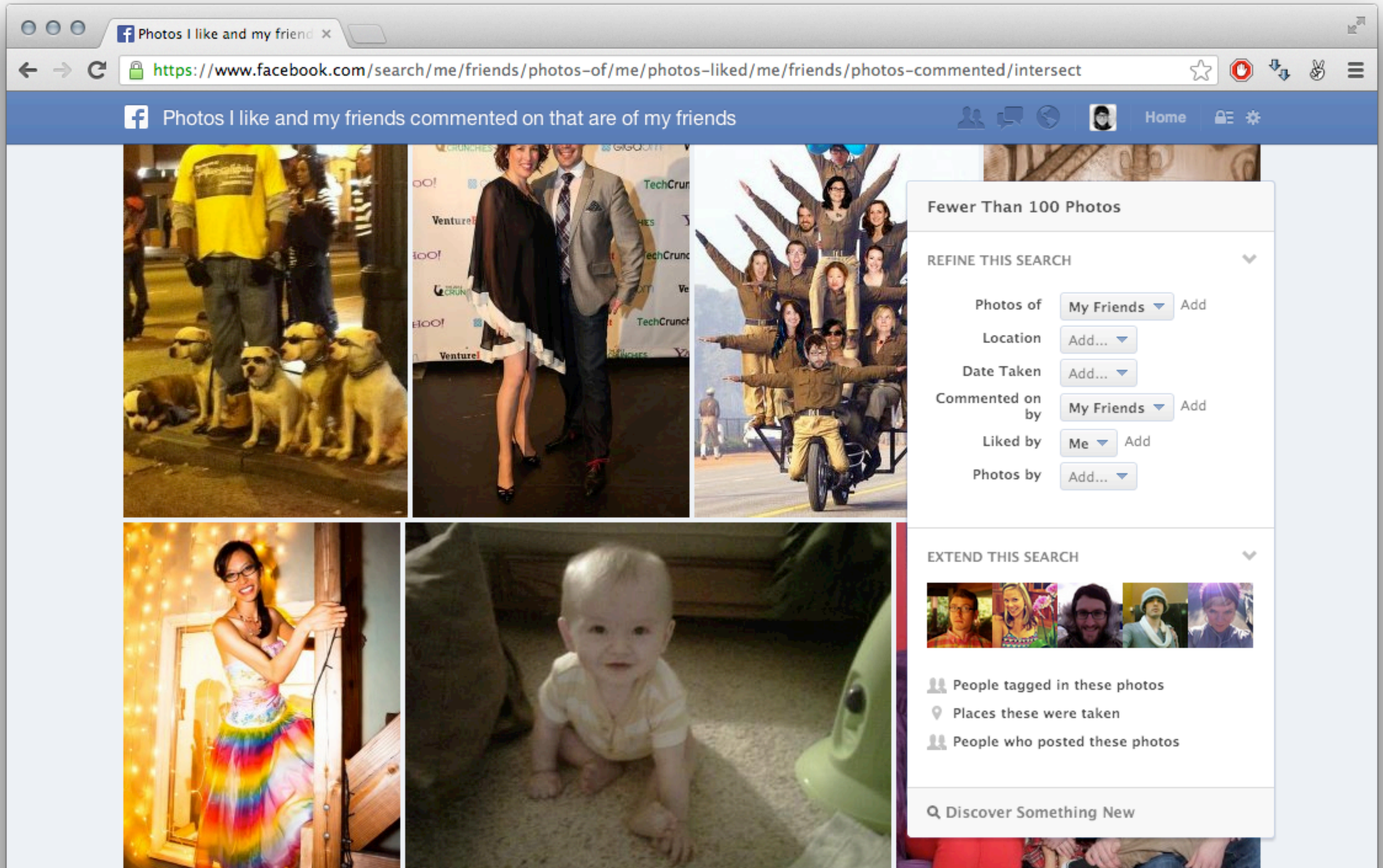
Because, for example, to get back to the Iraqi bombings, information is most useful in context. Knowing that there were 18 bombings a week in Iraq last year won’t help you much. And frankly, in the context of the Boston bombing, it seems like a really insensitive thing to bring it up now. It sounds as if it’s trying to were trying to diminish the horror of what happened in America.

Our job, if we want to teach people who have no real motivation to learn, and in fact might consciously or subconsciously shy away from learning, is all about giving information at the right time.

Right now, people aren’t particularly interested in seeking out new information, or researching what they hear about, on the internet. The internet is for entertainment, right? There’s a few reasons for this.

The first is that we don’t necessarily show them any good data at all, really. Lots of interfaces are effectively black holes with search boxes. Email. Text message UIs. Here’s an example.





It's the incredibly slick and awesome Facebook social graph search. It's very powerful, and makes it really easy to find not only hilarious connections between groups of people, but to see a lot of your own data filtered through your own actions or your friend's actions, too.

The Facebook social graph search is probably one of the most obvious powerful data sorting tools that people see on a regular basis outside of search engines.

For example, this query is of photos that I have liked, of my friends, that my friends have also commented on, which is a pretty complex query, and it's easy to set up.

But I don't use the social graph stuff routinely, and I'm guessing you don't either, unless you're an advertiser or in a really stalkery mood. So, what's missing?

Can you guess?

There's no context. This tool can be about finding interesting correlations between everyone else, but it doesn't really draw out those correlations. It just shows you a big pile of results.

But it's not really telling you any information you can use or act on, unless you're, well, an advertiser. It's a filter.

So that's one reason people may not be naturally wanting to learn more; it's not clear that you can. Here's another reason, much harder to solve.



# BIASED ASSIMILATION

...people assimilate new information in a selective fashion. When people get information that supports what they initially thought, they give it considerable weight. When they get information that undermines their initial beliefs, they tend to dismiss it.

CASS R. SUNSTEIN, HARVARD LAW, IN THE NYT

It's called biased assimilation, and it's associated with cognitive bias, as you would guess. Here's a definition from Cass Sunstein, a pretty fantastic legal professor at Harvard:

*Biased assimilation:*

*...people assimilate new information in a selective fashion.*

*When people get information that supports what they initially thought, they give it considerable weight.*

*When they get information that undermines their initial beliefs, they tend to dismiss it.*

Not a huge surprise, right?

Looking for information in advance, before they make a decision or form an opinion, is just not how human brains work, sadly. It makes sense:

Brains don't like to spend a lot of time debating options. They like to take big mental shortcuts whenever possible, which totally made sense 10,000 years ago. You hear something that could be a wildcat, you run away from the wildcat. You see someone who looks like a stranger, you run away from the stranger.

But the result now is that we have bad mental shortcuts persisting, like stereotypes. And when people learn something new, something that should theoretically break down that stereotype, they actually straight-up ignore it. And I don't just mean 'listen to and discard.' When humans don't agree with things, they'll shut down mentally and in some cases physically. They'll tune out, turn off the television, move away from the speaker, and so on.





A record if it is to be useful to science, must be continuously extended, it must be stored, and above all it must be consulted.

The human mind does not work that way. It operates by association.

With one item in its grasp, it snaps instantly to the next that is suggested by the association of thoughts, in accordance with some intricate web of trails carried by the cells of the brain.

—Vannevar Bush

*“A record if it is to be useful to science, must be continuously extended, it must be stored, and above all it must be consulted.*

*The human mind does not work that way. It operates by association.*

*With one item in its grasp, it snaps instantly to the next that is suggested by the association of thoughts, in accordance with some intricate web of trails carried by the cells of the brain.”*

So, first step to working with that associative brain!

One thing we do know: are ALWAYS interested in themselves. And then others, once they get the connection. So we can enter through the backdoor, so to speak; we can teach people how to parse information by telling them things about themselves.

And better yet, teaching people to learn to look for information in advance.

Better YET, flat-out surrounding them with the information in such a subtle way they can do a comparative analysis really any time they hear any data at all.

So, if we want to start doing this, subtly, cleverly, usefully, here are a few guidelines we need to follow to create an user interface where even the least curious can be well-informed.

**CLICK to show “Number one, it should be subtle”**



01 02 03 04

# THE UX SHOULD BE SUBTLE.

Number one?

It should be subtle.

Now, a subtle UX does not necessarily equal a subtle UI. Let me show you what I mean.

One interface maker that's pretty much killing it when it comes to giving you ambient, comparative data all the time is...ESPN.

**CLICK to show ESPN screenshot**



# EASTERN CONFERENCE PLAYOFFS

1 MIAMI  
8 MILWAUKEE

MIA won season series 3-1

4 BROOKLYN  
5 CHICAGO

CHI won season series 3-1

3 INDIANA  
4 ATLANTA

Season series tied 2-2

2 NEW YORK  
7 BOSTON

Game 1 - Saturday 3 ET



NBA GS 50 POR 36 win OR Rockets loss ESPN GS Curry:

When I was a kid, I remember my grandpa watching a game on TV with the sound off while simultaneously listening to a game on the radio. Well, no more need for that, Grandpa! Live television has figured this shit out.

Okay, so I said the user experience should be subtle, and this does not look subtle at all, right? It's this is covering up the whole freaking screen. Fair point! That's why I said the UX should be subtle, not not necessarily the UI. This is a huge overlay, but you don't see it for long.

This is a key point.

- The information on this page—and there is a crazy amount—is displayed at a specific time during the game, when the viewer knows there's some downtime and might even be a little anxious to get updates about what's going on in the rest of the playoffs.

So while the data here is huge, it's not invasive. Timing is key.

Here's another fascinating example.

**CLICK to show baseball comparisons**



10:16 ET  
LIVE

**SLUGGING IT OUT**  
2008 SEASON COMPARISON

YANKEES  
DODGERS

TIGER  
WOODS

D-BACKS  
RAYS

STEELERS

DEREK  
JETER

INDIANS  
RED SOX

ML MVP

FIELDER		BERKMAN
.276	BA	.312
34	HR	29
102	RBI	106
.507	Slugging Pct.	.567

4TH IN NATIONAL LEAGUE

MLB NYY 3 CLE 5 3 OUT NYY AT BAT ESPN HD

Okay, this one I really love. Apologies for the low quality.

This is ESPN comparing the Brewer's Prince Fielder to the Astro's Lance Bergman in 2008.

There's a game going on in the background—the Yankees versus the Indians—but in the meantime, hey, let's compare the stats from two high-ranking players in COMPLETELY different teams, to give context for the game that's going on in the background.

Again, this is a lot of data! but it's shown at the right time and gives useful and comparisons. Even if you know nothing about baseball, it's impossible to watch a game and not walk away surprisingly well-informed.

“Okay, Timoni,” you're saying. I can hear you saying it. “That's all well and good but sports are live, and we can't just randomly pop up interstitials at people on websites.”

I hear ya. Okay, here's an example where this sort of information could live very happily, and incidentally, it goes along perfectly with the second guideline, which is...

**CLICK to “the data should provide context.”**



01 02 03 04

# THE INTERFACE SHOULD PROVIDE CONTEXT.

The UI should provide context.

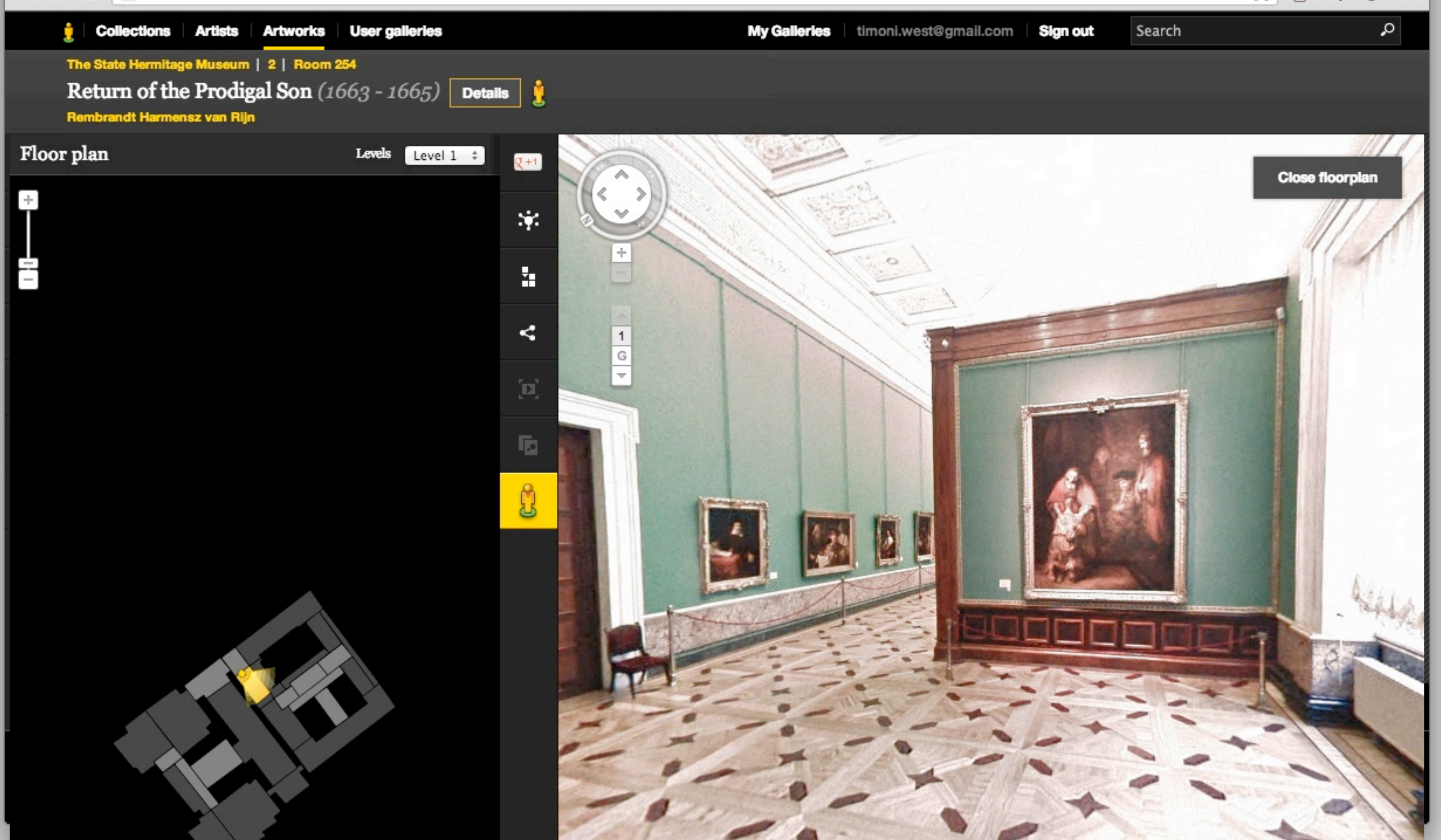
There's a rapport, a strong conversation, between the content organizer, and the viewer of that content. And it's a conversation that's started and framed by the organizer. Designers and engineers, on the internet, that is us.

We are the context organizers. All the well-meaning library scientists of the world can't force us to display things in a useful way, as much as I'm sure they'd like to.

Here's a great example of a site that could provide tons of contextual data WITH a natural user experience, and it's not sports, I promise.

**CLICK to Google's Art Project.**





It's art! This is Google's Art Project, which is an absolutely wonderful, lovely site, and I feel a little bad picking on them.

This painting, if you can't see it written up here in the corner, is a Rembrandt, the Return of the Prodigal Son. Quite nice, very orange. And if you click on "Details" in the corner...

**Click to see details overlay**

...you'll see things like the dates, information on Rembrandt, what the painting means, who commissioned it, and so on. Typical good museum notes.

And you can click the name of the museum or the painter to see more paintings from that museum, or by that painter, which is nice.

**Click to remove details overlay.**

So there's a lot more functionality on the page. I'll go over most of it quickly.

**Click** You can recommend the painting on Google Plus. So that's...a thing I probably won't do.

**Click** You can browse by other artists or other collections.

**Click** You can add the painting to your own 'gallery,' which is to say, organize it for later—which is nice.

**Click** You can share the painting on tons of social networks (which...shrug)

**Click** You can start a slideshow, which I don't understand at all—presumably it takes you through the images at the bottom of the screen, except I have no idea what order they're in or why, or how to reorder them.

**Click** You can compare it to other images, or

**Click** You can see it in context in the gallery—which is pretty sweet, I guess?

**Click to show museum view** It's providing a context of a sort. I just don't get the particular usefulness of this context because most museums have decent maps and helpful volunteers. \*shrug\*

**Click to remove museum view**



01 02 03 04

# AVOID USING TOO MANY WORDS.

Yeah. I just used a lot of words.

Okay, so there's a lot of information that I just mentioned that we can show without using words.

- Use a map to show where visitors are looking at the painting.
- Use a graph or calendar to show how many times the viewer has looked at the painting,
- or others have looked at the painting.

Here's a good, tiny example of using words vs not using words.





Ernest Hemingway used to leave his final sentence of each day half finished. It gave him an easy starting point for the next morning.

*This interview on the creative process is part II in an interview with award-winning author Fred Waitzkin. Part I [can be found here](#).*

**Reading time:**

- Bolded points (teaser) – 3 minutes
- All – 15 minutes

**TF: But what about “inspiration”? Does it exist for you?**

For me, inspiration is primarily energy. If I feel energy for a paragraph or a description I can almost always get to the essence of it. If I feel dead to myself, I don't have a chance. I am always looking for energy. Where can I find it? What or who can give it to me? How can I amp up what I have?

A story can help us here. An older friend of mine was once depressed about his advancing years. He lacked zest or motivation for his regular gym workouts. He couldn't concentrate on his career. One evening this man found himself in an elevator with a woman, a housekeeper who had worked for him in the past. But she was wearing outside clothes, a tight fitting sweater. She was young and beautiful. They talked a little. There was chemistry. She got off the elevator at his floor. They chatted in the hall. She said that she found him attractive. But he could feel this even before she said the words. She

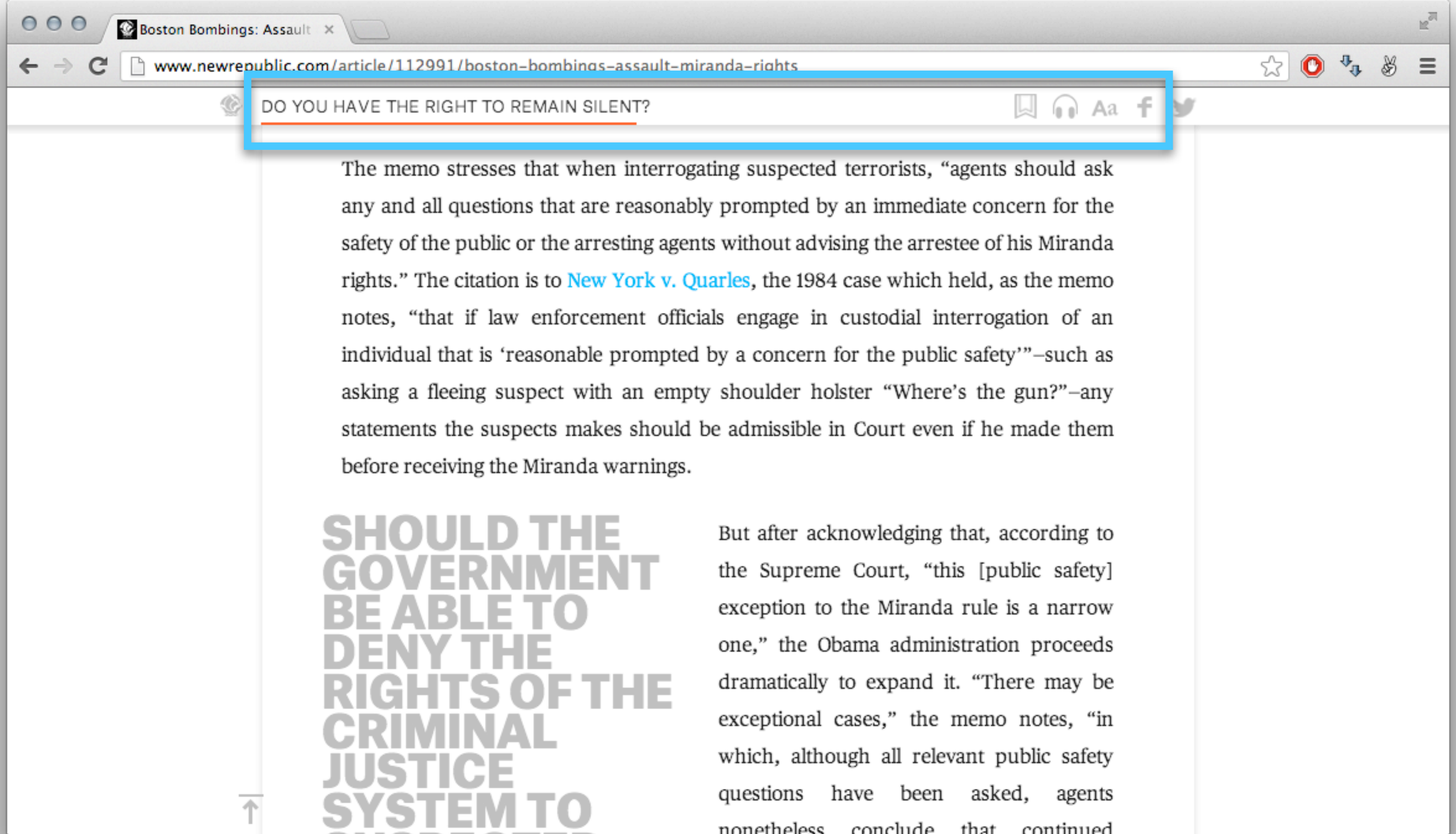
So this is Tim Ferriss's site. I'm sure a lot of you know of him, but if you don't, he's something of an expert in lifestyle modifications. This is his blog about Four Hour Work Weeks, which is a very tight timeframe.

**Click to highlight estimate**

So he often has an estimate on how long his articles will take to read, which I think is very nice of him, since four hours isn't a lot of time.

**Click to show New Republic**





And this is the New Republic, a very pretty news site.

### Click to highlight estimate

They don't tell you how long it will take to read something—I'm guessing they don't have a strong sense of what their audience's reading speed is—but they do have a great, subtle, ambient way of telling you how long the article you're reading is, and how much you have left.

This is great—it's very smart. You'd think a scrollbar would be enough of an indication, right? But with comments and headlines and so on, scrollbars really don't tell you much about the length of the article itself. Hence this nifty tool.

So, two examples of length: one uses words, and one uses graphics.

The more ancillary information you want to display, the better to use graphics: it's less likely to be glossed over, and more likely to be learned on a subconscious level. Use less words.

And now, on to the final guideline.

### Click to show "Focus on the personal to get to the global"



01 02 03 04

# FOCUS ON THE PERSONAL TO GET TO THE GLOBAL.

Number four: Focus on the personal to get to the global.

As mentioned before, people LOVE learning about themselves.

**CLICK for quizzes**



They really do.

**CLICK**

They just don't know how to do it well, which is why horoscopes, and pop quizzes about "What type of color ARE you?!" are so popular everywhere.

**CLICK**

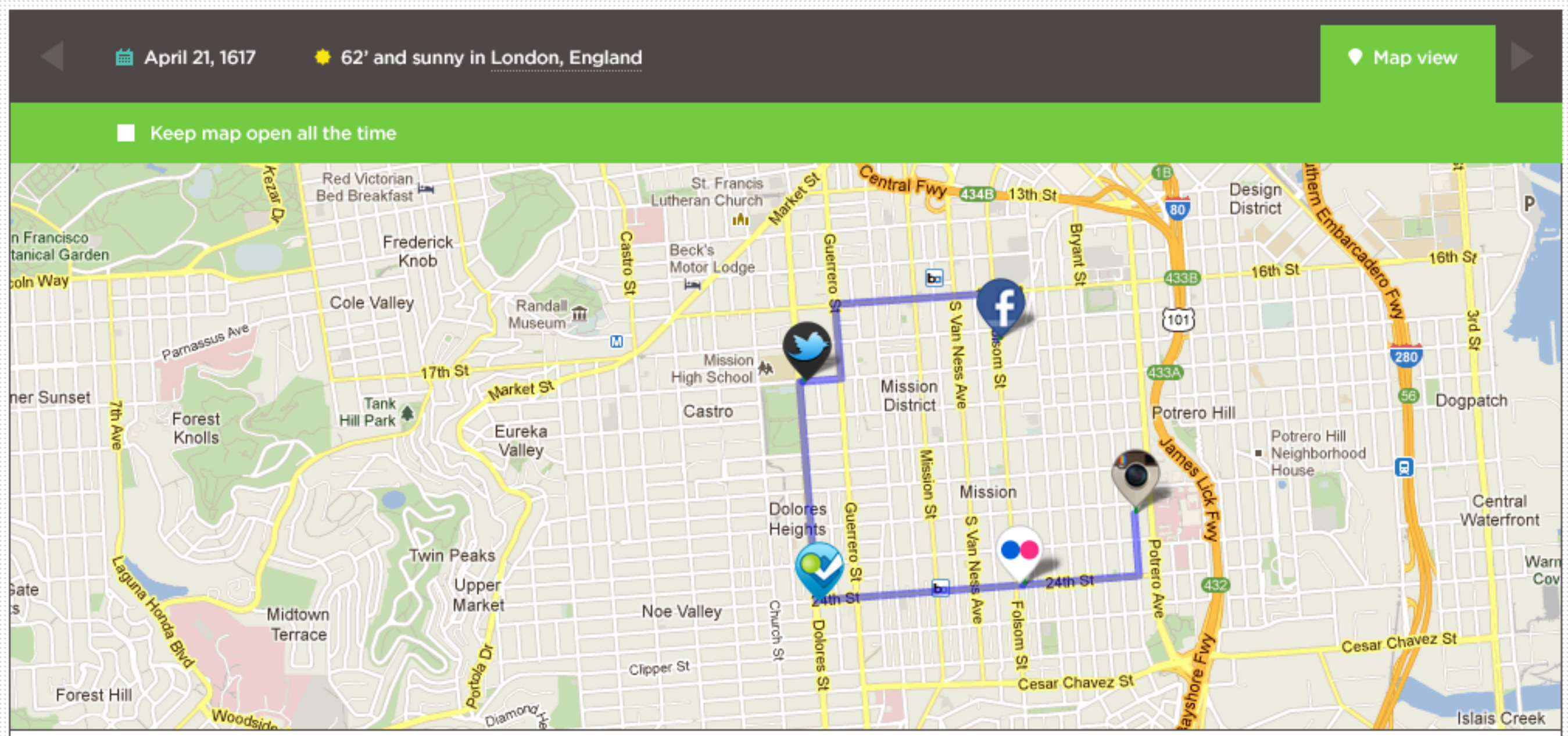
People are avidly curious about themselves; they just don't really know where to start.

**CLICK, CLICK, CLICK**

And we can use this basic instinct, coupled with all of the data we have, to inform people about the things they're learning, reading, and seeing, in context. Here's a few examples.

**CLICK for 'let's influence everybody to be better.'**





**SUNRISE**

10:14 This day I first left off my waistcoat, it being so hot as to make me break out, in my hands, which vexes me, but is good for me.

So here's Recollect, a tiny product a few of my old Flickr colleagues and I made. It stores your data from across different social networks, like Facebook, Twitter, and Foursquare, archives it, backs it up, and makes it searchable. Basically like Dropbox for your online social stuff.

So this is the day view, which shows you what your day looks like based on what you put online. There's a map view, there's the weather, your path, checkins, and so on.

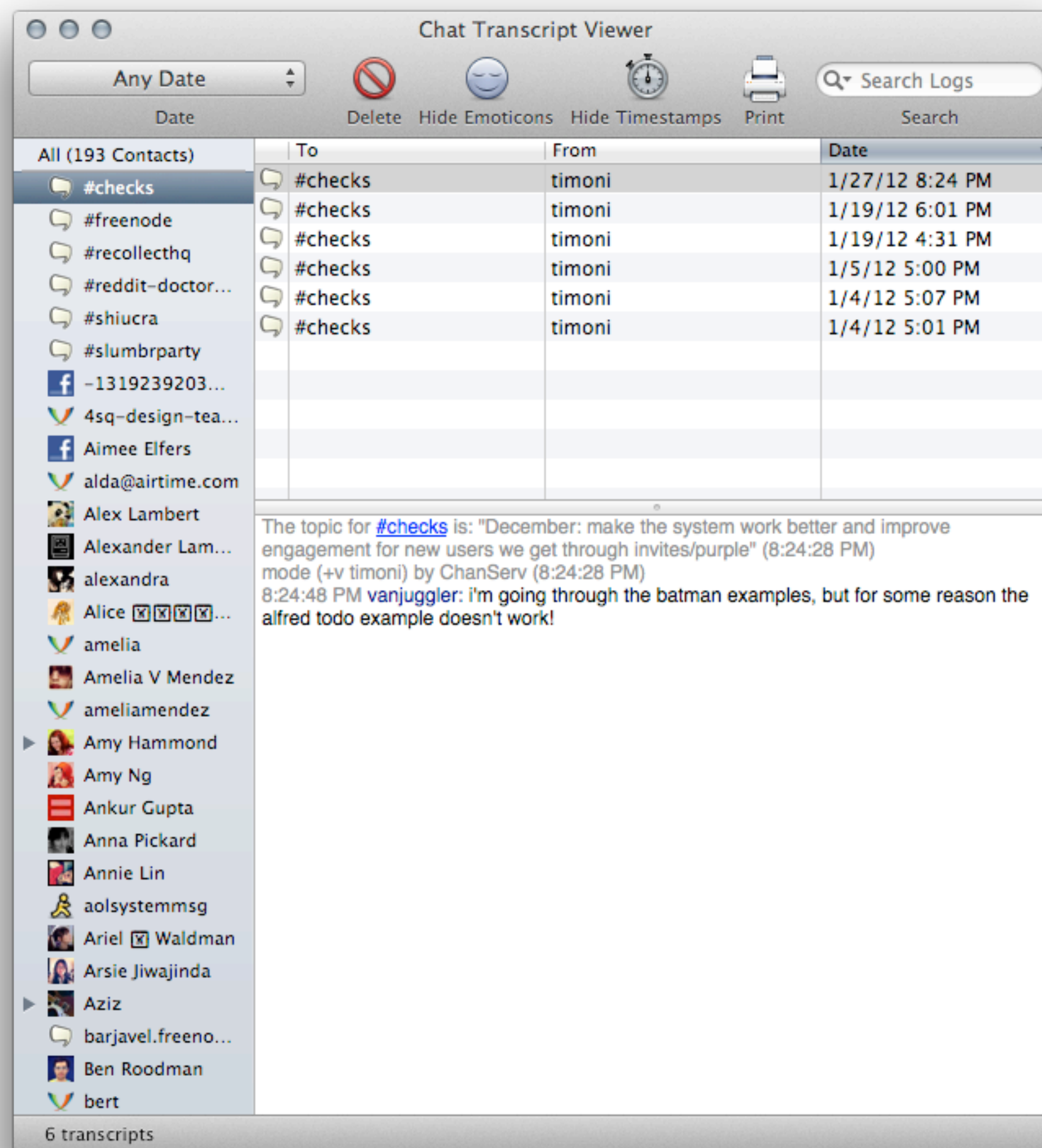
But this is just *the basics*, the giving back your data in a useful way that I already talked about.

We can also do things to actually remind you to go to Recollect.

Like maybe you're in your calendar, and there's a link to see all of your activity in context. *Subtle UX cues* that show up at the right time, like ESPN.

**Click to show Chats screenshot**





Here's a more general example: chat transcripts! If you have archives of your chats, as I do, you can run basic analysis and have it displayed ambiently all the time:

for example, how often, when you talk to someone, do you have long conversations;

what's the mood of your conversation?

Do you use more negative words, positive words, business words?

It might be a little scary to show this information to people who don't really get that computers don't have an agenda and don't really give a shit about your personal life.

So making it opt-in is really important.

But ambiently displaying this data, making it available all the time, will get people thinking about it.

And that's what we want.

**CLICK to show 'the data is available to you'**





THE DATA IS AVAILABLE TO YOU!

YOU CAN UNDERSTAND IT!

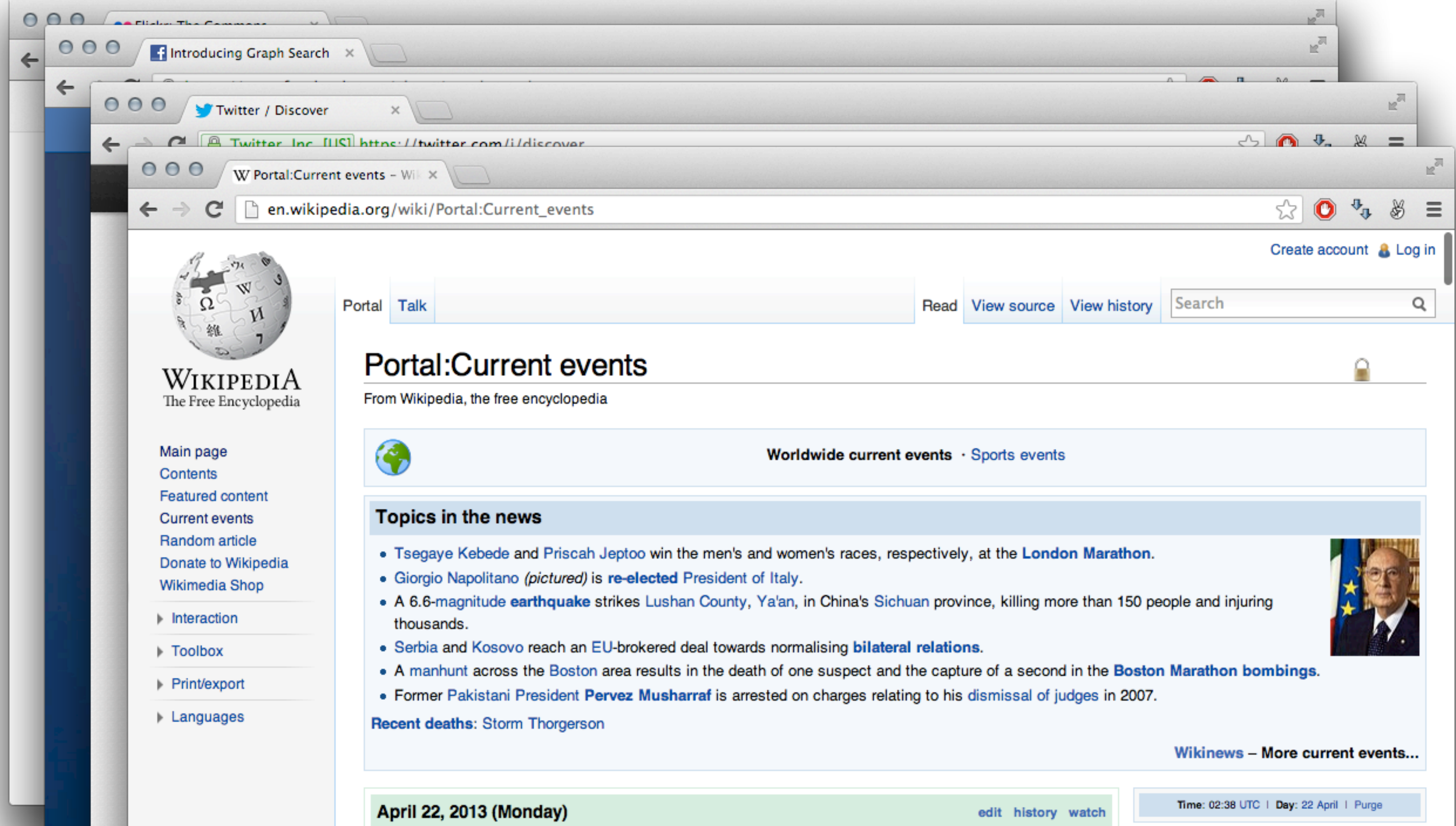
These are the two main goals of interaction design for large data, for a democratic data system.

Again, we're trying to get everyone who uses a device, here, not just intellectuals, not just the curious, to start remembering that this data is all around them, and they can look at anything they're reading, or viewing, or thinking about, in a larger context. In a global or historical context.

So how would this look on other websites? I didn't mock up any interfaces today, because I'll be damned if I'm going to tell people how to design their products with pie-in-the-sky interfaces. But I'll give you some examples of existing features, and some brainstorming ideas I had, to start getting the juices flowing.

**CLICK to show creative commons**





Flickr's Creative Commons. How many of you know about this?

Basically, Flickr gathered a ton of open-source or government images from around the globe, from different various NGOs, libraries, and so on, and offered to host them. So you've got tons of excellent historical images, usually free to use, with a lot of context, good tags, very searchable. It's wonderful.

And this is absolutely the best UI example because it's so seamless. The data is already in the system, and Creative Commons photos come up in search results right along side everything else. You can't help but stumble across it.

## CLICK for FB social graph

Facebook's social graph is an interesting first step; it teaches users the data exists, and they can manipulate it. I would love to see them populate or backfill data from previous populations; they could take it from there.

It'd be amazing to be able to compare the population now to populations past. And again, just make this a seamless part of the interface.

## CLICK for Twitter

So, sadly, Twitter is the worst of the bunch in terms of keeping data around for analysis later. This would be the realm of the third-party dev; you could do things like analyze tweet-sized bites of information written in newspapers, and compare it to the the headlines of today. Sentiment analysis is where Twitter really shines, too, because people don't edit themselves very much, and they use a lot of emotional words.

## CLICK for Wikipedia

So Wikipedia is a great example of a system with a lot of data, but it's not really being used for anything. This is a huge opportunity. Google's AdSense is a good example of a system that uses data to make money, but it's not really being used for anything.





We know that once people are aware of a facts and absorb them, they remember them later.

And we know that humans are generally good, either because of our fabulous natural personalities, or because of socialization—

it doesn't really matter which; we're just predisposed social animals. But we have to be taught in order to extend our basic goodness, and empathy, from our small social groups, to the world at large.

Finally, and this is kind of the most important, at least in the short term, we know from experience that if we create social patterns, people will repeat them.

There are things that people do now that don't make sense in the short term, but do make sense in the long term: swaddling babies in clothes, not hitting your sister, knowing to chew tree bark to get rid of headaches.

Social wisdom, but not necessarily conscious wisdom, that gets passed down as habits over time.

So, internet makers, we've already created tons of habit-forming products. Let's make new habits. Good habits.

**CLICK to BIG FINALE**





# TEACHING THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD TO BE AWARE OF AVAILABLE DATA AND ACCESS IT ON A REGULAR BASIS.

## **SLOW DOWN**

We want to do this

because humans have traditionally not had access to information,  
and we know that when humans have better access to information,  
and are open to it,  
they make better choices, they improve their lives, and they improve the lives of others.

## **SLOW DOWN, MAKE IT COUNT.**

The more we remember of history, the better we become as humans.

**Thank you.**





Thank you.



<http://www.flickr.com/photos/sdasmarchives/7142989567/sizes/o/in/photostream/>

## 1 [The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston](#)

The Battle of Four Horsemen (Battle of Anghiari) (c. 1657 - 1666) Details

## [Gérard Edelinck](#)

2 [Benaki Museum of Greek Civilization](#)

Children busy reading 1950 Details

[Papaioannou Voula Th.](#)

<http://www.googleartproject.com/collection/benaki-museum-of-greek-civilization/artwork/children-busy-reading-papaioannou-voula-th/718450/>

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THEY WANT PRIVACY NOW, OR TO FORGET ABOUT THEMSELVES NOW  
**WHY DON'T USERS CARE ABOUT SEEING DATA NOW?**  
THEY AREN'T SENTIMENTAL

THEY HAVEN'T EXPERIENCED A LOSS (OF DATA) YET  
**ALSO FRANKLY A LOT OF IT IS BORING**



For their personal data, there are some pretty clear reasons.

**CLICK 'they want privacy'**

They want privacy, which a service like Snapchat gives you, or they want to forget about that party last Friday entirely.

**CLICK 'they aren't sentimental'**

Or maybe they don't care about any party, any Friday.

**CLICK for honey badger** Honey badger don't give a shit.

**CLICK 'they haven't experienced a loss of data'**

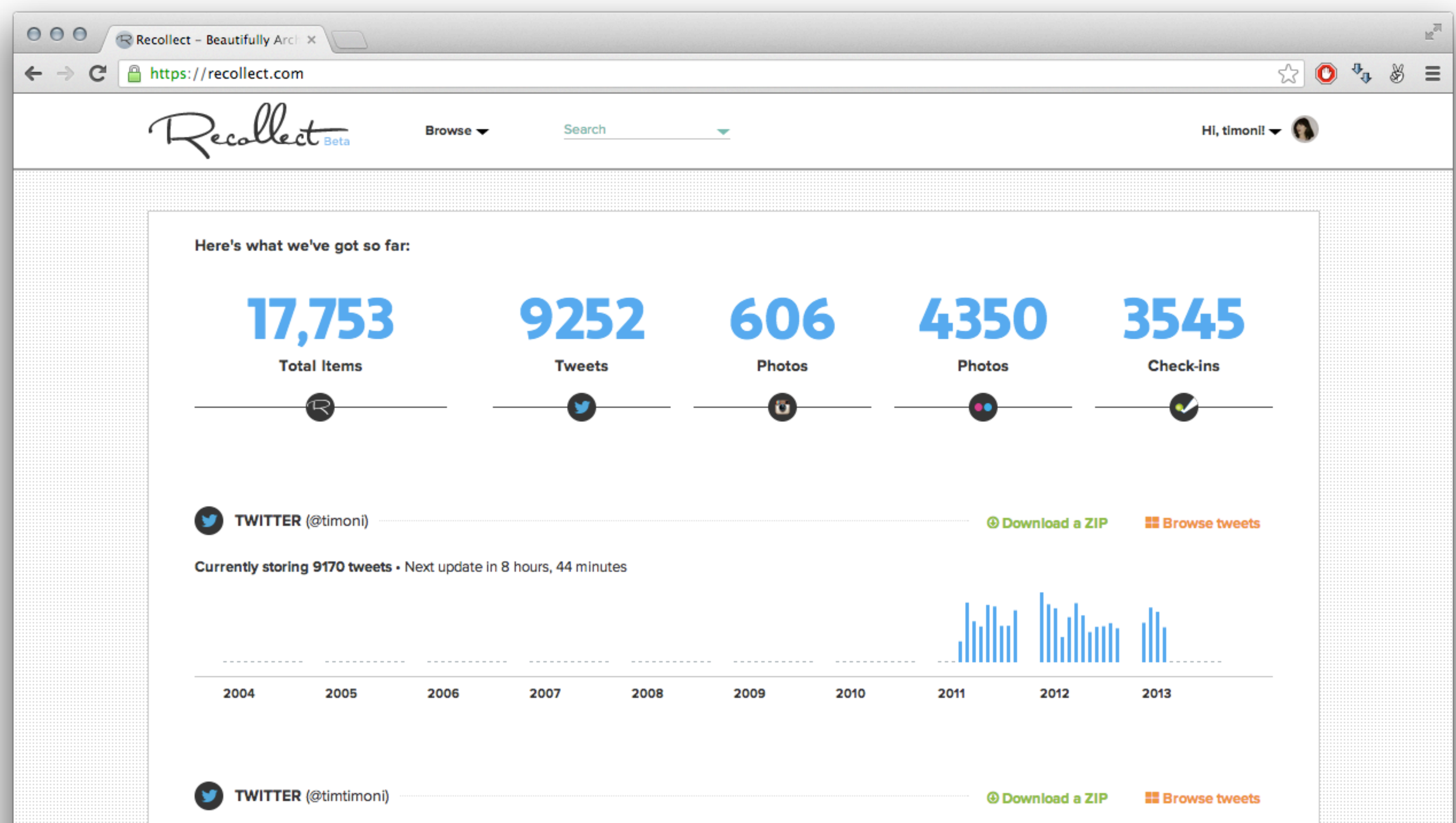
Or maybe he doesn't care because he's never actually *lost* anything important so far, and so sort of assumes the information will just...be there, all the time, whenever he does want it.

**CLICK 'also frankly a lot of it is boring.'**

Yeah. It is. Fair enough, honey badger.

**CLICK for the facebook social graph.**





My Flickr colleagues, Bert Fan and Chris Martin, were also concerned by this, so we make a web utility called Recollect to help.

At this point, Recollect basically just stores up your information from across the web in a tidy little bundle until you find something awesome to do with it.

But you know where it is, it's backed up, and you can download it at any time whether or not Twitter or Facebook or other networks go down...

or, you know, have sucky search features...

Because we, and frankly everybody, are putting a LOT of data online.

**CLICK to show 'users are showing a lot of data.'**





LET'S INFLUENCE PEOPLE INTO BEING BETTER.

AND WHEN I SAY 'PEOPLE' I MEAN

HUMANITY.

Let's influence people into being better.

**CLICK**

And when I say people...I mean **CLICK**  
seriously, everybody.