THE WEB 4.0 WE NEVER HAD

a talk by @tech-absurdist

at exocon26, 2026-03-21

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Anyway, let's begin …

THE WEB THROUGHOUT THE YEARS...

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1989.

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Tim Berners-Lee invents WWW.

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Web 1.0!

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Darry DiNucci predicts an era of dynamic sites and user-generated content.

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Web 2.0!

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One Satoshi Nakamoto publishes a whitepaper.

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Decentralized consensus, plus scams and speculations.

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Web 3.0!

THE WEB THROUGHOUT THE YEARS...

2017.

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Google Deepmind introduces the transformer.

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Sam Altman shits LLM and cloud.

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Web 4.0!

THE WEB THROUGHOUT THE YEARS...

So what do we learn?

THE WEB THROUGHOUT THE YEARS...

So what do we learn?

The more we progress, the more centralized the system gets.

THE CORPORATE OLIGOPOLY

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Amazon Web Services

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Microsoft Azure

THE CORPORATE OLIGOPOLY

Amazon Web Services

Microsoft Azure

Google Cloud

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Amazon Web Services

Microsoft Azure

Google Cloud

Cloudflare

THE CORPORATE OLIGOPOLY

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Blink (Chrome)

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Gecko (Firefox)

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Bloated W3C standards

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Bloated W3C standards → Fourth web engine near impossible

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Counterpoints: NetSurf, Dillo, Ladybird, Servo, Flow

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Interesting Projects: Isocore by Isaac Clayton

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Controlled by DNS Root Servers, TLD Registries, Domain Registrars.

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[Unstoppable Domains](#)?

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IETF and ISOC?

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Unstoppable Domains?

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IETF and ISOC?

Too slow to standardize any attempted reforms.

WHERE ARE WE?

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IPFS/Filecoin for distributed storage + ENS/Namecoin for owned domains

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Fediverse – powered by ActivityPub.

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Federated, but not fully P2P.

WHERE ARE WE?

We can do better.

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Robin Berjon [dreams of a web](#) that maximizes user agency by moving power away from centralized servers and large platforms.

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Robin Berjon [dreams of a web](#) that maximizes user agency by moving power away from centralized servers and large platforms.

We have the tools to make it a reality.

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Project Gemini explores a fast, simpler, text-based web.

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Direct P2P connections via iroh gossip protocol.

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Direct P2P connections via iroh gossip protocol.

Post-connection routing via Yggdrasil.

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Every peer has a unique ID.

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Hosts their own content in a local directory.

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Bookmarking, downloading, mirroring possible.

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Human-readable, low-bandwidth transmission.

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Think decentralized git network like Radicle.

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No ISP.

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No TLD.

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No TLD.

No DNS.

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No ISP.

No TLD.

No DNS.

No HTTP.

THE WEB 4.0 WE NEVER HAD…

No ISP.

No TLD.

No DNS.

No HTTP.

No W3C spec bloat.

THE WEB 4.0 WE NEVER HAD…

Simpler. Slower. Local-first.

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P2P. Permissionless. Post-platform.

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Open source. Free as in speech. Free as in beer.

TILL WE MEET AGAIN!

QUESTIONS, PLEASE!