

Let's Plan a Book Club

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Agenda

Goal: Make plans for a book club sub-Meetup.

For tonight's purposes this probably means picking a book or books. This actually appears to me as somewhat difficult.

Your humble organizer is not a book club expert. I appreciate feedback and I would be particularly open to delegate this one.

`https://github.com/capnion/random/blob/master/
acm_capnion_5september2023_stlgenai.pdf`

Meta Concerns on Book Selection

Some worthwhile bits of meta-conversation about how to plan:

- How far ahead should we plan?
- Does anyone have no-go guardrails on their mind?
- Are we similar or different in our desires?
- Do we have conviction or “someone please just pick”?
- How much democracy do we want?

These questions will to some degree answer themselves over time (including over the course of our conversation tonight).

What makes a good choice?

I have a few ideas about what a good choice looks like, and I would love to hear more. A choice should be...

- At least a little challenging
- Have significant substantive content (no fluff)
- Broadly accessible (not a math treatise, etc.)
- Easy to obtain (doesn't force someone to buy a Kindle)

Hopefully we can avoid books that are triggering or otherwise miserable for someone.

Some Subcategories

There are a couple categories that are worth separating in our conversation. Among other things, it clarifies our potential criteria a bit.

Ethics and Society - probably substantive and accessible, plausibly miserable and triggering for someone, ?what does “fluffy” mean here?

How-To (do something or other) - unlikely to be triggering and miserable, plausibly a lot more fun with people with some related knowledge already, possibly fluffy

I have an unpleasant sense people have used ChatGPT to write a zillion terrible books about AI.

A Highly Random Example

Kissinger, Schmidt, Huttenlocher “The Age of AI”

Good:

- Bigwig authors
- NY Times review gives some context
- Looks easy to find
- Accessible topics

Bad:

- Do we like these bigwigs?
- The review was meh

This is a conversation piece and no endorsement is intended.