

Scaling Laws, Tech-Transition Books, and Open-Source Essays

Recommended Reading from Tech Founders

2026-04-24

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By Recommended Reading from Tech Founders • April 24, 2026

Today's strongest organic recommendations centered on long-range frameworks: Satya Nadella pointed to the scaling laws paper as a map of today's capability jumps, while Cat Woo and Brian Armstrong recommended books on development, worker transitions, and nation-building. Additional links covered open source security and AI-company communications.

What stood out

Most of today's recommendations focused on large-system change rather than narrow tactics: AI capability scaling, historical technology transitions, economic development, civilizational rise and fall, and nation-building [1, 2, 3].

Most compelling recommendation

- **Title:** the scaling laws paper
Content type: Research paper
Author/creator: Not specified in the provided excerpt
Link/URL: Source context: Microsoft CEO Talks AI, Australia and Upskilling workers
Who recommended it: Satya Nadella
Key takeaway: Nadella said that when he first read the paper, he thought that if its prediction held, it would be very interesting. He now says it has held that line as capability jumps arrive [1]
Why it matters: This was the strongest example today of a leader pointing to a resource that directly shaped his model of AI progress [1]

when I first read even the scaling laws paper, I felt like wow, this if this happens, this would be really interesting and it's turned out that



it's held that line. [1]
Microsoft CEO Talks AI, Australia and Upskilling workers (11:30)

Books for thinking about the AI era through history and institutions

Source context for Cat Woo's recommendations: How Anthropic's product team moves faster than anyone else | Cat Wu (Head of Product, Claude Code)

- **Title:** *The Technology Trap*
Content type: Book
Author/creator: Not specified in the provided excerpt
Who recommended it: Cat Woo
Key takeaway: Woo said it studies the industrial and computer revolutions and how they affected workers [2]
Why it matters: She recommended it specifically because history can help make the AI transition go well [2]
- **Title:** *How Asia Works*
Content type: Book
Author/creator: Not specified in the provided excerpt
Who recommended it: Cat Woo
Key takeaway: Woo described it as a story about economic development and the policies and governments that create long-lasting successful economies [2]
Why it matters: It is a direct recommendation for readers trying to understand how durable economic systems get built [2]
- **Title:** *Paper Menagerie*

Content type: Book

Author/creator: Not specified in the provided excerpt

Who recommended it: Cat Woo

Key takeaway: Woo called it a book of short stories about coming of age, AI, and self-discovery [2]

Why it matters: It broadens the set beyond policy and economic history into narrative work that still touches AI [2]

- **Title:** *Atlas Shrugged*

Content type: Book

Author/creator: Ayn Rand

Who recommended it: Brian Armstrong

Key takeaway: Armstrong called it a classic that celebrates builders and said readers will start noticing the same characters and events playing out today [3]

Why it matters: He framed it as a way to think about builders and recurring patterns [3]

- **Title:** *The Changing World Order*

Content type: Book

Author/creator: Ray Dalio

Who recommended it: Brian Armstrong

Key takeaway: Armstrong recommended it for understanding how civilizations rise and fall and how crypto can help create better countries [3]

Why it matters: It ties macro history to Armstrong's view of crypto and institutional design [3]

- **Title:** *From Third World to First*

Content type: Book

Author/creator: Lee Kuan Yu

Who recommended it: Brian Armstrong

Key takeaway: Armstrong said it is worth reading for understanding nation-building [3]

Why it matters: It was the clearest state-building recommendation in today's book set [3]

One writer surfaced twice

David Breunig was the only author to appear more than once in today's recommendations: once through a direct Matt Mullenweg endorsement, and once through Simon Willison's security note that Mullenweg amplified [4, 5, 6].

- **Title:** *Cybersecurity is Proof of Work Now*

Content type: Blog post / article

Author/creator: David Breunig

Link/URL: <https://www.dbreunig.com/2026/04/14/cybersecurity-is-proof-of-work-now.html> [5]

Who recommended it: Simon Willison; Matt Mullenweg endorsed the

recommendation

Key takeaway: Willison highlighted Breunig’s point that the ease of finding exploits makes proven open source libraries more valuable [5]

Why it matters: Mullenweg’s follow-on comment showed why the piece resonated with open-source-minded builders [6]

the ease with which exploits can be found makes proven open source libraries more valuable [5]

- **Title:** *The Cathedral, the Bazaar, and the Winchester Mystery House*
Content type: Essay
Author/creator: David Breunig
Link/URL: <https://www.dbreunig.com/2026/03/26/winchester-mystery-house.html> [4]
Who recommended it: Matt Mullenweg
Key takeaway: Mullenweg simply called it a great essay [4]
Why it matters: Even with little added commentary, it was a direct founder recommendation with a clear link to the source [4]

A targeted watch for operators

- **Title:** Short advice clip from Dylan Field with Patrick O’Shaughnessy
Content type: Video clip
Author/creator: Dylan Field with Patrick O’Shaughnessy
Link/URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LF3aUIM57uw&t=2514s> [7]
Who recommended it: Bill Gurley
Key takeaway: Gurley said everyone in marketing/PR at an AI company, especially large model companies, should watch it, and described it as crisp and to the point [7]
Why it matters: It was the narrowest operational recommendation in the set, aimed directly at how AI companies communicate [7]

Bottom line

If you open one resource first, start with the scaling laws paper for the strength of the endorsement. If you want a more immediately actionable reading stack, pair *The Technology Trap* with *How Asia Works* for historical and institutional context on how major technology shifts and durable economies are managed [1, 2].

Sources

1. Microsoft CEO Talks AI, Australia and Upskilling workers
2. How Anthropic’s product team moves faster than anyone else | Cat Wu (Head of Product, Claude Code)

3. X post by @brian_armstrong
4. X post by @photomatt
5. X post by @simonw
6. X post by @photomatt
7. X post by @bgurley