

The Myth of Mobility

Another con of analog centers around the perceived immobility of the system. Its roots, once again, trace back to Sönke Ahrens. In *How to Take Smart Notes*, Ahrens says he chose to use a digital Zettelkasten for "mobility."¹ His presumption is that a laptop storing his notes is easier to carry than a filing cabinet full of notecards. While this may be true, he's actually making the wrong comparison. Sure, a laptop carrying notes is more mobile than carrying around filing cabinets full of notecards. However, they are not equivalent. He mistakenly believes that the two are equal when, in reality, they are not.

An analog system like the Antinet contains thoughts and a structure of knowledge that are irreplicable in a digital notetaking system. The knowledge Ahrens carries with him on his laptop is of lesser value and worth than the knowledge contained in a robust analog system.

In addition, the material you carry with you when using an analog system does not just reside in the card boxes. The knowledge resides in your mind. Such knowledge, when digitally managed, would otherwise not be stamped in your mind in such a way. In effect, with the Antinet you carry knowledge with you, wherever you go. Whether you're in the shower (where breakthroughs in thinking actually happen), or whether you're on your couch reading, you carry with you knowledge that would otherwise be missing if you used digital systems. In this way, it can be argued that digital systems are *less* mobile than *analog* systems. Why? Because with analog systems, you can carry more knowledge, internally, than you can with digital systems. Plus digital notes result in cheaper, less processed knowledge stored in the depths of a notetaking app.

¹Sönke Ahrens, *How to Take Smart Notes: One Simple Technique to Boost Writing, Learning and Thinking: For Students, Academics and Nonfiction Book Writers* (North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace, 2017), 31.