

**UNFINISHED**

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**Welcome to the Unfinished newsletter, where we explore issues at the intersection of tech, ethics, and society.**

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Today, we're reading Wired's [epic oral history](#) by Garrett M. Graff of the day, two years ago, when many of us went into lockdown. But like a lot of people, we're mostly still focused on crypto and Ukraine.

## What we're thinking about

The acceleration of the mainstreaming of crypto and web3. This week, a few notable events took place that seemed to push this new revolution in technology even further out of the fringes — one was a truly wild Twitter talk, the other came from U.S. President Joe Biden.

🔥 First, the Twitter Space called [The Role of Crypto and Web3 in Ukraine's Fight for Freedom](#), which you can listen to in full at that link, as the session was recorded. Among the speakers were **Vitalik Buterin**, the Russian-Canadian whiz kid coder and one of Ethereum's originators; the Deputy Minister of Digital Transformation for the Ukraine government, [Alex Bornyakov](#); the Moscow artist and activist [Nadya Tolokonnikova](#), of **Pussy Riot** fame (she [participated in Unfinished Live](#) in the past); **Chris Lehane**, formerly a Clinton Administration official and top executive on policy at Airbnb who now works in crypto; and **Sam Williams**, CEO of Arweave, which we wrote about two weeks ago — his blockchain-based archive is hosting a user-generated, hack-proof record of the war in Ukraine.

Impressive roster! Even more eye-popping, however, was the audience. Nearly 30,000 people tuned in. Read that again. Thirty thousand! That's at least 10x more listeners than any other (already large!) Twitter Space we've listened to, with attendees ranging from U.S. Senators to tech CEOs to crypto hawks to journalists and everyone in between. It was super interesting and worth a listen, even if you just want to skip around.

🌟 The discussion was in part a celebration of the many millions of dollars in crypto that have been donated to the Ukraine government from individuals and groups around the world. Donations have hit around \$100 million. Ukraine has moved quickly, through a governance process, to earn approval to turn those donations into real-world purchases. According to Coindesk, **that money is being used** for gas (the real kind, not the blockchain kind), food, water, drones, heat goggles, and other military equipment.

This is notable, said U.S. diplomat and now **crypto policy executive Tomicah Tillemann**, who shared a story about a sensitive trip he took to Georgia with **Joe Biden** in 2008, following its invasion by Russia. On the flight back, Tillemann said, he and Biden discussed how they could safely get **foreign relief** into the right hands. What was striking to him this go-round was how efficiently currency could be passed to state leaders without leaks or interference.

🗳️ The Biden administration issued its **highly anticipated executive order** on crypto, essentially ordering all government agencies to examine the dangers and possibilities for innovation. **Bitcoin soared in the aftermath.** Large swaths of the crypto crowd are psyched about the directive, whereas skeptics read the order with more measure. This is just the beginning of what will be a complex movement toward regulation. Outlook uncertain for now.

💰 Amazon has **apparently been bleeding talent** and is ratcheting up its salaries to remain competitive. The Org got the lowdown on the new bands for top positions, and you can see those **here**.

🤖 Duck Duck Go, a search engine beloved by people who care about their digital privacy, announced this week it would start **down-ranking** Russian misinformation in its search results. Like all things on the internet, this had some people cheering and others very mad. We liked **the take from one of WaPo's technology** writers: "DuckDuckGo's unique value proposition is privacy, not neutrality. Use it because it doesn't track your search history—not because you think it somehow gives 'unbiased' search results. Demoting disinfo (and promoting reliable info) is what we should want from a search engine."

🎉 Lastly, our colleagues at The McCourt Institute, which is focused on advancing technology for the common good, hosted its **inaugural event** yesterday at Sciences Po in Paris. You can watch the whole thing **here**. And if you want to skip to the part about web3 challenges and opportunities, scoot over to the 2:24 mark.

# Thank you for reading.

Follow Unfinished ([@byUnfinished](#)) and Damon ([@dlberes](#)) — who is on parental leave and doing very well despite being sleepy — for ongoing discussion about the changing web.

Have a great weekend,

— The Unfinished team

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