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Welcome to the Unfinished email, where we explore the intersection of tech, ethics, and society.

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What we're thinking about

The classic entrepreneur's dilemma known as "build versus buy." To oversimplify the quandary, think of it like this: Buying something (a product, an add-on, a service) can cost a lot of money and come with some trade-offs, but it saves you a lot of time. Building something can be less expensive, it allows you to create more or less exactly the product or service you envision, but it takes much longer.

⚡ In a surprise move **Elon Musk** — billionaire, maverick, master of marketing (by which we mean tweeting), and thrower of "[Cyber Rodeo](#)" [parties](#) — seems to have chosen the latter. Just last week, Musk tweeted that he's "[giving serious thought](#)" to the idea of building a new social-media platform. And while he didn't outright *buy* **Twitter**, Musk this week became its largest shareholder, landing him a board seat and, potentially, significant influence over the company. For its part, Twitter says board members do not control policy decisions, but that didn't allay [employee concerns](#) that Musk's influence could result in the rolling back of its content-moderation rules, including the one that led to the deplatforming of former U.S. President **Donald Trump**. Musk is, after all, a "[free speech absolutist](#)."

It was a move that surprised even the savviest tech insiders. But naturally, once we all lifted our proverbial jaws from the floor, a strange kind of clarity kicked in. Musk wants influence over Twitter? [Of course he does](#), writes **Marina Koren** for *The Atlantic*.

👁️ One of the most gobsmacking new applications of A.I. got some press this week when a number of journalists wrote about **OpenA.I.**'s new tool called

DALL-E 2. It's a "new A.I. tool that can create and edit images from natural language instructions." Put more plainly: The beta allows researchers to put in a string of complex descriptors — "An orange monkey sipping a pina colada while the city behind him burns" — and *voilà!* It generates an image of just that. It's a see-it-to-believe-it kind of thing, so we will simply point you to [this thread from entrepreneur and OpenA.I. CEO Sam Altman](#), who canvassed his followers for requests of DALL-E 2-generated images. He delivered.

As with all artificial intelligence, the power of the technology must be wielded carefully. You can easily imagine this kind of tool in the wrong hands, being used for abuse (think: deepfakes). There is also the perennial A.I. issue of encoded bias. For example, guess what the people look like when you search for "[lawyer](#)" versus "[nurse](#)"? For now, it is available to researchers, and we suspect the firm will be iterating on the tool before it's more widely available.

🧐 Now, some spicy conversations. The economist **Tyler Cowen**, who hosts an excellent interview-style podcast, recently spoke with **Sam Bankman-Fried**, the founder and CEO of the crypto exchange **FTX**. SBF, as he's often called, is a prominent effective altruist — this is a philosophy of giving that we've mentioned [in recent newsletters](#) because it's only getting more mainstream, and it's big in tech circles. The key concept for these philanthropists is to use reason and data to determine the most effective way to help as many people as possible.

Given that SBF is a crypto billionaire (his net worth is more than 20 Bs, to be specific), it is compelling to hear his thoughts about Ethereum, life extension, leadership, giving, and why he is [bullish about the Bahamas](#), where he lives. You can read the [transcript](#) or listen to it in your favorite podcast app. It's a bit under an hour long, and Cowen comes in with the smart, incisive questions.

🗣️ On the other end of the spectrum was **Ezra Klein's** conversation with the YouTube-famous crypto skeptic **Dan Olson**. (Olson's viral video "[Line Goes Up](#)" has been viewed on YouTube nearly 7 million times!) Klein has been on an interesting journey squaring his crypto skepticism with the journalistic imperative of inquiry.

A couple of months back he had [Katie Haun](#) on his show. **Haun**, a former federal prosecutor and now [bigtime web3 VC](#), likes crypto. Olson, on the other hand, does not like crypto, not one bit, and in his lengthy, spicy conversation with Klein, he makes the argument that the underlying technology cannot be decoupled from the scammy marketing culture that surrounds this asset class.

They discuss how financial FOMO — the "fear of missing out" — is playing mind games on people, powering a movement that stands to financialize every aspect of our online lives. Olson warns of the dire circumstances that can result from this kind of hype. You can listen to the whole thing [here](#).

👉 **Peter Yang**, a product lead at Reddit, wrote a recent piece on his blog asking if [web3 was a solution looking for a problem](#). We'll spoil the ending and say that no, generally speaking, that is not Yang's conclusion. Instead, he identifies three use cases where web3 might, with some effort, ease some friction and solve IRL problems. It won't simply happen with a few keystrokes of code. Yang has some good ideas.

🤗 Finally, join us for a salon on April 22! Unfinished believes in the power of convening — that when you bring people together from across disciplines, you can find solutions that might not otherwise be obvious. For the first in a series, **Van Jones**, Founder of DreamCorps, and **María Teresa Kumar**, Founding President and CEO of Voto Latino, will host “Realizing a Thriving Multiracial Democracy.” It's free. Register [here](#).

Thank you for reading.

Follow Unfinished ([@byUnfinished](#)) and Damon ([@dlberes](#)) — who is back from 🙋 leave soon — on Twitter.

Have a great, restful weekend.

The Unfinished team

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