UNFIN'SHED   "

May 20, 2022

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

Did someone forward you this email? ***Sign up to receive your own copy here****.*

What we're thinking about

A few meaty pieces on cryptoland. Plus, disarming perspectives on the future of digital surveillance.

💸   If you've ever felt the sting of regret that you didn't invest in Bitcoin 10 years ago…well, join the club. But also, **read the latest from the *Atlantic*'s Ian Bogost**. "The Crypto Crash Feels Amazing" is all about embracing that particular feeling, because even if you think "it could've been me" who gets super-rich on crypto, he writes, "the truth is more banal: It could *never* have been me." It's elegantly written and just a bit spicy.

📈   The venture capital firm a16z, which is heavily invested in crypto and web3 startups—released a new **"State of Crypto" report** that assesses various aspects of web3. We're particularly interested in two ideas expressed in the document: 1) That web3 is fundamentally about aligning "network participants to work together toward a common goal," and 2) That web3 "empowers a collective owned future over a corporate or government owned future." These ideas are baked into the foundation of the Unfinished Network and our development of **Project Liberty**, so we'll be watching to see how this potential comes to life over time.

🤔   Keep in mind that since a16z is deeply invested in this space, the report has a slight flavor of boosterism. Stil, there are a lot of valuable nuggets in there.

👁   Sociologist and author Zeynep Tufekci **writes in the *New York Times*** that privacy is a more urgent topic than ever as the U.S. Supreme Court appears poised to overturn *Roe v. Wade*: "Surveillance made possible by minimally-regulated digital technologies could help law enforcement track down women

who might seek abortions and medical providers who perform them in places where it would become criminalized … What's needed, for all Americans, is a full legal and political reckoning with the reckless manner in which digital technology has been allowed to invade our lives."

🚨 Our partners at Georgetown University **published a new report** on data-driven deportation in the 21st century. The findings are shocking: "By reaching into the digital records of state and local governments and buying databases with billions of data points from private companies, ICE has created a surveillance infrastructure that enables it to pull detailed dossiers on nearly anyone, seemingly at any time. In its efforts to arrest and deport, ICE has – without any judicial, legislative or public oversight – reached into datasets containing personal information about the vast majority of people living in the U.S., whose records can end up in the hands of immigration enforcement simply because they apply for driver's licenses; drive on the roads; or sign up with their local utilities to get access to heat, water and electricity."

💡 And here is **a sharply written and thought-provoking piece by the engineer and writer Molly White** that explores how artists are thinking about their work when/if the NFT bubble bursts. Many digital artists, she points out, have struggled in the past to earn a living and get the acclaim afforded to physical-good artists, and the explosion of the NFT market in 2021 and 2022 was a boon for some. What happens if this proves to be a passing trend? And what if blockchain, per se, was not even needed for these digital artists to thrive? White dives in.

🗳️ Tech and the future of democracy— and other great discussions

Starting Monday, Unfinished and our partners at the Web3 Foundation will convene inspiring technologists, policy-makers, academics, journalists, and others for a slate of programming live from the World Economic Forum in Davos.

These conversations are all about navigating a changing world, and we think everyone will find something of value in them. We also recognize that Davos isn't exactly across the street for most people, so we're excited to offer free livestreams of each event—make sure to follow us on **Twitter** and **LinkedIn** to join. (And hey, if you do happen to be in town, **here's how you can join us in person**.)

📅 Here's the full event rundown:

Monday, May 23
At 2pm CET / 8am ET, our editor-in-chief **Damon Beres** moderates **Tech and the Future of Democracy**, with guests **Teresa Hutson** (VP Tech and Corporate Responsibility at Microsoft), **Katherine Hsiao** (Executive VP at Palantir, head of

its Health and Life Sciences division), and **Dr. Hahrie Han** (Director of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Agora Institute at Johns Hopkins University).

At 5pm CET / 11am ET, we'll host the journalist **Alex Kantrowitz** for a live recording of the Big Technology podcast, where he'll interview **Nick Clegg**, President of Global Affairs at Meta and former Deputy Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

Tuesday, May 24
At 2pm CET / 8am ET, Yahoo! Finance EIC Andy Serwer moderates **What Will It Take to Build a Better Web?**, with guests Frank McCourt (Creator of Unfinished and Founder of Project Liberty) and **Gavin Wood** (founder of Polkadot and the Web3 Foundation).

At 4pm CET / 10am ET, Alex Kantrowitz hosts a live recording of his Big Technology podcast, where he'll interview Gavin Wood.

Wednesday, May 25
At 10am CET / 4am ET, *Atlantic* CEO **Nick Thompson** hosts New New Media: Exploring the Possibilities of Communication and Compensation in the Next Generation of the Web, with guests **Michael Casey** (EIC, Coindesk), **Leela de Kretser** (Global Breaking News Editor at Reuters), and **Jamil Anderlini** (EIC, Politico Europe).

At 2pm CET / 8am ET, Aspen Digital Executive Director **Vivian Schiller** hosts the TikTok at War: Trust and Truth in a Time of Conflict panel with guests **Salvatore Romano** (Head Researcher at Tracking Exposed) and **Nabiha Syed** (CEO, The Markup).

Thank you for reading.

Follow Unfinished (**@byUnfinished**) on Twitter for ongoing chitchat on the changing web.

Have a great, restful weekend.

The Unfinished team