

**Introduction**

When Thomas Edison patented the light bulb, he had no idea it would revolutionize so much, leading to flourishing and significant technological innovations. 43 years passed from when the lightbulb was invented to when 50% of all homes used electricity. We are only 15 years into Bitcoin. We are so early. When Satoshi Nakamoto created Bitcoin, he knew that Bitcoin's success was binary, and if it worked, it would revolutionize the world's use of and perception of money (and so much more). Bitcoin is modern-day electricity, electrifying and bringing light to our future. Nobel Laureate Economist Paul Krugman in 1998 said, *"By 2005 or so, it will become clear that the Internet's impact on the economy has been no greater than the fax machine's."* This sentiment might represent most of the world's opinion on Bitcoin now, in 2023, but in 2029, in 2049, and in 2069, I think not. There is a history of underestimating the impact of technology that must be corrected.

**Please Describe Your Intellectual Interests and Focus of Your Proposed CS Project:**

"If you have life, you have purpose. Find it." I've found purpose in Bitcoin (not bitcoin). On a personal note, for GenZ, my wish is that they know Bitcoin is their tool to find their purpose. GenZ is the first generation in a very long time that does not have to earn their wealth twice (Ammous).

Money is a tool to shape reality. Economics and by extension, money "is the foundation layer that gives rise to everything else" (Booth). We live in a world with a dishonest ledger, with a dishonest reality. Bitcoin is more than just money, but it is the best form of money we've ever had. We need a world that operates on an honest ledger and reflects an honest reality. Bitcoin is society's tool to undergo this transition. Bitcoin is our tool to make this world a reality. Bitcoin adoption will have cascading positive, individual, national, and global effects.

Bitcoin is privacy-enabling freedom tech (Odell). Bitcoin is the first way for humanity to store energy for generations, it's property every person can own, and it's money the whole world can use; because it allows people to act with a long-term mindset, with empathy, with inclusion; because it is coded for moral soundness. Bitcoin is our tool to think critically to gain wisdom and insight through first-principles thinking. Bitcoin is a tool that all 8 billion people can use; however, they see it best.

However, the majority of humanity, reinforced by conventional information sources, does not think so and does not have bitcoin in their toolkit. Why? Answering this question will be the focus of my study.

**Proposed Title: Unhashing the Cognitive Conundrum: A Neuroeconomic Exploration of the Cognitive Dissonance Between Traditional Paradigms and the Revolutionary Implications of Bitcoin**

**What will the CSP enable you to do that a more traditional A&S Major may not?**

A robust and formal study of Bitcoin does not exist at any university in the world; no A&S major is sufficient to study Bitcoin. The College Scholar Program (CSP), which encourages study “around a question or issue of interest” and “a course of study that cannot be found in an established major,” enables me to do more than a traditional A&S major.

“The fourth stage of human development is coming...Human cultures have blind spots...*only a few heretics have bothered to think about how transitions from one phase of civilization to another actually unfold. How are they triggered? What do they have in common? What patterns can help you tell when they begin and know when they are over?...To see “outside” an existing system...breaches a convention that helps keep the system functioning*” (The Sovereign Individual, 54-55).

The CSP was founded to support students in seeing outside existing norms, structures, and boundaries and outside of what is “known.” Bitcoin transcends every boundary, physical, digital, and conceptual, and the study of Bitcoin cannot be contained to one or two majors. The only way to study Bitcoin and the global transition underway is to do so in an environment and a community of people that rejects and disregards boundaries.

*“...history’s great transformations are perceived, or rather, misperceived as they happen...The Romans were reluctant to acknowledge the changes unfolding around them. So are we...The change will be so profound, in fact, that to understand it will **require taking almost nothing for granted** (The Sovereign Individual, 59).*

The CSP is the only environment where I will be able to and be supported in “taking...nothing for granted” (59). The only environment where questions are valued more than answers. We live in a world today where these changes are downplayed or suppressed, and humanity does not have the luxury to stay silent.

**Which academic disciplines do you see as playing a central role in preparing you to pursue the lines of inquiry that seem most promising to you at this point?**

While this list may initially be too robust, I see Cognitive Science, Psychology, Information Science, Government, Economics, Anthropology, and perhaps the History of Capitalism being influential academic disciplines in my lines of inquiry.

**How are the courses you propose to take related to the intellectual focus you have identified? Please explain how the courses you propose to take will contribute to what you envision the intellectual focus of your CS project to be.**

For Spring ‘24, I propose to take courses such as COGST 2090 Developmental Psychology, COGST 4230 What Does the Hippocampus Do?, COGST 4350 Mind, Self, and

Emotion, COGST 4720 Emotion, Cognition, and Brain, COLLS 3001 College Scholar Seminar, GDEV 3680 Environmental Decision Making, HIST 3175 Inquisition and Knowledge Revolutions, INFO 4220 Networks II: Market Design, PHIL 2810 Intro to Philosophy of Science, and PSYCH 2940 Better Decisions. Given my proposed title and study, these courses all support the inquiry into how humans perceive information, retain information, make decisions, come to an understanding of how the world works, think about the future, and are influenced by external factors.

**What have you learned from the courses you took and the conversations you have had with faculty conducting research in those disciplines?**

**Fall '21: CCSF-SHU 101L-014 *Global Perspectives on Society*:** How money and economics shape reality. Intended as a system to increase profit, capitalism has had lasting impacts far exceeding economic boundaries.

**Spring '22: CCST-SHU 132-001 *Creativity Considered*** (taught by former Cornell President Jeffrey S. Lehman). **(1)** “Creative destruction” and “disruptive innovation” are two sides of the same coin - Cathie Wood. Initially, I thought the technology that would be a creative disrupter would be AI. I was wrong initially. It’s Bitcoin. **(2)** there are many different ways to be creative: **(a)** There exists creativity through “un-learning, through “adding and subtracting,” through how you “watch,” close up, arm’s length, or at a distance; how you “do,” involved or detached; how you “think,” bios or zoe” (Tharp). **(b)** There exists creativity through ignorance and uncertainty; through recognizing everything you do is grounding in assumptions, identifying your assumptions, and questioning your assumptions (Lotto). There exists creativity through shaking up your ecosystem, through isolation. **(c)** Finally, there exists creativity through combination.

**Fall '22: COGST 2415: Intro to Moral Psychology:** As Hobbes argues, a Leviathan is necessary for society to exit the state of nature, for society to thrive, and for civilization to progress. Currently, I would argue that the actual “leviathan” is money, not government; money and control of money, control of what is scarce, is where power originates. However, this Leviathan is weakening because fiat currency is no longer scarce. The gold standard failed, and the PetroDollar is failing. As such, the Bitcoin network will be the world’s peaceful Leviathan and allow us to exit the state of nature. Additionally, bitcoin is the first true form of property, fulfilling the requirements of Hobbes, Locke, and Hume. **INFO 2040: Networks:** Game theory and the diffusion of innovation.

**Spring '23: COGST 2150 Psychology of Language:** Human language is highly imperfect. Language is like a game of charades, where “winning” the game means making it through the “Now-or-Never Bottleneck” of language acquisition. Among many other things, Bitcoin could fix what language fails us in. Full article [here](#).

**Fall '23: COGST 1101: Intro to Cognitive Science & PSYCH 1101: Intro to Psychology:** Different ways humans are evolutionarily adapted and heuristics/ biases that strongly impact how we perceive the world and make decisions. **ILRID 1700: Introduction to Organizations and Management:** Bitcoin, the first true form of property, allows for an age of discovery for the first time since the Dutch East India Company (the VOC) in 1602. With Bitcoin, with the digital frontier, this is the first time in a long time that the future is an exploration. **COGST 3801: Intro to Game Theory and Strategic Thinking:** In finitely repeated games, it is impossible to induce cooperation. However, with an infinitely repeated game, cooperation is possible to induce. Bitcoin embodies the properties to be society’s first infinite game. Bitcoin has the potential to lead to cooperation in ways never before possible.