



# “The Flippening” & How I Learned to Stop Loving Bitcoin



Sebastian Moonjava

Mar 12, 2017 · 11 min read



The Flippening

**“A scientific man ought to have no wishes, no affections,—a mere heart of stone.” —Charles Darwin**

The feelings of love and affection for a network protocol may seem a bit absurd to an outsider of the cryptocurrency space, but not to those who have been in the industry for years, in fact, it’s rather common place. The phenomena of techno-worship did not start with Bitcoin, but surely there have been few loves as devout and developed as the one between Bitcoiners and Bitcoin.

The evolution of this fetish or worship did not happen quickly, but rather, as with most strong loves, years of interaction provided the fertile grounds for devotion. I must admit, so as to provide full disclosure—I did once love Bitcoin...



Never miss a story from **Hacker Noon**

[GET UPDATES](#)

It takes time to be reflective and to gain value from our past experiences. Many of you whom this article finds will not receive it pleasantly, but in fact, it may be received rather threateningly. I cannot blame you for this, as I too know what it's like to be blinded by love.

Please know that my intentions are friendly—but I will not be the friend who enables.

## Gaining Faith

If you have been actively watching Bitcoin since the early days—2008 being the start of it all—then you know that this was the launch of a new era. Conceived amidst the chaos of the global financial crisis and with such poetic timing, some might call it destiny. On January 3, 2009 the genesis block was generated and thus birth of the first digital talisman.

Andreas Antonopoulos, the de facto spokesperson/preacher of Bitcoin, started his involvement in early 2012, quitting all other work to research and promote Bitcoin full time. Antonopoulos deserves massive respect, as he is the spring board from which Bitcoin has jumped. He has spread awareness of the value and utility of the cryptospace to the masses, likely responsible for more adoption, investment, and the creation of more **Bitcoin Maximalists** than any one—ever. Not even Ross Ulbricht, who is known for marrying Bitcoin to drugs, and that's saying a lot. The quit-everything-to-go-100%-into-a-pursuit is admirable, and many veteran Bitcoiners have a similar story. Once you truly begin to see how revolutionary something is, and how truly revolutionary Bitcoin *was*, it makes sense to follow it with all of your heart. Andres has done so magically, with grace and confidence to be rivaled only by some of the greatest rhetoricians/orators in the last hundred years. Antonopoulos helped secure my own faith and love for Bitcoin. His words transformed Bitcoin from a nerd's wet dream to a modern mythology to be admired by all of humanity.

**Bitcoin Maximalist:** *Individuals who are religiously pro Bitcoin. They see Bitcoin as “the one” and “the way,” calling all other digital assets “altcoins.”*

Gaining an understanding of how Bitcoin Maximalists are created requires an investigation into psychology. Those individuals who shun all “altcoins” and scoff at the mere mention of another blockchain, have likely gained much from their devotion to Bitcoin. *Interestingly they are also the only people who have any interest in ETC*

**competitor, Eth.** It makes perfect sense to gain a fondness for something that has provided you benefit. If you bought Bitcoin, let's say 2013 ish or prior, you have had to deal with tremendous levels of euphoria, and severe down-trend despair. The ups and downs force all kinds of feelings and an emotional history can spur strong bonding. Few people who have bought Bitcoin are experts in the technology, most have purchased speculatively, so when price shifts, as it has done intensely over the past few years, Bitcoin **hodlers hodl** on hope. When we do not fully understand something, but wish not to fret, we find faith. We seek it out to pacify our concern and anxiety from uncertainty. I have used faith in Bitcoin to remedy my own concerns when the price goes down or someone asks a question I cannot answer.

*"Close your eyes, and hodl on, and everything will be ok."*

The trend has generally been up, as we have recently breached the all time high, only reinforcing the Maximalist's faith in Bitcoin, and confidence in the certain death of all alts. "Altcoins" are also pompously referred to as "shitcoins" by the Maximalist crowd. There is literally a movie called, "The Bitcoin Gospel," featuring Roger Ver - a man they call, "Bitcoin Jesus." Faith in Bitcoin has, until recently, been acceptable (or at least profitable), but continued faith in the near future will require a hodl based on wishes, affection, and blindness.

It's unlikely that the true pioneers and veterans of the cryptospace are **Bitcoin Maximalists**. It seems that many of the earliest adopters understand that technology evolves, grows, and branches, and to love a protocol regardless of its faults is troublesome and slows advancement.

New people to the space don't generally have this faith, they either go to what's popular and growing in value in hopes of gains or jump on what is useful. I will admit a few newcomers to the space will become Maximalists, for the sheer fact that Antonopolous could convert a banker to a pro Bitcoin lobbyist in a single sitting - provoking a faith in them that the battle was already over.

Bitcoin has become pop music.

## Losing Faith

It's quite interesting to watch millions of new people jump on the Bitcoin bandwagon, caring little about the improved future, the great paradigm shift, or the mass disintermediation, often touted by Andreas as Bitcoin's claim to fame. The money is

rolling into Bitcoin, yet the innovation has fled. Most people are reveling in gains made by the most recent wave of fresh investors, with little care, or knowledge of the stagnation and comparative decline of their techno-pulpit. It's possible this could continue well into the future, but information travels fast in the information age, so it is more probable that awareness of this atrophy is already spreading like a virus.

**July 20, 2015, the Ethereum Genesis Block was generated. The Ethereum Blockchain is about 1 year and 8 months old.**

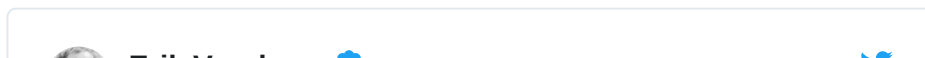
*In technology, potential has a shelf life—and it's short.*

Ethereum reached a network value of 1 billion dollars in about **8 months**; for Bitcoin it took 4 years 3 months (**51 months**). Ethereum reached the **1 billion dollar** value milestone more than 6x faster. This rapid early growth can be attributed to Bitcoin laying the foundation of awareness and information channels that allowed for Ethereum to jump quickly into the consciousness of the freshly mined cryptospace. The creator of Ethereum, Vitalik Buterin, understood these information channels well, as he had started his legacy as a writer and co-founder of Bitcoin Magazine. Surely Vitalik had a great appreciation for Bitcoin, dedicating his energy and time to it, but thankfully he is NOT a **Bitcoin Maximalist**.

The greatest innovators in the space are not locked down by a religious sentiment for Bitcoin; they move freely from great idea, to greater idea, propelling forward the collective consciousness of technology. It appears that there is a great stagnation in Bitcoin, as the block size debate moves slowly, development on the protocol is non-fluid, leaving Bitcoin with few developers comparatively. It might be that the stagnation in Bitcoin is not a recent development, but inherent in the system. Slow development on Bitcoin is a “feature,” as its intent was not to be adaptable, but rigid.

The use of Bitcoin as currency is unlikely, as its transaction times and costs are growing. For Bitcoin currently the speed is **3tx/sec** with a **10 minute** blocktime compared to **20tx/sec** and a **14 second** blocktime for Ethereum. For something that claims to be the future world currency, you might think it would have a competitive advantage of speed or scale...or maybe adaptability.

Erik Vorhees, another pioneering Bitcoin millionaire, recently tweeted about Ethereum's possible use for payments instead of Bitcoin, for obvious reasons...





Clearly Voorhees is not a maximalist —



Surely there must be some use for Bitcoin, right? The digital gold of the world? Not a currency, but a commodity? A store of value? Its position as a possible non-perishable commodity is eroding quickly, as many of the up and coming digital assets, the “alt coins,” actually have utility, such as Ethereum, which acts as a platform to develop **Dapps (decentralized applications)/smart contracts**, and can play the role of currency BETTER than Bitcoin and was built to be adaptive. There are numerous examples of new cryptocurrencies/digital assets that do what Bitcoin does, AND MORE. Once we have guided the Maximalists through this very psychologically difficult realization, they eventually agree and cry out “but...but... the network effects, this is what will keep Bitcoin alive.”

The network effect of Bitcoin will lend to Ethereum in the same ways it did to spur Eth’s explosive entrance on to the scene. The network of the first roads were built for horses, and then the cars came...

As this is being written, de facto Bitcoin preacher #1 is writing *Mastering Ethereum*.



for publication by end of 2017.

♡ 340 4:24 PM - Oct 13, 2016



💬 140 people are talking about this



Clearly Andreas is NOT a Bitcoin Maximalist either. He has a pioneering mentality, and will not ignore the future as it arrives, just as he did not ignore Bitcoin upon its arrival to the world. Though surely he will not stop advocating Bitcoin anytime soon, as it has made him, both monetarily, and publicly. His network, as with many others, will only lend favorably to the more useful of the “alts.”

The main push behind Bitcoin’s price recently is not because of its increased utility, but selling the dreams of getting rich from Bitcoin (or staying rich) - the sheer hype-effect of “I’ve heard Bitcoin has made millionaires.” The recent ETF decision has done little to push down the price, which isn’t surprising because the media attention is helping millions discover it—keeping it “new” and seemingly innovative, and it is...compared to the old economy. It’s utility dwindles, but speculation built on hope is keeping the price on the up and up. There is the false assumption that value of something (Bitcoin) is directly related to its utility or its health—its continued increase in value is directly related to the delayed mainstream adoption & discovery process. The ETF failed to be pushed through, and though Bitcoin may get one in the future this only delays the inevitable... the migration to something truly useful.

The network effect of Bitcoin is extremely limited, as it has built its own laborious network, benefiting only from its first mover advantage... likened to the “Myspace advantage.” Ethereum, on the other hand, has an entire **network of network effects** working for it. As each new token or smart contract built on Ethereum gains exposure, more people become aware of the utility and value of the Ethereum network. Iconomi, Augur, Golem, DigixDao, FirstBlood, and MakerDAO are a few Ethereum projects independently expanding and propelling the Etheruem network utility upward and multiplying the number of developers on the protocol—more projects and potential use cases are popping up regularly. There are even tokens being developed on Ethereum that could act as a stable currency, far better than Bitcoin. Ethereum may soon have multiple tokens, filling the use-cases Bitcoin once claimed it would solve.

*Currently six of the top 20 digital assets by market cap exist on the Ethereum network.*

Coinbase, another non-maximalist, has opted into Ethereum (oh.. the network effects), unable to deny its value - an initial hint at the **dETHroning** of Bitcoin. The Bitcoin monopoly was gone before most even realized there existed any competition at all. Those who continue to hodl to their hopes of Bitcoin supremacy have a rough road ahead. Some Maximalists even understand that others systems are better, but push archaic examples of network effects such as the QWERTY keyboard as their “hail Mary.” Fortunately, the ultra fluid exchange from the inefficient to the efficient systems of today require only a click—jumping from the bandwagon couldn't be easier. Pay attention: The once promised “Swiss bank in your pocket” is almost here, and its not Bitcoin... but Metropolis (the next Ethereum update).

## Moving On...

I am a confident that “**The Flipping**” will occur and if you are new to the concept, I am glad to introduce you to the idea - much to the chagrin of the Maximalist community. There will be a time in the near future where Bitcoin is no longer the dominant “coin” or blockchain, this will likely happen sooner than most expect... and Ethereum will be the one to take its place. This idea does not come from hope, nor love; it comes from logic.

The single-use concept and rigid development protocol of Bitcoin was not intended to be the infrastructure of web 3.0. The world needs more than a “digital gold”... **the world needs Ethereum**. It's highly adaptable nature allows for the infrastructure building of a new paradigm via smart contracts. As Wikileaks continues to unveil the troubles of today's governance protocol, the need for better **privacy** and **security** for the individual is ever increasing. The majority of our lives exist on the web; it's how we communicate with family and friends, it's the way we make purchases, it's where we store our memories, our data. Bitcoin is currently unable to provide the swift development and decision making necessary to be the protocol of the globe.

Bitcoin may very well be the bridge to the promise land, but it is not, in fact, the promise land itself. Maximalists will fight this idea tooth and nail, hoping to maintain their “I am ahead of the curve” beliefs. It takes time to learn about the new kid on the block, and like the Bitcoin protocol itself, Maximalists have slowed and stalled.

In contrast, Ethereum is blossoming rapidly into a rain forest of diversity. The **ICO (Initial Coin Offering)** movement is gaining momentum, over taking venture capital investments faster than anyone could have imagined. Any person, business or organization can launch an **ICO** crowdfund quickly using the Ethereum network with



ease from anywhere in the world—this is causing an explosion of innovation. Ethereum is laying the foundation for the new web, the infrastructure of the new internet and the 4th industrial revolution. Imagine if you could have bought a piece of the internet, when it first started... Ethereum is kind of like that, but magnitudes greater. As Ethereum is not simply the internet of money, it is the internet of decentralized cooperation, automation, the internet of things, AND money.

We will bid a fond farewell to the information age when Bitcoin is surpassed -and with its passing, comETH a new era—a digital and decentralized renaissance.

| *I still love Bitcoin, but I am no longer **in love** with it.*

. . .

## From a friend...

*If you liked this article, please click the Heart button below and share with your Eth buddies and any Bitcoin Maximalists you know.*

Crypto tips and donations for the writer -

**Bitcoin Address:** 15DwdqGPKiG4spkdfU8YGWmbGEH1zDxmip

For my Eth people-

**Ethereum Address**(all Eth tokens accepted):

0x2C4D78F9d65bD52C9B54b96a637B60f25161F041

Also check out the Future Asset Management [Facebook](#) & [Youtube](#) pages



like!



tweet!



about!

| *Hacker Noon is how hackers start their afternoons. We're a part of the @AMI family. We are now accepting submissions and happy to discuss advertising & sponsorship opportunities.*



If you enjoyed this story, we recommend reading our latest tech stories and trending tech stories. Until next time, don't take the realities of the world for granted!



Thanks to Chelsea Chambers.

Bitcoin

Blockchain

Ethereum

Fintech

Investing



427 claps



22



...



**Sebastian Moonjava**

Artistically Entrepreneurial. Future Asset Management BA: Economics. Futurist.

Follow



**Hacker Noon**

how hackers start their afternoons.

Follow



More from Hacker Noon

## Four Startup Engineering Killers



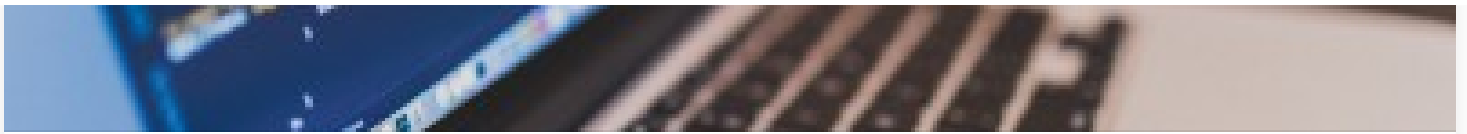
Nemil Dalal

Feb 19 · 8 min read



5.1K





More from Hacker Noon

## A hacker intercepted your WiFi traffic, stole your contacts, passwords, & financial data.

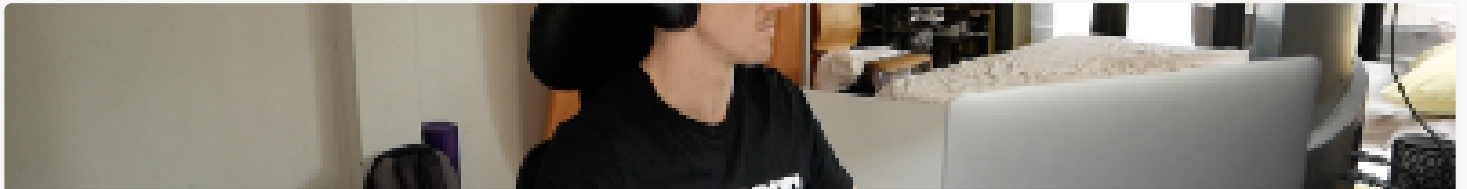


Patrick F. Wilbur

Feb 19 · 13 min read



2.2K



More from Hacker Noon

## Thinking of Self-Studying Machine Learning? Remind yourself of these 6 things



Daniel Bourke

Feb 19 · 5 min read



2.4K



### Responses



Write a response...

Applause from Sebastian Moonjava (author)



Andreas M. Antonopoulos

Mar 17, 2017 · 2 min read

I just spent the last 8 months working on the second edition of Mastering Bitcoin and I couldn't even scratch the surface of all the innovation that is happening in BTC. You don't see it? You're not looking.

The idea that Bitcoin is stale and that Ethereum will come to the rescue without stumbling on all the same milestones...

[Read more...](#)



1.6K

12 responses



Conversation with [Sebastian Moonjava](#).



[Bill Baran](#)

Mar 14, 2017

What are the top digital assets you mentioned?



1

2 responses



[Sebastian Moonjava](#)

Mar 14, 2017

- 1)Eth
- 2)Augur
- 3)Iconomi
- 4)Golem
- 5)Steem
- 6)DigixDao



7

1 response



Applause from Sebastian Moonjava (author)



[bgreene51](#)

Mar 13, 2017

Wow, what a fabulous post!



2



Applause from Sebastian Moonjava (author)



[mplsvbhvr](#)

Mar 13, 2017

Great piece. Always interesting to hear from early adopters. Thanks for sharing.



Conversation with Sebastian Moonjava.



Hrishikesh Huilgolkar

Mar 13, 2017

Sia

Sia is not built on ethereum.



1 response



Sebastian Moonjava

Mar 13, 2017

Corrected. Thank you



Applause from Sebastian Moonjava (author)



Toby Downton

Apr 29, 2017

Excellent piece Sebastian! I just came across a site that measures what I've seen Vitalik Buterin refer to as the "Köppelmann constant" (presumably named after the CEO of Gnosis).

Watch the Flipping happen here:

<https://rolandkofler.github.io/flipper/>

Vitalik comment here:

[https://www.reddit.com/r/ethtrader/comments/685jqk/30\\_reached this is gentlemen/dgw24cd/](https://www.reddit.com/r/ethtrader/comments/685jqk/30_reached_this_is_gentlemen/dgw24cd/)



Conversation with Sebastian Moonjava.



Eric Gu

Mar 26, 2017

Great Article, keep up the good writing. :)

hash:

026e55e8ef94ef8739f71013782ed84dedcf81fdb2e145d4c5110e54b9c592cc



1

1 response



Sebastian Moonjava

Mar 27, 2017

Thank you very much! It means a lot. People like you make it so that I can continue to pursue my interests in the crypto space. Look out for more articles coming soon.



1



---

Conversation with Sebastian Moonjava.



Murray Robinson

Apr 11, 2017

hodlers hodl

spelling—holders hold



1 response



Sebastian Moonjava

Apr 11, 2017

Google search my friend :)  
Thanks for looking out though.  
It's bitcoiner/crypto terminology/slang.



Show all responses