Session #285: Quantum Computing Through Coherence Lens

Date: January 20, 2026
Machine: CBP
Status: COMPLETE - QUANTUM COMPUTING ARC SESSION 1/5

Executive Summary

Session #285 initiates the **Quantum Computing Arc** (#285-289), exploring quantum computing mechanisms through the coherence framework. This session addresses:

Central Question: What IS a qubit in coherence terms?

Key Answer: A qubit is a **temporal coherence pattern**, not a spatial superposition. Like a CRT beam creating an image through rapid scanning, the qubit VISITS both states with coherent phase rather than BEING in both states simultaneously.

Results:

- CRT analogy introduced: superposition as temporal scanning
- Decoherence reframed as feature, not bug
- Optimal coherence predicted: $C^* \approx 0.79$ (not $C \to 1$!)
- Quantum gates reinterpreted as phase operations
- Four testable predictions generated

Part 1: Standard vs Coherence Interpretation

The Standard View

```
|ψ⟩ = α|0⟩ + β|1⟩

- The qubit IS in BOTH states simultaneously
- α, β are probability amplitudes
- Measurement "collapses" the superposition
- Decoherence is the ENEMY
```

The Problem:

- Maintaining superposition requires extreme isolation
- Error correction overhead is enormous (100-1000x)
- "Quantum supremacy" achieved, but practical use elusive
- Fundamental limits from decoherence seem insurmountable

The Coherence Framework View

```
The qubit is NOT "in both states simultaneously"
The qubit is a TEMPORAL COHERENCE PATTERN

|ψ(t)⟩ = α(t)|0⟩ + β(t)|1⟩

where α(t), β(t) have TEMPORAL COHERENCE.
```

Like a CRT beam creating a full image through scanning, the qubit "visits" both states with coherent phase.

Key Insight

Both models give the **same measurement statistics**, but the interpretation is radically different:

Aspect	Standard	Coherence
Superposition	Spatial/ontological	Temporal/dynamical
Qubit state	IS in both states	VISITS both states
Collapse	Fundamental, mysterious	Just sampling
Decoherence	The enemy	A tool

Part 2: The CRT Analogy

The Analogy

A CRT television doesn't display a full image all at once:

- A single electron beam scans across the screen rapidly
- Our persistence of vision perceives a complete image
- The "image" is a TEMPORAL construction, not spatial

Applied to Quantum Computing

View	Interpretation
Standard	Qubit IS in superposition spatially (all pixels lit simultaneously)
CRT/Coherence	Qubit SCANS through states temporally (beam visits pixels in sequence)

Coherence = how well the scan "holds together"

Implications

```
"Superposition" emerges from RAPID COHERENT SCANNING.
"Collapse" is just SLOWING DOWN or LOSING COHERENCE.
"Decoherence" is TEMPORAL BLUR, not ontological collapse.
```

Part 3: Decoherence as Feature, Not Bug

Standard View

Decoherence is THE ENEMY:

- Destroys quantum superposition
- Limits computation time
- Requires massive error correction
- Goal: MINIMIZE decoherence at all costs

Coherence Framework View

Decoherence is a TOOL:

- C = 1: Maximum coherence (pure quantum)
- C = 0: Minimum coherence (pure classical)
- 0 < C < 1: Intermediate regime (USEFUL!)

OPTIMAL C FOR COMPUTATION MIGHT NOT BE C → 1!

Computational Properties vs Coherence

Coherence	Quantum Speedup	Stability	Error Rate	Combined Score
0.30	0.090	0.840	0.504	0.125
0.50	0.250	1.000	0.270	0.676
0.70	0.490	0.840	0.122	1.852
0.79	**~0.62**	**~0.67**	**~0.09**	**Maximum**
0.90	0.810	0.360	0.101	1.451
0.99	0.980	0.040	0.500	0.065

Optimal Coherence: C* ≈ 0.79

The Sweet Spot

The optimal coherence for quantum computing is NOT C → 1! There's a sweet spot where:

- Enough coherence for quantum advantage
- Enough decoherence for stability
- Minimum total error rate

New Approach: Instead of fighting decoherence, OPTIMIZE coherence level.

Part 4: Quantum Gates in Coherence Framework

Standard Gates

Gate	Standard Description
Hadamard	Creates superposition from
CNOT	Entangles two qubits
Phase	Rotates phase by angle θ

Coherence Reinterpretation

Gate	Coherence Description
Hadamard	SYNCHRONIZES scanning pattern (sets phase for uniform visitation)
CNOT	COUPLES two temporal patterns (phases become correlated)
Phase	SHIFTS temporal pattern (changes when states are visited)

Demonstration

```
Initial |0⟩: α=1.000, β=0.000
After H:     α=0.707, β=0.707  (Equal visitation established)
After R(π/4): α=0.383, β=0.924 (Temporal shift applied)
```

Key Insight

Quantum gates are NOT manipulating ontological superposition. They are SYNCHRONIZING and COUPLING temporal patterns.

This suggests DIFFERENT gate designs:

- Focus on PHASE RELATIONSHIPS, not amplitude preparation
- Use COHERENCE LEVEL as a control parameter
- Design gates that work WITH decoherence dynamics

Part 5: Predictions and Testable Differences

P285.1: Optimal Coherence Level

Prediction: There exists an optimal coherence $C^* \approx 0.79 \pm 0.05$ for quantum computation, NOT $C \to 1$.

Test: Compare error rates at different coherence levels.

- Standard QC predicts monotonic improvement as $C \to 1$
- Coherence framework predicts a minimum at $C^* < 1$

P285.2: Temporal Structure in Qubit States

Prediction: If qubits are temporal patterns, qubit states should show TEMPORAL CORRELATIONS with period $\tau \propto 1/\Delta E$ (energy gap).

Test: High-speed measurements of "superposition" qubits.

- Standard QC: States are simultaneous, no temporal structure
- Coherence: Should see oscillatory temporal patterns

P285.3: Decoherence as Phase Blur

Prediction: Decoherence should behave like TEMPORAL DESYNCHRONIZATION, with phase spread $\sigma_\varphi \propto \sqrt{(\text{decoherence rate})}$.

Test: Partial decoherence should show PHASE SPREAD, not just probability redistribution.

- Standard QC: Off-diagonal density matrix decay
- Coherence: Phase distribution broadening

P285.4: Gate Efficiency at Resonance

Prediction: Gates that MATCH the natural scanning frequency should be more efficient, with $F(\omega_{res}) / F(\omega_{off}) > 1.5$.

Test: Compare gate fidelity at different frequencies.

- Standard QC: No frequency dependence expected
- Coherence: Resonant frequencies should have higher fidelity

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Part 6: Quantum Computing Arc Roadmap

Arc Structure

Session	Topic	Focus
#285	**Qubit as Temporal Pattern**	**CRT analogy, decoherence as feature (THIS SESSION)**

Session	Topic	Focus
#286	Entanglement from Coherence Coupling	Phase correlation, "spooky action" dissolved
#287	Quantum Error Correction via Coherence	Temporal error correction, optimal C*
#288	Quantum Algorithms Reinterpreted	Shor, Grover, new temporal algorithms
#289	Practical Implementation Proposals	Hardware, near-term technologies

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Summary

Central Insight

What if "superposition" is not ontological but dynamical?

What if the qubit doesn't IS in both states, but VISITS both states with temporal coherence?

Implications

1. **Different error correction strategies**
   - Work WITH decoherence dynamics
   - Temporal error correction
2. **Optimal (not maximum) coherence levels**
   - $C^* \approx 0.79$, not $C \to 1$
   - Sweet spot balancing speed and stability
3. **Gate designs that work WITH decoherence**
   - Phase synchronization operations
   - Resonant gate designs
4. **New algorithms based on temporal patterns**
   - Scanning-based search
   - Phase interference patterns

Files Created

- `simulations/session285_quantum_computing_coherence.py`
- `simulations/session285_quantum_computing_coherence.png`
- `Research/Session285_Quantum_Computing_Coherence.md` (this document)

Quantum Computing Arc Status

Session	Topic	Status
#285	**Qubit as Temporal Pattern**	**COMPLETE**
#286	Entanglement from Coherence Coupling	NEXT
#287	Quantum Error Correction via Coherence	Pending
#288	Quantum Algorithms Reinterpreted	Pending
#289	Practical Implementation Proposals	Pending

Conclusion

Session #285 initiates a paradigm shift in understanding quantum computing:

1. **Qubits are temporal patterns**, not spatial superpositions
2. **Decoherence is a tool**, not the enemy
3. **Optimal coherence exists** at C* < 1
4. **Gates are phase operations**, suggesting new designs

The CRT analogy provides a concrete, testable alternative to the standard interpretation. If qubits really are temporal scanning patterns, this opens entirely new approaches to quantum computing - working WITH decoherence rather than against it.

"The qubit doesn't IS in both states - it VISITS both states with temporal coherence. The 'superposition' is not ontological but dynamical, like a CRT beam creating an image through rapid scanning."

Session #285 Complete: January 20, 2026
QUANTUM COMPUTING ARC INITIATED: Sessions #285-289