UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF FLORIDA MIAMI DIVISION

CASE NO.: 1:23-CV-21023-CMA

EDWIN GARRISON, *et al.*, on behalf of themselves and all others similarly situated,

Plaintiffs,

v.

KEVIN PAFFRATH, GRAHAM STEPHAN, ANDREI JIKH, JASPREET SINGH, BRIAN JUNG, JEREMY LEFEBVRE, TOM NASH, BEN ARMSTRONG, ERIKA KULLBERG, CREATORS AGENCY, LLC,

Detendants.	
	,

NOTICE OF PROOF OF SERVICE AND MATERIALS FOR SHOW CAUSE HEARING

In accordance with the Order of the Court [ECF No. 12], Plaintiffs hereby provide proof of service on Defendant, Ben Armstrong (in both the *Paffrath* and *Zhao* class action matters, as explained below), so this Court can set a hearing to address the "serious matters" of Armstrong's conduct to date. *See* ECF No. 12. After many weeks of evading service — but continuing to make *daily violent threats* towards Undersigned Counsel and plaintiffs — here is actual video of Defendant Armstrong finally accepting service this morning: https://www.youtube.com/shorts/nW8SFEmi6AM

Mr. Ben Armstrong, a Youtuber who self-proclaims to be the "People's Champ," but has a demonstrated history of earning great amounts of money at the expense of his unsuspecting social media followers, has been named in two separate class actions pending in this Court for his role in soliciting the sale of unregistered securities: *Garrison, et al. v. Paffrath, et al.*, No. 1:23-cv-21023

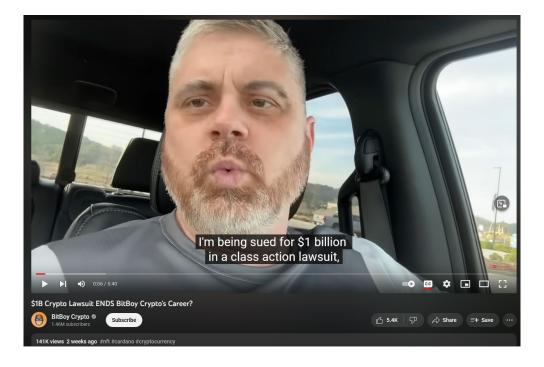
(S.D. Fla.) (Altonaga, C.J.) ("Paffrath") and Sizemore, et al. v. Changpeng Zhao, et al., No. 1:23-cv-21261 (S.D. Fla.) (Altman, J.) ("Zhao").

In *Paffrath*, filed on March 15, 2023, Armstrong is alleged to have personally financially gained for promoting \unregistered securities in connection with FTX's offering of, among other things, FTT (the native cryptocurrency token of FTX).

Similarly, in *Zhao*, recently filed March 31, 2023, Armstrong is again alleged to have been paid to promote unregistered securities in connection with Binance's offering of, among other things, BNB (the native cryptocurrency token of Binance), and was a co-conspirator in Binance's scheme to circumvent the U.S. regulatory system through coaching Binance customers to utilize VPNs to access Binance's international platform, which is otherwise restricted to U.S. investors.

A. Armstrong's Contemptable Conduct.

The very day after Paffrath was filed, Armstrong publicly confirmed he had actual notice of the suit against him, and began posting videos on the allegations against him:¹



¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dp1F5lJUBf4 (accessed April 5, 2023).

2

As explained in the Notice of Filing and Request for Status Conference filed on March 20, 2023, in *Paffrath*, ECF Nos. 4–5, copies of which are attached,² Armstrong immediately began attacking Plaintiffs' counsel and their families. The scope of the attacks (including death threats), which examples are provided in those filings and which continue on a daily basis since, necessitated Undersigned Counsel to open an FBI investigation into Armstrong, as well as the investigation files by local police authorities for Plaintiffs' counsel and their families. Chief Judge Altonaga in the *Paffrath* matter granted Plaintiffs' emergency request the very same day, referring the matter to Magistrate Judge Damian to take all necessary action. *Paffrath*, ECF No. 6.

That evening, Armstrong responded to the service email sending the Notice of Filing and Request for Status Conference, levying more threats and hurling additional insults:³

From: <u>ben armstrong</u>
To: Rejane Passos

Cc: Adam Moskowitz; Joseph Kayer, Barbara C. Lewis; Howard Bushman; szq@grossmanroth.com; aaq@grossmanroth.com; adp@grossmanroth.com; dBoies@bsflip.com; ABoies@bsflip.com; Karlsen@bsflip.com; ashaw@bsflip.com; tulrich@bsflip.com; mayala@bsflip.com; balexander@bsflip.com; José Ferrer; Michelle Genet Bernstein

ashaw@bsfllp.com; tulrich@bsfllp.com; mayala@bsfllp.com; balexander@bsfllp.com; José Ferrer; Michelle Genet Bernstei Re: SERVICE OF COURT DOCUMENT - Activity in Case 1:23-cv-21023-CMA Garrison et al v. Paffrath et al

Date: Monday, March 20, 2023 5:38:23 PM

nents: D.E. 4 Notice of Filing Material vs Armetropo"e Haracement Towards Disintiffe" Councel off
D.F. 5 Ps" Request for a Status Conference to Bring Awareness of Armstropo"s Haracsment Towards Plaintiffs" Counsel.ndf

Hey all

Just wanted to let you all know that I received this notice and I couldn't be happier!

You are all so kind to let me know that you are all dumb mother fucking cunts! I've been waiting on this so I can file my countersuit. You are ALL FUCKED.

I'm going to not only sue you and win easily, but I'm coming for all your fucking licenses. You don't understand who you have fucked with. But you will.

Thank you,

Ben Armstrong

On March 26, 2023, Plaintiffs' counsel served a Notice of Commencement of Action and Request for Waiver of Service on Defendant Armstrong in response to Armstrong's "Daily reminder you are a p***y" email, to which Armstrong responded "Oh don't worry. It will be returned this week. I can't wait."

² See Exhibit A and Exhibit B.

³ See Exhibit C.

⁴ See Exhibit D.

Rather than return any Waiver, on March 29, 2023, Plaintiffs' counsel received an email from a Mr. Lionel Iruke, who purports to be "General Counsel with Bitboy Crypto, making a limited appearance on behalf of Ben," who inquired as to why Armstrong was included in the *Paffrath* suit. ⁵ To date, Armstrong nor his alleged counsel, have ever responded with the Waiver as he indicated he would.

True to form, shortly after *Zhao* was filed, Armstrong began tweeting to his millions of followers more insults and threats to Plaintiffs' counsel, while clearly acknowledging his actual receipt and awareness of the new lawsuit:⁶



On April 3, 2023, Plaintiffs' counsel again sent to Armstrong and Mr. Iruke the Notice of Commencement of Action and Request for Waiver of Service forms for the *Zhao* action.⁷

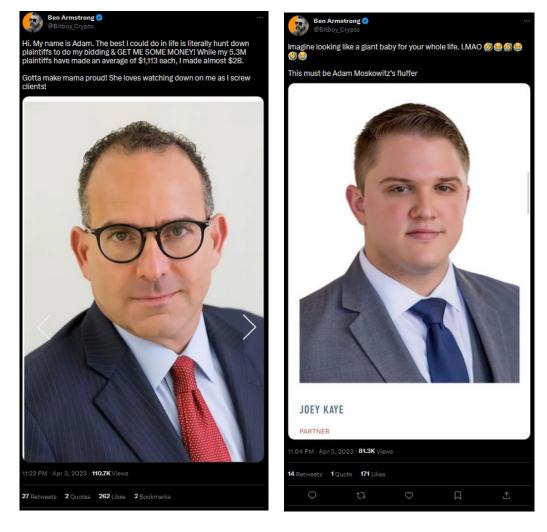
⁵ See Exhibit E.

⁶ https://twitter.com/Bitboy Crypto/status/1642738389748178945 (accessed April 5, 2023).

⁷ See Exhibit F.

This time, rather than respond to the email as he did in *Paffrath*, Armstrong stuck to posting more Twitter insults and attacks about Plaintiffs' counsel:⁸



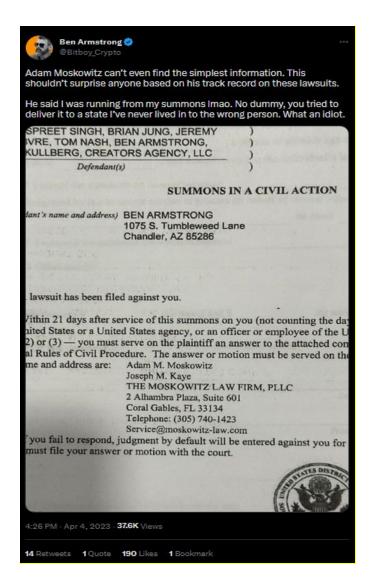


https://twitter.com/Bitboy_Crypto/status/1643091684224368640; https://twitter.com/Bitboy_Crypto/status/1643086108140371971; https://twitter.com/Bitboy_Crypto/status/1643087145593192448

Contrary to what he was boasting to his millions of twitter followers, it appeared that Mr. Armstrong had no intention of willingly appearing in this federal court matter. Therefore, Plaintiffs attempted service at Armstrong's residence, at 4944 Oglethorpe Loop NW, Acworth, GA 30101. Armstrong instructed the guard at the gate to refuse entry.

Attempt was also made at his BitBoy store, located at 3102 Cobb Parkway NW, Kennesaw, GA 30144. Armstrong's assistant accepted service on his behalf at 3:39pm. In an abundance of caution, the process server waited and observed the store from 4:20pm to 6:00pm. At 6:00pm, Armstrong's "partner" told the process server that Armstrong was filming and could not come out, but that Armstrong would "make sure that he will be available tomorrow at 12:00pm." However, at 4:26pm, ostensibly during the time when Armstrong was "filming," he tweeted a picture of the summons from *Paffrath*, acknowledging that he was in possession of the materials served on his assistant less than an hour before: 9

⁹https://twitter.com/Bitboy_Crypto/status/1643349356655853568?cxt=HHwWgIC21Y7irM4tA AAA (accessed April 5, 2023). The *Paffrath* summons has an Arizona address that came up in a skip trace as the most recent for Ben Armstrong with a birthdate of October 27, 1982, but service attempts have been made in Georgia at addresses attributed to Defendant Armstrong since issued.



Thus, not only was service in *Paffrath* and *Zhao* effectuated on Armstrong through serving his agent designated to accept service of process, Armstrong quickly confirmed that he did, in fact, receive actual notice of the summonses and complaints from these actions and has been participating in these litigations now for weeks.

On March 16, 2023, the morning after *Paffrath* was filed, Armstrong issued a public statement to reporters illustrating that he had read the Complaint and did not agree with the

allegations.¹⁰ The truth as set out in publicly available evidence to date, however, reveals that Defendant Armstrong has long promoted FTX, FTT and Sam Bankman-Fried to his millions of followers, and is indisputably an affiliate marketer of Binance (for which he derives personal financial gain), with his own Referral Code for the Binance Platforms, and has also created various content over the years promoting Binance, BNB, and the other unregistered securities Binance offers and sells, all for personal, financial gain, often at the expense of his many followers.

On April 5, 2023, Armstrong was finally personally served with both the *Paffrath* and *Zhao* complaints at his BitBoy Crypto office. He responded via a video he asked the server to film when service was effected: "Fuck you. I received this paperwork. I love it. I am going to bury you."

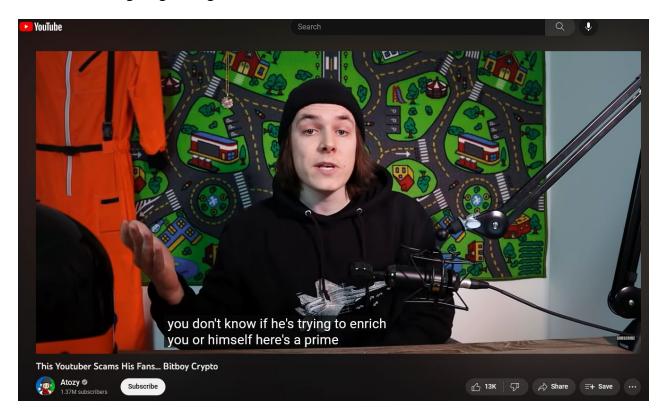
B. Armstrong's History of "Shilling" Crypto Coins to his Followers for Pay and Then Attempting to Conceal the Evidence.

There can be no dispute that billions of dollars have already been stolen from proposed class members in the FTX, Voyager, and Binance cryptocurrency disasters. With all of the federal bankruptcies, most of these victims may only see recoveries from those aiders and abettors, who promoted these unregistered securities for their own financial gain. Many social media influencers have already documented Mr. Armstrong's long history of specifically promoting unregistered cryptocurrency tokens.

¹⁰ <u>https://decrypt.co/123810/youtube-influencers-bitboy-1-billion-lawsuit-ftx</u> (accessed April 5, 2023).

¹¹ As outlined in great detail in the Complaints, all of these crypto companies knew the only way to compete, and greatly expand into the billions of dollars, was to establish an intricate number of Affiliated Programs established in the typical pyramid structure. They also retained the most well-known and world-famous celebrities to tout their unregistered products. No better example can be the Cleo Award winning "I'm all in" and "Don't Miss out in Crypto" advertising campaigns created by DentsMB. Plaintiffs certainly intend to serve much third-party discovery to ensure that each and every liable promoter of these unregistered securities is held accountable.

Atozy, a YouTube Internet personality, posted an 11-minute video on November 8, 2021, to his over 1.37 million followers that details how Armstrong has "one of the largest crypto channels but has also been known for being a shady dirtbag who milks his audience for a quick buck rather than giving them genuine advice."¹²



Atozy details Armstrong's vigorous promotion of the "PAMP" network, which Armstrong claimed was "guaranteed" to go up in value, but which quickly tanked when the truth was finally revealed *after* Armstrong made his promotions, alleging that Armstrong was paid to "shill" the project to his fans so that the project owners could create "exit liquidity" so they could effectuate the rug pull. ¹³ While Plaintiffs will not detail the entire 11 minute video in this brief, it is certainly worth a watch to fully understand Armstrong's method of doing "business."

¹² https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DibvroDcT88 (accessed April 5, 2023).

 $^{^{13}}$ \overline{Id} .

Consistent with his character, after Atozy released this video, Armstrong quickly threatened and sued Atozy, claiming Atozy "defamed" him with his video exposing his fraudulent activities. Armstrong apparently did not realize that the lawsuit would become public, and once it did (and the public supported Atozy through crowdfunding hundreds of thousands of dollars to fund his defense), Armstrong was required to drop the lawsuit, admitting that the only reason he filed the suit was because he was "trying to get [Atozy] to remove the video" from YouTube. 15



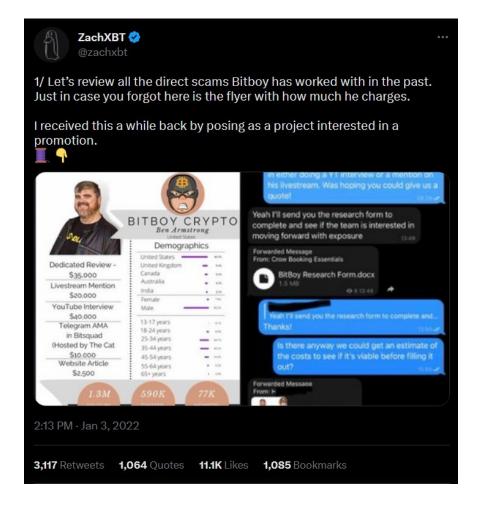
Atozy is not the only online personality to expose Armstrong's misconduct. Twitter personality "@ZachXBT," who calls himself an "On-chain sleuth" released a series of Tweets that document the "direct scams" Defendant Armstrong worked with as of January 3, 2022. 16

¹⁴ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJPvipmLq2I (accessed April 5, 2023).

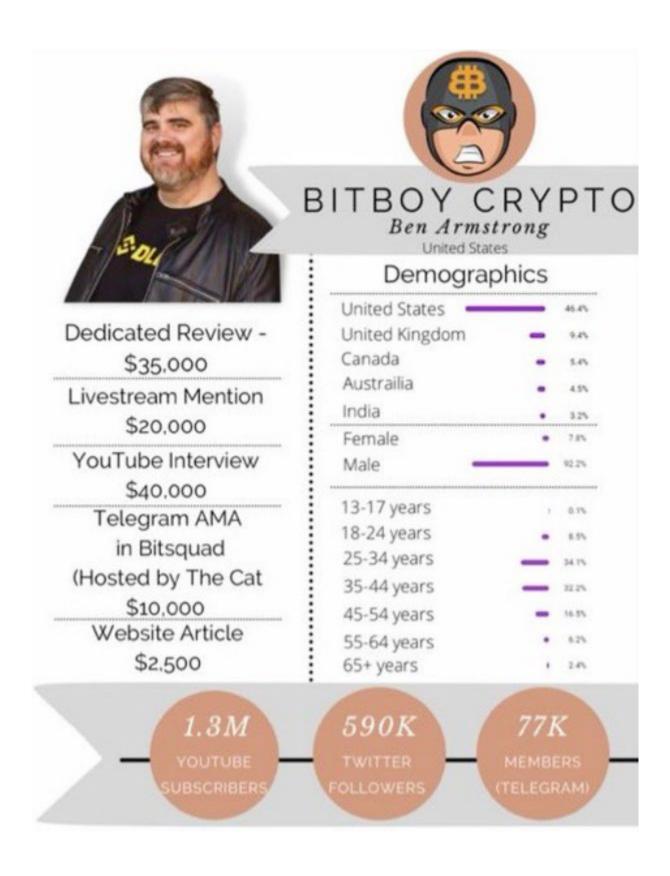
¹⁵ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MJPvipmLq2I (accessed April 5, 2023).

¹⁶ https://twitter.com/zachxbt/status/1478082010807742468 (accessed April 5, 2023)

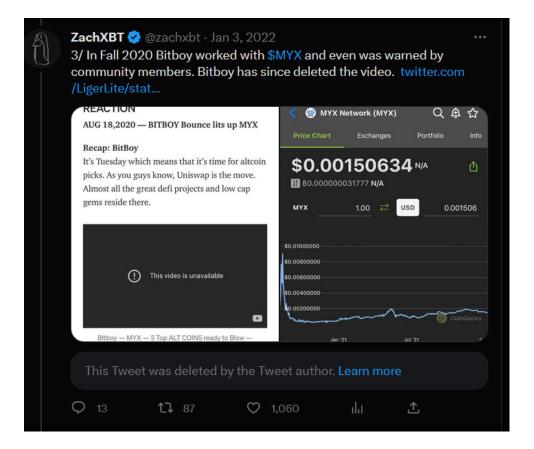
The thread begins with a flyer he received from Defendant Armstrong's team in response to his request for a quote to do a YouTube interview or receive a mention on Armstrong's livestream. The flyer, in addition to including statistics showing that the vast majority of his millions of followers target American men aged 25-54, details that Armstrong charges \$20,000 to simply mention a crypto project on his livestream, and \$35,000 to do a dedicated review of a crypto project. ¹⁷



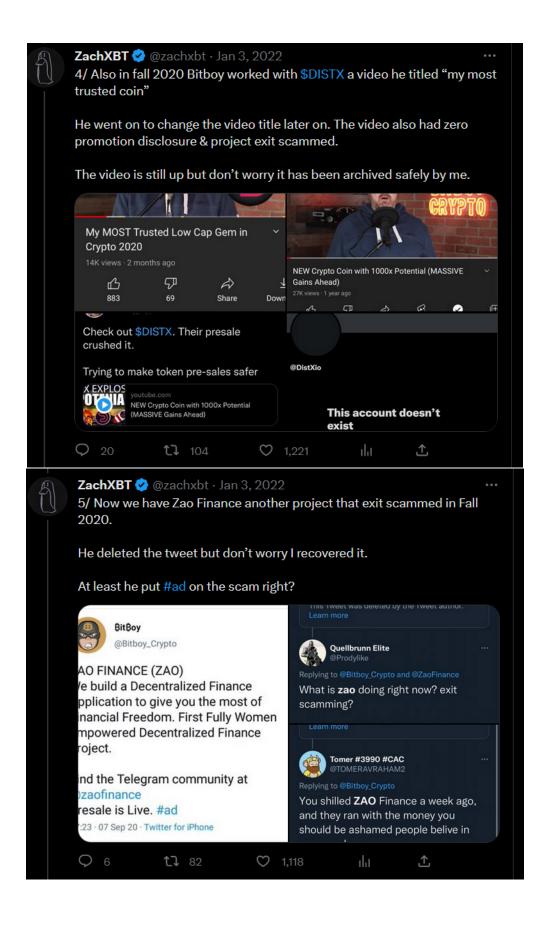
¹⁷ *Id*.

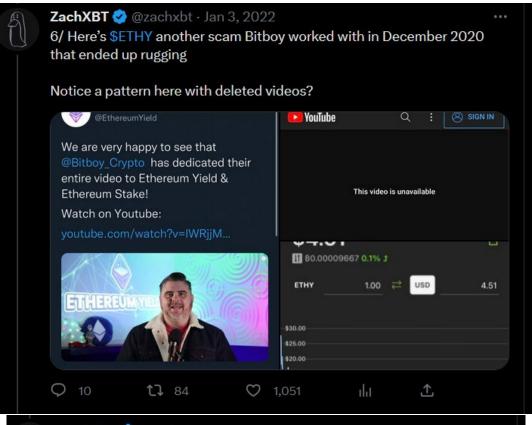


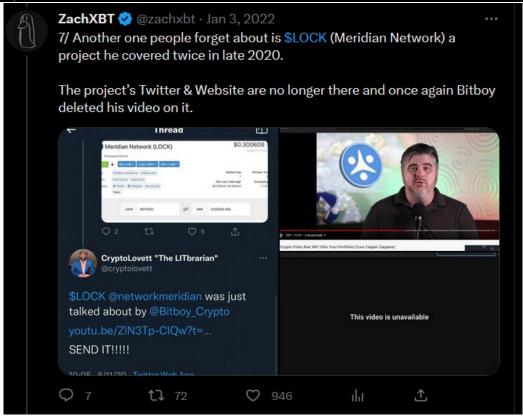
After noting that Armstrong claimed he "personally rigorously vet[s] all paid promotions," @ZachXBT catalogues 7 crypto projects that Defendant Armstrong "actively worked with and promoted to his audience," demonstrating that, for each of the projects, Armstrong went back and either attempted to delete the evidence that he shilled the project to his followers or altered posts to attempt to minimize his promotion of the failed project: ¹⁸



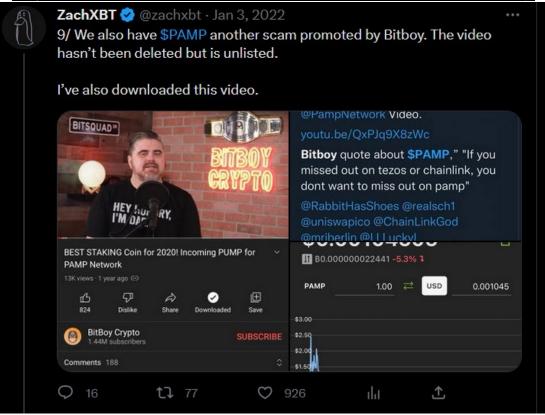
¹⁸ *Id*.







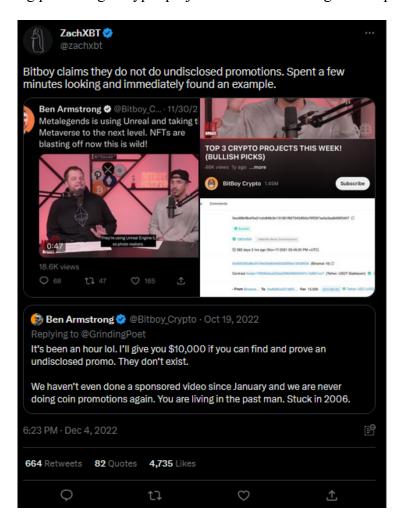




Were these facts exposed by @ZachXBT not clear enough indications of Defendant Armstrong's public misconduct, @ZachXBT also publicly caught Armstrong red-handed for an undisclosed paid promotion of a cryptocurrency project, which Armstrong publicly admitted, acknowledged, and paid @ZachXBT for exposing.

On October 19, 2022, Armstrong tweeted to another Twitter user, "I'll give you \$10,000 if you can find and prove an undisclosed promo. They don't exist." ¹⁹

On December 4, 2022, @ZachXBT took up the challenge, and within minutes found a clear example of Armstrong promoting a crypto project without disclosing he was paid to do so. ²⁰



¹⁹ https://twitter.com/zachxbt/status/1599545021887565824?lang=en (accessed April 5, 2023).

 $^{20} \, \bar{Id}$.

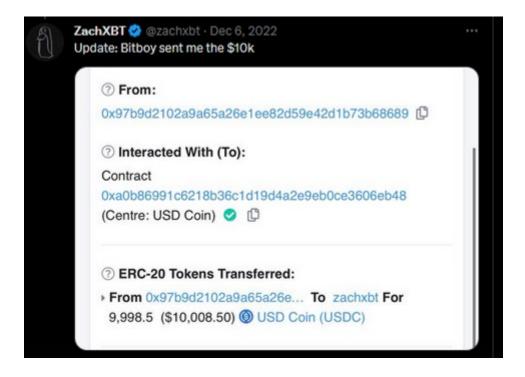


Armstrong then publicly admitted that @ZachXBT was correct, but claimed he was "shocked," and went on to blame his employees for the "mistake." ²¹

²¹ *Id*.



Armstrong then paid @ZachXBT the \$10,000 he owed him for catching him. ²²



²² *Id*.

C. Armstrong Publicly Promoted FTX, FTT, and Sam Bankman-Fried

Contrary to Defendant Armstrong's public statements after *Paffrath* was filed, there is a wealth of public evidence that Armstrong specifically promoted FTX, FTT and Sam Bankman-Fried, all for financial gain, that he has not yet had a chance to delete from the internet (in all likelihood mostly because many other users have saved the information and are posting it themselves in response to his claims). Some of his admitted statements (which the record reflects he would not make without first being paid) include:



"Let's talk about the <u>secret token</u>. FTT. That is the token of FTX. Sam Bankman-Fried, everything this man touches turns to gold."²³

²³ https://twitter.com/pchindle/status/1638298258077372416 (accessed April 5, 2023).



"FTT is potentially going to be one of the few coins I believe that could go up in the bear market. Now, I know that sounds crazy because I tell you hardly anything ever does." 24



"We could see FTT just absolutely rip." ²⁵

²⁴ *Id*. ²⁵ *Id*.



In another video, which Defendant Armstrong titled "2 Crypto CRUSHERS!!! (Why I Put \$1 Million in These SECRET Altcoins)," Armstrong claims to have put a half million dollars into FTT because "I got some information on [FTT] in the last 24-48 hours that made me just say man, I gotta go ham on these coins." Armstrong continued, explaining "Now, FTT, I said before this is going to be one of the number one coins we are going to accumulate in this bear market. But, got some inside info that this thing is about to explode in the next few weeks." ²⁸ He concluded

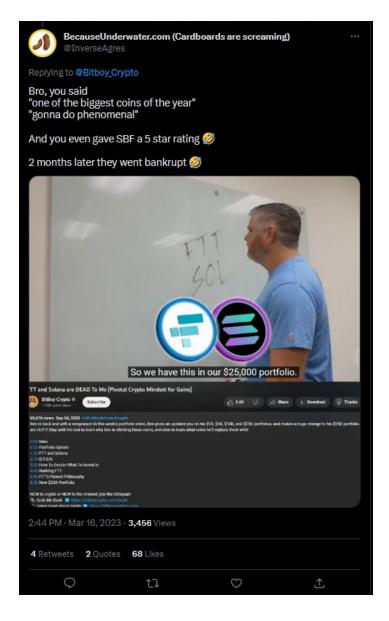
²⁶ https://twitter.com/808 CryptoBeast/status/1636445683975884801 (accessed April 5, 2023).

 $^{^{27}}$ \overline{Id} .

²⁸ *Id*.

to his followers that they should "Look for [FTT], by Christmas, to absolutely moon. A lot of money is about to come pouring into FTX." ²⁹

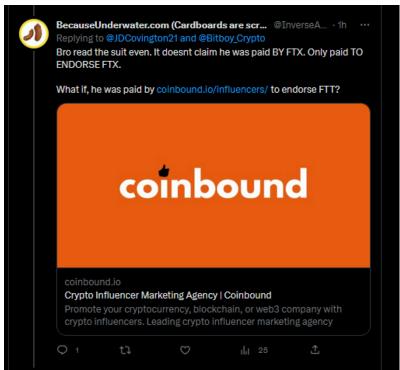
Other users have been publicly calling Armstrong out since he has claimed he never promoted FTX or FTT, and was never paid to do so, including by identifying the agency that likely paid him, Coinbound:³⁰



²⁹ https://twitter.com/808_CryptoBeast/status/1636445683975884801 (accessed April 5, 2023).

https://twitter.com/InverseAgres/status/1636438351329804297 (accessed April 5, 2023); https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JrMOj0x6goI (accessed April 5, 2023)





Armstrong has also publicly disclosed his own portfolio at times (which his followers would want to emulate based on Armstrong's "success" and "saavy" in cryptocurrency investing), which shows that he purportedly held \$437,000 in FTT, one of his larger holdings:³¹

What's in BitBoy Crypto's portfolio?

BitBoy Crypto most recently revealed what was in his entire crypto portfolio earlier this year.

It is likely there have been multiple changes to his investments since his last update on March 27, 2022 due to the crash of the cryptocurrency market in May.

However, at the time, his portfolio and worth were as follows:

- 106.6 BTC worth \$4.1million
- 1.152.9 ETH worth \$3.36million
- 1,000,000 ADA worth \$925,000
- . 1,018,211 XRP worth \$824,000
- 39,294 DOT worth \$785,000
- 7,696 SOL worth \$705,000
- 7,838 AVAX worth \$67,000
- 3,655 EGLD worth \$669,000
- 9,942 FTT worth \$437,000
- 14,702 ATOM worth \$409,573
- 788 BNB worth \$310,000
- 40,756 RUNE worth \$350,000
- 1,300,000 HBAR worth \$218,000
- 400.000 MATIC worth \$596.000
- 10.000 LINK worth \$155.000
- 240.000 CRO worth \$100.000
- 31,610 SAND \$99,000
- 119,000 ALGO worth \$95,000
- 25,000 CEL worth \$83,000
- 33,000 IMX worth \$75,000
- 2,406 CAKE worth \$75,000
- 788 LUNA worth \$67,000
- 3,000 THETA worth \$10,000
 Unspecified amount of USDT, USDC, and GUSD worth \$2.4million

And it should not be forgotten that Defendant Armstrong has said time and again that FTT

is his "Top altcoin pick," 32 and has made numerous videos promoting the coin. 33

https://24-7-crypto.com/bitboy-crypto-who-is-ben-armstrong-what-is-his-net-worth/ (accessed April 5, 2023); https://techiegamers.com/bitboy-crypto-net-worth/ (accessed April 5, 2023)

https://www.businessinsider.com/altcoins-to-buy-bull-run-bitboy-crypto-shares-biggest-bets-2021-12# (accessed April 5, 2023).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Dxu5c_2rMQ&t=234s (accessed April 5, 2023); https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvVZZZ 6Lh0 (accessed April 5, 2023)

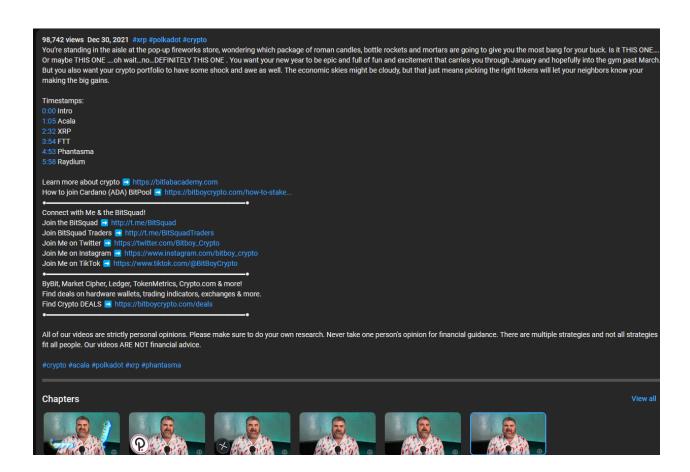
BitBoy Crypto's Top altcoin picks

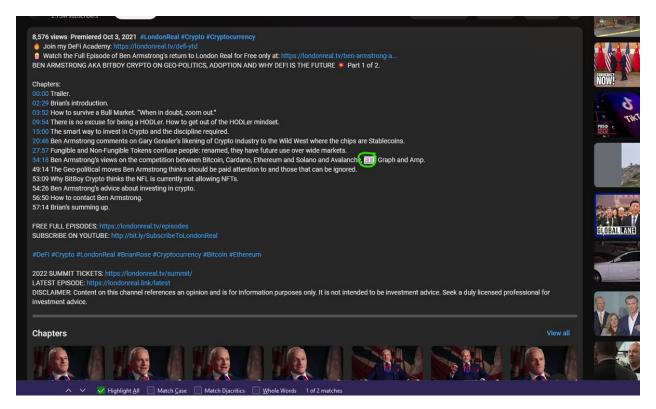
Armstrong's first pick is **FTX Token** (FTT). CEO Sam Bankman-Fried is the co-founder of this crypto-derivatives exchange platform, something that gives Armstrong confidence in the project.

He's anticipating a lot of upside potential for this digital asset because institutional investors are also considering adding it to their portfolios, he said.

FTT is trading at around \$51, according to CoinMarketCap, down 39% from its September peak of \$84.

"In general, a winning strategy or a winning formula is always buy in the red, sell in the green. So that does add a little bit of fuel to the fire for FTT," Armstrong said.

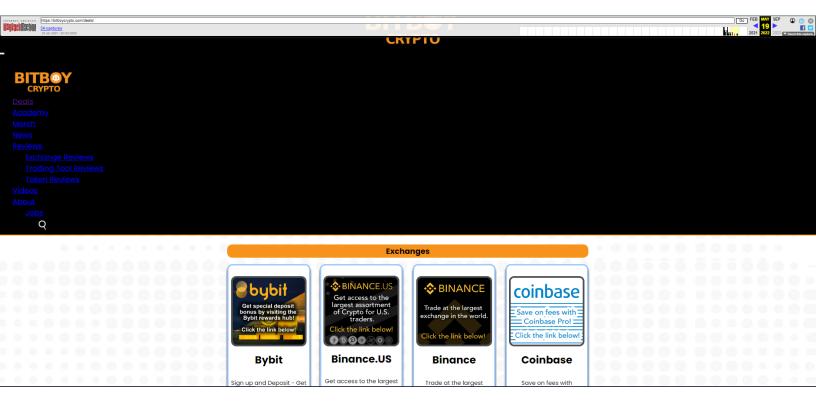




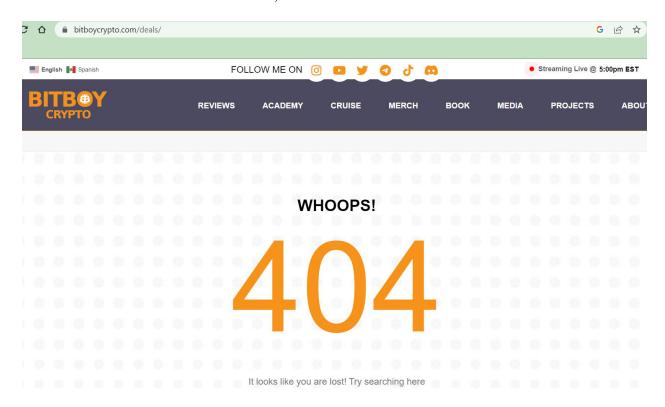
D. Armstrong is an Admitted Binance Affiliate and Promotes Binance's Platforms and Securities Offerings, Including BNB

Finally, as detailed in the *Zhao* Complaint at ¶¶ 153–156, Defendant Armstrong, as he has been exposed for doing numerous times, has also taken to hiding his extensive participation in affiliate marketing with Binance. His bitboycrypto.com webpage in the past contained dozens of links to crypto exchanges and products, but within the last year, he has wiped the referral page of his website.

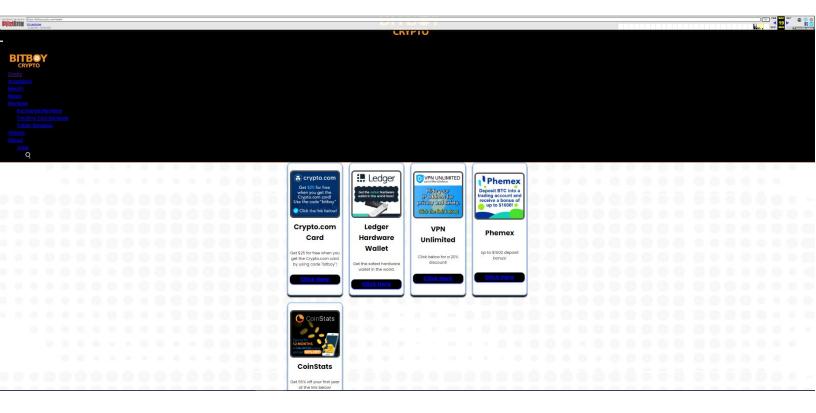
As shown in the below screenshot from the Wayback Machine, the domain: https://bitboycrypto.com/deals/ on May 19, 2022, at 22:45:54, contained affiliate links to Binance and Binance.US:



That same domain on March 31, 2023 at 17:00:20 has been scrubbed:



On top of Defendant Armstrong's previous, shameless promotion of his affiliate links, he also illegally and problematically advertised VPNs like his affiliate link to "VPN unlimited" shown below, 34 right next to crypto exchanges like Binance and BinanceUS, in order to help Binance further its goal of enabling U.S. investors to trade on the international Binance exchange, aiding Binance in its effort to circumvent U.S. regulations. These crypto exchanges are subject to strict Know Your Customer rules and geofencing customer limitations, which, as explained above, can be bypassed by such VPNs.



³⁴ The domain: https://bitboycrypto.com/deals/ on the Wayback Machine as of May 19, 2022, at 22:45:54.

CONCLUSION

First, Plaintiffs respectfully suggest that any Court cannot condone or allow such inappropriate, bullying, unprofessional and, frankly, terrorizing conduct, specifically in a time where social media reaches millions of people and which involves direct threats on officers of the court and their families. Every litigant deserves a chance to voice their opinion and mount their defense in a court of law, but they can never be allowed to threaten officers of the court on social media, via direct emails, and with harassing phone calls. An example should be made of Defendant Armstrong because he continues to wear his bullying and assaulting conduct as a badge of honor.

Second, while contrary to Defendant Armstrong's cries of innocence, it is already well-documented that Armstrong has been intricately involved in many nefarious activities that this Court will decide, including (1) shilling crypto projects to his followers in connection with "pump and dump" schemes—from which he derives significant personal financial gain—and then intentionally hiding evidence after the rug is pulled through deleting or editing his social network content; (2) charging tens of thousands of dollars per mention of a crypto project in his public online content; (3) posting a plethora of materials regarding specifically FTX, FTT and Sam Bankman-Fried (much of which he has since altered or deleted, though many are still publicly available), including his own purported half million dollar stake in FTT; and (4) being an admitted Affiliate of Binance, has promoted BNB, one of the unregistered securities at issue in Zhao, and even promotes a VPN on the same affiliate page, in line with Binance's deceptive business practices.

Plaintiffs are extremely appreciative that this Court agreed to hold a Status Conference with Defendant Armstrong to put a stop to his harassment, and can certainly decide if and when it should coordinate such actions with the Court in *Zhao*.

Dated: April 5, 2023 Respectfully submitted,

By: /s/ Adam Moskowitz

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Co-Counsel for Plaintiffs and the Class

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that a true and correct copy of the forgoing was filed on April 5, 2023, via the Court's CM/ECF system, which will send notification of such filing to all attorneys of record, and via email to Defendant Armstrong at bitboy@bitboycrypto.com.

By: /s/ Adam M. Moskowitz

Adam M. Moskowitz