# ParTecK 2017

BACKGROUNDER

> ## "THE BENEFITS WILL BE MYRIAD...

...as big data becomes part of the solution to pressing global problems like addressing climate change, eradicating disease, and fostering good governance and economic development. But the big-data era also challenges us to become better prepared for the ways in which harnessing the technology will change our institutions and ourselves."

Mayer-Schonberger & Cukier, Big Data, p. 17

FROM THE SURVEY
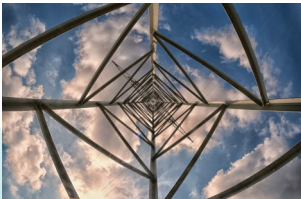
What comes to mind...

Consciousness

bringing humanity to technology; meditation, neuroscience, lucid dreaming, psychedelics; quantum morphogenetic field; being awake; hard problem; neurology, meditation, autonomous systems; refraction, not knowledge, involves voids; mind, Daniel Dennett, awareness; the one mind we all share; expressive, growing, necessary; seems like a good thing; humanity, AI, ethics

Contents

Exploring the emerging field of tech-consciousness

Tech and Consciousness are co-creating one another at a rate approaching a kind of event horizon. Technology increasingly allows for an almost unimaginable capacity to know, influence or outright manipulate human thought, moods, psyches, behaviour and choices. In other words, our consciousness. What are the implications of this - ethically, socially economically and practically? How might we proactively bake right use into the fabric of our innovative new products and services? ParTecK is a gathering of pioneers in this emerging field, an opportunity to be enriched by one another's ingenuity and challenges, and also to dive deeper into proactively shaping the good with humane best practices.

The frontier of measurement is being evaporated and pushed further out almost daily with advances in tech. What can be measured, how often, and how quickly it can be analyzed is almost beyond exponential compared to past forms of research - limited as they were by sample size and set, and especially the labour involved in analysis. Nowadays, with those limits rapidly blown open, there is much to wonder about the implications of mass measurement.

We might wonder about what gets measured, how often, and how this influences our experience of ourselves and behaviours, as well as evolving socio-economic structures. Studies have shown that people seeking to lose weight will lose more if they weigh themselves daily than those who do so weekly. In an age where every move, and every pause, we make while online can be -

and often is - measured, how do we even track what influence this has? And will have? And will have? Who wants the data, how readily can they acquire it, and what are they using it for?

Some data we volunteer, like name and email address when we first sign up for a product or service. Much of the data we produce through our online behaviours however is passively or unconsciously "given", through clicks, spelling errors in searches, how long we stay on a site, or who's in our contact list, for example. We give blanket permission for this data to be collected, which is increasingly fed back to us through how 'choices' are arranged on sites we visit, such as which youtube video will queue up next, which song will play next on Spotify, or what notifications you'll receive on various social media platforms. How does awareness or ignorance of these industry practices impact our daily lived experience and quality of life? What is freedom of choice when the menu offered is so powerfully curated by algorithms, design architects, and multiple data-points?

Questions like who benefits, how can we protect our data sovereignty, or should we even have it are foundational to the tech-humanity discourse. Advances in the tech - consciousness space can make the world a better and more dangerous place - eliciting some of our worst fears and highest hopes - a charged polarity for sure. At ParTecK, this polarity is part of this novel and important discourse, to work us, and be worked on by us, as we engage in the deeper making of our products and services.

An Integral Primer

From an Integral Theory perspective, consciousness, technology and ethics each arise from distinct ways of knowing and validating your experience. These ways of knowing can be distilled into 1st, 2nd and 3rd person perspectives - three native ways of seeing, speaking about and engaging in our world.

Technology is a 3rd person reality in that it is an "it" that can be objectively seen, measured and evaluated. 3rd person data collected from your likes and searches are now stored, tracked, and possibly sold so that predictive algorithms can be created to understand your preferences, political leanings and so forth.

Some might say your person-hood is being reduced to objective data, with inferences made about your subjective and social self that then informs what choices you have online. Because the 3rd person is about objective reality, it is not concerned whether what it does is good, it is concerned that it got the equation right, that it is indeed accurately predicting the your preferences as much as possible. Yet your personal operating system can not be reduced to 250 likes on Facebook...

Consciousness is a 1st person reality and is concerned with you from the inside, your feelings, thoughts, motivations, dreams, state experiences, perceptions and perspectives...what you find beautiful and the specific way that you feel sad. When you like or search something online, you are expressing an aspect of your consciousness. In the 1st person space, what is most important is whether your are being authentic to your intention. If you like something on Facebook that you really don't like, for example, it would not pass the 1st person validity test. Some people have spent a great deal of effort researching the algorithms created about them only to find bizarre categories and predictions not reflecting how they see themselves. Alternatively, these algorithms can be surprisingly and awkwardly accurate.

Ethics reside in the 2nd person perspective, concerned with "we, us, us and them, us vs them..." and the social agreements, spoken and unspoken,inform what is considered good and bad, right and wrong. It is here that ethical inquiry takes shape - is it ok that so much data is being collected and sold? what social good can come of this, in health sciences for example? what possible dangers might there be, such as predictions of sexual orientation in countries where some are outlawed? what limits to privacy need to be in place? Because the 2nd person is concerned with social agreements, it doesn't marvel at the latest invention, and it doesn't ask for your personal reflections and experiences, it wants to know if technological advancements are in line with socially agreed upon ethics...and it if is, then it is considered to be "good."

STATES

States of awareness are like movements of water - emotions can feel choppy and thoughts can pound like roaring waves; or our feelings can radiate out like a stone dropping in a pond and our thoughts can be still, reflecting the light of our awareness. States can shift in an instant, like a sudden breeze can bring about waves, and likewise we can shift our state in a moment with a certain level of mastery. Wearables are increasingly supporting people in developing awareness and mastery over their states. The easiest is often the most overlooked in this regard...simple attention to our breath.

TYPES

What is your personality type? Knowing your type can help you understand your choices and preferences, and create more self acceptance. Knowing that others have a different personality type can lead to greater understanding, and less need for everyone to be "just like us" :-) Types ultimately help us see ourselves and others in the context of the whole, connected through our relative difference and sameness. Tech is increasingly reaching into our typologies, predicting introversion and extraversion, sexual preferences, and biases...while we are more than our types, our typologies are like our fingerprints. To what degree do we want to protect them?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

METRICS MATTER

...Quantitative measures, like how much time users spend on a site or app, are useful from a business perspective. But that doesn't necessarily, nor often, correlate to a positive effect in someone's life, to beauty added, or other benefit.

...A useful metric for the user is how it affects their quality of life, not just short term gratification.

...Our social-cognitive wiring makes us prone to mistake quantity of clicks, likes, shares etc for quality of content, which can produce in-the-moment satisfaction at the expense of medium and long-term well-being.

Sam Harris interview with Tristan Harris, former design architect at Google
https://www.samharris.org/podcast/item/what-is-technology-doing-to-us :

Integral's Levels and Lines

How our stage of consciousness arises from and responds to our complex environments

LEVELS

Like landings on a staircase, we occupy certain stages of consciousness in our lives and, if we are surrounded by the support we need, continue to move beyond them in a never ending journey. These stages are all valid in their own experience, yet the contexts of our lives may call for another layer of complexity and understanding to be able to make meaning across a vaster horizon. New complexities call for new levels of consciousness.

Three broad stages are egocentric, ethnocentric and worldcentric...there are many distinctions within these stages, and there are stages beyond worldcentric...we'll start here for now.

At egocentric, we are concerned with ourselves, ensuring we are safe and our basic needs are met. We see this naturally in children and it is an important stage, however when we stay here instead of moving on, it hinders greatly our ability to be in the world.

"AT WORLDCENTRIC WE CAN SEE IN 50 SHADES OF GREY...OR TECHNICOLOUR"

An adult limited to egocentric will seek out ethical contexts that make it ok to only look out for "self" without regard for "other" and social good is interpreted according to how it meets "my" needs.

At ethnocentric, we are concerned with both ourselves and our family of origin, our social groups, our culture, our clubs, ensuring that our needs and those of our affiliates are met. We see this begin in teenagers naturally and continue in adult populations. At ethnocentric, we seek out ethical contexts that make it ok to take action that serves "us" as opposed to "them" (or just "me") .

At worldcentric, we are concerned with the wellbeing of "all of us." It is now important to include the greater good in the conversation, it is no longer as acceptable to take actions that serve me and mine, while harming you. At worldcentric, there is greater capacity to be present to the complexity of the world, the many needs, desires, and wants, perspectives and contexts that lead to more complex ethical considerations. Worldcentric can see 50 shades of grey ...r technicolour where at ego- and ethno- centric it's mostly black and white.

LINES

Lines of development add a layer of complexity that can be useful in a conversation about ethics and technology. We know from developmental research that people develop along multiple of lines of intelligence at different rates and capacities. There is a group of lines of intelligence that most people develop through to simply function in our world - cognitive, interpersonal, and moral...while other lines are more unique to the individual - mathematical, kinesthetic, musical and so on. For the core lines of cognitive, interpersonal and moral, we can actually be at different place in each.

A highly intelligent person may have no social skills....a highly social person may have no ethical prudence and so on. Or in our example, a highly complex, cognitively developed mind may design technology with less robust attention to ethics. And this approximates the cultural context that our current tech world has arisen from - one that validates the 3rd person tech sphere while the 2nd person ethos struggles to keep up with a tidal wave of ethical dilemmas it creates, requiring new ethical orientations to emerge and give them shape.

Blockchain

Blockchain was Initially developed as a decentralized process for bitcoin currency transaction through an online distributed ledger. Motivated by and inspiring a movement of resistance against exploitive practices of banks and governments post global financial crisis. blockchain removes the need to personally trust a single entity, relying instead on integrity of information across multiple autonomous entities. If at least 50% of "miners" (computer systems) agree to a "block" of transaction information, it is accepted as legitimate and all systems are updated across the board.

Blockchain technology has the potential to serve other areas where greater transparency, authenticity and auditing are needed because it allows for information through a supply chain to become transparent yet also private. The ability to protect refugee identity, greater accountability among charities and even supply chain transparency for street drugs are possible applications.

While blockchain has much promise, it is not bullet proof. Like all technologies, it is shaped by the intentions of its creators unless there is an unambiguous and clearly defined ethical system, there can be no ethics.

What ethical framework will guide the development of this emerging technology?
And, how will it shape the further development of the technical landscape (e.g., permissioned blockchains or open, non-permissioned blockchains). Are cryptocurrencies good for society, allowing for freer movement of capital to those who need it or an avenue for illicit and illegal gain? Will using the blockchain for identity exacerbate the challenges of quantifying and fixing the self, or will it protect the privacy of the individual?

POSTSCRIPT

Given the possibilities of a co-arising interpenetration of tech and consciousness, exciting new frontiers of knowing, influence and well-being open up, alongside unnerving potentials for abuses and destruction. We are at the vanguard of this new world-space, be it as a co-creator, practitioner, pioneer. . . what mark will our work make on the tapestry of humanity in these unprecedented times? As we drive and dance forward with the practical nuts and bolts of innovation

with tech - in the internet of things, sustainability, measuring and enhancing consciousness, using algorithms to predict the onset of global and local conflict, advancing and humanizing leadership and education - how might we challenge one another to make this really good for humanity? To not mess it up too badly? I mean, we are human, after all, and our track record has its highs and lows! In the omega point of tech and consciousness lies great potential, along-side tremendous potential pitfalls, of an emerging technociousness. Welcome to ParTecK 2017 and the opportunity to shape your work this bold, crazy-intelligent new world-space.

Reading List

TECH

AI/Big Data

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Blockchain

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"The UN Could Help 80 Million People Each Year With Blockchain" https://futurism.com/3-the-un-wants-to-use-blockchain-to-distribute-humanitarian-aid-to-thousands

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