

Culture, Power and *Thriveability*

**ParTecK19**

May 29 and 30th, 2019  
312 Main, Vancouver

## EVENT SUMMARY



Human Data  
Commons Foundation



[humandatacommons.org](http://humandatacommons.org)



# ParTeck Design Intention and Invitation

This year's theme was the culmination of a year's worth of reflection on emerging topics in the tech space. Early in the design process, we honed an intention for ParTeck19 that guided us as we brought speakers and processes together:

## Design intention:

*A collective space with tech and social innovators who are willing to and have a desire to go beyond their known perspectives and ways of thinking to have a new level of inquiry (orientation) about tech and ethics.*

- Immersive - body, heart, mind
- Inquiry based, drawing on the collective intelligence of the room
- Development of consciousness in self and culture

ParTeck19 invited participants to a unique, ahead of the curve conversation...one that bridged tech and a conscious, visioned a thriving future and deep, reflective, creative sharing and learning.

Over 1.5 days, through presentations, group activities, focussed and open discussions, we dove deep into our own transformation around the question: Are humans ready, willing and able to create a thriveable digital future in the current potent yet nerve-wracking reality of culture wars, shot through with deep inequity, and infused with a strong whiff of our often troubled relationship with great power and wealth?

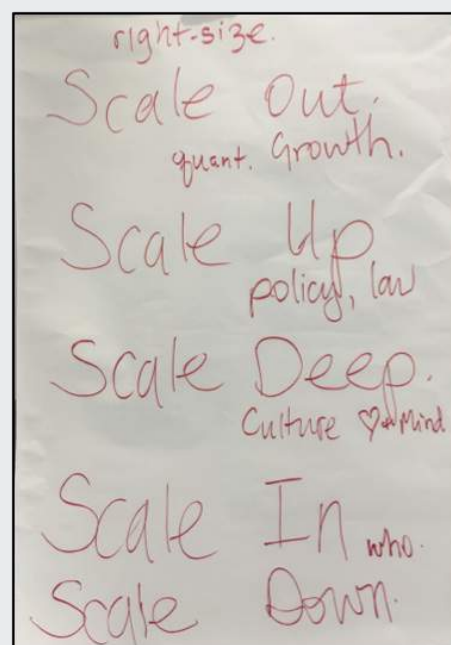
The challenge we took on was to engage this predicament with our whole beings, exploring and pioneering the kinds of mindsets and culture that a genuinely thriveable way forward demands of humanity more than ever at this point in our story.

Have a look at our Backgrounder for a deeper dive into this year's theme.

## SCALE

Scale is a key concept in both Social- and Tech- innovation. The concept of scale was expanded and nuanced to include more richness of multiple types of Scale.

Typically when we ask "how can we scale that?", we're referring to "scaling out" to create greater reach to more consumers, customers, subscribers, or listings (think Airbnb). The goal is "more", and succeeding at scaling this way usually means more profits. Tech culture can privilege this type of scaling as a coveted sign of success. In social innovation meantime, other kinds of scaling are often even more important than scaling out. Social change often includes the dimension of "scaling up", or changing policies and laws to improve society or the environment. Creating policies related to AI, to data privacy and protection, are examples of scaling up. Key to our current times of culture wars is another type of scaling, scaling "deep". This refers to having an impact at the deep levels of culture, where unconscious and sometimes conscious beliefs, and values operate. During this rich conversation Participants identified two further types of scaling. "Scaling in" as the awareness of our personal, individual identity and experience, as well as "scaling down" or in other words becoming smaller, less massive, when that's what's called for to keep healthy balance in a system.



Scale: We integrated and built on important distinctions about scale by Darcy Riddell, PhD and Michele-Lee Moore, PhD from the Social Change field ([https://mcconnellfoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/ScalingOut\\_Nov27A\\_AV\\_BrandedBleed.pdf](https://mcconnellfoundation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/ScalingOut_Nov27A_AV_BrandedBleed.pdf))

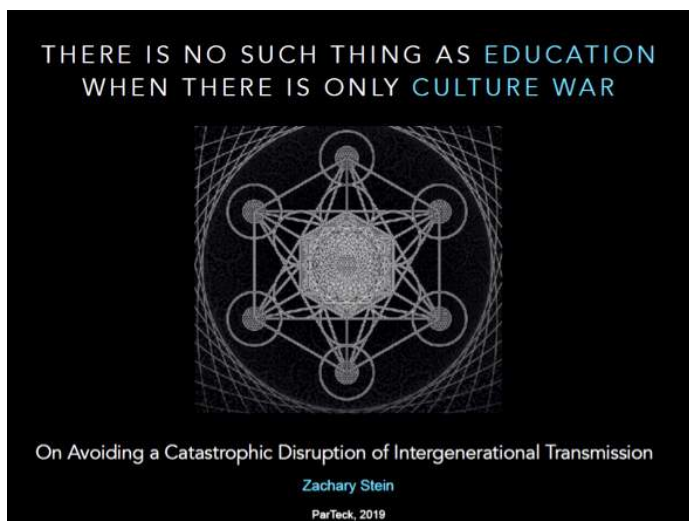


### Traditional Blessings

Elder Kelly White opened and blessed ParTecK with a traditional welcome song. Her singing evokes the depth of the earth and a people long connected with it, weaving into the sacred her talent for unexpected, playful humour. On Day 2, Elder Kelly White opened our day with a cedar blessing. Standing in a circle we learned how to cleanse ourselves using a cedar bough. At the end of Day 2, Elder Kelly White helped bring ParTecK to a close with a closing circle that allowed us to meaningfully acknowledge each other.



# Theme 1: Culture



On Day 1, Dr. Zak Stein joined us by video conference. With his penchant for embodied paradox, Zak took us on a friendly tour to the dark side of educational commercialism in online spaces. He explored the accompanying culture wars, a major casualty being the loss of intergenerational transmission to children, leaving them to make up a context for much of what they encounter online. Further bringing his point home, Zak discussed the commodification of education in online media by using educational tools to disseminate advertising. Turning towards our 3rd theme of thriveability, Zak finished his talk with an outline of what it might take to shift humanity to a more thriveable future.

## Zak Stein's 13 Miracles

- 1) Debt jubilee for students (and nations)
- 2) Basic income guarantee
- 3) Integral decentralized social safety net
- 4) Actual democratic governments and workplaces
- 5) Public regulation of investment and finance sectors
- 6) Legal and economic systems that value the biosphere for its own sake
- 7) Renewable and inexhaustible energy
- 8) Re-appropriation of the land: agriculture and geography
- 9) Total planetary demilitarization
- 10) Mutual respect between all major world religions

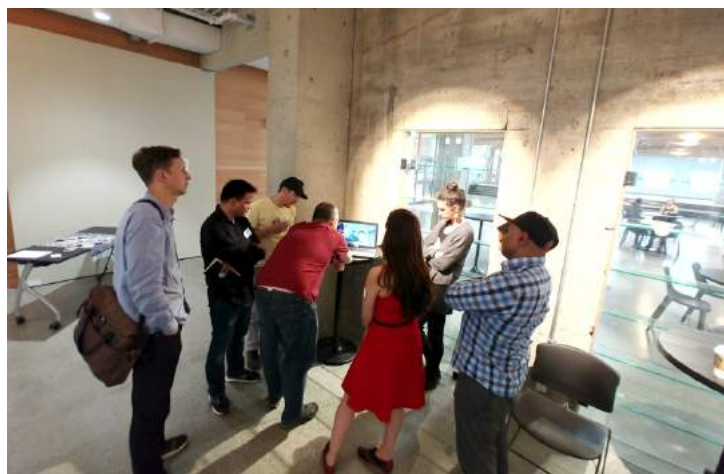
- 11) Absence of oppression based on race, gender, sexual orientation, etc.
- 12) Universal de-alienation and re-humanization
- 13) Science and technology in the interest of human flourishing and exploration.

Here's a link to Zak's powerpoint.

<https://humandatacommons.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/CultureWar.pdf>

## Some of the highlights from the discussion that followed on days 1 and 2:

- What is worth measuring? What is valuable to humanity?
- How is information affecting us on a physiological level?
- How much of the current culture is driven by our human nature or by a current set of conditions?
- Under the current educational system, we don't have an answer to the question of what is a human being. We are entering an equivalent of a medieval period.
- As an aboriginal person, the different way of life occurs with society has clear milestones of growing up, having a mentor, being allowed to fall, attendance to natural high points and giving room to change and grow.



On Day 2 of ParTecK, participants connected for a more intimate conversation with presenters.

## Theme 2: Power and Privilege

Anastasia Gaisenok (<https://checkyourhead.org/people/anastasia/>) brought her wisdom and experience working with power and privilege. She began by owning her own background, training and perspective and invited us explore what she had to say from a place of openness and curiosity. Our conversation collectively touched on the various ways that we experience privilege as well as inequality, and the kinds of discomfort we felt with each. Her closing slide impactfully showed two categories - those who are privileged and those who are not (see below).

|                    | Dominant  | Subordinated  |
|--------------------|---|---|
| Race/Color         | White   | People of color   |
| Ethnicity          | Anglo-Saxon/European descent  | Everyone else   |
| Sex and Gender     | Sex: Male, men<br>Gender: gender-conforming, males, gender-conforming females         | Sex: Female, woman, intersex<br>Gender: Those who don't identify as male or female, and trans/poly gender individuals |
| Ability            | Able-bodies, those who don't suffer from developmental and psychological disabilities | People with disabilities (psychological, learning, developmental, physical)   |
| Sexual orientation | Straight/heterosexual   | Gay, lesbian, bisexual  |
| Class              | Middle and upper-class  | Working class, people living in poverty (including working poor)  |
| Age                | Young and middle aged adults  | Elderly people, teenagers or children   |

Slide from Anastasia's talk.

These comments sum up the sentiment in the group conversation that followed:

- We need to be aware of our individual power in different situations.
- At ParTeck - people here who are smart and people who want to make the world better but timidity - what are we doing to change the world?

Here is a link to Anastasia's presentation:

[https://humandatacommons.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Power-Privilege-Workshop\\_ParTeck.pptx](https://humandatacommons.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Power-Privilege-Workshop_ParTeck.pptx)

An audio clip paired with Anastasia's presentation will be available on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNsqqXbB9eUC-iJG\\_Tftz3w/featured](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNsqqXbB9eUC-iJG_Tftz3w/featured)

### NEUROLEADERSHIP

We included work from the Neuroleadership Institute about how power is understood to affect the brain and makes it more difficult - if not impossible - to take other perspectives and be adequately inclusive. For more on these ideas, visit their website: <https://neuroleadership.com>.



At the ParTeck dinner.

## Theme 3: Thriveability

Jen Gresham (<https://workforhumanity.com/about>) joined us from Bellingham to share her in-depth research on Thriveability in the context of our current world of disparity and mental and emotional health concerns. She shared her model of Thriveability which she defines as human agency resulting from the ability to express one's human potential at will. We explored the ways that technology supports or prevents our thriveability. She then offered an in depth exploration of the way our current system is biased towards downward mobility and "designed for productivity and corporate growth, not thriving." She then shared her vision for a future of work, including a shift in mindset we become agile learners and develop our non-cognitive skills.

See her powerpoint for the full presentation:  
<https://humandatacommons.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Gresham-ParTeCK-May-2019-v3.pptx>

An audio clip paired with Jen's presentation will be available on YouTube: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNsqqXbB9eUC-iJG\\_Tftz3w/featured](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNsqqXbB9eUC-iJG_Tftz3w/featured)

Concepts that came out of group discussion afterwards included being aware of the many ways to get paid and to pay others, as well as "right sizing" - becoming more fluid and less fragile in the face of economic insecurity.

One of participants later shared in the survey that this presentation was a highlight for them:

- The presentation on Thriveability was very inspiring, and I especially enjoyed the fact that this is the first time I heard someone plan for the elimination of low-value work by preparing the people involved.
- ParTeCK Survey Respondent

## Theme 4: Integrative Prototyping

Jesse McKee (<https://221a.ca/contributors/jesse-mckee>) from 221A shared with us a unique project that integrates many of the elements we discussed at ParTeCK - culture, equity, and thriveability. His project, Blockchains and Cultural Padlocks (<https://221a.ca/research-initiatives/blockchains>), "a three-year Digital Strategy initiative by 221A that researches, develops capacity, and implements blockchain technology for Cultural and Public sector use-cases."

A participant shared this appreciation about Jesse's presentation:

- Basically everything about the presentation was new and surprising and made me hopeful that blockchain might be getting closer to realize its potential.

– ParTeCK Survey Respondent





### In a Nutshell

#### SOME EVENT STATS

- 50+ attendees; 64% repeats from ParTecK17 and ParTecK18
- ParTecK community-building working group formed
- 5 bitcoin in grants offered
- 86% came away with new ideas for collaboration
- 93% made connections with potential collaborators
- 91% would recommend ParTecK to a friend or colleague

#### FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANT SURVEY

What surprised you?

- the way people engaged with good will and openness
- positivity and forward looking perspectives shared and expressed by most of attendees
- the incredible quality of the presenters and the topics; the great balance of experience and discussion
- the diversity of perspectives and worldviews, and all the different perspectives on scaling, in turn

#### PARTECK IMPACT FOR PARTICIPANTS

- Getting engaged with the community in Van to co-create and prototype emergent structures of power and cultures to thrive.
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- I feel like I really need to get involved at a policy-setting level.
- It changed my context for education and diversity.
- A group of participants met to explore the possibility of a ParTecK Network Working Group that would help to plan and develop activities throughout the year. Over 10 people signed up to continue to be involved in the pilot project.

# ParTecK19 Grant Recipients

For a third year in a row, Scott Nelson offered a ParTecK Grant to collaborations generated by ParTecK participants. A requirement of the proposed project was that it contribute to ParTecK community in some way. This year, the total amount granted was \$27,400CAD plus 2.7BTC.

## ParTecK19 Grant Recipients

### 1) Convening the ParTecK Network - Carissa Kazyss, Erin Robinson, Darlene Gering

Coordinate ParTecK related projects and events, nurture partnerships, create communication tools, and continue to develop the network.

### 2) Work for Humanity - Anastasia Gaisenok, and Jen Gresham

Design, deliver and evaluate a pilot adult education program to demonstrate the capacity of low wage workers for more meaningful and valuable work.

### 3) ParTecK Collective - Harmony Barer, John Andreas, and Michelle Martin

Deliver four ParTecK related events in 2019/20 with a wide ranging themes including health & wellbeing, decentralization & alternative economics, deep adaptation & sustainability and collective intelligence & network building.

### 4) Eros Tilt - Durwin, Lee White, Michelle Martin, Mary Lou Hardy, and Tony Mayer

Prototype a Whole Human Health Map to support personal development at the Whole Human Summit and then build it into the Whole Human Health Database.

### 5) ParTecK DAO - Greg McMullen and Kris Constable

Research, develop, and deploy a ParTecK DAO, intended to augment the existing ParTecK community and allow it to leverage the power of decentralized organizing tools.

### 6) Evolutionary Convening - Mary Lou Hardy, Sharon Halfnight, Carissa Kazyss, Rochelle Fairfield, and Tony Mayer

A deeper look at what it means to “convene” along with a framework and suggestions for the ParTecK community.

### 7) 2020 Currency - Tony Mayer, Mary Lou Hardy, Sharon Halfnight, Lee White, and Jen Gresham

A thought-leadership whitepaper on the development of a new form of open source payment & transaction system with transparency and traceability that can incorporate local values and perspectives while retaining the ability for inter-community trade.

## GRATITUDE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to the following people who supported ParTecK19:

- Elder Kelly White for her traditional Opening Prayer and Welcome; Cedar Blessing, and Closing Circle.
- All the presenters who so generously gave their time and rich insight.
- Each of you who offered a helping hand throughout, and with clean up at the end.
- Gordon Casey at Brave.Technology Coop (<https://www.brave.coop/team>) who partnered with us on the venue.
- Naomi Steinberg for procuring a gift blanket for Elder Kelly.
- Friendship Catering for feast-worthy Bannock.
- Scott Nelson for his generous support and making grants fun again.