

2018 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



OUR HUMAN SITUATION

Living Through Times of
Tribalism | 2

HUMAN VENTURE BOARD REPORT

Activities and Priorities | 3

MEET THE ASSOCIATES

New Cohort | 4

ASSOCIATE ARTICLE

Inoculations Against
Ignorance | 9



OUR HUMAN SITUATION

ANNA-MARIE ASHTON AND
DANA PENRICE

*Photo: 2016 Trump Chicago Protest
(Credit: Paladin Justice, wikicommons.org)*

Reading the headlines in 2018 can make your head spin and your stomach turn; in times of stress, reversion to our worst biosocial drivers - including tribalism and narrow horizons of caring - seems inevitable. The rhetoric of "us and them" is a powerful trigger, and is used successfully to advance narrow ideologies and strategic positions worldwide.

At the same time, we are seeing information warfare at an industrial scale, with countries and companies battling for influence and control over the narratives that guide our lives, looking for the strategic advantage that comes with shaping public opinion.

As a result, we are experiencing a degradation of truth standards. Our ability to judge what is true is critical at a time when we are facing enormous challenges as a species with climate change and human rights abuses.

Nazi Germany, Stalinist USSR and Mao's China are 20th century are historical warnings for the 21st century that we must pay attention to.

So what are we to do?

While humans are capable of enormously destructive behaviour, we are also capable of heroic acts that advance humanity. We live in a time where we must maintain our commitment to cultivate the better angels of our nature.

As individuals, we might not feel like we have much power. Although we are embedded agents in the larger situation, it is always possible to conduct ourselves more humanely and justly. It is in times like these that we need individuals and groups who are able to function intelligently & responsibly beyond the boundaries of convention to overcome the limitations of our socio-cultural context.

It has been the work of the Human Venture to prepare and support

individuals and communities who want to take on this responsibility.

Individuals working at the edge of human and social development must pioneer new ways for society to operate by building systemic adaptive capacities to meet the challenges ahead. We have learned a great deal about what this takes but must strive to learn more. Through the coming years, we'll be working to:

deepen our caring for humankind and the ecosystem on which we depend.

- Reframe what life progress is beyond what conventional influences tell us.
- Orient people to what it takes to walk a pioneering, contested path.
- Help others to avoid repeating known mistakes.
- Develop cultural resources to engage more people in this work.

Image: Voice of America, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



HUMAN VENTURE BOARD REPORT

DANA PENRICE,
HUMAN VENTURE LEADERSHIP BOARD CHAIR

Through 2017 - 2018, the board engaged in a year-long study of the nature and function of strategy. This work supports the ongoing capacity of board members for adaptive strategic foresight and planning. We have three areas of development for the Human Venture organizations and community:

1) Ongoing research into pioneering human venture path initiatives across fields of endeavours from the local to global scale and continued mapping of human venture pioneering disciplines and dynamics.

We continue to support the work of Ken Low in researching and mapping. This includes ongoing addition of books in the Human Venture Library. Ken continues to mentor and support others in developing the capacities for research, mapping and curation through the Associates Program. In 2017-2018, we had 14 participants in this program.

2) Extending the variety of programming being offered by Human Venture Leadership and continuing to deliver the programs that we are currently offering.

In 2017-2018, Elizabeth Dozois continued delivering and refining the introductory intensive programs under the new title "Introduction to Adaptive Learning." We had 21 participants in 3 intensives in both Calgary and Edmonton as well as 20 participants in an alumni program that supported ongoing learning. The Human Venture framework is also introduced in the Alberta Network of Immigrant Women Leadership program led by Mark Hopkins.

3) Extend our network globally and build relationships with individuals and organizations who are working to understand the challenges facing us in the 21st century and exploring solution space to address these challenges.

Our outreach continues to grow through our newsletter, social media and website. We have been working to deliver quality resources for our audience to meaningfully engage in this work. We published 6 articles over the past year and have begun recording for an upcoming Human Venture podcast to be released in 2019.



MEET THE HUMAN VENTURE ASSOCIATES

Over the past year, we've piloted an associate program for advanced learners. This cohort has invested significant time and commitment in our learning community and we are exceptionally grateful for their dedication . You inspire us to keep the fires lit in our bellies.

Our focus last year was Strategy, and we are working on Human Venture Disciplines this year. Representing the private, non-profit and government sectors, with a broad range of engagements - meet the Human Venture Associates!

ASSOCIATES

Mark Hopkins is Artistic Director of Swallow-a-Bicycle Theatre, which generates productive discomfort through art-making, and an Associate with Human Venture Leadership, which seeks to build our collective capacities to reduce ignorance, error, waste, suffering and injustice. He volunteers with the Calgary Foundation and the Centre for Newcomers, is a Fellow with the Energy Futures Lab, and founded We Should Know Each Other, a community-bridging initiative.



Blythe Butler volunteers through her family's community engagements, works as a consultant in the non-profit sector and is a member of the Human Venture community. The implications of climate change on future generations keep her up at night. Her career as a consultant has been focused on helping organizations and teams develop their capacity to respond to social issues such as early childhood development, homelessness, mental health, literacy, sustainability, community investment and domestic violence. She focuses her efforts on the development of adaptive learning cultures within organizations and collaboratives.



Dana Penrice is a farmer and community organizer. She has spent 14 years working on projects in food systems. Through this she strives to better understand how farming can be designed to better manage ecosystems, promote biodiversity, mitigate climate change and provide nutrient dense food to communities. In 2015, Dana brought Young Agrarians to Alberta to grow the next generation of ecological farmers and ranchers in the province. She can now be found on her own farm in Shoal Lake, Manitoba.



ASSOCIATES

Laura Kennett is the Manager of the Pipeline Integrity Execution Program at Enbridge in Edmonton, AB and a board member of Human Venture Leadership. She is a Professional Engineer with a Masters Degree in Engineering and Technology Management, and a Fellow with the Energy Futures Lab in Alberta. The Human Venture has played a major role in forming her personal mission statement: To develop and lead resourceful, resilient, responsible and enthusiastic people in support of safe and just energy systems while respecting planetary, social and economic boundaries.



Chris Hsiung is an engineer turned documentary filmmaker. He runs Hidden Story Productions, an organization dedicated to using documentary storytelling to nurture a more compassionate, just, and intelligent society. His journey has taken him from Kathmandu where Nepalese youth push for better water sanitation to local Alberta Indigenous communities who struggle to be recognized in their own home. Chris continues to find ways of using media in all its forms be they podcasts, audio tours, or films to help deepen our connection to the human venture.



Jason Low is an experienced Information Technology professional who has worked with operating systems for over two decades. Jason administers several platform-technologies that HVL depends on to operate. Jason finds the Human Venture framework concepts intensely engaging and profoundly practical for adaptation and managing resistance within a broad range of workplaces and systems.



Natalie Muyres is an independent consultant who has worked in organizational culture, project and change management for over 20 years. Natalie has been involved with Human Venture Leadership since 2007. She sits on the board of the Human Venture Institute and is an Associate. The study of Human Learning Ecology provides a deeper understanding of social structures, individual and societal beliefs and how individuals and organizations learn (or don't learn). Natalie has a personal commitment to ongoing learning and supporting individuals and organizations who are striving to adaptively meet the future needs of our society.



Elizabeth Dozois has been providing research, evaluation and strategic support to the non-profit and public sectors in Calgary and other regions for over 20 years, and has a particular interest in supporting adaptive learning in complex and emergent initiatives. Elizabeth has been working with Human Venture Leadership for over a decade, and facilitates a range of workshops and introductory programs.



Kim Rowe has been working in community in Alberta for decades as a volunteer, staff, board member, and facilitator. She has experience in community development, training, program development, event coordination, and supporting relationships to build community. She is a Leadership Calgary 2004 graduate, but her best education has been from her children and their questions. Since 1998 her family has been building their home and community in the foothills west of Cochrane, Alberta. In addition to her work as a citizen, Kim has been a Community Development Officer with Alberta Culture for over 10 years.



Motivated by a passion for social and environmental justice, Sarah Kinnie has worked across the non-profit sector for the past 15 years in both programming and administrative roles. She uses her learning with HVL to make sense of our messy, complex world and figure out the capacities we need in order to meet current and upcoming challenges. Sarah has volunteered with program delivery since 2011. Sarah supports indigenous young people who are strengthening their personal leadership skills as they work on community initiatives at Canada Bridges. For the last 18 months, Sarah has been busy learning what it takes to be a mom.

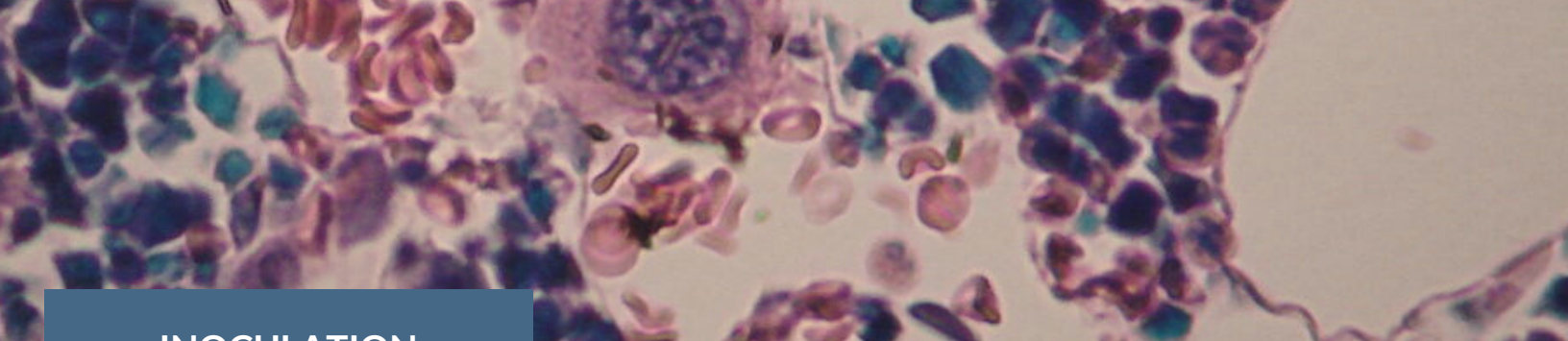


Harold Semenuk is a Program Coordinator at Edmonton Public Schools, and an Associate with Human Venture Leadership. Harold has applied HVL learning to curriculum development; program design for incarcerated youth and those on conditional release (The Bent Arrow Society’s “Working Warriors” program); innovative practices as a teacher and administrator; and, political campaign strategy and operations. His most important learning focuses on creating a more capable world to handle ongoing challenges for the betterment of his 15 month old son and all life on earth.



Anna-Marie Ashton is an independent consultant with a background in small business management, methods & standards development, business analysis, strategic project portfolio management, and leadership development. She's worked with the Human Venture since 2012.





INOCULATION AGAINST IGNORANCE

NATALIE MUYRES,
HUMAN VENTURE ASSOCIATE

Photo: Two megakaryocytes are visible in this slide of bone marrow (Credit: Wbensmith, wikicommons.org)

Like our immune systems need exposure to viruses to create antibodies, we require ongoing exposure to a steady diet of significant life challenges and great adaptive resources to develop the antibodies required to push back ignorance and error.

Our immune systems are constantly detecting and correcting for breaches to our health. Whether we are affected by a virus, bacteria or a major wound, our immune system goes to work immediately to resolve the situation and restore our health.

A highly intelligent network, our immune system operates independently and is constantly at work; from our skin, to mucous membranes and stomach acid, defences are always active. The immune system is designed to mobilize and overwhelm the invader and push it out. Interestingly, we're not born with our immune system intact.

It is developed through ongoing exposure to toxins, either naturally or deliberately, like vaccinations; it is learning all the time!

Vaccines are used to create antibody memories for specific antigens or toxins, so the body can have an immune response and fight to eliminate the toxin when exposed. To wipe out or stop a virus, you need herd immunity, which means a high proportion of the population are immune to the disease.

Near the end of his life, Louis Pasteur, the scientist who discovered germ theory, said, "The germ is nothing, the terrain is everything." Like ignorance, viruses require habitats and environments to thrive.

This is critical to understanding the systemic nature of ignorance. We are our environment – we are a product of our culture. Like the spread of germs in unsanitary environments, unhealthy thinking, caring and acting spreads ignorance and cultivates toxic cultures.

We need to develop and support our collective immunity by cultivating an environment for empowering, responsible and wise learning.

Our programs and learning community help us get our existential immune systems fired up and identify areas of ignorance, as though they are viruses.

Our community works as a network to gather intelligence, detect and correct all forms of ignorance. Like our bodies are constantly learning and pushing out viruses, we need our community to support our mutual learning and capacity development in order to push back ignorance.

As we are exposed to sources of ignorance, we work to create memories that will better help us detect, correct, anticipate and prevent the ignorance – to reduce waste, suffering and injustice.

Like viruses, ignorance adapts and immunity does not last a lifetime. Our everydayism can erode our learning and distract us, so we need to come back to our learning and be aware of our changing ignorance.

We need to eradicate forms of ignorance through our own herd immunity – it is why we need more of the population developing the adaptive capacities to push back the boundaries of ignorance and error.

We are a small-but-mighty, mostly volunteer organization.
Through your donations we can unleash our community's capacity to create amazing things.

Last year your donations:

- gave 11 participants the ability to participate in our programs through bursaries totalling \$8,600 dollars
- provided stable funding for us to support Ken Low in his ongoing research, mapping and curating
- allowed us to create the Introduction to Adaptive Learning intensives, a big step in ensuring we have the ability to run programs in a sustainable way over time
- helped us to engage more participants through distance learning sessions
- provided space for us to explore podcasting
- allowed us to create an Associates program that will help in the continuation of this work into the future

"It seemed to me that all over the world intelligent people were waking up to the indignity and absurdity of being endangered, restrained, and impoverished, by a mere uncritical adhesion to traditional governments, traditional ideas of economic life, and traditional forms of behaviour... These people I imagined would say first, 'We are drifting; we are doing nothing worth while with our lives. Our lives are dull and stupid and not good enough'. They then would say, 'What are we to do with our lives?'

And then, 'Let us get together with other people of our sort and make over the world into a great world-civilization that will enable us to realize the promises and avoid the dangers of this new time.'"

- The Open Conspiracy by H.G. Wells, 1928

Many people pour tremendous time, thought, care, and resources into Human Venture Leadership, which is made possible largely by community support. If you have found what we do helpful and would like us to keep going, please consider supporting us. And if you have already donated, from the bottom of our hearts: THANK YOU. We appreciate everything you do to help this organization learn, experiment and grow. We need you. It takes an ecology of diverse and thoughtful people to position this work successfully, and you are a critical part of this endeavour. Help us to continue our work and achieve even more in 2019.

DONATE TODAY THROUGH WWW.HUMANVENTURE.COM