

Welcome to ParEvo

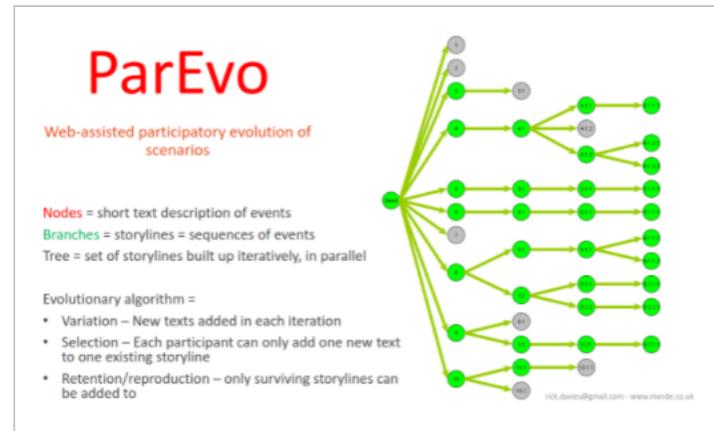
ParEvo is a method of developing past histories or future scenarios, using a participatory evolutionary process (hence ParEvo). The process is designed to be used by multiple people, to produce a collective good– a set of storylines about what did, or could, happen. In addition, the ParEvo website generates transparent measures of the value created individually and collectively during this process, available in real time.

The use of ParEvo is **free**, subject to approval by the Administrator.

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How it works - in brief



1. The facilitator provides the **seed for a story**. This will usually be no more than four or five sentences long, setting the scene for what might happen next
2. Participants are then asked to each add a short text describing **what happens next**. These are the nodes 1-10 in the diagram, representing contributions by 10 participants
3. Participants then read all these contributions and each **select one they would most like to continue**

Getting started

Participants

Participants **need to be invited** by a Facilitator to set up an account. Please contact your Facilitator for login details. If you have not been invited, you cannot use ParEvo. Once you have login details you can login at any time.

Facilitators

To become a Facilitator, you have to apply to create an account. Use the form below. ParEvo is **free to use**, subject to approval.

Once approved, you will be able to invite Participants and set up and manage one or more exercises of your own design.

Facilitator application

First name:

Last name:

Your email:

ParEvo email list

If you want to be kept informed of how ParEvo website is developing join the email list: parevo-subscribe@googlegroups.com

Who developed ParEvo?

The ParEvo process was designed by [Rick Davies](#), an evaluation consultant based in Cambridge, U.K.

For more information on the origins of the process design see [MandE NEWS - Evolving Storylines](#).

The ParEvo web app was built by [Aptivate](#): The Digital Agency for International Development.

Copyright

Rick Davies owns the copyright to the ParEvo process embodied in and enabled by this website. Others can use this process, at no cost, if they notify Rick Davies beforehand. For more information on copyright see:

- <https://www.gov.uk/copyright>
- <https://www.copyright.org.au>

Limitation of Liability

ParEvo process design

= participatory evolution of future scenarios or past histories

Nodes = short text description of events

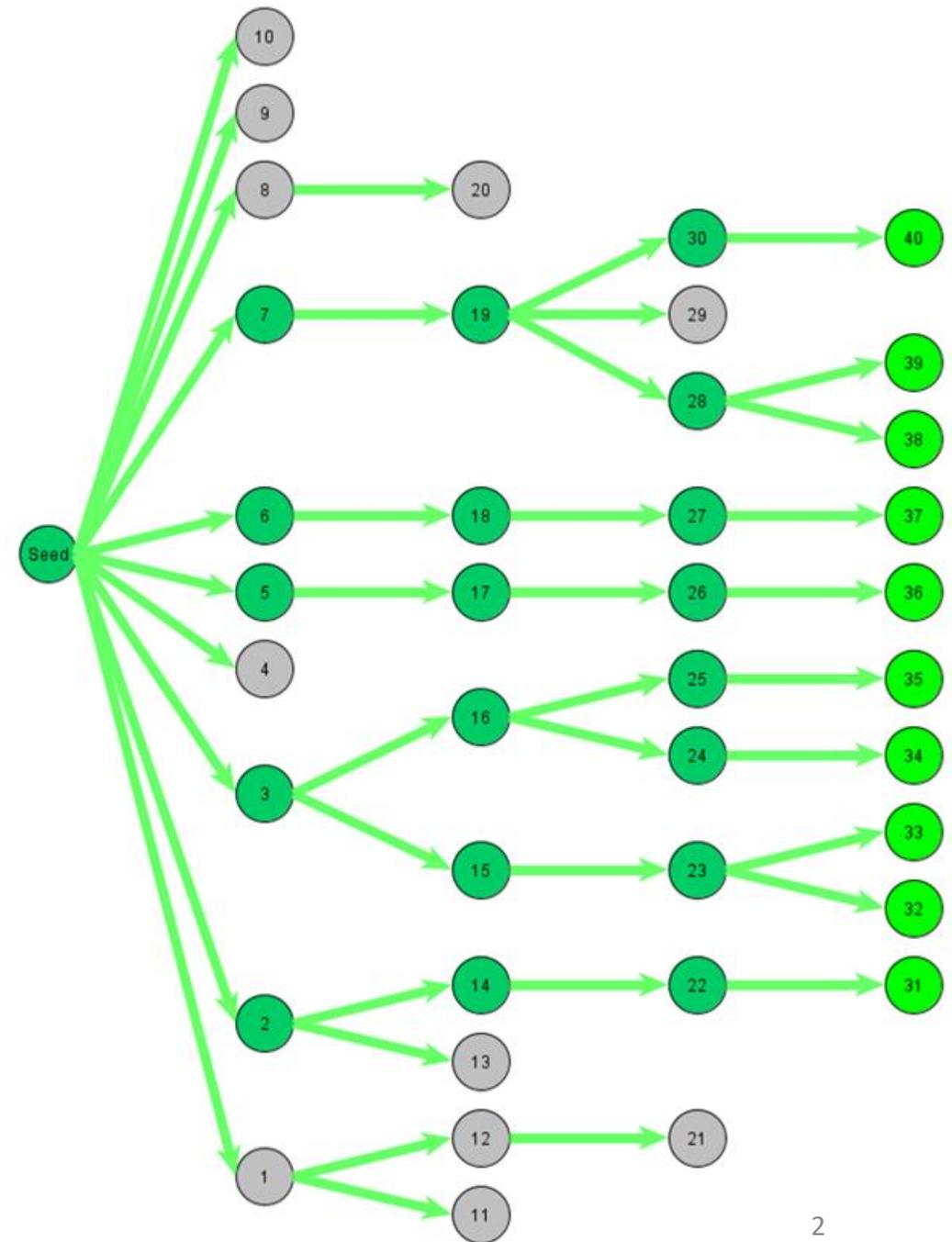
Branches = storylines = sequences of events

Tree = storylines built up iteratively, in parallel

Columns = successive iterations, moving right

Evolutionary algorithm =

- Variation – Participants each add a new text, in each iteration
- Selection – Each participant can only add one new text to any one existing storyline, per iteration
- Retention/reproduction – only surviving storylines can be added to





Alternate futures for the USA 2020+

Iteration #8

This exercise has now finished.

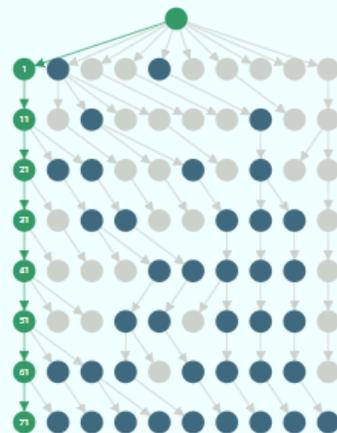
A full description of this exercise is available here: <https://mscinnovations.wordpress.com/alternate-futures-for-the-usa-2020/>

This includes the following information

1. Purpose
2. Participants
3. Process
4. Instructions
5. Results
6. Analysis
7. Conclusions

with thanks, Rick Davies, Administrator

Search



These are the results from the evaluation round. How many people thought this storyline fell into each category is shown below:

Least Desirable: 3	Most Desirable: 0
Least Likely: 1	Most Likely: 1

Storyline ending #71

0 The inauguration of Joe Biden as the 46th president of the United States marked the commencement of the four-year term of Joe Biden as president and Kamala Harris as vice president. A public ceremony took place on Wednesday, January 20, 2021, on the West Front of the United States Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. The event was the 59th presidential inauguration. Biden took the oath of office as president on that day, and Harris took the oath of office as vice president. Festivities were limited due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in the United States. Public health measures to prevent the spread of the virus, including mandatory face coverings, temperature checks, and social distancing, were in place for the ceremony. "Our Determined Democracy: Forging a More Perfect Union," a reference to the Preamble to the United States Constitution, served as the inaugural theme. Contrary to custom the outgoing President, Donald Trump, did not attend. This is the story of what happened next, after that day...

1 The threats of civil war came to nothing. Once the new President was installed, the wind was taken out of the sails of the far right. The Proud Boys, the Q-anon crowd, and the die-hard Trumpers all faced public ridicule and were seen as the small fringe groups they truly were. Though Trump pardoned himself before he left office, this did nothing to absolve him of state crimes. By the end of March, over a dozen criminal suits were filed against him in NY state. With no capable lawyers willing to represent him, Trump had a small, rag-tag legal team of barely competent lawyers. He is expected to lose most, if not all, of his trials and to die in jail.

1 comment

11 Not only was Trump facing multiple lawsuits, but so were a great number of his administration. While Trump had prepared a slush fund to pay his legal team, most of his administration had no such income. Many plead guilty to avoid a prolonged and costly battle. With the last 2 senate run-offs in Georgia going to the Democrats, they now controlled the Presidency, the senate and the congress. Biden was able to quickly undo much of the damage that was done over the last 4 years.

21 Covid-19, while not totally gone, was well under control and the US started to get back to normal. People were going back to work, masks were no longer mandatory and people were gathering again. Trump and his cronies were rarely in the news. Although Trump continued to write outrageous tweets and to deny that he lost the 2020 election, the public just had no real interest. The new administration was pushing forward with constructing windfarms and solar energy panels as well as making strides towards accessible health care for all.

31 By the last quarter of 2021, the country had more or less settled back into normality. At this point, Vice President Harris began to take a more prominent role, often appearing on news programs to speak for the administration and explain the initiatives she was personally leading. President Biden said during his campaign that he thought of himself as a bridge to the future, and it seemed he truly felt this way. Harris was clearly being positioned, by Biden and the DNC, to assume the role of POTUS in 2024 or 2028. The public increasingly saw her as a seasoned, intelligent, warm figure, not unlike Obama. Trump never stopped campaigning during his term in office and the democrats learned from this. They started Harris' campaign very early indeed, though they were less blatant about it.

ParEvo user interface

- Facilitators guidance
- Seed text
- Contributions
- Storyline
- Tree structure
- Comments
- Evaluation judgements
- Key word search

Roles:

Facilitators, Participants, ...
 Commentators, Observers, ...
 Admin support.

ParEvo exercises to date

- 13 exercises
 - 6- 15 participants per exercise
 - students, volunteers, crowdsourced workers, staff, international experts
 - Time scope: 2 to 10 years
- Topics
 - Alternative futures
 - US politics, UK politics, Climate change, Covid, biotechnology research
 - Alternative histories
 - UNV volunteer, agricultural projects, gender policies

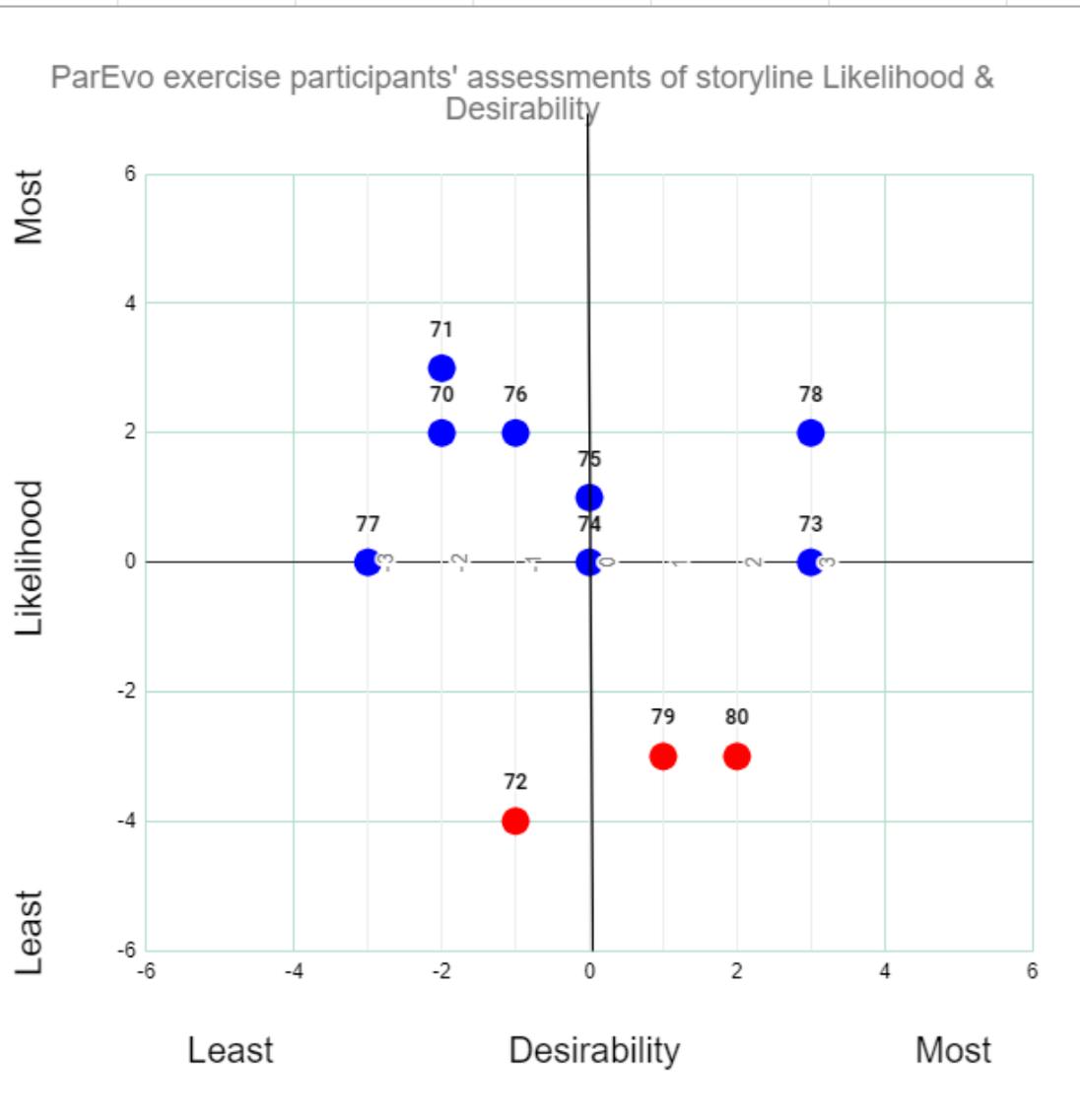
Theories of Change

- 1. Individual storylines:** Participants describe actors, their activities and outcomes
- 2. Individual exercises:** Facilitator helps participants to construct a diversity of futures, and then to evaluate them
- 3. ParEvo platform:** Administrator accumulates data on multiple exercises, & learns how to optimise exercises

Participants' evaluations of storylines

- During storyline development
 - When a participant chooses which storyline to extend
 - When a participant comments on a specific contribution
- During Evaluation stage
 - Within-app widget
 - Online Survey
 - Other follow-up activities

1. Analysis of storyline diversity

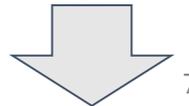


Mapping storylines on multiple criteria

- Likelihood x desirability
- Equity x Sustainability
- ?

Asking questions

1. What storylines are contested and why e.g.80
2. What types of storylines are missing
3. How to respond to different combinations of likelihood and desirability...



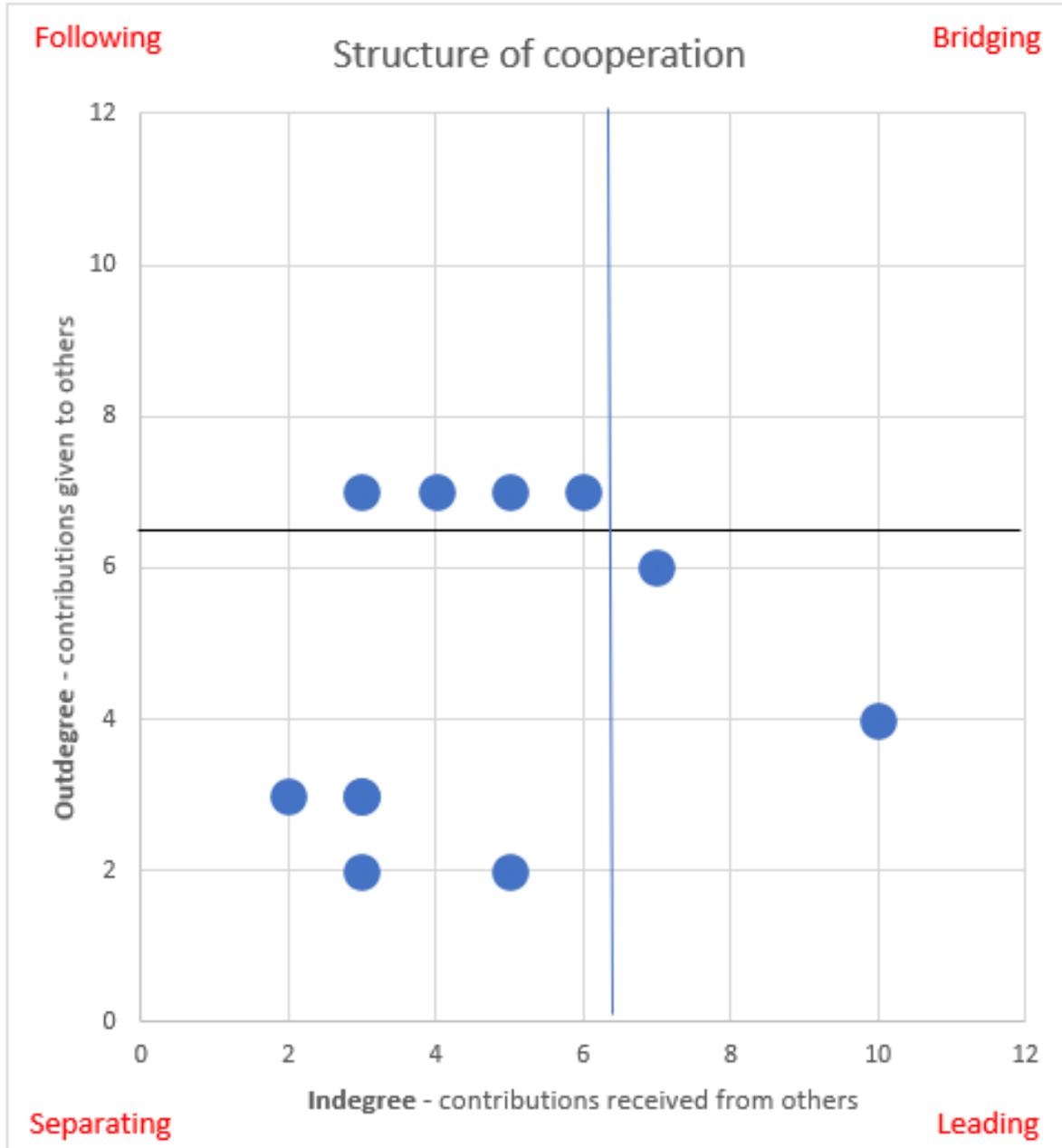
Storyline types & possible responses

Storylines are...	Undesirable	Desirable
Likely	Prevent beforehand, mitigate afterwards	Compare and harmonise with pre-existing plans
Unlikely	Monitor possible changes in their status	Enable beforehand, exploit afterwards

2. Analysis of storyline outcomes

78	A USA centred solution was being pursued							
79	Attention is focused on international solutions	Here a single international solution was being sought	Focus on appropriate research team management - more micro					
74			Focus on international discussions and expectations - more macro					
76		Here there are competing international solutions	Competing interests start to be resolved	NGOs take the lead in negotiating acceptable texts				
72				Nation state level negotiations	Negotiations continue on contents of international standards			
80					national reactions disrupts international trade and communications			
77			Competing interests are not resolved	Competing interests are not resolved	Nation state tensions increase			
71					Tensions remain at the same level	A "Western nations" versus other split appears	"Western nations" have adopted a common position	
73							"Western nations" are more split in their views about the best way forward	
75						No discernable overall split appears, just various disagreements	Different international fora are tried out by different groups	
70						Efforts by different countries decouple and become balkanised		

Example: A top-down content analysis, based on perceived significant differences between storylines



3. Analysis of Participation

- Relationship measures
 - X axis = Indegree
 - Y axis = Outdegree
- Questions
 - Is there an ideal mix?
 - How do you maximise collaboration behaviour?

In summary: ParEvo...

1. Facilitates creative (combinatorial) thinking about a diversity of possible futures, and...
 - People do enjoy taking part
 - The process generates a large amount of analysable data
2. ParEvo is especially useful for thinking about what can happen in complex settings where there are multiple actors, multiple objectives and interactions between these.
 - Gives more attention to changes over time than diagrammatic representations of ToC

• **But we need both!**
NY Times April 2022: *The idea that Pluto has ice volcanoes on its surface fed by a deep warm ocean is a reminder that “**We needed to have a better imagination.**”*