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Pedaling Poverty Through Pennies, Dimes, and Disaster

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Introduction: Pimping Poverty for Profit

Many deficit ideologies are cloaked in the myth that there exists a “culture of poverty” (e.g., see Ahlquist, Gorski, & Montañó, 2011; Redeaux, 2011). Well-known educators such as Dr. Ruby Payne promote this deficit ideology professionally, while profiting privately. As such, Redeaux (2011) writes, “Payne has amassed a multimillion dollar empire by *pimping poverty for profit*” (p. 101, italics added). Fortunately, Paul Gorski (2008) demystifies Payne’s oppressive framework—one that lies and then blames the victim. In hopes of raising critical consciousness, Gorski and his colleagues (e.g., see Ahlquist, Gorski, & Montañó, 2011) critique the “culture of poverty” myth and encourage educators to think more critically about what educational scholarship, like Payne’s, actually achieves, namely, a reinforcement of the “culture of poverty” myth.

In a similar way, Jon Krakauer (2011) acerbically criticizes the professional motivations of Greg Mortenson and his *Pennies for Peace* program and overseas school building campaign in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Both his programs—*Pennies for Peace* and international school building—are supposedly social justice initiatives, but Krakauer writes that they are nothing more than personal-enrichment programs. Through thoughtful investigative work, Krakauer’s research serves as a “mirror” for readers by reflecting the hidden motivations and unethical practices of the Central Asia Institute (CAI) and Mortenson, who is best known for his bestselling book *Three Cups of Tea* (2006).

In a similar vein, Nicholas Hartlep (2012) helps his readers better distinguish the antipodal difference between what he labels “teachers’ pet projects” and “real social justice teaching.” Hartlep’s (2012) study of four social justice teachers and teacher educators in Chicago found that “real social justice teaching” and real social justice projects contain overlapping core tenets: they both originate from the community, they both are localized events, and they both are focused on issues of equity. Contradistinctively, “teachers’ pet projects” are top-down, artificially administered, and do not address issues of equity or the needs of the marginalized that they claim to serve. Philip Kovacs (2011) and Henry Giroux (2012) would agree that good intentions or a belief in a “cause” are not enough when it comes to educational equity. Similarly, Celia Oyler (2012) petitions for justice projects that move beyond charity work or volunteerism, showing that community activism projects offer fertile ground for practicing democratic engagement as part of classroom work.

Paper Objective

This paper synthesizes and categorizes important social justice scholarship into a useable taxonomy that social justice workers can use in their personal and professional spheres of influence. This social justice taxonomy is not intended to be used exclusively by educators. Rather, it can also be deployed by practitioners in fields outside of education, such as by animal rights activists, global human rights activists, service sector employees, and rank-and-file community advocates. The present paper discusses the idea that although social justice activities and/or projects may originate with noteworthy missions and motivations, unless their creators are vigilant, service projects have the potential to deteriorate into myth-making initiatives that reinforce the problems that they originally intended to ameliorate.

For this reason, the *Pennies for Peace* and the *March of Dimes* programs are critically examined and included within this social justice taxonomy. Although both social justice projects originated with noteworthy missions and motivations, they nevertheless have problematic elements that will be discussed later. Moreover, because social justice initiatives commonly begin to emerge during times of disaster and fear, this paper also examines how “disaster capitalism” is used in the promotion and the reinforcement of the “culture of poverty” myth (e.g., see Klein, 2010; Saltman, 2007). The final social justice taxonomy that is presented illustrates that unless it originates locally, a social justice project or initiative is more likely to be categorized as a “pedagogical pet project” than “real social justice teaching” (Hartlep, 2012). As a result, this paper argues that “pedagogical pet projects” benefit from, and perpetuate disaster capitalism and neoliberalism, rather than challenge it. This paper is timely given that *philanthrocapitalism* is on the rise and is impacting schooling and education in negative and insidious ways (e.g., see Kovacs, 2011; Saltman, 2007; Watkins, 2011).

Problem Statement: Moving Beyond Generosity

David Stovall, a Chicago-based social justice educator has been recorded saying that “social justice has become a Chevrolet Nova—everyone has one” (personal communication, January 27, 2012). Stovall, a professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago and volunteer teacher at Social Justice High School, is referring to the widespread popularity of social justice education and the mislabeling of social justice projects and teaching praxis; actions that are merely to gain favor and attention by the liberal media and/or other progressive political and educational stakeholders (e.g., scholar activists being motivated to be interviewed on National Public Radio). In some ways, Stovall’s commentary speaks to the insincere or the “teacher-knows-best” attitude that is toxic to the goals of justice-oriented education. Also, because social

justice is becoming mislabeled, many individuals and institutions firmly believe that they are doing justice work—leading to its diminishment.

The “watering-down” of social justice education is a tremendous problem given that teaching for social justice has deep roots within social and Civil Rights struggles. If social justice becomes “mainstream” and less “political,” some contend that it loses its potency, power, and provocativeness. In other words, in order for readers to better understand the power of social justice projects and initiatives, this paper reviews the literature on social justice projects inside and outside of the field of education, and formulates a new taxonomyⁱ that social justice advocates, allies, and activists can use; again, not only in education, but also in a wide variety of public spheres and spaces.

It is important to note that social justice projects that are based on “generosity” are doomed to fail since generosity does nothing to change the fundamental realities of power (Giroux, 2012). “Real social justice projects” therefore need to move beyond generosity, toward “justice-oriented” praxis and change (Hartlep, 2012). Perceived, abstract, and/or intangible “change” is largely imagined or illusory. The words of Chris Iijima (1998) are worth repeating: “In order to have the continued opportunity to express their ‘generosity,’ the oppressors must perpetuate injustice as well” (p. 385). Thus, the interests of oppressors and white supremacy (viz. philanthrocapitalists and neoliberal education reformers) are ulterior, insidiously problematic, and dangerous for justice and equity work, and by extension, social justice projects. The next paper section outlines how poverty is pedaled through disaster capitalism and project-based learning activities that fail to criticize the *status quo* and *modus operandi*.

Pedaling Poverty through Pennies, Dimes, and Disaster

In times of fear and disaster, people resort to incredible things. Naomi Klein (2007) in *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* writes about how individuals and corporations exploit disasters and crises—which she refers to as mega-disasters—in order to generate super-profits. This section examines the pedaling of poverty through goodwill programs and generous charities. Seen through the lens of “disaster capitalism” and looking for elements of social justice, Mortenson’s *Pennies for Peace* program and Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s *March of Dimes* charity are critically examined.

Pennies for Peace (PFP)...or Profit?

The *Pennies for Peace* program (PFP) caught media attention for its efforts to collect pennies in K-12 schools and to use the money to build schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan—schools that supposedly disadvantaged children, namely girls, would attend. The problem with believing that PFP is socially-just and effective in its school building efforts is that there is substantial counter-evidence that PFP does not deliver upon its promises, making its work more mythic and made-up, than real.

Charity Navigator, a watchdog organization that monitors charities finds that PFP, a non-profit 501 3(c) organization, is not as pristine as it promises publicly. Indeed, when using the search term: “Pennies for Peace” on the *Charity Navigator* website, the Central Asia Institute (CAI) appears. The *Charity Navigator* website gives CAI (which runs PFP) a very “bad” rating. In fact, *Charity Navigator* initiated a donor advisory by sharing numerous news items that shed light on the questionable practices of PFP, and by extension, the CAI, which resulted in its “bad” score. The following is a direct quote taken from their the *Charity Navigator* website (www.charitynavigator.org; accessed on February 13, 2012):

Two people are suing the Central Asia Institute and its Executive Director, Greg Mortenson, alleging fraud, deceit and racketeering. For more information, please see the news coverage by *USA Today*. *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* reported that one of the original defendants dropped out of the case and the lawsuit was modified. In September of 2011, the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* reported that the Central Asian Institute was dropped from the lawsuit although its founder, Greg Mortenson, was not.

After personally telephoning *Charity Navigator*, I was informed that a donor advisory was placed on CAI, and came into effect, on April 2011. Moreover, according to an e-mail response from the Vice President of Marketing and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of *Charity Navigator*, Sandra Miniutti: “Prior [to April 2011] ratings for CAI [were]: 4-star, 4-star, 2-star, 4-star, 3-star” (S. Miniutti, personal communication, February 16, 2012). Donor advisories, like the one placed on the CAI, are only placed on a charity when *Charity Navigator* wants prospective donors to be aware of issues like zero fundraising (which *Charity Navigator* confirms through charities’ IRS 990 forms), embezzlement, and/or scandal. The employee who I spoke with on the telephone indicated that according to the *Charity Navigator* computer system (on February 13, 2012), there were a total of 34 current donor advisories. But readers may ask, is a donor advisory such a big deal?

According to the *Charity Navigator* website, “In making a determination of whether to post a Donor Advisory, the Donor Advisory Issuance Committee considers the reliability of the source of the information, the nature, scope, and seriousness of the charges or allegations, if proven, timeliness, and other factors it deems relevant in each instance.” I believe that PFP, under the leadership of Mortenson, may feel its project of collecting pennies to fund building schools abroad is socially-just, but is reinforcing educative, and social conditions they are seeking to improve.

Indeed, I contend that PFP misrepresents itself and has not helped, but rather made the situation in Pakistan and Afghanistan worse for females in Pakistan and Afghanistan (e.g., see

Ali, 2010). PFP achieves its goal of appearing to be socially-conscious and active by playing-off of Western media's message that the women and children of Afghanistan and Pakistan need to be saved. The news media is complicit in promoting disaster capitalism—in this case, the salvation of oppressed little girls—while CAI and PFP is willfully culpable in profiting from its pedaling of disaster for profit. PFP is not unique.

Other Pennywise Programs

Interestingly, pennies are a common item collected in charity programs. For instance, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's School and Youth Programsⁱⁱ include programs, such as *Pennies for Patients* and *Olive Garden's Pasta for Pennies*. One difference between PFP (viz. CAI) and these Cancer initiatives, are that the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's School and Youth Programs' ratings are 3/4 stars on *Charity Navigator*, while PFP has no ratings at all.

According to the backmatter of the *Pennies for Peace Toolkit*:ⁱⁱⁱ “Pennies for Peace™, a service-learning program of Central Asia Institute [CAI], educates children about the world beyond their experience and shows them that they can make a positive impact on a global-scale—one penny at a time.” This, however, is an outright and mendacious lie, since the program spends more on self-promotion than on assisting adolescents globally. According to Krakauer (2011), in 2009 schoolchildren donated \$1.7 million, but only \$612,000 was spent on PFP outlays (e.g., teachers' salaries, student scholarships, school supplies, basic operating expenses). Why does CAI spend so much on self-promotion, rather than on oppressed and disadvantaged children? Because these pennywise programs are not about people, or fighting against the *status quo*: they are about generating profit and maintaining the *modus operandi*.

Since I was raised most of my life in Wisconsin, the PFP project resonates with me because Westside Elementary (located in Madison, Wisconsin) was the first school to use the

“Pennies for Peace” in its school. Wisconsin, as a state—seen in its state gubernatorial recall election—is under neoliberal assault like the rest of the nation (e.g., see Giroux, 2012; Watkins, 2011). This reality, as well as my past being an early/elementary school teacher in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, makes me want to fight the neoliberalism that has been entering our public schools. And odd as it may be, pennies are not the only coin used in supposed social justice work: dimes have also been collected for social justice and welfare programs. The next section documents the March of Dimes (MOD) and their historical health social justice project initiatives.

March of Dimes or March of Crimes?

The thirty-second United States President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, established the March of Dimes (MOD) in 1938, at that point of time, the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis (Rose, 2003). MOD originally sought to end infantile paralysis, otherwise at that time known as *poliomyelitis* (gloss: polio). Once polio was virtually eradicated in the United States during the 1960s, MOD changed its mission and vision. According to the MOD website (2012) (<http://www.marchofdimes.com/>), “March of Dimes® working together for stronger, healthier babies (original sought to end polio). Its original mission accomplished, the foundation turned its focus to preventing birth defects and infant mortality.” The MOD is nearly as ubiquitous as the pink ribbon of the “Susan G. Komen Fight for the Cure” since the MOD has walks (or Marches) for babies (<http://www.marchforbabies.org/>).

But what caused the MOD to change the direction of its organization? It can be safely deduced that given that the polio epidemic was effectively ameliorated due to Jonas Salks vaccination. Perhaps the MOD desired a new social justice “cause” to fight for. While it is commendable that the MOD accomplished its original charge (ridding society of polio); what is not commendable is the type, and the amount, of animal testing that its charity currently endorses

and carries out all in the name of working for stronger, healthier babies. Similar to the Jonas Salk vaccinations that used animals (monkeys) to test the medicine's effectiveness, the continuation of the practice of animal testing by the MOD is an abomination, and something that should be examined further. Should the March of Dimes actually be considered a March of Crimes against animals? Animal rights activists have responded "yes." Moreover, while polio does not have the impact that it once did in the United States, it remains a deadly killer globally.

Animal Rights and Campaigns of Compassion

Global citizens and social justice advocates have written about animal rights (Wise, 2001, 2002) and research conducted on animals for birth defects and life-threatening diseases (e.g., see PETA 2012). According to People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA, 2012), "Charities that test on animals have tortured and killed millions of animals in cruel experiments, yet the incidence and death rates of the diseases that they address remain about the same, and in some cases, they have even increased" (para 3). Is society serious about finding an alternative solution?

Campaigns of compassion are unconvincing to animal rights advocates and activists since they contain internal contradictions: namely how humans who believe that they are progressive, derive pleasure from animal suffering (eating meat, animal cruelty in the name of sport or entertainment, dissection, vivisection, and biomedical research). In a 2001 press release, PETA said the following:

Armed with *bloody dimes* and a clothesline of stuffed "babies" to show how the *March of Dimes* "hangs babies out to dry while animals die," PETA members will protest outside the charity's regional office to let potential donors know that it funds cruel animal experiments [an abomination]

In addition to the MOD's unwillingness to stop vivisection, its non-profit organization's executives earn exorbitant salaries. Again, compassion, and generosity aside, neoliberal projects are most interested in engineering programs and projects that generate mega-profits.

Similar to the CAI, since the March of Dimes is a non-profit charity organization, it was researched on *Charity Navigator*. The MOD's *Charity Navigator* score was 2.8/5.0; their low score most likely was caused by the unduly high salaries of the organization's executives and leadership personnel. Readers might question the reliability of *Charity Navigator* and ask, is it credible and trustworthy? It certainly is. *Charity Navigator* is not only the largest charity evaluator in America, but also accepts *no* advertising or donations from the organizations it evaluates, ensuring unbiased evaluations, nor does it charge the public for this trusted data. *Charity Navigator* helps guide intelligent and socially-just giving by evaluating the Financial Health and Accountability & Transparency of nearly 5,500 charities.^{iv}

Disaster Capitalism

In her book *The Shock Doctrine* (2007), Naomi Klein outlines what she labels “disaster capitalism”

I call these orchestrated raids on the public sphere in the wake of catastrophic events, combined with the treatment of disasters as exciting market opportunities, “disaster capitalism. (p. 6)

Klein's (2007) term “disaster capitalism” has been with us for quite a long time. For instance, President Ronald Reagan's *Nation At Risk* in the 1980s stirred the public's fear of falling behind. The fear of falling behind the Soviet Union was the catalyst that caused America to speed up its Space program, as well as re-energize its education programming. Twenty years later, Hurricane Katrina rocked New Orleans and the Gulf States. Educational architects saw this

natural disaster as an opportune time to reconfigure the public school district, working to privatize and charter the impacted schools. Neoliberal reformation—which enjoys privatization, vouchers, and choice—blames the schools and supposedly give parents options to choose the best education for their students. However, research indicates that the result of such an educational system, is further marginalization of historically, economically, and racially oppressed people. Top-down projects and politics are not socially just. Rather, social justice is a bottom-up ordeal.

Take It To The Wall Mural Painting Project

As the 2011-12 Chair of the Graduate Student Council (GSC), a standing committee of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), in April of 2012 I had the privilege of participating in a community partnership program at the 2012 Annual Meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia. Several educational emissaries (AERA GSC, University of British Columbia [UBC], Simon Fraser University [SFU], Surrey Appreciates ME [SAME], Michelle Loughery, etc.) participated in the “Take it to the Wall” mural painting project.

The mural project consisted of Canadian secondary students painting alongside American and Canadian graduate students. The strength of this mural project was twofold. First, students engaged in workshops building up to the mural project. Their voices and concerns were accounted for in the planning phase. They assisted in developing the message of what would be painted and how the mural would convey this message. Workshops centered on issues of identity, racism, subordination, power, and student empowerment. Second, students’ took on leadership roles as the project culminated. Surrey students were partnered with graduate students who signed up to participate. The Surrey students also spoke about how the SAME program

assisted them as high school students. One student, Tony (pseudonym) introduced project participants during the painting day:

Good morning everyone. My name is Tony Jasper, and I am a student that has been involved with the Surrey: Take it to the Wall project. Getting involved in this project was important to me. It was important to me because, as a high school student, I see and hear discrimination every day. I see it in the class room as someone throws erasers at the “social outcast.” I hear it in the hallways as a group of friends glares at that insecure, introvert girl, calling her a slut. Discrimination in all of its forms plagues our schools, our workplaces, and it dominates our lives. We all know how it feels to walk down the hall—whether it is in school, at work, or anywhere else—and feel alone. We all know how it is to feel the cold, unforgiving hands of isolation clenching our minds – robbing us of the joy, validation and liberation that all humans need. I have personally been victimized by bullying and discrimination countless times throughout my school career. I have been at the centre of ridicule for my intelligence, my sexuality, my looks and so much more. It was a common belief in elementary school that I had not blood running through my body, but whisky because I am Irish. Discrimination hurts; no matter what form. Physical, emotional, or mental—it’s all the same. That is why I joined the Take it to the Wall project. A project led by youth. The voices of our youth are so often disregarded and underestimated amongst adults under the basis that we are irrelevant, unintelligent, immature, and out of control. I disagree. We are ALL human. We are ALL one race. We are a human race. We all live. We all die. We are neither right nor wrong for we are all human and we make mistakes. We learn. The voice of a child is just as important as the voice of the elderly. We are all affected by the choices we as a society make. Ageism is another form of discrimination. To the youth in this building here today – we are the future. We have a voice and we can be heard. Never let anyone take it away from you. You have had the courage to join this project, to fight discrimination. The fight lives on inside of you. The mural we are painting today is a physical manifestation of that. With that said, I wish everyone a great day today.

Jasper’s introduction speaks to the heart of social justice: local youths speaking truth to power despite societal hierarchies.



Figure 1. “Take it to the Wall” Mural Panel 5 of 7

Exit Through the Gift Shop

Now, juxtapose “Take it to the Wall” with “Exit Through the Gift Shop,” a documentary that explores stenciling, stickers, and street art in the United Kingdom. Is this latter form of public art vandalism or graffiti? What makes the mural painting art, and the sorts of artwork highlighted in Thierry Guetta’s documentary “Exit Through the Gift Shop” criminal activity? Street art, as documented in the film, is clearly political, raw, unfiltered, and aggressive. Thierry, an art aficionado taped street artists in the act of doing their work. Thierry, later, himself, became a recognizable figure in the art scene after he put together an event where he sold over \$1 million of his artwork. His artist name is Mister Brainwash. In fact, one well-known street artist captured and followed in this documentary is Shepard Fairey, the acclaimed artist who painted the well-known and ubiquitously famous, Barack Obama “Hope” poster used in the successful Barack Obama presidential campaign in 2008.



Figure 2. Barack Obama “Hope” Poster

Shepard Fairey has been an outspoken supporter of street art as a form of social justice. He has worked with the New York City Kids Organization, a non-profit youth development program that brings young adults in inner-city communities together. A modern-day Andy Warhol, Fairey has publicly said that he admires the work of Keith Haring in the 1980s. Who is

Keith Haring? David Mills (2011), a middle school teacher of Visual Arts at Hawthorne Village Public School describes social justice artist Haring as follows:

Keith Haring was an American artist who became to some extent a pop culture icon during the 1980s. The style of his art was simple and almost cartoon like. In many cases, he created huge banners and *murals*. Most of *these murals made statements about social justice issues* that were important to Haring. These included *gay rights, AIDS education, and the ending of apartheid in South Africa*. He always tried to support people who were at the fringes of society. (p. 158, italics added).

Further evidence that Fairey is a human rights activist and advocate can be seen in artwork that he has produced (www.obeygiant.com). For instance, I was given a sticker (see Figure 3) of Aung San Suu Kyi that he produced for the U.S. Campaign for Burma (www.uscampaignforburma.org) by one of my undergraduate students. The sticker has an image of Suu Kyi, above which says “Freedom to Lead” and below which says “Support Human Rights” and “Democracy in Burma.” To better understand the aim of this work, the U.S. Campaign for Burma (USCB) is a U.S. based membership organization dedicated to empowering grassroots activists around the world to rally for human rights and to bring an end to the military dictatorship in Burma.



Figure 3. “Freedom to Lead” Sticker

The Heidelberg Project

The Heidelberg Project (HP) is a justice-oriented artistic project that uses art to spur critical questions. According to Buffington (2007), Tyree Guyton, an African American grew up on Heidelberg Street...

Paperclip Project

Paperclips served as a symbolic solidarity with Jewish people. The project to collect paperclips was not a community problem. And thus, it was not a localized event. The first Jew to visit Whitwell, Tennessee was after the museum was created. Also, what about the paperclips? Who made them and where did they come from? Most likely they were created in a sweatshop somewhere.

Wind (2008) recounts her participation in a memorializing ceremony in Whitwell, Tennessee. Whitwell Middle School is known for its “Paper Clip” project. Wind (2011) writes the following, which serves as a lucid description of this supposed social justice project:

In 1998, two teachers and Linda Hooper, the principal of Whitwell Middle School, initiated a project in response to a request from several students. The goal was to collect 6 million paper clips in an effort to impress upon students studying the Holocaust the magnitude of the number of Jews who had been murdered. Why paper clips? The paper clip was invented by a Norwegian, and many Norwegians wore a paper clipping their lapels to show their solidarity against the Nazi invasion and occupation of Norway. (p. 290).

Of particular relevance, Wind (2008) informs her readers that principal Hooper’s educational maxim was “Changing the world...one class at a time” (p. 291). But what did the students actually change? And more pointedly, how did impressing students constitute a social justice project? One thing is for certain, if one used the work of Westheimer and Kahne (2004) as an evaluative rubric, the “Paper Clip” project would be classified as a “participatory” project, not a “justice-oriented” one. Hartlep (2012) similarly would most likely classify the project as a

quasi “teachers’ pet” project given that the project did not translate the Jewish Holocaust to the many other types of manmade Holocausts around the globe. They collected 28 million. I find the project problematic given that it memorializes and entombs their project, which is self-righteous and navel-gazing. The “Paper Clip” project fails to read the word while reading the world (Freire & Macedo, 1987).

Kony 2012 Video Project

In 2005 Invisible Children, Incorporated registered as a 501(c)3. According to 2011 compensation information procured from the *Charity Navigator* website, the Chief Executive Officer (Ben Keesey) and two Co-Founders/Filmmakers (Jason Russell and Laren Poole) of Invisible Children, Incorporated each earned a tremendous salary, despite the organization’s non-profit title: \$88,241; \$89,669; and \$84,377, respectively. Although Invisible Children has a ranking of 3/4 stars, its organization constitutes problematic practices.

Baker’s (2012) article “Think Twice Before Donating to Kony 2012, the Charitable Meme du Jour” provides four reasons that diminish the idea that the Kony 2012 video project is socially-just: (1) its dubious finances, (2) its exaggerated claims, (3) its support for military claims, and (4) its marketing tactics.

<http://www.charitynavigator.org/index.cfm?bay=search.summary&orgid=12429>

Table 1. Matrix of Selected Social Justice Literature

Author(s) and Date	Title/Type ^a	Audience	Project/Initiative	Key Ideas
Westheimer & Kahne (2004)	A	Everyone	Citizenship Education	There are three types of “good” citizens: (1) personally responsible, (2) participatory, and (3) justice oriented.
Kahne & Westheimer (2003)	A	Everyone	Teaching Democracy	Pedagogical social justice strategies include promoting: (1) commitments, (2) capacity, and (3) connection.
Schultz	A	Higher Education	Critical Citizenship	Classroom participants determine what is most important and relevant to them through change-oriented engagement
Stovall & Ayers (2005)	A	K-12	School Building	An urban community gets the school that it wants and that its children rightly deserve by staging a hunger strike.
Oyler (2012)	B	Everyone	Social Action and Advocacy Projects	“Community Activism as Curriculum” involves moving beyond charity work and/or volunteering.
Hartlep (2012)	C	K-12	Teaching for Social Justice	“Teacher’s Pet Projects” are teacher generated while “Real Social Justice Teaching” is student generated.
Gutstein (2009)	C	K-12	The “Boundaries Project”	Social Justice Mathematics Curriculum should derive from students’ realities.
Wind (2008)	C	K-12	The “Paper Clip” Project	The goal was to collect 6 million paper clips in an effort to impress upon students studying the Holocaust the magnitude of the number of Jews who had been murdered.
Buffington (2007)	A	Everyone	The Heidelberg Project (HP) ¹	Tyree Guyton, an African American artist’s project of artwork built on and around vacant lots and abandoned houses on Heidelberg Street in Detroit, encourages people to talk about difficult topics/issues including racism, politics, religion, poverty, homelessness, and consumption.
“Exit Through the Gift Shop”	F	Everyone	Street Art	This is the inside story of Street Art. An eccentric Los Angeles based French shopkeeper-turned-amateur-film-maker as he captures many of the world’s most (in)famous street artists on camera.
In Defense of Animals (2012)	W	Animals	Boycott Proctor & Gamble (P&G) Project ²	The P&G boycott is the biggest of its kind. P&G admits that guinea pigs, rabbits, hamsters, ferrets, rats and mice are among the animals poisoned in its product safety research, and cats and dogs are used in experiments for their pet foods. Boycotting P&G due to its animal testing practices is intentional since it is an industry leader.
In Defense of Animals (2012)	W	Animals	Student Projects ³	The In Defense of Animals website provides students many on-line resources and ways to get started as an animal rights activist.
Invisible Children (2012)	F	Everyone	Public Broadcasting	Making Kony famous will cause a groundswell of political support which will inevitably lead to his ousting and eventual arrest by the international criminal court system.

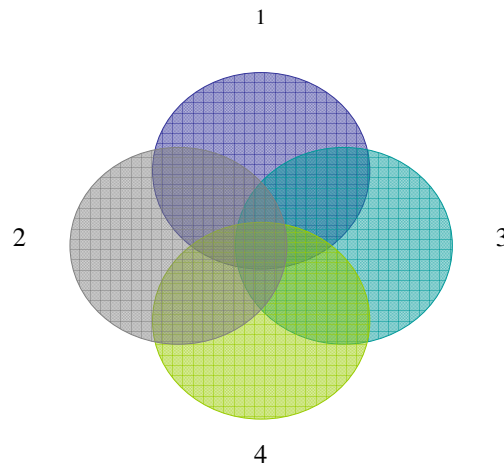
^a A=Peer-reviewed journal article; B = Book; C = Book Chapter; D = Dissertation; F = Film; W = Website

¹ Readers of this paper may be interested in visiting the social justice project’s website here: <http://heidelberg.org/> According to the website, “The focus of the Heidelberg Project (HP) is rooted in the need to improve the under-resourced and horribly blighted Detroit community where the project was founded.”

² <http://www.boycottpandg.co.uk/>

³ <http://www.idausa.org/ir.html>

Figure 1. “*Reading the World and Word*” Social Justice Taxonomy: Projects that Serve as a Window and Mirror



1. Real Social Justice Project: The project applies knowledge that social inequities exist in various settings by criticizing social inequality through critical praxis.

2. Reactionary Project: The project recognizes that social inequality exists in multiple settings/contexts and reacts through praxis.

3. Recognition Project: The project recognizes that social inequality exists in multiple settings/contexts.

4. Pedagogical Pet Project: The project repeats *a priori* learned ideas related to social inequality.

Concluding Thoughts

In this paper I have argued that disaster capitalism has forced social justice workers to better understand their projects and initiatives. It turns out that we can do something: manmade disasters are unnatural causes and thus, can be ended. In order for a social justice project to be authentic, it must pass a critical question: *cui bono*? Scholars have reviewed social justice, indicating that it means a variety of different things to different stakeholders (Jost & Kay, 2010; North, 2006), and it is my intention that the social justice taxonomy provided allows for justice workers to help situate their projects within a larger framework (see Figure 1) that believes projects must both serve as windows and mirrors (Style, 1988).

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ENDNOTES

ⁱ Joel Westheimer and Joseph Kahne's (2004) well-known taxonomy of citizenship (personally responsible citizen, participatory citizen, and justice oriented citizen) is noteworthy, but pertains to the individual (micro-level). This paper attempts to create a taxonomy that can be used at an individual (micro) level, but also at a group and organizational (macro) level for social justice-oriented projects/initiatives. Thus, this paper hopes to fill lacunae in the literature on social justice projects and citizenship scholarship.

ⁱⁱ <http://www.schoolandyouth.org>

ⁱⁱⁱ The Pennies for Peace Toolkit contains two CDS: 1 CD and 1 DVD

^{iv} *Charity Navigator's* level of "independence" is its stalwart hallmark. For instance, some watch-dog organizations charge for their audits and reports, like *Charity Watch*, formerly known as American Institute of Philanthropy, which is a nonprofit charity watchdog and information service that requires paid membership in order to have access to its three-time published charity rating guide (<http://www.charitywatch.org/ratingguide.html>). The cost of membership ranges from \$40.00 to \$200.00.