Open-Source Learning:
A New Pedagogy for 21st Century Aspirations

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Reflections on the abolitionist movement
I. Open-Source Learning

II. Pragmatism and Agency

III. Aspirationalism

IV. Our global challenges
I. Open-source learning

The open source metaphor
I. Open-source learning

Open source tools: the case of Wikipedia

- Lack of hierarchy
- Group-based
- Network-based
- Real-time creation of knowledge
- Knowledge for the common good
I. Open-source learning

The ‘open source century’

- Kiva.org
- Change.gov
- Kluster.com
I. Open-source learning

Elements of ‘open source learning’

- Lack of hierarchy in the classroom
- Group-based learning
- Network-based learning (porousness of classroom walls)
- Real-time creation of knowledge
- Creation of knowledge for the common good
I. Open-source learning

Open source learning: some recent examples

- “The Challenge of Becoming Carbon Neutral”
  - Middlebury’s new biomass plant
Open source learning: some recent examples

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  - Middlebury’s new biomass plant
- “Environmental Economics”
  - BrighterPlanet.com
I. Open-source learning

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- “Environmental Economics”
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- “Building the climate Movement”
  - Stepitup2007.org and 350.org
I. Open-source learning

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- “Environmental Economics”
  - BrighterPlanet.com
- “Building the climate Movement”
  - Stepitup2007.org and 350.org
- Group-based internships
  - 1Sky and Power Past Coal
I. Open-source learning

Open source learning: two possible concerns

- Is this atheoretical?
- What are the individual motives?
II. Pragmatism and agency

- The Metaphysical Club
- William James on pragmatism
- John Dewey on education
II. Pragmatism and agency

The pragmatists are

- Action-oriented
- Grounded in facts
- Focused on the concrete
- Did not strive for perfection
- Understood power
II. Pragmatism and agency

🌟 John Dewey on:
- Education and social progress
- Social service and reform
- Democracy and governance
- Spiritual life
II. Pragmatism and agency

“I believe that education is the fundamental method of social progress and reform. All reforms which rest simply upon the law, or the threatening of certain penalties, or upon changes in mechanical or outward arrangements, are transitory and futile.... But through education society can formulate its own purposes, can organize its own means and resources, and thus shape itself with definiteness and economy in the direction in which it wishes to move....

John Dewey, My Pedagogic Creed, 1897
II. Pragmatism and agency

🌟 Open-source learning is:

◆ Action-oriented
◆ Built around the “facts on the ground”
◆ Focused on the concrete
◆ Does not strive for perfection
◆ Understands power
II. Pragmatism and agency

The issue of agency
- What is my role?
- John Dewey on connecting to others
- William James on agency
III. Aspirationalism

- An infinite set of aspirations
- Each individual’s choices comprise their identity
- Derive happiness from the level and the rate of change
- To achieve most aspirations requires inputs from others
- The possibility of high and low aspiration equilibria
III. Aspirationalism

- Aspirationalism, the environment and social justice
  - Well-being for current generations
  - Well-being for future generations
  - Public policy and aspirations
IV. 21st Century Challenges

Climate change and poverty reduction: the two great challenges of the 21st Century

"Poverty and environmental degradation, if unchecked, spell catastrophe for our world."

Prime Minister Tony Blair (September 2002)