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August 6, 2007, 9:53 am

Lessons From the Bridge Collapse in Minneapolis?

By STEVEN D. LEVITT

I grew up just a few miles from the [bridge that collapsed in Minneapolis](#). We were a family that was terrified of heights. At least once a month, my father would mention how he thought a bridge over the Mississippi was going to collapse. We would be calling him Nostradamus today, except that his doomsday prediction was about a *different* bridge (the old [Lake Street Bridge](#), for those who know the Twin Cities). In fact, when officials tried to demolish the Lake Street Bridge to make way for a new one, the first round of explosives proved inadequate — they had to bring in a second round to bring it down. So that bridge proved sturdy, despite my father's premonitions.

But what, if anything, can we learn from the recent bridge collapse?

One thing I suspect we will learn about is the government's response to tragedy. No doubt there will be a lot of time and effort spent on extra bridge inspections, and probably a lot of money wasted because no one wants to be at risk for blame if something like this happens again. Now, I'm not saying we shouldn't spend money on bridges; indeed, my friend **Tom Paper** (who also grew up in the Twin Cities) at [Data360.org](#) sent me [this link](#) to a chart depicting U.S. government spending on infrastructure as a share of GDP, which has fallen from 3% in the late 1960s to 2% currently. I'm not sure how much of that 1960s spending was put towards building interstates. But my guess is that the money spent in the wake of a tragedy like this one is not spent well.

Something about the events following the bridge collapse that makes sense, but which I never would have thought about, is how a [sharp rise in cell phone usage](#) alerted T-Mobile that something had happened before they heard the news reports. This would seem to hint at strategies that could be useful for coordinating quick emergency response more generally, as well as military/intelligence applications.

TAGS: BRIDGE COLLAPSE INFRASTRUCTURE TECHNOLOGY

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35 comments so far...

1. August 6th, 2007 10:51 am
Why should the government spend money on infrastructure? Surely the free market will cause corporations to step in to avert failures that could cause an increase in their costs.
— Posted by pvanderwaart

2. August 6th, 2007 10:58 am
Making roads safer for bicyclists reduces injuries and deaths for not much infrastructure \$.
— Posted by kah

3. August 6th, 2007 11:03 am
I am sorry but if the gov didn't spend the money on infrastructure, I would totally ignore State troopers!
The cell phone spike question is a very good one and I would imagine that the AP probably has someone on that at all times. (Cell phone spikes)
— Posted by jimmybear

4. August 6th, 2007 11:07 am
Apparently, we need to replace a few bridges across MN: <http://www.startribune.com/10204/story/1341088.html>
— Posted by wptrocks

5. August 6th, 2007 11:29 am
About cell phones being used to coordinate emergency response—good idea, but surely there are a number of possible false positives? Isn't it possible that the T-Mobile people just suffered from a sort of confirmation bias? It's possible that these spikes happen relatively frequently, but that after this particular one happened, they selectively remembered "knowing" something was wrong. (It's similar

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Comment of the Moment

"The big question about standardized tests is, what do they really measure? I personally test well, I know other smart people who also test well, but I also know other smart and educated people who don't."

— Justin

[What Should Be Done About Standardized Tests? A Freakonomics Quorum](#)

Naked Self-Promotion

Wikio, an online news aggregator, has launched its own blog rankings, based on the number and value of links pointing to every blog on the Internet. [Freakonomics can be found in the Top 50](#), and currently holds the Number 43 slot.



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- December 20 5 comments
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Yesterday, I posted a quiz asking what my wife Jeannette's grandma has in common with Mark Twain. The answer is that she, like Twain, had her obituary published while she was still alive. Jeannette's grandma is named Anne Hathaway. At age 92, she is still going strong. Just a few years ago, she traveled from Orono, [...]
- December 20 11 comments
[More on the Gmail/General Motors Mixup](#)
We posted an item the other day from a reader who kept landing on General Motors' Web site when he went to use his Gmail account; he

to how some people claim they can predict the weather through, say, their arthritis- they remember the times they had boneaches before a storm and forget the other times their bones ached).

— Posted by the_admiral

6. August 6th, 2007 11:42 am

“But my guess is that the money spent in the wake of a tragedy like this one is not spent well.”

I would argue that whether any problem bridges are identified, the government is purchasing peace of mind right now. I agree that it is not money well spent if people are rational and more spending would only help identify problem bridges. On the other hand, if people are frightened and reactionary (which they are), this is money well spent calming the public.

— Posted by brad_c

7. August 6th, 2007 11:47 am

I struggle with what our interest in this story really is? Is it about the loss of life? If so, in comparison to starving children or other deaths that occur everyday, it's quite minuscule. Not to discount the tragedy but it seems to me this is more about rebar and concrete than the loss of life. Certainly the sensational nature of the disaster intrigues us but in terms of loss of life, there are many other tragedies much more horrific than this.

I'm not suggesting we don't examine and consider solutions but in terms of priorities...it's quite far down the list.

— Posted by shareski

8. August 6th, 2007 11:51 am

One question in whether or not to spend money on infrastructure is the question of which investments are worth it. Some research indicates that money spent on roads is in general a poor investment. E.g., research by Cliff Winston at Brookings and others concluded that the economic benefit from highway investments is plummeting: from 17.6% annual return in the 70s to 4.9% in the 80s and to 1% in the 90s. The authors attribute this decline to several factors, including Congressional earmarks and failing to charge people appropriately for the costs they impose in using roads. Other research indicates that costs of infrastructure are very frequently underestimated and benefits overstated-this pattern is so common that researchers say it can only be explained by “strategic misrepresentation”, i.e., lying. So it makes sense to require careful cost-benefit analysis to avoid the many expenditures on wasteful projects.

Chad Shirley and Clifford Winston, “Firm Inventory Behavior And The Returns From Highway Infrastructure Investments,” Journal of Urban Economics, Volume 55, Issue 2 (www.sciencedirect.com), March 2004, pp. 398-415.

<http://www.enr.com/opinions/viewpoint/archives/0312SB.a.sp>

This article reports on research that shows that large scale projects that get built are generally those with: underestimated costs, overestimated revenues, underestimated environmental costs and overestimated economic benefits.

<http://www.plan.aau.dk/~flybjerg/Misrepr4-0.pdf>

Flybjerg reports on a study by Wachs in which he says that “in case after case, planners, engineers and economists told Wachs that they had had to “cook” forecasts”.

<http://www.plan.aau.dk/~flybjerg/JAPAASPUBLISHED.pdf>

— Posted by mcbrucker

9. August 6th, 2007 11:58 am

It's not just in the US where extra resources and money are being spent: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/6929777.stm> details how the UK Highways Agency is now going to spend extra resources looking at the bridges in the UK (even though they have confirmed that none of them are the same construction as the one that collapsed).

Does this mean that they needed to spend more looking at bridges in the first place or just your Atlantic cousins following suit?

— Posted by derfer

10. August 6th, 2007 1:06 pm

All of the resources and effort spent on the investigation are definitely worth it. While some waste may happen with regard to CYA and blame deflection, I think the largest benefit comes from the fact that there are hundreds of thousands of bridges in the US (not to mention the rest of the world) and likely hundreds that have some important similarities to the one that failed in Minneapolis. Failures like this one sometimes identify problems with a particular class of bridge that were previously unknown or whose risk level was not properly assessed. Perhaps microscopic cracks in the steel were considered to be a mild risk to be monitored, but this will discover that if they exist near a particular location in the bridge that they need attention. Or maybe they'll identify a problem with how recent work was done which will change procedures in future related bridge maintenance. They may find none of these, but given the number of bridges involved, and the lack of understanding of the failure, this is money well spent.

— Posted by eak

11. August 6th, 2007 1:14 pm

I utterly disagree with the cynicism of this post- this really is the perfect time to buttress infrastructure spending- it's the wisdom of looking at what good can come out of this tragedy- presuming that spending outlays are cyclical, and that the bean counters can always argue for and against any spending projects, what better way to shift public spending than when public sentiment is high?- the spotlight is now on government neglect of infrastructure- so let's work at improving it and we'll all feel better about the ramifications of this

wondered if many Gmail users did the same, and subsequently wound up buying cars. We don't have an answer to that question, but the whole scenario is starting to [...]

December 20 4 comments

The FREAK-est Links

A New York guide to holiday tipping. Researchers discover the surefire way to win at Rock, Paper, Scissors. (Earlier) An economic case for predicting no recession. Monkeys exhibit the same addition skills as college students.

December 19 43 comments

Is 'Stop Liking Men Who Drive Hot Cars' Sound Climate Advice?

Richard Gray at the U.K. Telegraph reports that Sir David King, a University of Cambridge chemist, staunch global warming activist, and one of Britain's top government scientists, gave the following advice to a woman who asked him what she could do to curb global warming: “[S]top admiring young men in Ferraris.” King's larger point — that we [...]

About Freakonomics

Stephen J. Dubner is an author and journalist who lives in New York City. [Bio](#) | [Contact](#)

Steven D. Levitt is a professor of economics at the University of Chicago. [Bio](#) | [Contact](#)

Their book *Freakonomics* has sold 3 million copies worldwide. This blog, begun in 2005, is meant to keep the conversation going. **Melissa Lafsky** is the site editor.

Monthly Archives

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Stuff We Weren't Paid to Endorse

The Farnsworth Invention isn't a great play, but it's a very good play and if you're a recovering *Studio 60* junkie, like I am, you've got to be grateful for a new piece of writing by Aaron Sorkin. It's about the creation of television, both the technical and business ends of it. Although it's a historical play, it takes great license with history. As I write, you'll have to take my word that the play is good, since most of Broadway has been temporarily shut down by a stagehand strike. (SJD)

Most religious memoirs inevitably circle back to the same irresistible, ineffable question: How real is God? But that is not the question that Scott Korb and Peter Bebergl wrestle with in their new dual memoir, *The Faith Between Us*. Instead, they address something that is, to my mind at least, far more interesting: How real is faith? (SJD)

If you love Lucinda Williams, as I do, and want more of her songs than presently exist, you would do well to get Carrie Rodriguez's *Seven Angels on a Bicycle*. There are a lot of similarities between Rodriguez and Williams, but Rodriguez plainly has her own wild thing going on. "50's French Movie," e.g., has a fantastically nasty groove. (SJD)

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From the Opinion Blogs

PAUL KRUGMAN

event

— Posted by frankenduf

12. August 6th, 2007 1:19 pm

"Isn't it possible that the T-Mobile people just suffered from a sort of confirmation bias?"

Possibly but telephone traffic is fairly predictable so abnormal traffic shows up fairly distinctly. When I worked in a long distance call center operators would routinely ask supervisors if something was going on in various places based on the number of calls they were handling from and to a given area.

The problem of course is identifying the cause of the spike. The classic example is the radio station giving away a \$1000 dollars to the 26th caller. Generally those sort of spikes are of fairly limited duration though.

— Posted by Big Hal

13. August 6th, 2007 1:55 pm

Infrastructure in America is going to be a bigger problem in years to come. We have taken for granted all the building that happened in the post-war years. Our patterns of life have become dependent on structures that we think are permanent, but in fact are coming to the end of their useful life. It's no coincidence that our freeways and sewer systems are getting decrepit just as the baby boomers are - we were all made around the same time.

When we think about the legacy we leave our grandchildren, we need to think about leaving them a country in good working order.

— Posted by pparkman

14. August 6th, 2007 2:15 pm

pparkman, I couldn't agree more. What about public transportation? Can we not upgrade and improve that infrastructure? Or are we too afraid we'd be giving terrorists better targets?

— Posted by giromide

15. August 6th, 2007 3:53 pm

The lesson here is that the governing body spending money on new infrastructure should be required by law to appropriate money to maintaining that infrastructure for the predicted useful life of the project.

Or voters who use infrastructure projects should reward candidates who maintain those projects over candidates who build new projects.

— Posted by oddTodd

16. August 6th, 2007 5:13 pm

Angry Bear blog has details of spending by President.

Reagan, Clinton and GWBush are the 3 making the cuts. While GHWBush merely sustained Reagan's cuts.

Why am I not surprised?

Our current gov in MM - Pawlenty - pledged to Never Raise Taxes. Kind of a box for him at the moment.

If you look at the list of deficient bridges linked in Post 4 above you will see the 35W bridge over 62. That is actually an interchange with bridges over city streets and the replacement started this summer. There is a bit of a sad-joke story about the project.

The state did not have the funds but had decided to do the project. So 2 years or so ago they put the project up for bids with NO FUNDING. They asked the contractors to Trust that the state would come through the following year. Guess what? No Bids.

So they finally borrowed enough and got going this summer.

I have no clue how the state will fix the rest of the listed bridges.

NOTE also: How few of the bridges got inspected in 2006 vs 2005.

— Posted by JRip

17. August 6th, 2007 5:15 pm

to find Angry Bear posting go here:

<http://angrybear.blogspot.com/2007/08/comparing-presidents-investment-in-non.html>

(I hope the link comes through in one piece.)

— Posted by JRip

18. August 6th, 2007 8:54 pm

We should be careful to separate the basic issues. One is that unsafe bridges should not be kept open (unless travelers are specifically warned — I don't much care if someone who knowingly crosses a defective bridge gets hurt; that's their lookout). It's negligent to leave an unsafe bridge open, whether it's publicly or privately owned. So if the government doesn't want to pay to keep all the bridges safe, some of them need to be sold, given away, closed, or demolished. That's common sense.

Regardless of whether bridges are public or private, or whether infrastructure spending should be increased or decreased, anyone who maintains the pretense that an unsafe bridge is safe is indulging in negligence.

As for making a big show out of closing the barn door after the horses have escaped, who is going to be fooled by this? Bridge safety is a highly technical, long-term proposition. Politicians can do nothing useful in the short term other than closing the most dangerous bridges. I predict they will prove very reluctant to do this, due to the inevitable uproar. So most of what will be done will be fake. Hopefully the civil engineers will get more mindshare for a while, though.

— Posted by robertplamondon

Search for security

One of the truly amazing things about the current financial environment has been the way investors are parking their money in ...

NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF

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19. August 6th, 2007 9:44 pm Steven,
In case you're not aware of it, the Lake Street Bridge DID collapse. One section of the new one, which is of concrete arch construction, collapsed during construction because the concrete form for the arch was insufficiently supported. IIRC, there was one fatality.
— Posted by [Minnesotachuck](#)
-
20. August 7th, 2007 1:14 am This is when one can really identify how government truly works. It isn't about return on investment, in terms of comparing the benefits society gains as a result of society's money(taxes) spent. It is about return on investment, in the terms of how many votes will I Senator John Doe get next election as a result of a government spending project I sponsor.
Government spending on roads is not popular, because it really doesn't win you votes in an election, unless of course the roads reach critical mass and an infrequent event occurs that scares people enough to believe that their vote might need to be bought through government infrastructure spending. Although, human beings have terrible memories, so I doubt this will go very far.
— Posted by [FreeMarketSociety](#)
-
21. August 7th, 2007 4:05 am The cell phone circuits were completely tied up during the NYC steamline blast as well: I was calling a friend who happened to be on a bus in the area of a blast so that we could meet up for dinner. I couldn't get through. Little did I know what was going on until after the news broke.
— Posted by [Neoterix](#)
-
22. August 7th, 2007 9:56 am As an engineer, I agree with [robertplamondon](#). Much of the current frenzy of bridge inspections is premature until the cause of the Minnesota collapse is understood, and that understanding takes a lot of investigation. To be sure, something got missed in the I-35W inspections, but nobody yet knows what that was.
— Posted by [kaszeta](#)
-
23. August 8th, 2007 9:12 am Suburban sprawl brings more driving, more bridges, more infrastructure, more costs. In my small southern town, a fancy-pants Atlanta company came and built a huge shopping area on a former pecan grove 5 miles north of town, abandoning the shopping area in the middle of town. It can only be reached by private automobile. The old infrastructure has to be kept up, and, now, so does the new.

I second KAH re: bicycles; build to the human scale and the infrastructure won't cost so much.

Pmac
— Posted by [Pmac](#)
-
24. August 8th, 2007 11:12 am In this climate of "make government work like a business," this kind of thing will keep happening.

There is a fundamental difference between government and the free market, one that all those MBAs out there didn't learn. For business the bottom line is profit; for government—and all nonprofits for that matter—the bottom line is: Was the service provided?

In order to provide services, the systems need to be redundant, and redundancy is the opposite of efficiency. Lean and mean engineering is what was behind not only the collapse of the I35W bridge, but also the collapse of the WTC.

Redundancy is more expensive than efficiency, but it's the only way public services can be reliably delivered. So let's get over this mania for efficiency in government. It doesn't work.

(Don't scream at me about wasteful expenditures. Duh. My response is "KBR.")
— Posted by [Mary](#)
-
25. August 8th, 2007 11:24 am The irony of this tragedy is that in a single day more people will have died in auto accidents than in this bridge collapse. However, no one is trumpeting the tragedy of the automobile culture in the United States. It is an odd juxtaposition of reactions.
— Posted by [J.R. Bovinet](#)
-
26. August 8th, 2007 11:36 am Spending public money on bridges and roads is better spent than \$400 million of taxpayer money used to build a new baseball stadium for the twins.

The Metrodome is 25 years old and holds 56,000, the new stadium with its special accommodations for the wealthy has new club seats and luxury boxes and will only hold 40,000. How can you justify spending that kind of corporate welfare to fund expensive entertainment when there are 37 bridges in the immediate area that have ratings below 50%? How many of those bridges could be repaired or replaced with that money?
<http://www.startribune.com/10204/story/1341088.html?wanted=all>
<http://www.ballparks.com/baseball/american/minbpk.htm>
— Posted by [lupine](#)
-
27. August 8th, 2007 11:52 am I was surprised to hear Gov. Pawlenty commending those who ran toward the bridge as if they were coming to help (1%), rather than gawk (99%). Had this been a terrorist attack (and initially there was every reason to think it was) all the extra people showing up could have caused major problems for rescue personnel, not to mention

additional targets for terrorists. Although this is hardly the first time that Pawlenty has pushed reason aside to pander to voters.

— Posted by T-Lu

28. August 8th, 2007 2:43 pm “Why should the government spend money on infrastructure? Surely the free market will cause corporations to step in to avert failures that could cause an increase in their costs.

— Posted by pvanderwaart”

Surely the free market will lead to corporations putting the elusive “common good” at the fore of their decisions. Surely! I’m completely convinced by pvanderwaart’s argument, and I don’t see why historical examples to the contrary—deregulation in power, telecom, and financial services—should be any reason to think otherwise...

Obviously, I’m being sarcastic. I can only hope pvanderwaart was, too.

— Posted by Dan

29. August 8th, 2007 4:31 pm i understand that it was rush hour at the time of the bridge collapse, and therefore the bridge had a maximum number of cars, as well as tons of repair equipment. what if all these at-risk bridges (i heard one estimate of 174,000) limited the number of vehicles allowed on the bridge at any time, that is, controlled the traffic flow over the bridge, by having a stop light at the beginning of the bridge, for example? (i think i saw this done at the delaware memorial bridge or somewhere.) would this help minimize the risk of collapse? especially since these 174,000 risky bridges can forget about getting that needed repair anytime soon.

— Posted by JO

30. August 8th, 2007 10:53 pm We really don’t need to spend \$ on infrastructure. We’re too busy spending \$200 billion a year in Iraq to boost the profits of Exxon / Halliburton / Bechtel.

— Posted by Singapore

31. August 13th, 2007 3:05 am Why should the government spend money on infrastructure? Surely the free market will cause corporations to step in to avert failures that could cause an increase in their costs.

Why have a government at all?

— Posted by mikey

32. August 14th, 2007 2:29 pm I live not far from the 35W bridge. I hope the list from post 4 above is not used to prioritize expenditures without also factoring in a couple other pieces of info. One would be a ranking to determine how a bridge failure would affect human life (let’s face it, traffic engineers rationalize this stuff every day). The other would be some sort of ranking system to determine how the unplanned downtime for a catastrophic failure would affect the local economy, traffic, etc. The failed 35W bridge would probably rank high on both counts, but others (e.g., a low bridge over a shallow stream with alternate routes) may not.

— Posted by BC

33. August 26th, 2007 12:53 pm I am now worried about if the bridges that sill stand today will collapse if I am on it one day. And i wounder what Bush and the government plan to do to prevent this from happening again. God Bless those who lost their loved one’s in the bridge collapse. May God be with you.

— Posted by Rodrik

34. August 27th, 2007 11:29 am Not to take away from those who lost family or loved ones, but on average 120 motorists die EACH DAY in accidents (43,000/yr). What are we doing about them, are they included when we set spending priorities?

— Posted by LEW

35. September 13th, 2007 8:32 pm Maintenance

What do our bridges, schools, health care, and safe city streets have in common?

Yesterday, Cathy and I walked the tenth avenue bridge to get a closeup view and a sense of the scale of the collapsed freeway bridge. It is the biggest disaster I have been face to face with in my lifetime.

As we walked I felt a sense of reverence for my community and a great sadness for the dead and injured. It was a moving experience to walk the quarter of a mile of twisted steel and concrete laying in the river.

This is OUR city, we deserve safe streets, good schools, and bridges that don’t fall into the river.

Community infrastructure is important. If our bridges are failing, it’s probable that our schools, court systems, child protection, and health care systems are getting the same mistreatment. As a CASA child protection volunteer, I believe this to be true.

As a long time student of public policy, business person, and pragmatic human being, I am convinced that listening to experts and completing their minimal maintenance recommendations is exponentially more cost effective than gambling on the savings of not doing the maintenance.

The following few paragraphs should provide a logical arguement for this thought. First the facts:

Minneapolis City Pages September 5th Economy in Freefall article quoted Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty as estimating the additional costs of gas and extra miles due to the bridge collapse at \$400,000 per day, or \$146,000,000 over the next year.

Any accurate calculation of additional costs to drivers must include at least a fair minimum amount for the 144,000 cars per day that used this bridge each day that now must find other routes.

Forty eight cents per mile is the IRS allowance for automobile deductions and this does not include the headache factor of clogged traffic and longer commutes that I seem to be experiencing.

Assuming an average of ten additional miles for each car each way (some of us take the longer 694/494 route around town (which is depending on east or west between thirteen and eighteen additional miles bypassing the city on freeways, others drive fewer extra miles through downtown city streets or the 280 detour).

Multiplying an average ten miles each way for 144,000 cars per day equals 2.8 million miles per day times the IRS 48 cents equals \$1,382,000 per day, or almost four times the governor's estimate.

Hoping that it only takes one year to finish the bridge, multiply 1,382,000 times 365 and it adds to a little over five hundred million dollars in hard costs to drivers for these detours. Eighteen months bridge construction time would equal over seven hundred and fifty million dollars in hard driver costs.

With no extra consideration for the extra ten to twenty minutes at each end of our commute we can honestly call this the hard cost of the bridge collapse.

Add this to the approximately two hundred million dollar estimated cost of a new bridge, and the sure to be substantial lawsuit settlements for wrongful death and injury from the victims of this disaster, and some minimal value for the businesses that are failing because of their new inaccessibility, and a billion dollars becomes a realistic estimate of the total hard costs of not maintaining our bridge.

New York's 20 year veteran bridge engineer Samuel Schwartz (NYT OP-ED 8.13.07) estimated that 178,000 dollars annual maintenance per year per bridge would keep all of his states bridges in pristine condition ("all bridges guaranteed never to collapse", MINE).

Compare 178,000 dollars to the 1,000,000,000 dollars cost of not maintaining this bridge and you can begin to see the actual cost of our anti tax policymaking that has won the hearts and minds of so many Minnesotans.

It appears to be up to five hundred times more expensive to ignore the advice of qualified people (real engineering experts paid high salaries) than it was to gamble on the small savings to be gained by ignoring their advice. Even if we had spent \$178,000 each year for twenty years, the total is \$3,560,000 (far less than a billion dollars).

Similarly, in the case of human beings it is much more cost effective to attend to the needs of a child than waiting until disaster strikes. Trying to resurrect a criminalized juvenile or adult with ten to twenty years of serious mental health problems is extremely difficult. A similar financial calculation for failing to help children in child protection systems to receive the help they need to make it in public schools. Traumatized children cost our community a fortune when we ignore them and wait until they are mentally unstable adults to deal with them. Experts will tell you that the time to help abused and neglected (traumatized) children is when you first have the opportunity. It is exponentially less expensive than waiting until they hurt someone.

Our bridge failed the majority of its safety inspections over the last twenty years. Early and sustained annual maintenance would have been the way to save money, lives, and trauma.

Bridges are designed to a factor of ten times their estimated strength needs. Ask any engineer about the significance of a bridge failure.

It is not the engineers that ruined the bridge. It's not the teachers that wrecked the schools, or social workers that are not taking care of children in child protection.

The bridge collapse was the direct result of the people that made the policies, the same people that have been ignoring the engineers and the experts that know what is needed for systems and infrastructure to stay in working order.

The same policy makers that are responsible for the declining conditions of our schools, transportation, courts, bridges, child protection systems and safe city streets.

Policy makers that point fingers and blame others instead of admitting their own failures and especially those that are not working for long term workable solutions to our infrastructure problems should be tarred and feathered (at least run out of office).

Would someone please print a large "YOUR GOVERNMENT AT WORK" sign and post it on the tenth avenue bridge to be seen by the thousands of us poor dumb saps as we drive by the billion dollar fiasco that to this point hasn't been any policymaker's fault?

Who voted for that person anyway? Would you please vote for someone else next time?

And would someone please tell the anti tax people to stay home and count their money at least until the bodies are buried and the wreckage is cleared?

Mike T

I am also a spokesman for Invisible Children
www.invisiblechildren.org/weblog

— Posted by mike t

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