

## **Battle for the Enlightenment: Neoliberalism, Critical Theory and the role of Circumvential Education in Fostering a New Phase of the Enlightenment**

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### **Abstract**

*Higher education is one of the last democratic institutions in society and it is currently under attack by advocates of neo-liberalism. The purpose of this paper is to illustrate how this “battle” can be framed as a battle over the direction of the Enlightenment. Critical Theory and neoliberalism both emerged from academia in response to historical conditions, but each school drew its inspiration from the same source, the promises of the Enlightenment. It is my ultimate hope that framing critical theory and neoliberalism in a battle for the Enlightenment will shed light on the dialectal heritage of present day higher education as well as its dialectical capabilities. Finally, to utilize the dialectal capability of higher education, a new critical pedagogy is examined, that of circumvential education, which seeks to circumvent and dialectically surpass the neo-liberal paradigm.*

**Key Words:** Critical Theory, Dialectic, Enlightenment, Neoliberalism

### **Neoliberalism as the pinnacle of the Enlightenment**

The Enlightenment transformed European society during the eighteenth century onwards. Its effects were felt around the world (Chakrabarty, 2000; Jay, 1996). The Enlightenment was the age of reason, a time of hope and optimism. Many truly believed that the human race was at the threshold of change (Habermas, 1990). Of course the Enlightenment was not a monolithic term; some ideas conflicted with others. Some thinkers were more radical, some wanted democracy, others constitutional monarchy, some wanted free market capitalism, others social and moral progress, but almost all wanted some form of change (Sewall, 1985).

During the nineteenth century, global capitalism and industrialization utilized certain strands of the Enlightenment; namely the free market and *laissez faire* theories of the Scottish School

and Adam Smith at the expense of the more progressive ideas (Habermas, 1990). Science, industry and reason were increasingly subsumed into the profit making schemes of capitalism and for the benefit of an elite minority (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969; Giroux, 2011; Habermas, 1990; Horkheimer, 1974). This exploitive capitalism reached its zenith just prior to the Great depression which exposed its many flaws (Wolff, 2012). Until the 1970s, governments enacted policies to mitigate these flaws (Wolff, 2012). Critical theory flourished at this time. It helped to undergird some of the most radical social movements of the 1960s (Jay, 1996). Since the early 1980s however, many of these reforms have been rolled back due to the efforts of a resurgent right wing and neo-liberal influence (Wolff, 2012).

Higher education is one of the institutions that facilitated the rise of neoliberalism to global dominance (Giroux, 2011; Peet, 2009; Vestritich, 2008). The theories of Neoliberalism hatched in academia and many institutions in wider society gradually adopted them (Peet, 2009; Plant, 2010). Neoliberalism assumed the position of the dominant paradigm of globalization during the later twentieth and now twenty-first century (Habermas, 1990; Spring, 2008; Peet, 2009). Now, virtually all higher education policy is influenced by neoliberalism (Slaguther & Rhoades, 2004). In the widest sense, Neoliberalism is the most advanced form of global capitalism because neo-liberals, like their eighteenth century predecessors, seek to minimize any government influence and allow the market to reign supreme (Mallot, 2012; Plant, 2010; Wolff, 2012).

Higher education however also offers society the best way to realize the promises of the Enlightenment (Giroux, 2011, Hill, 2012). The purpose of this paper is to illustrate potential next phases in the development of Enlightenment thought in academia. In order to foment the revolutionary capabilities of higher education, a new type of critical pedagogy will be introduced, that of circumvential education. Circumvential education exploits holes in the neo-liberal paradigm to induce a transformation of higher education and ultimately of Enlightenment thought. Critical theory holds the potential for true emancipation because Critical Theory is centered on the notion of social justice, liberation and the dialectic (Adorno, 1990; Jay, 1996; Marcuse, 1992).

Generally critical theorists view dialectical movement as progressive, or at least as a critical tool which has the power to upset the status quo of society and which makes visible all forms of oppression (Adorno, 1990; Jay, 1996; Marcuse, 1990). Once visible, these oppressive elements are rectified or negated by latent possibilities that already exist within the society itself (Jay, 1996; Marcuse, 1990). The result is a new, more just society, which is always open to further dialectal criticism. For critical theorists, the dialectic is the result of human action and thought; not some supernatural guiding hand (Marcuse, 1990).

Since the emergence of industrialized capitalism during the late nineteenth century, a dialectal foil has emerged alongside of it and acted as a critique, first Marxism and then Critical Theory (Carrier, 1997; Sewall, 1985). To illustrate the dialectical movement of Enlightenment thought in higher education, I selected three prominent neo-liberal theorists and I have contrasted them with three prominent critical theorists. By pitting the selected critical theorists side by side with selected neo-liberals I sought to make visible the existing contradictions in the neo-liberal order. Once visible, the beneficial aspects of neoliberalism can be retained and what is oppressive can be annihilated. Then a new phase of higher education can be ushered in by the method of circumventual education which in turn can ignite social change.

There are various institutions of higher education worldwide; two year schools, four year schools, public schools, private schools and for-profit schools (Rhoads & Torres, 2006). This paper focuses specifically on public institutions of higher education in the United States and globally. Neoliberals attack public and democratic spaces. This is why I focus on public higher education. While the fight against neoliberalism will vary by situation, neoliberalism is a global phenomenon (Rhoads & Torres, 2006).

### **Situating the Battle in Current Literature**

Giroux argues that pedagogy and politics cannot be separated. In order to participate in a democracy, students must be properly educated for the task. They must be given critical and conceptual tools to participate in their own governance (Giroux, 2011). This is why higher education has been in the cross-hairs of neo-liberal advocates for the last 40 years (Giroux, 2011; Hill, 2006; Rhoads & Torres, 2006; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Giroux further argues

that critical theorists cannot despair or resign themselves to the totalizing neo-liberal onslaught of all democratic and public values (Giroux, 2011). Instead, he argues for pedagogy of hope; he believes that higher education is a place of resistance.

Hill (2012) argues that this is a revolutionary time in history. Global capitalism has perpetuated a huge income gap between the rich and the poor globally (Hill, 2012). He bluntly states that equality cannot exist under a capitalist system. Without equality, there will always be oppression and major institutions in capitalists' states must reproduce capitalist ideology thus reinforcing inequality (Hill, 2012). The education systems of a state are a major institution for transmitting this ideology. Hill however, argues that it is not monolithic and thus, like Giroux, must become a site of activism and hope. New pedagogies must inculcate hope and resistance to the neo-liberal order (Hill, 2012). Again, Hill's work speaks to this battle between critical theory and radical democracy on the one hand and anti-democratic neoliberalism on the other. In addition, Carl Becker (2010) argued that, due to the neo-liberal attack on higher education, the very foundation of the United States democratic tradition is at stake.

The battle that Giroux, Hill, Becker, Rhoads and Torres and others have elucidated between critical theory and democracy on the one hand, and the prevailing neo-liberal paradigm on the other, is more complex. I contend that it is actually a battle for the true meaning of the Enlightenment. The University of Chicago, particularly the economics department, was one institution that helped to incubate the ideas of Neoliberalism (Overtveldt, 2007; Reder, 1982). Similarly, the theories that emerged from the Frankfurt school in Germany were also incubated by the particular experiences that its members experienced. When contrasted, the school of Critical Theory and the school of Neoliberalism can be seen as a battle for the legacy of the Enlightenment. Each school of thought emerged from academia in response to historical conditions, but each school drew its inspiration from the same source, the promises of the Enlightenment. This battle cannot be seen as occurring in a vacuum; rather, the unique influences of the particular institutions of the University of Chicago and Frankfurt must be examined.

### **Critical Theory: The Dialectical Foil**

Capitalism has always engendered a dialectical opposition (Carrier, 1997; Sewall, 1985). The first major opposition came from Marxism during the middle of the nineteenth century (Carrier, 1997; Sewall, 1985). Critical Theory, in turn, largely derived from Marxism (Jay, 1996; Sewall, 1985). Critical Theory emerged during the interwar years in Germany at the University of Frankfurt. This was a time of radical social upheaval in Europe. The Russian Revolution of 1917, as well as the failed socialist Revolution in Germany in 1919, along with the subsequent entrenchment of bourgeoisie capitalism in Germany had fired the imagination of many would-be revolutionaries in Germany. Many of these revolutionaries turned to Marxism because they felt it offered the most illuminating critique of their contemporary bourgeoisie capitalist society. Many German Marxists, however, disdained the increasingly dogmatic and state sponsored “communism” of the Soviet Union. A common aim of many adherents to Critical Theory was to revitalize Marxism after its mechanistic interpretation by Soviet Marxists (Jay, 1996; Kellner, 1992).

Felix Weil, who had completed his dissertation and earned his doctorate from the University of Frankfurt in 1922, and who had participated in the failed socialist revolution in Germany in 1919, held a week-long Marxist seminar in the summer of 1922. Many of the renowned Marxist scholars in Germany attended. From this meeting, Weil was inspired to create a permanent institute dedicated to examining and propagating Marxism in Germany. In 1923, Weil persuaded his father, a wealthy grain merchant, to endow the institute, which was named the Institute for Social Research. German Marxists had three choices after the Russian Revolution of 1917: either follow the leadership of Moscow, fall in line with the more liberal German socialist party and work through the Weimar system, or forge a new path for Germany Marxism. With the creation of the Institute for Social Research in 1923, German Marxists chose the latter (Jay, 1996).

Max Horkheimer became the director of the institute in 1931. Horkheimer, who had received his doctorate at Frankfurt, desired to take the institute into new, uncharted directions. Horkheimer believed a supra-disciplinary approach was needed to examine contemporary society, not the dusty, archaic Marxist formulas developed in the nineteenth century (Jay, 1996; Kellner, 1992). Under Horkheimer’s leadership, the Institute turned Marxism, which

had become dogmatic, into a tool of liberation for the oppressed (Jay, 1996; Kellner, 1992). This supra-disciplinary and emancipatory approach naturally would not have flourished in the rigid German University system. The Institute for Social Research, which was only loosely affiliated with the University of Frankfurt, allowed its members a freedom unknown in the universities (Jay, 1996). Due to this flexibility, Critical Theory found fertile ground at Frankfurt (Jay, 1996; Kellner, 1992).

This semi-autonomy resulting from the Institute's endowment inculcated aloofness in the Institute members from the German higher education system. This aloofness, this outsider perspective, helped to foster an atmosphere of critical reflection on a society to which the members of the institute did not feel attached (Jay, 1996, Kellner, 1992). This outsider perspective was only intensified in 1934, when most of the members were forced to immigrate to America, because of their communist leanings (Jay, 1996). Their position as outsiders gave them a unique vantage point for both German and American society, and allowed them to craft a unique social theory (Jay, 1996, Kellner, 1992). Social theory is a conceptualization about how human beings interact in a given society (Lemert, 2010). The inner circle of the Institute for Social Research, which consisted of Horkheimer, Adorno, Herbert Marcuse and Erich Fromm, believed that the main determinant of human behavior in contemporary society was capitalism and in turn, a society's relationship to capitalism. The Critical Theorists espoused revulsion for capitalism and its destructive tendencies. They sought to use Marxism to critique society, and ultimately to liberate it from the deadly effects of capitalism (Jay, 1996; Kellner, 1992).

The terms Critical Theory, Frankfurt School and Institute of Social Research are usually used interchangeably, but this is misleading. The Institute for Social Research was founded in 1923. During the 1930s, the Marxist overtones of many in the Institute necessitated the use of the code phrase "critical theory" in order not to arouse the attention of the increasingly dominant Nazi party, which was increasingly hostile to communist thought. Afterward, this name stuck because certain members of the Institute sought to use Marxism to critique and transform society. The term Frankfurt School was not used until after the members returned to Germany in 1950. This paper will use the term Critical Theory and Critical Theorists

because it preserves the intentions of its founders, namely the desire for social action and change (Jay, 1996; Kellner, 1992).

One of the earliest works that emerged from the Critical Theory tradition was Erich Fromm's *Escape from Freedom* in 1941<sup>1</sup>. One of the lynchpins of Enlightenment thought was the notion of individualism. As individuals, all humans were endowed with reason, thus all should be free to reason their behaviors. However, Fromm argued that this freedom was isolating, alienating and terrifying to the individual. The individual, freed from all sorts of communal and transcendental bonds, was utterly alone. Writing at the beginning of the Nazi attempt to dominate Europe, Fromm (1969) saw what man did with his freedom; he escaped into the comforts of Fascism, which offered some sort of stability and purpose. Fromm's theories bear the imprint of his time spent at the Institute. With *Escape from Freedom*, Fromm built off his earlier work while at the Institute, which was an attempt to create a revolutionary consciousness to accompany the degenerating material conditions for the exploited classes. This revolutionary consciousness was a preoccupation of the institute and specifically of its Critical Theorists. Declining material conditions were not enough for the Critical Theorists as they were for the orthodox Marxists, a revolutionary conscience was needed as well to incubate revolution (Kellner, 1992). The Critical Theorists third path, that of straddling scientific Soviet Marxism as well as the Weimar Republic Marxism, along with their outsider status from society and the university systems in German and America, had helped to incubate this original and unorthodox turn in Fromm's theories.

While Fromm was concerned with providing a sociological-psychological critique of society, Adorno and Horkheimer sought a more historical critique. In *Dialectic of Enlightenment* first written in 1947, their joint work both argued that the European Enlightenment had dialectally transformed into a new barbarism. The Enlightenment extolled human reason. After the subsequent industrialization of the West during the later 19<sup>th</sup> century, and continuing in to the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, this extolment of reason turned into a slavish adherence to efficiency in the forms of Nazism, Stalinism, and later the giant bureaucratic states such as the United States (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969). Adorno and Horkheimer pointed to the brutal and compassionless extermination produced by the Nazi war machine, as well as the standardizing and conforming of the masses in democratic countries, due to a growing

advertising and Hollywood movie industry (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969; Kellner, 1992). Humans were liberated from superstition, but their liberation paradoxically enslaved them to cold hard scientific logic, consumerism, and a brutal standardization. The Enlightenment had transformed into slavery (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969). What was needed was a new dialectal movement to a more enlightened state, one based on justice and human happiness (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969)

Following Adorno and Horkheimer, Marcuse (1992) argued that the Enlightenment had dialectally transformed into a new barbarism. However, he further argued that a key feature of this new barbarism was the emergence of the one-dimensional man (Marcuse, 1992). The Enlightenment thinkers of the Eighteenth Century fought for freedoms and rights, the right to think, the rights to speak freely, the right criticize, and above all the right to be free (Marcuse, 1992). Marcuse saw these rights as belonging to the inner or second dimension of every human being. This inner dimension was one of reflection or what Marcuse called negative thinking. Negative thinking was the act of submitting the given reality, the status quo, to critique in order to usher in a higher reality. The new barbarism though had invaded man's sphere of critical reflection (Marcuse, 1992). Like Adorno and Horkheimer, Marcuse saw the rise of the advertising industry, the media and government propaganda as usurping man's inner sphere and destroying his second dimension. Man was reduced to one dimension. His rights became commodities. He no longer had the ability to liberate himself through critical reflection (Marcuse, 1992).

Critical theory spurred revolutionary activities in the United States and Europe during the tumultuous 1960s and 1970s (Jay, 1996; Kellner 1992). Racism, sexism and the Vietnam War became targets for young protestors, and many used elements of critical theory to develop their critiques (Jay, 1996). The social gains of the 1960s and the subsequent quest for social justice they inspired however were in large part neutralized by the rising tide neoliberalism and the quest for profit (Newfield, 2008; Newfield, 2011). During this time, neoliberalism gained strength and acceptance and finally emerged as the victor between the two ideologies during the 1980s.



### **Neoliberalism and Chicago**

Adam Smith is largely hailed as the father of modern capitalism (Plant, 2010). He believed in limited government interference in the economy, the ability of individuals to make rational decisions, and above all the idea of the “invisible hand” (Fowler, 2009; Overtveldt, 2007; Plant, 2010). Smith defined the invisible hand as a theory in which individuals were motivated by self interest, but through their selfish actions individuals would check each other and create harmonic society (Plant, 2010). For Smith, the market was the guarantor of this invisible hand. Competition and customer satisfaction would lead to harmony. Smith’s theories were foundational for the development of liberalism in the Eighteenth Century, which was a major impetus of the American and French Revolutions. In the second half of the Twentieth Century, Smith’s ideas underwent resurgence (Fowler, 2009; Plant, 2010). In the Twentieth Century, followers of Smith were dubbed neo-liberals, because they were perceived to be reinvigorating eighteenth and Nineteenth Century liberalism (Fowler, 2009).

The American stock market crash in 1929 sent an already economically fragile world into the worst depression it had ever seen (Mazower, 1998). After this, the *laissez-faire* position was discredited, and perceived to be the cause of the crash (Peet, 2009; Reder, 1982). It seemed the stock market crash and the ensuing Great Depression signaled the end of the invisible hand. President Franklin Roosevelt inaugurated a new era in American politics with the passage of the New Deal policies in the early 1930s. Meant to counter the economic downturn of the Great Depression, the New Deal brought the government in direct contact with the economy in the form of bank regulation, higher taxes, the creation of government programs, and deficit spending (Peet, 2009). After the Second World War, many European nations had established welfare states to avoid the calamities of the 1930s (Mazower, 1998).

Instead of Smith, Roosevelt and other architects of the New Deal drew on the ideas of the 20<sup>th</sup> century economist Maynard Keynes. Keynes distrusted Smith’s theory of the invisible hand. Keynes called for strong government regulation and deficit spending to jump start a stagnant economy. Businessman and bankers reluctantly supported the Keynesian New Deal policies (Peet, 2008). The most vocal criticism to Keynesian and New Deal policies came from the University of Chicago, and namely its economics department (Klein, 2007). Melvin Reder (1982) argues that by the late 1940s, the American Conservative Party was in

shambles. Its two major tenets, *laissez-faire* economics and social conservatism, had been deflated by the events of the Great Depression and Nazism, respectively (Reder, 1982). Into this void the ideas emanating from Chicago began to jostle for a foothold with Conservatives. The subsequent entrenchment of Neoliberalism, at least in the conservative party was aided by the flourishing American economy. During the 1950s and 1960s, the most dangerous theories were not those of terrorism or anti-clericalism, but rather socialism and criticism of capitalism (Overtveldt, 2007). And Critical theory, which derived from Marxism, embodied this resistance to global capitalism (Jay, 1996).

While neoliberalism is now a global phenomenon, it originated in America (Mallot, 2012; Peet, 2009; Spring, 2008). American bankers and businessmen and many on the political right had reluctantly supported New Deal policies and the larger role of the government in the economy from the 1930s until roughly the early 1960s (Peet, 2009; Wolff, 2012). By the 1960s, however, after the Johnson Years and the programs of the Great Society, which had changed the focus of policy from economic prosperity which only aided some to equality for all, many on the right began to look for a voice to rebut the political left in United States politics. By the 1970s, the battle between left and right had reached a fevered pitch due to the government's direct attack on business in the form of stringent environmental and labor regulations (Peet, 2009). Intellectuals, conservative think tanks, corporate-funded research teams helped to disseminate the pro-market ideas of the Chicago School on a national scale (Peet, 2009). During the 1950s and 1960s, the radical ideas emanating from Chicago were gaining ground but were still too radical to be accepted by Washington politicians and the general public (Overtveldt, 2007; Peet, 2009).

Latin America and Southeast Asia proved to be laboratories for neoliberalism during the 1960s and 1970s (Klein, 2007). The United States, at the behest of corporations such as International Telephone and Telegraph, United Fruit and Pfizer to name a few, backed military juntas and coups in Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Indonesia (Klein, 2007). The US also founded hundreds of Latin American graduate students to study at the University of Chicago under Milton Freidman and other neo-liberal theorists. These students returned to Latin America and assumed positions of leadership in the newly formed authoritarian governments (Klein, 2007). The once thriving socialist governments were brutally dismantled

by US and corporate backed dictators, and neoliberal economic policies were implemented by Latin American scholars turned statesmen (Klein, 2007). The holy trinity of privatization, deregulation and slashing of social spending mutilated these once prosperous economics (Klein, 2007). The result: a massive disparity of wealth, a skeletal social net and enormous profit for foreign companies (Klein, 2007).

As a global recession overtook the world in the 1970s, conservatives found a window of opportunity to implement neoliberalism on a global scale (Klein, 2007, Peet, 2009). Neoliberalism resonated with an American society that was weary of protest, tumult and recession and it was driven home by massive backing from right wing donors (Newfield, 2008). Neo-liberal theories became a permanent part of the American political landscape with the election of Ronald Reagan in the US and the election of Margaret Thatcher in the UK both in 1981 (Klein, 2007; Mallot, 2012; Peet, 2009; Wolff, 2012). The Reagan and Thatcher administrations slashed social spending, deregulated the economy, cut taxes, urged privatization and attacked unions, just like in Latin America (Giroux, 2011; Klein, 2007; Wolff, 2012). The result was the same: a massive income disparity and skeletal social services (Klein, 2007; Wolff, 2012). With the US in the lead, these neo-liberal ideas were implemented globally by world organizations such as the International Monetary Fund and World bank (Peet, 2009). Neoliberalism and critical theory were two competing visions of the Enlightenment during the middle of the Twentieth Century but neoliberalism dominated by the 1980s has become the current stage of capitalist domination (Mallot, 2012).

During the 1980s and 1990s, victorious neo-liberals and conservatives led a vicious smear campaign to discredit the social justice gains of the 1960s. They branded any social justice claim with the moniker of “political correctness” to paint it as an absurdity (Newfield, 2008). Institutions of higher education were hit particularly hard (Newfield, 2008). Social justice was cast as an expensive farce propagated by supposedly liberal and communist college professors (Newfield, 2008). Instead of meeting the right wing attack head on, leftist scholars degenerated in a vicious and pedantic criticism of each other (Rhoads & Torres, 2006). As a result, the right pointed to the absurdity of the left and argued that disciplines like the humanities and philosophy were ultimately useless (Newfield, 2008; Rhoads & Torres, 2006). Instead, they argued that only practical disciplines like engineering and applied

sciences, which could yield profit, were valuable (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Profit, utility and the global economy became the only standard measure for higher education (Rhoads & Torres, 2006; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004).

### **The Battle**

Neoliberalism is a diverse theory, but the Chicago school represents the most coherent formulation of neoliberalism (Peet, 2009; Reder, 1982; Spring, 2008). The story of the Chicago school also offers a glimpse of the rise of neoliberalism and its perpetual foil of Critical Theory. The free-market strand of the Enlightenment inaugurated by Adam Smith and the Scottish school has assumed a position of dominance in modern global society (Giroux, 2011; Hill, 2012; Peet, 2009). Neoliberalism is the most current stage of the evolution of the Enlightenment (Mallot, 2012). Adorno and Horkheimer argued that the Enlightenment had dialectically progressed to its opposite in the by the Second World War (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969). However, by the 1960s, there had been another dialectal progression and some of the concerns of critical theory like social justice and equality were being fought for (Newfield, 2008). Of course, neoliberalism was gradually rising, at first in developing countries (Klein, 2007). But the by the 1980s there was another shift, this time toward neoliberalism on a global scale. In the widest sense, Neoliberalism is the pinnacle of the Enlightenment-usurped by capitalism because the market is the supreme harbinger of justice and value in society.

### **Hayek and Fromm**

F. A. Hayek was never an official member of the Chicago School of Economics. He was a professor in the Sociology Department at Chicago, and prior to his tenure at Chicago he was a professor at the University of Austria (Plant, 2010). Hayek's theories at his time in Austria and later at the University of Chicago had a tremendous impact on the Chicago School. Overtveldt (2007) argued Hayek's first major work; *The Road to Serfdom* written in 1944 became the unofficial manifesto of Chicago economists.

In *The Road to Serfdom* Hayek argued that that the road to serfdom was inaugurated by the loss of individuality and contemporary society was on that road, which culminated in totalitarianism (Plant, 2010). Hayek pointed to Nazism and Stalinism as examples of modern

serfdom. He further warned that the welfare state policies of Great Britain and the United States were eerily reminiscent of the centralizing tendencies of pre-Nazi and Nazi periods in Germany (Plant, 2010). He argued that the conception of the individual was the backbone of the Western tradition, and the respect and praise of the individual reached its pinnacle during the period of Nineteenth Century liberalism. This notion of the individual harkened back to the Enlightenment (Hayek, 1944; Plant, 2010). Hayek does admit that abuses occurred while elevating individualism. He notes how certain individuals profited at the expense of others. He maintained, however, that society should have refined liberalism and worked through these problems instead of turning to socialism (Hayek, 1944; Plant, 2010). He concludes his work by calling for a new conception of the individual to emerge.

The foundation of Hayek's work is the conception of individual freedom. As Plant (2010) notes, Hayek ascribed to a notion of negative liberty. Plant describes this as "freedom from" not "freedom to." Hayek distinguished between a nomocracy and teleocracy to draw the distinction between positive and negative freedom (Plant, 2010). A nomocracy is a society where the government acts simply as a referee, allowing individuals to do as they please and simply to regulate their actions so they do not harm others. This is negative liberty; it is simply the idea of allowing the individual to pursue his own ends without endangering anyone else (Plant, 2010). In contrast, a teleocracy is where a government and society are organized to achieve specific purposes (Plant, 2010). For example, socialist societies were organized around the notion of "freedom from want." This is a positive freedom, which Hayek argues is not really a freedom at all because it curtails the individual (Hayek, 1944; Plant, 2010). This notion of the individual, and individual rights, is one of the cornerstones of the Chicago School and in a wider sense, one of the cornerstones of the Enlightenment (Bloland, 2005; Kellner, 1992). Hayek's work, written as the American conservative movement was beginning to recover, and within the unique confines of the Chicago School, can in some ways be read as the extreme conclusion of Enlightenment individualism.

Erich Fromm's major work *Escape from Freedom* which was written three years earlier than *The Road to Serfdom* in 1941, tempers Hayek's praise of individual liberty, and by doing so challenges Hayek's extreme version of Enlightenment individualism. Fromm's work was

juxtaposed to Hayek's because of the stark contrast each thinker represents in regards to the meaning of Enlightenment individualism.

Hayek and Fromm both had different visions of history. Hayek saw socialism and fascism rise as a result of the curtailment of individual liberties during the early Twentieth Century, whereas Fromm saw fascism and Soviet socialism arise as a result of the individual actually fearing his own freedom and accepting a form of domination to escape his freedom (Hayek, 1944; Fromm, 1969). Hayek called for a negative freedom, but for Fromm this prospect was terrifying. Freedom was not enough. This is, however, precisely what Hayek and the school of Neoliberalism offered; a negative freedom which isolates and atomizes the individual (Plant, 2010; Overtveldt, 2007). Fromm argued that this "free" individual is then bombarded with advertisements and media messages meant to dull his intellect and turn him into a consumer. The Enlightenment had transformed the real individual into a fiction, a consumer to be manipulated (Fromm, 1969). Hayek's negative freedom must be read with a warning; freedom may not be enough to free man. The freedom that Hayek argued in favor of was terrifying in some respects, at least to Critical Theorists like Fromm.

Fromm's arguments foreshadowed this alienating aspect of freedom in modern society. Man in isolation is not free. Enlightenment individualism can lead to a destructive competition. This contradiction in individualism must be realized and dialectally superseded. Individualism can by no means be dispensed with, but it must be valued in the context of the community. Without a communal notion, individuals become brutes; they de-evolve into a competition for resources. Under neoliberalism, communal notions are stripped away (Plant, 2010). Public higher education must dialectically work to bring back individual rights grounded in the notion of community.

### **Friedman, Adorno and Horkheimer**

Milton Friedman is the most well known and influential of the Chicago Economists. He served as a professor at the University of Chicago from 1946 until 1976 (Overtveldt, 2007). Led by Friedman, the Chicago School of Economics became a powerful force in American politics (Peet, 2009). Friedman drew inspiration from neoclassical economics, which is ultimately rooted in the ideas of Adam Smith. Friedman believed that economics was a

science on par with the natural sciences, and that it is predictive of human behavior (Reder, 1982). Riding the anti-socialist and anti-government planning wave that began to swell in the 1950s, Freidman attacked the dominant Keynesian economic policies of the US government. Freidman saw Keynes' theories, namely the idea of government inference and the limiting of the free market as leading to a benevolent dictatorship and ultimately totalitarianism (Peet, 2009).

Freidman's ideas set the tone for the rest of the Chicago school. Though Freidman's ideas were diverse and complex, he primarily argued that price mechanism is the key element in solving all economic problems as well as all societal phenomena (Friedman & Friedman, 1980; Reder, 1982; Overtveldt, 2007). Freidman believed that privatization, competition, and deregulation, adhered to by governments, would facilitate maximum efficiency of all social institutions (Fiala, 2010). This notion underscored all of Freidman's theories, as well as most of the work that came out of the Chicago school (Fiala, 2010; Friedman & Friedman, 1980; Overtveldt, 2007; Reder, 1982). As noted by Overtveldt, Friedman's vision of economics elides with one of the major beliefs of the Chicago school as a whole; economics was the most important science and most relevant to the human condition.

Reder (1982) noted how soon after coming to Chicago, Friedman began to combine his economic research with policy advocacy. Specifically, he advocated for publically subsidized private schools, voluntary social security and abolishing regulatory measures for doctors to name a few. Freidman (1982) felt that the economist had the responsibility to inform legislators and then let them make decisions based on this information. In light of the growing resistance to Keynesian policies and governmental interference, and the extolling of the virtues of American capitalism in the face of Soviet planning, Friedman's strand of political activism helped to propel Neoliberalism to the forefront of the American political scene. Specifically, during the 1970s, conservative think tanks and corporate-funded research grants helped to disseminate the tenets of the Chicago School and Neoliberalism (Peet, 2009).

Freidman's theories can be seen as fulfilling Adorno and Horkheimer's predications. For Adorno and Horkheimer, the Enlightenment's preoccupation with quantification and the scientific method had dialectally progressed to a new type of enslavement, to a new

barbarism of cold hard logic, standardization and efficiency (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969). Of course Adorno and Horkheimer were writing in regards to Nazism, and later to the giant bureaucratic democracies of the United States and Europe in the 1950s. Friedman's market reductionism can be seen as the logical conclusion to the new barbarism. While Friedman argued that the market would lead to efficiency and ultimately to harmony- much like Smith's invisible hand-Adorno and Horkheimer argued that the free market only leads to compassionless decisions undertaken without any regard for human life. Instead, the only concern is competition and efficiency (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969). Friedman's glorification of the market is the epitome of the new barbarism because now modern man was enslaved to reason and efficiency, which was supposed to liberate him (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969). Here there is no room for creativity or love. All must be quantifiable. The notion of Friedman's rational consumer and cold, efficient market is antithetical to the critical theories' conception of a vibrant public sphere undergirded by individualism and democracy. Efficiency must be part of any advanced society, but not at the cost of humanism. Friedman's ideas must be dialectically superseded

### **Becker and Marcuse**

One of Friedman's most distinguished students was Gary Becker. Becker's ideas have the imprint of Friedman, but they took Friedman's ideas in new directions. Becker put forth the theory of human capital in the early 1960s. The theory holds that institutions such as education can be viewed like any other monetary investment (Lazear, 2000). People engage in these investments when they receive a high rate of return (Becker, 1993). People will spend more on education if a high return is obtained. For Becker, schooling and educational institutions specialized in the production of training human beings for certain tasks. This training could be measured and quantified with formulas for the rate of return (Becker, 1993). This quantification aspect, and the complex system of measuring the returns, is the heart of the theory of human capital. Becker sensed that his theories might stir controversy because in essence they viewed people as objects, as capital (Becker, 1993). Due to this sensitivity, he noted that his theory of human capital did not have to exclude non-momentary aspects of education, such as education for citizenship, culture or the arts (Becker, 1993). Ironically, this seems to be the one piece of his ideas that was not readily adapted. As Becker noted in 1993,



and later thinkers such as Overtveldt (2007) and Peet (2009) note, neoliberalism is now the dominant economic and social ideology across the globe.

The theory of human capital is emblematic of the Chicago School as a whole because it paved the way for the idea that public services could be quantified and treated like financial operations (Reder, 1982). Again, like Friedman's ideas, Becker's theory of human capital elides with the foundational tenet of the Chicago School, that is, market reductionism. Becker noted his conceptualization of human beings as capital could be traced back to the master himself, The Enlightenment thinker, Adam Smith (Overtveldt, 2007). The kernel of Becker's ideas, which is the embodiment of the Chicago School itself, is the quantification of social institutions. By the 1970s, the notion of human capital had extended beyond the discipline of economics, and was eventually adopted by such organizations as the World Bank in regards to their funding of educational programs globally (Lazear, 2000; Peet, 2008).

In some sense, Becker's notion of human capital fulfills Marcuse's notion of the one-dimensional man because if man is viewed as human capital, in terms of profits and investments, then his inner sphere becomes a commodity (Marcuse, 1992). When individualism is viewed only as consumerism, it is pitted against a much deeper and richer understanding of the free individual (Fowler, 2009). Marcuse notes how the advertising industry, the media and the government all help to invade this inner sphere of man and they do this by creating artificial desires, for new products and brand names. These false desires replaced man's natural capabilities of reflection and criticism. While Becker and other members of the Chicago school argued that the theory of human capital is simply a more efficient way to look at social problems, seen in light of Marcuse's work, the essence of human capital is reductionism. Man is reduced to a consumer with no capabilities of critical reflection and he is reduced to one-dimensional man (Marcuse, 1992). This reductionism is seen by many as the greatest achievement of the Chicago School, and the unique culture of the Chicago School as well as the events in wider American society, helped to inculcate this (Peet, 2009; Reder, 1982).

The 1970s neoliberal experiments in Latin America and Southeast Asia proved to be the birth pangs of a new neoliberal society in the womb of the old (Klein, 2007). Klein noted that

these experiments were performed with exacting terror, and terror, far from the exception to capitalism and the free market is at its foundation. Democracy and neoliberalism are not compatible, rather true democratic institutions need to be dismantled and replaced with authoritarian ones in order for capitalism to return to its true and original state; neoliberalism (Klein, 2007).

Human capital epitomizes this battle between the truly free individual of the Enlightenment and the narrow vision of the individual as a consumer, and really between a democracy based on profit accumulation and a teleocracy rooted in social justice, which has played out in higher education policy around the world (Rhoads & Slaughter, 2006; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). In 1993 Gary Becker remarked the theory of human capital had become the norm in higher education policymaking (Becker, 1993). He was right. Higher education policy in the United States and globally has become a direct reflection of neoliberalism and in a larger sense, the neoliberal pinnacle of the Enlightenment (Mallot, 2012; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Rhoads & Torres, 2006).

### **Educational Policy, Neoliberalism and the Space for Social Justice**

In the United States, Latin America, Europe, Africa and all parts of the world higher educational policy globally is driven by neoliberalism (Giroux, 2011; Kiziltepe, 2010; Rhoads & Torres, 2006; Spring, 2008) During the last thirty years, higher education has undergone a transformation (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Rhoads & Torres, 2006; Vestrich, 2008). Many policymakers and higher education administrators have sought to change the focus of higher education from its traditional humanist emphasis to a more vocational and utility-oriented emphasis (Kiziltepe, 2010; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Vestrich, 2008). This utility-oriented emphasis embodies Hayek's negative freedom, Friedman's efficiency of the market, and especially Becker's human capital. As the Enlightenment matured into the nineteenth and twentieth century it increasingly became immersed in global capitalism. It resembled the "new barbarism" of Adorno and Horkheimer. Now, in the twenty-first century, the new barbarism is celebrated as neoliberalism.

Some examples will suffice to show the transition to neoliberalism. In my home state of Virginia, for instance, the Top-Jobs Act of the 21st Century of Virginia clearly illustrates this

neo-liberal emphasis in higher education policy. The summary of the act forcefully states that the purposes of higher education are to enhance revenue for the state, enhance revenues for the individual, and create a trained workforce able to compete in the global economy and to foster partnerships with the private business to enhance revenues (Rhoads & Torres, 2006). There are similar policies regarding higher education in state capitols across the United States (Fowler, 2009). Similarly, in Europe, the Bologna Process, which was a European Union initiative undertaken in 1999, has restructured the European higher education according to many neo-liberal dictates (Maassen & Stensaker, 2010). Higher education in areas such as Latin America and Africa have neo-liberal policies largely imposed on them, or at least institutions must play the game of neoliberalism to receive any recognition (Rhoads & Torres, 2006). Education has become a commodity; educational software, educational technologies and distance education are lucrative endeavors (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). The Enlightenment notion of critical individuals, of citizens with a sense of social responsibility, of “two-dimensional” citizens is being repressed. The small sample of policies examined above illustrate how the neo-liberal strand of Enlightenment thought has overtaken the more critical and democratic aspects of Enlightenment thought in higher education policy. These policies also show how the Enlightenment-turned neoliberalism is experienced by student, higher education administrators, faculty, policymakers and the general public. This is not the Enlightenment that the original Enlightenment thinkers hoped for.

The Enlightenment, however, is not a failed dream. Jurgen Habermas perhaps punctuates the thoughts of Fromm, Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse with a call to action. Habermas (1990) argues that the Enlightenment is still an unfinished product. The goals of moral progress, social justice and human happiness were, and still are worth fighting for (Bloland, 2005; Habermas, 1990). I feel that these goals can only be realized through higher education by an understanding of dialectical movement. Too much scholarship in education is not critical; it is simply stale methodology (Hill, 2006). It is my hope that critical theorists can make their work and public education itself dialectical and a true weapon of change. A dialectal movement toward a new phase of the Enlightenment would not be a return of the values of the 1960s however, but rather a completely new phase of human history which could be inaugurated by higher education.

As stated earlier, dialectal movement is a perpetual motion which constantly dissolves outdated and oppressive elements of society, while preserving what is beneficial (Jay, 1996). Yet this movement is rooted within that society itself. Only with a deep understanding of the social, economic and political circumstances of a society can true dialectal movement be achieved because any professed change that does not work from these factors is doomed to fail. In dialectical thinking and movement, facts and ideas must be understood holistically, as part of a much wider constellation of meanings (Adorno, 1973; Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969; Jay, 1996). Science cannot be understood without history, nor can psychology be understood without sociology and the market must always be seen in light of the political in any society (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969; Horkheimer, 1973; Jay, 1996). We must aim for a holistic understanding of contemporary society with social justice at its foundation. Social justice specifically refers to a just distribution of resources based on need and contribution to society (Plant, 2010).

Ultimately, the dialectic does not render neat and easily classifiable information or discreet facts. It leads to social action and social transformation (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969; Jay, 1996). Currently, neoliberalism is seen as value free, taken as neutral and objective, ahistorical and ultimately un-dialectical (Giroux, 2011). Neo-liberalism is static; there is no conception of growth or change, only profit and efficiency. A dialectal understanding and critique of neoliberalism can help to supersede this static view but retain anything beneficial from it. The dialectic is a weapon. But there is no savior waiting at the end of it. Any resistance will be the product of human action (Zizek, 2009). Since higher education can be a place of resistance and hope, scholars must take hold of the dialectic. Scholars must roll up their sleeves and *become* dialectical. Their students must become dialectical beings that understand reality as vast totality. They must be able to supersede the new barbarism to arrive at a more humane state.

I will briefly sketch out some ways in which scholars in various disciplines in higher education can seize on Critical Theory and dialectally supersede neoliberalism. We cannot start by changing policy, although this would help. Changes in policy simply create new methods of repression and evasion (Banks, 2009). A true change of heart and minds is required. Once enough people in the present and future generations are educated to the ills of

neoliberalism we can truly wage the fight against it. Higher education needs to produce new human beings, dialectical beings who understand reality and the intricate webs of interaction that make up reality in vastly new and hitherto unknown ways.

Martin Jay noted that the leftist intellectual always must straddle a fine line between theory and activism due to the nature of activism; it can turn into a mob. Pedagogy and scholarship may be a way to bridge this gap. Pedagogy and scholarship are also methods to make the aims of critical theory and by extension the true aims of the Enlightenment, a tangible reality (Jay, 1996).

One way to accomplish this dialectal transformation is through circumvential education. The completion of the Enlightenment must begin as an academic revolution because education is a transformative process and has the power to imbue students with ideas of justice and make them dialectic (Bowen, 1996; Giroux, 2011). Newfield argues that this is precisely what happened during the 1960s. Higher education began producing college graduates who were politically and economically independent, racially diverse, and critical of the corporation culture and conservatism in general (Newfield, 2008; Newfield, 2011). Higher education was engendering a new, more revolutionary public before it was stymied by neoliberalism (Newfield, 2008). Circumvential education works to revive this revolutionary potential of higher education. But instead of merely reviving higher education's revolutionary potential, we must now give it a dialectal potential.

The seeds of this academic revolution must be planted in students and their future children to grow. Giroux argues that critical pedagogy frightens right wingers and neo-liberals because it takes time for reflection and critique (Giroux, 2011). Circumvential education falls in this tradition. It should frighten all neo-liberal and market advocates of higher education because it seeks to expose and supersede them from within their own system, from the disciplines they neglect. Circumvential education, as its name implies, seeks to circumvent the neo-liberal paradigm by utilizing the neglected and forgotten spaces in the neo-liberal paradigm itself. It is in these spaces where the seeds of justice are planted, where they can grow, weaken and ultimately destroy neoliberalism. It only takes a small handful of committed people to propagate an idea for it to take hold within a much larger setting. These people need

not be in a position of formal power, but rather in an influential position (Bakunin, 1999). There is no more influential position than teacher or faculty.

Under neoliberalism, the market determines what is valued and what the market values is profit. Efficiency and profit are the foundations of the new barbarism (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969). Biotechnology and engineering have the potential to rake in the most profits, and so it is these and related fields which are prized in the neo-liberal paradigm (Washburn, 2005). As such, many of the social sciences, the humanities, and even forms of basic scientific research are neglected by policymakers and higher education administrators (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Vestritch, 2008). Although, as Newfield points out, in many instances, tuition dollars from humanities enrollments are used to subsidize the potentially profitable research endeavors from the disciplines of engineering and the hard sciences (Newfield, 2011). More times than not, these endeavors are not profitable (Washburn, 2005). Higher education policy rarely mentions the civic and democratic purposes of higher education anymore (Giroux, 2011). For instance, in the United States, President Obama has pegged higher education as one of his major initiatives, but only references higher education for its ability to help the United States compete in the global economy (Giroux, 2011). Obama lavishes praise on the familiar STEM categories of science, technology, education and mathematics with no mention of history, political science, humanities, the fine arts or literature.

This very neglect however may be the ideal situation. Professors in neglected disciplines must reaffirm their own commitment to social justice and awaken this passion in their students. These scholars can use theory actively and actually *teach* the dialectic into power and create dialectal constellations. There is no widespread accountability for history, philosophy of literature papers for example. Since they are neglected and forgotten, faculty and students in neglected disciplines can embody the notions of critical theory, and propagate them further when they take positions of leadership. There is no extra pay or bonuses for this; it is the duty of true educators to fight oppression (Giroux, 2011). History professors, literature professors and other professors from neglected disciplines must use critical theory and other devices to expose and attack the neo-liberal paradigm in their classes and in their scholarship. They must show how neoliberalism reduces humanity to unthinking consumers

with no regard for any social or public concerns, how neoliberalism ultimately resembles Adorno and Horkheimer's dialectic of enlightenment because man is enslaved (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969).

Circumventual education does not dispense or further the divide between the so-called neglected disciplines and the profitable disciplines of neoliberalism, however. It seeks to transcend the new barbarism. The new barbarism has changed somewhat since Adorno and Horkheimer spoke of it in the 1940s however. We have now entered the information age or the post-industrial society (Bell, 1999). This age is characterized by the production, control and manipulation of all types of information (Bell, 1999). The only information that is truly valued under neoliberalism is information that leads to profit (Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Washburn, 2005). Applied sciences, biotechnology engineering and other favored neo-liberal disciplines must be held to a standard of justice. For instance, society has the capability to feed and shelter every human being on the planet (Schutter & Starke, 2011). There are record numbers of homeless, starving and sick (Giroux, 2011). Scholars who circumvent the neo-liberal paradigm with critical theory and humanism must seek to bring science and technology under dialectical control. They must be used in the service of humanity and not profit (Marcuse, 1990; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Washburn, 2005). This is the new barbarism of the information age.

As Fromm, Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse argued, individuals are not cogs or customers, but citizens, human beings (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969; Fromm, 1969; Marcuse, 1992). Giroux states that neoliberalism produces "disposable populations" (Giroux, 2011). The homeless, the elderly, youth of color, the poor and other whole groups of people who are not ideal customers are blamed for their own misery, when really the neo-liberal market has produced them (Giroux, 2011). This is perhaps the terrifying result of Adorno and Horkheimer's dialectic of the Enlightenment (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969). Disposability may be the result of the "progress" of science, the market and technology. This must be circumvented and surpassed. Science must have a soul and philosophy must become tangible. The dialectical supersession of neo-liberalism may accomplish this. Dialectical students must penetrate deeply into the intersections between the arts, sciences, STEM and even vocational education in order to make them just.

In order to accomplish this dialectical understanding, students in the neglected disciplines must be made to realize the role of science and technology in the dialectic of history (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969; Marcuse, 1990). If these things are held to a standard of justice and not profit, they can supersede neoliberalism. Without a standard of justice, science, technology and the market become a new barbarism (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969; Fromm, 1969; Marcuse, 1992). Of course, it is arguable whether the market could ever be just, but science and research can be made just. Scholars and students in the neglected disciplines must begin to argue forcibly for scientists and engineers to pursue research that is beneficial to humanity, not just profitable to a few. Instead of cosmetics, cures would be pursued. More than this, science and technology, once harnessed by critical theory, can begin to fulfill the true aims of the Enlightenment, social justice and human happiness (Marcuse, 1990). Scholars that engage in circumvential education must hold science and technology to justice and fulfill the Enlightenment and not remain in barbarism (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1969). Higher education produces so much information and technology that can be put to some much better use (Giroux, 2011; Marcuse, 1990; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004; Washburn, 2005). They must engage with the sciences directly through scholarship, social media, lobbying, activism and social pressure.

Another way to impact pedagogy is through the unlikely practice of strategic planning. Strategic planning is usually seen as a bureaucratic, cumbersome process (Bryson, 2004). This view holds much truth. Strategic planning however has the potential to become dialectical and empowering. Strategic planning is the brains or blueprint of an organization (Bryson, 2004). A well written strategic plan can guide an organizations' behavior in positive ways to surmount challenges and seize opportunities in the existing environment (Bryson, 2004). In the present climate, the ills of neoliberalism must be considered by writers of strategic plans for education schools. Neoliberalism is the most dominant feature of the global landscape and is at odds with virtually all of the sentiments of the public higher education (Giroux, 2011; Hill, 2012). Schools of education within universities can re-conceptualize their strategic plans to encompass these moral and social issues which neoliberalism deny and suppresses. Scholars' work and actions and their dealings with students could all be geared toward dialectical suppression of neoliberalism. Of course, schools of education must come to realize that their superiors, such as deans, college



presidents and politicians most likely agree with the neo-liberal visions for higher education (Auld, 2010). This should not stop higher education faculty from tackling these issues, even if it means “circumventing” some of the more adversarial language of critical theory.

Scholarship in academic schools of education is largely neglected (Berliner, 2002; Labree, 1998). Faculty in education schools can take advantage of this neglect however and use their scholarship to openly promote dialectal change in universities, such as re-conceptualizing the distribution of funds in the sciences and applying a standard of justice to technology (Newfield, 2009). Education faculty can remold themselves as gatekeepers of the university. In this role they can act as a nexus for interdisciplinary studies and scholarship. Scholars can create new critical journals and publications, start conferences and even reach out to the general public to make them aware. Educationalists must utilize the flexibility of their disciplines and bring all the other disciplines into conversation with each other. Education is a field, not a discipline, because it draws on the frameworks of all other disciplines (Labree, 1998). Thus, educationists must weave a dialectical constellation with the information of other disciplines. More than this, scholars of higher education must actually use their scholarship to bring about the next dialectical transformation of the Enlightenment.

The Enlightenment however, as Chakrabarty has shown, cannot be a Euro-centric universal constraint forced upon non-European peoples. The terms of the Enlightenment, while pervasive have been “translated” and appropriated into a variety of different cultures which have interpreted them differently (Charkrabarty, 2000). Understanding and expanding on these various translations and differences can help scholars interpret the Enlightenment principles not just in European lens, but in a truly diverse context.

While these aims are grand, they are meaningless if done only for the present generation. That is why not only present students, but posterity must be planned for. There are two ways to approach this. The first deals with teacher education. Education as a discipline is largely neglected by the neo-liberal paradigm but teacher education however is not neglected. Teachers are crucial to perpetuating the capitalist order to further neoliberalism (Hill, 2006). Thus, it is imperative for the elites to control teacher education. Hill argues that teacher education programs today are largely sterile and impotent (Hill, 2006). Faculties of education

schools must fight to take teacher education back, or at least make it critical while adhering to state mandates.

Teacher education programs must begin to teach potential teachers critical skills for analyzing social, economic and political problems facing public education today (Hill, 2006). Drawing off this sentiment, future teachers must look at their students not as cogs or products, but as human beings with tremendous potential, as second dimension citizens, as dialectical beings (Giroux, 2011). Teacher education can be a tremendous source of change which circumvential education must tap into.

The second method is revolutionary parenting. Children are the cornerstone of education and the dialectic itself (Giroux, 2011). Students and their future children have the potential to attack neoliberalism. Professors in the neglected disciplines must stress to them that most of them will most likely be parents in the near future, if they are not already. It is imperative that they not only talk about issues amongst each other, but raise their children in a responsible way. The intergenerational effects of higher education have been made apparent (Greenwood, 1997). Children of educated parents, on average, live longer lives, are healthy, happier and receive more education (Greenwood, 1997). This intergenerational effect may be higher education's greatest attribute and most potent weapon (Giroux, 2011). Children represent the hope and future of a society (Giroux, 2011). The results of teaching are cumulative and exponential, they accrue to succeeding generations. If a desire for social justice and critical reflection are inculcated in present students, many will most likely imprint this on their future children. Faculty must stress that this is crucial. Of course, this is not meant as brainwashing, but critical reflection, it is dialectical. This is truly revolutionary parenting. This may be the nodal point of circumvential education because it allows for the dialectal critique of neoliberalism to continue with the younger generational.

Higher education must produce faculty, students, teachers, parents and leaders who will fight. The fight must be waged on all fronts; policy, planning, parenting and pedagogy. Only then can society dialectically progress toward the true aims of the Enlightenment that Fromm, Adorno, Horkheimer, Marcuse and Habermas envisioned. This new phase of the Enlightenment would not be a simple return however; it would be something completely new.

While we cannot predict the specific details, this new phase of history would be rooted in a rich and complex understanding of social justice, science, economics and the humanities. This new historical phase can also not be American or Eurocentric. Rather, as Chakrabarty argues, any new conception of history must be a history that reflects on its own injustices when dealing with hitherto suppressed groups (Chakrabarty, 2000). It cannot seek to pulverize all differences into a homogenous (European or American led) mass. Differences must be not be feared, but understood and embraced. Further, the new citizen produced by higher education would not be the static individual of neoliberalism such as Hayek, Freidman, Becker and most higher education policies call for. Rather, higher education would produce a true dialectical citizen ever able to conceptualize new possibilities and constellations of meaning for society.

### **Conclusion**

In contemporary society, the tenets of neoliberalism are not seen as weapons, but usually taken for granted as the natural state of things (Habermas, 1973; Peet, 2008; Slaughter & Rhodes, 2004). It should be remembered that higher education also provided the weapons to critique this modern dogma, in the form of Critical Theory. This debate was fought over the theoretical conception and proper role of the economy in modern society and has its roots in the European Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. In the neoliberal view of the Enlightenment all human phenomena are quantified, human beings are treated as capital, the notion of the individual trumps any type of communal bond, and profit and efficiency are the highest values. Conversely, the Critical Theory's view of the legacy of the Enlightenment is a society in which criticism and critical reason are valued above all, the individual is not just a consumer or a cog, but a truly rational being rooted in a community, able to evaluate his/her society and dialectally progress to a higher reality.

It is naïve to think that circumvential education will rally every faculty member in every neglected discipline. What is more realistic is to rally some members from some disciplines and for these members to establish interdisciplinary publications and other collaborations. These professors must work to educate each other, their students, future faculty and teachers, and even impact the future children of their students to the potential that they hold and the change they can bring to society. The ultimate hope is to actually *teach* past neoliberalism in

order to dialectically supersede it and realize social justice and human happiness which are currently denied to so many.

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<sup>1</sup> This book was written after Fromm left the institute. The reason for its inclusion in this framework is that while Fromm had broken with the institute, *Escape from Freedom* bears the imprint of Critical Theory, namely is emphasis on the sociological aspects of psychology which hitherto, had been exclusively an individual discipline (Jay, 1996, Kellner, 1992).

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