

Deconstructing globalization discourse,  
and unveiling its effects on education  
through critical pedagogy

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**ABSTRACT**

Deconstructing globalization discourse,  
and unveiling its effects on education through critical pedagogy.

Christine Phillips

A purposefully slippery and ambiguous definition of modern globalization is defining our epoch, rendering the perception of global citizens as powerless to affect it. In an attempt to unravel and understand globalization processes, a literature review of critical pedagogy was conducted in order to acquire the tools to investigate globalization critically. I examine processes of globalization and their effects on Western education, namely Canada and the U.S., and explore how critical pedagogy can be used as a tool to address some of the negative forces of globalization by acting as a vehicle for globalization from below.

The investigation into critical pedagogy researches the foundations of critical pedagogy and its key concepts, as well as today's most prominent critical pedagogues, and some critiques. Most importantly, it attempts to link the economic, political, and cultural forces of globalization to the dominant ideology and hegemony driving them.

This thesis hopes to contribute to the research in critical pedagogy's effectiveness by examining to what extent critical pedagogy is compatible with our modern epoch of globalization, and also to what degree the learner, I, was able to become critically conscious on the subject and thus in everyday life.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>PREFACE</b> .....	<b>VII</b>
Disconnected Generation.....	vii
Great Canadian Expectations.....	viii
Democracy and Beyond.....	ix
<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Problem Statement.....	1
Research Questions.....	1
Scope of Research.....	2
Assumptions.....	2
Education.....	2
Globalization.....	3
Class.....	3
Hope.....	4
Positionality.....	4
Organization of thesis.....	5
<b>CHAPTER 2: A STRUCTURALIST GLOBALIZATION PROCESS</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Origins and Background.....	6
Contemporary Globalization and World-Systems Theories.....	7
Postindustrial Society.....	7
Post-Fordist Theory.....	8
Globalization: Ideology or Reality.....	9
Ideology.....	9
Multi-Dimensional Realities.....	10
Economic Globalization.....	11
Political Globalization.....	13
Neoliberalism and Neoconservatism.....	14
Cultural Globalization.....	16
Media.....	16
The Fourth World.....	17
Globalization from Below.....	19
<b>CHAPTER 3: GLOBALIZATION AND EDUCATION</b> .....	<b>21</b>
The Impact of Globalization on Education in the West.....	21
Education and Politics.....	21
Standardization and Accountability in Education.....	21
Competence-Based Learning.....	25
Education and Global Economics.....	27
Marketing the School and Selling Young Minds.....	27
Cyber-Universities.....	28
OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development).....	30
Education and Global Culture.....	31
Critical Pedagogy: An Instrument of Globalization from Below.....	31
Critical Pedagogy and the Internet.....	33
Education and a Global Civil Society.....	34

<b>CHAPTER 4: CRITICAL PEDAGOGY .....</b>	<b>37</b>
Laying the Foundations .....	37
A Look at Freire's Pedagogy .....	38
Key Concepts.....	42
Subjugated Knowledge.....	42
Forms of Knowledge.....	43
Hegemony.....	44
Ideology.....	45
Culture.....	47
Historicity.....	48
Politics.....	48
Dialectical Thought.....	49
Consciousness and Praxis .....	51
Critiques .....	52
Epistemological limitations.....	52
Non-Reflexive.....	53
 <b>CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION .....</b>	 <b>56</b>
Reflection and Evaluation.....	56
Recommendations.....	57
 <b>REFERENCES .....</b>	 <b>61</b>
 <b>ENDNOTES.....</b>	 <b>68</b>

## Preface

### *Disconnected Generation*

Before pursuing a degree in the field of education, I had worked in the corporate world for a number of years, where I felt undervalued and unappreciated. Although always having unwavering ideas about social responsibility and equality, I found myself losing faith in the idea that I could affect any kind of real change, in other words I felt as if disconnected from the world in which I live. In this age of mergers and acquisitions, the privatization of major public sectors, and an economy that is now being managed within a global framework, I could not identify my place. As I became more informed I felt that the choices I, as a citizen have, appeared to be more of an elaborate ruse of smoke and mirrors than reality. Feeling as if I were backed into a corner with very few choices I decided that I would return to school in an attempt to navigate in the direction of being able to 'change the world'. What critical pedagogy has helped me to understand is that I am a part of the world and therefore regardless of what I do I will affect and change it and that learning to be critical in my understanding of how the world operates is how I can best participate. If my 'pre-critical' self, the person who hopelessly thought there was no real way to affect the world, represents my generation, the North American generation, then we have a generation of people who feel disconnected from everyone and everything, a generation of people who feel that they cannot do anything to stop injustice anywhere, and even worse who don't know that they contribute to it at all. A generation who feel that globalization is out of their hands and that no one can stop progress, in a word, a generation without hope. However, if the person I am today

represents my generation, the person with the knowledge and understanding that I am not only in the world, I am actually creating it, is in any way indicative of the spirit of my generational kin, then the future abounds with endless possibilities, and therein lies the hope.

### *Great Canadian Expectations*

While I was working on this thesis, Canada appointed a new Governor General, the Right Honourable Michaël Jean, a woman, a black woman, a Haitian Refugee, a journalist, a mother, a wife, and the Queen's representative of Canada. I remember listening to her installation speech and being reminded of Freire's work on the language we use and how it shapes us. I heard the experiences of her life dictate how she spoke; the words she chose seemed almost defiant, it was aggressive and honest. Her message included hope, humanity, active participation, proper representation, democracy, globalization, and the future. Her tone, although patriotic to Canada, was committed to the world. I couldn't help but notice that the Governor General was using much of the language found in critical pedagogy. She used a fitting quote by the Enlightenment philosopher Montesquieu to describe the expectation of Canadians, "The duty of a citizen becomes a crime if it makes him forget the duty of the man" (Right Honourable Michaël Jean, 2005, p.1). I was reminded of Martha Nussbaum (1996) and her recognition of Stoic ideals where it is believed that, "We should recognize humanity wherever it occurs, and give its fundamental ingredients, reason and moral capacity, our first allegiance and respect." (p.7). In a time where globalization is defined as a market-based phenomenon, Canadians are being urged to be global agents for social responsibility. However, the way in which Canadians are represented and dutifully



expected to act, coupled with a lack of necessary channels, specifically in the field of education, to foster a population of critical thinkers, points to a serious disconnect in the Governor General's expectations and the avenues being provided to meet these expectations.

### *Democracy and Beyond*

Canada's constitutional monarchy takes shape in the form of a representative democracy. Citizens of Canada are expected to elect those who will best serve the needs and desires of the society. Although the words the Governor General chose may simply be deemed rhetorical, in a time of declining voter turn outs, especially by young Canadians, her speech bears great significance. It means that citizens of Canada are being represented as having a panoramic scope of mind, a global mindset, and an understanding of the political and economic policies, which actually render its citizens powerless. The traditional, hegemonic, and narrow lens that our present Cartesian-based public education system espouses supports the status quo. Accounts of this, other than my own experiences, are detailed in the work of many educational practitioners and researchers such as that documented in Peter McLaren's, *Life in Schools, An Introduction to Critical Pedagogy in the Foundation of Education* (1998). Assuming that Canadians want to have a panoramic scope of mind, want to be participating citizens, and want to respect humanity on a global scale, just wanting it is not enough; it must be nurtured, fostered, and upheld. I believe education is one of the principle roots that can grow this mindset. Updating our systems of education to nurture the expectations of a socially responsible, critical, and democratic population in Canada will undoubtedly have local and global ramifications. Ultimately, Western democracy is defined within a political realm and

national borders, however our actions have ripple effects that continue way past our own so-called democratic borders and into undemocratic ones by undemocratic means. The idea of democracy in the West has come to mean free enterprise *at any cost*. The cost is paid by the West's marginalized and oppressed populations, as well as by developing nations. Critical pedagogy is relevant and it echoes Marx's theory of historical materialism, a theory that points to the importance of economic stratification in understanding almost all aspects of society. It makes one think to ask questions like, democracy for whom, for what, and at what cost?

## Introduction

### *Problem Statement*

This thesis is a theoretical research endeavor examining the impact that the modern epoch of globalization is having on education in Western societies. Using critical pedagogy as my framework, I conceptualize globalization and investigate how the face of education is evolving in relation to it, in hopes of attaining a clearer understanding of globalization's impact on education in the West. Finally, I research the theory of critical pedagogy which informs my research into the trends in globalization and Western education, and highlight how the present dialectical processes of globalization are compatible with critical pedagogy.

The emancipatory objective of critical pedagogy, as well as my research into globalization, is an attempt to ebb massification and foster critical thinkers making informed democratic decisions based on choices. I conduct this research with the belief that globalization has expedited the emancipatory struggle of the planet's human community. Understanding the totality of anything in our daily lives is getting exponentially complex, leaving the majority of us in the dark, which makes critical pedagogy not only relevant, but vital to explore.

### *Research Questions*

1. How can we critically define and conceptualize globalization?
2. How does globalization inform Western education?
3. To what extent is critical pedagogy compatible with the study of globalization?

### *Scope of Research*

The impact of globalization on education can be seen and experienced at all levels from pre-school to graduate school, and therefore narrowing my scope was quite difficult. From micro classroom objectives to macro educational policies, the impact and influence of globalization on education can be found everywhere. However, for this work I focus on global forces, which determine macro political, economic, and cultural developments that shape public education.

I study contemporary critical pedagogy theorists such as Peter McLaren and Henri Giroux, who research critical pedagogy in lieu of neoliberal policies informing globalization and education, as well as Michael Apple, and Nelly P. Stromquist, who also look at understanding education in a globalized world. Some of my additional sources are articles from on-line academic journals and recognized organizations. Although it would be ideal to be able to do an in-depth analysis of North American and world markets and economies, politics, and cultural studies, in relation to pedagogy, as critical pedagogy demands, in the interest of time, resources, and quality of work, I restrict myself to the analysis of the impact of globalization on education. While I take into account the perspectives offered by other relevant theories so as to help in understanding their critiques, critical pedagogy will remain the principal framework I use to study globalization's relationship with education.

### *Assumptions*

In this section I briefly operationalize some of the key assumptions of my thesis.

*Education.* Educational institutions are public spaces that are being marketed and run as for-profit business endeavors, rather than being respected and upheld as bastions of

learning and discovering of new spaces. As such, they are stripped of their democratic credentials and potential. Students are now consumers of knowledge, and are learning to be uncritical. I contend that education is the entitlement of everyone regardless of profit margin, and thus a democratic space in governance and content.

*Globalization.* There is much debate over globalization. Traditionally, its very existence has been questioned since we have been making significant advancements in technology since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, there is now a widely accepted consensus that since the 1970s, the advancements of communications technology and satellite capability has drastically sped up the process. More recently, a new debate has emerged; it is no longer a question of whether globalization is upon us but rather a question of its political, economic, and cultural consequences, both locally and globally. I stand with those who argue that we are in an era of globalization, a globalization determined by technological advancements, which is guided by profit, and that it is having a dire political, economic, and cultural impact on public education in the West.

*Class.* Assumptions about class are made on both global and local levels in this research. These assumptions have a Marxist influence which is that public education serves the upper strata of society by controlling the masses' possible limits of thoughts and therefore actions. Many theorists and activists, such as Malcolm X, Timothy Leary, and others charge that classrooms are where unlearning takes place. I also make that assumption, as I study the relationship between globalization and education.

Globalization stokes the embers of class stratification by providing a fast-track to *massification*. Freire (1973) used this term to describe a scenario where there are fewer decision-makers (elite), more specialists (labourers), and ultimately the separation of

activity from the totality of the project which disengages critical thought (p.34). It certainly cannot be denied that globalization has become a catalyst for mass production, which Freire warns "...is possibly one of the most potent instruments of man's massification" (p. 34). The corporatization of public schools everywhere, from grade school to graduate school is a direct result of neoliberal globalization policies, and further evidence to the charge of the radical thinkers just mentioned.

*Hope.* In this research endeavor, I assume that my former 'hopeless' self best represents my generation of people in the West. This apparent lack of hope may be due to the fact that the public education the majority of students receive does not reflect the reality of the world they live in and therefore there is no critical understanding of how their world actually operates. The further away from reality we are, the further away we are from the hope that we can affect change. Freire (1973) has argued that an education that is superimposed onto and disconnected from the people rather than emerging from them "...dooms them to failure." (p. 28). I also assume that there is hope for humanity. Refusing to allow ourselves to be bamboozled into making uninformed decisions through dialectical inquiry about ourselves, our planet, and our relationship to them, is empowerment, and certainly inspires hope.

### *Positionality*

This brings me to situate my positionality and bias within this study. I am a white, blue-eyed, able-bodied, heterosexual female who cannot know what it is like to be anything else. Perhaps the fact that I was never directly confronted with racial or other forms of bigotry, speaks to why I tend to give primacy to class stratification as dictating how society operates. Lucky to be advantaged in many ways, such as having an amazing

and loving family, perhaps speaks to the hope I have in humanity. Growing up in a working class family, money was never abundant nor desired, it was simply a way to be able to live. The fact that importance of knowledge and autonomy was valued and stressed perhaps speaks to my particular interest in critical pedagogy. The fact that I am writing this thesis in hopes of attaining a Master's degree is a testimonial to the value I place in it, and thus my Cartesian epistemic background and admittedly a contribution to the reification of 'legitimate' knowledge.

### *Organization of thesis*

The thesis is divided into five chapters, each having one or two sub-headings. In this introductory chapter, I have presented the problem statement I attempt to research, my methods and assumptions, my objectives, and finally my research questions. In chapter 2, I explore and conceptualize globalization as an economic, political, and cultural phenomenon. In chapter 3, I study trends in Western education in light of globalization processes. Chapter 4 examines the origins, objectives, concepts, and critiques of critical pedagogy, which informs the previous chapters as it provided the framework, as well as highlighting its compatibility in understanding globalization. Finally, following critical pedagogical form, in chapter 5, the conclusion, I reflect on my analysis, evaluate the extent to which I was able to address my problem statement, and suggest questions for further research.

## Chapter 2: A Structuralist Globalization Process

### *Origins and Background*

The term globalization is a complex and dialectical one that has a multitude of meanings with layers of implications. Although, globalization is historical and some argue can be synonymous with evolution, it is the more contemporary developments, specifically in the last thirty-five years or so, that are the focus of my study. The enormity of the task of defining globalization becomes evident when one realizes the impossible task of defining its limitations, delineating its span, or categorizing its field. Singh, Kenway, and Apple (2005) suggest studying globalization from both a top-down perspective or what is referred to as globalization from above, as well as a bottom-up perspective, known as, globalization from below (p. 2). The majority of studies on globalization understand it from a top-down perspective. These authors break down theories of globalization into three branches; the first is structuralist, which focuses on the “...all-powerful relationship among global capital, markets, and digital technology...” (p.4). The second strand of theorization is dialectic, which focuses on the relationships among global and local, and the third draws on complex connectivity, the network of interconnections and interdependencies of globalization (p.4). The complex connectivity theory is an integral way of understanding the true globalization process. I leave the complex connectivity theory to be studied by globalization studies theorists and examine globalization as a structuralist concept, while highlighting some global and local intersections. I examine some of the theoretical perspectives from which origins of globalization can be studied. I then go on to examine globalization as both an ideology and a reality, examine globalization’s economic and political implications, and finally, I



investigate globalization's impact on global culture. My purpose here is to unfold some of the ways in which globalization can be understood. In other words, in this chapter I attempt to lay down the conceptual foundations upon which I examine the impact of globalization on education in the western hemisphere in the next chapter. It is important to preface this chapter by stating that there are many who believe that the theories I look at are riddled with Western "capitalocentric" assumptions (Luke & Luke, 2000, p.285). Asia, for example, having a deep history of migration patterns, colonization, and economies, pre-dating Westernization, is rarely mentioned in globalization discourse.

*Contemporary Globalization and World-Systems Theories.* There are two schools of thought that place the origins of globalization around the 16<sup>th</sup> century. According to the world-systems theorists capitalism and the 16<sup>th</sup> century emergence of a global economy is what truly defines the origins of globalization, as we understand it today. Morrow & Torres (2000) explain that within this camp are postindustrial society and the post-Fordist theorists who believe that specific time periods within the 20<sup>th</sup> century also notably impacted the speed at which we are advancing the global cause. The latest, relatively new theory regarding globalization is the informational economy theory. Sociologist Manuelle Castells (Morrow & Torres, 2000) explores globalization as an informational economy, and differentiates between it and the global economy of the 16<sup>th</sup> century by highlighting operations on a global scale in real time. Although the three theories are relevant and similar, I will focus my study on the postindustrial society theory and the post-Fordist theory.

*Postindustrial Society.* The postindustrial society literature claims that contemporary globalization dates back to the 1970s' petroleum crisis and the search for

alternative energy and labour resources through technological advancements (Burbules & Torres, 2000, Morrow & Torres, 2000). This signaled a change in production processes which went from a focus on product to a focus on service and an emphasis on "...the primacy of knowledge in production." (Morrow & Torres, 2000, p.29). This has major implications for the education sector. Sociologist Daniel Bell (Morrow & Torres, 2000), a pioneer of this line of argument, claims that the shift of industry and manufacturing would go towards a post-industrial service economy. Similarly, the Information Society, postindustrial theory's successor, takes the knowledge theory one step further by claiming it was actually the shift of focus to communication and computerization that hurled us all into this era of contemporary globalization (Morrow & Torres, 2000).

*Post-Fordist Theory.* The post-Fordist theorists claim contemporary globalization can be traced to the dismantling of the linear and rigid Fordist assembly line model. They claim the shift went from means of production to the relations of production and the creation of a global model "...organized for flexibility of productions which allow shorter runs of more differentiated goods" (Morrow & Torres, 2000, p.30). An analysis of the neoliberal economic restructuring of the 1970s supports this theory, as this era brought a weakening of the welfare state in many countries. As social benefits disappeared, and salaries replaced by payments per piece of work, hourly wages, and part-time work, there was a simultaneous non-enforcement of organized labour demands (Burbules & Torres, 2000). Other than cuts to the welfare state, and a restructuring of labour, the neoliberal agenda also brought a global increase in privatization, a de-skilling of labour for low paid workers, and the rise of hegemonic policy discourse. Burbules & Torres point out that increases in international trade and multinational corporations ushered in a decrease in

labour-capital conflict, surmising that profits are now calculated by an increase in per capita productivity (Morrow & Torres 2000). Stromquist (2002) eloquently sums up by saying that what we have today has actually evolved into a sort of “global assembly-line” (p.10).

*Globalization: Ideology or Reality*

It is important to recognize globalization both as an ideology and as a reality of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As discussed above, globalization appears to be a tangible reality disputably originating at different times, which may bring one to ask how globalization can be considered an ideology when it is defined by specific events in history. In my introduction I make the assumption mostly from personal experience that many people believe globalization cannot be stopped, as if it were some larger than life entity snowballing away from us, completely disconnected to us and yet devouring us at the same time. This is hegemonic globalization ideology in play. Borrowing from Morrow & Torres (2000) who distinguish between globalization as an ideology and globalization “...of economy, politics, and eventually culture as a historical and structural process” (p.40), I recognize both of these concepts. Arrighi (2005) also draws a distinction between structural and ideological globalization, “...the former referring to the growth of intensive, large-scale networks relative to more local ones, the latter referring to neoliberal political ideology,” (p.37). The dialectical nature of critical pedagogy allows us to study globalization dialectically, and to understand that all definitions merit exploration.

*Ideology.* Globalization’s ideology inextricably links both capitalism and democracy. The positive virtues of freedom, global democratization, and internationalism

are pushed by the neoliberal and capitalist beneficiaries of globalization. McLaren (2005), referring to globalization's ideology, says it has an "aura of inevitability" (p.30) and in more detail explains that "[T]he logic of privatization and free-trade...creates ideological formations that produce necessary functions for capital in relation to labor" (p.23). In an article in the journal *New Politics*, Edward S. Herman (1999) explains that globalization as an ideology is intended to "... reduce any resistance to the process by making it seem both highly beneficent and unstoppable." (p.1). This ideology, Herman points out, also has people perceiving it "...as beyond human control, which further weakens resistance" (p.5). McLaren (2005) sums it up, "In short, capitalism and the legitimacy of private monopoly ownership has been naturalized as common sense" (p.22). Keeping in mind the postindustrial and post-Fordists theories, McLaren's statement combines both the ideological and the structural realities of globalization quite succinctly. In other words, the feeling of inevitability surrounding dominant globalization discourse is purposefully propagated and implies a democratic and egalitarian semblance of teaching and learning taking place. Where in fact the elite dictate while the masses learn how to unquestionably march in line.

*Multi-Dimensional Realities.* Stromquist (2002) identifies four major players in the process of globalization, the state (political), the transnational corporations (economic), the mass media (culture), and non-governmental organizations (from below). Similarly, in a discussion with *Edge: The Third Culture*, Anthony Giddens (2000) argues that there is now a second debate over globalization, no longer about whether it is upon us or not, but rather over its economic, political, and cultural consequences. Let me briefly explore these three dimensions of globalization as well as globalization from

below. However, in doing so, I heed Stromquist's (2002) echoing of Wallerstein (a major contributor to world-systems theories) against the separation of economic, political, and cultural aspects of life, as they exist simultaneously in time and space and truly occupy one existence.

### *Economic Globalization*

The context in which globalization is most often used and assumed is economic globalization. As previously discussed, most theories of globalization have to do with production, consumption, capital flow, and the development of capitalism. The last three decades have seen a considerable advancement in the level of global economic activity. The globalization of economics has flourished with the aid of many global capital organizations like the World Trade Organization (WTO), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, whose purposes are to provide global monetary stability and lend poorer nations the funds to develop economically. The power these organizations wield is immense. For example, the IMF has the power to cut public expenditures and devalue currencies. Further, helping the global profitability potential of economic globalization has been the establishment of free-trade agreements such as the NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) and APEC (Asia Pacific Economic Conference), no-tax zones, Economic Unions such as the European Economic Community and the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union, the World Trade Organization (Morrow & Torres, 2000), as well as the World Economic Forum. These are all significant contributors to what Cutler (2005) says is referred to as the legalization of world politics. Although globalization appears to be this naturally occurring evolutionary phenomenon propelled by technological advancements, there are actually many highly organized operating forces at

work. The rich countries that effectively control these organizations benefit from exploiting the developing countries' resources and products. By setting low prices on their products they are able to keep these countries in debt and further exploit them by taking over or forcing buyouts of their natural resources. Stromquist (2002) points out that "...globalization has a number of controlled and intended features (e.g., regulations governing the importation of some products, the advocacy of centralization, and the emphasis on accountability)..." (p.3). Most of these serve the interests of the developed countries and big corporations.

Although we hear much discussion about the erosion of the middle-class, it should be understood that generally speaking, there are more opportunities to access wealth today, however, the distribution is more unequal than ever. The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (Yulnizyan, 2007), an independent research institute recently reported that the income gap between rich and poor was at its highest in 30 years in 2004, and that the top ten percent saw the biggest growth and were the group that worked the least amount of hours. It should also be noted that although people in developed nations, such as Canada, are living more comfortable lifestyles today than before, the amount of credit and debt that so many take on for this is also higher than ever before. Further, these trends in the distribution of wealth are also now occurring on a global scale, with the technologically advanced, knowledge-based economies amassing most of the wealth. Consequently, developing nations have become the West's resource for cheap labour and the "...dumping grounds for pollution for the western democracies" (McLaren, 2005, p.22). In his introduction, Stromquist (2002) cites statistics from the United Nations Development Program which states the gap between income levels of those in rich

countries and poor countries have risen from an eleven to one ratio in 1913 to seventy-one to one in 1997 (p.xvii).

### *Political Globalization*

While it cannot be argued that economic activity is certainly a large measure of globalization, it does not work alone. Borrowing from Marx, McLaren (2005) says "... the economic and political [are] conceived as distinct moments of the same totality" (p.24). Economic policy-making is a heavily weighted task in politics. Burbules & Torres (2000) deconstruct policy-making to require four major considerations. Policy-makers must: 1- respond to transnational capital, 2-respond to global political structures and civil societies, 3- respond to domestic pressures, and 4- respond to their own international needs and self-interests, therefore although policy-making may be a domestic affair, three of the four points of consideration actually respond to and depend on global activity. This means that globalization is political and that politics, even domestic politics, are certainly global. For the status quo, maintaining a blurred line between economic and political globalization allows politics to directly affect and facilitate the processes of economic globalization. When top government members are also owners of multinational corporations, it is not surprising to see free-trade agreements, tariff-free zones, domestic tax breaks for corporations, and a position of small-government. In an interview with Ira Shor, Noam Chomsky (1996) provides additional perspective by explaining that within democracies, governments must ultimately respond to its people, and when the effects of neoliberal restructuring begin to directly impact the people, the government (which Chomsky says is often the alter ego of the corporations) will be the scapegoat that takes responsibility for the economic outcomes such as unemployment, low wages, exploitation,

and the like. Meanwhile, the multinationals go, for the most part, unscathed. The political system in the West, is dominated by the neoliberal agenda and neoconservative politics, the frontrunners in what Apple (2000) refers to as the “Conservative Restoration Alliance” (p.59).

*Neoliberalism and Neoconservatism.* One is hard-pressed to find any discussion on globalization without the juggernaut that is neoliberalism entrenched deep into it. Stromquist (2002) claims that globalization’s “...economic dimension is deeply guided by a development model based on the hegemony of the market and the role of the state as a key supporter of market decisions” (p.7). Earlier I mentioned the neoliberal economic restructuring that unfolded in the 1970s around flexible relations of production, now I will explore neoliberal discourse to discover its influence on globalization. The neoliberal agenda is guided by a tenet of ‘small government’ meaning minimal government interference in economic activities. Neoliberal policies encourage private enterprise and discourage any “drains on the economy” which might be defined as the public sector (Apple, 2000, p.59). In economic discourses, the private sector refers to private ownership and deregulation, which should not be confused with the private sphere as the former is supported by neoliberalism and the latter is not.<sup>i</sup> The new relations of production quickly translate to government cutbacks in “...health, education, and housing development; the creation of shantytowns in urban industrial areas; the concentration of women in low-wage subcontracted work; the depletion of natural resources; the rampant deunionization;...the expansion of temporary and part-time labor; [and] the pushing down of wages...” (McLaren, 2005, p.20). It is important to note that the lynchpin of the hegemonic neoliberal discourse is the notion of choice. Politics and economics are



unified by using a common denominator, the word 'choice'. Economic capitalism is defined by consumer choice, and democracy is defined by a freedom to choose; they are definitely not the same thing but according to Apple (2000), "...for neoliberals consumer choice is the guarantor of democracy" (p.60). The reality is, as McLaren (2005) sees it, that the "...meaning of freedom has come to refer to the freedom to structure the distribution of wealth and to exploit workers more easily across national boundaries..." (p.29). Ironically, as dialectical as globalization is, it is evident that neoliberal economic and political globalization has an acutely narrow and focused lens, which McLaren (2005) firmly states "...is unifying the world into a single mode of production and bringing about the organic integration of different countries and regions into a single global economy through the logic of capital accumulation on a world scale" (p.25). What has become apparent is the big picture; although neoliberal values include small government rhetoric what they are actually creating is 'less government' through centralization. Of course, they do have to share the spotlight, somewhat, with the neoconservatives, because policy-making would be more difficult for neoliberals without neoconservative ideology very much embedded in the Western psyche. Although neoliberal policies dominate political and economic domains, it is interesting to see how the neoconservative discourse is still quite influential in government, considering their different and even opposing positions on so many issues. As Apple (2000) explains, set in motion in the Reagan and Thatcher years, the neoconservatives believe in strong government control and have a romanticized vision of days gone past where religious morality (of the Christian faith, of course) and "natural order" guided the state (p.58). Neoconservative discourse is patriotic and riddled with fear of the "other" reified through

evidenced binary discourses (Apple, 2000). It is not surprising, that with this ethnocentric and racialized understanding of the world, neoconservatives also fear globalization (Apple, 2000). Although, they may appear different from the outset, they, in fact, both have a common goal, to keep the power in the hands of the elite.

### *Cultural Globalization*

Cultures around the globe are responding daily to globalization. Changes in the global media and communications abilities have given people, more than ever before in history, access to information, news, film, music, and cultures from all over the world to anywhere in the world. Certainly, we have never before had such a detailed peripheral vision of so many world cultures. When discussing the cultural flows of globalization, a familiar metaphor, “McCulture” (Lingard, 2000, p.103, Luke & Luke, 2000, p.276), is often used to suggest westernization rather than globalization of culture. Let me briefly touch upon some of the conduits of this trend.

*Media.* Western culture has infiltrated every corner of the world, from the biggest metropolises to the most remote areas on the planet. It can be argued that the economic and political aspects of globalization are what influence and drive cultural globalization as well. Economic, political, and cultural globalization exist simultaneously as exemplified by Morrow & Torres’s (2000) discussions on the origins of the internet. The internet, the major conduit of cultural globalization, was actually born out of the U.S. defense research agencies, moving through to the Pentagon, then the National Science Foundation (ironically, all state funded) and then sold to private corporations, where it was then sold back to the citizen/consumer who paid to have it produced in the first place. In fact, this is the case for most common technology used today. Therefore, since

technology is the conduit, it is both the medium and the message. It will not be too far fetched to say that technology is becoming the way in which we perform our daily lives. According to Stromquist (2002) one prediction is that "...economic globalization will increasingly find new and ingenious ways ...to promote consumption...and entertainment content much more than programs intended to foster critical thought..." (p.11). Further evidence to this can be found in, *Manufacturing Consent* in which Herman and Chomsky (1988) discuss television's language of production and explain that the term "content" actually refers to the advertising and the term "filler" refers to the programming<sup>ii</sup>. Nixon (2005) asserts that the media is central to today's cultural production by "...educating people on how to buy, consume, negotiate, and value commodities and services within everyday life" (p.47). Combining this assertion with the theory of a structuralist globalization process, Nixon (2005) argues "...today's high-tech culture performs powerful pedagogic work on behalf of both institutionalized politics and the business sector" (p.57). I am reminded of Freire's (1970) argument that cultural invasion is both an instrument and result of domination and that "...cultural action of a dominating character [such as the media and] (like other forms of antialogical action), in addition to being deliberate and planned, is in another sense simply a product of oppressive reality" (p.154). Understanding media as a catalyst for cultural globalization, Kellner (2000) stresses that Freire has advocated a critical media literacy, "...to empower individuals against manipulation and oppression" (p.321, endnote).

*The Fourth World.* As I have previously explored, Western media is advancing Western culture on a global scale. The majority of Western societies operate their daily lives using advanced telecommunications. It is assumed that because we operate this way

so does the rest of the world, and in fact, the word 'globalization' itself conjures images of people all over the world communicating with each other, and refers to the entire planet. However, the majority of the world's population does not partake in the advanced communications technology that globalization has established. Those who benefit least from globalization are those who live in what is now labeled the fourth world. The irony of this label is that just when the hegemonic classification of nations as first, second, and third 'worlds' had begun to fade, due to the demise of the second world, the Soviet Union, as explained by Stromquist (2002, p.17), globalization discourse coins the term "fourth world". The fourth world refers to those populations, which are excluded from any benefits of globalization, and in fact are victims of it; they do not partake in global economics and technologies. Morrow & Torres (2000) say that they have no collective conscious and therefore no civil societies (p.50). These populations can be found in "...Sub-Sahara Africa, parts of Latin America, and parts of Asia." (Morrow & Torres, 2000, p.49). Many areas of these nations are also categorized as developing worlds, these areas are usually indebted to global economic organizations, like the World Bank and IMF, which according to McLaren (2005) "...reproduces underdevelopment and ensures the continuity of dependency" (p.20). In addition, Stromquist (2002) points to a movement that recognizes the world's migration patterns moving from the South to North for better economic opportunities (p.3), essentially arguing that the deliberate processes of globalization determine their displacement and existence. While the fourth and developing worlds are not major players in world politics, they are a resistance nonetheless, giving them agency. In the next section I talk about some of the forms and conduits of their agency.

*Globalization from Below.* Both local and global resistance to top-down globalization is termed globalization from below. Singh, Kenway, and Apple (2005) note that it has also been called "...mundane, vernacular, or indigenized globalization..." (p.7). Axford (2005) borrows from Richard Falk to define globalization from below as a "...strategy for offsetting the tendency for national government to be co-opted by top-down market forces" (p.188). These include non-governmental organizations (NGO), trade and labour unions, women's groups, indigenous groups, agricultural workers, textile workers, and in education as well. Stromquist (2002) reports that "...international NGO's grew from 6,000 to 26,000..." in the 1990s alone (p.162). More recently, Anheier et al (2005) estimate there are about 40,000 operating NGOs. Other examples of globalization from below include: protests, strikes, boycotts, and many other forms of dissent, which attempt to challenge the status-quo. Even others include, Amnesty International, Greenpeace, members of Jubilee 2000 (a group of charitable organizations, NGOs, INGOs, celebrities, and religious groups) who have been working for many years "...seeking write-offs of the debts of fifty-two heavily indebted poor countries." (Stromquist, 2002, p.163). They are all part of what Moghadam (2005) refers to as the "...family of supranational political change organizations...global civil society organization, transnational advocacy networks, and transnational social movement organizations..." (p. 349), furthermore, Moghadam asserts that along with NGOs, actually constitute a transnational public sphere.

In this chapter I discussed how the top-down forces of globalization dominate its primary mode of operation. The several theories that underscore different impacts on the global economy to conceptualize modern globalization study the outcomes from an

economic perspective. The globalization of economics, politics, and culture, along with supporting ideology, works in perfect synthesis to generate the desired outcome, profit. The neoliberal and neoconservative architects of globalization processes that position policies that benefit the elite are the sole beneficiaries of a so-called democracy which renders the vast majority of its population powerless. In spite of this, globalization from below is a force that heavily influences the processes of globalization and which is gaining in power daily. In the following chapter I discuss how Western education is influenced and shaped by this chapter's accounts of some major globalization processes.

### Chapter 3: Globalization and Education

#### *The Impact of Globalization on Education in the West*

In the light of the above discussion it is imperative to investigate how education is affected by globalization and to understand the ways in which critical pedagogy can respond to these effects. Below, I examine globalization's relationship to education addressing three main points of intersection: education and global politics, education and global economics, and finally education and global culture.

#### *Education and Politics.*

There is often much ado in Canada over the private versus public debate. It is a contentious issue because we are a highly taxed population that has certain expectations regarding basic rights to services paid for, such as education. Presently, class stratification is embedded in education systems from school district taxation (students living in low-income districts receive a quality of education that cannot be equal to that of those who live in higher income areas) to 'choice' programs in the U.S. The fact that some people, specifically certain segments of society, do not have the same access, benefits, and quality of education as others, is actually dichotomous in a society that states its cornerstone is democracy. Barakett and Gleghorn (2008) explain that education perpetuates itself but does not question itself, nor does it recognize the knowledge that students bring into the classroom, claiming that, "...education maintains the status quo and is seen as profoundly political process." (p.89).

*Standardization and Accountability in Education.* Neoliberal policies do not spare public education from privatization, and have transformed the student into a consumer, and education into a product (Apple, 2000). In other words, education has been

commodified and has overtly become market driven. Students are regarded as human capital or future workers who require competence-based skill sets to fill particular jobs as needed. "Standardized tests are touted as the means to ensure that the educational system is aligned well with the global economy" (McLaren, 2005, p.28). Similar to their neoliberal counterparts, neoconservatives are also advocates of Western patriotism, national curricula, standardized testing, and accountability programs. Neoconservatives do not support bilingual education, multicultural education, or cross-cultural education as can be evidenced in curricula of their time. Neoconservative curricula have traditionally distorted history by omitting most of the populations that make up their countries (Apple, 2000). Although neoconservatives have had to compromise with the neoliberal introduction of curricula that begins to recognize the many cultures that make up the society, they are comforted with the fact that it still keeps a strong hegemonic perspective (Apple, 2000). In regards to education, the neoconservative discourse supports the neoliberal strategies which aim to "...make sure that schooling and education ensure ideological and economic reproduction that benefits the ruling class" (McLaren, 2005, p.31). Stromquist (2002) believes that "...education has become the key venue to support globalization." (p.xiv). Further, Stromquist argues that "...linked to accountability is the notion of managerialism...which emphasizes compliance over questioning for various proposed solutions" (p.40), obviously the opposite of what critical pedagogy attempts to advance. Stromquist further asserts that "...notions of managerialism are serving as instruments of internal control instead of being tools to facilitate the educational process" (p.40).



Complimenting the standardization of education is the notion of accountability. A great example of this is the U.S. 'choice plan' education policy. These accountability programs supposedly create competition between schools to remain open by putting a monetary value on the child and giving that student/customer the choice of where they would like to attend school. As a result, a school's budget would depend on the number of students it has, and it is assumed that 'good schools' will receive more 'customers' than 'bad schools', where average test scores from the standardized tests define good and bad. Of course, the ideological rhetoric that is touted is that all children have equal opportunity to receive a 'good' education. However, I wonder if this just does not create more inequality in the long run. If we take this idea to its practical end, then we assume that schools that are already doing poorly, will get even worse because they will continue to receive even less funding until they eventually close. This will lead to a lack of schools in certain areas, forcing children in those areas, therefore removing choice, to travel who knows how far and incur how much expense, to receive an education they are entitled to but cannot access. It is interesting to note how the program name is choice, considering it leaves many without one! In fact, Stromquist (2002) cites Bell to add that in California it was reported that the wealthiest ten percent of schools received grants higher than the statewide average school. Stromquist also cites Kacher and Harrison as well as Lipman, to point out that this "... 'equality of opportunity' now means that parents are free to move their children to whichever school they desire or can afford either financially or logistically" (p.45). I echo Stromquist who believes that neighbourhood public schools will soon be a thing of the past when we consider all the forces at work to ensure this happens. Stromquist maintains that between charter schools, "voucher programs" and

“choice programs” in the U.S. “...that the school as a publicly shared institution will disappear” (p.45).

These competitive conditions place much pressure on each school to churn out high test scores and good attendance if they wish to continue to exist, so much so that according to Stromquist (2002), “There are some reports that in some schools whose academic year goes from August to June, teachers prepare students for test taking from January...” (p.43). Further, Stromquist highlights what critics of standardized testing assert, that because ethnic minorities tend to do poorly in standardized tests, the tests are also “...a symbolic (and psychological) form of regulation of minorities” (p.43). Even more evidence to what McLaren and others have called high stakes testing, as being completely bias and inefficient comes in a case study in Chicago, which found that some students who had strong grades, attendance, and academic accolades throughout the year but did poorly on the standardized tests were still forced to repeat the year (Stromquist, 2002, p.60).

In Stromquist’s (2002) view, “...the attribution of failure to schools is also convenient to educational entrepreneurs who see schools as the new business arena” (p.39). Some say there was a significant shift following the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, which warned against the looming demise of the entire country should they continue to operate their education systems so inefficiently, i.e. publicly<sup>iii</sup>. Following was a drastic rise in outsourcing education packages that promised profits and high test scores. Referring to Fitz and Beers, Stromquist explains that this was done by simple business profit logic, lowering expenditures within the classroom, mainly by hiring unskilled teachers for even lower salaries, so that the funding received from a school district

(which is now based on a per pupil basis) is higher than its expenditure. There are several major educational corporations who see education programs as having enormous national, global, and cyber profit potential. Other than curricula, they sell testing and evaluation programs, educational consultation services, teacher 'training', various certification programs, and language programs (ESL is becoming increasingly popular and profitable). All of these educational programs, along with the previously discussed centralization of schools and standardization of tests, are put forth by narrowly focused neoliberal profiteers of modern globalization. Moreover, according to Stromquist, there is little evidence that educational conditions have improved in the past few decades, however, there does appear to be a lot of evidence that the elite of society are making lots of money keeping the masses uneducated.

*Competence-Based Learning.* The educational reform underway in Quebec is competence-based and technology-driven. In *Monitoring the Implementation of the Reform and the QEP* (Quebec Education Program), a document put together by the Implementation Design Committee (n.d.), the QEP's reform rubric states that it's pedagogy is governed by learning which is "...structured, organized, and directed by the teacher...[and] organized around traditional disciplinary content" (n.d., p.14). Paradoxically it also claims that learning is negotiated between student and teacher and that "...learning is driven by student inquiry...which arise from the focuses of development in the Broad Area of Learning" (n.d., p.14). The fact that it is competence-based immediately proves itself to be un-critical. Further, if the subjects are to be broad, then there is no intention to be critical, as critical pedagogy demands inquiry and investigation into the deeper hidden meaning of subjects. Further, any negotiation of

learning between teachers and students is rendered moot by the teachers' obligation to abide by the proposed curriculum.

According to Morrows & Torres (2000), perhaps the key issue of globalization in relation to education, centers around the relationship between education and the state. Although it can be said that there have been a number of improvements in education in regards to the programs that are offered at most institutions of higher learning, for example International Education (Liberal Arts, multicultural, postcolonial education) and Cross-Cultural Education (Humanistic, and Cosmopolitan education), the fact is that neoliberal policies do not strongly support, through time, money, and resources, the researching of these areas of study, unlike the funding and attention the science and technology programs receive. Further, more and more universities are being funded by private corporations, which are also shifting the focus from knowledge-based skills to competence-based skills. Competence-based learning programs provide specific skill sets for specific jobs in specific settings. In keeping with an earlier metaphor, a perfect example of that might be McDonalds' Hamburger University, where "...more than 65,000 managers in McDonald's restaurants have graduated."  
[http://www.mcdonalds.com/corp/career/hamburger\\_university.html](http://www.mcdonalds.com/corp/career/hamburger_university.html)).

The problem with competence-based learning is well stated by Freire (1973). According to him, "Analysis of highly technological societies usually reveals the domestication of man's critical faculties by which he is basified and has the illusion of choice" (p.33). In *Learning for Life*, Geoff Peruniak (1998) argues that a major criticism of competence-based learning is that it spends "...an enormous amount of time and energy on the measurement issues of competence to the detriment of a broad discussion

and critical analysis of purpose” (p.323). Further, the certification programs offered by corporations are often accused of being nothing more than a money-grab. However, Stromquist (2002) notes that there is evidence that 40 to 50 percent of jobs in the new economy will be technical or trade based, not requiring university training (p.xxi). She further adds that, “...technical skills and competencies for the production of goods...do not seek (and probably wish to avoid) the development of any critical thinking...” (p.38).

### *Education and Global Economics*

*Marketing the School and Selling Young Minds.* As government funding to public schools is consistently scaled back, school administrators have had to look to other sources to keep their schools alive, and at the front and ready to support, are corporations.

Schools have become advertising spaces that corporations vie for, after all, talk about a captive audience! Soda machines, fast food in school cafeterias, advertising on walls, floors, and bathrooms, are just some ways in which the student’s agency is primarily to be a product consumer rather than a learner. The selling out of educational space for advertising space by major corporations is a blatant act of conditioning young people’s minds so that they may learn to be good consumers. Further, the fact that more and more schools are left with little choice but to rely on corporate sponsorships to operate, means that the corporations are in the powerful position to decide which schools are kept afloat and which ones are funded with a new science lab or gymnasium, for example.

The BusRadio project underway nationwide in the U.S. is an example of how advertisers get to their fastest growing market, teenagers. In this project school buses are required to play the BusRadio station to and from school every day, where they claim

“[T]he show also includes minimal, carefully selected sponsorships of which participating districts receive a portion of revenue.” (<http://www.busradio.net>). A much longer running program that has been operating in the U.S. for 19 years is the Channel One program. This television network, contracts out media equipment to schools in low-income areas for a minimum viewing time of twelve minutes daily. Presently, there are seven million students subjected to Channel One (Sharpe, 2007). Therefore, for a single television in one classroom, the schools have been selling the minds of 20-30 students per class, every day of every year for the past 19 years. Multiply this seven million times and once again it is evident to see who is benefiting most from these types of deals. Furthermore, according to Stromquist (2002), researchers from Vassar and John Hopkins studied the Channel One programs and found that 20% of viewing could be considered educational while, 80% went to “...advertising, sports, weather, and natural disasters...” (p.51).

Education materials are also increasingly being 100% sponsored by big corporations, making it difficult for schools who are barely surviving on government funds to pass up. From branding on school tests, tools, and materials, Trojan horse marketing is in full gear. North American advertising targeting children has climbed from 100 million dollars in 1990 to 2 billion dollars in 2000 (Sharpe, 2007). With all of this marketing and advertising taking up actual learning time and space in the classroom, it appears a new curriculum is emerging, consumer pedagogy.

*Cyber-Universities.* Globalization has had an extraordinary impact on education on a multitude of levels. Advanced technology, specifically the marriage of the internet and private enterprise, has led to universities in cyberspace as well as a vast array of on-

line certification programs and degrees. There is a debate over distance education, schools without walls, education without borders, and so forth. The crucial question that arises is that does it afford those who may not have the time, money, ability, or physical capacity to go to school, the opportunity to do so, or is it, as Morrow and Torres (2000) suggest, "...an ideologically driven strategy for reducing the autonomy of education and deflecting its critical potential" (p.52)? Given that in order for anyone to benefit from these virtual programs they must not only have immediate access to a computer (and be computer literate) but must also be able to afford the fees that these programs cost, we quickly narrow down the number of people who can benefit from them.

The next question then becomes, who benefits? I am reminded of our earlier discussion on cultural globalization and the global Westernization that is surfacing to answer that question. In fact, Stromquist (2002) looks to California as an example "...one of the economic epicenters of globalized economies" (p.xxi), where 70% of new jobs earn less than \$10 000 a year, "...a majority of these jobs being filled by African American or Hispanic minorities." (p.xxii). It is fairly clear to see who is benefiting and who is paying the short-term and the long-term consequences. Morrow & Torres (2000) argue that there is a lack of autonomy and therefore critical potential because these programs tend to be based on standardized benchmarks and tests. Also, Brown (2005) claims that "The spread of new technologies has been used by university corporate managers to redefine power over knowledge...[and] to reduce the status of academics by enhancing the influence of those who control technology" (p.186). Brown calls for a "...partnership between academics and information technologists....that extends rather than constrains the reflexive processes linking [them]..." (p.188).

*OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development)*. Morrow & Torres (2000) claim that neoliberal pressures to restructure education in response to industrial production and need "...along lines that correspond to skills and competencies" (p.35) is a major cross-section of globalization and education. In fact, in response to globalization, the richer, more technologically advanced nations have come together to foster competence-based standardization and created a global committee on education. The Convention on the OECD was signed in 1960 with 20 countries as members and has since been ratified to add ten others. The OECD clearly merges democratic government and market economy, and places primary importance on statistics and standardization and claims that it "...plays a prominent role in fostering good governance in public service and in corporate activity."

([http://www.oecd.org/about/0,2337,en\\_2649\\_201185\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/about/0,2337,en_2649_201185_1_1_1_1_1,00.html)). It is also clear in its resolve to 'help' governments (70 of which they have active relations with at the time of my research) create policies that are able to respond to economic necessity (of the more than 20 member countries, no doubt) (Lingard, 2000). Stromquist (2002) reports that although the OECD member countries make up about 19% of the world's population, they have 71% of global trade in goods and services. The member countries of the OECD spend an average of fifty times more on basic education than non-member countries (Stromquist, 2002). Further, Stromquist following James Petras charges that, "...some academics shape the economic programs of developing countries to maximize the global interests of the multinationals..." (p.7).



*Education and Global Culture*

*Critical Pedagogy: An Instrument of Globalization from Below.* Freire (1973)

argued that historical epochs are thematic; the theme of our epoch is modern globalization. Critical pedagogy is necessary when we consider the present state of the planet, genocides, slave labour, and ecological massacres all in the name of profit. It is in the interest of everyone to learn that they create the world they live in now. We live under false assumptions that we live within national borders that protect us, when in fact national borders only create smokescreens so that we do not see what we are causing beyond them. The Western policies that allow for the present ecological devastations alone threaten our very survival. We know that governments and the TNCs (trans-national corporations) that control them have no interest in being accountable for the ecological ramifications our consumerist driven societies have created. Critical pedagogy, in my opinion, has the capacity to respond to this by connecting the daily transactions of people to their national and international ramifications. Stromquist (2002) also asserts that “[T]he landless in the Third World, workers in very low paying factories, and hidden forms of child labor are coming into the consciousness of people who seek greater economic and social equality across countries” (p.159). Furthermore, this “...second group of globalization resisters...seeks to block the development of a homogenized mind...” (p. 159). For example, a small movement of producing and selling fair trade products is beginning to seed in many Western countries, a direct result of a critical understanding of a global market. According to Stromquist most of the resistances occurring today are over issues of social injustice, environment, and ethical concerns. However, this resistance can be used as an educational tool, “...to increase people’s

awareness of the impact on globalization on everyday life and ... how negative impacts on education itself can be attenuated” (p.158).

As I argue above, the term globalization is slippery, ambiguous, multi-faceted and accompanied by a debatably neutralizing ideology. Globalization is considered a threat to local cultures, traditions, economy, and democratic governance, by postmodern theorists and post-Fordists, who declare that it is our new and defining epoch. Although thus far, the relationship between globalization and education appears to promote homogeneity through standardization, and is evidently market-driven, it does have other balancing characteristics. Douglas Kellner (2000) draws from Richard Falk and describes the concept of globalization from below, “...in which oppositional individuals and social movements resist globalization and use its institutions and instruments to further democratization and social justice” (p.301).

Through critical pedagogy we learn not to see things in binary perspectives, and to be critically aware of the many multi-dimensional tensions at work. I would have to agree with those who believe trying to stop globalization is a futile and limiting venture. Rather realizing and accepting that globalization affects the daily lives of everyone, and everyone affects globalization is the first step to intentionally create our world. In response to globalization’s ‘inevitable’ ideology, Kellner (2000) states that understanding globalization as a varying theoretical construct “...helps rob it of its force of nature...” (p.305). Critical pedagogy responds by deconstructing the ideological basis of globalization, and thus makes it a form of resistance. In this sense it can be an example of globalization from below. In fact, Kellner (2000) notes that numerous projects resisting

globalization use Freire's methods such as, reflection and action, lateral organization, agency, and equality in economic and social relations.

The discourse of globalization from above is limited in its reach as it is primarily concerned with the universalization of capital, markets, and politics, and the Westernization of culture. With the spread of consumerism as epistemology, it appears that 'the powers that be' are attempting to lull us into a state of unconsciousness, which is why it is so important that education be a bastion for awakening consciousness, which critical pedagogy speaks to. It seems that globalization does have a bottom-up ally, or what is referred to as globalization from below, in the form of critical pedagogy.

*Critical Pedagogy and the Internet.* Although the internet offers a bevy of on-line certifications from educational corporations, it can also be seen as the most democratic learning space where almost everything can be shared. The internet is one of the most striking features of the era of globalization, especially in the context of education. Although it has its limitations and even dangers, it does provide a wealth of information to the discerning browser. Stromquist (2002) asserts that it has not only diffused the process of economic globalization but it has also become a resource for "... those seeking to introduce greater reflexivity in the immense whirl of globalization developments" (p.158). It has become a place of resistance itself, what Burbules (2000) calls a "metacommunity" (p.348), as people are communicating with each other from all over the planet, building on-line communities and networks to share information, knowledge, experiences, ideas, and global awareness, it has become a global culture unto itself, a space that Kellner (2000) calls a "cyber-democracy" (p.311).

Arguably, on-line communities have many limitations, as complete trust in community members is not possible, as well as having many variable physical, psychological, and logistical barriers (Burbules, 2000). Historically, media, from print to television, has always served as an avenue for democratic action; the internet is perhaps the 21<sup>st</sup> century's version of the Enlightenment period's pamphlet. When we consider Richard Falk's (Axford, 2005) previously mentioned definition of globalization from below (opposition using globalization's institutions and instruments to advance social justice), coupled with previously discussed origins of the internet (being born of U.S. Dep. Of Defense and raised by corporations), then the use of the internet as a means of advancing social justice, is undoubtedly a site of resistance and a form of globalization from below. Allman, McLaren, and Rikowski (2005) assert that education is a site of human resistance (p.152); this is just one example of how that statement is true and how critical pedagogy as a manifestation of globalization from below can be effective.

*Education and a Global Civil Society.* Global participation necessarily constitutes a global citizenship and responsibility, which has been growing, evidenced by the establishment of various non-governmental organizations. Sociologist, Anthony Giddens (2000) said this in an interview discussing a global civil society with Edge: The Third Culture:

A global civil society essentially is the underpinning of many institutional democracies. You could regard non-governmental associations and organizations as a kind of early beginning to a global civil society. It's essentially having a civic culture of global participation, and should in the end,

one would certainly hope, lead to some kind of version of global citizenship.

(p.6)

Of course there has been and continues to be an ongoing debate on what a global civil society constitutes. For example, Hegel discussed a global civil society as being separate from but mediated by the state while Marx was a staunch opponent of this idea believing it boiled down to a “self-serving economic factor” (Anheier, et al, 2005, p.13). Gramsci viewed a global civil society as both a “...non-state and non-economic area of social interaction, to be only temporary and strategic, a tool in the revolutionary struggle” (Anheier, et al, 2005, p.13).

This Chapter discussed how Western education as a public space is disappearing and is being replaced by a profit-logic agenda, selling both physical and mental spaces to hungry educational entrepreneurs. Standardized testing and accountability programs are key vehicles to centralizing education which facilitates this agenda. The rise in competence-based learning from high school to university is further evidence to the charge that public education has become a cash-cow for those benefiting from a market-driven and consumerist epistemology. On the other hand, there has also been a rise in what is arguably a global civil society. The power of these forces from below cannot be denied. For example, Anheier, et al, (2005) claim that in more recent years the OECD’s funding to developing nations is not only influenced by private enterprises and corporate financing but also by international NGOs (p.18). Whether a global civil society is to be used as a tool for revolutionary change or whether it necessarily constitutes a global citizenship, it is a great example of how education, especially critical pedagogy, is ideally situated to provide the learning tools to contribute significantly to it. In the following

chapter I investigate critical pedagogy's foundations, span, and limitations, which has provided me with the tools to conceptualize globalization's complex processes.

## Chapter 4: Critical Pedagogy

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles."

- Karl Marx (1881,1967)

This chapter examines the foundations of critical pedagogy. Particularly, it links some of the key concepts in critical pedagogy (that I draw on chapters two and three) to my previous discussion on globalization. Finally, it summarizes some of critiques and limitations of critical pedagogy. The objective of this chapter is to shed light on critical pedagogy's effectiveness in attaining critical consciousness in light of top-down globalization processes.

### *Laying the Foundations*

Critical pedagogy promotes education through understanding historical progress and materialism. An approach developed by Marx and Engels (1881, 1967), which stresses that social phenomena can be understood through the analysis of historical economic developments and their material forces of production. Critical pedagogy focuses on the contradictions in social culture, which preserves oppression (Freire, 1970), and also looks to deconstruct the histories, practices, and infrastructural support systems that strengthen hegemonies (Rezai-Rashti, 1995). Critical pedagogy examines critical theory, social theory, political theories, economic theories, feminist theories, radical theories of emancipation, and more recently and relevant to this research, theories of globalization. In doing so, it can be argued that critical pedagogy works towards the democratic goal of creating socially just and equal relations and structures in societies through critical approaches to pedagogy. Critical pedagogy is rooted in emancipatory objectives and is dedicated to the relief of human suffering everywhere. It presupposes

that we are a community seeking emancipation from social injustice and antidemocratic functionality. It also presupposes that in order for a democratic and socially just society to exist its members must have the ability to change it.

Critical pedagogy has come a long way from its philosophical origins seeded in the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory<sup>iv</sup>, transforming into a revolutionary pedagogy for education. Given its seeds in critical theory, critical pedagogy's Marxist framework denounces positivist<sup>v</sup> epistemology, and identifies class as its central problematic. However, newer conceptualizations of critical pedagogy reject the Marxist notion of materialism and that "...economic factors dictate the nature of all other aspects of human existence."(Kincheloe, 2005, p.51). For example, Peter McLaren and Henri Giroux have called for a critical pedagogy that examines cultural spaces within a class based framework. As explored in chapter two, the processes of globalization appear to reinforce and legitimize a kind of McCulturalization which is flourishing across borders. Ultimately, the dominant forces of economic, political, and cultural globalization work interdependently, to above all, maintain economic and class positions static.

*A Look at Freire's Pedagogy.* Critical pedagogy has two discursive areas of research interest. Some researchers are more interested in the instructional practices in specific contexts such as Paulo Freire and Ira Shor, while others have a macro and ever-widening and shifting vision of education and society, such as Henri Giroux and Peter McLaren (Gore, 2003). It is interesting to note that although it is in Giroux's *Theory and Resistance in Education* that we are first introduced to the term "critical pedagogy" in 1983 (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003, p.2), it is often synonymous with the name Paulo Freire, perhaps the most renowned name in critical education. Paulo Freire's



theoretical and practical contributions to the field of education and literacy have made indelible impressions that transcend pedagogy and touch every part of society, making it not merely a method or technique but rather a critical way of living. Although much of his work is dedicated to methodology his vision of critical education significantly informs its contemporary version, and so I begin by exploring Freire's theoretical vision of education to gain further understanding of this emancipatory pedagogy.

His middle class family being pushed down the economic ladder appears to have borne great significance in Freire's life, living and experiencing first hand the difference between the middle and lower classes informs his pedagogy as class structures and power relations are the engines that drive it. Freire was jailed and exiled from Brazil for fifteen years for his writings and dissidence, during which time he worked and became renowned the world over, until his return to Brazil when he became the Minister of Education for Sao Paulo. Freire's model of adult literacy programs is the foundation for many comprehensive radical pedagogies today, and his techniques are used around the world.

Freire's pedagogy uses dialectical thinking to introduce problematization. Through dialogue and problem-posing (as opposed to problem-solving), "...one problematizes the natural, cultural and historical reality in which s/he is immersed." (Freire, 1973, p.ix). Freire's pedagogy engages both coordinators (teachers) and participants (learners) to research their world and surroundings and generate pictures and symbols that represent it, what Freire referred to as **codifications**, the fruit of these dialogues were termed **generative themes**. Out of these "thematic investigations" (Freire, 1970, p.105) and through creative dialogue and problem-posing, Freire's problematizing

of these generative themes advanced a "...form of reading that not only understood the words [picture or symbol] on the page but the hidden and unstated dominant ideologies as well" (Kincheloe, 2005, p.16). Dialogue, as opposed to polemics, is central to critical pedagogy, and the codifications and generative themes place the learner "...in the role of the object rather than the subject of his learning" (Freire, 1973, p.49). Freire (1970) asserted that critical persons are dialogical, that they realize their ability to re-create the world and have faith and hope in humanity to do the same. Dialogue is a cornerstone in most emancipatory pedagogies based on understanding through mutual communication. Important to Freire's pedagogy is the idea of cultural synthesis, recognizing that in society there exists anti-dialogical action by the oppressor or dominant group in order to maintain the status quo. Thus, discourse is the tool used to uncover anti-dialogical action and discover alternative actions.

Critical pedagogy does not exist without active learning on the part of the learner and although the teacher is expected to be knowledgeable and have researched their students (Kincheloe, 2005), the value of the learner's contribution is no less important or critical than the teacher's because the student's historicity is the starting point of inquiry (Freire, 1970). More recent critical pedagogy calls on the educator to locate how his or her "...positionality e.g., worldview ...theoretical perspectives, social identities, and roles" (Enns, et. al. 2005, p.177), influences his or her pedagogy in an attempt to cross-over to the student by dismantling one's own assumptions of privilege and power. This dialogical method of inquiry occurs in what Freire termed **culture circles**, and what are often referred to as learning circles in critical pedagogy today. Both students and teachers break down power structures (such as teacher as lecturer) and become in touch with their

own agency. The realization of human agency, of each person's ability to recreate the world, is what ultimately leads to the **transformation** of it. Freire stressed the penetration of the culture of silence, the way in which dominant culture silences the voice of the **subjugated** culture. For him, the culture of silence was the **voice** to be discovered and heard. Freire's techniques are intended to create an inquiring mind, to question what is neutral and what is commonsense, and are a challenge to positivist methods of learning.

Perhaps one of Freire's best known challenges to positivist epistemology is his notion of the banking method. Freire borrowed from Jean Paul Sartre's digestive analogy of education where teachers feed knowledge to students (Freire, 1970, footnote, p.76), to introduce what he referred to as a banking method of education. In Freire's banking analogy, students are equated to empty vessels in which teachers deposit knowledge. In this scenario there is no inquiry into the meaning of what is being taught. Not only does Freire challenge what is taught and how it is taught, he challenges everything about traditional or positivist education, from physical proximity and placement of teachers and students, to methods of evaluation, as he claimed it all "...serves to obviate thinking." (Freire, 1970 p.76), placing Freire in a similar camp of earlier mentioned radical thinkers. This is the indictment to positivist epistemology and the antithesis of critical pedagogy. Let me briefly discuss some of the Freirean notions that have a direct and significant bearing on the issue under discussion.

### *Key Concepts*

*Subjugated Knowledge.* Subjugated knowledge is the knowledge that dominant culture has erased through hegemony and ideologies which only legitimate positivist epistemology. Subjugated knowledge is part of critical pedagogy's language today, as it [critical pedagogy] is "...profoundly concerned with understanding subjugated knowledge coming from...various oppressed groups and examining them in relation to other forms of academic knowledge." (Kincheloe, 2005, p.26). In chapter 3 I examined how education has responded to top-down globalization by recognizing and valuing technical knowledge while simultaneously devaluing academic knowledge. In relation to globalization, the subjugated knowledge which is being hidden and oppressed is the information on globalization from below, which not only links the actions of top-down globalization processes to their consequences but opposes it and acts in ways to balance out these forces. Western education continues to indoctrinate in the name of profit logic which serves the dominant ruling classes on both local and global scales. Western societies and their media, a major conduit of culture, rarely profile or link the consequences of globalization to their root causes, nor do they cover the strides being made to balance the negative forces of globalization. In fact, often these balancing efforts are purposefully thwarted through various tactics such as, keeping exposure to a minimum except for when things may go wrong (perhaps protests breaking out into riots, which are often incited by the authorities), and branding them as antidemocratic troublemakers. Further to this point, Darder and Torres (2003) suggest exposing subjugated knowledge by linking the global histories of social movements against inequalities and social injustice by highlighting the historical connection between race

and class. An example of how intimately race, class, economics, and politics are still very much intertwined was exposed in the U.S. on May 1st, 2006. Latino Americans all over the country staged a massive demonstration titled, "The Day Without Immigrants", to show the strength of their economic contribution, power, and impact on the economy and fight against tougher immigration laws, as reported by CNN.com (2006).

*Forms of Knowledge.* Critical pedagogy focuses on unveiling what has been deemed legitimate knowledge or what Foucault termed "regimes of truth" (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003, p.7.). Knowledge is assumed and "...legitimated within the context of a variety of power relationships within a society" (p.7.). Critical pedagogy borrows from Foucault in assuming that relations of power and knowledge are found in discourse. Discourse refers to "...a body of anonymous, historical rules, always determined in the time and space of a given period...", which are formed through discursive practices governed by dominant powers (McLaren, 2003, p.83). As explored in chapter 3, the discourse surrounding globalization describes it as inevitable and beyond the control of a single group, or individual. Critical pedagogy focuses on challenging the "...purposes and procedures of interpretation" (Kincheloe, 2005, p.58), for the purpose of developing a "...cultural criticism revealing power dynamics within social and cultural texts" (p.58). The critical analysis of discourse and knowledge is shaped by historicity, class, culture, and politics, making knowledge a social construction. Critical pedagogy can provide the tools to easily uncover the power dynamics of globalization processes and how they relate to class, culture, and politics, both locally and globally. The knowledge that is legitimated and valued in western societies and globally, regarding top down globalization processes, is completely disconnected from and unrelated to any

understanding of the how the world operates. For example, technocrats and entrepreneurs are highly regarded and monetarily compensated accordingly even though they most often do not connect their daily functions and aspirations to their negative and global consequences. However, farmers and conservationists, who have a clear understanding of the negative consequences of globalization, and who try to expose those consequences, are barely compensated at all, and are branded as uneducated peasants.

*Hegemony.* Antonio Gramsci's, concept of hegemony forms an important foundation of today's critical pedagogy. Gramsci's theory of hegemony unveiled the naturalization process of 'commonsense' truths that are put forth by the moral leaders of society to keep dominating power positions fixed (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003, p.7). Hegemonic processes seek to have oppressed groups participate in their own oppression through non-coercive means. As previously discovered, neo-liberal agendas manifested in trans-national corporations (TNC) are responsible for the new relations and conditions of labour which have caused widespread losses in permanent employment, benefits and security, and unemployment. Lower economic segments of society which shop at big-box stores, are participating in their own oppression, because by doing so, they are supporting the perpetrators that restrict their ability to shop elsewhere in the first place. Further, the commonsense ideology that justifies getting the most bang for a buck encourages all segments of society to do so. Therefore, big-box store patrons are not only those who have little choice economically, but also middle and upper economic segments of society as well.

The concept of hegemony is important to critical pedagogy as it "...points to the powerful connection that exists between politics, economics, culture, and pedagogy"

(Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003, p.13). This naturalization process occurs in all spheres, schools and curricula, churches, work, entertainment and media sources, and even within cultural and family groups. McLaren (2003) states, “critical discourse focuses on the interests and assumptions that inform the generation of knowledge itself...and deconstructs dominant discourses the moment they are ready to achieve hegemony” (p.84). Considering structural globalization’s relatively new existence, it is important that we begin to deconstruct the dominant discourse surrounding it now.

*Ideology.* Where hegemony refers to a process, ideology refers to a framework; a set or order of belief systems that give particular meaning to things, in an assumed fashion, so that we understand it contextually. Hegemony and ideology are so closely linked in fact that “...it is sometimes referred to as ideological hegemony” (McLaren, 2003, p.79). It is a “...framework of thought that is used in society to give order and meaning to the social and political world in which we live.” (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003, p.13). Ideology and hegemony work together to create the perpetuation of unequal power relations already in existence. McLaren (2003) quotes Giroux and describes ideology as “...the production and representation of ideas, values, and beliefs and the manner in which they are expressed and lived out by both individuals and groups.” (p.79). Certainly the fact that ideology provides meaning to things illuminates its positive values because it allows us to make sense of our world (from a perspective), however its link to power and domination means it is used for less than positive purposes. John Thompson (McLaren, 2003) breaks down negative functions of ideology into four categories: 1 - the legitimization of particular ideology, 2 – dissimulation or the camouflage of relations of power, 3 – fragmentation of oppressed groups pitted against

each other by dominating powers and what Freire (1970) called “Divide and Rule” (p.141), and 4 – reification of knowledge “...as permanent, natural, and commonsensical...” (p.80). The ideology which present forces of globalization endorse deems capitalism and individualism as commonsense and legitimate ideology aligns well with Thompson’s first negative function of ideology. The dissimulation or camouflage of power, Thompson’s second function, is accomplished by the processes of globalization in several ways. As I explored in chapter 2, Chomsky theorizes that government bodies provide an alter ego, a scapegoat, and a distraction for the major trans-national corporations to perform their functions with ease. Also, explored in chapter 2, McLaren and others claim that capitalism has become analogous to democracy further camouflaging this ideology as desired. I also point out that the neoliberal and neoconservative powerhouses controlling the present forces of globalization actually work together to accomplish their common goals. This is revealing since the present democratic processes in Canada and the U.S. have their nations divided along party lines. For example, there are rarely more than two candidates to choose from when going to the polls, and the parties often incite the rift of one party against the other. In the U.S., they categorize their states as red or blue, representing the states political position, often pitting red against blue in political discourse. The Canadian House of Commons literally face off with each other daily, as the house seats are divided opposite each other and evenly in two. These democratic proceedings appear to create more divisiveness than common ground within public discourse, yet, the status quo continues to flourish. This is evidence to Thompson’s third negative function, fragmentation. And finally, the fact that we continue to accept all of this as natural and even to be revered is evidence to



Thompson's fourth function, reification of this particular brand of democracy as commonsense.

Understanding the difference between what is ideal and what is real is no easy task when we consider the many powerful hegemonic forces working to retain the dominant ideology.

*Culture.* Freire (1970) argued that knowledge couldn't transcend culture and history since all knowledge is created and fashioned within the specific context it is discovered. Understanding culture is key to becoming critically capable. For critical pedagogy, McLaren (2003) defines culture "...as a set of practices, ideologies, and values from which different groups draw to make sense of the world" (p.74) and stresses that people don't live in cultural spaces but rather "...live out cultural relations" (p.75). He further distinguishes cultural forms as "...the symbols and social practices that express culture" (p.76). McLaren (2003) presents and highlights three categories of culture defined by critical social theory: dominant culture, subordinate culture, and subculture. The first and second being the hegemonic and subjugated cultures, consecutively, and the last refers to the segments of dominant society that are resistant, perhaps not truly oppositional because they are often not critical<sup>vi</sup>. Critical social theory states culture is "...inextricably connected with the structure of social relations within class, gender, and age" (McLaren, 2003, p.74), that it is a form of production of hegemony, and it is a field of struggle. As previously stated, a cultural globalization put forth by the owners of material progress represents western ideology and values as the surfacing dominant global culture.

*Historicity.* In *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (1970) draws on Marx when discussing the materialistic nature of society. Marx and Engels stated that the activity of people is the fundamental basis of human existence and what produces material life produces society and is ultimately what makes history. (Tejeda, Espinoza, Gutierrez, 2003). Freire (1970) stated that “[T]here is no historical reality without humankind” (p.130). The intent of critical pedagogy then becomes to move people from positions of object in their reality to subject, for the purpose of transforming it (p.130). In critical pedagogy understanding that present conditions are based on the past is as important as understanding that they do not necessarily govern the future. Globalization is a historical reality which defines material reality and arguably 21<sup>st</sup> century Western existence. Assuming that education and the quest for knowledge ultimately seek to understand human existence, it is imperative to critically examine globalization as part of our historical and material reality.

*Politics.* As previously noted, critical pedagogy is framed by socialist, even Marxist theory, which is intended to guide an emancipatory and empowering pedagogy thereby creating a more just and democratic society by developing critically reflective and analytic skills in its citizenry. At its core, critical pedagogy is sociopolitical because it attempts to balance injustices created by political hands seeking to maintain very unequal status quos. It is not only concerned with understanding the way knowledge is constructed but also how and to what end. Education is political, as can be witnessed by the fact that education ministries, elected political bodies, decide what education is, what purpose it has, and who it serves, which critical theorists contend is often relational to the economic positioning of a nation. Critical pedagogy is ultimately intended to balance

society by countering oppression by way of exposing hegemonic forces, consequent ideologies, and unmasking relations of power, making it political at its very core. Although critical pedagogy does have a political perspective and democratic processes and goals, its political nature is less about bureaucratic process and more about attempts to place power into the hands of citizens rather than act as a reinforcement of hegemony. Freire (1970) argued against what he termed *assistentialism*, which describe futile policies that attempt to change unsavory symptoms of societies rather than attack their causes (p.15). Critical pedagogy does not claim to be neutral and does have its own agendas of politicization, which are linked to emancipation, politics, and democracy. It is clear that the politics of education are directly linked to the politics of globalization therefore critical pedagogy can deconstruct the ideologies and hegemonic processes that perpetuate the present top down forces of modern globalization and has the potential to raise consciousness and practice to create a more balanced model.

*Dialectical Thought.* Critical pedagogy draws on Hegel's interpretation of dialectics. In Hegelian terms, essence is linked to logic and reflection, where understanding the deeper meanings or 'essence' of something is revealed through the dialectical unfolding of itself, where ultimately all things are understood as historical critical activity. Through dialectical thinking, we are able to understand how commonsense ideological hegemony enables domination, or the status quo of dominating powers. Giroux (2003) states that, in critical theories "...the logic of predictability, verifiability, transferability, and operationalism is replaced by a dialectical mode of thinking that stresses the historical, relational, and normative dimensions of social inquiry and knowledge" (p.50). This becomes complex since not only must we learn to analyze

our world critically we must simultaneously critically analyze our framework of knowledge which constructs how we see our world. In a sense, dialectical thinking illuminates the path to critical consciousness; "...critical pedagogy embraces a dialectical view of knowledge that functions to unmask the connections between objective knowledge and the cultural norms, values, and standards of society at large" (Darder, Baltonado, & Torres, 2003, p.12). Giroux (2003) quotes Marcuse to explain its function, "...to break down the self-assurance and self-contentment of commonsense, [and] to undermine the sinister confidence in the power and language of facts..." (p.37). McLaren (2003) enlists Carr and Kemmis to help further unravel the process and purpose of dialectical thought explaining that dialectical thought is about finding contradictions, which lead to the reconstruction of a new state of affairs. Giroux (2003) brings it into critical classrooms by breaking it down into micro and macro objectives, where macro objectives encompass a global reference point to "...acquire a political perspective" (p.71), and micro objectives, what Giroux terms "productive knowledge" (p.71), are concerned with course content, the organization and classification of data, and "...have a content-bound path of inquiry" (p.71). The ultimate goal is what he calls "directive knowledge", where the learner can make a connection between micro classroom objectives and macro sociopolitical relationships, which develop students' critical thinking skills that can be carried outside the classroom as well. This echoes Freire's (1970) purpose of generative themes, which bring together "themes of universal character" (p.103) like domination and liberation, with "themes of limit-situations" (p.103), and are the characteristics of society. Coming to understand the totality of these themes, ultimately leads to emancipation and transformation. I previously discussed the

extent to which politics, economics, and culture are interconnected and the dominant roles they play in determining globalization processes, making it absolutely necessary to examine globalization dialectically. Our new modern epoch of globalization necessarily renders all citizens global citizens, essentially demanding an understanding of the local/global dialectic. Once again, the dialectical nature of critical pedagogy responds to this demand by way of dialectics as one of its central problematics.

*Consciousness and Praxis.* Krishnamurti (1982), India's spiritual philosopher and educationist is mostly not included in enumerations of critical pedagogists. However, although Krishnamurti's pedagogy is technically a holistic pedagogy, in my opinion, it is a form of critical education and does touch on many tenets of critical pedagogy, such as consciousness, knowledge, and conflict theory, the first of which I will explore.

Krishnamurti identifies that there are different groups of consciousness, such as class groups, racial groups, ethnic groups, religious groups, cultural groups, national groups, and the list is never-ending. It is true that groups of people share a consciousness that is relative to the group, the true consciousness of all of these groups is one and the same, and when one suffers everyone suffers. Attaining critical consciousness allows us to see how individuals and group consciousnesses are constructed or "programmed" (p.12).

Krishnamurti maintains that, "You have to enquire into the whole movement of thought because it is thought that is responsible for all the content of consciousness..." (p.14).

Therefore, how we learn and what we learn determines our forms and levels of consciousness, which brings me to Freire's concept of **consciousness**.

The key to Freire's (1973) pedagogy, and perhaps what sets it apart from previous critical theories, is critical consciousness or "...conscientização [which] represents the

development of the awakening of critical consciousness” (p.19). Freire explains that there are three stages to consciousness: the first being intransitive where the person does not question their life or existence, the second is naïve-transitivity where the person questions their life and existence but does not act, and the third is critical transitivity, where people are able to question their historical context and locate themselves within it (p.18).

Therefore, it becomes education’s task to foster the skills which can move the learner toward critical transitivity. Critical transitivity or conscientização is reached when a learner realizes their own capacity to re-create the social realities that shape their lives (Darder, Baltonado, & Torres, 2003, p.15). Here is where **praxis** comes into play; in order for critical consciousness to occur, the action and experience of re-creating the world is just as important as deconstructing and understanding it. In critical pedagogy, praxis is where theory (critical education) and action (in the world) come together, which incites reflection; “[W]hen a word is deprived of its dimension of action, reflection automatically suffers and the word is changed to...verbalism” (Freire, 1973, p.87). Therefore critical pedagogy requires an action-reflection-action process. Top down globalization discourse and activity presently supports an action-non-reflection-action model of education in Western societies purposefully proliferated by the elite to perpetuate the status quo, yet another indication that critical pedagogy can thwart further developments and reinforcement of top down globalization processes.

### *Critiques*

*Epistemological limitations.* Critical pedagogy, despite its popularity is not without its critics. Many postmodern critiques of critical pedagogy come from feminist scholars and critical race theorists and most criticisms are linked to its “...classical

European philosophical roots” (Darder, Baltonado, & Torres, 2003, p.17). Notably, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Engel, and the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory, comprise of wealthy, white, European men. Ellsworth (1989) argues that “[R]ational argument... set[s] up as it’s opposite an irrational Other.” (p.303), and the binaries that are often found in the language of critical pedagogy are a testimony to this. Some argue that since critical pedagogy’s intention is to be organic, this creates a hole in the theory, because this pedagogy provides the framework and language of the oppressor. When we consider critical pedagogy’s focus on oppression and who the oppressor in most Western societies is, critical pedagogy’s strategy of dialogics and language must be challenged. Further, some charge that critical pedagogy’s universalistic and totalizing tones actually create an oppressive framework. To organize categories of characteristics and then slot people within these categories is limiting and oppressive. Freire (1970) claimed that in our awareness of being incomplete “...lie the very roots of education as an exclusively human manifestation” (p.84). Critical pedagogy’s cognitive and rationalist approach to knowing and learning is asserted with its rejection of other ontological ways of knowing, such as notions of spirituality, magic, and the exclusion of intuition from the discourse. Challenging this point are Bell and Russell (2000) who charge that critical pedagogy “...tends to reinforce rather than subvert deep-seated humanist assumptions about humans and nature by taking for granted the borders (as in Giroux, 1991) that define nature as the devalued Other” (p.189).

*Non-Reflexivity.* It is also argued that critical pedagogy’s voyeuristic focus on the oppressed as the consummate subject leaves little room to observe the attitudes, assumptions, and behaviors of the dominant group, ultimately creating no critique of

itself and actually perpetuating the status quo. Ironically, although critical pedagogy's objective is to expose the hidden agendas of the oppressor within a society, Gore (2003) says that it's " 'self critical' nature...seems more rhetorical than actual" (p.337). Gore claims that the works of theorists like Giroux and McLaren have responded to some arguments, however, overall, critical pedagogy theorists have not responded to its actual emancipatory effectiveness. Although having critiqued Trinh Minh-ha, Ellsworth (1989) quotes her to remind us that "[T]here are no social positions exempt from becoming oppressive to others" (p.321), making these roles fluid rather than static. I would agree with that and add that oppressed groups are often simultaneously oppressors, unwittingly or not. For example, school administrators in low-income areas who succumb to programs like BusRadio or Channel One just to keep their schools alive are ultimately undermining and sacrificing the value and potency of the education they provide.

Another good example of how globalization induces this phenomenon on a global scale is provided by big-box stores and trans-national corporations. By exploiting developing countries to provide cheap labour and resources to the west, they are able to sell products at extremely low costs, which end up being bought by the west's marginalized, oppressed, and economically strapped, who then ultimately contribute to their own oppression as well as the oppression of developing countries. By highlighting the forces of globalization from below through critical pedagogy, this subjugated knowledge can be analyzed in comparison to the mainstream forces of globalization. Given that globalization creates a situation where populations are both the oppressed and the oppressor, critical pedagogy can uncover the silenced voice of both.



The very nature of critical pedagogy requires analysis of the theory itself, as a result, critical pedagogy has been and continues to be contested, debated, and modified. It is important to remember that critical pedagogy does not claim to be ideal and so must absorb constructive criticism never losing sight of its emancipatory goals. It is imperative that this be the core value of all critical pedagogy dialogues, otherwise it only amounts to John Thompson's previously mentioned third negative function of ideology, fragmentation. Fine examples are Bell and Russel (2000) who may have their critiques about critical pedagogy, however, ultimately they are advocating for a *critical* environmental education. Critical pedagogy is about creating a critical citizenry. An informed society that asks questions such as: What is legitimated and what is not? Who decides? Who benefits? Who pays? How? What are the short and long term consequences? Is this the only path? Ultimately, critical pedagogy contends that being able to ask these questions, reflect on them by interrogating their language and meanings, and then acting with informed intent is what creates a critical citizenry and thus a truly democratic society. These questions are extremely pertinent and must be raised (and answered) in order to understand how globalization affects the process of education.

## Chapter 5: Conclusion

### *Reflection and Evaluation*

My research into critical pedagogy's purpose, agenda, and limitations provided me with the tools necessary to break down the globalization process as both a top-down phenomenon and a bottom-up one, as well as exposing the ideological hegemony pushing a neoliberal agenda. This research has allowed me to understand how the economic, political, and cultural aspects of globalization processes feed each other, depend on each other, and ultimately determine the whole, and that the results are not only imminent but carefully calculated. Therefore, creating a society that can critically examine how to cut through the propaganda and rhetoric that is put forth by the profiteers, to advance a just and democratic goal, contributes to the bottom-up processes of globalization, which ultimately creates a more balanced system. Unfortunately, the present abusers of a purposefully unbalanced globalization process are the same bodies that are determining what Western education is presently propagating, a disconnected and unquestioning citizenry, which only perpetuates the status quo. We often hear the word 'connected' these days, which refers to technological communication, however uncovering the processes of today's globalization I have found that Western education is purposefully creating a society of *robotons* more disconnected to each other and the earth than ever before.

In response to Gore's challenge regarding critical pedagogy's emancipatory effectiveness, I would humbly submit that my research into critical pedagogy has emancipated me from the constraints of the ideological hegemony surrounding globalization. It has led me to become more connected to the world by giving me the

tools to critically examine the forces determining it. This research endeavor has uncovered who the dominant forces driving top-down globalization are, what they do to achieve their goals of power and domination, how they do so, and has allowed me to act in a just and democratic way.

This research endeavor only manages to scratch the surface of economic, political, and cultural globalization processes and how they are affecting Western education and thus society. The interweaving of this triad creates an intricately complex and ever-widening scope of this field making it impossible to thoroughly study in great detail. However, critical pedagogy has provided me with a template to not only understand globalization, but to conscientiously navigate myself in it, knowing that the results of my ensuing actions are contributing to a more balanced world. Because of this, I believe that critical pedagogy can most definitely be used as a tool to understanding globalization, its effects on education, and ultimately as a form of globalization from below.

### *Recommendations*

Can critical pedagogy provide hope and emancipation in a time where a looming aura of hopelessness exists and most citizens believe that they are too insignificant to affect this massive ominous machine, which has been named globalization? I believe it can. In this research endeavor, I studied critical pedagogy and used it as a framework to understanding globalization and its relationship to education. However, this research has unearthed so much more than that. From the beginning of this process to now, I have become and continue to transform into a critically transitive and conscious person, as I use critical pedagogy as a framework to examine my own life. Critically examining every part of my daily life, I discovered the many ways in which I contribute to the reification

of commonsense ideologies, and began to understand the many ways in which I could act as an agent of change in my own life and thus in the world, having a deeper understanding of my 'global footprint'. In the preface I refer to the vision our Canadian Governor General has for our citizenry; these high expectations can be matched with equally high standards for creating a democratic citizenry with the implementation of critical pedagogy in our education system.

Critically analyzing globalization exposes the person behind the curtain, allowing us to understand that globalization is not a phenomenon out of our control, and that there are in fact many controlling forces directing its progress, and further that we are one of those forces. For example, critically examining the power of the trans-national corporations directed me to examine my relationship to them, and although there are many instances where I have no choice but to consume their product or service, I have begun to eat local, organic, and shop fair trade wherever and whenever possible, deliberately choosing not to buy brand names or shop at big-box stores. In examining my relationship to the environment, I began to understand how I was destroying it, not only for myself but also for the world and future generations. Using natural products, recycling, and taking public transport, are just some of the many changes I have made. Ultimately, critical pedagogy has made me understand that today's globalization does depend largely on economics and politics, and therefore choosing how and where to spend my dollar is just as powerful as casting a vote. Locating my place in society through critical analysis of my daily life, I was reminded of the Marxist notion of materialism, which claims that society depends on materialist notions to define itself (which is purposefully propagated), in turn, the market responds, and consequently, the

global elite profit. Understanding my contribution to the process allowed me to take responsibility for my part, and make changes accordingly. More importantly, critical pedagogy has taught me how to unravel the hegemonic ideology attached to economic and political rhetoric, so that my choices are my own. In response to my problem statement, I have found that critical pedagogy is empowering and is an effective and useful learning instrument to navigate people in the direction of being critically conscious in their lives and have hope and faith in humanity to act accordingly. It is a powerful tool for critically understanding globalization, and therefore our epoch, which is defined by a modern globalization.

Kellner (2000) charges that too many critical pedagogues view advanced technology "...solely as instruments of domination" (p. 317) and further that "very few progressives have attempted to theorize globalization from below, to detect how globalization can be used to foster a progressive social agenda, and to encourage the project of using globalization to promote emancipation and democratization." (p.308).

Today's citizen is more cosmopolitan than ever, has a global responsibility, and is a citizen of the world. Perhaps, critical pedagogical theory and critical globalization studies (a branch of Humanities or Sociology) might do well to work towards an interdisciplinary relationship to further both theories. According to James Mittelman (2004), critical globalization theory has four main components: reflexivity, historicism, de-centering, and interdisciplinary learning, and further that it is grounded in equality and social justice, making it quite akin and compatible with critical pedagogy. In response to my research question regarding the relevance of studying and understanding globalization, I echo Kellner's (2000) advocacy for further research on globalization from below and a

critical theory of globalization (p.308). More precisely, I suggest further research in education and critical pedagogy that understands daily activity as a global phenomenon, the local/global problematic of globalization. Understanding critical pedagogy as a form of resistance to this epoch's globalization from above, it provides a much needed counter balance as a powerful form of globalization from below. In an age where we communicate globally in real-time, the potential is as hopeful as it is possible, and the time is now.

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## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> Socialist Feminism focuses on the analysis of public and private spheres, the former being occupations traditionally held by men while the latter refers to occupations and work traditionally held by women. Public sphere occupations have always been highly regarded and compensated, while private sphere occupations from domestic work, to nurses and teachers have been and continue to be discriminated against, devalued, and under-compensated.

<sup>ii</sup> This is based on their propaganda theory put forward in 1988 in their book *Manufacturing Consent*.

<sup>iii</sup> For the full report visit the U.S. Department of Education at <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/NatAtRisk/risk.html>.

<sup>iv</sup> Frankfurt School and Critical Theory. In 1923 the Frankfurt School of philosophical thought, which later became known as Critical Theory, was born of University of Frankfurt's Institute of Social Research. The institute's theoretical bases had a Marxist framework and stressed the importance of the historical context of meaning and results to research. Critical Theory was to address two major issues, first to develop a theory that addressed "...the complex changes arising in industrial-technological, postliberal, capitalist society;" and second to "...recover the philosophical dimension of Marxism..." (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003, p.9).

<sup>v</sup> "Positivism is an epistemological position" (Kincheloe, 2005, p.27), which is the study of how knowledge is constructed. Positivists purport that knowledge is not contextual (Kincheloe, 2005, p.27), and do not consider hegemonic ideology, for example.

<sup>vi</sup> They contest some dominant cultural spaces and forms like "appropriate" clothing, hairstyles, manners of conduct, and language (McLaren, 2003, p.75).