The Topic

### [excerpt from recent Maduro speech breaking off relations with the United States]

### We begin with the futility of the topic: Maduro has ended all ties with the United States. Economic engagement with Venezuela is impossible. We situate ourselves as observers of the voices and perspectives that the United States has refused to respect.

BBC 13, (BBC: an international new agency July 20, 2013 “Venezuela 'ends' bid to restore full US ties” -http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-23387807) GV

Venezuela says it has "ended" steps towards restoring diplomatic ties with the US, after comments by the woman nominated as the next envoy to the UN. Samantha Power said this week she would seek to combat what she called the "crackdown on civil society" in countries including Venezuela. She was speaking at a US Senate confirmation hearing on Wednesday. The remarks prompted an angry response from Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro. "The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela hereby ends the process... of finally normalising our diplomatic relations," said Venezuela's foreign ministry in a statement. It objected to Ms Power's "interventionist agenda", noting that her "disrespectful opinions" were later endorsed by the state department, "contradicting in tone and in content" earlier statements by Secretary of State John Kerry. Relations between the US and Venezuela have been strained in recent years. They last had ambassadors in each other's capitals in 2010. Washington angered Caracas by backing the Venezuelan opposition's demand for a full recount of the presidential election in April to replace Hugo Chavez, who died in March. Mr. Chavez's anointed successor, Nicolas Maduro, won the vote by less than two percentage points. In June, the two countries had tentatively agreed to work towards improving their strained relations, after Venezuela freed and deported a US filmmaker who had been held on conspiracy charges. During a regional summit in Guatemala, Mr. Kerry said he had agreed with Foreign Minister Elias Jaua on an "ongoing, continuing dialogue" in order to "establish a more constructive and positive relationship". He said the US wanted to "begin to change the dialogue between our countries and hopefully quickly move the appointments of ambassadors between our nations". Mr. Jaua said at the time that for Venezuela it was important to build a relationship based on the principles of mutual respect and no interference in internal affairs.

# The Eye of the Storm

### Neoliberalism is not only an economic policy that rose took root after the Washington Consensus, but a range of international policies that prioritized the market in social organization—neoliberal market rationale became the center of the creation of meaning. The way through which the United States engages any policy is through the framework of neoliberalism.

Couldry 10 (7/14/2010, Nick, Professor of Media and Communications at Goldsmiths University of London, “Why Voice Matters: Culture and Politics After Neoliberalism,” LW)

What type of object do we understand neoliberalism to be? The economic policies with which neoliberalism is associated are well known and are easily listed, for example in the form of the orthodoxy which emerged as the conditions imposed in Latin America and elsewhere in return for multilateral finance in the 1980s and 1990s. These came to be known in economist John Williamson's phrase as 'the Washington consensus': strong fiscal discipline, reductions in public expenditure, tax reform to encourage market investors, interest rates determined by markets and notthe state, competitive exchange rates, trade liberalization, the encouragement of foreign direct investment, privatization of public services and assets, deregulation of financial and other markets, and the securing of private property rights."

But neoliberalism has also been a policy framework adopted voluntarily by many rich countries such as the USA and the UK. Neoliberalism, then, is not just the Washington Consensus but more broadly the range of policies that evolved internationally from the early 1980s to make market functioning (and the openness of national economies to global market forces) the overwhelming priority for social organization. Neoliberalism did not start as a theory about politics, but as a new economic 'policy regime' in Richard Peet's phrase," Neoliberalism took root as the rationale behind a particular interpretation of the 1970s global economic crisis and policy responses to it. By reading that crisis as the result of the failure of a preceding economic policy regime (Keynesianism), neoliberalism authorized a quite different approach to politics and economics which saw market competition as their common practical and normative reference-point, with state intervention in the economy now the aberration."The elites and adviser circles involved in developing this new 'rationality' of economic and political management were more than technical consultants; they were, in Peel's words, 'centres of the creation of meaning'. 10

### Neoliberal discourse has undermined voice as a process through the economic regulation of civil lives. Voice, however, is also critical to challenging neoliberalism because it lets us act against the dominant framework and build an alternate political framework.

Couldry 10 (7/14/2010, Nick, Professor of Media and Communications at Goldsmiths University of London, “Why Voice Matters: Culture and Politics After Neoliberalism,” LW)

This reflexive concern with the conditions for voice as a process, including those that involve its devaluing, means that 'voice', as used here, is a value about values or what philosophers sometimes call a 'second order' value.

Why should this distinction be important? What can the term 'voice', used in this special way, add to other terms, such as democracy or justice, in helping us think about political change? The reason lies in a historically specific situation. A particular discourse, neoliberalism, has come to dominate the contemporary world (formally, practically, culturally and imaginatively). That discourse operates with a view of economic life that does not value voice and imposes that view of economic Life on to politics, via a reductive view of politics as the implementing of market functioning. In the process of imposing itself on politics and society, neoliberal discourse evacuates entirely the place of the social in politics and politics' regulation of economics. These moves have been implemented in various ways in different countries, whether or not they are formal democracies and to greater or lesser degrees using the disguise of democracy. The result is the crisis of voice under neoliberalism. I offer 'voice' here as a connecting term that interrupts neoliberalism's view of economics and economic life, challenges neoliberalism's claim that its view of politics as market functioning trumps all others, enables us to build an alternative view of politics that is at least partly oriented to valuing processes of voice, and includes within that view of politics a recognition of people's capacities for social cooperation based on voice, I use one word - voice - to capture both the value that can enable these connections and the process which is that value's key reference-point. The term 'voice', as used here, does not derive from a particular view of economic processes (consumer 'voice') or even mechanisms of political representation (political 'voice'), but from a broader account of how human beings are. The value of voice articulates some basic aspects of human life that are relevant whatever our views on democracy or justice, so establishing common ground between contemporary frameworks for evaluating economic, social and political organization (for example, the varied work of philosophers Paul Ricoeur and Judith Butler, development economist Amartya Sen, social theorist Axel Honneth and political theorist Nancy Fraser); and it links our account of today's crisis of voice to a variety of sociological analyses (from diagnoses of the contemporary workplace to accounts of particular groups' long-term exclusion from effective voice). All are resources for addressing the contemporary crisis of voice and thinking beyond the neoliberal framework that did so much to cause it.

### Neoliberalism means poverty and exploitation for the general population and lower classes—and especially for the Global South. Conflicts of neoliberalism Venezuela spearheads the war against the neoliberal New World Order.

Chris Carlson 7, (Contributor to the State of Nature, State of Nature Spring 2007 “Venezuela in the Center of the World”- <http://www.stateofnature.org/?p=6131)GV>

Maybe you haven’t noticed, but there is a world war going on out there. It’s a class war, raging world-wide, and everyone is affected by it. Across the globe the dividing line has been drawn. A small minority seeks to dominate the world, spreading global free-market capitalism to the last corners of the planet, regardless of the consequences for the people who happen to live there. All alternatives have failed, they tell us. Communism, Socialism, Keynesianism, Protectionism; they have all been tried, none of them worked. Global capitalism is the only way, the only road. There are no alternatives. We have reached the end of history, they say. But suddenly, there is one small problem; Latin America has exploded in protest. The general population of Central and South America have been some of the hardest hit by the new wave of globalization. The region has extreme inequality, where a small upper class lives a life of affluence and comfort, walled-off from the brutal reality of their countries. The majority are the victims who are hard-hit by the policies promoted by this minority elite. The growing mass of slum-dwellers scratches out a living off a dollar or two a day. The wages are so low that the workers are forced to accept horrific living conditions.The picture is a grim one, but this is not only happening in Latin America. It’s happening world-wide. Even in the United States, where the living conditions are much better, the same general process is occurring. The globalization of the economy means that the society is slowly divided into the same two groups; an affluent minority connected to the global economy, and the majority who works in the service sector with a slow but continued decline in living standards. [1]In the United States declining living standards means lower wages, longer hours, and decreasing social mobility for the majority middle class. More fall into poverty every day and the number without access to healthcare grows by the thousands. [2]But in Latin America, declining living standards means tragedy. The malnourished masses flood into overcrowded cities. Urban shanty-towns grow uncontrollably causing infrastructural disasters. As displaced families try to survive on the margins they become more and more desperate. Child labor, drugs, crime, and violence plague the masses. Huge portions of the population are not even afforded basic services such as running water, housing, or plumbing, much less access to education or healthcare. The social and cultural consequences are so grave they are beyond comprehension, and will still be felt many, many years into the future. In the last few years places like Bolivia, Mexico, and Argentina have erupted in massive mobilizations against this new world order. But one nation has led, and continues to lead the battle against this dark trend. One nation is at the center of the global struggle, this world-wide class war. In the last few years, Venezuela has emerged as the most important battleground of the ongoing war. The social and political movement in Venezuela insists that another world is possible, that a better system than global capitalism can be built, and it is determined to fight for it. The conflict in Venezuela and now spreading to the rest of Latin America is the central battlefield in the world war between the multinational ruling class, and the rest of us.Venezuela: Here’s how it happened. For most of their histories, Latin American nations have been ruled by elite groups. Until the 1970s these groups were both national and internationally connected elites. Governments were, for the most part, a consensus of elite groups, using state resources to increase national production, but without stepping on the interests of the international elites. The masses were kept complacent with populist programs in which the state provided social spending on basic services, subsidized consumption, and government programs. Although the governments by no means represented the interests of the general population, they maintained relative support through these populist programs, and some limited response to popular demands.This is the liberal democratic model. Those who govern are various sectors of the elite class, elected every few years by national elections, but not representative of the popular will. The majority of the population plays no role, being only a spectator except for casting a vote once every 4 or 5 years. This is the system that rules in the United States and has been promoted around the world as “democracy.” A similar system ruled in Venezuela for 4 decades until it fell apart in the nineties. Two parties, both representing elite interests, governed the country together, sharing power between them. [3]As multinational capital grew and expanded around the world, it began to take control not only of first-world countries, but also third-world nations. By the 1980s, national elites had mostly lost dominance, and had joined up to the newly dominant internationally-linked elite groups. A process of neoliberal economic transformation began that totally dismantled the previous state structure. Social spending was mostly eliminated, national industries would no longer be subsidized or protected, populations were left to fend for themselves. This was known as the “Washington Consensus.”The national economies were increasingly opened up to international capital. As national elite groups either joined up with multinational capital or were swallowed by them, the world was divided into two groups; the multinational interests versus the rest of the population. There was now no representation of popular demands in the government, and two basic groups remained. The conflict became a global class war of a tiny minority of wealthy capitalists against virtually everyone else. But instead of quietly standing by, these populations erupted in total rejection of the neoliberal agenda of the multinationals.Venezuela exploded on February 27, 1989. It was the first, the largest and the most violent of the popular explosions that would occur in countries across the region over the next decade. As the international elite consolidated their control over the Venezuela state, they began to dismantle the populist structure. Prices of food, gas, transportation and other essentials immediately shot up as government subsidies were slashed. The budget was put at the service of the international lending institutions. The debt would be paid, but the population would have to go hungry. The masses poured into the streets, rioting, looting, and burning the city. The national army was called out to massacre them by the hundreds. [4]Finding difficulty in expanding in the developed world, corporations now seek to expand across the globe, buying up whole nations. In Venezuela, one of the world’s largest oil producers, international capital sought to privatize the state-controlled oil industry. Throughout the 1990s the plan was to privatize everything from Venezuela’s national resources to telecommunications, health care, and electrical infrastructure among others. By 1998 they had almost completed the job. [5]But the popular movement that began with the violent uprising in 1989 brought President Hugo Chávez to power exactly ten years later. On a platform of total rejection of neoliberal reforms, and defense of the poor majority, Chávez easily swept into power in 1998. Far from being a dictator as has been the claim, Chávez put himself up for reelection just two years later under a new constitution that his government had pioneered. Chávez and the new constitution were widely approved in nation-wide elections. In the conflict between international capital, and the people, Venezuela now had a government that represented the people. Washington and the corporations that they serve became worried. This was exactly the kind of democratic explosion that they had worked so hard to prevent all these years. The last time the Venezuelan people had united behind a popular leader was in 1948, and he only lasted 10 months. Chávez wouldn’t last much longer if Washington and the Venezuelan elite could help it.In 2002, after Chávez had passed new laws calling for agrarian reform and reversing the privatization of the oil industry, they would try to get rid of the popular president once and for all. The high military command renounced the authority of the president and threatened to bomb the presidential palace if he didn’t step down. Chávez was taken into their custody and flown to a small island in the Caribbean. There, according to some witnesses, a U.S. government plane was seen arriving. The plan was to fly Chávez to Cuba where he would be exiled. [6] This was the same strategy later used in 2004 to get rid of popular Haitian president Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Kidnapped by the U.S. army and forced onto military aircraft, Aristide was dumped in Africa and remains there to this day. [7]But the plan failed in Venezuela. Massive protests and the rebellion of the National Guard brought Chávez back to power less than 48 hours later. This wouldn’t be the last attempt, however. The wealthy elite and their ally Washington would continue to work for the removal of the democratic president. [8] With each attempt over the next few years, the Venezuelan masses would become more and more radicalized. Chavez’ political movement would become more and more revolutionary in response. The class conflict had become clearer than ever. Chavez and the Venezuelan masses were now very conscious of who the enemy was. Like no other nation in the world, in Venezuela any elected official can be revoked at mid term, a policy pioneered by Chávez under the new constitution. In 2004, a Washington-funded NGO in Caracas led a campaign to use his own policy against him and recall Chávez’ presidential term. Once again, the US was working on getting rid of the popular leader. After collecting enough signatures, the recall referendum went to a national vote. Chávez easily won the referendum, and his mandate was again approved before public opinion. [9]In December of 2006, in nation-wide presidential elections, Chávez received twice as many votes as any president in Venezuela’s history. He won the support of 63% of the population for another six-year term. [10] It can now be said that Hugo Chávez is the most popular Venezuelan president ever. And the achievements are significant. Hundreds of health clinics have been built around the country, dozens of new high-tech hospitals, new universities, educational programs, subsidized food markets, to name a few. Literacy programs have officially eradicated illiteracy in the country. Thousands of Cuban doctors have been spread throughout the country, building a new health system based on the Cuban system. [11]Although critics have said that this model cannot work, that Chávez is taking the wrong road, in Venezuela they have demonstrated that there are alternatives to free-market neoliberalism. With consistently high growth rates over the last few years, Venezuela now has one of the fastest growing economies in the world. And with growth in non-petroleum sectors leading the way, along with integration with their neighbors, Venezuela is on its way to freeing itself from dependence on oil exports. [12]According to a recent survey, in recent years the poorest sectors of Venezuelan society have drastically increased their spending. [13] The minimum wage has been repeatedly raised, and is now higher than it has ever been. Venezuela’s wealth is now being redistributed more equally. The country’s resources have been maximized for the benefit of the people, not the multinational corporations. But perhaps most importantly, this movement is not just about improving the conditions of the majority poor. It is about building an alternative system, a popular democracy to challenge the liberal elite democracy of before. They are experimenting with transforming the economy, and political structure of the country. Cooperatives are being promoted by the government around the country. New community councils are being given more power to govern over their own affairs. Millions of poor Venezuelans who never had the legal documents to vote, to participate, have been given an identity by this government, and have been given the right to participate. [14]Unlike any time in Venezuela’s history, the masses are permitted and encouraged to participate, to make decisions. Venezuela is challenging the Washington consensus that gives all the power to multinational corporations. They are experimenting with giving the power to the people. [15] In a world where multinational capital reigns, Venezuela has become the biggest challenge to their domination. And as Chavez’ movement has consolidated power in Venezuela, his influence in the region has also grown. The popular movements against neoliberal globalization are sprouting up across the continent. In Bolivia, Ecuador, and Nicaragua, movements similar to Venezuela’s have taken power and are beginning their own transformations. Nations like Mexico, Colombia and Peru are also seeing significant movements for change that could take power in the near future. Latin America as a whole has become the biggest threat to the neoliberal model, with Venezuela in the lead. The fight is to build a new alternative to global capitalism and liberal elite democracy. In Venezuela the goal is to build a political system that truly lies in the hands of the people, a popular democracy instead of a representative democracy. A democracy where everyone participates in the political system as well as in the economic system. Instead of a capitalist economy which creates huge inequalities and concentration of wealth and power, Venezuela is searching for a new way to organize the economy to allow for a fairer and more egalitarian distribution of wealth. At the very root of some of the biggest problems in the modern world, Venezuela is searching for a solution. For the sake of all of us, let’s hope they can succeed.

### Venezuela is not a unique instance—the Bolivarian Revolution rose out of changes in the 20th century.

Martinez 10 – program director for Global Exchange in Venezuela, writer (Carlos, Michael Fox – journalist, reporter, documentary filmmaker, producer of Venezuelanalysis radio headlines, co-founder of internet radio program Radio Venezuela en Vivo, co-director of documentary Beyond Elections: Redefining Democracy in the Americas, Jojo Farrel – former program director in Venezuela for human rights organization Global Exchange, journalist, Venezuela Speaks!: Voices from the Grassroots, nd)

It would be easy to believe that what has been happening in Venezuela since 1998 is solely the result of the election of Hugo Chávez as president. As the present book shows, however, Chávez’s election fits into a much broader context of the development of social movements in Venezuela. Chávez would be unthinkable without the movements that support and animate the Bolivarian Revolution. Similarly, Chávez and Venezuela’s social movements have emerged within a much broader context of recent changes in Latin America, which have to do with social, economic, and political changes that took place in the continent during the second half of the 20th century.¶ Following World War II, approximately from the 1940s to the 1970s, the nations of Latin America and of most of the rest of the Third World pursued policies that came to be known as “import substituting industrialization,” in which countries tried to industrialize and develop economically by restricting imports and replacing these with domestically produced equivalents. It was a time in which national governments and national capitalists generally cooperated in the belief that only such cooperation would advance their countries economically.¶ However, in the course of the 1970s, a worldwide recession led to a gradual replacement of state-interventionist economic policies with free-market “laissez-faire” doctrine eventually known as “neoliberalism.” The causes for this transition were both economic and political-ideological. On the economic side was the collapse of the Bretton Woods financial system, which had regulated the world’s exchange rates between 1945 and 1973. The fixed exchange rate system gave national governments a certain degree of control over their national economics and over capital inflows and outflows. However, when the Nixon administration decided to pay for the Vietnam War by printing dollars, and when OPEC’s oil embargo caused financial instability, such enormous pressure was put on the fixed exchange rate system, that it had to be completely abandoned by 1973. This, combined with the development of new communication technologies that further aided the flexibility of capital, meant that capital could now flow around the globe with far fewer restrictions, creating a dynamic that could threaten governments with disinvestment or an investment strike if governments did not create more favorable investment conditions in the different countries. Of course, more favorable investment conditions generally meant elimination of trade barriers, deregulation of workplace and environmental protection, and lower taxes for corporations and the wealthy.¶ On the political-ideological side, the transition towards neoliberalism was aided by Pinochet’s coup in Chile (1973) and later by the electoral successes of Margaret Thatcher in Britain (1979) and Ronald Reagan in the U.S. (1980). In one country after another, politicians that represented the interests of transnational capital attained political power. Bretton Woods institutions, the World Bank and IMF and later the World Trade Organization (previously the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade), all controlled by First World countries, also began re-tasking themselves in order to push neoliberalism in their development programs. Though some governments, such as that of Chile, participated willingly, many Third WorId countries were often forced via the threat of withholding credit to open their economies to the neoliberal principles of transnational capital. As a result, the neoliberal ideology of the economist Milton Friedman replaced that of John Maynard Keynes as the world’s dominant economic practice.¶ As more wealth was redistributed towards the rich and transnational capital (or finance capital) acquired unprecedented power, neoliberalism was an unmitigated success from the perspective of the world’s upper class. According to its advocates, however, neoliberalism was also supposed to bring about stability, and steady and continuous economic growth. In the time that it was the world's reigning economic doctrine, however, it proved to be a failure on both these accounts. Despite providing some relief from inflation, neoliberalism usually meant increased hardship for the poor. According to the World Bank, the ratio between the average income of the world’s poorest twenty countries and of the world’s twenty richest countries increased from a ratio of 18 to 1 in 1960 to 37 to 1 in 1993. Measured in terms of growth of per capita GDP, the neoliberal era also did not do as well as the previous era of state-driven development. Between 1980 and 1999, when neoliberalism reigned, per capita economic growth in Latin America was a mere 11 percent, compared to the 80 percent growth in the previous twenty-year period, between 1960 and 1979, when state-driven developmentalism reigned. In regard to stability, neoliberalism contributed to many economic calamities in Latin America, such as Mexico’s financial implosion in 1994, Argentina’s in 2001, and the worldwide financial crisis of 2008-9.¶ In Latin America, the economic failures of neoliberalism combined with the political failure of representative democracy and thus contributed significantly to the rise of the New Left. Throughout the continent, politicians would promise pro-poor policies only to reverse themselves upon taking office. Perhaps the most extreme instance of such a reversal happened in Venezuela, when former president Carlos Andrés Pérez ran for a second non-consecutive term in 1988 on an anti-neoliberal platform. A few weeks after taking office in February 1989, however, he implemented a harsh neoliberal IMF-imposed “structural adjustment,” which led to country-wide riots and then to police repression that killed anywhere between 400 and over 1,000 Venezuelans. Populist neoliberals, such as Alberto Fujimori of Peru and Carlos Menem of Argentina, were also among the most notorious representatives of this type of politics.¶ That is, the failure of neoliberalism to deliver on its economic promises to the general population also meant the rise of resistance to this economic doctrine throughout the continent. In Brazil, the landless peasants movement organized massive land occupations that directly confronted the power of the country’s landed elite. In Ecuador and Bolivia, indigenous movements mobilized against their respective governments’ environmental policies and the usage of natural resources such as water, gas, and oil. In Mexico, the Zapatistas emerged to stage more violent forms of resistance in Chiapas. And in Venezuela, as a consequence of the aforementioned IMF riots of 1989, new urban community associations and political parties emerged that provided an important impetus for the emergence of Hugo Chávez in 1998. After Chávez, one country after another elected leftist leaders; in South America, only Colombia and Peru seem to have escaped the trend so far. The degree of leftism in the governments of Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Bolivia, Uruguay Ecuador, Paraguay and Venezuela, of course, varies greatly from one country to the next. Spanning the left-of-center political spectrum in terms of willingness to challenge the old neoliberal hegemony and to introduce more radical policies of redistribution and democratization, they range from the more moderate left governments in Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay to more leftist in Argentina, Ecuador, and Paraguay, and yet further left in Bolivia. In this context, Venezuela is the most radical of them all.

# Methodology

### We need the combination of the experiences of the people in Venezuela and abstraction to understand the movement. Ignoring personal experiences glosses over the contribution of voice and critical pedagogy.

Bruce 08 – was BBC correspondent in Venezuela, British journalist, author and filmmaker (Iain, The Real Venezuela – Making Socialism in the 21st Century, nd)

[Seeking to ground this collective account in the concrete, lived experience of individual Venezuelans and the communities in which they live or work does not mean avoiding the more general, even abstract, realm of analysis and interpretation. On the contrary, many of the existing interpretations of the Bolivarian revolution err on the side of simplicity, not because they are too concrete but because they are too abstract. They often fail to take account of the multiplicity of lived experience that has found a place within it. And they often fail to measure the distance between intention and achievement, between rhetoric and reality. So for example, Tariq Ali's important interview, 'Changing the World by Taking Power', was a legitimate and timely rebuttal of some of the autonomist, would-be Zapatista, positions that could not cope with the phenomenon of a Chavez - a rebuttal taken further by D. Raby with her emphasis on the indispensable role of 'strong leadership'. But that is only half the story. It risks eclipsing the nonetheless real and also indispensable contribution of autonomist-type thinking and practice to the Venezuelan experience - and to its outlines of a socialism for the twenty-first century. This contribution has been very marked in some of the most impressive areas, like the urban land movement or the closely connected alternative media. And it has made a deep mark on some areas of government policy too, as in the way the attempts to develop a 'people's economy' have recycled lessons from the Brazilian Landless Workers' Movement (MST) and their "economiasolidaria'. Getting our understanding of these combinations right - or at least as right as we can - is no small matter.The significance goes well beyond Venezuela. And it goes beyond the immediate questions about what a government like that in Venezuela, or in Bolivia or in Ecuador, could or should do, because it begins to reveal much more generally where radical politics may be heading in the years to come. The experience 'in Venezuela is once again making it possible to ask some of the big political questions that have been off the agenda for half a generation.

### Voice and its narration are key to radical approaches because they survive transformations in the ways of living, can be carried over from the past, and can directly address neoliberalism.

Couldry 10 (7/14/2010, Nick, Professor of Media and Communications at Goldsmiths University of London, “Why Voice Matters: Culture and Politics After Neoliberalism,” LW)

Radical hope rests, Lear explains, on at least three things: addressing a current crisis as openly and clearly as possible; facing the unknowability of the transformations which a current way of living will undergo; and finding some underlying principle from the past which can be sustained into a future period whose features cannot yet be anticipated, This returns us to voice's status as a second order value: its insistence that, whatever transformations social, political and economic structures undergo, none will be acceptable unless they are based on valuing individuals' ability to give an account of themselves and the conditions under which they live. Voice's apparent vagueness can, from this perspective, be seen as its strength, since it is only a flexible, second order value of this sort that can be expected to survive major transformations. Another strength is its link with the working principles of past democracy; something must be carried over from the past. And yet, in a crucial respect, voice is neither vague nor backward-looking: it articulates a direct response to neoliberalism's own second order value, market functioning, the card that trumps all considerations of voice. It is striking how Lear's vision of 'radical hope' is itself grounded in valuing a process much like voice:

although we may be corrected in various ways by others, we take ourselves to have authority when it comes to the narratives of our own lives .... in general, we think it constitutive of a person having a life that he or she claims some authority over saying what is happening in it.B1

It is only from the perspective of humans as 'self-interpreting animals' with 'narratable lives',B2 that the depth of loss to which radical hope was for Lear a possible answer comes into view: so too for the losses generated by neoliberal discourse. Only by facing and naming those losses do we have a chance of developing, over time and from many sources, a counter-rationality that can succeed neoliberalism and a 'counter-expertise’ that generates new directions for policy and politics.

### And, Chavez has created a framework that privileges voice: Bottom-up education directed equally towards all social classes not only encourages critical thought on neoliberalism through inclusion of politics in academics, but also is fundamentally structured to oppose neoliberalist ways of organizing education and supports a self-sustaining socialist state.

McLaren, 2013—Professor at UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies who specializes in critical pedagogy, critical ethnography, political sociology of education, critical theory, revolutionary social movements, critical race theory, and social justice education (2013, Peter, OBITUARY EDUCATION AS LIBERATION: THE BOLIVARIAN ALTERNATIVE HUGO CHAVEZ (1954-2013))

Education under Chavez was education for the creation of a "multipolar" world. For Chavez, education either meant giving life support to capitalism's profit-orientation in such a way as to bolster the remains of the welfare state, or education meant recreating a socialism for the twenty-first century. Chavez was not concerned with incorporating the oppressed within the liberal-democratic framework, but rather in changing the framework through the reorganization of political space through education, that is, through making the state function in a non-statal mode by reorganizing the state from the bottom up through the education and initiatives of the popular majorities. Socialism, Chavez understood, could only be sustained by the subjective investment of those involved in the process.

Under Chavez, Venezuelan education was not only geared to help provide universal access to education (as Venezuela's poor had been shut out for generations), in particular, to those traditionally disadvantaged and/or excluded groups such as the urban and rural poor, those of African descent, and indigenous communities, but to help prepare the next generation of Venezuelans to enhance the conditions of possibility of a socialist alternative to capitalism. Venezuelan education aspired to be a combination of Freirean-influenced critical and popular education, where horizontal and dialogic (subject-subject) relationships were pursued using holistic, integral and transdisciplinary pedagogies and methodologies based on andragogical principles for a liberating and emancipatory education.

Under Chavez, little attempt was made to distance educational reform from a politicized approach. Education reform clearly directed itself towards an organic form of endogenous socialist development of the social-community context as part of a larger struggle for a participatory-protagonistic democracy. Against the privatization of education and approaches hegemonized by the neoliberal education industry, and its consumerist role grounded in egoism, competition, elitism, and alienation, Venezuelan education aspired to be humanistic, democratic, participatory, multi-ethnic, pluri-cultural, pluri-lingual and intercultural. The development of a critical consciousness among the population was crucial, as was an integration of school, family and community in the decision-making process. Venezuelan education favored a multidisciplinary approach linking practice and theory, curriculum and pedagogy, with the purpose of creating social, economic and political inclusion within a broader vision of endogenous and sustainable development, and with the larger goal of transforming a culture of economic dependency to a culture of community participation. This approach, for example, underwrote the courses at the Bolivarian University of Venezuela (UBV) where mentors hip was provided to students who undertook projects in their local communities. For instance, Community Health students worked with doctors within the Barrio Adentro health mission, and Legal studies students established a community legal centre to advise and

support families with civil law issues, while education students worked in local schools with a teacher/mentor (Griffiths and Williams, 2009). And in the evening, during classes at the UBV, students discussed theory "linking back into and arising from their experiences in the project" and thus became part of a broader project of social reconstruction (Griffiths and Williams, 2009). Of course, there were obstacles to be overcome with this approach.

For instance, how you prevent the social formation of schooling to be integrated into the educational system without reducing education to the functional needs and requirements of the national economy? And further, how do you create an approach that addresses the political formation of students in a way that is not simply a formalistic and uncritical response to official ideologies that support socialist objectives? Of course, this is not simply a challenge that faced Venezuelan education under Chavez, but is the challenge of critical pedagogy in whatever context it is taken up and engaged. Despite these challenges, education under Venezuela prospered. Over 93 percent of Venezuelans aged 15 and over can read and write. The Venezuelan government has more than 90 institutions of higher education and remains committed to the idea that every citizen should be able to have a free education. Education was conceived within an integrationist geopolitical conception of Latin American countries in a way that enabled Latin Americans to challenge economic dependency fostered on them by the imperialist powers, to resist colonialist globalization projects, and to create spaces where students could analyze critically local problems from a global perspective (Muhr and Verger, 2006). Under Chavez's leadership, the Venezuelan government invested significantly in all educational levels. In fact, between 1997 and 2002 - under Chavez - all social classes benefitted from an increase in access to higher education. Chavez refused to follow the neo-liberal strategy of finance-driven reforms-i.e., transferring fiscal and administrative responsibilities to either lower levels of government or to individual schools for cost-saving and efficiency purposes-thereby challenging the dictates of the Washington Consensus policies (Muhr and Verger, 2006). He refused a shift of the cost of education to the "users" through privatization which would simultaneously instrumentalize 'participation' as pecuniary and nonpecuniary household/community contributions (Muhr and Verger, 2006).

Postcolonial Directions in Education, 2(1), pp. 145-153,2013, ISSN: 2304-5388

151

### This debate round is an intellectual opportunity to engage in the critical pedagogy of these voices. We inquire into why Venezuela and other Latin American countries at their foundation refuse the neoliberalism that the US has thrust upon them. Our methodology is perspective, not prescription—we offer both a perspective and our commitment to listening to all voices and perspectives. Critical pedagogy—constant analysis of institutionalized knowledge—is key to engaged citizenship, intellectual dialogues, and true democracy.

Giroux 11 (Chair of English and Cultural Studies at McMaster University, “Rejecting Academic Labor as a Subaltern Class: Learning from Paula Freire and the Politics of Critical Pedagogy”, http://www.uta.edu/huma/agger/fastcapitalism/8\_2/Giroux8\_2.html, DL)

Freire was acutely aware that what makes critical pedagogy so dangerous to ideological fundamentalists, the ruling elites, religious extremists, and right-wing nationalists all over the world is that central to its very definition is the task of educating students to become critical agents who actively question and negotiate the relationships between theory and practice, critical analysis and common sense, and learning and social change. Critical pedagogy opens up a space where students should be able to come to terms with their own power as critically engaged citizens; it provides a sphere where the unconditional freedom to question and assert is made central to the purpose higher education, if not democracy itself. And as a political and moral practice, way of knowing, and literate engagement, critical pedagogy attempts to “make evident the multiplicity and complexity of history.”[[9](http://www.uta.edu/huma/agger/fastcapitalism/8_2/Giroux8_2.html#note9)] History in this sense is engaged as a narrative open to critical dialogue rather than predefined text to be memorized and accepted unquestioningly. Pedagogy in this instance provides the conditions to cultivate in students a healthy skepticism about power, a “willingness to temper any reverence for authority with a sense of critical awareness.”[[10](http://www.uta.edu/huma/agger/fastcapitalism/8_2/Giroux8_2.html#note10)] As a performative practice, pedagogy takes as one of its goals the opportunity for students to be able to reflectively frame their own relationship to the ongoing project of an unfinished democracy. It is precisely this relationship between democracy and pedagogy that is so threatening to so many of our educational leaders and spokespersons today, and it is also the reason why Freire’s work on critical pedagogy and literacy is more relevant today than when it was first published. Clearly, such a pedagogy demands not just a critical understanding of the relations between knowledge and power, learning and experience, and education and social change, but also a willingness to fight for the labor conditions that both promote academic freedom and struggle against academic repression. At the heart of any vestige of critical pedagogy is both the project of relating education to the creation of informed citizens and the labor conditions that give faculty the opportunity to engage in the pedagogies that make such a project possible. This is not merely a dispute over who should control the classroom, but a struggle over how power is shared, used, and institutionalized so as to create the structural and ideological conditions for experiencing the university as a democratic public sphere. According to Freire, all forms of pedagogy represent a particular way of understanding society and a specific commitment to the future. Critical pedagogy, unlike dominant modes of teaching, insists that one of the fundamental tasks of educators is to make sure that the future points the way to a more socially just world, a world in which the discourses of critique and possibility in conjunction with the values of reason, freedom, and equality function to alter, as part of a broader democratic project, the grounds upon which life is lived. Such a future cannot be built on the backs of a subaltern class of academics who are powerless, overworked, denied basic benefits, and removed from shaping policy. Nor is the problem solved by simply calling for a limit to the pool of potential faculty. This is a political issue that is about power, the meaning of education, and what role faculty, students, and administrators are going to play in shaping a future much different than the present. This is hardly a prescription for political indoctrination in the classroom; rather, it is a project that gives critical education its most valued purpose and meaning, which is “to encourage human agency, not mold it in the manner of Pygmalion.”[[11](http://www.uta.edu/huma/agger/fastcapitalism/8_2/Giroux8_2.html#note11)] It is a position that also threatens right-wing private advocacy groups, neoconservative politicians, and conservative extremists. Such individuals and groups are keenly aware that critical pedagogy with its emphasis on the hard work of critical analysis, moral judgments, and social responsibility goes to the very heart of what it means to address real inequalities of power among faculty and administrators, or among others across society, and to conceive of education as a project for freedom while at the same time foregrounding a series of important and often ignored questions such as: What is the role of teachers and academics as public intellectuals? Whose interests does public and higher education serve? How might it be possible to understand and engage the diverse contexts in which education takes place? What is the role of education as a public good? How do we make knowledge meaningful in order to make it critical and transformative? How do we democratize governance? Against the right-wing view that equates any suggestion of politics with indoctrination, critical pedagogy is concerned with offering students new ways to think critically and act with authority as independent political agents in the classroom and in larger society; in other words, it is concerned with providing students with the skills and knowledge necessary for them to expand their capacities first to question the deep-seated assumptions and myths that legitimate the archaic and disempowering social practices structuring every aspect of society and then to take responsibility for intervening in the world they inhabit. Education cannot be neutral. It is always directive in its attempt to teach students to inhabit a particular mode of agency, enable them to understand the larger world and one’s role in it in a specific way, define their relationship, if not responsibility, to diverse others, and experience in the classroom some sort of understanding of a more just, imaginative, and democratic life. Pedagogy is by definition directive, but that does not mean it is merely a form of indoctrination. On the contrary, as Freire argued, education as a practice for freedom must expand the capacities necessary for human agency, and hence the possibilities for how academic labor should be configured to ensure such a project that is integral to democracy itself. Surely, this suggests that even within the privileged precincts of higher education, educators should nourish those pedagogical practices that promote “a concern with keeping the forever unexhausted and unfulfilled human potential open, fighting back all attempts to foreclose and pre-empt the further unravelling of human possibilities, prodding human society to go on questioning itself and preventing that questioning from ever stalling or being declared finished.”[[12](http://www.uta.edu/huma/agger/fastcapitalism/8_2/Giroux8_2.html#note12)] In other words, critical pedagogy forges an expanded notion of politics and agency through a language of skepticism and possibility, and a culture of openness, debate, and engagement—all those elements now at risk because of the current and most dangerous attacks on higher education. This was Paulo’s legacy, one that invokes dangerous memories and is increasingly absent from any conservative discourse about current educational problems. Unfortunately, it is also absent from much of the discussion on the current status of academic labor.

