

NEOLIBERAL ECONOMIC CRISIS AND RESISTANCE IN CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

Maria Nikolakaki, University of Peloponnese

Neoliberalism represents a reassertion of the fundamental beliefs of the liberal political economy that was the dominant political ideology of the nineteenth century, mainly in Britain and the United States. The arguments of political economy were based on intuition and assertion rather than on rigorous analysis, but their strength rested on their ideological appeal rather than on their analytical rigor. Neoliberalism wasn't enforced by the power of the argument of free markets, but by being the argument of power itself.

The most basic feature of neoliberalism is the systematic use of state power to impose (financial) market imperatives, in a domestic process that is replicated internationally by 'globalization', a particular organization of capitalism, which has evolved to protect capital(ism) and to reduce the power of labor. The consequences of neoliberalism are devastating and during the existing economic crisis we are witnessing the impoverishment and the retrieval of working rights of large sections of society, mainly working and middle class. Resistance and political disobedience is the only language possible, and what the system is afraid of- that is why they systematically undermine these reactions.

Critical pedagogy questions the existing "democratic" framework in order to achieve the equal distribution of political and economic power. It enables individuals to broaden shared interests by breaking down class, ethnic, and gender barriers. Critical pedagogy must lead to action that overthrows hierarchy and exogenous dependencies, by playing a key role in the struggle for democracy.