Schooling in Disaster Capitalism:
How the Political Right Is Using Disaster To Privatize Public Schooling[1]

By Kenneth J. Saltman

Introduction

Around the world, disaster is providing the means for business to accumulate profit. From the Asian tsunami of 2005 that allowed corporations to seize coveted shoreline properties for resort development to the multi-billion dollar no-bid reconstruction contracts in Iraq and Afghanistan, from the privatization of public schooling following Hurricane Katrina in the Gulf Coast to the ways that No Child Left Behind sets public school up to be dismantled and made into investment opportunities—a grotesque pattern is emerging in which business is capitalizing on disaster. Naomi Klein has written of,

> . . . the rise of a predatory form of disaster capitalism that uses the desperation and fear created by catastrophe to engage in radical social and economic engineering. And on this front, the reconstruction industry works so quickly and efficiently that the privatizations and land grabs are usually locked in before the local population knows what hit them.[2]

Kenneth J. Saltman is an associate professor in the Department of Education Policy Studies and Research of the School of Education at DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois.

Despite the fact that attempts to privatize and commercialize public schools proceed at a startling pace,[3] privatization increasingly appears in a new form that Klein calls "disaster capitalism" and that David Harvey terms "accumulation by dispossession." This article details how in education the political right is capitalizing on disaster from Chicago's Renaissance

2010 to the federal No Child Left Behind act, from educational rebuilding in the Gulf Coast of the U.S. to education profiteering in Iraq. The new predatory form of educational privatization aims to dismantle and then commodify particular public schools. This conservative movement threatens the development of public schools as necessary places that foster engaged critical citizenship. At the same time it undermines the public and democratic purposes of public education, it amasses vast profits for few, and even furthers U.S. foreign policy agendas.

Educators committed to defending and strengthening public education as a crucial public sphere in a democratic society may be relieved by several recent failures of the educational privatization movement. By 2000 business publications were eyeing public education as the next big score, ripe for privatization and commodification, likening it to the medical and military industries and suggesting that it might yield $600 billion a year in possible takings.[4] However, it has become apparent that only a few years later Educational Management Organizations (EMO), that seek to manage public schools for profit, have not overtaken public education (though EMOs are growing at an alarming rate of a five-fold increase in schools managed in six years). The biggest experiment in for-profit management of public schooling, The Edison Schools, continues as a symbol, according to the right-wing business press, of why running schools for profit on a vast scale is not profitable.[5] The massive EMO Knowledge Universe, created by junk bond felon Michael Milken upon his release from prison from nearly a hundred counts of fraud and insider trading, is in the midst of going out of business.[6] By the autumn of 2005, the school voucher movement, that the right has been fighting to implement for decades, had only succeeded in capturing the Washington, D.C. public schools (through the assistance of Congress), and that experiment is by all accounts looking bad. The charter school movement, which is fostering privatization by allowing for publicly-funded schools managed by for-profit companies, and is being pushed by massive federal funding under No Child Left Behind, has also taken a hit from NAEP scores that in traditional terms of achievement suggest charters do not score as high as the much maligned public schools. Even school commercialism has faced a sizable backlash from a public fed up and sickened by the shameless attempts of marketers to sell sugar-laden softdrinks and candybars to U.S. school children who are suffering epidemic levels of type II diabetes and obesity. Although commercialism continues putting ads in textbooks and on playing fields, on buildings and buses, a growing number of cities, states, and provinces have put in place anti-commercialism laws. Such laws limit the transformation of public space into yet more commercial space for corporations, which have succeeded in infiltrating nearly every bit of daily life with advertisements and narratives that prosthletize the elements of corporate culture: celebrating consumerism, possessive individualism, social Darwinism, authoritarianism, and a corporate vision for the future of work, leisure, politics, and the environment.

It would be difficult to assert that most public schools currently foster the best alternative to corporate culture, that is, democratic culture, what Dewey called

"creative democracy." Nurturing a democratic culture and a democratic ethos demands of educators continual work, practice, and attention.[7] The present historical moment is seeing the radical erosion of democratic culture by not only the aforementioned onslaught of commercial culture but also the state-led dismantling of civil liberties under the new dictates of the security state, the resurgence of jingoistic patriotism under the so-called "war on terror," and demands for adhesion to a militarized corporate globalization.[8] If many public schools do not presently foster a democratic ethos necessary for developing in citizens habits of engaged public criticism and participation, the public nature of public schools makes them a crucial "site and stake" of struggle for the expansion of democratic social relations. Privatizing public schools does not simply threaten to skim public tax money to provide rich investors with profit. Public schools differ from privately-controlled schools in that they harbor a distinct potential for public deliberation and oversight that privately owned and controlled educational institutions limit. Privately-controlled institutions are captured by private interests. For example, freedom of speech is protected on the public space of a town common but is privately regulated in a shopping mall. In a public school learning and knowledge can be engaged in relation to pressing public problems in ways that can be limited within privatized schools. Consider for example the following threats to the public: the threats posed by the expanded corporate control over a biotechnology giant like Monsanto that can patent life, own and control the genetic makeup of all crops, and infect biodiverse crops with potentially devastating genetically modified Franken-food; the threats posed to the global environment by a multinational like McDonald's that participate in destroying the rainforests for cattle grazing land; the threats to public life as a national security state expands to enable the U.S. government to continue to surround strategically the world's oil supplies with permanent military bases to benefit oil corporations, military corporations, and to continue to project a capitalist model of development that is most often, despite the rhetoric, thoroughly at odds with democracy, particularly in the states alleged to be U.S. allies: Egypt, Pakistan, Jordan, Uzbekistan, etc. When a for-profit corporation runs schools, it will share ideological commitments to corporate globalization that frame public problems in ways compatible with ever- expanding corporate profit despite the risks to people. Public problems like the weakening of the public sphere resulting from the corporate takeover of knowledge and schooling is not likely to be taught by corporations such as The Edison Schools. At stake in the struggle for public education is the value of critical and public education as a foundation for an engaged citizenry and a substantive democracy.

Capitalizing on Disaster in Education

Despite the range of obvious failures of multiple public school privatization initiatives, the privatization advocates have hardly given up. In fact, the privatizers

have become far more strategic. The new educational privatization might be termed "back door privatization"[9] or maybe "smash and grab" privatization. A number of privatization schemes are being initiated through a process involving the dismantling of public schools followed by the opening of for-profit, charter, and deregulated public schools. These enterprises typically despise teachers unions, are hostile to local democratic governance and oversight, and have an unquenchable thirst for "experiments," especially with the private sector.[10] These initiatives are informed by right wing think tanks and business organizations. Four examples that typify back door privatization are: (1) No Child Left Behind, (2) Chicago's Renaissance 2010 project, (3) educational rebuilding in Iraq, and (4) educational rebuilding in New Orleans.

No Child Left Behind

No Child Left Behind sets schools up for failure by making impossible demands for continual improvement. When schools have not met Adequate Yearly Progress, they are subject to punitive action by the federal government, including the potential loss of formerly guaranteed federal funding and requirements for tutoring from a vast array of for-profit Special Educational Service providers. A number of authors have described how NCLB is a boon for the testing and tutoring companies while it doesn't provide financial resources for the test score increases it demands.[11] (This is aside from the cultural politics of whose knowledge these tests affirm and discredit).[12] Sending billions of dollars of support the way of the charter school movement, NCLB pushes schools that do not meet AYP to restructure in ways that encourage privatization, discourage unions, and avoid local regulations on crucial matters. One study has found that by 2013 nearly all of the public schools in the Great Lakes region of the U.S. will be declared failed public schools and subject to such reforms.[13] Clearly, NCLB is designed to accomplish the implementation of privatization and deregulation in ways that open action could not.

A study of the Great Lakes region of the U.S. by educational policy researchers found that 85% - 95% of schools in that region would be declared "failed" by NCLB AYP measures by 2014.14 These implications are national. Under NCLB, "The entire country faces tremendous failure rates, even under a conservative estimate with several forgiving assumptions."[15] Under NCLB, in order for Illinois, for example, to get much needed federal Title I funds, the school must demonstrate "adequate yearly progress," AYP. Each year Illinois has to get higher and higher standardized test scores in reading and math to make AYP. Illinois schools, and specifically Illinois schools already receiving the least funding and already serving the poorest students, are being threatened with: (1) losing federal funds; (2) having to use scarce resources for under-regulated and often unproven (SESs) supplemental educational services (private tutoring) such as Newton, a spin-off company of the much criticized for profit Edison Schools; or (3) being punished, reorganized, or closed and reopened as a "choice" school (these include for-profit or non profit

charter schools that do not have the same level of public oversight and accountability, that often do not have teachers unions, and that often have to struggle for philanthropic grants to operate). Many defenders of public education view remediation options 2 and 3 under NCLB as having been designed to undermine those public schools that have been underserved in the first place in order to justify privatization schemes.[16] Public schools need help, investment, and public commitment.

NCLB is setting up for failure not just Illinois public schools but public schools nationally by raising test-oriented thresholds without raising investment and commitment. NCLB itself appears to be a system designed to result in the declaration of wide-scale failure of public schooling to justify privatization.[17] Dedicated administrators, teachers, students, and schools are not receiving much-needed resources along with public investment in public services and employment in the communities where those schools are situated. What they are getting instead are threats.

The theoretically and empirically dubious underlying assumption of NCLB is that threats and pressure force teachers to teach what they ought to teach, force students to learn what they ought to learn. In terms of conventional measures of student achievement, Sharon Nichols, Gene Glass, and David Berliner found in their empirical study, *High-Stakes Testing and Student Achievement: Problems for the No Child Left Behind Act*, that "there is no convincing evidence that the pressure associated with high-stakes testing leads to any important benefits for students' achievement . . . [the authors] call for a moratorium on policies that force the public education system to rely on high-stakes testing."[18] These authors find that high-stakes testing regimes do not achieve what they are designed to achieve. However, to think beyond efficacy to the underlying assumptions about "achievement" it is necessary to raise theoretical concerns. Theoretically, at the very least, the enforcement-oriented assumptions of NCLB fail to consider the limitations of defining "achievement" through high-stakes tests, fail to question what knowledge and whose knowledge constitute legitimate or official curricula that students are expected to master, fail to interrogate the problematic assumptions of learning modeled on digestion or commodity acquisition (as opposed to dialogic, constructivist, or other approaches to learning), and such compartmentalized versions of knowledge and learning fail to comprehend how they relate to the broader social and political realities informing knowledge-making both in schools and in society generally.

Renaissance 2010

In Chicago, Renaissance 2010, essentially written by the Commercial Club of Chicago, is being implemented by Chicago Public Schools, a district with more than 85% of students who are poor and non-White. It will close 100 public schools and then reopen them as for-profit and non-profit charter schools, contract schools, and magnet schools, and bypass important district regulations. The right-wing Heartland Institution hailed the plan, "Competition and (public private) Partnerships are

Key to Chicago Renaissance Plan" while the President of the Chicago Teacher's Union described it as a plan to dismantle public education.[19] These closings are targeting neighborhoods that are being gentrified and taken over by richer and Whiter people who are buying up newly developed condos and townhomes. Critics of the plan view it as "urban cleansing" that principally kicks out local residents.[20]

Like NCLB, Renaissance 2010 targets schools that have "failed" to meet Chicago accountability standards defined through high stakes tests. By closing and reopening schools, Renaissance 2010 allows the newly privatized schools to circumvent NCLB AYP progress requirements, thus making the list of Chicago's "need improvement" schools shorter. This allows the city to claim improvement by simply redefining terms.

NCLB and Renaissance 2010 share a number of features including not only a high pressure model, but also reliance on standardized testing as the ultimate measure of learning, threats to teacher job security and teachers' unions, and a push for experimentation with unproven models including privatization and charter schools, as well as a series of business assumptions and guiding language. For example, speaking of Renaissance 2010, Mayor Daley stated, "this model will generate competition and allow for innovation. It will bring in outside partners who want to get into the business of education."[21]

Beyond its similarities to NCLB, Renaissance 2010 is being hailed as a national model in its own right across the political spectrum. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is the most heavily endowed philanthropy in history, worth about $80 billion, with projects in health and education. Its focus on school reform is guided by the neoliberal Democratic Leadership Council's Progressive Policy Institute. Though it offers no substance, argument, or evidence for why Renaissance 2010 should be replicated, the economically unmatched Gates Foundation praises Renaissance 2010 as a "roadmap" for other cities to follow.[22] As Pauline Lipman, a progressive urban education scholar at the University of Illinois at Chicago writes:

> If Chicago's accountability has laid the groundwork for privatization, Renaissance 2010 may signal what we can expect nationally as school districts fail to meet NCLB benchmarks. In fact, failure to make "adequate yearly progress" on these benchmarks, and the threat of a state takeover, is a major theme running through the Commercial Club's argument for school choice and charter schools. Business and political leaders seem to believe turning schools over to the market is a common sense solution to the problems in the schools.[23]

Both NCLB and Renaissance 2010 involve two stages of capitalizing on disaster. The first stage involves the historical underfunding and disinvestment in public schooling that has resulted in disastrous public school conditions. For those communities where these schools are located, it is the public and private sectors that have failed them. Although the corporate sector is usually represented not only in mass media but also much conservative and liberal educational policy literature as coming to rescue the incompetent public sector from itself, as Dorothy Shipps points

out in her book *School Reform, Corporate Style: Chicago 1880-2000*, the corporate sector in Chicago and around the nation has long been deeply involved in school reform, agenda setting, and planning in conjunction with other civic planning. As she asks, "if corporate power was instrumental in creating the urban public schools and has had a strong hand in their reform for more than a century, then why have those schools failed urban children so badly?"[24]

Creative Associates International, Incorporated

In Iraq, Creative Associates International, Incorporated, a for-profit corporation, has made over a hundred million dollars from no-bid contracts with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to rebuild schools, develop curriculum, develop teacher training, and procure educational supplies. The company has avoided using local contractors and has spent the majority of funds on security while the majority of schools continue to languish in squalor. Educational privatization typifies the way the U.S. invasion has been used to sell off Iraq. Privatization and the development of U.S. style charter schools are central to the plan (conservative consultants from the right-wing Heritage Foundation have been employed), despite the fact that these are foreign to Iraq's public education system, and members of right-wing think tanks have been engaged to enact what invasion and military destruction has made a lucrative opportunity financially and ideologically. Privatization of the Iraqi schools is part of a broader attempt to privatize and sell-off the Iraqi nation while for-profit educational contractor CAII appears as the spearhead of U.S. foreign policy to "promote democracy."[25] As I discuss at length elsewhere,[26] the claims for "democracy promotion" in Iraq appear to have more to do with using this human-made disaster for promoting the interests of corporations and transnational capital and nothing to do with expanding meaningful and participatory democracy. As this article goes to press CAII, like Haliburton, has withdrawn from Iraq having made a furtune. Unlike the owners of the company, the public schools of Iraq have little to show for it.

Hurricane Katrina

Likewise, following the natural disaster of Hurricane Katrina on the U.S. Gulf Coast, a for-profit educational contractor from Alaska, named Akima, won a no-bid contract to build temporary portable classrooms in the region. But for-profit education's big haul in the Big Easy was in the U.S. Department of Education imposing the largest-ever school voucher experiment for the region and nation. Right-wing think tanks had prepared papers advocating such an approach, describing public school privatization as a "silver lining" and a "golden opportunity."[27]

Six months after Hurricane Katrina, the destroyed New Orleans public schools sit slime-coated in mold, debris, and human feces, partially flooded and littered with such detritus as a two-ton air conditioner that had been on the roof and the carcasses of dead dogs.

> All 124 New Orleans Public Schools were damaged in some way and only 20 have reopened with more than 10,000 students registered. There were 62,227 students enrolled in NOPS before the storm.[28]

The devastation nearly defies description.

> . . . Katrina roared in, severely damaging about a quarter of the schools: Roofs caved in. Fierce winds blew out walls and hurled desks through windows. Floodwaters drowned about 300 buses. Computers, furniture and books were buried in mud. Dead dogs and rotting food littered hallways.[29]

Yet days after the disaster *The Washington Times* quoted longstanding advocate of school vouchers Clint Bolick of the Alliance for School Choice. Bolick used the tragedy to propose wide scale privatization of the New Orleans public schools in the form of a massive voucher scheme. He said, "If there could be a silver lining to this tragedy, it would be that children who previously had few prospects for a high-quality education, now would have expanded options. Even with the children scattered to the winds, that prospect can now be a reality—if the parents are given power over their children's education funds."[30] Calling for the privatization of public schools, Bolick's metaphor of the silver lining would be repeated over and over in the popular press immediately after the storm. Karla Dial in the *Heartland News* wrote, "emergency vouchers could be the silver lining in the storm clouds that brought Hurricane Katrina to the Gulf Coast on August 29."[31] Reuters quoted Louisiana State Superintendent of Education Cecil Picard as saying, "We think this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I call it the silver lining in the storm cloud."[32] Jack Kemp, who served in the Reagan administration, a long-time proponent of business approaches to urban poverty, took poetic license but stayed with the theme of precious metal, ". . . with the effort to rebuild after Katrina just getting underway, the Right sees, in the words of Jack Kemp, a 'golden opportunity' to use a portion of the billions of federal reconstruction funds to implement a voucher experiment that, until now, it has been unable to get through Congress."[33] The governor of Louisiana saw gold too. Although before the storm the state legislature had rejected the governor's attempt to seize control of the public schools from the city,

> . . . legislation proposed by Governor Blanco in November allows the state to take over any New Orleans school that falls below the statewide average on test scores and place it into the state's Recovery School District. Under this low standard, management of 102 of the 115 Orleans Parish schools operating before Katrina would be transferred to the state. The governor sees it as an effort to grasp what she called a "golden opportunity for rebirth."[34]

Brian Riedlinger, the director of the Algiers Charter Schools Association that would control all but one of the re-opened New Orleans schools six months after the tragedy, employed a creative variation on the theme, invoking the poetry of Coleridge and the discourse of hygiene, "I think the schools have been a real albatross. And so I think what we're giving parents is the possibility of hope, a

possibility of wiping the slate clean and starting over."[35] Longstanding advocates of public school privatization, Paul T. Hill and Jane Hannaway, carried the hygienic metaphor a step further writing, in their Urban Institute report "The Future of Public Education in New Orleans," that "[e]ducation could be one of the bright spots in New Orleans' recovery effort, which may even establish a new model for school districts nationally."[36] This "bright spot," according to Hill and Hannaway, that should be a national model, calls for refusing to rebuild the New Orleans public schools, firing the teachers and by extension dissolving the teachers union, eradicating the central administration, and inviting for-profit corporations with sordid histories such as The Edison Schools[37] and other organizations to take over the running of schools.[38] Sajan George is a director of Alvarez & Marsal, a Bush administration-connected business-consulting firm that is making millions in its role sub-contracting the rebuilding of schools. George, a "turnaround expert" contracted by the state, brought these metaphors together stating, "This is the silver lining in the dark cloud of Katrina. We would not have been able to start with an almost clean slate if Katrina had not happened. So it really does represent an incredible opportunity."[39]

An incredible opportunity indeed.

Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans typifies the new form of educational privatization. The disaster has been used to enrich a predominantly White tiny business and political elite while achieving educational privatization goals that the right has been unable to achieve before: (1) implement the largest ever experiment in school vouchers; (2) allow for enormous profits in education rebuilding by contracting firms with political connections; and (3) allow the replacement of a system of universal public education with a charter school network designed to participate in the dispossession of poor and African American residents from their communities. Such documents as those by the Urban Institute and Heritage Foundation discuss strategies to make the temporary voucher scheme permanent and even how to take advantage of future disasters.

Vouchers use public money to pay for private schools and thus stand as a potentially lucrative business opportunity. Right-wing think tanks and advocates of educational privatization have been calling for wide-scale voucher schemes for decades, alleging that the competition for consumers' money will drive up quality and drive down costs. For example, the Heritage Foundation has been lobbying for vouchers for decades and published a report immediately after the hurricane calling for vouchers, as did the Urban Institute.[40] Support for vouchers comes largely from the neoliberal ideological belief that applying business ideals to the necessary bureaucratic public sector guarantees efficiencies. Critics of vouchers have contended that: (1) encouraging parents to "shop" for schools will take scarce federal resources away from those public schools most in need of them—schools that have historically been underfunded by having resource allocations pegged to local property taxes[41]; (2) vouchers have traditionally been used to maintain or worsen

racial segregation in the face of desegregation policies[42]—a particularly relevant legacy to the racial dispossession going on in New Orleans; (3) vouchers undermine universal public schooling by redefining a public good as a private commodity and stand to exacerbate already existing inequalities in funding; (4) vouchers undermine the public democratic purposes of public schooling by treating citizens as consumers; and (5) vouchers undermine the constitutional separation of church and state.

Not only was the voucher agenda being pushed unsuccessfully for years before the storm, but also until Katrina the only federally-funded voucher scheme was implemented by the U.S. Congress in the District of Columbia.

> One that has been "marked by a failure to achieve legislatively determined priorities, an inability to evaluate the program in the manner required by Congress, and efforts by administrators to obscure information that might reflect poorly on the program."[43]

This voucher scheme was surreptitiously inserted into federal legislation by being rolled into a budget bill and it was aggressively supported by one of the richest people on the planet, Wal-Mart inheritor John Walton of the Walton Family Foundation, one of the largest spenders pushing privatization of public education.[44]

Not only did New Orleans not have a voucher scheme prior to Katrina, but a K-12 voucher bill had just been defeated in the Louisiana state legislature just before the hurricane.[45] The bill would have allowed for public tax money to fund private or religious schooling.

Despite public democratic deliberation on the issue concluding against vouchers, conservative privatization advocates moved quickly to take advantage of the disaster. Within two weeks after the hurricane struck, the Heritage Foundation released a "special report" refashioning their longstanding agenda as "principled solutions" for rebuilding. "Heritage has been pushing school vouchers since 1975 and so it is no surprise that the organization now strongly believes that a voucher proposal that would fund private schools constitutes a successful response to the crisis."[46]

The Bush administration, so slow to provide federal emergency aid to residents, was nonetheless quick to respond to extensive media criticism by following the privatization proposals of such right-wing think tanks. The administration proposed $1.9 billion in aid to K-12 students with $488 million designated for school vouchers. The editors of *Rethinking Schools* accurately wrote, "This smells like a back-door approach to get public funding for private schools and would essentially create the first national school voucher plan."[47]

Privatization advocates were quite explicit in their desire to undermine local control over educational decision-making and to create a situation in which it would be very difficult to reverse the implementation of vouchers. For example, Carla Dial reporting in the right-wing Heartland Institute *School Reform News* quotes Chris Kinnan of Freedom Works, a D.C. organization fighting for "smaller government" and more "personal freedom."

> "Having those vouchers for a couple of years would change the way parents and

> students and even educators think about them," Kinnan said. "The impact would be so powerful that if you did it right, [school] systems would be competing to attract these [kids with vouchers]. It's all about changing the incentive. Once you have that freedom it would be very difficult to go back to the community control system."[48]

For Kinnan and his ilk "freedom" means privatizing public control over public resources so that fewer people with more wealth and power have more political control over said resources. The genius of framing the amassing of political and economic control over public resources as individual consumer choice is that it takes on the deceptive appearance of increasing individual control while it actually removes individuals from collective control. Privatizers aim to treat the use of public resources as "shopping" by "consumers," thereby naturalizing the public sector as a market—as a natural, politically-neutral entity ruled by the laws of supply and demand rather than as a matter of public priority, political deliberation, and competing values and visions. Such metaphors of consumer culture not only conceal the ways that public goods and services are different from markets (public services aim to serve public interest and collective goals not the amassing of private profit) but such appeals also fail to admit that markets themselves are hardly neutral and natural but are, on the contrary, hierarchical, human-made political configurations unequally distributing power and control over material resources and cultural value.

Clint Bolick of the Alliance for School Choice was also scheming to get a foot in the door. Hopeful that the initial one year period for vouchers in the Bush proposal could be extended indefinitely he said, "I think that if emergency school vouchers are passed this time they will be a routine part of future emergency relief. I'm also hopeful that when the No Child Left Behind Act is modified that it will be easier for Congress to add vouchers to the remedies available under that law."[49]

The Heritage Foundation, The Alliance for School Choice, and The Heartland Institute were hardly alone as a large number of right-wing groups committed to vouchers praised the President's plan. Gary Bauer of the group American Values hailed the "rebuilding challenge as an opportunity to implement conservative ideas such as school vouchers and tax free zones."[50] The Bush plan was praised by the Family Research Council, Rich Lowry of the National Review, Gary McCaleb of the Alliance Defense Fund, Marvin Olasky of World Magazine, and William Donohue of the Catholic League, among others.[51]

The Yankee Institute took a full-page color advertisement in Heartland's *School Reform News* with a letter from Executive Director Lewis Andrews, who admonishes readers that when the real estate bubble bursts and public education "cost soars relative to home values" in rich communities "savvy reformers will be prepared to make the case for school vouchers in all communities."[52] The ad begins with the expression, "Every cloud has a silver lining."

Implicit in Andrews' statements is the fact that privatizers have already been taking advantage of the historical failure to fund education properly in poor and working class communities. Before Katrina, per pupil spending in New Orleans

stood at about $5000 ($4,986 in 1998). To put this in perspective, per-pupil spending in suburban public school districts in wealthy suburbs around the nation reaches as high as roughly quadruple this amount despite the fact that they face far fewer obstacles. As the right clearly grasps, the question of privatization is inextricably linked to matters of public funding. Vouchers, charters, and EMOs cannot make headway with well-financed public schools in richer communities. Crisis and emergency benefit privatization advocates who can seize upon a situation with pre-formulated plans to commodify this public service. To put it differently, privatizers target those who have been denied adequate public investment in the first place. As the United Federation of Teachers Joe Derose insists, the policy emphasis in rebuilding should be on the chronic underfunding plaguing the New Orleans public schools rather than on the schemes to privatize them.[53] As the above quotes from Bolick, Kinnan, and Andrews illustrate, the right is eager to take advantage of crisis to subvert democratic oversight over policy matters of great public importance.

The Bush administration has long aimed to expand vouchers. In 2002 vouchers were removed from the No Child Left Behind bill at the last moment as part of an effort to secure bipartisan support.[54] Not only do the Katrina federal vouchers cover far beyond the Gulf Coast region, but they take advantage of the crisis to promote the idea of vouchers and privatization generally. For example, while select counties and parishes in Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Florida are included in the Emergency Impact Aid, the entire state of Texas is included in the voucher scheme. While emergency funds do not permit public school rebuilding, they nonetheless give funding to schools in 49 states. What is more, the vouchers can be given to charter schools without charter schools meeting section 5210 (1) of ESEA No Child Left Behind that requires charter schools to be developed with public charter agencies. In other words, the vouchers allow public funding for charter schools that do not need to be held accountable to public oversight institutions that regulate charter schools. As a result the Aid favors not merely the public funding of private schools but even encourages the development of charter schools unregulated by the public sector by funding them when they would otherwise be ineligible to receive federal funding for having failed to meet basic requirements.[55]

The Emergency Aid is also being used to promote and publicize vouchers as a legitimate school reform. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings made this goal of proselytizing vouchers quite explicit in her speech of April 5, 2006 in a New York church, saying that, in addition to expanding charter schools and the voucher scheme in D.C., "most importantly, we've armed the parents of 48 million public school students nationwide with the information to be smart educational consumers and become real advocates for their children."[56] Spellings notably embraces the neoliberal description of education as a business with consumers rather than as a public good crucial for the making of citizens capable of developing skills and dispositions of self-governance. In this speech Spellings explains that No Child Left Behind's provision allowing students to attend other schools and its designation

of schools as "failed" are designed to expand "choice." This is how she describes both vouchers and the NCLB provision allowing students to go to any school—a measure implemented to set the stage for vouchers. And as Spellings explains, the voucher scheme in New Orleans is part of an aggressive broader attempt to use federal power to privatize public schooling,

> More than 1,700 schools around the country have failed to meet state standards for five or six years in a row. And many of these schools are in districts where public school choice isn't a real option. We're proposing a new $100 million Opportunity Scholarship Fund to help thousands of low-income students in these schools attend the private school of their choice or receive intensive one-on-one tutoring after school or during the summer.[57]

Immediately after Katrina, Secretary Spellings even sought to waive a federal law that bans educational segregation for homeless children with the obvious purpose of using public funding for private schooling even in explicitly segregated schooling.[58] What is crucial to recognize here is that disasters are being taken advantage of and produced to set the stage for educational privatization. Whether public schools are being systematically underfunded, as were the New Orleans Public Schools before Katrina and then declared "failed" (as NCLB is designed to do nationwide), or whether a storm blows them to smithereens does not matter to the privatizers—though the aftermath of Katrina indicates the right has found just what can be accomplished through sudden massive destruction.

What goes undisclosed in the Department of Education's mandated notification is a comparison of how much money a student received in their prior public school relative to the federal funding for the private school. In fact, the vouchers give significantly less money per pupil than New Orleans students received. New Orleans students received an already very low per pupil funding of roughly $5000 while Bush's voucher scheme pays only $750 per pupil. Clint Bolick argues that a prime reason for vouchers is to save money. Cutting funding for education certainly saves money but it doesn't explain how educational services are paid for. The numbers don't appear to add up. Congress approved $645 million in the Hurricane Education Recovery Act that applies to 49 states and $496 million to the states most severely damaged to reopen schools under the Immediate Aid to Restart School Operations Program. In September of 2005 Spellings stated that there were 372,000 schoolchildren displaced from Louisiana and Mississippi. Yet in March 2006 she gave a figure of 157,743 students nationwide who are eligible for a portion of the HERA money as of the first quarter of the year. That would mean HERA should pay about $4088 per pupil but schools will receive only $750 per pupil and $937.50 for students with disabilities. Where is the money going? Instead of going to rebuild aggressively the destroyed schools in the regions hardest hit needing the full amount, the money is being dispersed throughout 49 states and D.C.,

> States and the District of Columbia will receive funding under this emergency, one-

> time program. Funds may be used to hire teachers; provide books and other classroom supplies; offer in-school or outside supplemental services such as tutoring, mentoring and counseling; and cover transportation and health costs.[59]

It would be myopic to think that this funding is merely about paying for the new burden of educating hurricane evacuees. This shifting of educational resources around the nation under the guise of emergency needs to be understood in relation to the failure of the Bush administration to pay states' federal funds as part of NCLB. As Monty Neil points out,

> Not only has the federal government failed to meet the social, economic, and health-related needs of many children, but NCLB itself does not authorize nearly enough funding to meet its new requirements. The Bush administration has sought almost no increase in ESEA expenditures for FY2005 and the coming year. The funds Congress has appropriated are about $8 billion per year less than Congress authorized. Meanwhile, states are still suffering from their worst budget crises since World War II, cutting education as well as social programs needed by low-income people.[60]

It appears that emergency is being used to cover failed promises that have nothing to do with emergency other than the emergencies created by an administration hostile to supporting public education in the first place. But such coverage is taking the form of privatization. Failures of a conservative executive and legislature to support public education need to be understood in relation to a conservative judicial branch that in 2002 ruled vouchers constitutional. The political right is waging war on public education while doing all it can to force through privatization initiatives that are unpopular and difficult to win politically.

Neoliberalism and the Uses of Disaster in Public Schooling

Contemporary initiatives to privatize public schools through the use of disaster can only be understood in relation to neoliberal ideology that presently dominates politics.[61] As David Harvey elucidates, neoliberalism, also described as "neoclassical economics" or "market fundamentalism," brings together economic, political, and cultural policy doctrine. Neoliberalism, which originates with Frederic Von Hayek, Milton Friedman, and the "Chicago boys" at the University of Chicago in the 1950s, expresses individual and social ideals through market ideals. Within this view individual and social values and aspirations can best be reached through the unfettered market. In its ideal forms (as opposed to how it is practically implemented) neoliberalism demands privatization of public goods and services, removal of regulation on trade, loosening of capital and labor controls by the state, and the allowance of foreign direct investment. For neoliberalism, public control over public resources should be taken from the "necessarily bureaucratic" state and placed with the "necessarily efficient" private sector. The implosion of the Soviet Union and the fall of the Berlin Wall were used by neoliberals to declare that there could be no alternative to global capitalism—Thatcher famously called this the

TINA thesis, There Is No Alternative to the market. Within the logic of capitalist triumphalism, the only thing to do would be to put into effect the dictates of the market and spread the market to places previously inaccessible.

The financial past performance of neoliberalism, as Harvey explains, is not one of accomplishment but rather one of failure having caused crises, instability, and unreconciled contradictions regarding state power.[62] However, as he shows, neoliberalism has been extremely accomplished at upwardly redistributing economic wealth and political power. Consequently, Harvey suggests understanding neoliberalism as a longstanding project of class warfare waged by the rich on everyone else. Neoliberalism has damaged welfare state protections and undermined government authority to act in the public interest. As well, these policies have brought on widescale disaster around the globe including a number of countries in Latin America and the pacific rim. Such disasters have compelled governments to reevaluate neoliberalism as it has been enjoined by the so-called "Washington consensus." In fact, recent elections throughout Latin America with left victories have largely been a reaction to the neoliberal "Washington consensus" that imposes neoliberal globalization through institutional mechanisms such as the IMF and World Bank.

Initially seen as a wacky doctrine, neoliberalism was not brought into the mainstream of policy and government circles until the late seventies and early eighties in Thatcher's U.K. and in Reagan's U.S. As Harvey details, Chile, under brutal dictator Pinochet, was a crucial test field for the ideology, resulting in increased commercial investments in Chile alongside 30,000 citizen disappearances. The widening reception to neoliberalism had to do with the steady lobbying of right wing think tanks and electoral victories but also with the right conditions including economic crises that challenged the Keynesian model and fordist modes of economic production and social formation in the late seventies.[63] Neoliberalism has a distinct hostility to democracy. As Harvey writes,

> Neoliberal theorists are, however, profoundly suspicious of democracy. Governance by majority rule is seen as a potential threat to individual rights and constitutional liberties. Democracy is viewed as a luxury, only possible under conditions of relative affluence coupled with a strong middle-class presence to guarantee political stability. Neoliberals therefore tend to favour governance by experts and elites. A strong preference exists for government by executive order and by judicial decision rather than democratic and parliamentary decision-making.[64]

Such opposition to democracy and preference for elite governance is ceaslessly expressed by such neoliberal education writers as those of the Koret Task Force of the Hoover Institution like John Chubb, Terry Moe, Eric Hanuschek and company.[65] For progressive and critical educators principally concerned with the possibilities for public schooling to expand a democratic ethos and engaged critical citizenry, neoliberalism's anti-democratic tendencies appear as particularly bad.

In education, neoliberalism has pervasively infiltrated with radical implications, remaking educational practical judgment and forwarding the privatization

and deregulation program. The steady rise of privatization and the shift to business language and logic can be understood through the extent to which neoliberal ideals have succeeded in taking over educational debates. Neoliberalism appears in the now common sense framing of education through presumed ideals of upward individual economic mobility (the promise of cashing in knowledge for jobs) and the social ideals of global economic competition. In this view national survival hinges upon educational preparation for international economic supremacy. The preposterousness of this assumption comes as school kids rather than corporate executives are being blamed for the global economic race to the bottom. The "TINA" thesis (There Is No Alternative to the Market) that has come to dominate politics throughout much of the world has infected educational thought as omnipresent market terms such as "accountability," "choice," "efficiency," "competition," "monopoly," and "performance" frame educational debates. Nebulous terms borrowed from the business world such as "achievement," "excellence," and "best practices" conceal ongoing struggles over competing values, visions, and ideological perspectives. (Achieve what? Excel at what? Best practices for whom? And says who?) The only questions left on reform agendas appear to be how to best enforce knowledge and curriculum conducive to individual upward mobility within the economy and national economic interest as it contributes to a corporately managed model of globalization as perceived from the perspective of business. This is a dominant and now commonplace view of education propagated by such influential writers as Thomas Friedman in his books and *New York Times* columns, and such influential grant-givers as the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

This neoliberal view of education dangerously eradicates the role of democratic participation and the role of public schools in preparing public democratic citizens with the intellectual and critical tools for meaningful and participatory self-governance. By reducing the politics of education to its economic functions, neoliberal educational thinking has deeply authoritarian tendencies that are incompatible with democracy. Democracy is under siege by the tendency of market fundamentalism to collapse politics with economics, thereby translating all social problems into business concerns with the possibilities for continued profit making. Yet, democracy is also under siege by a rising authoritarianism in the U.S. that eviscerates civil liberties and attacks human rights domestically and internationally through the USA Patriot Act, "extraordinary rendition" (state sanctioned kidnapping, torture, and murder), spying on the public, and other measures that treacherously expand executive power. Internationally, this appears as what Harvey has termed "The New Imperialism" and others have called "militarized globalization" that includes the so called "war on terror," the U.S. military presence in more than 140 countries, the encirclement of the world's oil resources with the world's most powerful military, etc. This is on top of a continued culture of militarism that educates citizens to identify with militarized solutions to social problems. In education I have called this militarism "education as

enforcement" that aims to enforce global neoliberal imperatives through a number of educational means.66

David Harvey offers a compelling economic argument for the rise of repression and militarization, explaining the shift from neoliberalism to neoconservatism. Neoliberal policy was coming into dire crisis already in the late 1990s as deregulation of capital was resulting in a threat to the U.S. as it lost the manufacturing base and increasingly lost service sector and financial industry to Asia.[67] For Harvey, the new militarism in foreign policy is partly about a desperate attempt to seize control of the world's oil spigot as lone superpower parity is endangered by the rise of a fast growing Asia and a unified Europe with a strong currency. Threats to the U.S. economy are posed by not only the potential loss of control over the fuel for the U.S. economy and military but also the power conferred by the dollar remaining the world currency, the increasing indebtedness of the U.S. to China and Japan as they prop up the value of the dollar for the continued export of consumer goods. For Harvey, the structural problems behind global capitalism remain the financialization of the global economy and what Marx called "the crisis of overproduction" driving down prices and wages while glutting the market and threatening profits. Capitalists and states representing capitalist interests respond to these crises through Harvey's version of what Marx called primitive accumulation, "accumulation by dispossession."

Privatization is one of the most powerful tools of accumulation by dispossession, transforming publicly owned and controlled goods and services into private and restricted ones—the continuation of "enclosing the commons" begun in Tudor England. If neoliberalism came into crisis due to the excesses of capitalism (deregulation and liberalization yielding capital flight, de-industrialization, etc.), then the neoconservative response—emphasizing control and order and reinvigorated overt state power—makes a lot of sense. As Harvey explains in *A Brief History of Neoliberalism,* central to the crisis of neoliberalism are the contradictions of neoliberalism's antipathy to the nation and reliance on the state. Neoconservatives have responded to the neoliberal crisis by using national power to push economic competition, to pillage productive forces for continued economic growth, and also to control populations through repression as inequalities of wealth and income are radically exacerbated, resulting in the expansion of a dual society of mobile professionals on the one side and everyone else on the other.[68] The surging culture of religious right-wing populism, irrational new age mysticism, and endless conspiracy theorizing appear to symptomatize a cultural climate in which neoliberal market fundamentalism has come into crisis as both economic doctrine and ideology. Within this climate, private for-profit knowledge-making institutions including schools and media are institutionally incapable of providing a language and criticism that would enable rational interpretation necessary for political intervention. Irrationalism is the consequence. Not too distant history suggests that this can lead in systematically deadly directions.[69]

At the present moment there is a crucial tension between two fundamental

functions of public education for the capitalist state. The first involves reproducing the conditions of production—teaching skills and know-how in ways that are ideologically compatible with the social relations of capital accumulation. Public education remains an important and necessary tool for capital to make political and economic leaders or docile workers and marginalized citizens or even participating in sorting and sifting out those to be excluded from economy and politics completely. The second function that appears to be relatively new and growing involves the capitalist possibilities of pillaging public education for profit, in the U.S., Iraq or elsewhere. Drawing on Harvey's explanation of accumulation by dispossession, we see that in the U.S. the numerous strategies for privatizing public education—from voucher schemes, to for profit charter schools, to forced for-profit remediation schemes, to dissolving public schools in poor communities and replacing them with a mix of private, charter, and experimental schools—all follow a pattern of destroying and commodifying schools where the students are redundant to reproduction processes, while maintaining public investment in the schools that have the largest reproductive role of turning out managers and leaders.

Strategies of capitalist accumulation, dispossession, and reproduction appear to be at odds. After all, if public schooling is being pillaged and sold off, then how can it reproduce the social order for capital? Yet privatization is targeting those most marginal to capitalist reproduction, thereby making the most economically excluded into commodities for corporations. Hence, EMOs target the poor making economically marginalized people into opportunities for capital the way that for profit prisons do. Reproduction and dispossession feed each other in several ways: in an ideological apparatus such as education or media, privatization and decentralization exacerbate class inequality by weakening universal provision, weakening the public role of a service, putting in place reliance upon expensive equipment supplied from outside, and justifying further privatization and decentralization to remedy the deepened economic differentiation and hierarchization that has been introduced or worsened through privatization and decentralization. The obvious U.S. example is the failure of the state to properly fund public schools in poor communities and then privatizing those schools to be run by corporations.[70] Rather than addressing the funding inequalities and the intertwined dynamics at work in making poor schools or working to expand the democratic potential of public schools, the remedy is commodification.

It is crucial to emphasize that what Klein terms "disaster capitalism" and Harvey terms "accumulation by dispossession" are not just an economic project but also a cultural project and that these need to be comprehended together. What Henry Giroux has termed the "cultural pedagogy of neoliberalism"[71] is typified not merely by the language of "silver linings" and "golden opportunities" but by the turn to business language and models in thinking about the social world including public school reform and policy. Not only have public school debates been overrun by the aforementioned neoliberal language but, as we see in New Orleans, business

"turnaround specialists" such as Alvarez and Marsal are brought in to dictate school rebuilding while residents are dispossessed of their communities through economic rationales. The state and Alvarez and Marsal invoked "supply and demand" to justify not rebuilding the New Orleans public schools (residents do not return because the schools have not been rebuilt and then the planners declare that there is no demand for school rebuilding), the idealization of choice, markets, business, deregulation, and anti-unionism is propagated in a number of ways through the cultural pedagogy of neoliberalism. It is essential to remember what Pierre Bourdieu emphasized about neoliberalism.

> Neoliberal economics . . . owes a certain number of its allegedly universal characteristics to the fact that it is immersed or embedded in a particular society, that is to say, rooted in a system of beliefs and values, an ethos and a moral view of the world, in short, an *economic common sense*, linked as such to the social and cognitive structures of a particular social order. It is from this particular economy [that of the United States] that neoclassical economic theory borrows its fundamental assumptions, which it formalizes and rationalizes, thereby establishing them as the foundations of a universal model. That model rests on two postulates (which their advocates regard as proven propositions): the economy is a separate domain governed by natural and universal laws with which governments must not interfere by inappropriate intervention; the market is the optimum means for organizing production and trade efficiently and equitably in democratic societies.[72]

A number of educational forces in addition to schools are required to keep such premises appearing natural and hence unquestionable. Mass media is one of the most powerful pedagogical forces ongoingly educating the public to understand "the economy" as natural and inevitable whether through news programs that report stock prices like the weather or through sports that align capitalist values of numerically quantifiable progress and growth with the possibilities of the human body, or through police shows (nearly half of U.S. TV content) that replace the primary role of the police, protecting private property, with the drama of seldom-committed spectacular murders, or the social darwinist game shows that make contestants compete for scarce resources including money, cut-throat corporate jobs, trophy spouses, and cut-face plastic surgery to compete all the better, or through the advertising behind it all that sells the fantasies that comprise a particular kind of radically individualized cynical consumer view of the self and the social world. Such media products function pedagogically to define what is possible to think and what is impossible to imagine for the future.

Yet, as powerful as mass media is as a pedagogical force, teaching, the traditions of critical pedagogy, critical theory, cultural studies, feminism, progressive education and critical cultural production offer powerful tools to produce different kinds of visions—hopeful, democratic visions that articulate with growing democracy movements around the world. The neoliberal postulates that Bourdieu denaturalizes appear increasingly dubious at best as wealth and income are radically

redistributed upwards in the U.S. while nation after nation in Latin America rejects the neoliberal "Washington consensus" in favor of another path that coheres generally much more with the democratic ideals of the global justice movement.[73]

The Assault on Teacher Education

Alongside the current attempts of business and the political right to capitalize on disaster these same forces have taken aim at teacher education in the U.S. The Carnegie Corporation thought its Teachers for a New Era initiative has invoked its ominous warning from the 1983 A Nation at Risk report suggesting that the present state of teacher education is akin to an act of war by a foreign power.[74] That is, teacher education in the U.S. is being described of late as, if not a disaster, then as culpable for the oft-alleged disastrous state of public education in the U.S. In the Summer of 2006 *The New York Times* which had been writing mostly favorably of charter schools for years published an editorial that strongly criticized charter schools yet concluded the editorial by suggesting that the one big problem with public education is teacher education.[75] The World Economic Forum also in the fall of 2006 issued a press release that the United States had fallen in one year from first to sixth in rankings of global competitiveness. Of central blame for this alleged disaster: the education system.

Carnegie, the World Economic Forum, and many other prominent institutions and policymakers ultimately understand the role of teacher education programs through neoliberalism. That is, they view teacher education as principally preparing teachers to make competent workers who can contribute to global economic competition and whose opportunities are understood as individual capacity to negotiate an economy controlled by others. In these reports teachers and teacher educators are framed as responsible for the well-being of the economy in that the primary responsibility of schools is preparing competent workers and future consumers. Oddly such reports and institutions do not lay a heavy onus on business schools though business schools do prepare future managers of the economy with disproportionate power to shape economic decisions. Such a belief about business schools would expect far too much from a course of study while neglecting the ways multiple forces, structures, and institutions impact on individual and collective decision making. Yet teacher education is being held responsible for the fate of the U.S. economy. At the same time, the neoliberal view fails to admit the democratic roles of public education in preparing students to govern themselves and others in a just and egalitarian manner by developing their capacities for engaged political interpretation and individual and collective action.

Thoroughly at odds with critical pedagogical approaches, these neoliberal views of teacher education have an accomodationist bent that views the social order as fundamentally just and does not make central the role that teachers can play in preparing democratic citizens. Perhaps most ominously a number of these individuals and institutions advocate measuring the value of teacher education instruction by the numerical test scores of the students of teaching candidates. Such a positivist

approach to knowledge both separates claims to truth from animating underlying assumptions and it insists on understanding learning as a product and knowledge as a commodity to be deposited into students so that they can "make achievement gains." Such thinking removes from consideration crucial questions about whose knowledge is worth learning and why, how knowledge relates to authority, and who designed the tests that supposedly neutrally and objectively measure knowledge that is alleged to be of universal value. These concerns are in addition to questions of who is profiting financially from test publishing, textbook sales, and the vast resources that go into such dubious "performance based" reforms that are increasingly being extended from their destructive presence in K12 to teacher education. The positivism of the neoliberal approach to teacher education lends itself to privitization. Alleged universally valuable knowledge is easier to standardize and numerically quantify and hence commodify than are more dialogic, intellectually rigorous, interpretive, and critical forms of investigative learning. Such critical and investigative forms of learning are more compatible with scholarship at the highest levels and with the making of democratic culture.

The neoliberal assault on teacher education participates in how the right is capitalizing on disaster by producing forms of teacher education that restrict from the curriculum matters central to the making of a democratic culture. For teacher educators the most crucial matter at stake in debates over privatization and school reform generally is the possibilities for public schooling to expand a democratic ethos and foster democratic practices and social relations with regard to politics, culture, and economy. What is being done for profit and ideology in New Orleans and Iraq, in Chicago and throughout the U.S. with NCLB and the assault on teacher education does just the opposite by political dispossession, economic pillage, and cultural symbolic violence. It is incumbent upon teacher educators to develop pedagogical and material strategies to expand democratic struggles for the public to take back schools, resources, and cultural power as part of a broader democratic alternative to the anti-democratic neoliberal approaches that capitalize on disaster and imperil the public.

Notes

[1] This article draws on my forthcoming book *Capitalizing on Disaster: Breaking and Taking Public Schools,* Boulder,CO: Paradigm Publishers, 2007.

[2] Naomi Klein, "The Rise of Disaster Capitalism," *The Nation,* May 2005.

[3] For the most recent update on the state of educational privatization see the research provided by the Educational Policy Studies Laboratory at Arizona State University available at www.schoolcommercialism.org

[4] *The Economist*, "Reading, Writing, and Enrichment: Private Money is Pouring Into American Education—And Transforming It," 16 January 1999: 55. I detail a number of business publications that were salivating over privatizing public schooling in "Junk King Education," chapter one of Robin Truth Goodman and Kenneth J. Saltman, *Strange Love, Or How We Learn*

to Stop Worrying and Love the Market, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002. In academic circles Paul Hill was striving to make education an investment opportunity. Hill, Paul Thomas; Pierce, Lawrence C.; Guthrie, James W. 1997. *Reinventing Public Education : How Contracting Can Transform America's Schools* : University of Chicago Press. Hill appears at the forefront of calls for Katrina profiteering in 2005 as the first chapter details.

[5] See for example, William C. Symonds, "Edison: an 'F' in Finance," *Business Week*, 3806: 2 (November 4, 2002) and Julia Boorstin, "Why Edison Doesn't Work," *Fortune*, 146:12 (December 9, 2002). For a detailed discussion of Edison's financial problems and the media coverage of them see Kenneth J. Saltman, *The Edison Schools: Corporate Schooling and the Assault on Public Education,* New York: Routledge, 2005.

[6] See "Junk King Education" in Robin Truth Goodman and Kenneth J. Saltman, *Strange Love, Or How We Learn to Stop Worrying and Love the Market,* Lanham,MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002.

[7] See Richard J. Bernstein's important discussion of the need for a democratic ethos based in Dewey's notion of Creative Democracy in *The Abuse of Evil,* New York: Verso 2005.

[8] See William I. Robinson, *The Critical Globalization Studies,* New York: Routledge, 2003.

[9] The editors of *Rethinking Schools* describe the federal voucher scheme after hurricane Katrina as "back door privatization" "Katrina's Lesson's," Rethinking Schools, Fall 2005, p. 4-5.

[10] David Hursh offers an important discussion of how neoliberal educational policies destroy democratic public educational ideals in "Undermining Democratic Education in the USA: The Consequences of Global Capitalism and Neo-Liberal Policies for Education Policies at the Local, State, and Federal Levels," *Policy Futures in Education,* Volume 2, Number 3&4, pp. 607-620.

[11] For an excellent collection of criticisms of No Child Left Behind see Deborah Meier and George Wood (eds.), *Many Children Left Behind,* Boston: Beacon, 2004. In relation to what Henry Giroux has called the "war on youth" being waged in the U.S. see his important chapter on NCLB in Henry A. Giroux, *Abandoned Generation,* New York: Palgrave, 2003. See also the collection of writings on NCLB on the rethinkingschools.org website.

[12] School rewards professional and ruling class knowledge and dispositions and disaffirms and punishes the knowledge and dispositions of working class, poor, and culturally-non-dominant groups. See for example, the work of Antonio Gramsci, Pierre Bourdieu and Jean Passeron, Louis Althusser, Raymond Williams, Michael Apple, Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, Stephen Ball, Sonia Nieto, Jean Anyon, Gloria Ladson-Billings, Michelle Fine, Lois Weis, to name just a few.

[13] See Edward W. Wiley, William J. Mathis, and David R. Garcia, "The Impact of Adequate Yearly Progress Requirement of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act on Schools in the Great Lakes Region," *Education Policy Studies Laboratory,* September 2005, available at edpolicylab.org

[14] Edward Wiley, William Mathis, and David Garcia, "The Impact of the Adequate Yearly Progress Requirement of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act on Schools in the Great Lakes Region," *Educational Policy Studies Laboratory,* Septmeber 2005, available at http://edpolicylab.org, page 3 of "Executive Summary."

[15] Edward Wiley, William Mathis, and David Garcia, "The Impact of the Adequate Yearly Progress Requirement of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act on Schools in the Great Lakes Region," *Educational Policy Studies Laboratory,* Septmeber 2005, available at http://edpolicylab.org, page 3 of "Executive Summary."

[16] See for example the contributors in Deborah Meier and George Wood (eds.), *Many Children Left Behind*, Boston: Beacon, 2004. Also see for example the writing of Stan Karp and Gerald Bracey on NCLB. A number of excellent resources on privatization and commercialism implications of NCLB can be found at the site of the Educational Policy Studies Laboratory at www.schoolcommercialism.org.

[17] Alfie Kohn, "NCLB and the Effort to Privatize Public Education," in *Many Children Left Behind,* Deborah Meier and George Wood (Eds.), Boston: Beacon, 2004, pp. 79-100.

[18] Sharon L. Nichols, Gene V. Glass, and David C. Berliner, "High-Stakes Testing and Student Achievement: Problems for the No Child Left Behind Act" *Educational Policy Studies Laboratory,* available at http://edpolicylab.org, page 3 of "Executive Summary".

[19] For an important scholarly analysis see Pauline Lipman, *High Stakes Education,* Routledge 2004.

[20] Activist groups include: Parents United for Responsible Education, Teachers for Social Justice, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, among others.

[21] Deb Moore, "A New Approach in Chicago," *School Planning and Management,* July 2004, p. 8.

[22] "Snapshot: Chicago Renaissance 2010," *Possibilities: An Education Update*, page 2, The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation available at http://www.gatesfoundation.org/Education/RelatedInfo/Possibilities/Possibilities2004

[23] Pauline Lipman, "'We're Not Blind. Just Follow the Dollar Sign,'" *Rethinking Schools Online*, Volume 19, number 4, Summer 2005, available at www.rethinkingschools.org

[24] Dorothy Shipps, *School Reform, Corporate Style: Chicago 1880-2000,* Lawrence, KS: The University of Kansas Press, p. x.

[25] Pratap Chaterjee, *Iraq, Inc.: A Profitable Occupation,* New York: Seven Stories Press 2004.

[26] Kenneth J. Saltman, "Creative Associates International, Inc.: Corporate Education and Democracy Promotion in Iraq," *Review of Education Pedagogy Cultural Studies,* Volume 28, pp. 25-65, 2006.

[27] For example, Clint Bolick of the Alliance for School Choice described privatization as the "silver lining" of the cloud that was hurricane Katrina. His op-ed or quote was then carried by countless publications including the neocon *The National Review* and The Heartland Institute and *The Washington Times*, *USA Today*, etc. The quote was picked up and repeated by others advocating the same.

[28] April Capchino, "More than 100 N.O. Schools Still Closed," *New Orleans City Business*, 2/27/06.

[29] Sharon Cohen, "New Orleans' Troubled Schools Get Overhaul," Associated Press, March 4, 2006, YahooNews at news.yahoo.com

[30] Clint Bolick, "Katrina's Displaced Students," *The Washington Times*, 9/15/05.

[31] Karla Dial, "Emergency School Vouchers Likely for Katrina Victims," *Heartland Institute School Reform News,* November 2005, available at www.heartland.org

[32] Sharon Cohen, "New Orleans' Troubled Schools Get Overhaul," Associated Press, March 4, 2006, YahooNews at news.yahoo.com

[33] People for the American Way, "Hurricane Katrina: A 'Golden Opportunity' for the Right-Wing to Undermine Public Education," 11/14/05, available at www.pfaw.org

[34] Paul Hill and Jane Hannaway, "The Future of Public Education in New Orleans," *After Katrina: Rebuilding Opportunity and Equity into the New New Orleans*, The Urban Institute,

January 2006.

[35] Online NewsHour, "Rebuilding New Orleans Schools," December 19, 2005, available at www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/education

[36] Paul Hill and Jane Hannaway, "The Future of Public Education in New Orleans," *After Katrina: Rebuilding Opportunity and Equity into the New New Orleans,* The Urban Institute, January 2006.

[37] See Kenneth J. Saltman, *The Edison Schools: Corporate Schooling and the Assault on Public Education,* New York: Routledge, 2005.

[38] Paul Hill and Jane Hannaway, "The Future of Public Education in New Orleans," *After Katrina: Rebuilding Opportunity and Equity into the New New Orleans*, The Urban Institute, January 2006.

[39] Sharon Cohen, "New Orleans' Troubled Schools Get Overhaul," Associated Press, March 4, 2006, YahooNews at news.yahoo.com

[40] People for the American Way, "Hurricane Katrina: A 'Golden Opportunity' for the Right-Wing to Undermine Public Education," 11/14/05, available at www.pfaw.org

[41] Linda Baker makes this important point about the embedded funding implications of "choice" in the context of how No Child Left Behind allows students to choose any school, "All for One, None for All," *In These Times*, October 24, 2005.

[42] For an excellent discussion of the history of voucher debates see Jeffrey Henig, *Rethinking School Choice,* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994.

[43] People for the American Way, "Hurricane Katrina: A 'Golden Opportunity' for the Right-Wing to Undermine Public Education," 11/14/05, available at www.pfaw.org

[44] See the eulogy for Walton who died in a private airplane crash in the right wing Hoover Institution in the Fall 2005 issue of *Education Next* magazine, p. 5. It is important to mention that Walton's multi-billion dollar inheritance was the result of Wal-marts's spectacular growth that came not only from the entrepreneurial savvy of Sam Walton but also his commitment to union-busting, displacing the cost of healthcare onto public coffers by refusing to offer adequate health insurance to employees, the destruction of small business throughout the U.S. through monopolistic practices, and of course being a significant contributor to the vast loss of manufacturing sector work to China. See the excellent documentary film "Wal-mart: The High Cost of Low Prices."

[45] Clint Bolick, "Katrina's Displaced Students," *The Washington Times*, 9/15/05.

[46] People for the American Way, "Hurricane Katrina: A 'Golden Opportunity' for the Right-Wing to Undermine Public Education," 11/14/05, available at www.pfaw.org

[47] The Editors, "Katrina's Lessons," *Rethinking Schools*, Fall 2005, p. 5.

[48] Karla Dial, "Emergency School Vouchers Likely for Katrina Victims," *Heartland Institute School Reform News,* November 2005, available at www.heartland.org

[49] Karla Dial, "Emergency School Vouchers Likely for Katrina Victims," *Heartland Institute School Reform News,* November 2005, available at www.heartland.org

[50] People for the American Way, "Hurricane Katrina: A 'Golden Opportunity' for the Right-Wing to Undermine Public Education," 11/14/05, available at www.pfaw.org

[51] People for the American Way, "Hurricane Katrina: A 'Golden Opportunity' for the Right-Wing to Undermine Public Education," 11/14/05, available at www.pfaw.org

[52] *Heartland Institute School Reform News,* November 2005, p. 9 available at www.heartland.org

[53] Sharon Cohen, "New Orleans' Troubled Schools Get Overhaul," Associated Press,

March 4, 2006, YahooNews at news.yahoo.com

[54] George Wood, "Introduction," *Many Children Left Behind,* edited by Deborah Meier and George Wood, Boston: Beacon, 2004, p. ix.

[55] See U.S. Department of Education, Volume I, *Frequently Asked Questions, Emergency Impact Aid for Displaced Students*, January 12, 2006.

[56] Press Release, "Secretary Spellings Delivers Remarks on School Choice," for Release April 5, 2006, available at www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/04/04052006.html

[57] Press Release, "Secretary Spellings Delivers Remarks on School Choice," for Release April 5, 2006, available at www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2006/04/04052006.html

[58] Judd Legum, Faiz Shakir, Nico Pitney, Amanda Terkel, Payson Schwin, and Christy Harvey, "Katrina: Ideology over People," *ThinkProgress.Org*, September 15, 2005, available at www.americanprogressaction.org

[59] Press Release, "Secretary Spellings, Gulf Coast Rebuilding Coordinator Powell Announce $1.1 Billion for Hurricane-Affected Students and Schools," March 2, 2006.

[60] Monty Neil, "Leaving No Child Behind: Overhauling NCLB," in *Many Children Left Behind,* edited by Deborah Meier and George Wood, Boston: Beacon, 2004, pp.102-103.

[61] Henry Giroux, *The Terror of Neoliberalism,* Boulder, CO: Paradigm Press, 2004 makes a crucial analysis of the cultural pedagogy of neoliberalism. For discussion of neoliberal pedagogy in relation to school curriculum, film, and literary corporate cultural production see also Robin Truth Goodman and Kenneth J. Saltman, *Strange Love, Or How We Learn to Stop Worrying and Love the Market,* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002. An excellent mapping and analysis of these conservatisms and others can be found in Michael Apple's *Educating the Right Way,* New York: Routledge, 2001.

[62] David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism,* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005.

[63] For an excellent succinct discussion of the shift from fordism to post-fordism with the rise of neoliberal globalization and the concomitant shifts in social organization as well as implications for cultural theory see Nancy Fraser, "From Discipline to Flexibilization? Rereading Foucault in the Shadow of Globalization," *Constellations,* Volume 10, number 2, 2003, pp. 160-171

[64] David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism,* Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 66-67.

[65] See for example, Chubb and Moe's neoliberal education bible *Politics, Markets, and America's Schools*. See also the several Koret edited collections including *A Primer on America's Schools*.

[66] See Kenneth J. Saltman and David Gabbard (Eds.), *Education as Enforcement: the Militarization and Corporatization of Schools,* New York: Routledge 2003.

[67] Harvey offers important tools for comprehending neoliberalism and neoconservatism in both *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* and *The New Imperialism*. For a discussion of Harvey's recent work and the implications for public school privatization and theoretical limitations of this work see Kenneth J. Saltman "Review of a Brief History of Neoliberalism," *Policy Futures in Education,* 2007.

[68] The expansion of the dual society as a result of neoliberal globalization has been importantly theorized by Zygmunt Bauman, *Globalization: the Human Consequences,* New York: Polity, 1998, and Nancy Fraser, "From Discipline to Flexibilization? Rereading Foucault in the Shadow of Globalization," *Constellations,* Volume 10, number 2, 2003, pp. 160-171.

[69] See Theodore Adorno, *The Stars Down to Earth and Other Essays on the Irrational Culture,* New York: Routledge, 2001.

[70] See Kenneth J. Saltman, *Collateral Damage: Corporatizing Public Schools—a Threat to Democracy*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2000.

[71] Henry A. Giroux, *The Terror of Neoliberalism,* Boulder, CO: Paradigm, 2004.

[72] Pierre Bourdieu, *The Social Structures of the Economy,* Malden, MA: Polity, 2005, 10-11.

[73] A valuable source for entry into literature on the global justice movement is Z Net, available at zmag.org.

[74] See www.teachersforanewera.org

[75] Editorial Desk, "Exploding the Charter School Myth," *The New York Times*, August 27, 2006, Section 4, page 9.