Neoliberal Rhetoric in Higher Education

by

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Abstract

The volatile political and economic environment that surrounds US higher education at this time calls for a nuanced understanding of the greater issues impacting programs, missions, and governance in post-secondary institutions. This project provides a contextualization of what is happening through the lens of political economy, which has shaped our rural and suburban educational landscapes, our businesses, our lives inside and outside of academia. By exploring the rhetoric of neoliberalism and its effects on higher education, I aim to contribute to rhetorical theory by expanding our understandings of the tropes used that reflect the underlying ideology of neoliberalism.

This project theorizes neoliberal rhetoric in higher education and, more narrowly, neoliberal rhetoric in writing programs within post-secondary institutions. Using a case study of the Presidential Controversy Papers located in the Auburn University Special Collections and Archives, I analyze examples of rhetoric that reflect neoliberal ideology. My aim with this project is to demonstrate how neoliberal sensibilities are reflected in the rhetorics that occur within the hierarchies of higher education.

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Chapter One

Introduction: Neoliberalism in Higher Education

In April 1980, Hanly Funderburk became the 12th president of Auburn University. Although Funderburk was instated by a majority vote of the university's board of trustees, that process was controversial and foreshadowed a controversial presidential term (Boosinger). The initial controversy began when Governor Fob James, as the acting director of the Auburn University Board of Trustees, pushed for one candidate, Rex Rainer, who failed to receive the needed votes for nomination; instead, Steven Samples (supported widely by faculty and several of the board members) and Hanly Funderburk each received six votes for president. With a split vote, the governor dismantled the presidential search committee and persuaded a majority of the board to support Funderburk (Boosinger). Many of the faculty were disgruntled because of the governor's actions, which seemed to disregard shared governance.

Once in office, Funderburk was charged with the task of improving the financial situation of the university by trimming budgets and initiating a capital campaign. Funderburk's term (from 1980-1983) was marked by economic and political influences and constraints. Rather quickly, he addressed the charge to remedy the institution's financial situation by calling a meeting with faculty to discuss "belt-tightening" measures, after which he "centralized financial operations of the university and instituted the first financial management system" (Boosinger par 4). Funderburk's managerial style of governance left deans, vice presidents, and department heads with the impression that they were losing control over fiscal management of their educational units as well as their ability to communicate with the board of trustees or press.

Funderburk's controversial style of leadership led to two faculty votes of no confidence and to his strongly suggested and ultimate resignation from the presidency. Documents detailing the communication between Funderburk and various stakeholders reveal the struggle between those proponents of participatory or shared governance and those who promoted a new form of centralized, managerial governance, reflecting a rhetoric of neoliberalism[1].

The rhetoric of neoliberal capitalism, based on entrepreneurial ideology that promotes privatization, free markets, and profitability, has permeated all sectors of culture, including the academy, so that the academy has taken up the notion of a corporatized business model in response. The corporatized business model has favored layers of centralized administrative power that oftentimes ignore the desires of faculty. This lack of faculty power and governance has resulted in what some call the decline in effectiveness of post-secondary education (Altbach, Bousquet , Dearlove, Ginsberg, Giroux, Kezar and Eckel, Lapworth). In this project, I theorize that neoliberal rhetoric, embodied through the actions and reactions of administration, faculty, trustees, students, and other stakeholders, reflects and contributes to the changing landscape in higher education that favors an organizational or managerial model of governance over shared governance. I use the aforementioned case study to explore how the rhetoric of neoliberal capitalism, reflected in stakeholder language, reveals underlying neoliberal ideology.

For this project, I perform a rhetorical analysis of the presidential controversy papers archival site with the goal of demystifying some of the underlying neoliberal ideologies that influenced the actions of stakeholders within the situation. The controversy that arose from the presidential appointment and subsequent contentious interactions between administration,

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[1] Neoliberalism, according to David Harvey, is "a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade" (2).

faculty, students, and board members reflected the larger political and economic situation of the time. This context provided the impetus for stakeholders to act and respond by utilizing the tropes of economic and political language that seemed logical and appropriate.

Economic narratives have long been assumed to be rhetorical in nature. Scholars such as Deidre McCloskey and Victor Villanueva have specifically examined the rhetorics of political economy, a school of thought that is concerned with the relationships of our economic system and its institutions to the rest of society and social development. Political economy is attuned to the influence of political and social institutions, morality, and ideology as they influence economic events (Sackrey, Schneider, and Knoedler). In this sense, political economy is much broader than mainstream economics. Catherine Chaput addresses the rhetoric of political economy and explores how the effects of rhetorical circulation within neoliberal economic systems perpetuate latent feelings and underlying beliefs that are not easily defined or explained by constituents within those systems. Marc Bousquet claims that the integration of neoliberal capitalism with information technology has created a new economy with the ability to further the exploitation of labor workers in higher education contexts (Bousquet 172). According to Bousquet, universities have become managed and marketized, and education has become merely a medium for information delivery. The transformation has occurred through a market-driven mentality that is concerned with economic feasibility. My research is concerned with how that change has occurred rhetorically, how the language used by stakeholders in the arena of higher education exhibits the underlying beliefs associated with neoliberal capitalism, and how the administrative stakeholders use that language to persuade and to perpetuate the current system.

Tony Scott takes up a line of argument similar to Bousquet's, stating that universities have become managed and marketized through an economic-driven mentality. Scott claims that

compositionists have not given enough attention to the implications of globalism, technology, and the neoliberal promotion of exploited labor that have contributed to the undermining of liberal education. He also explores the pedagogical implications of acknowledging the political/economic[2] structures that define the terms of work, both for faculty and students within institutions of higher education. According to Scott, faculty and students have bought into an erroneous myth of neoliberalism that a college degree equals a ticket to success and the middle class. He claims that faculty and students should resist the control of neoliberal capitalism by connecting the work they do within the academy to the political/economic and not accepting the particular forms of "efficiency" that capitalism promotes. My research takes up Scott's call to raise awareness of the connections between the work we do and the political/economic.

Corroborating the notion that institutions of higher education are maintaining an ideology of social mobility through the attainment of degrees, Ira Shor claims that the campaigns for excellence in modern universities are misleading. The ideology of social mobility is at odds with high levels of student debt and high unemployment rates. Shor explores the concept of "excellence" as it relates to institutions of higher education striving to become Centers of Excellence and states that the term is alienating to both students and teachers because it does not fulfill the promise it makes. Shor outlines a pedagogical stance that aims to liberate the educational system from conservative, neoliberal influences (95).

Concerned with the increasing reliance on part-time and adjunct labor in postsecondary institutions, Eileen Schnell and Patricia Stock claim that this process of utilizing the contingent labor force as a greater percentage of overall faculty is in direct correlation with the management of labor in corporate and industrial sectors, both nationally and internationally (5). They, along

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[2] Political/economic is used because the slash suggests synonymity between the political and economic

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with many others in rhetoric and composition who are concerned with contingent faculty (as evidenced by CCCC's *FORUM),* claim that all of the stakeholders who have interests in higher education (students, administrators, faculty, and staff) will lose unless we acknowledge what is happening and attempt to address it in meaningful ways. I contribute to the conversation by calling attention to some of the ways that the systemic influences of neoliberalism have penetrated our discourse within the academy.

Most of these scholars allude to the management of labor in higher education. Logically, this would lead one to consider the role of administration in the ways that the neoliberal imperative is carried out (whether by promoting myths of excellence, relying more heavily on contingent faculty, or changing the focus to a product of knowledge known as information). Richard Miller, however, claims that instead of resisting the corporatization of higher education, that faculty should acknowledge it, or even embrace it. He claims that those in rhetoric and composition tend to have administrative duties anyway, so that downplaying those duties means belittling what we do. Instead, we should take pride in the administrative functions and roles that we have and take a step further by training doctoral students in rhetoric and composition how to be effective administrators (R. Miller). His argument has met with resistance, yet a subtle but important aspect of his argument is that compositionists in administrative positions can affect change, even incrementally, through awareness of and education about issues of governance.

Benjamin Ginsberg takes up this topic of administrative oversight. He argues that the shift in governance over the last decade has created layers of academic administrators at the expense of full-time faculty positions and the quality of the education that students receive. Ginsberg believes that changes to the system can be made through boards of trustees willing to question administrative ratios, media coverage that calls administrative governance into question,

and faculty who are prepared to serve as board members and take a stand for shared governance. Also of importance to Ginsberg are alumni who are aware of governance issues and parents and students who are willing to support programs that are at risk in the hands of a market-driven administration (Ginsberg).

Other scholars (Thelin and Gerber) historicize the changes in higher education in an attempt to document the origins and influences upon the university system itself. Thelin offers a wide-ranging account of the many changes that have occurred in post-secondary institutions, encompassing such issues as the changes in faculty governance and economic constraints. Gerber offers a more pointed analysis of the history of shared governance in the United States and explores how, over the past several decades, the application of business strategies to the university has shifted power into the hands of administration, threatening the core mission and values of institutions of higher education. Ginsberg claims that this is often done under the guise of economic reasons.

I place my work within these conversations, with the aim to contribute to theories of the rhetoric of political economy as that rhetoric is manifested within the administration of higher education. While noting that the theory of neoliberalism and the practice of it are two distinct and often conflicting things, I take one instance, the situation of a presidential controversy at a public, land-grant university in the early 1980's, and place it within the context of a larger history of corporatization of higher education. The rhetorical analysis performed elucidates the language of power that is used and attempts to demystify some of the ideological influences that have contributed to the change in administrative power.

The methodology for this project is a Burkean, trope-based rhetorical analysis that seeks to unveil latent ideologies—that is, in the following chapters I undertake an ideological rhetorical

analysis that investigates the underlying "beliefs, values, and assumptions" that groups use to form their understandings of the world (Foss 209). In this project, I theorize the practice of neoliberalism in higher education governance and utilize Burke's four master tropes as heuristics for thinking about neoliberal rhetoric. The university setting is contextualized within the larger historical/cultural/political/and economic influences that provide for the *kairotic* elements contained within the situation.

The principal lens for analysis is provided by Burke's four master tropes:

1. Metaphor- which Burke also calls "perspective"

2. Metonymy- Burke also calls this "reduction"

3. Synecdoche- Burke also calls this "representation"

4. Irony- Burke says this could also be "dialectic" (*Grammar of Motives* 503).

To support my theory of neoliberal rhetoric, I examine a set of artifacts from Auburn University's institutional archives, a collection called "The Presidential Controversy Papers." The justification for examining a case at Auburn University is that this university is a large, land-grant institution with a research focus, likely representative of any number of similar land-grant universities across the United States.

Presidential Controversy Papers

This archived collection represents a rhetorical situation involving the controversial election of university president, Dr. Hanly Funderburk, and the subsequent response from various stakeholders which resulted in his controversial resignation three years later (from 1980-1983).

The collection is comprised of various types of documents: correspondence, memoranda, formal and informal reports, resolutions, news clippings, printed material, biographical sketches,

charts, data sheets, income tax returns, and propaganda items. In the case study, I focus primarily on Series 3 and Series 4.

Series 1: News clippings and propaganda; News clippings mainly from March 1982-August 1983; State and local papers (*Auburn Bulletin, OA News, Birmingham News, Montgomery Advertiser*)

Series 2: Records related to the controversy over disclosure of public records. David Parker's collection: two large notebooks of information and analyses of Auburn's budget and board minutes and biographical data on Auburn's Board of Trustees; General correspondence about this issue

Series 3: Documents related to various groups' response to the presidential controversy; Student and Faculty groups, alumni, Alabama Higher Education Association, as well as the following:

- Alabama Higher Education Association and Committees
- Anonymous supporters of Funderburk
- Auburn Administrator Evaluator Committee
- Auburn Alumni Association
- Auburn Board of Trustees
- Auburn Faculty
- Auburn Faculty Senate
- Auburn Library
- Auburn Students for a Greater Auburn University
- Auburn Students Petition
- Auburn Student Senate
- Auburn University Relations
- Coalition for Auburn University Students for Education
- Governor's Statements

Series 4: Presidential response documents

"Report to Board of Trustees, a Response to Allegations Made by Dr. J. Grady Cox and Dr. Taylor Littleton on August 23, 1982" written by Funderburk, as well

as other memos, correspondence, news clippings, excerpts from the faculty

handbook, and a full response to each of the allegations, official statements,

letters, and memorandums from the President's office

Series 5: Documents Post-Funderburk

Topic of Controversy

There are three major themes unveiled within the presidential controversy collection:

conflicting views between faculty and administration regarding the philosophy and direction of

the institution, faculty's lack of confidence in administration and board of trustees, and

administration's lack of confidence in other stakeholders. Several factors influenced various

stakeholders:

- Faculty stated that Funderburk had "repeatedly excluded faculty in university

  policy."

- There was a struggle between academics and politicians over the direction and

  emphasis in education

- There were claims of censorship because a Funderburk aide suggested that faculty

  wishing to grant interviews to press should report info to director of university

  relations

- A Budget crunch forced economies in all areas (according to Funderburk)

- Financial issues caused contention regarding resource allocation (according to

  Funderburk report pg 1).

These documents provide a rich source of information for the case study explored. The following

is a chapter outline of this project:

Chapter One: Introduction: Neoliberalism in Higher Education

In this current chapter, I provide the overview of my research and theory, and provide a rationale for the project. I give a historical account of the changes in higher education (Gerber, Harvey, Thelin) leading to justification for my theory and the case study. The concept of neoliberalism is defined and described (Harvey, Stedman Jones).

Chapter Two: A Theory of Neoliberal Rhetoric

In this chapter, I situate my research within scholarly conversations (Bousquet, Chaput, Giroux, Greene, Harvey, McCluskey, R. Miller, Scott) and explain a theory of neoliberal rhetoric in higher education that aims to contribute to rhetorical theory. I historicize neoliberal change in higher education (Thelin, Gerber, Stedman Jones, Braudel) in order to explore what has happened and is happening to post-secondary institutions.

Chapter Three: Contextualizing the Presidential Controversy Papers

In Chapter Three, I give an explanation of the method and methodology used within the case study. I give an overview of the economic, political, and cultural influences that provide the context for the case, along with a brief overview of the situation and stakeholders.

Chapter Four: Neoliberal Rhetoric at the Site of a Controversy

In this chapter, I use Burke's master tropes as a heuristic for thinking about neoliberal rhetoric in higher education. In this chapter, I analyze documents related to various groups' responses to the presidential controversy. Several commonplaces associated with neoliberalism emerge. Students, alumni, faculty, administration, and the president are represented in the documents examined.

Chapter Five: Neoliberalism and Writing Program Administration

In the last chapter, I provide an exploration of the implications of neoliberalism and neoliberal rhetoric for Writing Program Administration. I include the project's limitations and implications for further research.

Chapter Two

A Theory of Neoliberal Rhetoric

As stated in the previous chapter, political economy, according to Sacrey, Schnieder and Knoedler, is the school of thought that is concerned with the relations of economic systems and their institutions with the rest of society. Political economy is attuned to the influence of political and social institutions, morality, and ideology as they influence economic events (Sackrey, Schnieder, and Knoedler). According to Dierdre McCloskey, that influence happens through rhetoric. In her groundbreaking work *The Rhetoric of Economics,* she claims that economic discourse is inherently humanistic and persuasive, thus rhetorical. This chapter explores these ideas in further detail by examining the rhetorical practice of late capitalism (also known as neoliberalism, a concept that will be elaborated below). This chapter will explain a theory that neoliberal rhetoric is embodied through actions and reactions of administration and faculty in higher education and has contributed to a shift in governance from a shared or participatory model to an organizational/managerial model. To understand what I mean by this assertion, we must first consider the term "neoliberalism" and describe how the rhetoric of such a worldview might work.

Neoliberalism: A Definition

While scholars in political economy (Harvey, Klein, McCloskey, Reich, Stiglitz, and Villanueva) have worked with the term neoliberalism, consensus regarding it remains elusive; nonetheless, the concept is generally related to an ideology that reinforces the belief that society thrives best when there are unfettered, free markets that allow open trade and protect individual

property rights. This philosophy extends to rights of corporations, legally considered individuals, giving them many protections and affordances to act as individuals. Undergirding this philosophy is a belief that private enterprise and deregulation create, maintain, and ensure a prosperous economy that encourages innovation and benefits all (Harvey, Klein, Reich, Stiglitz).

According to tenets of neoliberal theory (a theory inherently political as well as economic), it is generally believed that privatization of public goods and services and deregulation, when combined with unfettered competition, allow the market to run smoothly, thus eliminating inefficiencies, lowering costs, and benefitting both consumers and corporations (Harvey, Reich, Stiglitz). This seems logical and simple, a likely explanation for the ideology's pervasiveness, but the tenets of neoliberalism extend even further into the private sector. According to British economic historian, Gareth Stedman Jones, in neoliberalism there is faith in the market to satisfy consumers and allocate goods, services, and labor to its most productive ability. Because of this efficiency, the market should dictate both public and private systems, with the overriding consideration for profitability and productivity dictating policy in public service systems just as it does in private ones (Stedman Jones 332).

As with any theory, there are assumptions with the general theory of neoliberalism. One is that complete market freedom will be carried out by rational, self-interested individuals who prize their individual liberty above all else (Stedman Jones 2). A second assumption is that the ideas of individualism and liberty are opposed to bureaucracy of state intervention or power of trade unions (Harvey, Smith, Stedman Jones). Closely related to the second assumption is another assumption based on the theories of Milton Friedman, the Nobel-prize winning Chicago School economist widely considered one of the most influential economists of the 20th century, which views the market as not manipulated by any other stakeholder in the equation, but instead,

ideally left open and free from governmental or private industry interference. These assumptions

frame the sacrosanct Western belief that freedom of the market allows individuals and

corporations to pursue their own selfish ends, guarantees individual rights and ultimately, as

guided by Adam Smith's notion of the invisible hand, promotes the greater public good

(Friedman, "Monetary Policy" 632).   This belief has become a thread that weaves through the

fabric of our lives, as citizens of a country entrenched in the economic tenets of modern

capitalism. The conceptual apparatus of the dominant ideology related to capitalism has become

embedded in our ways of thinking and what we consider common sense (Aune, Galbraith,

Harvey, Klein). We carry the affect of late capitalism with us (Chaput) and use the rhetoric of

such belief systems without realizing it. In this sense, the rhetoric of neoliberalism (or late

capitalism) becomes ontological—it creates our ways of being and understanding the world

around us, quite a different type of invisible hand from the one envisioned by Smith.

There are problems associated with the assumptions of neoliberal economic and political

theory. First, while Friedman, Hayek, and other proponents of neoliberal theory insist on the self-

regulating perfection of free markets, the reality is that markets are not free and can never be.

Ferdinand Braudel, French economic historian and scholar, explains how the economic system of

capitalism and its market networks crave freedom, and in the face of hindrances, consequently

expand in other areas, creating other networks in a vigorous attempt at accumulation of capital

(Braudel "Civilization and Capitalism 15C-18C" 164). According to Braudel, capitalism

requires access and moves to where that access is granted, which explains expanded networks of

trade and westward expansion (164). Braudel explains that colonization was used to open up

networks of trade markets that would have otherwise been closed. This was done through

employing local trading within the country where exportation was not originally granted

(Braudel 226). The local trade markets, when left alone, do contribute to thriving local economies; it is when they are exploited for larger market networks dominated by a select powerful sector of society that problems occur. The problem with expanded networks of trade and accumulated capital is that often times the accumulation of wealth is exploitative in nature and creates imbalances in power. Ideally, according to Say's Law[3] (based on Adam Smith's ideas), free markets with open supply/demand would self-stabilize; if supply increased due to increased production and efficiency, then that increase would, in turn, create demand for various other things, leading to a distribution of money and a healthy economy (Braudel 182). Unfortunately, that hasn't been the result of free market mechanisms.

The problem with Say's Law, elucidated by British economist John Maynard Keynes, is that beneficiaries of supply do not necessarily appear on the market as buyers; they do not always spend the money made through the means of production. Instead, they opt for investments and capital accumulation that do not contribute to the productive consumer market cycle (Braudel 182). Keynes' approach to solving this problem, which became a pivotal point in economic thought, involved government intervention through taxes and redistribution, so that capital accumulation did not impede the market cycle and standard of living for consumers (Keynes). Robert Reich, an American scholar of public policy and Blum fellow, explains that while the market naturally pursues freedom to expand, beneficiaries of production and supply (the profit-makers) advocate for policies that will give them more power, resulting in increasing re-distribution within the market towards the top (xv). Both Keynesian government intervention aimed at redistribution and policies that perpetuate corporate power and capital accumulation towards the top demonstrate that the market is not free from external political forces and policies.

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[3] Say's Law was developed by Jean-Baptiste Say, an 18th Century French classical, liberal economist

Reich argues that Keynes' solution was a diversion away from the moral implications of political economy, and that current economic theory should hearken back to the concerns of political economy, concerns that address the problem of how the market is organized via policies, laws and regulations that have moral implications regarding distribution of income and wealth (xvi). Other successful economists confirm this viewpoint. For example, John Kenneth Galbraith, a Harvard economist, sets forth a new approach towards economics that concerns itself with political economy, guided by an awareness of social implications for the greater good of society (*The Good Society*).

Instead of following these calls to look more closely at the tenets of political economy, current mainstream economic thought has relied on neoliberal ideology that values unfettered markets and prioritizes practices that privilege corporate advancement promoting political power and unequal distribution of wealth, with little concern for overall economic equality or stability of the middle class. Joseph Stiglitz, Nobel prize-winning American economist, claims that current policy (driven mainly by large corporate banks) is targeted more strategically towards financial markets, resulting in the Great Recession market failures of 2007-2008 (14). Stiglitz argues that the financial sector, especially, is implicated in the creation of economic inequality, as well as the creation of an ideology that undergirds such policies (15). Financial sector manipulation and the creation of the supporting ideology are both examples of constraining neoliberal forces on the market. The market is defined and constrained by mostly neoliberal policy; therefore, in an ultimate sort of irony, the neoliberal market is far from free.

Another problem with neoliberal economic and political theory is that consumers and citizens will at times act irrationally (according to free-market theories) or not in their own self-interests. The neoliberal theoretical model does not allow for such behavior. For example,

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consumers might choose to forgo their own profit or benefit in order to benefit another, or they might choose to sacrifice individual comforts for the greater good of society. Consumers supporting collective social interventions (for example, trade unions) force the neoliberal state take action in ways that undermine neoliberal theory by constraining consumer behavior, instead of freeing it (Giroux, Harvey, Reich, Stiglitz). Braudel and Polanyi explain that the problem occurs because the economy is a subdivision of social life, both surrounded and constrained by social reality (226). Because of this social nature of the economy, the distinction between trade or commerce and the "market" is necessary because trade and the "market" are quite different and have different implications socially. The shift of focus from simple, local trade-based market transactions to the more global, commerce-oriented concept of the self-regulating or free market changed how the world viewed commerce in terms of economic behavior—it created social upheaval. Braudel claims that all forms of exchange are both social *and* economic (227). The redistribution of wealth is a form of economic exchange as well (Braudel 227). Of course the concepts of collectivities, the social intricacies of market interaction, and the idea of redistribution of wealth for the greater common good do not coincide with neoliberal ideology; therefore, the proponents of modern capitalism find ways to restrict that behavior, often through the rhetorical creation of myths that perpetuate the restrictive practices while promoting concepts of freedom and efficiency.

Related to restrictive practices of neoliberalism, another problem is that monopoly power does exist and threatens to disrupt the utopian goals of pure neoliberal economic theory. Historically, trade regulations were instituted in order to protect consumers and preserve fair competition within the market (Braudel 228). The "freeing" of the market eliminated such protectionary regulations and allowed capitalists (those at the top levels of the economic

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hierarchy) to enjoy advantages such as elite communication networks and resources that allowed them to act quickly upon opportunities not widely known in the general public sphere (Braudel 400). Government and society did not resist such practice, and accordingly, capitalists were able to circumvent or alter the rules of the market economy. As Friedman famously said, "There is one and only one social responsibility of business--to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game…" (6). Capitalists, these businessmen at the highest levels of the hierarchy, were not required to abide by the same rules as the lower market levels (the levels of small business and artisans) (Braudel 400). Collusion, price fixing, and the merging of elite corporate entities were some of the results of deregulation, and while certainly this type of activity might further efficiencies in production and command higher profits, it does not promote a free and open market that necessarily benefits consumers. Instead of the regulatory consumer protections of the past, the types of government intervention we see now tend to protect corporate interests. Policies advocating that certain for-profit corporations are "too big to fail" support this ideology that the interests of the upper capitalist sector must be appeased, and the policies often promote this under the guise that it will benefit all consumers at the lower levels. For example, the IMF and Federal Reserve are collective monitoring agencies that "create the paradox of intense state interventions and government by elites and 'experts' in a world where the state is supposed not to be interventionist" (Harvey 68-69). As recently as February 2016, the Federal Reserve has taken action to dilute Frank-Dodd regulation by loosening bank capital requirements and allowing Capital One to buy back $300 million more of its own stock than allowed under Dodd-Frank (Currie and Chon par.1).

Neoliberal theory assumes that the market will be relatively stable, at least able to

overcome fluctuations on its own; it does not consider the possibility that the market may, in

fact, fail. Some instances in the areas of food, housing, education, and healthcare, have proven

that market mechanisms fail individuals within the system, even when those individuals are

actively subscribing to the underlying beliefs. Instead of acknowledging that failure, proponents

of neoliberal theory have instead resorted to inflammatory ad hominem attacks and a strategic

change in language used in policy advocacy. For example, the recent (February 2016) proposed

legislation directed toward Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program (SNAP, a current version

of food stamps) recipients by Missouri Republican senator, Patty Ritchie, attempted to restrict

food choices on the plan by not allowing disadvantaged recipients to choose steak or seafood

items. Ritchie used the following language to explain the bill: "This legislation would not only

help low-income families and individuals stretch their food budgets further and promote health

and nutrition, it would also protect taxpayers from abuse of a program that's intended to help

those who have fallen on hard times" (Holley), which clearly implies that low-income families

make poor choices regarding both budgets and nutrition. There is also the implication that

welfare recipients are prone to abusing programs that hard-working taxpayers have paid for. This

is one example of the myth promulgated by those steeped in neoliberal ideology—those who

don't succeed in the current economic system are inherently flawed and immoral; they have

"fallen." Ronald Reagan's infamous mantra regarding the "welfare queen" during his 1976

presidential campaign (Demby) is another example of the derogatory language used to imply

corruption in individuals benefitting from social safety net policy. The assumption is that those

individuals are not "honestly" pursuing legitimate success from the free-market system of

capitalism. According to Stedman Jones, "The losers were labeled, by conservative politicians

on both sides of the Atlantic, as welfare moms, dole-scroungers, or indigent free riders. At the same time, the language of profit, efficiency, and consumption replaced that of citizenship, solidarity and service" (344).

These problems with neoliberalism—the contradictions between the practice and the theory—have changed the way that global capitalism has functioned over the past thirty years. (Harvey, Piketty, Reich, Stiglitz). Harvey summarizes the contradiction well: "This theoretical framework [of neoliberalism] is not entirely coherent. The scientific rigor of its neoclassical economics does not sit easily with its political commitment to ideals of individual freedom, nor does its supposed distrust of all state power fit with the need for a strong and, if necessary, coercive state that will defend the rights of private property, individual liberties, and entrepreneurial freedoms" (21). This need within neoliberalism for some sort of enforcement and protection via state intervention contradicts some of the very bases of neoliberal theory; in effect, the practice of neoliberalism requires protection, whether it be via neoconservative measures which reinforce class power, protect corporate profit, and are marked by militarization and moral policing as a form of control, or whether by more purely neoliberal measures which rely on political and economic interventions that are controlled and protected by ideology that is crafted and enacted through the rhetoric of the elite in powerful positions (Harvey, Reich, Stedman Jones, Stiglitz).

Neoconservatism, however, should not be confused with neoliberalism. Whereas neoliberalism is concerned with economic policy and the power of markets to correct imbalances, neoconservatism is pointedly against the promotion of moral permissiveness that is prevalent within the neoliberal model (Ehrman, Harvey). Neoconservatism concerns itself more with foreign policy (rooted in anti-communist sentiment) and morality (especially the moral

superiority of American values) with the idea that American military strength is a necessary component of foreign policy (Cooper, Ehrman). On the other hand, neoliberalism is based on faith in free markets as the solution to society's problems. Where neoconservatism is concerned with politics as the solution to societal problems, neoliberalism is concerned with economics, more specifically laissez-faire market ideology. Neoliberalism's faith in the market holds that the expansion of markets and increases in market transactions will ensure greater prosperity and social good for all concerned; all human action is subject to the market and its mechanisms (Harvey, Stedman Jones).

Critics of neoliberalism say that neoliberal philosophies serve a more strategic purpose to redistribute wealth and capital into the hands of elite and powerful members of society (Giroux, Harvey, Reich, Stigliz). The project of neoliberalism requires unfettered markets, preferably ones with a global reach where untapped stores of capital may be accessed. For this reason, neoliberalism is concerned with information technologies as a way to reach those markets and capitalize on them. The market itself becomes a mechanism through which the elite and powerful manipulate monopoly power in order to accumulate capital. Although the market is depicted as a fair, democratic way to ensure healthy competition and innovation, the rhetoric of markets and economics becomes a way to foster this redistribution of wealth, and it becomes an integral component of the structure of neoliberalism by providing a way for the ideology to circulate and take hold.

Neoliberal Rhetoric

Market-based ideologies have become a dominant underlying feature of modern Western culture. The ways that these ideologies are created, promoted, advanced, and carried happen through language, cultural artifacts, and ways of being and interacting—rhetoric is the way these

ideologies are carried. According to Villanueva, "The role of rhetoric, according to Burke, is the demystification of the ideological. The role of political economy is the demystification of relations tied to the economic. If we're to understand where we are and what is happening to us—and maybe even to affect it—we need the tools provided by both" ("Economies"18). Neoliberal ideologies are not often interrogated; instead they are merely accepted as truths from an objectivist[4] standpoint. There is power in the rhetoric of neoliberalism (which relates directly to political economy), and that power needs to be interrogated and explored.

Harvey explains the power of neoliberal rhetoric in this way: "Neoliberal rhetoric, with its foundational emphasis upon individual freedoms, has the power to split off libertarianism, identity politics, multiculturalism, and eventually narcissistic consumerism from the social forces ranged in pursuit of social justice through the conquest of state power" (41). This rhetorical force has a divisive nature, compelling citizens to believe that social justice issues are separate from individual rights, that the two rights (collective and individual) are diametrically opposed, unable to be reconciled. In this way, neoliberal rhetoric attempts to separate late capitalism from political economy. The beliefs and ideologies undergirding neoliberal rhetoric are pervasive in our culture, which seems to define every policy decision according to the economic and political benefits afforded. Ironically, the underlying ideology that supports the myth systems of neoliberalism is socially constructed, reproduced, and carried; the crucial social component that is required in order for capitalism to thrive is one of the very components that it seems to detest. Such an individualist mentality, focused on marketization and economics, has not always prevailed. Certainly, we are still benefitting from remnants of New Deal policies that were

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[4] Ayn Rand's philosophy of objectivism is based on the humanistic idea that man should pursue his own individual self-interest above all others, work hard, and accept reality.

enacted after the Great Depression, policies that were accused of being too expensive and liberal, and yet those policies arose from political and economic exigencies.

The metamorphosis to a capitalist-dominated world view is one that historians are beginning to explore. For example, Stedman Jones notes the need for further inquiry: "The ways such ideas [neoliberal ones] were mediated through an ideological infrastructure and international network have yet to be fully explored by historians" (15). Examining historical points in time that produce *kairotic* moments—points within rhetorical situations offering opportunities for appropriate response and action that must be attended to rhetorically (Kinneavy 84)—becomes essential to understanding how and when the change in ideology occurred. This project aims to contribute to that understanding. In the following chapters I will examine one particular rhetorical situation during a pivotal point in the history of neoliberalism in which neoliberal rhetoric is enacted in the face of controversy regarding governance in higher education.

Scholars in rhetorical theory also claim that this type of interrogation is important. For example, Catherine Chaput argues that looking at historical cases is crucial. She claims that examining such critical points in time offers "opportunities for exploring how language has the power to shape and transform the way we see the world as well as the way we act in that world" (Chaput "Rhetoric of University" 176). Language in action and discursive practices further neoliberal ideology, and in the current environment, that ideology has a pervasive global reach primarily through the means of technology. According to Les Levidow, a specialist in technology policy in the UK, the forms in which neoliberal ideology presents itself are important because the forms are not "merely rhetorical," but instead, they manifest in various ways through technology and its design (4). Yet, it could be argued that design is rhetorical; technological

design carries and promotes ideology that is embedded within its structures and mechanisms for circulation and access. The notions of the importance of technology and information access, as Levidow calls the "information-society paradigm," are promoted through language that serves to naturalize neoliberal practices as commonsense courses of action (Levidow 4).

Scholars in rhetoric and composition have long claimed that action and language are undergirded by the ideological, and thus rhetorical, because the rhetorical practice carries and enacts the ideology that is embedded (Berlin, Bizzell, Porter, Villanueva). Rhetoric is "always already ideological" (Berlin 447) and imbued with underlying ways of seeing the world, instead of acting as an arbiter or conduit for ideology (Bartholomae, Berlin, Bizzell, Villanueva). It is important to note that the ideological is socially constructed, thus the rhetorical practice is social in nature as well. This social turn in rhetoric and composition has been investigated well (Bartholomae, Berlin, Bizzell, C. Miller, Elbow, Harris, Porter). Teun van Dijk, a Dutch scholar in discourse studies, makes the connection to the social by defining ideologies as the basis upon which groups of people organize their belief systems and negotiate value systems for what is ethical and just for their communities (8). The ideological is social, and the social creates, reinforces, and perpetuates the ideological through language.

Historical Perspectives on Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism has its modern origins in the Mont Pelerin Society, a group of intellectuals who convened in Switzerland in 1947 to discuss the challenges of promoting economic liberalism in the face of collectivist movements in Germany, the Soviet Union, Britain, and America (Polanyi, Stedman Jones). The Mont Pelerin Society, led by Karl Popper, Ludwig von Mises, and Friedrich A. Hayek, welcomed what some consider to be the second phase of neoliberalism (from 1950-1970), the first occurring from approximately 1920-until about 1950

(Stedman Jones 6). These founding figures of neoliberal thought promoted ideas of individual

rights and freedoms as central values that civilized societies should adhere to (Harvey 5). They

were concerned with what they saw occurring throughout the world: fascism, dictatorships, state

intervention and oppression of individual liberty, and they claimed that the values of human

dignity and individual freedom were of utmost importance. Because of this philosophy,

neoliberal doctrine was opposed to Keynesian policy that favored state intervention into markets

(Harvey, Krugman). Advocates for neoliberal thought, led chiefly by Milton Freidman in the

United States, firmly believed that state decisions regarding capital investment and accumulation

would be fallacious when compared to the prevailing wisdom of the economic market (Harvey,

Krugman). The neoliberal agenda sought to "disembed capital" from the constraints imposed by

state-led ownership of key sectors like coal, steel, and automobiles (Harvey 11). This same plan

of economic thought also appears to target higher education, using rhetorical means to further the

plan for redistribution of capital. The second phase of neoliberalism lasted until the

Reagan/Thatcher era of the 1980s (Stedman Jones 7), although the transition to a third phase

began in the 1970s.

The Third Wave: Friedman's Ideological Power, Crises of the 1970s, Change in the 1980s

The third wave of neoliberalism gained power as Keynsian policies began to fail, and

Bretton Woods gold reserves policy lost support (Harvey 12). Rising unemployment coupled

with inflation, caused stagflation in the 1970s, with a resulting public outcry regarding economic

policy. The economic ideology of Milton Friedman gained a foothold during this third wave,

stemming from his *Monetary History of the United States,* published in 1963, which gained

intellectual force in the 1970s as political and economic instability increased (Klein, Krugman,

Piketty). Friedman's explanation of the fiscal crises of the past placed the blame solely at the feet

of monetary policy. Friedman, who viewed crises as a mode by which to instate some of his free market ideals, used credit crises and stagflation as opportunities for hegemonic social and economic engineering (Klein 8-9). According to Friedman, the credit crises occurred because of unnecessarily restrictive Federal Reserve policy; what should occur was an unfettered increase in the money supply to ensure growth in a capitalist economy (Piketty 548-549). Around 1979-1980 the deregulation movement began in the U.S. and U.K, while privatization efforts found hold in Soviet and Chinese sectors (Piketty 138-139). Because of these changes, Reagan and Thatcher were able to gain support by promoting economic ideas regarding individual liberty, deregulation, and free markets as central aspects of their political policy agendas (Hall, Stedman Jones). This change in economic philosophy or shift in thinking was advanced by the incorporation of its elements into public and trade policy language. For example, Reagan while president proclaimed in 1986, "Our trade policy rests firmly on the foundation of free and open markets. I recognize. . . the inescapable conclusion that all of history has taught: the freer the flow of world trade, the stronger the tides of human progress and peace among nations" (Griswold).

The focus of the third wave of neoliberalism was centered on attempts to fragment areas of collective social benefits with the overarching idea that individual responsibility and free markets were the way to achieve a new economic equilibrium. Although Thatcher sought to eliminate collective measures like national healthcare, she had little success; however, in spite of this failure, she and Reagan were able to foster cultural ideas that promoted entrepreneurship and to impose policy regarding fiscal responsibility and accountability on institutions like universities and organizations like trade unions. (Hall, Harvey). For example, Thatcher used the

language of neoliberalism in her challenge to unions: "We always have to be aware of the enemy within, which is much more difficult to fight and more dangerous to liberty" (Post).

This movement gained power as scholars, entrepreneurs, and businessmen refined and articulated a radical set of free market prescriptions, and used media and other means to change public perception and the very language of politics and economics (Hall 41, Stedman Jones 7). This economic ideology promoted by the Chicago School, Friedman, Reagan, Thatcher, and many others took the form of neoliberalism, which became a coherent culture of ideas intended to capitalize on opportunities created by the economic social crises of the 1970s (Stedman Jones 19). Ironically, it was also during this period of change "that the use of 'neoliberal' by its proponents became less common" (Stedman Jones 7).

The Expanding Reach of the Third Wave in the 1990s

This new phase was also marked by expansion and emerging technology as a way for the reach of free market capitalism to extend its grasp. It was during this phase that more legislators, economists, and politicians advocated for open markets, incentives for rational economic behavior benefitting the individual, deregulation of the financial sector, and divesture of the state from social safety provisions (Harvey, Klein, Piketty, Stedman Jones). This period was marked by the adoption of neoliberal principles by such organizations as the WTO and NAFTA (Stedman Jones 8). For example, the WTO in 1997 promoted the idea of open markets in financial services in a report that stated "trade liberalization in this sector will enhance competition and improve sectoral efficiency, leading to lower costs, better quality, and more choice of financial services…" ("Liberalizing Financial Services"). As evidenced in this language utilized by WTO, the movement of ideas during the 1990s can be attributed to

rhetorical means. Adoption of policy, advocacy, and change in procedures—all of these ways

that the ideologies of neoliberalism are carried and enacted are done rhetorically.

Effects of Neoliberalism on Higher Education

The economic and political issues of the 1970s affected colleges and universities. It was

considered a transitional time for post-secondary education during which colleges and

universities struggled, facing financial problems that included budget shortfalls and diminished

endowments. Financial shortfalls presented a particular challenge, because despite institutions'

progression toward a managerial revolution in administration, they were not always able to adapt

and respond quickly to changing demands and fiscal issues (Thelin 318). A change in funding

was inevitable and began in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Aims McGuiness, an educational

policy analyst, notes that during that time "states led in developing new funding systems, such as

competitive, incentive, and performance funding. The use of funding 'on the margin' to support

centers of excellence in research and technology and stimulate improvement in undergraduate

education was widespread" (143). It is interesting to note that not only philosophies of funding

changed but, according to Roger Geiger, a scholar of higher education policy, "since 1980,

significant developments have altered the demographics, politics, and social relations of

American higher education" (61). These developments were brought about by the third wave of

neoliberalism. Significant to the 1980s was an increasingly panoptic focus on efficiency in

resource allocation to more pointed concerns about universities' institutional outcomes which

dominated states' funding (McGuiness 143).

While federal investment in higher education was significant in the 1970s, a decrease in

federal funding occurred in the 1980s resulting in an increase in funding from states during that

time (Geiger 62). For example, higher education historian, John Thelin states that "As inflation

dropped and the nationwide economy started to rebound by around 1983, appropriations for

higher education picked up. One side of recovery was that by the mid-1980s most gubernatorial

candidates campaigned as 'higher-education' governors---calling partnerships among state

government, private industry, and higher education as a way to foster a strong 'high-tech' state

economy" (341). Accordingly, the change in higher education correlated directly with the shift

from the second to the third wave of neoliberalism. This created a stronger state influence on

higher education as federal control waned. Higher education saw reform as a response to a

change in economic policy that was occurring.[5]

Another shift that occurred since the 1970s has been the concerted effort to

deprofessionalize faculty in universities as part of the greater concerted efforts to apply market

principles and practices of business management to institutions of higher education (Gerber 10).

Neoliberalism and the rhetoric of neoliberalism created and propelled that shift in state focus

from 1985 through the 1990s, when, according to Aims McGuiness,

> Spurred by reports of national task forces and commissions sponsored by state-based
>
> organizations such as the Education Commission for the States and the National
>
> Governors Association, governors and state legislators led a fundamental change in the
>
> definition of accountability, and these changes continue to underlie many of the state
>
> policy initiatives (143).

Obviously changes that involve redefining terms such as "accountability" and "outcomes"

involve rhetorical maneuvering and that maneuvering relies on the underlying tropes and

ideologies of neoliberalism.

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[5] State funding was substantially diminished during the market crash of 2008; as a consequence of that, the landscape of higher education funding is changing yet again

Higher Education and Economic Exigencies

WWII and its immediate aftermath was a unique point in time for universities, marked by increased demand as enrollments rose dramatically in response to mass educational imperatives brought about by the GI Bill. That time period was followed by stagflation in the 1970s, which according to Thelin, was an "unusual phenomenon of double-digit annual inflation coexisting with declining productivity in the national economy" that created an economic exigency for those in higher education because college revenues were not increasing during a time of increasing costs of goods and services (320). Shortly thereafter, higher education demand evolved from a mass access orientation to universal access; higher education was purported to be the means to achieve wealth and success, and it became a mythical means by which to attain the American Dream and follow the call of consumerism (Thelin 322). Demands for universal access were also in response to technological advances and an increasing complexity in economies that required a trained workforce (Altbach 21). These contextual exigencies created the opportunity and a need for universities to become an integral part of the new phase of neoliberalism, or the new economy, by providing a trained workforce and contributing to the demands for information and knowledge creation that have been brought about by the new capitalist imperative. Slaughter and Rhoades assert that the capitalist economy and higher education are difficult to separate because the higher education contributes to the economic system, which "treats advanced knowledge as raw material that can be claimed through legal devices, owned, and marketed as products or services" (15). The pressure placed on institutions of higher education to provide these things and to be relevant to the market, created an institutional response to emulate corporate values which they did by entering into such entrepreneurial activities as creating

executive MBA programs, hiring top-level administrators from pools of executives in private

industry, and marketing the knowledge produced by their faculty (Brown 117).

Other scholars agree; for example, Philip Altbach, professor and director of the Center

for International Higher Education at Boston College states that "pressure to serve the training

and research requirements of industry has implications for the organization of the curriculum, the

nature and scope of research, and the traditional relationship between the university and society"

(26). The increasing expectations of industry upon higher education have created an alliance of

sorts with funding and grants being given from corporate donors who require curriculum changes

and expect that their demands will be met. According to Altbach, this trend is called "curricular

vocationalism" (26), and the trend contributes to what Slaughter and Rhoades have labeled

"academic capitalism," which "focuses on networks—new circuits of knowledge, interstitial

organizational emergence, networks that intermediate between public and private sector,

extended managerial capacity—that link institutions as well as faculty, administrators, academic

professionals and students to the new economy" (15). A societal outlook associated with

consumerism and marketing that academic stakeholders take part in links them to the new

capitalist or neoliberal agenda as well.

In addition to corporate involvement in higher education, state government has had an

important part to play in funding, curriculum, and oversight. Considering Altbach's, Slaughter's

and Rhoades' claims, McGuiness's assertion seems logical. He states that "governments have a

legitimate interest in the responsiveness of the academy to major societal needs. At the same

time, it is important for both society and the academy that higher education be able to pursue

values and purposes that are different from and in some cases may conflict with the prevailing

values and priorities of the state" (McGuiness 142). When universities attempt to pursue

purposes that are not aligned with government or corporate interests, there will be sites of conflict between levels of administration and governing boards in higher education. Those sites of conflict are defined and enacted through rhetoric that creates a sense of urgency and attempts to prioritize one stakeholder's need over others. Conflicting demands over resources creates a sense of urgency to act in ways that correlate with underlying neoliberal ideologies. Oftentimes, crises will be created rhetorically in order to enact the changes that are deemed necessary. Other times, more external exigencies like the great recession of 2009 will open opportunities that are seized by those in power.

For example, Ginsberg describes a response to the more recent market crash of 2008 that seemed to take advantage of opportunities:

Some resourceful university administrators saw the recent financial crises as an opportunity more than a problem. The rules of all colleges and universities allow administrators to exercise extraordinary powers in times of financial exigency. The meaning of exigency is a matter of some dispute. The American Association of University Professors defines exigency as an imminent financial crisis that threatens the survival of an institution. The courts, however, have declared that an institution's governing board can reasonably determine that the school faces exigent circumstances if it is running deficits and facing a 'state of emergency'. Bankruptcy need not be imminent (Ginsberg 195).

Power regarding curricula, resources, and labor allocation fell into the hands of top-level administrators and their governing boards because courts gave the power to governing boards to define terminology related to exigency. It is important to note that often governing boards are chaired by state governors in public institutions of higher education. So, this allocation of power

ordained through the courts becomes a political and economic issue related to rhetoric, in that those governing boards define terms as they wish, to suite their purposes for structuring institutions, often according to neoliberal logics.

A problem with the power afforded governing boards and administration when financial crises occur is that institutional priorities sometimes misalign with what is best for students and faculty. Ginsberg explains this misalignment:

> The priorities of the all-administrative university emerge most clearly during times of economic crisis when administrators are forced to make choices among spending options...When forced by economic circumstances, like those that developed in the United States in 2009-2010, to make major spending cuts, administrators will relegate teaching and research to secondary roles and focus instead on the institution and particularly on the preservation of administrative jobs and perquisites (190).

Obviously times of financial crisis affect all organizations, but institutions of higher education are unique in that they face external pressures for efficiency and production that must be managed (McGuinness 150). Unfortunately, that autonomy and management flexibility is furthered by a decrease in faculty authority in governance which allows institutions of higher education to more fully embrace the strategy of market expansion.

A key component of neoliberal global strategy is the involvement of higher education as a vehicle to further the goals, influence and power of the capitalist imperative. According to rhetorical theory scholar, Catherine Chaput, the ideology of neoliberalism has permeated the sector of higher education as "the notions of market centrality, private sector efficiency, and the dangerous growth of big government have infiltrated educational spheres worldwide" ("Inside" 182). That ideology is carried rhetorically. Universities have become complicit in the far-

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reaching effects of the neoliberal state, possibly unaware of their contributions to this system, but most certainly feeling the effects.

Expansion of Higher Education

According to Altbach, the expansion of higher education has had profound societal impact, "regardless of political system, level of economic development, or educational ideology" and has become the "single most important trend worldwide" (21). We can see an example of this expansion manifest in the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 in which the United States federal government gave 30,000 acres to each state to fund public "land-grant" universities with emphases on agriculture and mechanics ("Morrill Act"). This act encouraged western expansion, rather than embracing the liberal arts, as done in the past; the Morrill Act emphasized areas of study like engineering and agriculture that were important for economic expansion (Mumper et al. 113). Of course, the westward expansion was brought about by the neoliberal imperative to expand, create demand, fill and capitalize on that demand. The seemingly altruistic creation of land grant universities furthered that objective in a couple of ways.

The Morrill Act expanded sites of higher education into rural areas, unreached before, and it allowed access to higher education for many students who otherwise might not have attended college. Moreover, it promoted the study of subjects that would directly improve industry in various sectors of engineering, technology, and agriculture. Because of the government's investment in higher education, the Morrill Act fostered the "creation and development of what are now some of the nation's great universities, including the University of Wisconsin, the University of California, and Pennsylvania State University" (Mumper et al. 115). Auburn University was among the new land-grant universities. This development coordinated with the political and economic progression of the United States at the time,

enabling the country to create and simultaneously fulfill the demand for post-secondary training that was useful to industry for the accumulation of capital (Ginsberg, Giroux, Harvey, Slaughter and Rhoades).

Consequently, enrollments in post-secondary institutions in the US soared, especially after World War II and the creation of the GI Bill. For example, according to Thelin,

> In 1939-40, total student enrollment at all colleges and universities was just under 1.5 million…by 1949-50, total student enrollments had ballooned to almost 2.7 million—an increase of about 80 percent in one decade. This was no aberration, for the figure increased to about 3.6 million in 1960 and then doubled again over the next decade, reaching over 7.9 million in 1970 (261).

More than one million of the new students were veterans (Mumper et al. 115). The demand for higher education did not subside after the 1970s; instead, another increase occurred in the 1980s with traditional college-aged populations expanding considerably (Gerber 119). Since the 1980s, the rate of college attendance has substantially increased as well, and by "2010 nearly one in two high school graduates (48 percent) enrolled in an institution of higher learning. In 2010, all together the nation's approximately 4500 colleges and universities enrolled more than 21 million students, double the number enrolled in 1975" (Gerber 119). This growth trend in higher education enrollment supports the neoliberal demands for more highly trained laborers in the workplace; the data provides evidence that both the demand for greater numbers of students and the increasing supply of those students who enroll in universities (often at an increasing burden to the students through tuition costs) follow a neoliberal imperative that fully embraces a meritocratic, bootstraps philosophy.

Increases in student enrollment occurred primarily in public institutions, although private college enrollments increased as well. Private college growth, however, was outpaced by public enrollments in both two and four-year institutions (Altbach, McGuiness, Thelin). Public institutions provided a less expensive, and therefore more attractive, option for students because those institutions were partially supported by governmental sources.

Resource Allocation

After the expansion of higher education during the 50s and 60s, states became even more active in the coordination of resources to universities, but not without challenges. The transition in higher education that occurred from the 1940s until now has altered both the culture and structure of higher education institutions, with emphases on increased administration, standardized testing, building of labs, classrooms, dorms, and other facilities (Altbach, Giroux, Thelin). Higher education faced challenges when transitioning from select to mass education, and those challenges were heightened in the face of later demands for universal education (Thelin 321). This strain on higher education is an economic one with social and political consequences, thus causing higher education to be the focus of attention regarding policy and funding at both the federal and state level.

Despite the shift from federal to state funding of higher education that occurred after the Education Amendments of 1972 (McGuinness 142), the federal government has continued to provide some support in the form research grants and student aid. Despite this provision, the federal role has remained secondary to states' roles (Mumper et al. 113). While states do provide funds (which influence policy) to public institutions of higher education through direct subsidy that varies from year to year and from state to state (McGuinness 142), that funding provision has dropped dramatically since the Great Recession that began in 2008 (Schrecker, Thelin).

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Because of economic constraints, states spent 28% less per student in higher education funding in 2013 than they did in 2008 ("Recent Deep"). It is interesting to note that the federal government still has some level of control by establishing eligibility requirements for student federal aid which dictate that the institution must be authorized by the state (McGuinness 143); however, that federal funding in the form of subsidized loans and Pell Grants fails to offer enough relief for the increasing burden of rising tuition costs for students (Giroux). For example, according to the Education Trust, in 1980 the maximum Pell Grant award would cover 70% of the cost of attending a public, four-year university, but in 2011 the maximum award covered only about 36% of the cost of attending (Douglas-Gabriel). In response to inadequate government funding of higher education, administrators turned toward a neoliberal corporate model by pursuing other fiscal means as sources of revenue: increased tuition rates (with an accompanying view of students as customers) and corporate sponsorships for departments and programs. Large corporate-sponsored foundations have provided sizeable grants to support research in higher education, most of which have restrictions and research imperatives (Thelin 262). In addition to private foundation sponsorships, the federal government has also sponsored higher education research but that support has been declining (as an alternative to direct investment in the operations of institutions of higher education).

Despite the fact that the Truman Commission Report argued for increased federal involvement and capital investment, little was done to address it (Thelin 269). Instead, direct federal investment in institutions declined. However, the federal government supported post-secondary education in a different way—in the form of federal funding for scientific research. When paired with corporate and foundation grants, federal funding for scientific research made strides in bridging the post-secondary budget gap created by a decline in resources. The trend in

funding from these sources has taken an interesting path. According to NSF data, the Federal

Government has increased funding 39% for higher education research from 2004 to 2013

(Basken). That number is deceiving, however, upon examining the underlying reason. Most of

the increase in federal research funding occurred because of President Obama's 2009 economic

stimulus package, which in 2013 faced sequestration, affecting the NIH with a $1.3 billion

reduction in grant funds (Basken, Troop). In the face of such reductions, universities have turned

to the private corporate sector to fund research. For example, in 2013 industry funding accounted

for 5.4 percent of university science and engineering research, which is an increase from 4.9

percent in 2004 (Basken). Enterprising universities like the University of Utah, strategize by

approaching corporations to not only buy the university's intellectual property, but to join with

their university in future research partnerships (Basken).

These new sources of funding have created a problem: political issues related to external

sources having power to influence institutional missions, research goals, and governance

(Altbach 16, Baskin, Thelin 274). *The Chronicle of Higher Education* cites numerous examples

of influence. Recently, in November 2015, scandalous emails surfaced between University of

Colorado Denver pediatrics professor, James O. Hill and the Coca Cola Corporation (Bartlett par

2-3). Professor Hill held simultaneous positions as director of the university's Center for Human

Nutrition and president of the Global Energy Balance Network, which had received $1,000,000

in funding for research from Coca Cola. Much of the research produced claimed that lack of

exercise, not sugary drinks, was responsible for the obesity epidemic. Professor Hill's leaked

emails indicated his desire to help Coca Cola "avoid the image of being a problem in people's

eyes…" (Bartlett par 3). The controversy resulted in the closure of the Global Energy Balance

Network and the University of Colorado Denver returning the $1,000,000 to Coca Cola (Bartlett par 3).

Another example of corporate influence is the ongoing (as of May 2016) controversy at the George Mason University in which the faculty senate called for a suspension of an agreement between the university's law school and the Charles Koch Foundation (Schmidt). This agreement dictates the renaming of the school of law after Antonin Scalia and requires that donors, who had pledged over $30 million dollars in scholarship funding, be notified if the university replaces the law school dean (Schmidt). Members of the George Mason faculty senate are outraged at the idea of donors having power over administrative appointments and are upset that the university failed to share these specific components of the agreement before it was passed (Schmidt). As these examples demonstrate, funding dollars are negotiated rhetorically and distribute power; these dollars also create research foci and direction in addition to the possibility of creating and altering the base mission of post-secondary institutions.

Much in the same way as external funding influences post-secondary research and governance, financial shortfalls, created intentionally or unintentionally, become exigencies that call forth action that is inherently rhetorical—administrators must respond to various stakeholders in order to address problems, solicit funding, alter policy and enact change. Ginsberg, Giroux, Thelin, Harvey, Chaput, and others say this often happens at the expense of faculty involvement. Ginsberg asserts:

> Aggressive administrators are prepared to confront and silence faculty resistance to their plans to establish new programs or reorganize old ones. One favorite administrative tactic is the claim that some fiscal or other emergency requires them to act with lightning speed—and without consulting the faculty—to save the university (9).

A current example of financial exigency calling for extreme administrator action is taking place at the Chicago State University (CSU), where budget shortfalls and a funding impasse with the state have created a dire situation (June). At CSU, administration announced layoffs totaling 300 people, a third of the staff. Although faculty were not included in that first round of layoffs, uncertainty has prevailed. Communication between high ranking administration and faculty has been marked with silence and contradicting statements. Jason Raynovich, vice president of the faculty senate at CSU stated that the senate was not told anything prior to the layoffs; he found out about the layoffs via media outlets along with the general public (June). When reflecting on how administration had been handling the situation, Raynovich made this observation: "I keep thinking, is this the way a university is supposed to be run? No. Maybe corporate America, but not a university" (June).

The growth in administrative power is evident in the increased number of administrative positions within all universities, with many of the executive level positions being filled for political purposes from the corporate or government sectors. An example of this is the recent controversial instatement of Margaret Spellings as president of the University of North Carolina's system. Spellings, a former education secretary for Georg W. Bush and President of the George W. Bush Presidential Center, has no direct university experience, and her appointment occurred under accusations of a lack of transparency on the part of the board of trustee's chair, John C. Fennebresque, who subsequently resigned under pressure from The University of North Carolina board (Brown and Suppiano, Thomason). As the previous examples demonstrate, administrators often act in ways that are politically and economically influenced, and they often fail to confer with faculty in deciding matters of governance.

These administrators rely upon financial imperatives (often ones created by state funding decreases) that call for action. At times, they create those very imperatives through their mismanagement of scarce university resources. Regardless of how the financial imperatives originate, administrators respond to these exigencies in order to enact the change they want to see carried out. One way they do that is by arranging fundraising initiatives that have become so important to the continued operation of institutions of higher education. This fundraising is initiated and controlled by the senior administrators often working with board of trustee members who are corporate executives and state politicians, and at times working in collaboration with donors regarding purposes and programs without faculty involvement. In this way, faculty have been relegated to positions without power, and development offices have provided administration with ways to gain some independence from state or federal intervention (Ginsberg 60, Giroux 60-61). This phenomenon has occurred in both private and public institutions of higher education, with corporate and foundation funding threatening shared governance and academic freedom (Gerber 145). An example of this can be seen in the Charles G. Koch Charitable Foundation that continues to make significant donations to universities in order to create new undergraduate programs that promote the study of free enterprise (Gerber 16). Specifically, in 2011 the Charles K. Koch Foundation pledged $1.5 million to Florida State University's department of economics with the stipulation that a Koch-appointed advisory committee would select and evaluate the newly hired professors for their program (Strauss).

Governance in Higher Education

It is interesting to note that faculty governance has not always had an influential role in the administrative structure within institutions of American higher education. Historically, according to Gerber, "dating back to the founding of Harvard College in 1636, faculty exercised

little influence over the formulation of educational policies or other aspects of institutional decision making. Instead, American institutions of higher learning very early came to be distinguished from European universities by the development of strong external governing boards and presidents" (3). Despite that difference, American higher education was in some ways influenced by European models, especially the Paris model that emphasized the role of the autonomous professor at the heart of the institution and the German model that appropriated resources from the state in order to further national research interests and promote political ideology of the state (Altbach and Kezar, Lester, and Anderson). The German model was responsible for the creation of graduate education, doctoral degrees, and areas of specialization that led to the creation of separate schools and colleges within the larger university structure, which "American reformers [of the European Model] further transformed by stressing the relationship between the university and society through the concept of service and direct links with industry and agriculture" (Altbach 17). American institutions also incorporated the German department chair system and expanded access to higher education through the GI Bill and the land-grant concept (Altbach, Lucas, Thelin). This ushered in the focus on higher education as more mass-oriented, with the idea of higher education being universally available to all (Kerr).

After the Civil War, a more faculty-focused view of governance emerged in American higher education, due to the rising prominence of U.S. institutions of higher education and the fundamental shift in education policy that supported the belief that education should be available to all (Bowen and Tobin). This shared governance system gave professors more professionalization and allowed them to have more influence in academic decisions (Gerber 1). American post-secondary institutions gained a reputation of preeminence by the middle of the twentieth century, primarily from postwar resources allocated to education and also from the

"development of the system of shared governance and academic freedom that prevailed in America's leading institutions of higher education" (Gerber1-2). While there are variations of the American or Western model of higher education, the various institutions comprising higher education in America share similar characteristics regarding structure, organization, and patterns of governance; the preeminence of Western higher education has connections to capitalist industry. Despite the power of the American model of higher education, there appears to be an underlying fear associated with its possible fall from status (Chaput, Braun, and Brown). This fear stems from the associations of higher education with the new capitalist economic model based on neoliberal philosophy. It directly aligns with fears regarding America's decline as a world economic and political force. The aforementioned influences upon higher education have affected the allocation of resources and missions, as well as the very structure of governance in higher education. According to Altbach, these outside influences, "such as government (particularly in the public sector)—but also including business, industry, and labor organizations—came to play a more important role in academic governance. These changes were stimulated both by the growing size and complexity of many academic institutions and systems and by a desire to rein in expenditures" (25).

The change was significant when contrasted to shared governance structures that emerged after WWII and became accepted by the 1960s (Gerber 6). During that time, faculty were generally expected to hold primary responsibility over academic matters and some shared influence in other areas of university administrative matters. Although the development of a stronger faculty role in governance was slow, it always included shared power with external governing boards and presidents (Gerber 5-6). Shared governance during that time was quite successful because the short-term demands of administration never overshadowed faculty's

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commitment to research and academic freedom (Bowen and Tobin, Ginsberg). Faculty ideas and concerns were valued and were influential in the 1960s and 1970s; however, today, the trend is towards managerial control--administrators and staffers who hold more power over making decisions regarding academic and strategic priorities (Ginsberg, Keller, Tierney). The change in governance from a shared model to an administrative, managerial model has significant implications for higher education, threatening the very core values and beliefs that are at the heart of educational missions throughout the US. Neoliberal ideology has infiltrated the very core of our institutions of higher education.

My argument is that this ideology has permeated through rhetorical means, through the very symbols, actions, and tropes that are used by various stakeholders at different levels within higher education. This neoliberal rhetoric has carried the ideology and enacted the change in governance that threatens the very nature of academic inquiry. In an open academic environment, one that allows for various viewpoints and modes of inquiry, the university can advocate for change, challenge assumptions, and foster an educated citizenry who advocates, challenges, and critiques. George Keller, an American scholar of higher education, advocates for a model of governance that pushes ever more towards the managerial, stating that the president and board of trustees need more power to make decisions quickly in the face of a complex and challenging environment; however, if the university is controlled by business-minded administrators who are far removed from classroom instruction, the university will be relegated to what Stanley Aronowitz calls a "knowledge factory" (Aronowitz, Ginsberg, Keller). The institution of higher education at that point will be only vocationally oriented, preparing students in practical ways for the jobs that corporations provide (Ginsberg). In various universities, such

as Georgia Perimeter College[6] which was awarded the AAUP shared governance award in June 2011 for including faculty on the presidential cabinet and policy advisory board (Schachter par. 6), some areas of faculty governance remain, such as lower-level departmental academic decisions, but even that power seems to fluctuate from institution to institution (Gerber 159). Now there is less power, due in large part to the increasing levels of full-time administration employed by universities, creating less need to have faculty in those positions. What had been an alliance between administrators and faculty to collaborate regarding the best ways to pursue university missions and purposes, now has become a hierarchy of power structures. Now, according to Ginsberg, "administrative tasks have been turned over to an enormous army of...functionaries, whose numbers have shown a triple digit increase in recent years" and who are much "more pliable than faculty administrators" (162). Ginsberg states that:

> This group of functionaries or staff is the bulwark of administrative power in the contemporary university. Before they employed an army of staffers, administrators were forced to rely on the cooperation of the faculty to carry out tasks ranging from admissions through planning. An administration that lost confidence in its faculty might find itself unable to function. Today, its army of staffers makes the administration 'relatively autonomous'…and marginalizes faculty (25).

Of course, there is still the appearance of shared governance in most places. This is evidenced by faculty senates and assemblies, which are supposed to share in important academic decision making. The reality is that there is often little power held by those faculty senates (Ginsberg, Giroux, Schrecker). This seems to be primarily for appearance, with faculty senates and assemblies used by presidents to defuse "external scrutiny" rather than demonstrate a true

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[6] Georgia Perimeter College was consolidated with Georgia State University in the fall of 2016. Governed by the University System of Georgia, the institution is now known as Georgia State University ("Overview").

concern for professors' academic freedom or governance concerns (Thelin 275). The

establishment of tenure systems was an important protection for academic freedom, not only for

teaching and research, but also regarding freedom of speech and opinion regarding issues of

governance (Gerber 9). Unfortunately, the tenure system is under attack, partially due to less

faculty power in governance that happened in part because of an oversupply of PhDs on the job

market. After 1980, the glut in the market for PhDs caused power to shift into hands of

administration since there were fewer options for tenured professors to find alternative jobs and

they could be easily replaced (Thelin 332). This labor situation eroded faculty senate ability to

argue emphatically for causes dear to them because administrators at some institutions were

willing and able to "discard the pretense of shared governance in favor of a more direct rule"

which could involve disbanding the faculty senate altogether (Ginsberg 16). My argument is that

the neoliberal imperative, created and furthered through neoliberal rhetoric, has created this

change in power and focus. In most cases the only way faculty are able to gain power or argue

their cases, is through economic maneuvering using neoliberal rhetoric of efficiency or economic

feasibility. Faculty often use this approach without questioning the tropes and language they

employ. (An irony of this is that one of the relied upon tropes of neoliberalism is freedom—the

very thing that is being taken away from faculty). The neoliberal discourse is a way of being and

interacting successfully in an ever-evolving, corporatized university system, organized and

administered by governing boards that are often not comprised of faculty representation.

Administrators sometimes see faculty representation on governing boards as a threat with

lines of communication being opened up between faculty and external board of trustee members

(Ginsberg 211). Others see the need, not for faculty representation on governing boards, but

instead for a stronger representation of those who can influence politicians at the state or federal

level in governance matters (McGuinness). As previously mentioned in the Margaret Spellings

controversy at the University of North Carolina, the board of trustees chair, Fennebrusque

claimed that it would be advantageous to hire Spellings because of her political connections

(Brown and Suppiano, Thomason). Advocates like Fennebrusque claim that there needs to be a

constructive relationship between state government and institutions of higher education and that

the higher education community should realize that it has a stake in actively engaging with state

political leaders in defining the nature of their relationship to institutions of higher education

(Brown and Suppiano, McGuinness, Thomason). Of course, the degree to which state

governments are involved in governance and missions in higher education varies from state to

state, with some states having structures that govern institutions while others merely coordinate

various resources (McGuinness 145). Governance as it pertains to governing boards of public

institutions of higher education involves the ever-delicate balance of administrative freedom and

public accountability (McGuinness 145), although most times the public seems far removed from

the decisions that are made at those levels. Autonomy, accountability, efficiency with

resources—these are all political/economic concerns that affect the mission, culture, ongoing

activities, and goals of post-secondary institutions. These concerns are all communicated and

conveyed through the political and economic rhetoric of neoliberalism, which often creates crises

that must be attended to and adapted from, even to the level of federal involvement. For

example, the "state fiscal crisis [of the last 5-7 years] is also prompting calls for a stronger

federal role in funding public research universities. These changes in the state role and its

increasing interdependence with federal policy leadership" have created a more centralized

notion of governance in higher education (McGuinness 144). This centralized notion contributes

to a closely managed and controlled governing structure that is inherently contradictory to the basic theory of neoliberalism.

Managerialism and the Corporate Model

Although administration had power from the onset of the American university, faculty gained power for a moment in time after WWII; however that power has declined in the neoliberal age that began in the late 1970s and early 1980s toward a managerial model of governance. The managerial shift (or turning back to administrative control) in higher education progressed because of reforms initiated in the latter part of the twentieth century. The shift was inherently rhetorical because it persuaded through language of accountability and efficiency in managing post-secondary institutions. In accordance with the managerial reforms in governance, the rhetoric of neoliberalism increased power given to administrators at the expense of faculty and students (Altbach 25). This shift in power occurred through the rhetorical practice of neoliberalism that enacted it. Administrators called for measures that streamlined operations, allowing for the complex nature of modern universities to be managed in expedient ways. Unfortunately, this action often involved hiring more layers of administration to take care of specific, segmented tasks. Keller, a scholar in higher education administration and a faulty administrator, argues that that type of management is necessary in face of the modern university and that the rights of faculty need to "be matched with a stronger sense of the imperatives of vigorous, forward-looking management" (Tierney). This is one example of the ideologies of neoliberalism in action, with the reigning in of faculty interests that do not align with progressive management ideology.

The managerial or corporate model gained popularity at approximately the same time that the neoliberal agenda was gaining momentum. Neoliberal rhetorical practice pushed the

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trend to corporatism in educational institutions that theretofore had had a distinctly different

approach to managing resources. This managerial approach is called the corporate model—what

Ellen Schrecker defines as the "adoption of business-related values and practices and the

commercialization of faculty research" (7). The corporate model for institutional governance

gives institutions legal status as public corporations and accords them more autonomy from the

state, but as discussed earlier, that autonomy is sometimes limited by monetary constraints and is

certainly complicated by state funding. The corporate model also aims for deregulation by

government and more management flexibility (McGuinness 150). Of course, the definition of

management and who is allowed to comprise those levels of authority is the territory that has

been contested because it directly relates to matters of governance. The trend towards

corporatization "accelerated in the 1990s with the interest in 'reinventing government,' the

growing impact of market forces on higher education, and interest in 'new public management'

(McGuiness 150). Certainly the shift to corporatized managerial approaches has contributed to

"more complex bureaucratic arrangements [as] part of the academic landscape" (Altbach 28) and

this trend has relegated shared governance to a practice of the past.

In the corporate model, administration manages faculty who are treated as "employees to

be assigned duties defined by management rather than as largely autonomous professionals

working in a collegial setting. These challenges to the professional status of faculty members are

thus closely linked to the effort to restructure the system of academic governance" as evidenced

by a shift from tenure line faculty to non-tenured or adjunct, from 70% full-time faculty and 57%

tenure-line in 1975 to less than one third of faculty being tenure track in recent times (Gerber 9).

The way that full-time faculty are treated by administration varies by institution, but in general,

the current climate challenges systems of shared governance that allow faculty to play a

significant role in academic decision making. Proponents of a businesslike model of higher education employ rhetorical strategies that call for universities to be more "flexible and nimble in responding to changing market demands and technologies" (Gerber 2).

Historians of higher education claim that the managerial revolution that began in the 1960s was incomplete during that time because it had not been tested by adversity (Thelin 337). The stagflation of the 1970s along with economic concerns of rising energy costs and expensive overhead of running campuses caused institutions of higher education to implement the "consolidation of a managerial and planning approach combined with the university and college becoming a genuinely enterprising institution" (Thelin 337). These calls for change and adaptation to market conditions seem logical to those steeped in the rhetoric of neoliberalism, but perhaps it only seems logical because the stakeholders fail to reconsider underlying assumptions being employed--assumptions about expediency, flexibility, efficiency, and freedom (claims related to liberalism). Many of the claims that are used in the name of these concepts enact conditions that accomplish the opposite of flexibility, efficiency, and freedom (the practice of neoliberalism).

This is the great paradox of late capitalism or the neoliberal ideology: the theory often fails to align with practice. Advocates of the new, businesslike approach to governance in higher education are "attempting to roll back the influence that faculty in the United States gradually gained over the course of more than a century" (Gerber 2). While Gerber claims that some have advocated for managerial governance in higher education since the late nineteenth century, managerial governance has been enacted more recently in response to economic and political exigencies that are rhetorical in nature and that contribute to the corporatization of institutions of higher education.

Chaput claims that the corporatization of higher education has been aided through rhetorics that "humanize corporate projects" and focus on ideas related to progress in mission imperatives (330). In addition to the use of neoliberal rhetoric in university missions, administrators employed management theories steeped in neoliberal rhetoric to change governance. The management theories that contribute to corporatization claim to "impose order and hierarchy on an institution" but "even those theories that provide a place for employee involvement see this as a way of pacifying underlings with the appearance of consultation" (Ginsberg 208). Ginsberg claims that this type of management fails to serve the best interest of students and faculty, and instead, it promotes pride and unethical practices within administration and leaves faculty with no sense of power (65-66). He claims that "on any given campus, the only institution with the actual power to halt the onward march of the all-administrative university is the board of trustees or regents. The board selects the school's president, must approve the school's budget and at least formally exercises enormous power over campus affairs" (Ginsberg 203). But, unlike corporate boards of directors, university boards do not have the same strict regulations (like SOXA) (Ginsberg 87).

These boards appoint university presidents that "serve at the pleasure of the trustees and can only be removed by them. Other administrators serve at the pleasure of the president. Every school employs a great many administrators whom the faculty regard as foolish or incompetent. But, so long as these individuals retain support of their administrative superiors, the faculty is usually powerless to remove them" (Ginsberg 6). Certainly, faculty are involved in presidential searches, but oftentimes the searches are "organized and overseen by corporate search firms employed by trustees….Before the 1960s, such firms were seldom retained by universities" (Ginsberg 5). In Chapters 3 and 4, I will conduct a critical rhetorical analysis of a controversial

presidential search in the early 1980s at a large land grant institution. This analysis will contribute to our understanding of rhetorical theory by demonstrating some ways that the rhetoric of corporatism and managerial governance reveals neoliberal ideology.

Corporatism has generated several sites of controversy among stakeholders in higher education, and among those sites have been the marketizing of higher education, privatizing aspects of institutions of higher education, and relying upon an ever-increasing part-time labor pool. Gerber states that a major issue has been administrative managerial approaches that insist on control in "retrenchment and reorganization of academic programs to achieve greater efficiencies, control over the use of new forms of instructional technologies, greater use of part-time faculty to ensure 'flexibility' and salary determination based on the varying market demand for different disciplines" (140). This managerial control is not without some contradictions. Assuming a corporate model would logically lead one to believe that efficiencies in management would be a priority, when the actual trend in higher education has been a dramatic increase in layers of administration.

Slaughter and Rhoades agree with Gerber about the focus of corporatism, but point out the departures from corporate practice that seem to be driven, at least partially, by the need for academic oversight of adjunct faculty. In academia, "a growing number of middle managers supervise the mass production of education through the use of information technologies such as Blackboard or WebCt…A combination of partial automation and managerial oversight may be necessary for quality assurance as colleges and universities increase the number of part-time faculty" (Slaughter and Rhoades 19). This appears to be a response to the growing demand for mass education, and one way that the imperatives of neoliberalism have changed the landscape of administration within higher education.

While those working within higher education are often aware of the change, oftentimes they lack the time or inclination to understand how that process has occurred. The paradox of neoliberalism creates a sense of confusion in the workers within the system. As Chaput states, "The proposition that democratic and social justice issues might be at odds with free market logics exists outside the rhetorically constructed institutional boundaries of these universities, and is therefore less accessible to those who live within the rhetorical confines of this educational landscape" ("Inside Higher" 189). In this sense, the rhetoric of neoliberalism constrains and defines the terms of the landscapes within higher education. It obfuscates the inconsistencies and paradoxes that are present. The power of neoliberal rhetoric moves within organizations of higher education, as well as outside of them. One notable example of external, international pressure is exhibited from the World Bank, which has been "promoting a 'reform agenda' on higher education. Its key features are privatization, deregulation, and marketization" (Levidow 5). This strategic power of neoliberal rhetoric has a widespread, global reach, and this reach has been criticized for the ways that it reinscribes class and race distinctions within settings of higher education (Brown 118). Although higher education attempts to offer solutions to racial/class issues, "the solutions to those problems that higher education offers, then, mirror the dominant social and economic policies valorizing social mobility, homogeneity, consumption, and competition,--the very values that capitalist social relations depend on, and more importantly, the very values that create the conditions for inequitable material conditions necessary to capitalism" (Brown 118). The efforts of higher education to address these conditions are thwarted by a neoliberal agenda that is furthered through rhetorical means.

According to Levidow, "Today's neoliberal project undoes past collective gains, privatizes public goods, uses state expenditure to subsidize profits, weakens national regulations,

removes trade barriers, and so intensifies global market competition" (2). This concerted effort to divide and fragment people and institutions furthers the exploitation of them (Levidow 2). Some claim that this concerted effort is intended to foster increases in capital and redistribute that capital into the hands of a few elite in order to maintain their power (Harvey, Reich, Picketty). Appeals to traditions and cultural values have helped build societal consent in regards to this, and a "programmatic attempt to advance the cause of individual freedoms could appeal to a mass base and so disguise the drive to restore class power" (Harvey 40). Ideals and language related to "individual freedom" and "economic efficiency" could be used to further promote a neoliberal agenda.

Marketizing and Privatizing Higher Education

Post-secondary institutions have subsumed neoliberal initiatives in the form of endorsing student financial aid from the federal government in the form of student loans (to fund the rising costs of higher education) and lobbying for laws that allow them to profit from federally funded research (Slaughter and Rhoades 20). It is important to consider that all of this happens through rhetorical means. According to Levidow,

> Neoliberal strategies for higher education have the following features: all constituencies are treated through business relationships; educational efficiency, accountability, and quality are redefined in accountancy terms; courses are recast as instructional commodities; student-teacher relations are mediated by the consumption and production of things, e.g. software products, performance criteria, etc. (2).

Levidow calls this the "marketizing" of higher education, and claims that, "since the 1980s universities have been urged to adopt commercial models of knowledge, skills, curriculum, finance, accounting, and management organization. They must do so in order to

deserve state funding and to protect themselves from competitive threats" (1). Universities seem

to have embraced this market-oriented approach, accepting the notion of a "need to be

responsive to market forces of supply and demand" and treating "academic departments as 'cost

centers and revenue production units'" (Gerber 122). The market-based approach to higher

education adheres to neoliberal ideas of self-interest within the "workings of the laws of supply

and demand, instead of purposeful efforts to determine what was in the public interest, to guide

institutional decision making" (Gerber 140). It is important to note that adopting a corporate

model, and even blurring the lines between public and private sectors within higher education,

does not mean that administrators intend that universities become completely independent

corporations—state and federal support is still a necessary component of higher education fiscal

policy. Despite this need for governmental funding, which has been in decline, universities

"favor boundaries between public and private sectors that allow them to participate in a wide

variety of market activities that enable them to generate external revenues" (Slaughter and

Rhoades 27). Slaughter and Rhoades claim that the university actively participates in its own

marketization, instead of being an unwitting victim to outside forces that commercialize and

exploit them (305). In the new neoliberal economy, universities join corporations to embrace the

concept of knowledge as a good to be produced (often electronically) and marketed (Slaughter

and Rhoades 17). This is where the blurring of lines between public and private sectors occurs.

The public good model of the past separated public and private sectors, and land grant

universities were based on public good concepts, but in an ironic twist, these same land grant

institutions paved the way for the industrial-oriented sectors that later became closely tied to

corporate interests (Slaughter and Rhoades 28). The neoliberal imperative "despises the public

sector because it interferes with the expansion of empire….whatever is left of the public must be

privatized to allow for the maximization of the reproduction of dematerialized finance capital"
(Braun 48). Because of the overarching goals of neoliberalism to expand and conquer, the notion
of blurring public and private sectors of the economy makes sense. Budget constraints in state
government have led to decreasing state support in many areas and have increased the
expectation for students, parents, foundations and other funding sources to fund a greater portion
of higher education; in this sense, higher education is being privatized and public institutions are
being more responsive to the economic market by seeing students as customers and revenue
sources (Altbach 30, Geiger 62, Gerber 120). Gerber sums up the situation quite well:

> The growing deference to market forces, the increasing deprofessionalization of large
> sectors of faculty, and mounting pressures from governing boards and legislatures for
> colleges and universities to use externally imposed metrics for assessing performance
> have resulted in an overall weakening of the practices of shared governance that had
> developed over the previous century. These trends threaten to undermine the academic
> quality of American higher education, as financial considerations increasingly override
> educational concerns. As higher education comes to be treated more as a private than as a
> public good, these developments also restrict the ability of colleges and universities to
> fulfill a broadly conceived democratic mission (121).

Most of the challenges now facing higher education are occurring because of the
demands of neoliberalism (Schrecker, Chaput, Bok, Aronowitz). And there are calls to closely
consider the rhetoric used to promote or "obfuscate the unethical practices of a continuously
evolving capitalist society" (Chaput "Democracy, Capitalism" 331) or to go a step further and
create an "assault on the dominance of free-market rhetoric" (Aune 4) in order to institute change
and build consensus. According to Chaput, "To change the world, one must first historically

outline and theorize its present conditions, including its socioeconomic limitations and contradictions" and she advocates doing that through a historical materialist lens that considers rhetorical boundaries (254). She calls for scholars to explore the "rhetorical processes" of professionals within the university so that we can call into question "the reproductive activities that lie at the heart of taken-for-granted notions of the university as well as its relationship to the state and its citizenry" (Chaput 227). Chaput calls for scholars to develop counterknowledges by historicizing the political economy of such capitalist practices ("Democracy and Capitalism" 331). This project aims to further rhetorical theory in the area of political economy by taking up Chaput's call for an analysis and historicizing of rhetorical practice in higher education.

Chapter Three.

Contextualizing the Presidential Controversy Papers 1980-1983

This chapter will introduce the rationale, method, methodology, and site of research while providing a contextualization of the case examined in this project. I argue that we are in the midst of a particular historical period within the political/economic sphere that began roughly in the late 1970s. This neoliberal economic period is advanced rhetorically. Examining some of the tropes used within the context of an institutional site during a *kairotic* time in the inculcation of this period will offer insights regarding the rhetoric that reflects the changed epistemic worldview concerning economics/politics/culture that appears to have permeated our current ways of being and knowing. The rhetoric of a neoliberal worldview has influenced the structures and hierarchy of various institutions and organizations in the US. This study aims to elucidate some ways that neoliberal rhetoric manifests within higher education.

The research method for this case study will be a trope-based analysis using Kenneth Burke's four master tropes, which are grounded in Giambattista Vico's basic tropes (K. Miller).

The master tropes are:

5. Metaphor- which Burke also calls "perspective"

6. Metonymy- Burke also calls this "reduction"

7. Synecdoche- Burke also calls this "representation"

8. Irony- Burke says this could also be "dialectic" (*Grammar* 503).

According to Burke, these tropes have a "role in the discovery and description of 'the truth'" (*Grammar* 503). Of course, there are various understandings of what constitutes truth, so coming to know "truth" is becoming aware of one version, through observing one particular group's viewpoint. Tropes provide a way to understand particular versions of truth with the implicit ideologies that are embedded within the tropes being studied. This type of rhetorical analysis (tropic) will unveil latent ideologies. This type of analysis relates to ideological analysis in that it goes beneath the surface of the artifact. According to Sonja Foss, an ideological analysis aims "to discover the beliefs, values, and assumptions it suggests" (209). It is important to note that ideology is socially constructed through rhetorical means. Teun van Dijk stresses that those studying ideology should differentiate between cognitive social constructs of ideology and the social practices of ideology (9). Van Dijk cautions that ideologies should not be assumed to be modes of domination because they are not always negative or constrained by dominant forces. Often the view of ideology is tied directly to hegemony; van Dijk offers a general concept of ideology that allows for resistant views that are counter-hegemonic, as well as views that are arbitrary or unconsidered. This general view of ideology provided by van Dijk allows for a more well-considered framework from which to conduct analyses. Ideology, often viewed as a pattern of beliefs that reflect an evaluative judgment of the world, provides a way of framing the world so that a group can regulate social practices as well as represent reality via concepts or representations (Foss 209, van Dijk 9). These concepts or categories of thought are often represented through myths, systems of communication, according Barthes, that are embraced in lived experience within a culture and given meaning that is based on context and the culture (217-218).

In Barthes' mythology, both semiology and ideology are components; mythology considers "ideas-in-form" (221). Semiology postulates the relation between the signifier, the sign, and the signified (Barthes 221). Meaning is found in their relationship and the context. The tropes of neoliberalism that will be examined provide a way to understand the ways that groups present ideas in their particular forms within a particular context. Structuralism provides a way to understand meaning as well, and it is related. Structuralism informs ideological analysis and allows scholars to decode systems such as myths within ideological systems (Foss 211). In structuralism the qualities of structures are accented through the creation of inventories (or grammars) of various elements composing the systems. The tropes of neoliberalism provide a way of investigating the cultural systems within higher education settings. Based on Saussure's theories, structuralism assumes that if cultural systems are treated as languages and analyzed, then underlying meaning can be revealed (Pace 283). It is important to note the human factor in the creation of these myth systems. Barthes purports that cultural events and artifacts surround humans and are systems of signs that convey meaning through shared understanding and conceptualization of concepts. The shared ideology is just that: shared. It is socially constructed. The systems are socially constructed as well, through human social practices that are recursive and self-reproducing. Anthony Giddens refers to this process in his theory of structuration by stating, "In and through their activities agents reproduce the conditions that make these activities possible" (2).

Some of the myths of neoliberalism will be examined by the tropical analysis presented in this study; these "ideas-in-form" will be explored as they manifest in the form of tropes used within the communication of various stakeholders in a setting of higher education during a period in the evolution of late capitalism. These stakeholders, through their activities and

responses, perpetuate the ideology of neoliberalism by rhetorical means. In higher education, both administration and faculty hold versions of truth that reveal their underlying belief systems. I argue that those belief systems are influenced heavily by the economic and political context.

One goal of this research is to uncover latent ideologies, providing a guiding idea or underlying belief system that undergirds various viewpoints in a particular context (*Rhetoric of Motives* 187). This project investigates a particular situation contextualized within a university setting at a particular point in time that provides insight into language used to promote the neoliberal processes of corporatization resulting in changes in governance. The university setting will be contextualized within the larger historical/cultural/political/and economic influences. The tropical analysis that will follow in Chapter Four will consider all views that appear within the context of the case study examined. It will reveal the ways that those in power, as well as those presumed to have no power, struggle and attempt to enact change through rhetoric that relies upon tropes of neoliberalism.

Outline of Four Master Tropes

Rhetorical tropes are omnipresent in our everyday language, often conveying meaning in ways that users of language do not fully investigate. It should be noted that the master tropes detailed below are overlapping; they "shade into" each other, according to Burke (*Grammar* 503).

Metaphor

Although they are not rhetoricians, Lakoff and Johnson provide interesting insights regarding the social and political implications of metaphor that correspond to Burke's interpretation. According to Lakoff and Johnson, "The most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in a culture" (22). A Burkean understanding of metaphor involves understanding it as a "device for seeing

something in terms of something else" (*Grammar* 503). As Burke has famously remarked, "It brings out the thisness of a that, or the thatness of a this" (*Grammar* 503). The relatedness of one characteristic compared to another offers perspective (Burke, *Grammar*, 503). The perspectives chosen and offered in a particular situation offer insights into the fundamental cultural values at that particular point in time. Burke claims that offering various perspectives in the form of metaphor helps one to come to a closer understanding of truth (*Grammar* 503). However, to understand the nature of "truth" being revealed rhetorically, one must consider what is being hidden or neglected as a result of the metaphor. The systemic nature of metaphor "that allows us to comprehend one aspect of a concept in terms of another (e.g. comprehending an aspect of arguing in terms of battle) will necessarily hide other aspects of the concept" (Lakoff and Johnson 10). In common language employed within a particular culture, the obfuscating aspects of metaphor are difficult to grasp or acknowledge as a result of the assumption that metaphor clarifies meaning and contributes toward an understanding of truth, as Burke suggests. Lakoff and Johnson argue that this very conventional way of understanding metaphor and truth becomes a deterrent to realizing that representations might be flawed, or that the metaphorical language might not reflect reality (11). Metaphorical language, put forth as truth and a way of understanding the truth, can hide other truths, or even obscure meaning in ways that benefit some ideologies while marginalizing others. The heavily relied upon metaphors of neoliberal capitalism may certainly reveal ideologies prevalent in that worldview, but the perspectives offered by metaphors used according to the neoliberal worldview only contribute to an understanding of truth that those in power want the culture to hold or act upon.

Lakoff and Johnson outline three types of metaphor: orientational, concerned with spatial organization; ontological, concerned with organizing physical experience related to activities,

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emotions, and ideas; and structural, which are overarching metaphors built on orientational and ontological metaphors, allowing us to structure one concept in terms of another metaphor. Orientational, also called spatialization, metaphors organize entire systems of concepts in relation to each other and are based on physical locations within the environment (Lakoff and Johnson 14). These spatialization metaphors are characterized by an "external systematicity" which provides "coherence among them" (Lakoff and Johnson 18). Coherence within a system of concepts is determined within the culture using such metaphors and because of this, the epistemic nature of such activities is apparent. Ontological metaphor, on the other hand, has more emphasis on understanding the experiences of the body and its interactions with physical objects (Lakoff and Johnson 25). This becomes the way through which events, emotions, and actions are understood. The use of ontological metaphor is necessary for rational understanding of lived experience (Lakoff and Johnson 25). The use of various types of metaphor is oftentimes confused with the trope of metonymy, and as Burke acknowledges, there is certainly overlap.

Metonymy

Use of metonymy is meant to "convey some incorporeal or intangible state in terms of the corporeal or tangible. E.g., to speak of 'the heart' rather than 'the emotions'" (Burke, *Grammar*, 506). Burke likens this to reduction in that this type of analogy often takes a complex, abstract term and describes it in relation to a lower level, less complex term (*Grammar* 506). D'Angelo makes the connection that metonymy involves cause and effect relationships (101). Burke considers reduction as a representation, and in this way the definition overlaps metaphor in that perceptions of representation contribute to meaning (*Grammar* 507). Lakoff and Johnson refer to metonymy as "using one entity to refer to another that is related to it" (35). They describe metonymy and metaphor as different processes (Lakoff and Johnson 36). They agree

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with Burke in the idea of metonymy as representation, describing both in terms of their actions: with metaphor creating understanding of concepts, and metonymy representing concepts and contributing to understanding (36). Again, here the similarities and intersection of the two rhetorical tropes can be seen, but the difference is that metonymy allows the audience to focus on a particular aspect of the referent (Lakoff and Johnson 37). Because one particular aspect is the part focused, the danger with metonymy is that other aspects of the referent are omitted, overlooked, or forgotten. In this way, "metonymic concepts structure our thoughts, attitudes, and actions. [They are] grounded in our experience" (Lakoff and Johnson 39). Much in the way the way that Goffman's framing works, metonymy guides our focus to the area intended for meaning, structuring thought and action at the same time. This thought and action are culturally influenced based on conceptual schemas that are symbolic in nature and grounded in lived experience (Eubanks).

Synecdoche

The representative aspect of metonymy overlaps with synecdoche, according to Burke, who describes synecdoche as use of "part for the whole, whole for the part, container for the contained, sign for the thing signified" (*Grammar* 507). He considers metonymy as a "special application of synecdoche" with synecdoche stressing a "relationship or connectedness between two sides of an equation, a connectedness that, like a road, extends in either direction, from quantity to quality or from quality to quantity; but reduction [metonymy] follows along this road in only one direction, from quality to quantity" (Burke, *Grammar,*509). Burke states that 'any act of representation automatically implies a syndecdochic relationship" (*Grammar* 508). An example of synecdoche can be seen in the statement, "give me a hand." The hand (part) stands for the entire body and its usefulness to help or assist. In this sense it is a reduction as well, in

that the hand is only part of the physical body. Lanham explains the reduction of synecdoche as a scale-change, in that "experience is described in terms of other experience, but at a different level of magnification" (148). He states that this scaling is indicative of the postmodern aesthetics and aesthetics of digital texts (Lanham 148).

Irony

The last trope, irony, is explained by Lanham as "implying a meaning as opposite to the literal meaning" (92). His stance is that every rhetorical move has underlying irony—hidden meaning and underlying posturing in regards to the rhetor's ethos. This hearkens to Wayne Booth's view of irony that emphasizes the communicator's sense of self and subjectivity, with the rhetor valuing one meaning over another (33). Lanham's definition of irony coincides with Burke's definition of irony being related to dialectic, in that both refer to the interaction of perspective, an engagement between rhetor and audience that relies on shared understanding of meaning, and a guidance on the part of one to interpret the meaning as contrary to what is being said. Lanham calls this a dependence on "an allegorical habit of mind in his reader, a habit that will juxtapose surface and real meanings" (93). Burke complicates the concept of irony a bit more by explaining that "Irony arises when one tries, by the interaction of terms upon one another, to produce a development which uses all the terms" (*Grammar* 512). The perspective of perspectives that he describes requires multiple voices and understandings in dialectic with each other (Burke, *Grammar,* 512). These multiple voices become necessary for true irony in that there is a "fundamental kinship with the enemy, as one needs him, is indebted to him, is not merely outside him as an observer but contains him within, being consubstantial with him" (Burke, *Grammar*, 514). He further explains irony as a pattern of inevitability, in that there is an

inevitable reversal at the heart of irony (517). D'Angelo sees irony as a complex heuristic that deals with "incongruities, ambiguities, and seeming contradictions" (101).

The four master tropes—metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony—will be used as a heuristic in the following trope-based analysis that investigates neoliberal rhetoric in higher education.

Data Collection and Artifacts

In this project, I look primarily at a set of artifacts from Auburn University's institutional archives. This archival research encompasses a collection called "The Presidential Controversy Papers." The aim with this archival research follows Barbara L'Eplattenier's view of archival work. She states:

Our understanding of the past is similar to the collages of photos that make up a larger photo. Using small images, we are able to create a much larger image. We see small pictures---individuals or groups or specific moments in time—and then, stepping back and looking at many small pictures, we can see a larger picture—trends, movements, ideologies (L'Eplattenier 75).

Through the examination of this collection, I plan to reveal some of the ways that neoliberal rhetoric manifests in higher education contexts. I chose to analyze a collection at a public, land-grant research university because of the history of the land grant concept and that concept's part in furthering neoliberal ideology, as discussed in Chapter Two. It is my hope that this ideological rhetorical criticism will provide an example of one instance of neoliberal rhetoric in action, so that scholars of rhetorical theory interested in political economy might have insight into the larger picture of the trends, movement, and ideological structure of neoliberalism.

The specific data collection selected, "The Presidential Controversy Papers 1980-1983"

provides a glimpse into a particular point in time in the administration of Auburn University. My

initial assessment of this collection occurred on November 3, 2014, when I introduced myself to

the archivists, got permission to view and use the collection, and made initial notes leading to my

determination that the artifacts would be useful as a case for my research. The collection was

composed of four series as of April 8, 2015, the initial date of data collection for this project; an

additional series had been added when I returned for further collection of data on July 29, 2015,

which brought the total to five series of documents. As of May 16, 2016, the collection has

undergone additional changes. It has been renamed "The Presidential Controversy Collection,

1981-1985." As of May 16, 2016, it still has five series of documents located in 4 boxes within

the archives. The archival record locator/finding aid for this collection was malfunctioning as of

May 16, 2016.

The Presidential Controversy Collection, 1981-1985 is located at Auburn University's

Special Collections and Archives within the Ralph Brown Draughon Library in Auburn,

Alabama. The collection is comprised of approximately 1.5 cubic feet of correspondence,

newspaper clippings, formal and informal reports, memoranda, resolutions, and published

statements concerning the administrative controversy at Auburn University during that time. The

controversy spanned from the appointment of Hanly Funderburk as President of the university in

April of 1980 to his resignation in February of 1983 and several months thereafter. The

collection archives numerous documents related to the increasing tension between Funderburk,

the Board of Trustees, Faculty Senate, alumni, students, and various other interested groups.

According to the Department of Special Collections and Archives, this group of documents is an

artificial collection assembled by various individuals.

The contents of the collection, when analyzed by series, fall into the following categories: Series 1: News clippings and propaganda from state and local newspapers; Series 2: Records related to the controversy over disclosure of public records (Board of Trustee records and correspondence; David Parker's information); Series 3: Documents related to various groups' responses to the presidential controversy, including student and faculty groups; Series 4: Presidential response documents; Series 5: Post Funderburk documents. This study focuses primarily on Series 3 and Series 4 by looking at Faculty Senate response, student and alumni response, and Presidential response to the controversy. Some records from Series 2 are included as well, as they relate to the Board of Trustees response to Faculty Senate.

The Context: Economic Constraints in Alabama

Coinciding with the third wave of neoliberalism mentioned in Chapter Two, the state of Alabama was impacted rather severely by the nationwide economic recession that began in the late 1970s and struck full force in the early 1980s. During that time (the early 1980s), the state was marked by surge in unemployment, having one of the highest unemployment rates in the nation due to drastic cuts in the heavy metals manufacturing sector. According to the Alabama Department of Economic and Community affairs, during the period of 1980-1982 the state lost 39,000 manufacturing jobs ("Alabama's Economy"). This was a period of transition for industry in Alabama, as employment opportunities shifted to service, technical, and communication sectors ("Alabama's Economy"). The agricultural industry in the state faced transition during that time as well, with row crop farming decreasing significantly and more specialty-oriented farming in areas like poultry, catfish, and horticulture, taking its place ("Alabama's Agriculture" par.1).

Unemployment, changes in industry, declining construction starts, and high interest rates created an economic context that did not bode well for state funding for higher education. The condition of the economy created an air of uncertainty for institutions of higher education throughout the country. Alabama was no exception. Despite the Alabama Commission on Higher Education's calls for increased state funding for universities during the early 1980s, those resources were not forthcoming (Wheat). Instead, proration of allocations from the Special Education Trust Fund (SETF) during that time caused universities in the State of Alabama to receive substantially less money than the Legislature had promised (Wheat par. 5).

The unpredictability of allocation resources from the state created a sense of uncertainty within administration of institutions of higher education in Alabama, and caused a shift in thinking toward the pursuit of private sector donations and funding. Jack Wheat, journalist for the *Tuscaloosa News* in 1981, stated it this way, "With state funding increasingly inadequate and uncertain, private funding and contracts and grants are becoming more and more important to higher education" (par.1). In that 1981 article, Wheat quoted Dr. John Blackburn, Vice-President for Educational Development at the University of Alabama who said, "At a complex university like this, we need to have multiple sources of income. We haven't historically done that" (par. 6). Blackburn detailed an historic plan of action for that university to solicit outside revenue—a sesquicentennial capital fund-raising campaign with the goal of raising $38.4 million dollars from 1981-1984 (the majority of which was expected to come from individuals, corporations, and foundations) (Wheat). Blackburn described the fundraising initiative in an interesting way, calling the initial phase a "subliminal approach" in which they would target specific donors and corporations and ask them for funding before an initial, wide-spread public campaign (Wheat). Obviously this focus on fundraising was not limited to the University of

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Alabama. Auburn University undertook similar initiatives during that time, one of which was a

$62 million capital campaign that began in the fiscal year 1979-1980 (Boosinger).

Another example of this type of post-secondary funding pursuit in the early 1980s in

Alabama is seen in the focus on corporate and government contracts and grants to fund research

and programs within the university. When discussing the economic situation facing universities

in 1981, Dr. Robert Wells, Assistant Vice President for Research at the University of Alabama

(at that time) stated, "I think you'll see a continued emphasis on cooperative university-industry

research, with universities doing the research and industries transferring the results" (Wheat par.

19). Wells explained the importance of that type of funding for higher education and said that he

believed incoming President Reagan's economic policies, which emphasized productivity, would

create more funding grants that focused on technology and technology transfer and would

provide more economic opportunities for the state of Alabama (Wheat par. 18).

Within this economic and political context in the early 1980s, Auburn University faced

challenges in addition to state funding shortfalls—executive-level administrative problems. The

early 1980s presented a challenge for the state's land grant university in a specific instance that

involved the appointment of a new university president.

Hanly Funderburk's Controversial Presidency

On April 7, 1980, Dr. Hanly Funderburk became the twelfth president of Auburn

University, after Harry Philpott's resignation (Boosinger). Funderburk's presidency was marked

by controversy from the onset. When the search began for Philpott's replacement, Funderburk

was not a forerunner. The Presidential search committee, organized by the Auburn University

Board of Trustees, had three contenders in mind: Rex Rainer, Governor Fob James' state

highway director; Steven Samples, a vice president at the University of Nebraska; and Hanly

Funderburk, Chancellor at Auburn University at Montgomery. Governor Fob James

recommended Rainer for the presidency, but he failed to receive the nomination from the board.

Steven Samples was the choice of most of the faculty and several board members and the board

vote was split between Funderburk and Samples. After the split vote, Governor James

dismantled the search committee and convinced the board to reconsider, which resulted in a

revote of 10-1 and Hanly Funderburk's win (Boosinger). The questionable nature of

Funderburk's appointment undermined the faculty senates' confidence in the Auburn University

Board of Trustees. Some trustees (like Robert Harris) felt the situation was marked by political

pressure (Cox 286).

This controversial appointment, when paired with the state funding proration for universities

in Alabama, created a difficult atmosphere for the new Auburn University president. Funderburk

was charged by the board from the beginning to improve the university's financial situation by

adjusting budgets and initiating a capital fundraising campaign (Boosinger par 4). Funderburk's

unpopularity soared among faculty when he called a meeting at the beginning of his presidency

and told them of the critical budget problems that would require "belt tightening" measures

within the university (Boosinger par 4). He implemented centralized fiscal operations within the

university and initiated Auburn's first financial management system (Boosinger par 4). This

change in financial operations did not win support of many deans and vice presidents who

disliked the loss of control over their reduced departmental budgets; they also felt that academic

decisions regarding programs were not considered (Boosinger).

In addition to changing the financial structure, the new president reorganized central

administration with the creation of a vice president for agriculture, home economics, and

veterinary medicine (Cox 287). Also, according to archivist Wayne Cox, Funderburk "combined

the offices of vice president for research and dean of the graduate school" (287). The attempted shift in governance toward a corporatized model that favored authority at the executive level did not set well with faculty. A faculty senate committee report that investigated Funderburk said that he was "dogmatic, intimidating, manipulative, and not highly principled" ("Report Criticizes"). Funderburk exacerbated the problem by claiming in a report to administration that Auburn faculty acted irresponsibly at times and demonstrated a high degree of absenteeism (Cox 287). Lack of communication with various departments regarding weighted state appropriations created more confusion and distrust (Boosinger par 5), and when paired with a memo from the president to faculty forbidding employees to contact board of trustee members without Funderburk's approval, the result was calamitous. The university faculty senate accused Funderburk of "lacking vision" and called for a performance evaluation of him in June, 1981 (Boosinger par 6). Despite an evaluation that rated him "poor" in effective leadership and a vote (455-416) of no confidence from faculty in February of 1982, the board of trustees voted for a resolution of confidence in his performance as president (Boosinger). Obviously there was contention and difference of opinion regarding Funderburk's management style. Funderburk was praised at that time by the Alumni Association for balancing the university's budget in the face of state proration (largely through one of the largest increases in tuition by a public university at that time) (Boosinger).

The contention between Funderburk and faculty administrators escalated when Executive Vice President, Grady Cox (former engineering dean) and Taylor Littleton, Vice President for Academic Affairs, resigned. Cox and Littleton attempted to represent the faculty and their concerns about the direction of Auburn's leadership. When their attempts were ignored or met with threats of retribution, they both resigned stating that they could no longer work with

Funderburk (Cox). Funderburk subsequently placed blame on their job performance and lack of willingness to participate in administrative meetings ("AU Head Responds"). A subsequent senate report that investigated the controversial resignations of Littleton and Cox determined that there were "disturbing questions of character and philosophy at the highest level" that were counter to a necessary environment of mutual trust, a sense of community, and shared vision (Cox 292).

Despite several faculty votes of no confidence, the Auburn University Board of Trustees (led by Alabama Governor Fob James) stood firm in their support of Funderburk's presidency. In fact, in the face of increased insistence by the University Senate for the President Funderburk to resign, the Governor and board members attempted to create a new chancellor position that would have promoted Funderburk to power over both Auburn University Montgomery and Auburn University (Boosinger). The political and economic were obviously at work at Auburn to orchestrate who belonged in positions of power. At that point faculty threatened to take the issue to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) and the Alabama Ethics Commission (Boosinger). When the controversy reached that critical stage of contention, alumni and student groups began to petition that the chancellor plan be dropped and that Funderburk step down, in light of disruptions to students' classes, failed program leadership, and negative portrayal in national media outlets like *Time* and *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (Boosinger). A critical juncture appeared when George Wallace took office as Governor for the state of Alabama in early 1983. Shortly thereafter, board of trustee member and state finance director, Henry Steagall reluctantly admitted that there appeared to be only one remaining solution to the crises and recommended that Funderburk resign (Cox 301). This recommendation seemed to be the final call. Funderburk's resignation was accepted on February 26, 1983, at the

same time the proposed chancellor system was dropped. The Auburn board of trustees then appointed Wilford S. Bailey as interim president and worked to create a committee of board members advised by students, faculty, and alumni who would search for the new university president (Boosinger). It is interesting to note that the new governor, George Wallace, vowed to recuse himself from the new Auburn University presidential search.

The following chapter, Chapter Four, will provide an examination of the ways that neoliberal rhetoric was used by various stakeholders in the presidential controversy situation. Language and tactics used by board trustee members, faculty, Funderburk, and students will be examined in light of the tropes of neoliberalism that were relied upon to persuade and convince others to take action and respond in certain ways.

Chapter Four

Neoliberal Rhetoric at the Site of a Controversy

In this chapter I provide a rhetorical analysis of artifacts found in Auburn University's Special Collections and Archives that relate to the Funderburk presidential controversy. As I explain in Chapter Two, neoliberalism advances particular values and philosophies through rhetorical action that is oftentimes contradictory. This particular tropical rhetorical analysis will explore ways that some of the valued ideas of neoliberalism manifest rhetorically within a particular site, Auburn University during the period of 1980-1983.

This qualitative method of case study invokes John W. Creswell's definition of qualitative work. According to Creswell, "Qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, the possible use of a theoretical lens, and the study of research problems inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (37). As I have previously mentioned, it is my intention through this study to provide a more detailed understanding of the ways that neoliberal rhetoric is reflected in higher education. Robert Stake calls this type of study a "single, instrumental case study" wherein the researcher focuses on an issue (in this case neoliberalism's influence on governance in higher education) and then selects one bounded case to illustrate the issue, (the Funderburk Presidential Controversy at Auburn University) (Creswell 74).

Analysis of the data gathered—documents, memos, reports, news clippings— reveals patterns and themes that are present in the rhetorical action that occurred. Data is coded according to themes that arise in the tropes used by various stakeholders (Creswell 148).

The values coded in this case study are:

1. Terms related to individuality and collectivity

2. Tropes indicating measures of efficiency and/or profitability

3. Terms associated with business management and power

These values correlate with earlier discussions of neoliberalism in higher education (in Chapter Two) and will provide a way to deconstruct terms used in various responses of stakeholders in the university presidential controversy. The goal of the following tropical rhetorical analysis, then, is to examine tropes used in the discourse within a particular context in order to provide examples of the rhetoric of neoliberalism as it was enacted at the time of the controversy. As I stated in Chapter Three, Burke's Master Tropes of metaphor, synecdoche, metonymy, and irony provide a lens through which to undertake this analysis. The archived documents are separated for analysis based on particular stakeholders in the controversy: President Funderburk, faculty (including committees and the Faculty Senate), alumni and students, and the Board of Trustees.

Faculty Responses

Faculty responses during the controversial time were rather pointed. In various documents faculty seemed intent to expose what they considered poor managerial practices within the presidency. Letters, faculty senate reports, and memos by various faculty members used language that demonstrated the displeasure of faculty with actions taken by Funderburk, especially in regards to governance issues.

For example, in a report titled, "Draft of the Report of the Committee to the Whole Faculty Senate" dated October 11, 1982, in which a sub-committee of the faculty senate investigated the actions of the Funderburk administration, the following language was used when

describing the purpose of the investigation: "The Committee of the Whole [will] be charged, based on its review, to develop and adopt a proposal or a set of conclusions that will either put to rest concerns related to this issue or institute a course of action that will lead to an acceptable termination of the current state of unrest within this University" (1). The language in this statement clearly explained the goals of the committee while relying upon a metaphor of putting to rest concerns. The controversy at that point had embroiled all of Auburn University's campus, and certainly it was something that faculty wanted to address and resolve in an efficient manner. Putting something to rest as a figure of speech in this instance hints at either putting something to bed or insinuating that something that should die. In this case, they probably were making reference to something that should be euthanized, that needed to be bound and buried, because of the use of "termination" in the latter part of the sentence. Faculty were certainly ready at that point to resolve and bury the concerns of all constituents regarding the Funderburk controversy.

Such calls for efficient solving of problems are common within organizational contexts, and institutions of higher education are not immune to such language use. It is interesting to note that the metaphor used in the sentence relates to a course of action that is hoped for: "termination of the current state of unrest within this university" ("Draft of the Report 1). The ironic use of this word "termination" is made apparent towards the end of the report, when the Senate Committee of the Whole ultimately recommends the request of President Funderburk's resignation by the Board of Trustees. The reader could surmise that the "resignation" related directly to "termination" mentioned earlier, with the President being represented by a "state of unrest" that he purportedly created. Faculty did not want to terminate the unrest; they wanted to terminate President Funderburk.

In addition, references to efficiency in effective communication of sensitive information relevant to the controversy were used. For example, the Draft of the Report to the Committee of the Whole states that "the review process could be undertaken most effectively and productively by a transfer of the review from the University Senate to the Board of Trustees" (2). Terminology related to efficiency and profitability is often tied to the subject of management and power. For example, in the Draft of the Report to the Committee of the Whole when the topic of the selection process of Funderburk was addressed, the committee states,

> The selection process through which he was chosen has been generally perceived as a
> series of events which did little credit to the Board of Trustees. The exclusion of faculty
> and student representation from certain key phases of the process and the unseemliness of
> the final Board deliberations left the new President at a disadvantage from the start (7).

The term "credit" when referring to the Board of Trustees does not mean the financial use of the term; while the university was concerned with financial matters at the time of the Funderburk controversy, and Funderburk, himself, used language related to financial exigencies, this Senate report seemed more concerned with issues of governance. In this case, the word "credit" appears to refer to cultural capital on behalf of relations with faculty, a metonymic term for an increased level of respect among colleagues. This relates directly to the latter part of the above-mentioned statement in which the Senate committee criticized the selection process because of the exclusion of faculty and student input. Governance issues ran deep within the heart of the controversy, often cloaked in phrases that attended purely to financial concerns. By utilizing such phrases focused on financial efficiency, neoliberal rhetoric can espouse popular notions of capitalism, the theories of neoliberalism that seem logical, while simultaneously furthering the contradictory practice of neoliberalism. In this sense, neoliberal rhetoric uses the tropes of efficiency to attend

to issues that are more fully neoliberal, such as the reallocation of power and resources to serve those at the highest levels.

The report certainly addressed Funderburk's focus on managing financial resources, a central concern in neoliberal theory. The report states that shortly after Funderburk assumed office in April of 1980 he "instituted a freeze on all hiring and other major expenditures, describing the University's fiscal situation as more serious than at many institutions where financial exigency had been declared. This freeze continued largely unbroken until the end of 1980" ("Draft of the Report to the Committee" 8). The metaphorical language used here is commonly used when referring to halting the use of funds; however, the interesting connotation with the term also represents more than fiscal concerns—the coldness of the "freeze" translated to coldness in relationship between faculty and the President, as evidenced in the context of the greater message of the report. The connotations were of a rigid, unyielding policy that remained "unbroken" for a large portion of the first year of Funderburk's Presidency. Considering the fact that his presidency began in April of 1980, the duration of the freeze seemed inconsequential; but the relationship damage was significant. The rhetoric employed by faculty was powerful in that it depicted an unyielding and cold leadership, in stark contrast with neoliberal concepts of freedom and efficiency that benefits all. The language was ultimately successful in promoting a course of action that would ultimately remove Funderburk from office.

Other faculty references to financial concerns are represented in a letter dated May 5, 1981 written by Coke Reed, a Professor of Mathematics at the time, on leave at the Institute for Defense Analyses. In this letter, Reed appears to support the majority of Faculty in their criticism of Funderburk. Reed addresses the letter to "Fellow Citizens" and claims that the controversy at

Auburn University was rooted in deep philosophical differences regarding the purpose of higher education. Reed describes the philosophy he opposes this way:

> Parents finance education by paying taxes. In return for this investment, it is the State's responsibility to increase the earning power of their children. This task should be carried out in an efficient, business-like fashion. The University is viewed as a state-owned factory that converts raw material, high school graduates, into finished product, college graduates. The faculty are factory workers who are supervised by the administrators. In order to guarantee efficiency, a system of accounting must be employed. To calculate profits, one subtracts from the earning power of the finished product the earning power of the raw material and the cost of operating the factory. The philosophy has an attractive, common sense ring that would appeal to a successful businessman eager to see his children gain financial success (Reed 1).

This portion of the letter alludes to the belief that market efficiency should dictate the public system of higher education; even while governed by the state, this system as described by Reed has corporatized elements, such as accounting systems, efficiency imperatives, and management hierarchy in governance. Certainly, as functioning organizations, institutions of higher education must attend to accounting and management. Reed, however, challenges corporatization with claims about the complexity of a broader philosophy:

> A second, broader philosophy realizes that while we all must pay taxes, we do not all have children who will attend one of the State's Universities. Those who espouse this broad philosophy feel that it is the duty of the University to better the life of every member of society. They view students, faculty, and administrators as partners in this

exciting task. It is a happy consequence that in the course of these events, the earning

power of the students is greatly enhanced. This philosophy does not claim the existence

of a formula for calculating the total worth of the institution to the citizens. Therefore,

administrative decisions are extremely difficult to make and are to be arrived at only by

careful deliberation by faculty (1).

Reed advances neoliberal tropes of worth and profitability in order to petition for the

importance of one particular philosophical viewpoint. Reed's letter appeared to be in response to

what he saw as a corporatization of the university and loss of faculty power in matters of

governance at that time. With rather harsh language, he criticizes the opposing philosophy. He

appears to be intimating that there is something much larger at risk. In neoliberalism, social,

collective benefit to society is viewed not as a goal, but as a by-product of self-centered, liberal

market approaches. Reed implies that the corporatization of the university, through

neoliberalism, is contributing to an administrative structure lacking shared governance, a

structure that does not value faculty's views about quality education or traditional missions of the

university as a place of intellectual inquiry. Reed uses the language of that neoliberal

philosophy-- "earning power," "investment," "efficiency," and "financial success"—while

juxtaposing the language with metaphors of neoliberalism that were hardly flattering.

Reed, as a faculty member, admonishes the public, arguing for a course of action that

would follow an overarching guiding philosophy upon which administrative policy in higher

education should be based. He does this through various tropical means, relying heavily upon

irony to emphasize a point about the quality of educational productivity. Reed states,

Sir Issac Newton abandoned the management of his mother's sizeable estate to study

mathematics and physics at Cambridge University. By becoming a university professor,

he lowered his earning power. Must Cambridge adhere to simplistic accounting procedures and enter a figure in the loss column under Newton, or should it also take into account the benefit we all have derived from his research in physics and his discovery of the calculus? The irony is that the formula would record a profit under the name of an engineering student who, because he had a poor grasp of a subtle point of calculus, designed an unsafe airplane or nuclear reactor. In short, the simplistic accounting method proposed by the narrow viewpoint is flawed because it does not measure quality (2).

In other words, greater "returns" on an investment in higher education might not be readily available at the beginning. He contrasts the concepts of quality and profitability and utilizes a central tenet of neoliberalism, return on investment, to prove a point that the return should not be merely fiscal, but it should provide collective benefit to all members of society. Reed appears to use the tropes of efficiency and return on investment in an attempt to show the greater possibilities for higher education as a social, collective enterprise, furthered by shared governance. He condemns the Funderburk administration for failing to include faculty in important decisions:

Now, the self-proclaimed efficiency experts are busy at work increasing the productivity of the Auburn factory without seeking the advice of the workers. They cancel subscriptions to scientific journals; limit enrollment of out-of-state students; suggest cancelling the supplementary faculty retirement program; build a deck on the stadium instead of much needed classrooms, offices, and laboratories; increase class size; and replace the associate and full professors who are resigning with less costly instructors and assistant professors (Reed 2-3).

In the above quote, Reed illuminates what appears to be happening at that university at that point in time: lack of shared governance in important decisions that would affect the mission and goals of the university and reallocate resources according to neoliberal practice. Reed ends his letter calling for a brotherhood that would enable intellectual inquiry at the university to flourish.

Ideas related to teams and family are certainly employed in neoliberal practice, the term "teamwork" being synonymous with successful business operations in private industry. But collective input and decision making power at all levels of the corporate hierarchy do not occur in most decisions related to policy or allocation of assets. The tropes of teamwork and family have been used for years to garner support and further agendas of those in power. These tropes contribute to the affect of neoliberalism, the inherent belief that neoliberal theories are part of our heritage, the cord that ties our "team" together. These tropes have become a crucial part of neoliberal action; in order to achieve the goals of neoliberalism, acceptance of the theory is required. If masses disagree and fail to take up those beliefs as part of their ideology, then the economic system fails. Tropes related to family and teams contribute to shared ideology and ultimately create the acquiescence that is needed in order to reconstruct the market in ways that allow for reallocation of capital and power.

In public institutions of higher education, administrative domination in governance was not the case shortly after WWII, as I mentioned earlier. Faculty during that time had greater input into decisions that affected their programs and decisions regarding leadership at the highest levels. The shift in governance power appears to have coincided with the third phase of neoliberalism, which began at approximately the same time as the Funderburk controversy. In the Funderburk controversy, a primary aspect of the conflict concerned the philosophical

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direction of the institution and the fact that faculty (for the most part) felt excluded from important decisions that impacted their programs and the university mission.

Not all members of faculty were critical of the Funderburk administration. In "A Minority Report to the Committee of the Whole of the University Senate, Auburn University" dated October 26, 1982, a minority of the faculty senate led by S. Allen Edgar of the Poultry Science Department shared its concerns about the critical nature of the Final Report investigating Funderburk's presidency. This minority report stated that the materials in the Final Report were "unnecessarily inflammatory" (1). The authors of the minority report claimed that "The discontent, it is suggested, is not due to a compelling set of misdeeds or established facts, but as the FINAL REPORT continually notes, perceptions which are based on a tissue of fact and the muscle of innuendo and clichés. We expect more from an academic community" ("A Minority Report 1). The biological metaphors used in these statements reflect the depth of emotions involved in all sides of the controversy. Words like "inflammatory," "tissue," and "muscle" relate to the physical human body and allude to the body of scholars being represented by the report, a synecdoche for the larger group who comprised the entire community of scholars at Auburn University. Underlying this language is a neoliberal understanding of the concept of teamwork and conciliatory abdication to the leadership of senior administration. For example, in many corporate environments teamwork and collaboration are stressed in order for the organization to accomplish its goals and mission. The notion of "working together" implies an acceptance of the leadership in place with little room for criticism or questioning of practices. The minority faction of faculty relied upon the trope of teamwork in order to argue their case; this practice aligns with neoliberal theory that furthers the concept of collective action only when it suits particular purposes, only when that action is aligned with the decisions of higher-level

management and missions that call for efficiency and profitability while oftentimes producing the opposite. It is interesting to note that terms related to teamwork used in their documents do not acknowledge that a majority of faculty appeared to feel excluded from the process of selecting the president in the first place. Funderburk's selection was hardly a move that incorporated the "team." This is an example of one the ways that neoliberal rhetoric manifests in contradictory action. It is also interesting to note, that oftentimes in neoliberal practice, efficiency is espoused, while the opposite occurs with additional layers of administration being hired by executive-level administration, distancing faculty even more from decision-making positions of power.

Board of Trustees' Response

University boards of trustees or regents are generally considered institutions' executive governing boards, much like corporate boards of directors. Most often, faculty have little representation on these boards within higher education contexts, as was the case at Auburn University during the time of the controversial Funderburk presidency. During that time, the board of trustees generally supported President Funderburk and advocated for maintaining his position of power. The tone of documents written by the Board in response to the controversy remained professional and vague. There were few documents on behalf of the Board of Trustees included in the Presidential Controversy Collection. The ones included in the collection make primary references to management processes and job descriptions. Of the coding themes being investigated, the Board documents make reference to individual and/or collective efforts and to management practices and power.

For example, in response to a faculty vote of no confidence in President Hanly Funderburk on February 11, 1982, R. C. "Red" Bamberg, then Vice Chairman of the Auburn

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University Board of Trustees, wrote a statement demonstrating his disapproval of their action. Bamberg stated, "Their actions do not reflect the many accomplishments that the faculty and administration have achieved by working together. The Auburn University Board of Trustees placed the faith and trust of all the Auburn family in Dr. Funderburk's hands as President" (par 1 and 2). In this statement directed towards faculty leaders, Bamburg relies upon the trope of the "family" when discussing matters of governance and discontent. This commonplace metaphor appears to be used in a way so as to manipulate the audience into abdicating unquestioningly to the board's leadership; certainly it is not an acknowledgement of their need to have their individual voices heard. This appears to be yet another example of neoliberal rhetorical action at work through the use of tropes that have contradictory underlying meanings.

Another example of the reliance upon concepts of collective support of the better economic good of the whole under authoritative leadership is found in the Statement by the Administrator Evaluation Committee of the Auburn University Board of Trustees, dated October 4, 1982 and chaired by Henry B. Steagall, II. This statement was written after the resignation of a couple of revered faculty from their administrative posts: Dr. Taylor Littleton, who resigned as Vice President of Academic Affairs; and Dr. Grady Cox, Executive Vice-President (who had been appointed by Funderburk). The statement, directed at faculty, was written regarding the selection of a successor for the position of Vice President of Academic Affairs. In the document Steagall states,

> The Board recognizes and appreciates the faculty's interest in this matter and encourages
> them to participate in the selection process and to give the person selected their full
> support…We encourage all administrators, faculty, and staff to join the efforts of the

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Board of Trustees and this administration in facing issues with a spirit of harmony,

professionalism and cooperation (par. 2-3).

Of course, allusions to "full support" and the encouragement of "all" faculty to "join the efforts"

with a "spirit of harmony" indicated the Board's desire to orchestrate a cohesive atmosphere at

the Auburn University campus. The terms used in this statement demonstrated the importance of

harmony in the face of controversy, and it seems as though the Board was intentional with the

calls for a supportive, collective atmosphere that would correspond to the prevailing identity of

the University as the Auburn "family." But this metaphor appears to run counter to the idea of a

corporatized university. There must be an accord within the culture of the organization. This falls

in line with the calls for unity from the Auburn Board of Trustees; instead of addressing the

issues at the heart of the controversy, ones that revolved around governance and educational

philosophy, the Board focused on calls for unity and acquiescence to their executive-level

decisions regarding policy and mission at the university. In all of the documents included in the

Presidential Controversy Collection related to the Board of Trustee response (only approximately

ten documents) there was little direct mention of educational philosophy, financial allocations, or

financial management. It appears as though these topics were ones they chose to ignore, despite

their pertinence to the issue at hand. There is meaning inherent in what goes unsaid. By avoiding

the core issues, the Board of Trustees was sending a message. The courses of action regarding

educational mission and allocation of resources appeared to be ones that were not on the table for

discussion. It hints at issues at the heart of the corporatized model of higher education, a model

that is more expensive to run and relies on layers of administration, top-down management, and

a lack of transparency.

Instead of transparency and acknowledging central faculty concerns, the Board utilized calls for efficiency and support in addition to references to the "family." For example, in a document titled "Statement of the Board of Trustees" dated November 5, 1982, the board made the claim that they were "attentive and receptive to the concerns of all parties interested in Auburn University—faculty, alumni, students, and others" (par.1). In the next paragraph of the statement, the Board made the power dynamic quite apparent: "On the other hand, the Board of Trustees believe decisions of basic policy and administration should be made in due course—and this Board will make such decisions in due course in the best interest of Auburn University" ("Statement of Board" par. 2). The reiteration of the phrase "in due course" is a cliche that displays an association with timeliness and action, movement towards a particular path. Expediency in accomplishing particular University missions and purposes was obviously important to the Board of Trustees according to this document. Equally important was full support of the Board's actions from faculty and other stakeholders, as evidenced in this sentence within the Statement, "In the meantime, the Board of Trustees will appreciate, in fact insist, on the cooperation of all parties in carrying out the policy set by this Board…" ("Statement of Board" par. 4). The strong language in this statement demonstrated the Board's claim to power that was both economic and political in light of the economic conditions facing universities in the early 1980s.

Alumni and Student Response

Alumni and student response to the controversy was mixed initially, but ultimately their response demonstrated a neoliberal economic predisposition. At first students supported Funderburk's presidency. An example of this support is found in a resolution from John Reagan

Moore, a student Senator at the time, directed to the Auburn University Student Senate and

Cabinet, dated February 8, 1982. In the memo, Moore stated:

> Whereas, in the twenty months since President Funderburk took office, the administration
>
> has made significant progress in the areas of securing funds, increasing faculty and
>
> student representation on key committees, and working towards strengthening academic
>
> programs; and Whereas, the short term of office has not provided enough time to justify a
>
> vote of no confidence; and Whereas, a change in the presidency would do significant
>
> harm to the Auburn Generations Fund, and thus the future of Auburn University; BE IT
>
> THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Student Senate of Auburn University supports the
>
> presidency of Hanly Funderburk…" (par. 2-4).

This document is marked with allusions to efficiency and profitability as well as management

and power. Phrases such as "short term," "enough time," and "significant progress" indicate a

belief on the part of the Student Senate that duration of position and effective action within an

allotted amount of time were important. Efficiency and progress are certainly themes of

neoliberalism that represent prized values within the private sector, and the themes themselves

are good ones, but in neoliberalism efficiency and progress mean something slightly different.

The efficiency that is often hailed in neoliberalism often manifests as inefficiency for the benefit

of certain people. Progress can be defined in various ways; progress in neoliberalism relates to

the advancement of capital into new markets, and the neoliberal university is faced with

challenges of entering into the global market and competing in that market. Certainly then, these

concepts become rather loaded within a context of the neoliberal university. Corporations

succeed based on progress, efficiency, and profitability; universities succeed based on their

rankings in US News, student employment numbers, and programs that solicit the largest donor bases.

The terms used in this particular document appear to demonstrate an adherence to neoliberal philosophy as well. When Moore mentioned securing funds, finances become evident as a primary concern on behalf of this stakeholder group. By stating that a "change in the presidency would do significant harm to the Auburn Generations Fund, and thus the future of Auburn," Moore seemed to equate the success of a fundraising initiative with the very future of Auburn as a viable institution. This close linking of the Auburn Generations Fund to the future of the university could be seen as a metonymic device that relied on the idea that fundraising for financial resources is crucial in order to have a viable future. This is not surprising considering the decrease in state appropriations that happened during the early 1980s. In the current economic environment, universities are faced with less state support than before, causing such fundraising imperatives to carry heightened rhetorical importance.

Likewise, several alumni groups demonstrated their support of the Funderburk Presidency by sending Western Union Mailgrams to the Auburn University Board of Trustees. The Presidential Controversy Collection holds at least four supportive mailgrams within the archive, in addition to one statement from the Office of the Executive Director of the Auburn Alumni Association dated February 10, 1982. The phrases used in these documents emphasize management efficiency, fundraising prowess, and timeliness. For example, in the Western Union Mailgram dated November 1, 1982, Frank Chalfont, then President of the Nashville Auburn Alumni Club, states,

> Living in an area where budget curtailment is a reality, we sympathize fully with the
> difficult position Auburn University finds itself in. The Board of Directors of the

Nashville Alumni Club fully supports Dr. Hanly Funderburk and thinks he is doing an excellent job under difficult circumstances. Hopefully all students, faculty and alumni can get behind the president and get on to the job of making Auburn #1. Attention then can be given fully to the Generation Fund (par 1-2).

The language in the above statement makes obvious references to the financial state of the university, with direct mention of "budget curtailment" and more obscure mentions of "difficult circumstances." This is another allusion to the economic and political situation regarding decreased state funding for higher education that was prevalent at that time. The statement also mentions the "excellent job" that Funderburk was doing as President of the university in light of such circumstances. In the statement, Chalfont relies upon language that called for collective endorsement of the president by using the words "all" and "get behind." This hearkens to the rhetorical action of the Board of Trustees in their statements to faculty, admonishing all to be in support of leadership decisions so that efficient and cost-effective operations could resume. From the language and action called for in such documents, it appears as though the underlying ideology privileges expediency and profitability at the expense of democratic governance. This falls in line with neoliberal philosophy. It is obvious that Chalfont utilizes the same tropes of efficiency, support, and attention to financial resources; this, whether intentional or not, when directed to the audience of the Board of Trustees, works to find common ground and reveals the shared, latent ideologies that undergirded administrative action. The last sentence of Chalfont's mailgram is also revealing: he calls for full attention to be given to the fundraising campaign that seemed to be of central concern to both students and alumni at that time. This indicates an acquiescence to the change that was occurring in higher education at the time—the gradual shift

toward privatization and reliance upon corporate and private donors, in addition to student tuition, to fund the ever-increasing operational costs of post-secondary institutions.

Another significant document in the collection, the Auburn Alumni Association Official Statement Adopted by the Board of Directors for release February 10, 1982 relies upon tropes related to management power and control of resources. In this statement, the official Alumni Association defends President Funderburk by claiming: "He should not be held responsible for decisions made outside his area of control. It is not his responsibility to appropriate State funds for the University. This is ultimately the responsibility of the people of Alabama through elected officials" (par 1). Reiteration of the term "responsibility" make it apparent that the authors considered a large portion of the financial burden of the university outside of the scope of the president's office and power. Instead, the alumni association appeared to shift blame to others: Alabama's voters and their elected officials who allowed the state funding for higher education to be cut in the first place. Metonymy is apparent in the preceding statement, with "State funds" clearly intended to mean the state of Alabama's appropriations for higher education, and "the University", while metonymous for the specific institution of Auburn University is also clearly synecdochic for all public institutions of higher education within the State of Alabama. Rhetorical devices such as these are used frequently, with an understanding inherent in their use that there is a shared point of reference. All people and public institutions were affected by state policy that cut funding for higher education, and this reflected a greater economic context that was affecting all public institutions in response to the economic woes of the late 1970s. It created a prime opportunity for those in power to divest public resources from public institutions of higher education, thereby creating opportunity for corporate "investment."

The economic and political situation at the time of the controversy certainly presented rhetorical challenges for the Board of Trustees and President Funderburk, and because of these challenges a solution seemed quite evident in the language found in most of the President Controversy Collection. The solution in finding alternative financial resources was mentioned explicitly in the Auburn Alumni Association Official Statement mentioned above. In this statement, praise was given to Funderburk for "balancing the budget" and the authors claimed that "He also persuaded the Board of Trustees to approve what could be the largest percentage tuition increase by a public university in modern times. This was a significant achievement" ("Auburn Alumni Association-Official" par. 2-3). It seems strange that a policy that increased tuition would be deemed a major accomplishment, and yet, in the political economy of the third wave of neoliberalism, it was a rational response that the Alumni Association clearly pronounced within their Statement. Neoliberal changes in the very structure of the university were happening and these changes were underlying the controversy.

The Alumni Association also made the following declaration about Funderburk in their statement: "He has played a significant roll {sic} in the Auburn Generations Fund. The response and confidence in Auburn during this fund drive has been exceptional. Over 24 million dollars has already been committed toward the campaign goal of 61.7 million dollars" (par 4). The Alumni Association proceeded to state later in the document that "We doubt there is a more productive University in American than Auburn, based on available resources" ("Auburn Alumni Association-Official" par. 7). The authors of these two statements relied upon neoliberal tropes of efficiency and profitability and used them to persuade their audiences about the effectiveness of President Funderburk; however, the definitions of productivity and efficiency are implicitly neoliberal in their undergirding ideology. Productivity is related directly to fundraising and

raising student tuition. Efficiency is related to streamlining decision making so that faculty were not included as much in the process of governance. The statements also provide insight into the shifting focus of the university in response to the political and economic exigency brought forth by state appropriation shortfalls.

In addition to alumni response, several student groups made statements regarding the presidential controversy. One student group, the Auburn Students for a Greater Auburn University (ASGAU), distributed a news release dated February 14, 1983 from Barry Mask, student chairman of the group, expressing their concern over the negative press surrounding the controversy. In the news release, Mask states, "Many Auburn students have expressed concern over the much publicized dispute between faculty and the administration governing Auburn University. ASGAU feels the entire controversy has lasted much too long, and it is now time for everyone involved to declare a one-year moratorium" ("News Release" par. 1). This statement directly addresses the issue as it affected students. Disruptions in governance and controversy over administrative power apparently had a disconcerting effect on the student population when added to the concerning political and economic situation within the state of Alabama. The above mentioned statement makes reference to the themes of efficiency and timeliness in arguing for a "moratorium" on the controversial action. This student group gives reasons for their formation, one of which was mentioned in the following statement:

> An old saying goes, 'the squeaky wheel gets the grease.' We find evidence of disgruntled faculty members using that philosophy in encouraging students to join their cause of being vocal against the present administration governing Auburn University. In our opinion, it is absolutely wrong for faculty to use class time and students in this endeavor. Since this has been going on, we felt a genuine need to counter the move (Mask 1).

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Mask seems unaware of the irony of his rhetorical action here. In an attempt to enact the change that he and his group wanted, he was, in fact, contributing to the controversial banter by releasing such information and alluding to missed instructional time to the news media. There appears to be an implied accusation in the statement as well, that any type of dissent against the governing body is wrong and counterproductive. That idea becomes clearer when Mask claimed that the group planned to promote the objective that:

> The at Auburn Board of Trustees is by law the governing body of Auburn University. While we recognize the right to disagree, we must realize there has to be a final decision made by those who are ultimately responsible. In order for this institution to function effectively and efficiently, Board policy must be followed (2).

In this statement Mask demonstrated an awareness of governance hierarchies and a desire to adhere to the decisions made by those in authority. Unquestioning authority of the neoliberal executive is the recurring trope that is revealed once more in these documents. Mask's allusion to efficient operations is a central tenet of neoliberal philosophy and appears to be used frequently in neoliberal rhetorical action, when in fact, the operations are often anything but efficient. This trope was repeatedly used in the Presidential Controversy documents with an apparent attempt to persuade stakeholders that executive-level managerial governance (instead of shared governance) was the best way to make decisions regarding university resources and mission.

Despite ASGAU's supportive action, there appeared to be a large segment of the student population who opposed Funderburk. The Coalition of Auburn University Students for Education (CAUSE) held a campus-wide student forum on February 10th, 1983 in order to educate students regarding the faculty-administration controversy. A flyer found in the Presidential Controversy Collection confirms that CAUSE invited both Hanly Fuderburk and

Gordon Bond (one of the most vocal faculty members opposing Funderburk) to the forum. CAUSE also released a statement:

> CAUSE joins the GTAs in the Mathematics and History Departments in the wearing of black arm bands to express sorrow over the resignations of three Auburn University department heads, to protest those conditions existing at Auburn University which have resulted in the aforementioned resignations, to express mourning for Auburn University at a time when its prestige and integrity are deteriorating rapidly, to urge students supportive of heretofore mentioned declarations to join the arm band movement (CAUSE).

In an act of rhetorical resistance, the students wore black arm bands (one of which was included in the archived Presidential Controversy Collection) in symbolic mourning of the loss of the former way of conducting operations. This could also be seen as a meta-level mourning for the loss of the university system in general as it was known during a time of low costs and better student access, although the students during that particular protest probably were not thinking of that. Obviously associated with mourning of the death of humans, black arm bands in this case had particular rhetorical import because they promoted the metaphor to bring awareness of the human factor at the heart of the controversy. CAUSE also utilized the arm bands in conjunction with their student petition calling for Funderburk to resign.

The Presidential Controversy Collection also contains a statement by CAUSE dated February 15, 1983 that questions Funderburk's presidency. This statement quoted a couple of specific board members regarding their position on higher education:

> What position do Funderburk's supporters have on higher education?

'I don't care what Funderburk does as long as he balances the budget.' Charles Smith, Board of Trustees Member.

'Higher Education is a_____ _____ [7] waste of taxpayers' money.' R. C. Bamberg, Board of Trustees Member ("Who Supports Funderburk" par. 2).

These quotations by members of the Board of Trustees were used in the CAUSE statement as a damning testimony of the executive-level administration's philosophy regarding public education. Profit and finances were the central concern, as evidenced by references to balancing budgets and utilization of taxpayers' money, and this seems to imply a lack of concern for the quality or value of education that students were receiving, a seemingly neoliberal outlook. As stated earlier, it is interesting to note that none of the Trustees official documents in the Presidential Controversy Collection mentioned finances as a concern. Instead, collective support of their decision is the paramount call to action in those documents. However, these quotations used by CAUSE display a different insight into the some of the Board's views.

Ultimately, perhaps influenced by CAUSE, Auburn's Student Senate followed the Faculty Senate who voted no-confidence in President Funderburk for the second time in November of 1982. The student senate requested the resignation of Hanly Funderburk after a vote of 33-1 in a secret ballet on February 14, 1983 (Summerford par.1). One student senator, Chuck Ellison, claims that the disharmony was "affecting the quality of education students are getting" and that the issue would not be resolved until Funderburk stepped down (Summerford par. 10). Another student senator, Pat McLoughlin states, "How many more resignations are necessary before we act? We're watching Auburn crumble around us" (Summerford par. 8). The language in these statements demonstrates values that were prized by the student population:

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[7] Blanks were used in the original document; it is assumed that they were used to replace profane language.

quality educational leadership and a united organization. The powerful metaphor of something

crumbling implied much more than the physical structure of the university; it implied the

destructive nature of toxic relationships and the resulting diminishing quality and reputation of

the university. These alumni and student responses were covered by various news media outlets

as the controversy gained national attention with an article in *Time Magazine.* In a neoliberal

environment where reputation, competitiveness, and performance on global scale are of utmost

importance to a university (and often necessary to receive the coveted foundation and private

donor funding deemed necessary for survival), such media coverage becomes more than merely

embarrassing, it creates a public relations crisis that could affect the university's reputation,

enrollment, donations, and tuition revenues.

President Funderburk's Response

As the figure featured at the center of the very public controversy, Funderburk

maintained claim to his position for several years, despite repeated calls for his resignation. In

response to negative allegations made by Dr. Grady Cox and Dr. Taylor Littleton, Funderburk

wrote an extensive report titled, "Report to the Board of Trustees in Response to Allegations

Made by Dr. J. Grady Cox and Dr. Taylor Littleton on August 23, 1982." One of the allegations

by Dr. Littleton claimed that progress had stopped at Auburn University. Funderburk states in

response,

> Progress is being made despite the difficult financial situation and other problems that
>
> have accumulated over the years…In order to make significant progress, we must find
>
> dedicated persons who are positive and who are willing to work together to build better
>
> quality academic programs so that our young people will have a better future ("Report to
>
> Board" 2).

In this section of his statement, Funderburk underscored the neoliberal idea of progress as a paramount concern. The definition of progress was never clearly explained within this context, and the assumption can be made that different stakeholders held varying definitions of the concept. Yet, a general, neoliberal notion of the concept does seem to be central to organizations, particularly institutions of higher education, and that notion relates to ideas of furthering the university's reach, increasing the revenue base, increasing student population and retention numbers, and becoming more competitive in a global environment. The underlying implication with this phrase about "progress" is that the university should grow and become financially stable. His admonition that there was a necessary component to progress, "dedicated persons who are positive," seemed to imply that the deterrent to progress was faculty who were not "positive" ("Report to Board 2). This language use provides an example of a way that Funderburk used synecdoche in his descriptions of faculty. Those who were "positive" were faculty who did not question or counter Funderburk's policies or managerial style.

The second part of the statement describes these people as being willing to "work together to build" better programs. In this statement there are two interesting concepts, that of community and social cohesion, similarly referenced repeatedly in the Board of Trustees documents discussed in the prior section of this chapter, and the concept of building something. A willingness to "work together" brings to mind the concept of team work, a notion that is central to organizational theory and certainly understandable in this context. It aligns with earlier mentions of the concept of team work. Aligned with the Board of Trustees' solution, Funderburk's solution to the crises was for everyone to become a united front, in support of his administration. He left no room for dissenting voices or questions. The tone in the document was defensive, as the entire document centered on addressing specific allegations by Cox and

Littleton. The mention of building is obviously metonymy for creating something of worth within their academic departments, programs and policies that would be of value to the institution. This is an interesting trope used throughout the Presidential Controversy Collection, with references made at certain points by critics of Funderburk who claimed the university was crumbling around them, another obvious allusion to building and tearing down/decay; building could be seen as neoliberal action, the creating of something material that substantiates the claims of progress being made.

Funderburk was compelled to mention allocation of resources and management of lower levels of administration within his documents, unlike the Board of Trustees in their response documents because they were more removed in their interactions with faculty. When responding to the claim that he had an administrative style that was domineering, Funderburk shifted responsibility somewhat by explaining the management hierarchy:

> The Board of Trustees instructed me to get the financial affairs of Auburn University in proper order. To help accomplish this charge, the Budget Committee of the Board of Trustees approved certain guidelines for the operation of the Auburn University System. In turn, I delegated to each person who reports to me as much authority as these guidelines will allow, and this is a considerable amount ("Report to Board" 3).

The mentions of "delegation," "guidelines," and "proper order" allude to order and management that are understood as efficient and effective; however, it is obvious from Faculty Senate documents that this type of order and management did not include sufficient faculty input in order to be successful. Issues of governance and power were certainly a central part of the controversy at Auburn University during that time and were central to problems within the

corporatized university being influenced by neoliberal ideology. This is evidenced in

Funderburk's further elaborations in defense of his management style:

> I imagine what Dr. Littleton has reference to is the fact that Auburn now has budgetary
>
> authority guidelines which prevent him from obligating funds without Board of Trustees
>
> Budget Committee approval as he did in 1979-1980 and prior years…All we ever asked
>
> him to do was follow the approved policies, procedures, and guidelines for Auburn
>
> University. Others follow these guidelines and operate their units with very few problems
>
> ("Report to the Board" 3).

The tone in these statement implies impatience with Littleton's viewpoint; in essence, the

president and the board wanted order and unquestioning obedience to restrictive policies and

guidelines that they had instated. They were the neoliberal executives, the fathers ordering

disobedient children to fall in line and do as they were told.

In a memorandum directed to the Board of Trustees dated September 9, 1982,

Funderburk explained why he had created the above mentioned response to allegations report.

He stated, "I had hoped this matter could be handled differently, but Drs. Cox and Littleton

chose the accusatory route. You now have the facts, and it is time to put this matter to rest by

announcing to the public whatever position you deem appropriate" ("Memo to Board" par. 2).

The key language in this statement revolved around movement and action. For example, the term

"route" was a metaphor for the choices that Cox and Littleton made regarding their dissention

with governance at that time. The rhetorical action by Cox and Littleton in voicing that dissent

became synonymous with a course of action that Funderburk found accusatory and offensive.

The other term referring to action in the response document was the mention of "putting

the matter to rest." This phrase was used repeatedly by various stakeholders within the

controversy, and it is an interesting allusion to death and endings. Certainly, the term was metonymous with the idea of resolving the differences and conflicts that were, at that point, an embarrassing phenomenon at Auburn University. Still it is an interesting trope upon which to rely. The connotation is that something is dead and should be buried; perhaps the stench of the controversy was akin to a rotting corpse that demanded to be put to rest. Funderburk appeared to approach the controversy with that mentality, and in light of the public relations crisis that he faced, the approach was warranted.

President Funderburk also had to address financial concerns brought about by the State of Alabama's economic situation. In a general letter to faculty and staff dated October 4, 1982, Funderburk addressed concerns regarding prorated allocations of the Special Education Trust Fund (SETF). When explaining the impact on Auburn University, Funderburk says,

> Many alternatives have been discussed in detail, but the key to the solution of this problem is an increase in the revenue from SETF. We hope that our economy will recover soon and that Auburn University can make more progress in its search for excellence. Full implementation of the 82-83 budget will be a step in that direction. I enlist your cooperation as we continue to explore approaches to accomplish that goal ("Dear Faculty" par 3-4).

In this statement, Funderburk mentions the "key" component of the strategy to increase revenue, which was to rely on increases in the SETF. In actuality, there was a plan in place that Funderburk fails to mention in that document: the pursuit of private donor contributions via the Auburn Generations Fund, as well as significantly increasing tuition rates for students. This corresponded with what was happening in many institutions of higher education at the start of the third phase of neoliberalism. The term "key to the solution" is metonymic usage to indicate

the importance of the concept being explained; his focus was on increasing funding from the State of Alabama, and he saw that as an integral part of the solution to budget woes, which was interesting in light of his other fundraising activities.

Funderburk directly mentioned governance in another document directed to faculty. In the "President's Report to the General Faculty" dated October 12, 1982, Funderburk stated that "The past year has been challenging for all of us. The faculty has raised and debated a number of important issues relating to governance of this institution, many of which have merit" (par. 3). The implication within this statement is that some of the faculty issues had no merit at all. By stating "many of which," his stance became clear. Following that statement within the report, Funderburk outlined a response to several topics of concern, the first of which was communication. Funderburk stated "It was clear that there was a problem with communication within the University. I have effected a number of procedures to remedy that situation—including a series of informal breakfast meetings with small groups of faculty. I hope I need not remind you that my door is always open to any concerned Auburn person" ("President's Report" par. 4). This metonymy of an open door signifies open and available communication on the part of management and is often used to convey an attitude towards communication between various levels within the hierarchy of organizational structure. This overused, or commonplace trope seems disingenuous in light of the many accusations from faculty that he would not listen. It is interesting to note that Funderburk used language that distanced himself from the mentioned communication problems by utilizing past tense and no personal pronouns. There "was a problem" and it was "within the University." At no point in the report did Funderburk take responsibility for his own shortfalls in communication. Lack of individual accountability is an ironic aspect of neoliberalism, which in theory praises the efforts and actions of the individual. In

neoliberal practice, however, the actions of executive-level individuals within the economic/political system often go unchecked. There is very little accountability for individual corporations and executives at the top levels of the capitalistic hierarchy. In light of this, instead of taking responsibility for shortfalls, he relied upon a rather intimidating tone in his last sentence when describing his open door. The statement "I hope I need not remind you" seems rather like he was patronizing or admonishing a disobedient child instead of a group of concerned professionals who believed they had valid concerns and desired a voice in the decisions being made. Funderburk, instead, appeared to assume the role of the corporate father in the hierarchical family.

The controversy escalated with faculty votes of no confidence and the insistence by faculty that President Funderburk resign. In response to these requests, Funderburk maintained his claim to his position by relying upon the power of the organizational structure at the university. In the "Statement by Auburn University President Hanly Funderburk" dated October 26, 1982, Funderburk states:

> As President of Auburn University, I serve at the pleasure of the Board of Trustees, and I intend to continue fulfilling the responsibility of this position with the Board's support. The Board has authorized me to proceed in assembling an administrative staff which works cooperatively in the interest of Auburn University (par. 3).

In this text, Funderburk used the metonym of the "Board" to refer to the group of people who comprised the Board of Trustees at Auburn University and relied upon his position by utilizing the management hierarchy. In this statement it was clear that he intended to resist all faculty calls for his resignation unless the Board of Trustees specifically asked him to step down. Also of note in this passage is Funderburk's reference to hiring staff that were willing to "work cooperatively"

in the interest of "Auburn University." The implied "best" interest of Auburn University was a neoliberal interest: one that concerned itself with university rankings, donations, tuition increases, and adding layers of administration.

In addition to Board of Trustee support, Funderburk had the support of various external organizations. The Alabama Farm Bureau awarded him the Federation's Service to Agriculture Award in 1982 (Davis 4). When accepting the award in a speech dated December 6,1982, Funderburk describes his management style and philosophy:

> Since becoming President of Auburn University, I have approached the job with the attitude which I think the modern farmer and agribusinessman goes about his business, bringing to my task the same practical outlook, the same careful weighing of assets and liabilities and the very same refusal to be governed by either false hope or fearful gloom ("Speech" 3).

His language, focused on the practical, business-like management style of "weighing of assets and liabilities," indicated an outlook that was guided by corporate principles. His metonymic use of the term "weighing" symbolizes a calculated approach to management that was focused primarily on the financial standing of the organization. This falls in line with capitalistic understandings of financial operations of companies, and it makes sense to think in those terms. But what was happening here was more than merely good fiscal management of a university. There was a restructuring taking place and a change in governance that corresponded to that restructuring. This is the insidious nature of neoliberalism. It appears to be reasonable and rational, all while changing public structures in the pursuit of capital.

Funderburk contrasts his explanation of his practical business style with the emotional implications of "false hope" and "fearful gloom" that were apparently indicative of his

opponents, who had a different philosophy regarding the mission and governance of the institution. At the end of his presidency Funderburk insisted on maintaining his position. He made a plea to unite as a community in a general statement to faculty, students, and alumni. In "A Statement by President Hanly Funderburk" dated January 10, 1983, Funderburk states:

> Auburn University has passed through some very difficult months, a period of time which has focused attention upon our every word and action. It has been a time for serious introspection by this institution, its administration and its faculty. However, the time has come for all members of the Auburn family—faculty, administrators, staff, students, alumni, and friends—to join together in our common cause: The improvement of Auburn University in its service to the people of Alabama and the nation (1).

The repeated use of the word "time" indicated the urgency of that point in the controversy. It was a critical moment in the public relations crisis in which Funderburk had one last opportunity to persuade the institution's stakeholders to keep him in office. He admonished these stakeholders to "join together in our common cause," a reiteration of the Board of Trustees' approach in admonishing faculty to come together in support of administration. The problem in this situation was that there was no common cause. Although Funderburk claimed that the cause was "improvement of Auburn University in its service to the people of Alabama," it was quite apparent from the beginning of his presidency that many faculty (and students and alumni at a later date) did not hold the same definition of "improvement" and therefore, there was a disagreement as to what the mission and goals should actually be. It was a fundamental disagreement in regards to the direction that future institutional "progress" would take, either a neoliberal one or one that held to traditions of shared governance, and that disagreement could

not be glossed over with vague terms and admonitions to "come together" under a leadership that was composed of administrators who failed to include faculty in important decision making.

In the same document, Funderburk described what he considered to be the ideal university: "At its best, a university is a vital balance of contesting and competing concerns. Auburn University is at a juncture where this vital balance is both necessary and desirable" ("A Statement" 1). The metaphoric language used in this statement conveyed the idea that in the best case scenario, an institution of higher education is an essential, lively, equilibrium between various viewpoints. Most everyone would agree with this definition. The insinuation with that statement was that there should be fairness, impartiality, and a condition in which equality exists in decision making. Funderburk used this metaphor to invoke a state that did not exist and attempted to persuade his audience that egalitarianism and democracy would occur, if only faculty would come together in support of his administration. It was an ironic statement in light of the central issue of the controversy, and yet, the irony seemed lost on Hanly Funderburk.

The statement by Funderburk dated January 10, 1983 repeatedly made reference to the "vital balance" metaphor, with Funderburk giving his audience insight as to how that balance might be enacted. He states, "To achieve this vital balance requires administrative stewards. Those who see the future of Auburn University as challenging will find that their role in establishing this vital balance is immense" ("A Statement" 1). The reference to administrative stewards appears to be an attempt to persuade faculty to let matters concerning management of the university rest with those who were in higher-level administrative positions and that those positions had an "immense" role to play in the future direction of the university. In conjunction with the "vital balance" metaphor, Funderburk utilized various terms that suggested he was cultivating a garden of sorts, using words like "growth," "cultivation," "flourish," and

"growing." The implicit metaphor of the university as a garden that would be cultivated by higher-level administration also brings to mind what would be produced by such a garden. This metaphor aligns very interestingly with the neoliberal viewpoint of institutions of higher education as producers of information and knowledge (with the consequent managing, packaging, and selling of that knowledge).

When contrasting the metaphors Funderburk used with the student and alumni metaphors related to humans and the human body, we see a pointed difference in the ideological underpinnings related to the purpose and focus of higher education within these documents. In the student/alumni documents the humanistic metaphors related to desire for respect, rights, for parts of the "body" to work together, which indicates a humanistic approach to understanding the purpose and value of higher education. On the other hand, President Funderburk's language implied an understanding of the purpose of higher education that was not humanistic, but instead, grounded in both liberal (purely free-market oriented) and neoliberal ideology. This ideology considers the university as a place to be managed with efficiency and expediency (without input of faculty); a place where the products of knowledge can be created, harvested, and disseminated; a place where students will be prepared to serve with practical skills; and a place that is globally competitive.

Neoliberal rhetoric used throughout the presidential controversy in the early 1980's at Auburn University was a way that all stakeholders negotiated the change that they wanted to see enacted at the time. Relying on tropes related to efficiency, team work, production, progress, managerial capability, and investment returns, various stakeholders were able to persuade and convince their audiences. In some documents, the authors seemed unaware of the irony of their statements; other times, they seemed to explicitly utilize neoliberal tropes. Inevitably the

language revealed philosophical differences regarding governance and mission at this particular institution of higher education.

Chapter Five

Neoliberalism and Writing Program Administration

While a rhetoric of neoliberalism is reflected in the governance of central administration within post-secondary education, it has particular implications for writing program administrators, those "managers" who often find themselves in spaces that fall between faculty and career administration. As Jeanne Gunner has stated, writing program administrators and writing programs themselves are involved in ideological activities, whether acknowledged or not ("Ideology, Theory, and the Genre" 7). Those ideological activities are implicitly neoliberal in response to the changing political and economic landscape of higher education.

In this chapter I argue, extending Donna Strickland's concept of the managerial unconscious, that there is a neoliberal unconscious in writing programs. This neoliberal unconscious manifests in rhetorical action that structures hierarchies, dictates governance, and allocates resources according to neoliberal practice. However, neoliberal practice does not have to dictate the terms of writing programs, as Steinburg, Horner, Strickland, Trimbur, Chaput, Scott, Welch, and others have claimed. As mentioned in previous chapters of this project, neoliberal rhetoric has the capacity to divide and separate. Neoliberal tropes are inherently ironic in that they rely on claims for efficiency and collective "team work" when the terms mean something else and accomplish contradicting aims; this is destructive to writing programs. Such language does not promote collaboration and cohesive attempts to better institutions and improve the greater good. Instead, relying on neoliberal tropes merely reinforces status quo notions of governance and allocation of labor. Neoliberal rhetoric creates and maintains the status quo, the

hierarchies, divisions and conflicts over resources. If we acknowledge, as Gunner has, that writing programs are ideological, then we are admitting that there are larger structures influencing and dictating the actions of those programs. One step towards unveiling the ways that the structures maintain their power is by examining the language used that creates and reinforces the structures, the rhetorics of neoliberal domination.

Writing Programs in the Corporatized University

Writing faculty are being required to do more "managerial" work, but that work can come at the expense of scholarship and administrative power concerning curriculum and programs. As Bousquet, Scott, and Richard Miller have claimed, writing program administrators are being required to do more (teach more, manage more, etc.) with fewer resources and diminished authority. While Bousquet, Scott, Horner, Strickland, and others consider this a problem, Miller in his 1998 book, *As If Learning Mattered,* embraces this changing, often heated, context in higher education, advocating for an understanding of the administrative work that rhetoric and composition faculty are asked to do and calling for training new rhetoric and composition doctoral students in that work (5). Miller's fatalistic view asserts that lamenting corporatization will have little effect on the changing material conditions of the university; instead, writing program administrators and faculty in rhetoric and composition should consider joining the bureaucracy and working within its constraints in order to affect change (*As If* 9). Extending his logic further, Miller extols the virtues of bureaucracy by claiming that bureaucracies don't impede change, but that they make change possible (*As If* 9). Miller's work was met with outrage in writing program communities at the time of his book's release. Much has changed since 1998, and Miller appears to have refined his thinking about the corporatization of higher education.

In his 2011 blog post, "Militarization not Corporatization," Miller challenges the concept of corporatization, and instead claims that universities are akin to military branches, that militarization is occurring instead of corporatization. As he states in this more recent piece, students are expected to follow orders, pay their time, and then collect their due rewards, analogous to servicemen following orders and serving without question. He claims that this type of institutional environment "places a premium on authority over understanding, hierarchy over cooperation, rules over reason" (Miller "Militarization" par 6). The language of neoliberalism that stresses efficiency, pragmatism, and team work reinforces unquestioning action of this nature. Because of this unquestioning action, the critical nature of academic inquiry seems to be losing ground. Miller states that knowledge can be attained from various means and that what students and administrators need to be attuned to is resourcefulness, working within the constraints of such an environment ("Militarization" par. 10). He claims, "One rises through the academy by learning how to work creatively within constraints" and states that the challenge for those invested in higher education is to "cultivate a commitment to the public good, to improving the quality of life in the here and now" (Miller "Militarization" par.12). He ends his post stating that the cultivation is "possible, even after all that has gone before has been looted, razed, and incinerated. Worlds end. And worlds begin. Time to start building anew" (Miller "Militarization" par.13). This fatalistic view of the change taking place in higher education hints at shock doctrine views regarding capitalist seizing of catastrophic events in order to enact desired change. Of course, Naomi Klein refers to this in her critique of capitalism, with neoliberalism at the heart of the opportunistic action. Here, though, Miller hints at something that could be a counteraction to neoliberalism's ever-expanding reach: using "shock doctrine" theory for different ends: allowing the destruction of higher education as we know it, in order to seize

opportunity for the change that we would like to see enacted, the building of something new in higher education. This tactic relates to Welch's and Scott's answer to austerity measures in higher education.

In their most recent book, *Composition in the Age of Austerity,* Nancy Welch and Tony Scott claim that the "death of composition and its reanimation in servitude to the market is not inevitable" and that there are many in the fields of rhetoric and composition who want to unite in a democratic fashion and voice their concerns in order to "reclaim and write education's next chapter" (16). Despite that desire to unite, there are obstacles to overcome within institutions being molded by neoliberal action. Critique of neoliberal administrative practices is certainly warranted within writing programs, but, as Kelly Kinney argues, critique alone does not result in the action needed to make the desired change happen. In order to resist corporatized university administration that insists on efficiency at the expense of programs and missions in higher education that benefit all, Kinney maintains that writing program administrators must negotiate what they want within institutional constraints that are modeled after corporate management (40). This working within the boundaries of the neoliberal structures seems reminiscent of Richard Miller's call to train new professionals entering the field to work within such constraints.

However, these constraints threaten to dissolve the field of composition as it is currently known. Scott argues that this is occurring because of neoliberal influence and the field's response to such influence through the taking up of "entrepreneuralism" ("Animated" 207). He claims that the rhetoric used by WPAs is to blame for the impending demise. According to Scott, "Entrepreneurial rhetoric has become such a common means of framing challenges, goals, and new initiatives that the ideological assumptions from which it derives can be all but invisible"

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("Animated" 205). Hidden neoliberal ideology undergirds the entrepreneurial rhetoric of which Scott writes. His argument is that composition's taking up of entrepreneurial philosophy and language calls the field's identity into question (Scott, "Animated" 207). He explains the threat eloquently: "Neoliberalism's reordering of social relations and production and a diffused sense of common purpose is potentially leading to the fragmentation and dissolution of composition as a professional culture and field of scholarly praxis" (Scott, "Animated" 208). So, the problem with working within and according to neoliberal constraints is that those very structures work to undermine and deconstruct the field as we know it. As explained in Chapter Two, neoliberal rhetoric divides and threatens; it separates the social from the economic, and in this way, we can see it accomplishing such action, not just within higher education at large, but within writing programs embedded in the larger structures of the university. Richard Miller would perhaps claim that that the destruction of composition programs is inevitable and okay. Kinney's position appears to be that of acquiescence to neoliberal constraints as well, with the idea that they are not necessarily destructive or divisive, but that within such constraints WPAs can advocate for better working conditions for non-tenure-track faculty.

Using such constraints and taking up the language involved in neoliberal rhetoric contributes to the pervasiveness of neoliberal ideology within writing programs. Sometimes such language is used as a rote response to higher level administration, in efforts to become more efficient and argue for the solvency and validity of our programs. There are dangers in using this rhetorical approach, however, dangers that WPAs, caught up in the marketization of higher education, will lose sight of composition's aims and goals, its outward-looking approach to civic engagement, public writing, and social justice. Taking up the managerial roles within writing programs often requires one to navigate within the hierarchies created and perpetuated by

neoliberalism. The language of rhetorical action in such environments is neoliberal in nature, and it threatens to create the soulless, entrepreneurial animation of which Scott warns ("Animated" 218).

Governance and the WPA

Linda Adler-Kassner, in *The Activist WPA,* claims that writing programs need shared strategies for dealing with administration and the larger publics of concern. She states that most WPAs desire strategic action, but there has been little implementation of that action (6-7). Assessment and labor issues are at the core of what is often debated within WPA circles, and Adler-Kassner states that in order to address the challenges being faced by WPAs and the programs they run, we need a balance between ideals and strategies. She appears to follow the same philosophy as Kinney and Miller in that she claims that writing program administration's power and influence are derived from higher-level administration (135). Adler-Kassner's solution is similar as well: WPAs must work within the institutional constraints imposed upon them and negotiate with executive administration through rhetorical maneuvering. Her solution is a pragmatic one: have "relational conversations" with higher administration to learn about the interests and concerns of WPA's potential audiences and link WPA interests with theirs as much as possible, while simultaneously connecting interests with concerns that the audiences might not have articulated (Adler-Kassner 137). Her strategy includes constructing messages that are "locally focused" because that is where WPAs have the most power (141). This locally focused effort becomes a grass-roots approach, from local level to national. The approach seems logical and achievable within the constraints of institutional politics; however, Tony Scott criticizes her for failing to acknowledge larger structures influencing those institutions of higher education. He claims that WPAs must attend to the political economy that is threatening universities and

writing programs within them and influencing the rhetorical action that WPAs take (Scott, "Animated" 213). Adler-Kassner states that WPAs must present their arguments with a consistent frame (142) but she fails to consider how the rhetorics of neoliberalism (one of which is Scott's rhetoric of austerity) influence the approach to that framing.

An aspect of Adler-Kassner's solution for WPAs who want to advocate for better resources for their programs is pragmatic: to communicate a different story about writing in higher education. In addition to creating those stories, they must be disseminated strategically. In essence, it appears as though she has constructed a marketing strategy for writing programs. Adler-Kassner suggests broadcasting the new stories by creating "events that are intended to change stories about writing" (153) and then working with university communications and media directors to publicize those stories (155). Her belief is that those stories shape the work that WPAs and writing instructors do, and by changing the stories strategically, WPAs can have greater influence (*163). Building alliances, organizing action within the academic community, and re-writing stories about writing programs that emphasize student success are all encouraging ideas; however, Adler-Kassner seems to be "buying into" neoliberal rhetorical action and brushing aside the very real, material conditions that affect WPAs and their ability to do the kinds of things she is suggesting.

Material struggles of WPAs have been addressed by other scholars (Bousquet, Scott, Gunner, etc). David Schwalm, a longtime central administrator and WPA, mentions some of the material struggles of the WPA in "The Writing Program (Administrator) in Context: Where am I, and Can I Still Behave Like a Faculty Member?" In this essay, he argues that WPAs are in a unique position, often untenured and asked to engage in administrative work at the expense of faculty identity and professional progress. WPAs who find themselves in such positions are in a

precarious place; they must carefully negotiate and attend to the concerns of their administrative superiors who hold all of the power in decision making. Schwalm's suggestion to WPAs facing such challenges is that WPAs should embrace the administrative function of their work and participate fully by reading literature that relates to central administration, staying abreast of upper administrative concerns, and being fully informed (Schwalm). This alignment with Richard Miller's calls to embrace the administrative roles that are assigned to WPAs and work within them, to be good institutional citizens, does little to address or counter the very real political and economic constraints that directly affect writing programs.

Neoliberal Unconscious in Writing Programs: The Professional/Managerial[8] Function of WPAs

The failure to address the overarching political and economic constraints affecting writing programs appears to be a common problem within much writing program scholarship. In effect, there is neoliberal unconscious within writing programs. Implicit in this neoliberal unconscious is an acceptance of the limited resources and marketization of higher education. Perhaps this acceptance has happened because of the proliferation of management responsibilities within writing programs. Donna Strickland, in *The Managerial Unconscious in the History of Composition Studies,* claims that the managerial work in composition was solidified through the creation of professional organizations for writing program administrators and the managerial overtones of the social and political turn of writing studies in the 1990s, which became the impetus for composition program growth and the stratified workplaces that it creates (101). Strickland argues:

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[8] This is an allusion to Barbara and John Ehrenreich's Professional/Managerial class, which will be explained later in the chapter

Despite composition studies' theoretical articulations with various forms of leftist

thought, the appeal to democracy and the classroom practices that tend to be favored may

function instead as articulations of managerial commonplaces, unexamined ideologies

and practices that do not always forward democratic goals…the appeal to democracy in

composition studies has emerged alongside similar appeals to quality and teamwork in

corporate management (100).

According to Strickland, an interesting thing has occurred in composition/writing

programs: managerial work has been separated from intellectual work. Both have become

stratified with the difference being denoted by the term "administration." The administrator has

power within the hierarchy and lays claim to scholarly, intellectual pursuits while the managerial

attends to the more pragmatic aspects of managing labor and limited resources within the

programs (9-10). She states that the word "managerial" has "negative connotations for traditional

humanist intellectuals, who have tended over the decades to distrust management as, at best,

nonintellectual and, at worst, soul-murdering. All the same, it's really a matter of word choice"

(Strickland 10). Strickland challenges writing program administrators to reconsider the

commonplace of the "marginalized but noble" composition teacher[9], by looking at the "teaching

of composition as a complex economic enterprise that has almost from its beginnings demanded

management as a result of its ubiquity in the ever-expanding American higher education system"

(7).

Shirley Rose and Irwin Weiser appear to adhere to this definition of the managerial

function of writing program administration. In *The Writing Program Administrator as Theorist:*

Making Knowledge Work, they claim that WPAs should consider themselves as something more

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[9] In *Response to Reform: Composition and the Professionalization of Teaching*, Margaret Marshall also challenges writing program scholars to do this

than managers of programs in service to institutional missions. They advocate for a theory for writing program administration that needs to be about practice and its complexities. Published in 2002, their edited collection appeared as a ground-breaking step forward for writing program administrators who were searching for a form of intellectual legitimacy for the work that they were doing. This theoretical praxis in writing program administration seems to serve as a bridge between the "scholarly" administrative role and the lowly managerial role, creating a new intellectual-managerial role that alludes to the professional/managerial class of which journalists, Barbara and John Ehrenreich coined.

They explain this class as one that rests between the working class and the middle class of small business owners; in essence, the professional/managerial class consists of liberal "college-educated professionals—especially lawyers, professors, journalists, and artists" that the politically conservative accused of promoting socialist ideals (Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich 3). This class finds itself caught in the middle, oftentimes seeming in conflict with and subject to the capitalist class, and yet, managers, controllers, and regulators of the working class, "between capital and labor" (Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich 4). Could WPAs be members of the jeopardized professional/ managerial class (PMC) of which the Ehrenreich's write? In a corporatized university, yes. According to Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich, since 1980, "capital attacked the autonomy of the liberal professions" and the PMC has often times defended "the values of scholarship and human service in the face of the relentless pursuit of profit" (11). According to this definition, WPAs (primarily the managerial directors of composition) appear to be on the front lines, while simultaneously seeming to occupy a liminal space that is at times neither truly administrative or fully faculty. The material consequences of being in such spaces can be threatening and destructive—quite a precarious place to be, especially for non-tenured faculty.

Failure to address the ideological underpinnings of such spaces is implicit acquiescence to them. Working within the constraints of such spaces and utilizing the language of neoliberalism in order to advocate for programmatic resources perpetuates the conditions because it fails to acknowledge what is at stake.

Neoliberal Rhetoric in Writing Programs

In an effort to remedy the problem of unconsciously relying on neoliberal rhetoric, some scholars are calling for an examination of the language that writing program scholars and compositionists are using to define their programs and the work they do. Bruce Horner, in his most recent work, "Rewriting Composition: Moving Beyond a Discourse of Need," argues that WPAs and compositionists need to break away from the discourse that depicts composition programs as powerless and needy, and reconsider the terms that they are using, terms like "writing," "pedagogy," "theory," "modality," and "composition" (452). Horner compares the rhetoric used in two particular cases: Smit's *End of Composition Studies* and Dobrin's *Postcomposition.* In this comparison, he describes how each scholar uses the "discourse of need" in order to advocate for their positions. Smit uses such language to argue that the field is facing its demise because of failure to increase writing skills transfer institutionally. In Dobrin's case, he uses the language of need to argue that the field is moving beyond compositionist's ability to create transfer. Horner examines Dobrin's and Smit's language by draying on J.K. Gibson-Graham's critique of "capitalocentric" discourse in economics ("Rewriting Composition" 453). Horner states that few disciplines "are defined in terms of their material and social location within academic institutions or identified with that location, as composition is" ("Rewriting Composition" 451). He claims that the problem with composition programs is that by only attending to the practical working conditions of those within composition, WPAs and others

invested in those programs are actually accepting "dominant culture's limited conceptions and valuations of composition as low, limited, preparatory, illegitimate" ("Rewriting Composition" 451). Adler-Kassner, as mentioned earlier, proposes that WPAs attempt to change those conceptions by writing and disseminating different stories about composition—success stories that validate what compositionists do. This approach seems limited in that it appears to accept the material and social location, an issue which Horner explains. Allowing the programs to be defined by the terms used in neoliberal discourse becomes a problem, even as we attempt to rewrite the stories and redefine the terms that create perceptions of who we are (as compositionists) and what we do. Accepting that language, working within the constraints imposed upon us in order to affect some sort of change, approaching our locations and position as inevitable, all seem to limit writing programs; such approaches could maintain a sense of disciplinarity that is misguided and restrictive.

Nancy Welch and Tony Scott label the language of need as "austerity rhetoric," which is employed by various stakeholders in higher education. Akin to Horner's "discourse of need" in composition programs, austerity rhetorics are used in contexts both within and outside of writing programs and are a key rhetorical strategy used in late capitalism. Welch and Scott describe the implications of these rhetorics for higher education and writing programs:

> In the perennial declarations of financial crisis on US college and university campuses, and in the repeated calls for faculty and staff to join in "shared sacrifice," we can see how austerity measures—wage freezes, staff cuts, program retrenchment, class size increases—are at once an opportunistic response to specific instances of declared crisis and part of a widespread, long-term national (and, though this is beyond our book's scope, global) agenda to fundamentally restructure postsecondary education (9).

As we respond to such austerity measures by using the rhetoric that surrounds and creates them, we are complicit in their stronghold. Gunner calls this a form of "consent" and claims that it manifests in various ways, one of which is "embodied forms" ("What Happens" 149). She states, "For example, the tenured ranks' consent to a system of privilege bought through the exploitation of contingent workers—makes up the material practices of our day" (Gunner, "What Happens" 149). The managed, corporatized university has imbued us with institutional values that are difficult to discern from corporate values; the two have become enmeshed, resulting in corporatized values that are often exemplified within composition programs through exploitative economics (Larson 164). As a result, the fields of rhetoric and composition have experienced "ideological fatigue," according to Gunner. She says, in response to this fatigue, "Logic, evidence, and persuasive ability have not gotten us 'outside' a system that uses our resistant efforts to solidify the necessity of its own. Ideological critique is being decentered as a political means and supplemented by 'autonomous' measures" (Gunner, "What Happens" 158). Gunner's autonomous measures take the form of resistance outside of normal hegemonic forms; however, this individualized, fragmented response appears to be one that is influenced by, and possibly a by-product of, neoliberalism with its calls for individualism and accountability. Nonetheless, autonomous consent that is self-motivated and critical can certainly offer opportunities to resist hegemonic austerity measures. As Gunner states, "Austerity remains a crises discourse, but it is clearly the new real, the usual our business has become. How we respond to it must be at once from within and outside, the consent accompanied by disruption" ("What Happens" 160). How that response might literally manifest is a pertinent question. Regardless, the need for response is urgent. Eileen Schell sums up the urgent state of our educational system this way:

If we do not act now to preserve the instructional base of university education and the

opportunity to voice our opinions and visions about the future of our institutions through

the shared governance process, we miss the opportunity to preserve what most of [us]

believe in despite rank and position: the right of faculty of all ranks to shape higher

education curricula and innovative pedagogies and research, the right for higher

education instructors to be adequately compensated and fairly treated, and the right for

our students to access an affordable, high quality education. Without these rights, there is

no university as we know it (189).

As mentioned in Chapter Two, the political and economic restructuring of postsecondary

education as we know it has been occurring since the 1970s. After the economic recession of

2008, a heightened shift has occurred with less funding from state and federal government and

more reliance upon revenues generated from student tuition, private donors' contributions, and

corporate foundation donations, which corresponds with increased expectations from these

constituents regarding their influence on the purpose and mission of higher education. These are

the other forces demanding that their visions be considered. The struggle for articulating a new

vision and creating the space for educational inquiry that benefits society is tangible, deeply

rhetorical, and inherently ideological.

Limitations of This Project

As with any scholarship, there will be limitations. A limitation of this project is its scope.

Utilizing one case from one university's archives gives a limited example of the types of tropes

used, and yet, it provides an interesting insight into the ways that all "sides" of the issues

surrounding neoliberalism (those issues of marketization, privatization, freedom, governance)

use the language of neoliberalism for different ends. That language is often contradictory and

ironic in its usage, much like the contradictions within neoliberalism itself. The documents analyzed within the collection were largely representative of the entire collection located within the institutional archives in the Ralph Brown Draughon Library at Auburn University. Other additional sources (another collection and possible interviews) could be added for triangulation, to increase the validity of the research. In a larger project, this additional investigation would be useful; however, for this limited case, the goal was to provide an example along the lines of Stake's single instrumental case study used to illuminate a concept or idea.

This project arose from my desire to explore the changing landscape I have observed in higher education. Stemming from my personal experience in corporate America, which led to a change of career and then eight years of adjunct-teaching first-year composition in an English department at a higher research activity university, my choice to explore the rhetorical aspects of the change in higher education seems logical. From my first graduate-level critical theory class at the University of South Alabama, where a reading of Fredric Jameson caused to me to deeply consider all the injustice I had observed in the banking industry, I asked the question "How does rhetoric influence capitalism?" My professor had no answer, and neither did I, but at that moment I committed to a journey that had started long before. I have approached this project through the lens of my experience; my experience has influenced my understandings of what I see, read, hear, consider, and write.

Few people know that I am a first-generation college graduate (on both sides of my family). It's hardly a topic of conversation that most people wish to engage. The few times I've mentioned it have been met with awkward replies and changes of subject. I'm not sure why people respond the way that they do, but I've found it simpler to not mention at all. I suppose it's necessary to mention now, because of my background. I grew up in rural, Black Belt country of

Alabama, home to some of the nation's poorest counties, steeped in civil rights history as rich as the soil farmed. As the daughter of a logger, I grew up with very little access to anything. Even books were a luxury. I remember the weekly Book Mobile that would stop a mile from my house; we'd meet it eagerly. A ramp led us into the musty van that housed a limited collection, and I remember being disappointed when it eventually ran out of books for me to read. In bored desperation one summer (I must have been 14 years old) I rummaged through an end table drawer in the den, to delightedly discover a strange and exciting trilogy of which I'd never heard. My uncle Larry had given the books to my mom the year before, and she'd stuffed them there under crocheting projects. *The Lord of the Rings* helped me get through that summer.

I remember the unofficial segregation of schools there in Marengo County; my family, despite its poverty, insisting on sending me to a struggling, sub-standard, "private," white school. Even as a kid I could see that both public schools and private schools were hurting academically, culturally, and economically because of the separation. I had a deep knowing that it would have been better had we just joined together. Yet there were structures in place that seemed to keep us there, stuck in our positions of distrust and poverty.

I worked hard in high school, following the American Dream; I studied, harassed my poor teachers with questions, and graduated as valedictorian. Of a class of fifteen. That hard work, unfortunately, didn't translate into an ACT score high enough for a decent college scholarship, but thanks to the federal government's Pell Grant program, I was able to attend my dream college: The University of Alabama. When I attended college in the late 1980s and early 1990s, full Pell Grants covered a much greater percentage of the cost. I was lucky in that respect, because I was able to graduate debt-free. Now, children from lower socio-economic groups, even

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children of the "middle class," don't have that sort of luxury or access. There are political and economic structures, here again, that limit and constrain.

When I graduated from college, *magna cum laude,* with a degree in Marketing, I knew that a better life was ahead, one in which I could take my mother on that cruise of which she'd always dreamed (and I did). I entered a management training program with a large, regional bank. They treated me well, the training was excellent, and I was on the path to management, becoming a branch manager at the age of 23 years. However, during that process, I began to notice some things about the bank's ethics that bothered me. Intentionally overcharging customers for overdrafts, selling products that customers didn't need, lying about corporate performance, the bank revealed itself to me in ways that made me very uncomfortable. I had an epiphany one day, sitting at my desk, looking at who was represented on the front lines: women, people of color. The pay in those positions (teller, customer service) was dismal, and despite that fact, we received a memorandum from executive management letting us know that pay raises were capped at 2% that year (1994) because of company performance. At the time, 2% was very disappointing (not the case now—workers are lucky to get raises at all). Right about the same time, the bank's annual report arrived on my desk (I was a shareholder, twenty whole shares). As a publicly traded institution, the bank had to disclose executive compensation, in which I was very interested. A quick calculation of the $900,000+ base salaries, and hundreds of thousands of dollars in bonuses and stock options and their increases from year to year revealed that they didn't abide by their own rules. Executive management (a team of about 5 people) gave themselves pay raises that averaged about 30%. I looked again at the teller line: single moms, working-class wives, part-time college students, all struggling. I considered the executive management—white, middle-aged males. During that moment I knew exploitation of labor was

taking place, and I made a decision to leave. I knew I may not be able to change what was

happening, to change the structures enforcing such exploitation, but I also knew I didn't have to

actively participate in it. I decided to change careers, to try to do something less exploitative,

something that would contribute to the greater good. Education was a logical choice. The irony is

apparent here. By entering into the trenches of composition within an English department, I

encountered yet another type of exploitation, one occurring in higher education, of which I was

unaware.

My sharing this story is not to garner sympathy; the intention is to share my insights into

political economy that has shaped our rural and suburban educational landscapes, our businesses,

our lives inside and outside of school. We are at an interesting juncture in our country's history,

one in which people are beginning to loudly protest against the economic and political injustices

that occur. Much important research has been done investigating those types of rhetorics of

resistance, invaluable contributions. With this project, I offer insights into the rhetorics of

oppressive forces, the rhetorics of domination and subjugation that have maintained division and

suspicion. By exploring the rhetoric of neoliberalism and its effects on higher education, I aim,

through the biased lens of my experience, to contribute to rhetorical theory by expanding our

understandings of the tropes used to enact the desired ideology of neoliberal forces.

Implications for the Future and Pedagogical Considerations

In the volatile political and economic environment that surrounds US higher education at

this time, pat answers to the very real struggles that programs (especially those in the humanities)

and their administrators face will not be sufficient. Such times call for a nuanced understanding

of the greater issues ultimately impacting those programs. This project aims to provide a

contextualization of what is happening through the lens of political economy. Some of the

questions facing educators now, especially those in writing programs, are: How do we respond to the economic and political exigencies surrounding us, if we refuse to use neoliberal rhetoric? How do we put into action the autonomous, resistant consent of which Jeanne Gunner writes? How do we practically create those spaces outside of the constricting places in which we find ourselves within the corporatized university? Much of the scholarship I mention in this last chapter seems a bit resigned to fatalistic ideas of the university ceasing to exist as we currently know it. I am not convinced of that; however, I do believe that composition programs are in danger. Writing programs are in a dire situation in which they are front stage in their complicity in corporatized exploitation. Writing program managers find themselves caught in a liminal space with their bifurcated roles within the university. There seems to be a hopelessness about the situation, while at the same time, hope springs from the margins as it always seems to do.

I find it interesting that in much of the scholarship surrounding the issues of political economy in education and writing programs, very little has been said regarding the part students may have to play in the solution. Tony Scott mentions students, certainly, in *Dangerous Writing*, Victor Villanueva mentions them in *Bootstraps,* and Bruce Horner mentions pedagogical strategies, too. However, I believe students should be given more consideration from others. They are mentioned so little, usually as an aside, mentioned in discussions of these issues: how they have been burdened with debt, how they are treated as consumers of knowledge products, how poorly they transfer the writing skills we have helped them acquire, and how they contribute to university revenues through their tuition dollars. I wonder if a key to the change we want to see is our students, an integral part of the solution that seems overlooked.

If we equip students with the awareness of political/economic contexts and allow them the opportunity to look at the ways that these contexts are created rhetorically, then we provide

them a type of literacy that is invaluable. Sometimes this awareness happens in interesting and unexpected ways that come about from kairotic moments.

Here's an example from one of my own business writing classrooms: In my class, we discuss genre as socially constructed, typified rhetorical action that derives meaning from context (C. Miller). The rhetorical situation calls forth the genre, but the rhetorical situation can be constructed rhetorically as well (Bitzer, Vatz). I like to explain to them that the rhetorical situation often has exigencies that are political/economic in nature. A couple of years ago, rather late in the semester, a couple of aviation management students in my writing class made an appointment with me to discuss an urgent matter; they were very upset about the possibility of their degree program being eliminated. They found out from an advisor that there were administrative plans in place to close their program; full-time faculty slots in their program were not going to be filled, and the program had been deemed unprofitable. They came because they wanted to write a letter to be used to petition their alumni and administration to keep the program. They wrote a letter that petitioned and challenged the constraints of the situation; I merely helped them think about their audience and purpose within the context (I remained very distant from the situation—it truly was student led in every way). They went on to petition, call for media coverage, and rally alumni support, and they ultimately changed the outcome and saved their program, all in response to the political and economic exigency that was before them. I observed their collective rhetorical action in amazement. They strategically transformed the context that was before them and challenged the values of their audiences. I was not responsible for this (they came to me with all of their plans already in place), but I like to think that the instruction I provided in the classroom helped them to see the situation in a different way and to consider the ways that they might respond rhetorically. Was there risk for my students in doing

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this? Yes, but to them the risk was worth it. They cared about their fellow students, alumni, program, and faculty enough to take that risk.

I think that teachers of writing and administrators of writing programs (both technical writing and composition) can inspire their students to understand, that "the power of literacy and learning is far more likely to come about when we conceive of our identities and the identities of our institutions as dynamic, constantly evolving, and subject to being rewritten" (Scott, *Dangerous Writing* 190). There is risk in responding to the material conditions we face—we don't have to respond with combative measures or petitions; however, we can approach constraints and demands with an awareness of the larger context in which we are located. This awareness allows us to fully face and acknowledge the political and economic influences upon our pedagogy and administrative duties.

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