

The Culturpreneur: Psychological Neoliberalism and Creativity in Professional Art Practices

Ling Chen

491218

BA Philosophy of a Specific Discipline

Supervisor: Dr. Kloeg

Advisor: Prof. Dr. Arora

Main study: psychology

June 15, 2022

9996 words

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
1. The History and Emergence of Foucault's Neoliberalism	5
<i>1.1 Governmentality</i>	6
<i>1.2 Human capital and entrepreneurship</i>	8
2. The Psychology of Neoliberalism	10
<i>2.1 The role of psychology in neoliberalism</i>	11
<i>2.2 The role of neoliberalism in psychology</i>	14
3. Fine Art in a Psychological Neoliberal Discourse	19
<i>3.1 Neoliberal art education: creativity and marketability</i>	19
<i>3.2 Neoliberal fine art market</i>	24
<i>3.3 Psyche of the neoliberal artist</i>	28
Conclusion	33
Bibliography	36

Introduction

Neoliberalism is an ideology that reduces all values to money values. Neoliberalism tells you that you are valuable exclusively in terms of your activity in the marketplace.¹

The rise and influence of the neoliberalism is a topic that has been widely discussed in various academic, artistic, political, and economic domains. Philosophers such as Foucault have particularly analyzed the formation of neoliberalism during his “The Birth of Biopolitics” lectures.² In line with Wendy Brown, neoliberalism is often understood as economic rationality that governs virtually every field of activity (e.g., work) and entity. It is a continuous conversion of one’s living and work into human capital, thereby influencing, for instance, creative production and organization.³

Human capital is a concept where the skills, knowledge, and experiences (capital) of individuals become an economic value for themselves and others: for organizations, the government, corporations, and many more social organizations. Moreover, it focuses on the investment value of individuals, which is perceived as most important. Individuals must invest in various ways (e.g., education) to increase their credit rating within each domain.⁴ For instance, artists must fulfill the requirements of challenges concerning promotions and

¹ William Deresiewicz, “The Neoliberal Arts,” Harpers, accessed at March 5, 2022, <https://harpers.org/archive/2015/09/the-neoliberal-arts/>.

² Wendy Brown, *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism’s Stealth Revolution* (New York: Zone Books, 2015), 51.

³ Jack Segbars, “Artistic Production in the Context of Neoliberalism Autonomy and Heteronomy Revisited by Means of Infrastructural Critique,” Parsejournal, accessed at March 3, 2022, <https://parsejournal.com/article/artistic-production-in-the-context-of-neoliberalism-autonomy-and-heteronomy-revisited-by-means-of-infrastructural-critique/>.

⁴ Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 33.

opportunities, earning a living if they behave like entrepreneurs⁵ within a market-orientated workplace.⁶

Moreover, an examination of the psychology of neoliberalism – or “psychological neoliberalism” – can contribute to our understanding of neoliberalism as a discourse. The idea of “psychological neoliberalism,” coined by Adams et al., refers to the idea that the neoliberal discourse is based on and reinforces distinctive psychological tendencies (e.g., keeping a happy attitude).⁷

Specifically, this thesis contributes a clearer insight into how psychological science is applied in creative practices to introduce and strengthen the neoliberal discourse. It will attempt to provide a greater understanding of how psychology shapes individuals in the neoliberal discourse and how artists deal with neoliberal concepts (human capital and entrepreneurship). Psychological science has been producing and forming neoliberal behavior based on these concepts. For instance, neoliberal governments have used behavioral techniques – derived from experimental social psychology – to encourage people to act like self-interested and rational individuals. Thus, psychology contributes to neoliberal structural policies and also reinforces neoliberal behaviors and mindsets.⁸

In recent decades, there has possibly been a neoliberal influence that has subdued various creative domains – specifically “fine art” – to processes of the free-market economy. This influence implicates an economization of art. The free market fundamentals – competitiveness and entrepreneurship – have been brought into the domain of artistic production. This suggests that market relations have not exclusively been introduced into the

⁵ Richard Swedberg, “The Cultural Entrepreneur and the Creative Industries: Beginning in Vienna,” *Journal of Cultural Economics* 30 (2006): 252, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s10824-006-9016-5>.

⁶ Segbars, “Artistic Production.”

⁷ Glenn Adams et al., “The Psychology of Neoliberalism and the Neoliberalism of Psychology,” *Journal of Social Issues* 75, no.1 (2019) 190, <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12305>.

⁸ Adams, “Neoliberalism of Psychology,” 198.

fine arts field, but the discourse of entrepreneurship has also been internalized at the individual artistic micro-level. The art sector consists of a large proportion of freelancers and a small proportion of small companies or free associations, collectives, and working groups. It seems to be that the “entrepreneurial individual” is a new type of employer. On a practical level, individuals who are educated in the fine arts must use their human capital creatively, thus using their creativity for profits.⁹

Consequently, neoliberalism impacts the structure of the art world in a manner that merges with a free-market-based approach to professional success, even more necessary than the intrinsic artistic values of the artists. These artistic values are what construes art: artists’ works express complex meanings by creating original works, expressing emotions through artworks, being intellectually challenging, and more. However, market values are competition and economic profits.¹⁰

For instance, art events are often seen as opportunities to endorse the artist’s art as a brand, and conceptual decisions of art are perhaps viewed as marketing strategies (conforming to a more saleable format). Eventually, art graduates might thus sacrifice their artistic values to gain recognition and visibility in a business environment.¹¹ This merging of artistic and economic values considers then the following questions. How should the influence of (psychological) neoliberalism on contemporary creative practices (such as the arts education) be understood? One might also ask how it has become perfectly acceptable and normal today to talk about branding, investment, and competition in the sphere of art.

⁹ Segbars, “Artistic Production.”

¹⁰ Kevin Vallier, “Neoliberalism,” in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta. Stanford University, 2021. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/neoliberalism>.

¹¹ Dean Kenning, “Art World Strategies: Neoliberalism and the Politics of Professional Practice in Fine Art Education,” *Journal of Visual Art Practice* 18, no. 2 (2019): 122, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14702029.2018.1500112>.

Moreover, how does psychology play a role in neoliberalism, and particularly, how does it play a role in the current neoliberal art discourse?

This thesis explores the impact of (psychological) neoliberalism on students and artists in contemporary creative practices, especially within fine arts education, to answer these questions. The thesis will substantiate the claim through the following structure. First, it shall briefly reflect on the history and emergence of neoliberalism, mainly based on Foucault's analysis in "The Birth of Biopolitics." It will focus on the concepts of "human capital" and "the entrepreneur." The second section shall examine the role of "psychology" in defining, creating, and reinforcing neoliberal tendencies. This part of the thesis will mainly rely on Glenn Adams' article. The third part analyzes how the neoliberal discourse (against the background of Foucault's analysis and – more specifically – regarding the influence of psychology) contributes to "structuring" fine arts education, the fine art "market economy," and the "neoliberal mindset" of the artist. The first part will describe the contemporary structure of art education and the concept of creativity central to the artistic values it teaches. More specifically, this part will also argue that artistic values are increasingly expressed through free-market economic values in the current (psychological) neoliberal discourse of fine art practices. After this part, the neoliberal structure in the fine art market as a creative industry and the behavior of artists within this market will be discussed. Accordingly, it will present art economization on the basis of an analysis of neoliberalism. The final part will conclude by arguing that there is a different understanding of artistic values – such as creativity – of art in the current (psychological) neoliberal discourse of fine art practices.¹²

The explicit focus on the psychological part is on the account that psychological science has been producing knowledge and practices that propagate, validate, and reinforce

¹² Barbara Townley, Nic Beech, and Alan McKinlay, "Managing in the Creative Industries: Managing the Motley Crew," *Human Relations* 62, no. 7 (2009): 939–40. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726709335542>.

the authority of neoliberalism. The psychological tendencies of “the liberal individual” are probably strengthened and form the basis of neoliberal systems. These tendencies are, for instance, an entrepreneurial understanding of oneself as a project that must develop continuously and always valorize itself.¹³

Thus, this thesis will consider how psychological science has been involved in neoliberal projects. Specifically, it will address this (psychological) involvement within the neoliberal artistic world. Although there might be more clarification on the role psychology plays within the neoliberal fine arts discourse, it is important to notice that the literature is limited on this specific topic. Consequently, distinct literature on neoliberalism, psychology, and the fine art world is integrated toward interpretation and analysis. This interpretation leaves room for further research on the conclusive role of psychology.

1. The History and Emergence of Foucault’s Neoliberalism

This section will clarify how neoliberalism is analyzed within the scope of the thesis. In this section, our main focus is the theoretical foundation of neoliberalism, which will be based on Foucault’s lectures, “The Birth of Biopolitics,” since these lectures discuss the foundations of the (neo)liberal revival. Foucault’s lectures contribute to the unfolding of my argument.

As mentioned earlier, it will argue that fine art practices – such as artistic values – are impacted by the current (psychological) neoliberal discourse. In order to substantiate this argument, some central concepts will be discussed, as mentioned in lectures 4, 6, and 9. First, the concept of governmentality will be presented. Thereafter, key concepts – such as entrepreneurship, human capital, “*homo economicus*,” and more – that characterize the

¹³ Adams, “Neoliberalism of Psychology,” 190.

neoliberal discourse shall be discussed. Thus, Foucault's conceptualization of neoliberalism is a useful basis for analyzing neoliberalism's fine art discourse.

1.1 Governmentality

According to Foucault, one should understand neoliberalism as a normative rule of reason that will develop itself as governing rationality.¹⁴ Neoliberalism is viewed as transforming liberal governmentality. This transformation started in postwar Germany and became increasingly present in other European countries. From the 1950s forward, liberalism transformed into neoliberalism, so many European countries have implemented its theoretical principles into political practices and reason.

In his lectures, Foucault presents an emergence of a new political and economic rationality, a belonging economic and political individual. Most importantly, most people also show new governmental rationality with novel state legitimacy.¹⁵ In other words, it is reshaping the liberal art of governing into a neoliberal art. Foucault's concept of governmentality can thus be used as a guide to analyzing the historical reconstruction from the period of liberalism to neoliberalism.¹⁶

Foucault coined the term governmentality, which contributes to understanding the autonomous individual's capacity to regulate oneself related to political government and exploitation (e.g., justification of exercising power).¹⁷ Governmentality uses certain forms of rationality, and these forms – such as a (neo)liberal rationality – as a mode of thought are

¹⁴ Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 49-50.

¹⁵ Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 51-2

¹⁶ Thomas Lemke, "The Birth of Biopolitics": Michel Foucault's Lecture at the Collège de France on Neo-liberal Governmentality," *Economy and Society* 30, no. 2 (2001): 191, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03085140120042271>.

¹⁷ Thomas Lemke, "Foucault, Governmentality, and Critique," *Rethinking Marxism* 14, no. 3 (2002): 52, <https://doi.org/10.1080/089356902101242288>.

inscribed in practices and systems.¹⁸ For instance, the states are restricted by the market because it induces a certain logic. This logic is that the market is organizing and regulating the government (rather than the government determining and watching over market freedom). These two aspects (restriction and rationale) depict liberalism. The new rationale of the state is the political economy, which initiates the art of government that rationalizes minimal governance.

Moreover, individual freedom is indirectly produced, organized, managed, and consumed by the state, as shown through individuals' entrepreneurial and competitive behavior. The liberal government limits itself to letting the individual be "naturally" free, whereas the neoliberal government changes the environment and can manipulate the individual depicted as making rational decisions. Hence, neoliberalism can be described as a constant requirement of manufacturing freedom.

Governmentality constructs neoliberalism as an ideology or a political-economic reality, but more importantly, it is a political endeavor to construe an existing social reality. Neoliberalism is a form of political rationality in which every social sphere becomes economic. Governmental services and security systems are also decreased and brought into a relationship with increased individual responsibility and self-care.¹⁹ The neoliberal government comes forward that places the responsibility of social risks and more general – societal life – on individuals, changing all aspects of life into self-care.

Neoliberal rationality mainly characterizes itself as attempting to realize an individual who is responsible, moral, and economic-rational. This form of rationality aims to create an individual's moral quality grounded on a benefit-cost analysis of one action in contrast to other actions. Accordingly, the rationale of neoliberalism – which manifests itself as free will

¹⁸ Lemke, "Foucault, Governmentality, and Critique," 55.

¹⁹ Lemke, "Birth of Biopolitics," 203.

(determining decisions by oneself) – entails that individuals are entirely responsible for the consequences of their actions. In line with Foucault, this rationality can be applied as a strategy in every domain, and as a result, every social responsibility (with its consequences) becomes a personal responsibility.²⁰

1.2 Human capital and entrepreneurship

Our current time is characterized by a (late) neoliberal political and economic system that originated in the late 1970s. What characterizes neoliberalism is that it “generalizes the economic form of the market” or “generalizes the enterprise form within the social body.” Accordingly, this led to the social domain being economized. Generalization of the economic scope serves as an analytical rule in that non-economic domains and actions are examined in terms of economic categories, and individuals and relations between individuals are explained in terms of economic criteria and intelligibility.²¹

The principles of a market economy are referred to, related to, and projected onto a general art of government. This is the transformation of liberalism to neoliberalism.²² It brings forth a new form of subjectivity that includes the concepts of entrepreneurship and human capital. Additionally, and more generally, society is reformed in line with the concepts of the market, *homo oeconomicus*, competition, and enterprise in neoliberalism. These key concepts will define neoliberalism but also differentiate it from liberalism.

Liberalism focuses on exchange as a fundamental of the market, while neoliberalism focuses on competition. Equivalence is the condition for exchange, while inequality is the condition and result of competition. This change of market principles gave rise to the

²⁰ Lemke, “Birth of Biopolitics,” 201.

²¹ Lemke, “Birth of Biopolitics,” 198.

²² Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 61.

rationality of neoliberalism, and these fundamentals of the market have expanded into every domain of life. The market was a new site of truth, and, at the same time, it was stimulated by the state for further “marketization.” Hence, the state becomes subservient to the market.

Moreover, the market replaces the law and edict in constructing, measuring, organizing, and legitimizing the government.²³ This means that the legitimacy of inequality is established in every domain. Moreover, if competition is fundamental to market rationality (and if that rationality should be implemented in all social fields), then guarantees of protection by the government will be gone. Individuals will be reduced to winners and losers. There is thus a generalization of market competition as a social and political principle.²⁴

Furthermore, the focus on commodities and consumption shifts to a focus on entrepreneurship and productivity. In line with Foucault, individuals are subjected to dynamic competition in an enterprise society rather than a market society. Every aspect of human existence is a result of entrepreneurship, and, hence, every individual manifest as entrepreneurial. Individuals develop into multiple enterprises, and more generally, society is directed “toward the multiplicity and differentiation of enterprises” and “not toward trading commodities.” An enterprise society does not place its focus on trucking and bartering things (exchange) but rather on human capital activities and orientation.²⁵ Foucault defines the entrepreneurial self as follows:

In neoliberalism . . . *Homo aeconomicus* [is] an entrepreneur of himself . . . being for himself his own capital, being for himself his own producer.²⁶

²³ Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 57-8.

²⁴ Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 64-5.

²⁵ Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 65-6.

²⁶ Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, 226.

Therefore, individuals still have entrepreneurial qualities (e.g., aiming for profit), but more importantly, they are transformed into human capital, investing in themselves to increase their value in all domains.²⁷ Accordingly, in a neoliberal discourse, human capital takes the place of labor (from the classical liberal discourse). The market principle is competition, and all actors are viewed as capital in the market. Thus, subjects are formed by the current market conditions as self-investing human capital.²⁸ This conveys that the principle of the market becomes a competition in which all individuals are capital in the place of precursory workers.²⁹

Human capital consists of two parts. The first part is genetically predisposing qualities, while the second is an investment in themselves. In multiple areas, such as education, training, and nutrition, these investments will eventually become skills. Individuals are not anymore reliant on a company as an employee, but they are now entirely responsible for choosing investments and seeking surplus-value production as autonomous entrepreneurs.³⁰ Meaning every aspect of that individual is made to be entrepreneurial. Thus, the individual's life is transformed into multiple and constant enterprises.³¹

2. The Psychology of Neoliberalism

Our time is characterized by neoliberal ideology; our psychology is neoliberal psychology.³² Hence, this section shall examine the role of “psychology” in defining, creating,

²⁷ Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 33.

²⁸ Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 177.

²⁹ Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 65.

³⁰ Lemke, “Birth of Biopolitics,” 199.

³¹ Brown, *Undoing the Demos*, 65.

³² Carl Ratner, *Neoliberal Psychology* (Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2019), 15.

and reinforcing neoliberal tendencies. This examination provides more understanding of the current neoliberal discourse and, in turn, will try to illuminate its psychological aspect.

In the first part, cultural psychology shall be presented. Notably, the literature on psychological neoliberalism is limited since cultural psychology is the only theoretical framework that provides an understanding of psychological neoliberalism. The second part will present the concept of the psychology of neoliberalism coined by Adams et al., which helps in understanding the practical and psychological implementations of neoliberalism by the government, thereof providing a clearer picture of the neoliberal structure that goes beyond Foucault's lectures.

This structure forms the basis for the next section: analyzing the art world within the psychological discourse of neoliberalism. This analysis will, in turn, provide a basis for the exploration of the psychological discourse of neoliberalism regarding the art world.

2.1 The role of psychology in neoliberalism

Neoliberalism takes on a cultural form within the theoretical framework of cultural psychology.³³ Each cultural form has ideas and material manifestations in institutions, practices, and artifacts.³⁴ Neoliberal frameworks resound with and intensify some properties of the mind that have established the information basis for hegemonic psychological science.³⁵ Neoliberal systems also contain psychological elements and hence have shaped our habits of mind that lead to the internalization of the neoliberal conception (e.g., entrepreneurship)³⁶ and

³³ Ratner, *Neoliberal Psychology*, 145.

³⁴ Glenn Adams and Hazel Rose Markus, "Toward a Conception of Culture Suitable for a Social Psychology of Culture," in *The Psychological Foundations of Culture*, ed. by Mark Schaller & Christian Crandall (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 2004), 342.

³⁵ Adams, "Neoliberalism of Psychology," 191.

³⁶ Ratner, *Neoliberal Psychology*, 150.

ways of being. The latter can be referred to as “neoliberal selfways,” coined by Adams et al., as an entrepreneurial approach, a personal growth imperative, and positive self-affect management. Neoliberal selfways are conceptualized as the specific habits of mind that align with and strengthen neoliberalism.³⁷

Psychological research has, for instance, studied the “entrepreneurial personality type,” which includes a high score on extraversion, openness, and conscientiousness, while a low score on agreeableness and neuroticism. More importantly, this type is linked to prosperity, higher entrepreneurial activity (e.g., starting a company),³⁸ and the entrepreneurial self. This concept of the self can only flourish as an ongoing project if subjects have the freedom to pursue their core attributes and ambitions. For instance, individuals are free from material constraints since education is accessible to them, and their capacity to follow their aspirations is increased.³⁹ However, the entrepreneurial self is inclined to evolve as a product or brand in trying to meet the demands of the economic marketplace.⁴⁰

Furthermore, neoliberal systems encourage the entrepreneurial self, which is an ongoing project to aim for the development and growth of one’s capital. These systems also give a sense of freedom from limits (e.g., regulations) and, more importantly, give freedom to work toward one’s aspirations. Individuals can do what they want or wish to do and thereby acquire happiness and well-being.

Another core aspect that shapes the pursuit of happiness is neoliberal individualism, which validates the reason of individuals and individual experience rather than the collective and its societal context.⁴¹ Happy individuals are physically and psychologically active, and

³⁷ Adams, “Neoliberalism of Psychology,” 191.

³⁸ Adams, “Neoliberalism of Psychology,” 196.

³⁹ Adams, “Neoliberalism of Psychology,” 193.

⁴⁰ Adams, “Neoliberalism of Psychology,” 194-95.

⁴¹ Adams, “Neoliberalism of Psychology,” 199-200.

conditions such as being fluid, changing, and growing are required for one's well-being. These individuals take risks and opportunities and acquire new skills and knowledge.

Moreover, the neoliberal imperative of personal growth requires opportunities to choose. Individuals can express themselves and their preferences through choices, but more eminently, choices make it necessary to elaborate on one's preferences. Entrepreneurial selves develop the habit of perceiving daily life as opportunities to choose, and the response to their choices determines how they behave. While this neoliberal focus on individuals' choices can give them a sense of autonomy and freedom to go after their dreams, the excessiveness of choice is related to experiences of paralysis and discontent with their own choices. Additionally, individual responsibility is strengthened by the neoliberal emphasis on personal choice. Individuals recognize societal issues as a consequence of their own bad choices.⁴²

Moreover, neoliberalism's affect is emphasized and associated with Foucault's entrepreneurial risk. The entrepreneurial self is active in seeking risks and in innovative enterprises that would lead to an increase in value. This form of risk-seeking demands physiological arousal and high arousal positive states (e.g., enthusiasm). Although these states of mind can stimulate the participation in risky situations concerning the development of the entrepreneurial self, these risky situations can produce anxiety. Individuals experience anxiety if they are entirely responsible for their achievements, failures, and fulfillments. Successful behavior develops itself as an affective regulation when individuals are confronted with such anxiety. Individuals regulate their affect through managing or reframing their negative affect, striving for and increasing positive affect.

The cultural-psychological perspective explains thus how the habits of mind and neoliberal selfways are formed by neoliberal systems. The key characteristics of these

⁴² Adams, "Neoliberalism of Psychology," 196.

neoliberal selfways are an entrepreneurial approach that perceives oneself as an ongoing development project, the necessity to develop and fulfill oneself, and the focus on affect regulation. As a result, hegemonic theories of subjectivity in psychological science are increasingly informed by these key aspects of neoliberal selfways. Naturally, most of psychological science's knowledge base may be understood as an elaborate notion of life under neoliberalism.⁴³

2.2 The role of neoliberalism in psychology

Much research has focused on how the psychological experience is influenced by neoliberalism. Such experience is characterized by behaviors, feelings, perceptions, and thoughts of an individual, which are situated and subjective.⁴⁴ Psychological science observes neoliberal systems and their impacts on human experience (e.g., mind and behavior) while, practicing and producing knowledge that replicates, legitimates, and supports the domination of neoliberalism in daily life.

Individuals can internalize the ideology of the entrepreneurial self as a psychological tool that arranges their self-conception and behavior.⁴⁵ Accordingly, it is necessary to examine neoliberalism in psychology to provide an adequate account of the psychology of neoliberalism.⁴⁶ In this part, the theoretical framework of cultural psychology shows the mutual relationship between neoliberalism and psychological science. In this case, there are two routes.

⁴³ Adams, "Neoliberalism of Psychology," 197.

⁴⁴ Christian Jantzen, "Experiencing and Experiences: A Psychological Framework," in *The Handbook on the Experience Economy*, ed. by Jon Sundbo and Flemming Sorensen (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2003), 146.

⁴⁵ Ratner, *Neoliberal Psychology*, 148.

⁴⁶ Adams, "Neoliberalism of Psychology," 190.

First, neoliberalism has a formed psychological experience and, hence, the knowledge basis of psychological science. Neoliberalism is based on and strengthens psychological inclinations of the liberal individualistic mentality (or mind) and selfways. These tendencies or selfways generally underlie prevalent concepts of the mind, such as the entrepreneurial notion of the self as a continuous development project and the need for one's progress and fulfillment, emphasizing the regulation of emotions for self-regulation.

Second, hegemonic psychological science aligns with neoliberal plans. Examining psychological processes and personal growth and management of affect are seen as core aspects for maximum well-being, which gives scientific authority to neoliberalism by psychologists. Additionally, psychological science provides a foundation, naturalization, institutionalization, and legitimation of this ideology and its consequences.⁴⁷ In reality, neoliberal selfways studied in research are used by institutional actors to transform them into a natural standard, and, hence, psychological science directly plays a part in reproducing the neoliberal system.⁴⁸

The knowledge base of psychological science has indirectly been used as a tool by neoliberalism proponents who prioritize psychology as a source of science and technology, transforming individuals to embody the neoliberal approach to the self. Neoliberalism finds investing in human capital important as a root for development and creativity.⁴⁹ For instance, proponents of American and British governments have used behavioral and psychosocial techniques to stimulate neoliberal behavior – such as self-interestedness and rationality – in individuals. Psychological science also directly played a role in the reproduction of

⁴⁷ Adams, "Neoliberalism of Psychology," 190.

⁴⁸ Adams, "Neoliberalism of Psychology," 197.

⁴⁹ Michael Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 121.

neoliberalism. However, regardless of its intention, psychology stimulates neoliberal selfways, as discussed in the preceding section.⁵⁰

The entrepreneurial self can be interpreted as psychological essentialism that views the mind and behavior as a result of one's own attributes that characterize the basis of an individual's life trajectory. Entrepreneurial selves partake in the project of personal development that promotes tendencies, such as finding, keeping track of, evaluating, increasing, and cultivating major attributes, characteristics ("to force one's way in"), and capabilities. For instance, individuals can act independently from their physical and societal environment.

Similarly, hegemonic psychological science understands in an essentialist manner that perceives an individual consisting of essential features, but more importantly, it can measure these features. For instance, psychological science manifests as psychological testing that promotes and reflects this part of the entrepreneurial self. Psychological testing focuses on abilities, traits, and interests that play an important role in the development of psychological science. More importantly, personality and psychological tests contribute to understanding oneself as a neoliberal and entrepreneurial individual. Educational institutions, companies, and organizations use these tests to select individuals with desired abilities, traits, and interests while developing them according to entrepreneurial goals.⁵¹

Psychological testing amplifies and broadens the basis of the neoliberal understanding of oneself as merely a pattern of characteristics and capabilities. These patterns and traits can be useful in one's work life, but the habits of mind and ways of being (e.g., about friends) are generally more adaptable for life outside work. Moreover, the broad use of psychological testing (e.g., intelligence) strengthens the idea that ability is a trait of individuals abstracted

⁵⁰ Adams, "Neoliberalism of Psychology," 198.

⁵¹ Adams, "Neoliberalism of Psychology," 202.

from their environment. The test score is attributed to an individual's lack of ability, while the focus on sociocultural influences is diverted. Proponents of neoliberalism also use this reasoning of testing that has its source in psychological essentialism. Specifically, they argue that ability differences can explain economic inequality.

Moreover, psychological science also strengthens the entrepreneurial self via personal responsibility. Psychological science renders individuals responsible for their own positive and negative outcomes because it generally explains socially structured phenomena (e.g., misfortune) as a result of individual processes. For instance, learning problems and career success are exclusively explained by internal processes that undermine the external structures of educational and organizational systems while ascribing the responsibility of their performance solely to individuals. This is particularly evident in choosing the right study, career, and (work and study) performance. Psychological science explains, mirrors, and replicates the idea that such issues result from bad choices and insufficient self-control (e.g., a lack of control to achieve what one wants in a situation) rather than a response to social and material constraints.⁵²

Furthermore, as previously mentioned, ruling forms of psychological science reproduce the neoliberal growth imperative, as shown in the growth mindset theory, where individual attributes – such as creativity – can be developed by the entrepreneurial individual and broadened by hard work and effort. In general, the growth imperative has also clearly been shown in other psychological theories, such as the attachment theory, self-determination theory, and positive psychology approaches. In line with these theories, more freedom (e.g., work autonomy, new experiences) gives a basis for (further) exploring personal development and aspiration. Exploration then encourages personal fulfillment, achieving dreams,

⁵² Adams, "Neoliberalism of Psychology," 203; 195.

actualizing potential, and flourishing. Hence, the focus on development and personal fulfillment reflects and legitimizes neoliberalism and selfways.⁵³

The entrepreneurial approach and self-growth imperative necessitate a psychologically active form of happiness (e.g., feeling good about one's actions) that goes further than the absence of negative affect. More importantly, this active form meets the conditions of neoliberal affective regulation. These conditions stimulate entrepreneurial risk-taking and diminish anxiety linked to the responsibility of failure. Achieving an energized and aroused positive affective state can help regulate their affect. However, some individuals internalize blame for their anxiousness and adverse experiences.

Although these individuals want to be more skillful in concentrating on the positive,⁵⁴ their negative attitudes toward adverse emotional states may be linked to experiencing depression. If individuals hold adverse attitudes toward their emotional state, it indicates how they maladaptively regulate their feelings. In particular, they avoid their emotions, believing them unchangeable, which may make the depression symptoms worse.⁵⁵ More importantly, the insistence on positive affect is unavailable and unsustainable to most people.⁵⁶ Hence, based on imposing high arousal positive affect, psychological science might play a role in the production of social inequality and, as a consequence, competition between neoliberal individuals.⁵⁷

⁵³ Adams, "Neoliberalism of Psychology," 204.

⁵⁴ Adams, "Neoliberalism of Psychology," 206.

⁵⁵ Sunkyung Yoon et al., "Are Attitudes Towards Emotions Associated with Depression? A Conceptual and Meta-analytic Review," *Journal of Affective Disorders* 232, no. 1 (2018): 334 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2018.02.009>.

⁵⁶ Sonja Lyubomirsky, Laura King, and Ed Diener, "The Benefits of Frequent Positive Affect: Does Happiness Lead to Success?," *Psychological Bulletin* 131, no. 6 (2005): 844, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.131.6.803>

⁵⁷ Adams, "Neoliberalism of Psychology," 206.

3. Fine Art in a Psychological Neoliberal Discourse

This section shall examine how psychological neoliberalism plays a part in “structuring” the fine art world, specifically, its education, “market economy,” and “neoliberal mindset” artists. This analysis will interpret how artists understand and perceive themselves in the neoliberal art discourse. The first part will describe the current structure of art education and the concept of creativity, discussed in the literature, central to artistic values taught in art education. More specifically, it will contrast teachings in developing creativity and conforming to fine art market strategies. This part will also present how fine arts education stimulates artists to perceive themselves as individuals who invest in themselves by following education and taking responsibility for their future aspirations.

The following part will describe the current structure of the fine art market economy. Particularly, it will present the mechanisms in selecting artworks. Moreover, it will examine how artists might conform to these demands. The final part will reflect upon the previous parts by showing how the neoliberal psychological mindset and tendencies are formed and reinforced throughout education. Here, the emphasis will be on the manifestation of the mindset in the artists’ behavior and actions in the fine market economy.

3.1 Neoliberal art education: creativity and marketability

As discussed in the preceding sections, psychology can be used to give evidence for teaching in a neoliberal manner. Accordingly, this section shall show how the neoliberal manner is implemented in education. First, it will present the concept of creativity and examine how it is taught in art education. Thereafter, the artistic and financial qualities of artwork shall be briefly presented.

The second part will discuss how fine arts education increasingly adapts to the conditions of the fine arts market. This part will specifically explore how art students are

shaped to adhere to economic policies, including investing in education. The last paragraphs will show that education focuses on developing professional practice at the expense of creativity.

There are different ways of defining creativity in literature. Creativity is a process that brings new ideas, which should be perceived as useful, tenable, or satisfactory by many people.⁵⁸ Another definition is one's capability to produce unique and atypical ideas or something novel.⁵⁹ Creativity and its ideas can be reflected in various manners, such as concepts, theories, and artifacts (e.g., paintings). Moreover, Loveless described creativity as the combination of five aspects: applying one's imagination, a making process, working toward goals, searching for something original, and evaluating values.⁶⁰

Although these different concepts of creativity are required for art students, the development of artistic creativity is particularly addressed in programs of fine arts education. Teachers use learning policies, practices, and activities to enhance students' creativity in fine art education. Fine artists acquire a range of skills, such as producing original, innovative, and imaginative ideas, using convergent and divergent thinking in an effective manner while developing, testing, and applying new hypotheses via production and design processes.⁶¹ For instance, students learn to use different tools to create artwork.⁶²

⁵⁸ Melody Milbrandt, and Lanny Mildbrandt, "Creativity: What are we Talking About?" *Art Education* 64, no. 1 (2011): 9, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00043125.2011.11519105>.

⁵⁹ *Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary*, s.v. "creativity," accessed May 26, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/creativity>.

⁶⁰ Loveless, Avril, "Thinking about Creativity: Developing Ideas, Making Things Happen," in *Creativity in Primary Education*, ed. Anthony Wilson (Exeter: Learning Matters Ltd, 2009): 33.

⁶¹ Frances Corner, "Identifying the Core in the Subject of Fine Art," *International Journal of Art & Design Education* 24, no. 3 (2005): 337, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1476-8070.2005.00457.x>.

⁶² Ivan Okonkwo, "Towards Quality Art Education: Challenges and Opportunities," *Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities* 15, no. 1 (2014): 111, <https://doi.org/10.4314/ujah.v15i1.6.r>

These creativity skills are accompanied by (intrinsic) artistic values. The artistic value of artworks is the qualities dependent on their characteristics and meaning.⁶³ Artistic worth is a criterion to measure such values, including aesthetic, symbolic, and other types of value,⁶⁴ that can be distinguished from non-art, specifically evaluated in terms of its unique aesthetic qualities (e.g., expression and feeling)⁶⁵ for the appreciation of the artwork.⁶⁶ Moreover, an artist's aims may be entirely related to the quality of the artwork itself, setting aside its economic qualities.⁶⁷ The latter is orientated toward profit and increasingly has become a motive for artists relative to artistic goals.⁶⁸

Similarly, art education policies have been transformed over the last decades to meet art market economic policies. Fine arts education has particularly taken on the pedagogical role of shaping students' thinking and behavior into the wishes that come together with economic policies. As previously discussed, this aligns with Foucault's neoliberal logic of the enterprise, which is a behavior meant for competitive strategies, actively produced by neoliberal governance.

For instance, art students perceive obtaining their diplomas as an investment of human capital, which is also expressed through government loans. Indebted students are motivated to focus more on economic returns and less on artistic values. The artist may be more inclined to produce art for financial return. More importantly, it demands job flexibility advantageous for

⁶³ Xiaowen Zhang, "The Value of Arts and Its Force: The Artistic Value and the Art Market," *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research* 638 (2022): 732, <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.220110.140>.

⁶⁴ David Throsby, "Economic Analysis of Artists' Behaviour: Some Current Issues," *Revue d'Économie Politique* 120, no. 1(2010): 50, <https://doi.org/10.3917/redp.201.0047>.

⁶⁵ Judith R. Blau, "Study of the Art: A Reappraisal," *Annual Review of Sociology* 14, no.1 (1988): 270.

⁶⁶ Zhang, "Value of Arts," 732.

⁶⁷ Throsby, "Economic analysis," 51.

⁶⁸ Olav Velthuis, "The Contemporary Art Market Between Stasis and Flux," in *Contemporary Art and Its Commercial Markets: A Report on Current Conditions and Future Scenarios*, ed. Maria Lind and Olav Velthuis (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2012), 18.

financial success under the art market conditions. Thus, fine art students and artists are neoliberal subjects that accept reality and act according to the changing conditions of the environment.⁶⁹

This adherence to the art market economy demands the development of artists' professional practices in schooling. The professional practice demands that artists regularly apply for funding and commissions and develop their marketing to be proficient with social media, connect with companies and art organizations, and attend art events.⁷⁰ Notably, such art professionalism does not include the creation of artworks. Rather, the emphasis is placed on simultaneous administrative and sociable practices, such as self-marketing, connecting and applying, monitoring artworks, and taking opportunities to engage with organizations in the art world. Accordingly, the current curricula emphasize the career of an artist and the development of these professional strategies.

The point is then that the demand and focus on the professional strategies among students in art education proposes that creating excellent creative artworks is insufficient to be discovered. Thus, students must actively seek out opportunities for the support and recognition of their work.⁷¹ Similarly, students must develop a generic entrepreneurial mindset to spot and fulfill the art market demands.

However, adherence to the market-based approach to professional success might go against the intrinsic artistic values (such as outstanding work) in art education.⁷² One reason is that less time is spent practicing art within the study program due to the demands that the

⁶⁹ Kenning, "Art World Strategies," 118.

⁷⁰ Lynne Fanthome, "'Am I Still an Artist?' Sustaining Arts Practice in an Age of Austerity," *Visual Culture in Britain* 14, no. 3 (2013): 283, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14714787.2013.830931>.

⁷¹ Kenning, "Art World Strategies," 119.

⁷² Kenning, "Art World Strategies," 122.

professional practice gives to art students. These demands are, for instance, reflected through network effects, where making a quick impression (to buyers and gatekeepers) is important for the emergence of an artist among other artists. Hence, art students and artists must strategically manage their time between artistic exploration and relational capital. The choice is either “more time investment in promoting oneself” or “more time spent in artistic experimentation and less in networking.”⁷³ Artists can even give up their time on their artistic production to attract attention and visibility for their work.⁷⁴

Therefore, it could be said that the contemporary art world presents a difference in value. Artists receive training in art education, while obtaining professional success requires marketability. Fine arts education is more aligned with market economic values where students develop themselves as entrepreneurs in a competitive environment rather than artistic values. Education focuses on the artist’s professional practice and artistic values might be sacrificed by students to meet the art market.

Moreover, art students adopt a certain mentality where they invest in education and view themselves as responsible for all their outcomes. In general, if one wants to know that art students internalize a neoliberal understanding of themselves, then it is important to explore this understanding among artists in the fine art market economy. Similarly, how do graduate artists behave, and how do neoliberal behaviors of artists relate to the current fine art market? To answer this question, we need to analyze the neoliberal structure of the fine art market.

⁷³ Kenning, “Art World Strategies,” 126.

⁷⁴ Kenning, “Art World Strategies,” 122.

3.2 Neoliberal fine art market

This part will analyze the current neoliberal structure in the fine art market. It shall not provide an exhaustive account of the entire market and its actors (e.g., art dealers) but focus specifically on the conceptualization of creative industries and how artists operate in the dynamics of the fine art market. This part shall focus on neoliberal concepts, such as competition and branding, that characterize the fine arts branch of creative industries. The following paragraphs shall discuss how artists adapt to entrepreneurial psychology and thereby act accordingly within this market structure and its demands.

The fine arts field was supported and funded by the government that had policies, including stimulating artistic practice by following the ideal of “art for art’s sake.” However, the art world underwent a governmental transformation, and the fine arts market presented itself as a creative industry. Creative industry is commonly defined as all branches and activities grounded on personal creativity, skill, and talent, possessing the possibility for revenue and work production through the making and exploitation of intellectual property. This definition entails that a particular form of creativity is necessary for changing it into “valuable” economic, social, human, and cultural capital.

The creative sphere has been progressively infiltrated by the economy, changing it into a commodity. For instance, the market regulates, mobilizes, and throws away creativity, redefining it as an economic asset. The fine art domain is changed into a market of ideas. The actors acknowledge the subsidization of art projects and organizations as investments that will return as financial capital. Artists must constantly show their value in producing their artwork. Culture and fine art have been noticeably colonized and merged into the market’s rationale.⁷⁵ The point is here that fine art as a commercial enterprise or a market is commodified.

⁷⁵Bernadette Loacker, “Becoming ‘Culturpreneur’: How the ‘Neoliberal Regime of Truth’ Affects and Redefines Artistic Subject Positions,” *Culture and Organization* 19, no. 2 (2013): 127—28, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14759551.2011.644671>.

Moreover, the contemporary art market consists of a project-based system that depends on employment in the short term rather than the long term. A great majority of business uncertainty is passed onto workers. Fine artists also acquire the capacity to control risk and uphold themselves via having numerous jobs, being versatile in occupations, and diversifying their job portfolios. Additionally, there is a greater supply of artists than demand for artworks. Due to these market conditions, artists operate as small businesses and not as “traditional” company employees. Fine artists seldom labor for wages because contracts for their services are usually for a physical output (e.g., a drawing), not for their hours worked.⁷⁶

Moreover, the current art market conditions reveal the picture of one successful project, while the artists also work on small projects that generate income. This rationale comes from the idea of one big hit and shapes the psyche of artists. This big hit is defined as one exceptional artwork made by the artist that hopefully has success.

Graduates recognize that they should network, create possibilities to finalize projects, and start new projects. Graduates, however, actually want to achieve one big hit that allows them to have a stronger place in the competitive market. Fine artists usually develop their potential “big hit” during the evenings and on weekends. The wish for one success story is in the mind of every artist because there is a possibility of a transformative effect. For instance, the pressure of multitasking and its associated networking will then be lifted. Thus, normalizing an artist’s one big hit strengthens the position and power a winner has in the competitive art market.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Throsby, “Economic Analysis,” 53.

⁷⁷ Angela McRobbie, “The Los Angelesation of London: Three Short Waves of Young People’s Micro-Economies of Culture and Creativity in the UK,” in *Critique of Creativity: Precarity, Subjectivity and Resistance in the 'Creative Industries'*, ed. Gerald Raunig, Gene Ray and Ulf Wuggenig (London: MayFlyBooks, 2011), 125-26.

In order to operate within these market structures, artists must enact the discourse of enterprise. These artists perceive themselves as customer- or demand-focused entrepreneurs who are skillful in producing products with artistic appeal.⁷⁸ For instance, artists compete with each other and manage themselves as brands. Artists aim to develop their brand identity, consisting of their history and creative identity. Past work history is the earlier artist's achievements such as winning prizes, obtaining critical praise, and invitations to relevant exhibitions. The latter is defined by stylistic codes and is an enduring component of the work. These codes can be associated with forms, materials, colors, topics, or techniques. If the aspects of an artwork recall the artist, then the artist can become "a brand." Now, the artist as a brand becomes distinct from other artists in the competitive art field, and the artist's position is secured in the art world.⁷⁹

Fine artists also have their brands endorsed by a few gatekeepers, and art events are predominantly business opportunities to network. Artists' aesthetic and conceptual decisions of art production might be market strategies. In this manner, their artworks adopt a successful and saleable look.⁸⁰ Such artworks may be recognizable and easy to digest, iconic, or show provoking images (usually lent from popular culture).⁸¹ Similarly, artists tend to focus on the aspects of their artwork that have the potential to earn revenue rather than the intrinsic artistic qualities that are only for the production of art. One reason for this shift of focus is that many artists are skillful on a similar artistic level while there are a relatively small number of

⁷⁸ Alladi Venkatesh, and Laurie A. Meamber, "Arts and Aesthetics: Marketing and Cultural Production," *Marketing Theory* 6, no 1 (2006): 13, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1470593106061261>.

⁷⁹ Alessia Zorloni, "Structure of the Contemporary Art Market and the Profile of Italian Artists," *International Journal of Arts Management* 8, no. 1 (2005): 66, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41064863>.

⁸⁰ Kenning, "Art World Strategies," 123.

⁸¹ Velthuis, "Contemporary Art Market," 19.

buyers.⁸² As previously discussed, there is intense rivalry among them. Hence, artists may choose to sacrifice their artistic or personal values to achieve success.

Moreover, this pursuit of monetary gain shows that artists are increasingly canner about their career development, for instance, aligning themselves with influential trend makers and creating a market for their artwork. Artists direct their production toward art fairs and dealers that frequently visit these fairs. Specifically, artists can choose a moderate collection of their artworks that are easily transportable and aligned with the most important market trends.

Similarly, commercial galleries often determine the quality of artwork based on salability and marketability. Artists also operate their studios as businesses, with assistants who carry out the artist's concepts to enhance their art production. This increase in free time allows these artists to focus more on marketing and exploring business enterprises. Hence, the mind of contemporary fine artists is less occupied with artistic autonomy and more with thoughts on how to adhere to pre-existing demands.⁸³

Furthermore, artists must keep their dedication to business networking because they depend on endorsement and support. It is clear that artists must be entrepreneurial when they seek out connections and make use of opportunities. The objective – recognition by others in the creative field – is not exclusively financial but as an end in itself. If an artist acquires knowledge and receives guidance from insiders, then the artist knows how to play and win the game.⁸⁴ Artists fully mobilize themselves, fitting into the neoliberal narrative of putting every ounce of potential into economic use.⁸⁵ However, artists who act like entrepreneurs do not

⁸² Throsby, "Economic Analysis," 52.

⁸³ Velthuis, "Contemporary art market," 19.

⁸⁴ Kenning, "Art World Strategies," 124.

⁸⁵ McRobbie, "The Los Angelesation," 126.

always get recognized or discovered, and unrecognized artists cannot mobilize every moment of loss.⁸⁶

In sum, the contemporary fine art market has transformed into a branch of the creative industries characterized by competition, uncertainty, and a winner-take-all market.⁸⁷ To meet these demands, artists operate as entrepreneurs. Specifically, they develop and understand themselves as “brands” and are opportunists (e.g., seeing art events as opportunities to network). The actions of contemporary artists align with Foucault’s neoliberal narrative of entrepreneurship. Accordingly, art students and artists seem to acquire a neoliberal mindset or psychology in the art world. Hence, one might ask, “What do this neoliberal understanding of oneself and the neoliberal mindset represent?”

3.3 Psyche of the neoliberal artist

This section will reflect upon the previous parts, describing how the neoliberal mindset or psychology is shaped and reinforced throughout education. It will explicitly focus on the artist’s entrepreneurial mindset because it aligns with and endorses neoliberal values. The importance of analyzing the entrepreneurial mindset may disclose its workings, contributing to development in fine arts education.

Additionally, the mindset may be recognized as a psychological effect of the ideology and cognitive skills approach to entrepreneurship. This approach focuses on teams, networks, personal satisfaction, and contributions to the community.⁸⁸ The following part will shortly

⁸⁶ Marion von Osten, “Unpredictable Outcomes / Unpredictable Outcasts: On Recent Debates over Creativity and the Creative Industries,” in *Critique of Creativity: Precarity, Subjectivity and Resistance in the 'Creative Industries'*, ed. Gerald Raunig, Gene Ray and Ulf Wuggenig (London: MayFlyBooks, 2011), 138.

⁸⁷ Kenning, “Art World Strategies,” 127.

⁸⁸ Vikki Pollard, and Emily Wilson, “The ‘Entrepreneurial Mindset’ in Creative and Performing Arts Higher Education in Australia,” *Artivate* 3 (2014): 8, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1234/artivate.v3i1.67>.

show how this mindset is manifested in artists' behaviors and actions in the fine market economy. Additionally, a critique of this particular mindset and behavior will be discussed.

The arts entrepreneurial mindset emphasizes business and artistic facets. This mindset is conceptualized as “an individual who has an entrepreneurial mindset in response to two triggers for the entrepreneurial act.”⁸⁹ The extrinsic trigger orientates on business, and the intrinsic trigger is the wish to produce something artistic. The former is how one thinks about their business that apprehends the advantages of uncertainty associated ⁹⁰ with novel venture creation. The latter is associated with achieving artistic fulfillment. Such a spirit also has elementary entrepreneurial attributes. The mindset consists of gathering people into a group, being well-connected, actively developing novel enterprises, and having faith in oneself to realize new ideas. Here, the entrepreneurial mindset is perceived as a set of cognitive skills.⁹¹

Higher education should take up the role that instills the entrepreneurial “outlook” among fine art students.⁹² As mentioned earlier, graduates are bound to experience a magnitude of self-employment, freelancing, and short-term contracts. Moreover, single full-time jobs are scarce for graduates; the employability rate is 50% for artists who do one type of work in the art sector.⁹³

⁸⁹ Maria Aggestam, “Art-entrepreneurship in the Scandinavian Music Industry,” in *Entrepreneurship in the Creative Industries: An International Perspective*, ed. Colette Henry (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2007), 32.

⁹⁰ Rita Gunther McGrath, and Ian MacMillan, *The Entrepreneurial Mindset: Strategies for Continuously Creating Opportunity in an Age of Uncertainty* (Boston MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2000): 35.

⁹¹ Pollard and Wilson, “The ‘Entrepreneurial Mindset’,” 8-9.

⁹² Charlotte Carey and Annette Naudin, “Enterprise Curriculum for Creative Industries Students: An Exploration of Current Attitudes and Issues,” *Education and Training* 48, no.7 (2006): 528, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00400910610705908>.

⁹³ Ralph Brown, “Performing Arts Creative Enterprise: Approaches to Promoting Entrepreneurship in Arts Higher Education,” *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation* 6, no. 3 (2005): 160, <https://doi.org/10.5367/2F0000000054662836>.

Consequently, fine arts education aims to prepare students for professions by instilling attitudes and behaviors, with entrepreneurial activities in project-based work being integrated.⁹⁴ Beckman identified this approach to arts entrepreneurship in education. His approach emphasizes the behavioral aspects of entrepreneurship that contribute to the shift from being a student to a professional artist in the art world.⁹⁵

The present-day fine arts program can include entrepreneurial skills, such as idea, opportunity, tactic thinking, networking, leadership, finance, and marketing skills.⁹⁶ Students learn to build and use contacts for commercial purposes other than the primary reason for encounters, such as effectively engaging with others (networking skills). Moreover, they learn how to contact the market, clients, and decision-makers, while achieving a great amount of exposure and awareness (marketing skills).⁹⁷ Even though not all entrepreneurial skills are included in the usual curricula, and it focuses more on professional career skills, acquiring these skills contributes to the development of the entrepreneurial mindset⁹⁸ aligned with self-belief, ambition, work ethic, and resilience.⁹⁹ More importantly, teaching entrepreneurship prepares undergraduates to become responsible and enterprising artists.¹⁰⁰

The fulfillment of the arts' entrepreneurial mindset is expressed through the behavior of artists within the art world. Fine artists, art entrepreneurs, and "culturpreneurs" can balance

⁹⁴ Carey and Naudin, "Enterprise Curriculum," 528.

⁹⁵ Gary Beckman, "Adventuring" Arts Entrepreneurship Curricula in Higher Education: An Examination of Present Efforts, Obstacles, and Best Practices," *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society* 37, no. 2 (2007): 89-91, <https://doi.org/10.3200/JAML.37.2.87-112>.

⁹⁶ Thom, "The Entrepreneurial Value," 58.

⁹⁷ Thom, "The Entrepreneurial Value," 53.

⁹⁸ Thom, "The Entrepreneurial Value," 70.

⁹⁹ Thom, "The Entrepreneurial Value," 59.

¹⁰⁰ Hanna-Mari Ikonen, and Minna Nikunen, "Young Adults and the Tuning of the Entrepreneurial Mindset in Neoliberal Capitalism," *Journal of Youth Studies* 22, no. 6 (November 2018): 827, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2018.1546383>.

creativity, spontaneity, and uniqueness with the market and economic demands and uncertainties. Artists understand themselves as human capital for themselves and others, sharing sociocultural capital with others by contributing to the economic development of the fine art market.¹⁰¹ The behavioral displays include attracting attention and visibility, promoting artworks, exploiting market opportunities, growing a network, and more.¹⁰² For instance, artists make artworks for the market, perceiving their works as a brand or business as a means for capital earnings. These entrepreneurial artists are ambitious about their art and do not mind taking risks to profit from their artworks, becoming market-orientated, and developing their brand.¹⁰³

Although teaching art entrepreneurship has the possibility of addressing graduate employability issues,¹⁰⁴ these issues and chances of employability are primarily determined by the labor market (not the individual capabilities of this mindset).¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, artists adopt a psychology in their self-conception or consciousness in which they blame themselves for unemployment rather than the structural art market conditions. Failure (and success) is a personal responsibility, construed as an individual deficiency in motivation.¹⁰⁶

Employability programs also translate social issues into personal inadequacies.¹⁰⁷ As presented in the previous section, the neoliberal government actively promotes this responsibility of societal life according to the neoliberal rationale of free will, where

¹⁰¹ Loacker, "Becoming 'Culturpreneur'," 130.

¹⁰² Thom, "The Entrepreneurial Value," 59.

¹⁰³ Marco Thom, "Crucial Skills for the Entrepreneurial Success of Fine Artists," *Artivate* 5, no. 1 (2016): 9, <https://doi.org/10.1353/artv.2016.0004>.

¹⁰⁴ Pollard and Wilson, "The 'Entrepreneurial Mindset'," 3.

¹⁰⁵ Phillip Brown, Anthony Heskett, and Sara Williams, "Employability in a Knowledge-driven Economy," *Journal of Education Work* 16, no. 2 (2003): 110, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1363908032000070648>.

¹⁰⁶ Ratner, *Neoliberal Psychology*, 150.

¹⁰⁷ Ikonen, and Nikunen. "Young Adults," 826.

individuals are responsible for their actions. Such neoliberal ideological framing also generates forms of psychology while blocking others, such as angry emotions responding to structural conditions.¹⁰⁸

Moreover, intrinsic triggers might be overlooked as a response to the market's requirements for fine arts. This particular market is primarily fragmented (local and worldwide markets, and art-trading institutions as galleries) and not transparent because of a great oversupply of artists. Many lecturers have argued that the market is regulated and controlled by a few, with capital-driven rather than artistic-value-driven gatekeepers (e.g., gallerists) who determine trends and quality.¹⁰⁹ Accordingly, the art curricula focus more on business rhetoric and monetary aspects of arts entrepreneurship. Similarly, the inclusion of intrinsic aspects of arts entrepreneurship has not been fully developed and implemented. Thus, the feasibility of possible focus on these aspects and the balance between the two aforementioned aspects are questionable.

Furthermore, the self-conception of artists partially enhances the flexibility and empowerment of the ideal neoliberal subject. To reach and maintain such individuality, artists with the entrepreneurial mindset must become attuned to characteristic non-depressiveness, that is, the ability to recuperate if they face difficulties while showing enterprise and an entrepreneurial mindset.¹¹⁰ Art students and artists must avoid developing (clinical) depression while being happy and grateful.¹¹¹ As previously discussed, artists keep a happy attitude toward flexibility in the art world even though art can be a difficult journey. This aspect of the entrepreneurial mindset mainly belongs to neoliberal character traits.

¹⁰⁸ Ratner, *Neoliberal Psychology*, 154.

¹⁰⁹ Thom, "The Entrepreneurial Value," 59.

¹¹⁰ Ikonen, and Nikunen. "Young Adults," 831.

¹¹¹ Ikonen, and Nikunen. "Young Adults," 825-26.

Although artists may be able to obtain this spirit initially, maintaining this in the face of fine arts market conditions may be more difficult. Inevitably, artists as their entrepreneurial selves will be drained, manifesting mental health problems, such as burnout, depression, and anxiety.¹¹² The usual competitive sphere that specifically separates losers and winners may also cause cunning acts, selfishness, and self-defensiveness among artists.¹¹³ As aforementioned, according to Foucault, the generalization of market competition as a social principle may reduce individuals to losers and winners.

In summary, art students develop and embody an entrepreneurial self –specifically, the arts entrepreneurial or the “culterpreneurial” self – through art entrepreneurship programs as a part of the curriculum in schooling. This program includes various entrepreneurial skills. Moreover, graduates and artists confirm this development and internalization of this mindset through behavior manifestations.

However, this mindset may not be enough in the face of market conditions determining employability. Additionally, the ideal of the arts entrepreneurial mindset may not be attainable as artists can focus more on its economic aspects. It is also important to note that artists cannot maintain a positive or non-depressed outlook that aligns with the mindset. Consequently, several artists may develop mental health issues.

Conclusion

At the beginning, this thesis asked, “How should the influence of (psychological) neoliberalism on contemporary creative practices – such as fine arts education– be understood?” Accordingly, this thesis analyzes the following claim: it can be assumed that

¹¹² Ulas Basar Gegzin, “20 Theses on Psychology and Neoliberalism: From Mainstream Psychology to Critical Psychology,” *Eurasian Journal of Anthropology* 10, no. 2. (2019): 51-52.

¹¹³ Ratner, *Neoliberal Psychology*, 155.

psychological neoliberalism influences fine art students and artists within the current art world, specifically within fine arts education and its market. Hence, psychology's role may contribute to how fine artists operate as neoliberal subjects (in line with Foucault) within the art world. This thesis attempts to analyze this claim and its main question through the following arguments.

First, Foucault's analysis in 'The Birth of Biopolitics' presented a theoretical foundation of neoliberalism. The emergence of neoliberalism brought along a new form of governmentality where the government instills rationality, with every sphere understood economically and individuals free to choose but responsible for their conduct. Neoliberal discourse (compared to liberalism) has a market defined by competition between individuals, with the state subservient to the market. Moreover, an individual is a *homo oeconomicus* who understands and acts like an entrepreneur, responsible for self-investment in every domain of life to increase personal value (capital). Thus, our contemporary times are characterized by the neoliberal ideology: every sphere and its subjects – such as fine arts and artists – are defined by economic value.

Secondly, psychology has played a part in defining, creating, and reinforcing neoliberal tendencies among individuals. Proponents of neoliberalism use psychological science to confirm and strengthen neoliberal ideology, yet neoliberalism also plays a role in psychology. In particular, neoliberalism has shaped the psychological experience through neoliberal selfways, and psychological research has focused on this experience. More importantly, these selfways are the specific habits of mind that reinforce neoliberalism. Artists are entrepreneurs. They think and act as a continuous development project, want to develop and fulfill themselves as artists, and regulate their affect in response to environmental demands.

Thirdly, artists develop, act accordingly, and understand themselves as neoliberal subjects through arts education. Specifically, there is an increasing emphasis and demand on professional practice within art curricula for artists to become entrepreneurs and meet the art market conditions since the market has been transformed as a part of creative industries indicating the economization of art. These industries are all branches of creative endeavors that can be changed into valuable capital, resulting in competition and entrepreneurship. Thus, as fine art students graduate, they express their neoliberal understanding of themselves through behaviors, such as working on one big hit, having various short-term jobs, and creating a brand within these creative industries of fine arts.

These behaviors are also in line with the neoliberal entrepreneurial mindset. Although cultivating this mindset may contribute to chances for employability, the market still primarily determines artists' employment. Knowing this, artists struggle to maintain a positive attitude that aligns with this mindset, even experiencing mental health issues.

Therefore, to answer the question, psychological neoliberalism plays a role in creative practices. Psychological neoliberalism specifically influences the mindset and behavior of students within arts education and the fine arts market. Students and artists understand themselves as 'culturpreneurs' who invest in their human capital in line with Foucault. Neoliberalism transforms artists, artworks, and, in general, the contemporary art market into commodities. Moreover, the artistic values of artwork are merged with financial values and are understood almost exclusively as a means for monetary purposes, not solely for artistic purposes within the contemporary art world. Accordingly, artists acknowledge that their artworks and themselves should be aligned as a brand with the fine arts market's demands of the current neoliberal discourse. Thus, psychological neoliberalism entails a new understanding of individuals across every sphere that reduces artists to monetary value in terms of their artistic activity in the marketplace.

Bibliography

- Adams, Glenn, Sara Estrada-Villalta, Daniel Sullivan, and Hazel Rose Markus. "The Psychology of Neoliberalism and the Neoliberalism of Psychology." *Journal of Social Issues* 75, no.1 (2019) 189-216. <https://doi.org/10.1111/josi.12305>.
- Adams, Glenn and Hazel Rose Markus." Toward a Conception of Culture Suitable for a Social Psychology of Culture." In *The Psychological Foundations of Culture*, edited by Mark Schaller and Christian Crandall, 335–360. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 2004.
- Aggestam, Maria. "Art-entrepreneurship in the Scandinavian Music Industry." In *Entrepreneurship in the Creative Industries: An International Perspective*, edited by Colette Henry, 30-53. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2007.
- Blau, Judith R. "Study of the Arts: A Reappraisal." *Annual Review of Sociology* 14, no.1 (1988): 269-292.
- Beckman, Gary. "Adventuring" Arts Entrepreneurship Curricula in Higher Education: An Examination of Present Efforts, Obstacles, and Best Practices." *The Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society* 37, no. 2 (2007): 87-112. <https://doi.org/10.3200/JAML.37.2.87-112>.
- Brown, Phillip, Anthony Hesketh, and Sara Williams." Employability in a Knowledge-driven Economy." *Journal of Education and Work* 16, no. 2 (2003):107–126. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1363908032000070648>.
- Brown, Ralph. "Performing Arts Creative Enterprise: Approaches to Promoting Entrepreneurship in Arts Higher Education." *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation* 6, no. 3 (2005): 159-167. <https://doi.org/10.5367/2F0000000054662836>.
- Brown, Wendy. *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution*. New York: Zone Books, 2015. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt17kk9p8>.
- Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary*, s.v. "creativity," accessed May 26, 2022, <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/creativity>.
- Carey, Charlotte and Annette Naudin. "Enterprise Curriculum for Creative Industries Students: An Exploration of Current Attitudes and Issues." *Education and Training* 48, no.7 (2006): 518-531. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00400910610705908>.
- Corner, Frances. "Identifying the Core in the Subject of Fine Art." *The International Journal of Art and Design Education* 24, no. 3 (2005): 334-342. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1476-8070.2005.00457.x>.
- Deresiewicz, William. "The Neoliberal Arts." Harpers. Accessed at March 5, 2022, <https://harpers.org/archive/2015/09/the-neoliberal-arts/>.

- Fanthome, Lynne. "‘Am I Still an Artist?’ Sustaining Arts Practice in an Age of Austerity." *Visual Culture in Britain* 14, no. 3 (2013): 281–300. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14714787.2013.830931>.
- Foucault, Michel. *The Birth of Biopolitics: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1978-1979*. Translated by Graham Burchell. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008.
- Gezgin, Ulas Basar. "20 Theses on Psychology and Neoliberalism: From Mainstream Psychology to Critical Psychology." *Eurasian Journal of Anthropology* 10, no. 2. (2019): 46-55.
- Ikonen, Hanna-Mari, and Minna Nikunen. "Young Adults and the Tuning of the Entrepreneurial Mindset in Neoliberal Capitalism." *Journal of Youth Studies* 22, no. 6 (November 2018): 824-838. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2018.1546383>.
- Jantzen, Christian. "Experiencing and Experiences: A Psychological Framework." In *The Handbook on the Experience Economy*, edited by Jon Sundbo and Flemming Sorensen, 146-170. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2003.
- Kenning, Dean. "Art World Strategies: Neoliberalism and the Politics of Professional Practice in Fine Art Education." *Journal of Visual Art Practice* 18, no. 2 (2019): 115-131. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14702029.2018.1500112>.
- Lemke, Thomas. "‘The Birth of Biopolitics’: Michel Foucault's Lecture at the Collège de France on Neo-liberal Governmentality." *Economy and Society* 30, no. 2 (2001): 190-207. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03085140120042271>.
- Lemke, Thomas. "Foucault, Governmentality, and Critique." *Rethinking Marxism* 14, no. 3 (2002): 49-64. <https://doi.org/10.1080/089356902101242288>.
- Loacker, Bernadette. "Becoming ‘Culturpreneur’: How the ‘Neoliberal Regime of Truth’ Affects and Redefines Artistic Subject Positions." *Culture and Organization* 19, no. 2 (2013): 124-145. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14759551.2011.644671>.
- Loveless, Avril. "Thinking about Creativity: Developing Ideas, Making Things Happen." In *Creativity in Primary Education*, edited by Anthony Wilson, 22-35. Exeter: Learning Matters Ltd, 2009.
- Lyubomirsky, Sonja, Laura King, and Ed Diener. "The Benefits of Frequent Positive Affect: Does Happiness Lead to Success?." *Psychological Bulletin* 131, no. 6 (2005): 803-855. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.131.6.803>.
- McGrath, Rita Gunther, and Ian MacMillan. *The Entrepreneurial Mindset: Strategies for Continuously Creating Opportunity in an Age of Uncertainty*. Boston MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2000.
- McRobbie, Angela. "The Los Angelesation of London: Three Short Waves of Young People’s Micro-Economies of Culture and Creativity in the UK." In *Critique of Creativity: Precarity, Subjectivity and Resistance in the ‘Creative Industries’*, edited

- by Gerald Raunig, Gene Ray and Ulf Wuggenig, 119-129. London: MayFlyBooks, 2011.
- Milbrandt, Melody, and Lanny Mildbrandt. "Creativity: What are we Talking About?" *Art Education* 64, no. 1 (2011): 8-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00043125.2011.11519105>.
- Okonkwo, Ivan. "Towards Quality Art Education: Challenges and Opportunities." *Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities* 15, no. 1 (2014): 110-130. <https://doi.org/10.4314/ujah.v15i1.6>.
- Pollard, Vikki, and Emily Wilson. "The 'Entrepreneurial Mindset' in Creative and Performing Arts Higher Education in Australia." *Artivate* 3 (2014): 3-22. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1234/artivate.v3i1.67>.
- Ratner, Carl. *Neoliberal Psychology*. Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2019.
- Segbars, Jack. "Artistic Production in the Context of Neoliberalism Autonomy and Heteronomy Revisited by Means of Infrastructural Critique." Parsejournal. Accessed at March 3, 2022. <https://parsejournal.com/article/artistic-production-in-the-context-of-neoliberalism-autonomy-and-heteronomy-revisited-by-means-of-infrastructural-critique/>.
- Swedberg, Richard. "The Cultural Entrepreneur and the Creative Industries: Beginning in Vienna." *Journal of Cultural Economics* 30 (2006): 243-261. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10824-006-9016-5>.
- Thom, Marco. "Crucial Skills for the Entrepreneurial Success of Fine Artists." *Artivate* 5, no. 1 (2016): 3-24. <https://doi.org/10.1353/artv.2016.0004>.
- Throsby, David. "Economic Analysis of Artists' Behaviour: Some Current Issues." *Revue d'Économie Politique* 120, no. 1(2010): 47-56. <https://doi.org/10.3917/redp.201.0047>.
- Townley, Barbara, Nic Beech, and Alan McKinlay. "*Managing in the Creative Industries: Managing the Motley Crew*." *Human Relations* 62, no. 7 (2009): 939-962. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726709335542>.
- Vallier, Kevin. "Neoliberalism." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta. Stanford University, 2021. <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2021/entries/neoliberalism>.
- Velthuis, Olav. "The Contemporary Art Market Between Stasis and Flux." In *Contemporary Art and Its Commercial Markets: A Report on Current Conditions and Future Scenarios*, edited by Maria Lind and Olav Velthuis, 17-50. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2012.
- Venkatesh, Alladi, and Laurie. A Meamber. "Arts and Aesthetics: Marketing and Cultural Production." *Marketing Theory* 6, no 1 (2006): 11-39. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1470593106061261>.

- Von Osten, Marion. "Unpredictable Outcomes / Unpredictable Outcasts: On Recent Debates over Creativity and the Creative Industries." *In Critique of Creativity: Precarity, Subjectivity and Resistance in the 'Creative Industries'*, edited by Gerald Raunig, Gene Ray and Ulf Wuggenig, 133-146. London: MayFlyBooks, 2011.
- Yoon, Sunkyung, Van Dang, Jessica Mertz, and Jonathan Rottenberg. "Are Attitudes Towards Emotions Associated with Depression? A Conceptual and Meta-analytic Review." *Journal of Affective Disorders* 232, no. 1 (2018): 329–340. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2018.02.009>.
- Zhang, Xiaowen. "The Value of Arts and its Force: The Artistic Value and the Art Market." *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research* 638 (2022): 732-735. <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.220110.140>.
- Zorloni, Alessia. "Structure of the Contemporary Art Market and the Profile of Italian Artists." *International Journal of Arts Management* 8, no. 1 (2005): 61–71. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41064863>.