

COLORINGBOOK
AGAINST
NEOLIBERALISM

About the booklet

Neoliberalism is an ideology and a political strategy which to a large degree affects our lives and the state of the planet. Yet the followers of this ideology claim that it does not exist. This is a clever trick, because it makes it hard to struggle against it.

To make neoliberalism appear a little clearer, you can color the iconic neoliberals and neoliberal icons in this booklet as you contemplate over the information about them.

All the images in the booklet are made by the artificial intelligence Dall-E 2, nourished by the community's user data and digital exhaust, and thus constitute a kind of shared look and a collective artistic expression – which, admittedly, only a few people profit from.

Friedrich Hayek

(1899–1992)

Austrian intellectual who won attention with his hard-hitting criticisms of socialist economies.

Established the think tank Mont Pelerin Society in 1947 and was president of the organization until 1961.

Was awarded the so-called "Nobel prize in economics" (actually: Sweden's Riksbank's prize in economic science in memory of Alfred Nobel, has nothing to do with the original Nobel prizes) in 1974.

Friedrich Hayek is by many considered to be the most central contributor to neoliberal ideology with his view that the only thing that can ensure individual freedom is a completely free market. In contrast to laissez faire supporters – those who believe that the market is able to achieve perfect freedom on its own, only assisted by a kind of invisible hand – Hayek believed that the market needs help from state bodies such as police, military and the courts. Other government tasks such as e.g. welfare schemes were to be abolished and privatized.

Hayek believed that democracy leads to welfare laws and a despotic "plundering" of the property of the rich, and has claimed that a democratic majority rule can be as oppressive as the worst dictatorship, and that there has "often been much more cultural and spiritual freedom under an autocratic rule than under some democracies".

"A claim for equality of material position can be met only by a government with totalitarian powers."



FRIEDRICH HAYEK

Milton Friedman

(1912–2006)

American economist who was a strong supporter of free market economics, and was among the 39 men whom Friedrich Hayek invited to attend the founding meeting of the Mont Pelerin Society in 1947.

Was awarded the so-called "Nobel Prize in Economics" in 1976.

Was president of the Mont Pelerin Society from 1970 to 1972.

Friedman believed that the authorities in all Western countries, including the United States, dominated economic life too much, and was an adviser to several American presidents, including Ronald Reagan. The individual's right to choose for himself was one of the most important issues for Friedman. He was very skeptical of both trade unions and bureaucrats, and he was a strong supporter of the market as a mechanism for producing and distributing goods.

Friedman was associated with the University of Chicago where he, among other things, taught the Chilean economics students ("The Chicago Boys") who eventually became the initiators of the radical economic upheavals that were implemented under Augusto Pinochet's dictatorial regime in Chile.

The television series "Free to Choose", which he produced together with his wife, Rose, offered an effective way of spreading neoliberal ideas, and was shown in several countries in the early 80s.

"The government's solution to a problem is usually as bad as the problem."



MILTON FRIEDMAN

James Buchanan

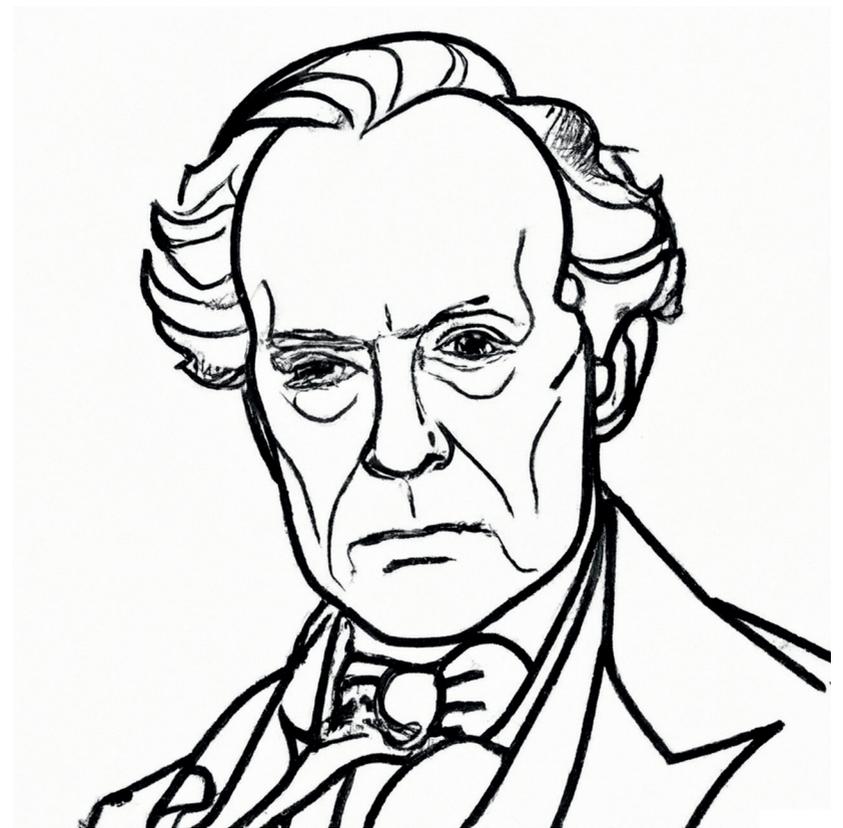
(1919–2013)

American economist known for his public choice theory, which examines the decision-making processes that are made outside the market and within politics, seen through a selfish utility maximization filter: Everything is done for selfish reasons, ergo politicians are greedy and ruthless egoists, and no political actions are taken out of consideration for the good of the community.

Was awarded the so-called "Nobel Prize in Economics" in 1976.

Was president of the Mont Pelerin Society from 1984 to 1986.

"We must create, support, and activate an effective counter intelligentsia that can transform the way people think about government."



JAMES BUCHANAN

ATTENTION! Dall-E did not know who the economist James Buchanan was, and was only able to produce portraits depicting President James Buchanan.

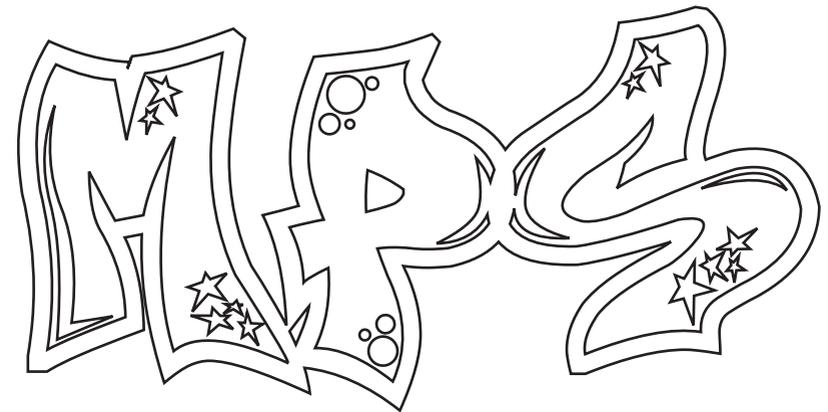
The Mont Pelerin Society (1947–)

The Mont Pelerin Society was founded on 1 April 1947 in the Swiss town of Vevey. The initiator was Friedrich Hayek, and with him at the ten-day gathering in Switzerland he had, among others, the economists Milton Friedman from the USA and Trygve J.B. Hoff from Norway.

The founding of MPS is by many considered to be the starting point for neoliberalism – an ideology that was based on classical liberalism, but which, in its upgraded version with the idea of a market-protecting state, was to outcompete the prevailing Keynesianism at the time (an economic model designed by the British economist John Maynard Keynes who proposes a mixture between planned economy and market economy), as well as what they saw as the totalitarian threat of collectivist ideologies.

The desire to develop the new ideology was, among other things, motivated by an idea that the market was too complicated for the human intellect to manage; regulations and planned economy would, among other things, lead to disaster. Furthermore, the MPS founders believed that the market constituted the best system for individuals to participate in society. Most people lacked the competence to interfere in politics through democratic elections, and should therefore have no other opportunity to influence society than as consumers. Moreover, the founders of MPS believed that the individual could only achieve freedom in a free market, and in order to ensure this, the state – contrary to what previous free market theories implied – had to intervene and help the market when needed. In addition to this, the state should be absent as much as possible, with the least possible bureaucracy and welfare schemes. The tax level was to be drastically reduced and public services were to be privatized.

"Eternal resistance, eternal uprising."



**MONT PELERIN
SOCIETY**

Ayn Rand (1905–1982)

Russian-born American writer and philosopher.

Rand never declared herself a neoliberal, despite the fact that her own theory – objectivism – had many similarities with neoliberalism. Rand believed that individual freedom could only be realized by, among other things, removing all public welfare and regulations, and introducing a minarchical system of government and laissez-faire capitalism. Even though she fought welfare schemes for much of her life, she received social security benefits at the end of her life. This she defended in following way: "Those who advocate public social security benefits have no right to them; those who oppose them have."

Rand's most famous book, the novel *Atlas Shrugged*, is 1,200 pages long and can be described as a scathing attack on socialism and communism, wrapped in a love story between the stunningly beautiful, athletic and energetic entrepreneurs Dagny Taggart and Hank Rearden. In the story, we also meet the equally stunning, athletic and energetic John Galt. While people go around wondering "Who is John Galt", this mysterious figure is secretly building a community of skilled entrepreneurs in anticipation of the world coming to an end as a result of unreasonable government market regulations, implemented by sweaty, fat and greedy politicians and civil servants.

"The smallest minority on earth is the individual. Those who deny individual rights cannot claim to be defenders of minorities."



AYN RAND

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank were created as a result of the Bretton Woods Agreement of 1944.

The British economist John Maynard Keynes and Harry Dexter White from the US Treasury are considered the most important architects behind these organizations.

The original purpose of the Bretton Woods Agreement was to finance the reconstruction of Europe after the devastation of World War II. As this was achieved, the organizations' mandate changed to the development of the Third World.

In recent years, the IMF and the World Bank have been strongly criticized by the anti-globalization movement for pushing a neoliberal system on the countries they support with financial means. The criticism has been that the IMF and the World Bank require streamlining, restructuring and privatization of the public sector, and that the "reforms" in many cases result in multinational companies taking control of natural resources in the countries which apply for loans. The phenomenon is described by several as a form of neo-imperialism or colonialism.

In several cases, the countries in need of loans are required to shut down their own industry and to commit to importing (preferably duty-free) expensive goods from the creditor countries (such as American second-hand clothes). UNCTAD (The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) estimates that market distortions caused by e.g. The WTO costs developing countries 700 billion dollars annually in lost export earnings.



**THE INTERNATIONAL
MONETARY FUND AND
THE WORLD BANK**

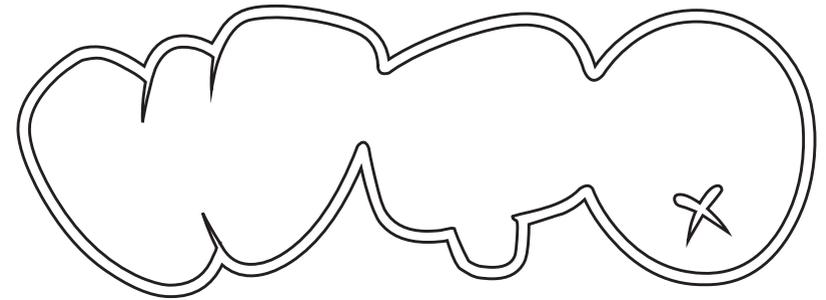
World Trade Organization

As a result of the Bretton Woods agreement, the creation of the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) was also adopted. After a revision in 1995, GATT was replaced by the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Since WTO was established in 1995, the organization has received increasing criticism for secrecy and that the organization is perceived as unclear to outsiders.

WTO aims to promote increased free trade between countries. As one of the largest international economic organizations, it has strong influence and control over trade rules and agreements, and thus has enormous power to influence a country's economy.

Many claim that WTO only serves the interests of multinational companies at the expense of poor countries, undermines local development and contributes to increasing global inequality. WTO is also criticized for having pushed forward agreements on agriculture and pharmaceutical goods that have led to limited access to food and health services, and thus caused a large number of deaths.



**WORLD TRADE
ORGANIZATION**

Ronald Reagan (1911–2004)

American politician for the Republican Party.

President of the United States from 1981 to 1989.

Before his political career, he was an actor and union leader in Hollywood.

Despite his previous trade union involvement, as president he took a tough policy towards trade unions. He also went to work eagerly when it came to reducing taxes, deregulating business and reducing public expenditure.

It is claimed that both Reagan's election victory and the content of his politics were the result of the neoliberal think tanks' patient lobbying and secret long-term work. Considering this, it is no surprise that Milton Friedman became Reagan's closest economic adviser.

"Government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short phrases: If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it."



RONALD REAGAN

New Public Management

Many associate New Public Management (NPM) with Margaret Thatcher, but even though she was an ardent spokesperson for, and implementer of, this strategy, it was under social democratic governments in Australia and New Zealand that the so-called reform program arose – i.a. provoked by public choice theory (read more about this under James Buchanan).

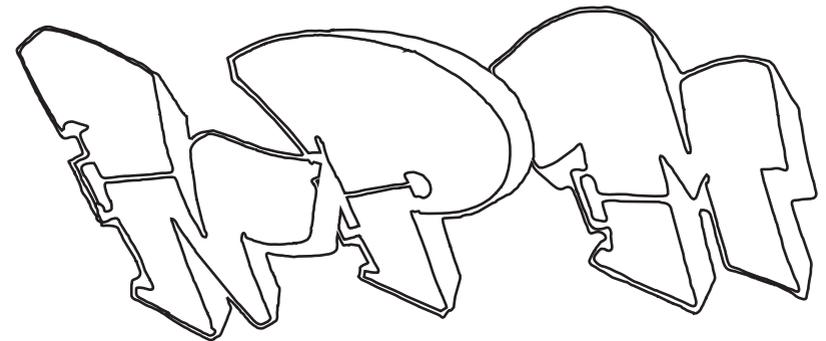
In Europe, both Conservative and Labor governments have been diligent in introducing sweeping changes in line with the NPM approach – a system that was intended to improve and lower costs for the public sector using management principles from the private sector.

A basic principle in NPM is that more market orientation within the public sector will lead to a more cost-effective supply of public goods. Among the instruments that have been used to achieve this are tendering, privatization, unit price financing, transfer pricing and customer-contractor models. After 30 years of experience from the UK, research shows that NPM is both more expensive, worse and leads to more complaints and reduced trust.

NPM supporters often use terms from trade or the production sphere: patients or students can, for example, be referred to as "users" or preferably "customers", and schools and hospitals can be referred to as "producers" or "suppliers".

Increased use of competition and the market is considered by NPM supporters to tighten requirements for efficiency. If a market does not exist, this can be created by outsourcing parts of the business to external suppliers (competitive tendering) or internal markets can be created in the organization using internal pricing.

A popular tool within NPM practice is reward for goal achievement. Both organizations, employees and managers can be given incentives to perform more through the use of performance rewards, performance financing and contracts. But in some cases, sanctions can also be applied if targets are not met. Control of target achievement has contributed to a strong rise in bullshit jobs. Read more about this in the section about "Handicraft against bullshit jobs".



**NEW PUBLIC
MANAGEMENT**

Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013)

British politician for the Conservative Party (the Tories) and Prime Minister from 1979 to 1990.

Was called the "iron woman" for her uncompromising politics and style of leadership.

Educated as a chemist and lawyer. As a chemist, she was, among other things, took part in developing the basis for soft ice cream production.

Strongly inspired by the ideas of Hayek and Friedman, as prime minister she emphasized deregulation, particularly of the credit market, privatization of state-owned enterprises and limiting the power of trade unions. She initiated a comprehensive downscaling of the social security and welfare system.

In line with Friedman's theories, she raised the key rate to prevent inflation, which caused unemployment to rise from 1 million to 2 million. To the criticism that her politics created unemployment, she replied that she had not "created", but caused that hidden unemployment became visible by canceling unprofitable jobs that had emerged under previous governments.

In the same way as with Reagan, one can probably give the neoliberal think tanks much of the credit for Thatcher's position as prime minister. Key figures in the US foreign service early considered her a possible future prime minister, and in 1967 she was selected by them to participate in a six-week exchange program in leadership.

Throughout her career, Thatcher highlighted Hayek as her favorite economist – an admiration for which she was rewarded by the awarding of the international prize to the Friedrich-August-von-Hayek-Stiftung.

"There is no such thing as a society."



MARGARET THATCHER

Gro Harlem Brundtland (1939–)

Norway's Prime Minister in 1981, and from 1986 to 1989, and from 1990 to 1996.

Credited for having made the concept of sustainable development widely known.

Although many were surprised when Thatcher and Reagan changed conservative politics in a neoliberal direction, the surprise was probably even bigger when socialist parties began to operate according to a neoliberal logic. Although it probably took a few decades before people began to become aware of their own astonishment.

Since Gro was among the first in the line of Labor Party politicians to take a neoliberal turn, she is here awarded the dubious honor of representing all of them, be it Swedish, Danish, British or later Norwegian, Labor Party politicians who are in a government position implemented the free release of markets and the New Public Management strategy – all to the great annoyance of Conservative politicians who accused the Labor Party of having "stolen the Conservative's clothes" (Syse in 2012 and Willoch in 2015).

When asked what Thatcher herself believed she had been most successful in during her time as prime minister, she replied: "Tony Blair and New Labour. We forced our opponents to change their minds." This statement may give the impression that the Labor parties changed their policy involuntarily and unconsciously, as a result of an external conspiratorial influence. The real reason for the change, some claim, is that from the 50s onwards the civil service began to recruit economists rather than lawyers and engineers, and that it is from these experts that the politicians took their advice. In the same period, the subject of economics had undergone a change that was compatible with neoliberal thinking. Who was behind the change in the economics subject, one can easily ask.

"Everything is connected to everything."



**GRO HARLEM
BRUNDTLAND**

Big Tech

(approx. 2000–)

Big Tech, also known as the technology giants Big Four or Big Five, is a term applied to the four or five largest and most dominant companies in the information technology industry in the United States. The Big Four consists of Alphabet, Amazon, Apple and Microsoft, with wider groupings also including Tesla, Meta, Twitter and Netflix.

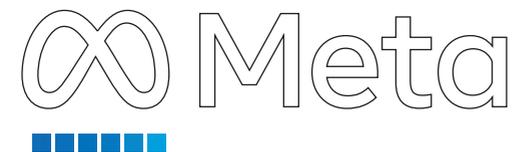
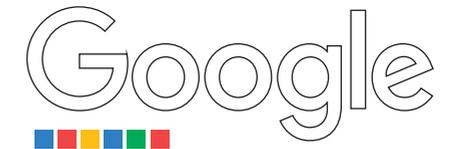
The technology giants are the dominant players in their respective technology areas: e-commerce, online advertising, consumer electronics, cloud services, computer software, media streaming, artificial intelligence, smart home/smart technology, self-driving cars and social networks – where a large part of the super-profit comes from a transaction model called surveillance capitalism or attention economy – a model that offers the user free content or service, against that he or she pays with his attention and user data. In this way, the user cunningly goes from being a customer to becoming the actual product – or rather the source of the product, i.e. user data, behavioral data etc. – which is sold on to the highest bidders on their own data stock exchanges.

The technology giants usually offer services to millions of users, and thus have a large influence on user behavior as well as control over user data. More and more people are concerned about these companies' monopolistic practices and the impact they have on privacy, market power, freedom of expression, censorship, national security and law enforcement. It has been speculated that it will soon not be possible to live in the digital world outside the "ecosystem" created by these companies.

"The human need for sleep is our biggest competitor."

– Netflix' administrerende direktør

The color charts below each logo show the palette in which they are normally used, but you are completely free how you want to deal with this.



BIG TECH

Peter Thiel

(1967–)

German-American IT investor who has helped founding PayPal and Palantir – a surveillance system which, among other things, the American armed forces and the Norwegian police are loyal customers of. He was also the first outside of Zuckerberg's circle of friends to invest in the Facebook project.

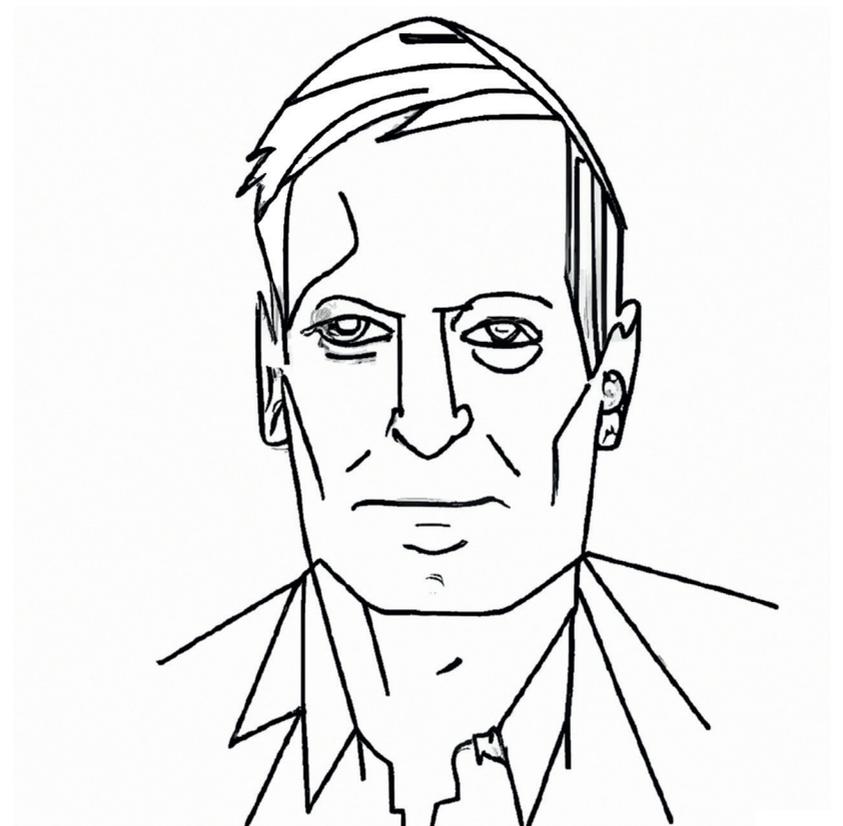
Thiel's investments have yielded great returns, which he has further invested in projects that can be described as future technology: Development of artificial intelligence, life-extending technologies and sea steading – the establishment of settlements in sea areas outside the jurisdiction of other countries, and thus completely free from laws and regulations.

It is claimed that Thiel receives regular injections of blood from 18-year-olds to prevent aging, and believes he will be able to achieve an age of approx. 150 years. For safety's sake, he has booked a place in a freezing clinic, so that he, along with a number of other transhumanists, can wait for medical research to find solutions that can guarantee eternal life.

Thiel's statements in the media reveal that he has little faith in democracy, which is perhaps not so surprising considering the amount of quarrels and conflicts people can get themselves involved in – a tendency that he coldly calculates in the levers of: the design of SoMe algorithms that increase people's emotional involvement and thus the use of time and attention (the core of the attention economy) – algorithms that now create such strong polarization that civil war-like conditions arise and endanger democracy in several places.

Perhaps it would be more accurate to describe Thiel as a predatory capitalist or hypermonopolist rather than a neoliberal. But since he is, in a way, the most extreme result of what neoliberalist thinking can lead to – he has, so to speak, lifted the neoliberal potential into a new dimension – he gets to be the last station in this coloring book of neoliberal icons and iconic neoliberals.

"I no longer believe that freedom and democracy are compatible."



PETER THIEL

Make a drawing of forgotten iconic neoliberals here and color it.

Make a drawing of forgotten iconic neoliberals here and color it.

