

Applying Joe Kincheloe's Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage/Pedagogy

And the Band Plays On

A Brief Demonstration and Analysis of Joe Kincheloe's Use of Music for Accelerated and Transformative Learning—and a Better Life



Vanessa Jae Paradis

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By Vanessa Jae Paradis

Preface

This book is for everyone who loves music. It is also for people interested in a new way of learning that incorporates music in engaging, creative, and transformative ways to enhance and accelerate learning. Teachers, parents, students, college professors, researchers, scientists, and musicians will find this book of interest.

Included in the book is introductory information for students and researchers who want to learn Kincheloe's advanced and rigorous qualitative research process, the multidimensional critical complex bricolage. It is not your ordinary bricolage and it takes research and writing to a whole new level. The process can be applied within all disciplines.

Of interest to scientists and researchers is the introduction to Kincheloe's critical science of complexity and how he has synthesized enactive, chaos, complexity, and other theories.

And finally, the author interprets two songs embedded in the writings of the late philosopher-educator, Joe Kincheloe, to demonstrate how he uses music in his work pedagogically. Following his lead by incorporating music into more facets of our lives in positive, transformative ways, we can create a better, more enjoyable life for ourselves and a better world for us all.

You will never view music in the same light again.

The author has researched the late Joe Kincheloe's work and has applied his critical complex theories for more than seven years.

Applying Joe Kincheloe's Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage/Pedagogy (Book 1)

And the Band Plays On

A Brief Demonstration and Analysis of Joe Kincheloe's Use of Music for Accelerated and Transformative Learning—and a Better Life



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The Universal Day of Love

Cover photo by Vanessa Paradis in memory of Joe's love for rock and roll. The photo was taken in St. Louis during the Tennessee Epistemological Road Trip in April, 2010.

Saloon (n.) Is the anglicized form of salon. In the 1700s it originally meant "large hall in a public place for entertainment." The conversion to "public bar" occurred in 1841, American English.

For Joe

*In Celebration of
Our Sixth Anniversary (Again)
And Our Seventh Year
Of Working Together
Across the Seas of Time*

*And
For Our
Beloved*

Pleiadian Brothers and Sisters

Can you bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Job 38:31



Thank you, Angel



Marriage Certificate



Through Initiation and Sanction by the Pleiadian High Council

King EmanuEl Nebruin and Queen Soferia Nebruin

Have been declared Eternal Soul Mates

and are hereby pronounced

Husband and Wife

In marriage of the Highest Spiritual Realm

On this third day of April, 2009.

Furthermore, let it be known that the Pleiadian Peoples

Have selected them as King and Queen

in the representation of particular matters concerning

the Pleiadian Peoples

It is also pronounced that this third day of April, 2009,

is hereby the official

Universal Day of Love

Which we Declare

Shall be observed each year hereupon in Celebratory Jubilation

April 1 through April 7

And the Band Plays On

*A Brief Demonstration and Analysis of Joe Kincheloe's Use of Music for
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Paradis Publications

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A Special Note about the Cover Photo

The photograph was taken in 2010, when I was led on one Joe Kincheloe's "epistemological road trips" to travel from my home state of Oregon to his home state of Tennessee. The photo represents the type of analysis his theoretical work asks of us—why must rock and roll (which he loved) be associated with a saloon? our inquiring minds might ask. The "heartbreakers" title is, sadly, too often the reality in relation to the misuse of alcohol. Understanding this association requires some research into etymology. Just a short search of the Online Etymology Dictionary reveals that defining saloon as a public bar is a recent trend in historical terms:

Saloon (n.) Is the anglicized form of salon. In the 1700s it originally meant "large hall in a public place for entertainment." The conversion to "public bar" occurred in 1841, American English.

Thus, it would be an interesting and informative project to research this historical trend. How is this change in the English language associated with the commercialization of alcohol, for example? Who made the change in the definition of the word? What kinds of entertainment were the "saloons" (salons) of the 1700s and prior used for as compared with the public bars today? How do the social, psychological, political, economic, cultural, etc., elements and purposes of public entertainment associated with the original meaning of salon and the newer meaning of saloon, compare? And so on.

Changing the future requires understanding the present, how it affects us socially and personally, and how it's changed from the past. We don't need to turn back the hands of time, but we can redefine things based on what we learn about the past and our understanding of how the present has often been changed in ways that are not conducive to healthy, joyful, peaceful living. Often these changes as represented in this example are employed upon people without their consent or full knowledge of the social, political and economic purposes behind them. In the last chapter of this book, I show how we can, in some cases, consider this act of changing things from the mundane and profane to one of "redivining," the bringing back of the sacred.

Applying Joe Kincheloe's Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage/Pedagogy

Introduction to the Series

Education in many places around the world is in trouble. As I was working on my master's degree, back in 2003-2005, and watched the United States Federal government clamp down ever more tightly on what students should learn and how they should learn it through the mandates of the No Child Left Behind legislation, I could see the increasing need for real changes. The pendulum is overdue for swinging back, and rather forcefully.

Unfortunately, most educational research, which is supposed to be the forerunner of this change, is absolutely inapplicable to the real world. The reason it's inapplicable is because it is far too often based on the idea that the human mind is like a machine, and thus, curricular materials are designed for this machine conceptualization, such as linear and rote activities. Further, educational research is being funded by the same federal government and corporate conglomerates that have their own goals in mind to educate people who primarily follow orders or perform robotic job duties. There are exceptions to these expectations, thankfully, and perhaps these exceptions will increase in the future, opening up more creative opportunities for and by people. But with the education currently being provided, few will be ready and this is where understanding Joe's work can help. It will help people prepare for what's up ahead.

The reality is that the human mind and consciousness is far more complex and powerful than computers. When educators write curricular materials and present instruction to what they view as a machine-like brain that simply needs to be programmed with the right information and in the right format and in the right order, they are missing the mark. And they are not educating.

I am reminded of the time I served as teaching assistant in a high school special education classroom. The head teacher had worked for years teaching special education students but she was convinced that the new research that required scripted reading lessons needed to be followed to the letter. None of the students in this high school class were terribly behind in their reading skills (many were just bored with what they were forced to read). And yet, she took them all back to first grade level using humiliating forms of teaching that they endured day after day. They had to listen to her script and then repeat syllables back to her in order to appease her. Literally, it was a year wasted because the reading was beneath the capabilities of most, if not all of the students in the class. Yet the teacher was convinced that by using this process, it would be sure to fill in the "missing gaps" these children had in their

reading that were holding them back. Clearly, she saw learning to read as a linear process when in reality, it's a complex, idiosyncratic process for which there are many methods and approaches. The reading program itself, based on quantitative research, seemed almost designed to delay student progress. I took a personal interest in the students in the class and knew they were perfectly capable of so much more than what was being expected of them. There was even a budding author in the class and the teacher didn't even know it, or if she was aware of it, she did not use the student's interests to help her improve her reading and writing skills.

When my own daughter struggled with reading, I found that she responded well with challenging reading materials that she was interested in, rather than reading materials suggested by the quantitative reading assessments that seemed superficial and below her true capabilities. This seems like common sense. If a child is reading something they find highly interesting, they will be more motivated to understanding it, engage more with the text, and their reading skills will improve during the process. She was bored with the materials that were assigned to her at school and rebelled against reading them simply because they were "too easy" or "too dumb." How accurate is a quantitative reading assessment for situations like these? And yet, students are set back and held back from their potential simply based on reading test scores that fail to examine any number of other factors that affect reading.

I knew there had to be a better way! I intuitively understood that education needs to be more idiosyncratic, appealing to diverse learners with diverse interests, abilities, and gifts. I intuitively understood that this involved both multidisciplinary (covering a topic through many subject areas) and interdisciplinary (integrating methods and processes between disciplines). I knew where I wanted to head with my research, but I found myself up against a brick wall for many reasons.

It was during my doctoral research in 2008 that I bumped into the philosopher-researcher-educator, Joe Kincheloe, and his work in critical theory and pedagogy; (this was by divine design: when the student is ready, the teacher will appear). The very first work I read that he had authored was "Critical Pedagogy in the Twenty-First Century: Evolution for Survival." It is the first chapter in the book he had edited with Peter McLaren, *Critical Pedagogy: Where Are We Now?* (2007). The title of his chapter speaks volumes. We must learn to take control of our own "evolution" (or as he frames it, "consciousness construction").

At that time, I had just begun exploring critical pedagogy and was trying to learn what seemed like a new language. When I serendipitously discovered Joe's online research community where he actively engaged in discussions, I realized he was the person who had authored what I felt was an amazing chapter in the book I had just read. I read a couple of more articles that he had posted on his website titled, "Bricolage and the Quest for Multiple

Perspectives: New Approaches in Ethnic Studies” and “Beyond Reductionism: Difference, Criticality, and Multilogicality in the Bricolage and Postformalism.” The concept *postformalism* recognizes that the mind is not stuck at “Formal Operations,” Piaget’s highest theorized stage of cognitive development—on which most education is still based today. We are all capable of so much more, of “evolving” beyond those limitations. We are being short-changed by our educational systems.

Upon discovery of Joe Kincheloe’s *critical complex bricolage*, a research and learning process which synthesizes many theoretical and philosophical concepts, I couldn’t sleep for two nights. Reading his work literally kept me awake (I find this humorous now since he and his work sparked a true spiritual “awakening” in me). What I have come to refer to as the *multidimensional critical complex bricolage* in order to highlight its multidimensional nature, provides a powerful process for the multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary approach I was seeking; it is the very direction we must turn for education as we move past the current misguided approach. We need to be prepared for a very wide swing of the pendulum--back. I knew I had to study bricolage and use it for the dissertation I was about to write. Joe and I had many great conversations about bricolage, as well as other topics, on his discussion forum. He was so patient and supportive of my learning process. It was an amazing experience for which I’m eternally grateful; I have learned so much from him.

Tragically, he passed away before I was able to write my dissertation or the book he had invited me to write. I had expressed my chosen topic to him—applying his theory to online education in order to move online education toward a more rigorous, student-centered approach, but that was as far as we had gotten. He died unexpectedly from a heart attack while on vacation in Jamaica just five days after his 58th birthday, on December 19, 2008.

His death made me more determined than ever to push forward with his work, whether the world was ready for it or not. I was not going to allow it to fall into the trash heap of abandoned historical tomes. I went on to write my dissertation and learned that, quite miraculously, he had not left me at all. How this is so is discussed within the dissertation I wrote, titled, *Did Joe Lyons Kincheloe Discover the Golden Chalice for Knowledge Production? The Application of Critical Complex Epistemology and the Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage*. I continue to explore the amazing phenomenological connection I have with him, a deep spiritual connection. More recently, to my amazement, theoretical physicists are exploring and shedding more and more light on the reality of multiple dimensions which correlate with my experiences.

I point these things out because in reading this book and any work I write, it’s important to keep an open mind. Some people already know and experience highly spiritual events, but many of us, in particular in the United States, have been taught to shut off these experiences.

We are taught that they are not real. I used to believe that too, but have had to radically change my perspective when the phenomena and magic in my life has been shown over and over again to be undeniable. So please do read with an open mind. I share my actual experiences (many of which science has yet to explain) and interpretations of those experiences, leaving options open to learn more and develop new interpretations.

The purpose of this series is important. In short, my work is dedicated to everyone who wants a better world. My goal is to provide some guidance for educators, researchers, teachers, parents, students, and for everyone who's interested in applying the multidimensional critical complex bricolage and epistemology in their own work and lives. The process is complex and few people have been able to fully grasp it to date. However, there are so many different contexts and so many different aspects, that my hope is that by further contextualizing it in combination with interpretations from Joe's work, that more people will begin to realize the profound benefits it can have so that they begin to apply it in their teaching, research, problem solving, work lives, and their everyday lives. It was during the process of studying Joe's work and writing my dissertation that I realized how vastly applicable and beneficial his theory is. His purpose was to guide us all to growing toward our full unlimited potential and to alleviate suffering in the world. As I have often stated, Joe's dream is my dream.

In conclusion, my hope is that my writings will serve, not as formulas or procedures, but as a catalysts that move people to applying the concepts and processes in their own lives and in their own unique ways—and that they will share their experiences with others. We are all teachers and we are all learners.

In this and many of my works, I reference blogs I've written, which include active links. These blogs can be found on the www.joekincheloe.us and www.paradispublications.com websites if you wish to access the links for more information. At the bottom of the blog pages are links for the blogs, archived by year and month.

Introduction

Somehow, I “knew” that music was important to Joe Kincheloe and his work before I was consciously aware of it. Strangely, I knew a lot about Joe before I knew anything about him at all. As mentioned in the Introduction to this series, I only came across his work in 2008. My deep research, as presented in my dissertation and elsewhere gives clues about our connection, but it’s not a type of connection most people can identify with, nor did I when I first encountered him. It is interesting to look back at my unconsciousness during my relationship with him and now realize our conversations were multidimensional (most often consciously on his part; unconsciously on my part). I seemed to have developed an unexplainable understanding of him and his work and we seemed to have been holding a secondary conversation beneath my level of awareness at the time. Our emails and conversations were consistently serendipitous and synchronistic, as if we were reading each other’s minds or communicating telepathically.

The very first email Joe sent me played music. He had not sent me a song, but I could hear it. The song was “It’s a Beautiful Morning” by the Rascals. I was moved (by Spirit?) to email him back, including the link to a YouTube video of the song I was hearing (https://youtu.be/iBEoBN-IH_8). I had even told him at the time that he “made music,” not even having a clue as to the deep relevance of the statement. I was to learn that much later. He is linked to music in some profound ways. However at the time I had written the email, I did not even know he was a musician and that he was lead singer and keyboardist for a band that played at various colleges he traveled to, much less how entwined music was in his writings.

It was not until after his death that I came to realize how he had embedded music throughout his work, how important music was to him, and the important role that music can have in the educational process far beyond what we typically would give it—and, subsequently, how profoundly he would have interpreted that music message I had sent him. The lyrics and the images in the music video now strike me as being ominous, predictive, and as representing a deep understanding and connection with him that I was totally unaware of at the time. In science terms, even very early on in our relationship, our interactions represent what theoretical physicists refer to as quantum entanglement and what Albert Einstein had referred to as “spooky action at a distance.” In the song I sent him, I was asking him to “lead the way” on what has turned out to be a totally amazing and magical journey. Not only was I asking him to lead the way, as I had stated to him in a later email, I trusted his judgment completely. He was my Master Teacher of the Past, Present, and the Future. . . I had total trust in his superb ability to guide me—and I still do yet today. There was something going on. . .

I continued my research after Joe passed away. I was determined to follow through with using his bricolage for my dissertation. In early 2009, I came to discover there are various levels of embedded music in his books. Some of the music is easy to identify because he wrote directly about the music. Some of the music was obfuscated because he might only repeat short lyrics from particular songs. Either you would have to know the lyrics or “google” them and find out they lead to a song. And some of the music is very deeply embedded and requires a deeper analysis.

I don’t know if Joe consciously chose all of these levels, but I do believe that he was conscious of most of his music choices, even those that are hidden to us as readers. I believe, and I will demonstrate in this book that he had pedagogical reasons for making the selections he chose (and this also includes his references to movies in his work, but that’s a discussion for another time, although the two do overlap). He openly spoke about using words as a form of magic and how he was always working on improving his writing. So far, I haven’t come across any direct admission from him in his writing of using embedded music (i.e., “hidden” references to music), although he has often expressed the importance of music in his life and how he loved rock and roll.

It is interesting that the choices he made for the music he includes in his work contribute to acquiring deeper understandings and provide for a unique application of hermeneutics. I have often analyzed various songs he’s provided using the hermeneutic circle and exploring ways to get out of the circle. His music choices also lead to a form of instant customization of the education process, providing we tune into our personal interests and engage emotion and intuition in our learning. His “choice points,” as in complexity theory, lead us to creating more “choice points” for ourselves and our learners. This opens up creative opportunities for seeking relevant knowledge.

I generally use an extremely intuitive process, which I’ll be demonstrating here, but that does not imply thinking is not involved, as I hope is clear. There are other times when I very consciously choose to explore some aspect relating to the song under study more deeply. It could be a word, phrase, historical context, the musicians, etc. Taking this approach demonstrates quickly how all knowledge is connected, because taking the exploration far enough will lead to learning from a wide range of disciplines about a wide variety of topics, and yet they all relate back to the original musical piece. The value of applying this in teaching or in the classroom becomes clear. Students can learn about different aspects relating to the music according to their interests and share their learning with the other students and the teacher, and everyone gets a well-rounded learning activity with many different perspectives brought in.

I had first discovered the levels of embedding in the last book Joe had written, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*. He had taken the approach to a very high

level in that particular book. I have since learned that he references music in all of his work to some degree, and always more than it would appear upon a superficial scan. Thus, in 2009, I had written a brief book about my discovery, titled *How to Find Music Easter Eggs in Joe's Kincheloe's Book, Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*. In the book, I delineated the levels of difficulty: (1) Eggs Over Easy; (2) Easter Eggs Over Medium: Movin' It Up a Notch; (3) Easter Eggs Over Hard: Confounding Variables; (4) Easter Eggs Scrambled: May Require Divine Intervention. I provide multiple examples from his work of each of the different levels of embedding. Thus, the book provides an introduction to discovering the music in Joe's work and ways to interpret it with the idea that it can also be applied as a teaching strategy.

Of course, synthesizing music as Joe has done, along with the stipulation that we consciously examine, interpret and make meaning of the music, provides a great learning process. I will demonstrate this process in this current book with two songs in his work that have recently come to my attention. I will point out that even when we may not be consciously alert to his reference to music and lyrics, they still move through our consciousness and can serve to expand our consciousness and increase our learning in ways we may not be aware of.

It is important to gain greater understanding of this process. It is used against us in the media daily, and in the, often irreverent, music videos that are produced for the masses. As we learn to become more aware of how this process works (e.g., how our consciousnesses are molded) we can take a more active role with interpretation, research, and analysis. The more we do this, the greater we enhance our learning and awareness or that of our students if we are teachers, or of our children if we are parents. Ultimately, we learn to become more responsible for our own learning and draw from teachers and learning situations that can guide us rather than direct us. We become more selective and learn to construct our own consciousness and our own identities rather than be pushed and swayed by the crowd.

There is much to understand in the application of Joe's multidimensional critical complex bricolage. While it is not my wish to break it into pieces because the pieces all work together with a form of *Super Synergy*, it may be helpful to focus on certain aspects, such as with music in the case of this book. At the same time, it will be demonstrated how intertwined music is with all of the other dimensions of the bricolage Joe includes in this process. It will be useful to review the process before delving into the music aspects, in particular if you are an active learner and researcher and wish to apply this process to your academic research.

Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage

Because bricolage as Joe Kincheloe has conceptualized is complex, in this book by means of introduction, I will present several descriptions of it, all of which draw on his own explanations as well as my experience using it. Some of the views may be redundant, but redundancy is almost necessary for it to be more fully comprehended. I lost track of how many times I've read his theoretical works describing bricolage. Of course, to understand it deeply, one does need to ultimately go to his works and practice it in increasing complexity. I am still learning (as he puts it, it's a lifelong process).

What is Bricolage?

This comes from my website, www.joekincheloe.us, where more information is provided free:

WHAT IS BRICOLAGE?

Joe Kincheloe has developed a superbly advanced conceptualization of critical bricolage and, as demonstrated by his work, he was an adept **multidimensional critical complex bricoleur**. Critical Bricolage, as he conceived it, is a complicated (and yet a very natural) process that makes use of multiple forms of research, analysis, investigation, and interpretation. It requires researchers to seek many divergent perspectives, allowing new understandings and knowledge to emerge from the synthesis.

Engaging in this process increases phenomenological experiences that catalyze seeking more knowledge. This, of course, leads to ever greater understandings of complex relationships between "research variables." An exceptionally high level of creativity becomes unleashed, often resulting in greater interaction with the emerging hidden dimensions of reality. Suddenly very little can be hidden anymore. Engaging rigorously in this process of research and learning seems to take people to higher levels of consciousness in graduated steps as they become more aware of the hidden dimensions of interrelationships and as they increasingly participate in intuitive, "fourth dimension" research.

Using Kincheloe's **critical complex epistemology** and **multidimensional critical complex bricolage** rigorously as he has asked us to do results in ever higher levels of experience and understanding, and in its full "employment," enactive and symbiotic processes seem to kick in, helping individuals find the most creative solutions to even the most complicated problems. Actively working within multiple dimensions using his fourth dimension research, results in amazing and profound solutions. In my own

experience, I often find that problems are solved before I even knew the problem would be manifesting. In addition, I have had some amazing experiences that science simply cannot explain yet. This is highlighted in my dissertation in some highly unusual ways, which is only the tip of the iceberg. Kincheloe's critical bricolage may very well be the process required to "unleash creativity" for solving even the most complicated, power-based problems we face -- all in service of "the alleviation of human suffering," the often-stated primary purpose of his work.

After researching this process for more than seven years now (and discovering that I had been using the foundational aspects of the process many years before) I am beginning to see how autopoiesis, enaction, synchronicity, all work together symbiotically to reveal hidden dimensions and relationships that make my life so much happier and joyful, even if I have many problems hanging over my head (that "blues aesthetic" Joe so often described). No matter how complicated the problems, with bricolage, they become solvable and/or our perspectives of the problems change.

Simultaneously, those power dimensions that force those of us who are oppressed to stay stuck at our "stations in life" also emerge, but there is such a difference to how I deal with these than in the past. Once the controlling factors are revealed, solutions also emerge in a sort of "unfoldment" process that reveal ways to counteract them and change things.

There is great power "behind the curtain" that can be leveraged by those of us who are typically "disenfranchised." I will go into much more detail at a later time, and as Joe always did so well, I will put them into context (there are many great experiences to share of both kinds of emergences - the love-based, almost magical ones, and the power-and-control-based ones for which insight, and often solutions also emerge) but suffice it to say, I am blazing multiple trails through the underbrush which will hopefully make navigating easier for people who come along and experience the same types of violence I have due to being poor and "low status."

Just as Joe was a "hillbilly" and he was never able to shake the label, I am a "country hick." True reality could not be more profoundly different -- for an Eros and Psyche. :)

The good news is that the use of bricolage is increasing rapidly around the globe as more researchers in all disciplines are beginning to see the promise it offers to construct new knowledge, lead to social empowerment, and reveal positive changes and amazingly creative opportunities. More researchers will soon be investigating and trying out this more advanced and powerful approach, which will lead to what Joe referred to as a "perpetual revolution." More teachers will also come to realize the value bricolage has in the classroom and the young students will pick it up naturally. The revolution has just begun. We can change the world! Join in today and apply the process in your own research, learning, teaching, and everyday life and see what a difference it can make. You can never go wrong getting more knowledge.

A Brief Description of My Interpretation of Joe's Critical Bricolage In Simple Words

The next entry is a blog I wrote while I was right in the middle of my research for my dissertation, thus I was still right in the middle of formulating my understanding of Joe's bricolage. As I review this today, I was still being influenced to a degree by a somewhat "mechanistic" world view at the time of writing it, or what Joe has defined as FIDUROD, which I discuss later in this book. As he had told me one time in an email, FIDUROD is in us all and we just need to be "mindful" of it.

Tuesday, May 25, 2010

A Brief Description of My Interpretation of Joe's Critical Bricolage In Simple Words

It is interesting that so many of my colleagues seek my advice with their research, even though I am a rookie. We all seem to be groping in the dark when it comes to navigating the research process. Frankly, many universities do not teach students how to research at all. In doctoral programs, instead of learning how to research, we are forced, once again, to take a long string of required classes of watered down, politically biased courses that are taught on the basis of textbooks that include major misconceptions, deceptions, gross obfuscations, omissions, and in some cases, even outright lies. And always, the textbooks present the reified Western view of things. I have written a number of papers in my courses pointing out these issues and I have even rewritten the curriculum in some of my courses to escape this nonsense, but of course, I am a hick from the country who is quite voiceless. I took a great deal of time reading Joe's version of the critical bricolage and often discuss it with my colleagues and they intuitively see that the approach that is being forced on them by upper faculty is often misguided, but they cannot see in what way. And so they often come to me – I think I need to go into the dissertation consultation business.

One thing for sure, education needs my dissertation **done** already. As I agreed with one of my colleagues, the critical bricolage involves mixed methods; that is true. (She had the recommendation from another colleague to not refer to it as the bricolage, but to just call it "mixed methods.") The bricolage, however, uses multiple perspectives, theories and methods to look at the object of inquiry from many angles and then, as she had stated, weaves or quilts them together. However, we can only SPECULATE up front what some of those methods might be and so we state that the process is IMPROVISATIONAL. Maybe the researcher will need to do interviews at some point, maybe look at different theories, maybe see how a trend noticed during the investigation compares with some other trend (there are infinite options, but you

select what will answer some of the new questions that come up as you go through the process and if using Joe's critical bricolage, the criteria for selecting are ways to promote social justice, or as he always so sweetly stated it throughout his work, the criterion is "to alleviate human suffering"); you do not determine all of your questions up front -- new questions always come up so why restrict your question to those you have up front during the time you have the least understanding of what your research might show?)....so you make those decisions during the research process as you uncover things. To say that we know what we are going to discover in research is backwards. As both Einstein and Joe had contended -- IF WE KNEW WHAT WE WERE GOING TO FIND, IT WOULDN'T BE CALLED RESEARCH. Not only that, science is not out to PROVE anything, it is out to INVESTIGATE, PROBE. It amazes me how many people even at our level think that research is out to "prove" something. I even find myself using the word and I know better.

It is a misconception to think that we can come up with some final nearly definitive answer. You can't. ALL research is interpretation, even positivism, and the best you can do is find a good stopping point at which you have gained a greater understanding and have moved knowledge forward -- maybe a lot, maybe a little. The research can always be picked up again and continued on sometime down the road when conditions change.

Note that the bricolage does not throw out positivism; positivism may have its place for ONE PIECE of the multidimensional puzzle. Joe was often criticized for throwing out positivism. If you read his work, he was highly critical of the fact that education has a love affair with positivism, but he had NOT eliminated it from the toolbox.

Many committee members appear to be hung up on putting the cart before the horse. Most students, even at the doctoral level have not been taught how to DO Research. We literally have not been taught and the dissertation process is much like the blind leading the blind in some cases (not all, fortunately).

This is one of the very reasons I selected the bricolage to research USING the bricolage. I can explain all of this right up front and I can bypass or clear up any misconceptions on the part of the committee, if there are any. Unfortunately, for whatever reasons, at my university, we often do not have free choice of our committee members, which means we may end up with someone we do not know and who is not familiar with our work. By the end of my dissertation I hope to put forth a greater understanding of the bricolage and how it can be applied. I truly hope -- if I am allowed to finish this process, and I have serious doubts about that, given my status as trailer trash -- that I open doors for future research. Educational research is not only at a standstill right now, it is taking society tragically backwards.

I explain the following, to once again remind people reading my blogs that they are:

1) The critical bricolage in action and they are phenomenological in nature;

2) Based on Joe's **critical complex epistemology** and **the critical bricolage**. This is NOT to be confused with critical pedagogy as it is practiced today, which is an entirely different ideology, FROM MY PERSPECTIVE -- please refer to my previous blogs about how Joe's work was leading us on a path AWAY from critical pedagogy and this is all in his book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*; although Joe defines his version of critical pedagogy, which is an element of his theory, he has moved us much further out on the paradigmatic spectrum, which is where I am most comfortable.

3) TOTALLY IMPROVISATIONAL. I do not PLAN these blogs. I meet with my Master Teacher each day during which he teaches me on an improvisational basis and also gives me his, what I like to call "magic music" that provides additional perspectives or sometimes simply consoles me during the trials and tribulations in my life -- and the music always projects love to the cosmos. My blogs are written much the way people CHANNEL information down through the cosmos. That is just one way to explain how I write and many writers use this same process, but most of them refuse to talk about it or reveal all of their secrets. Unfortunately, we are not taught this method in school. The bottom line is, we do not need to plan out and struggle with our writing. It just flows. This is one of the hidden secrets that many educators, famous authors, scientists, etc., know and use, but they have refused to pass down the information lest we all become great writers and, with their false notion of scarcity (there is not enough money or fame to go around), they keep these things hidden. We have free access to greater knowledge and abilities quite naturally. I will contend that we all can become great writers if we learn to capitalize on this process and practice it. The tactic in education is to force us to cram our brains with nonsensical "knowledge" so that our creativity does not have a chance to surge forth. This process is clearly explained in my blog, **Mental Processes Require Exposure to Difference**.

4) As stated above, everything is merely interpretation, including all research. In the **Disclaimer** for this site, on this page, there is a long explanation of what that means.

5) The purposes of these blogs are multiple and include, *but are not limited to*:

a) my dissertation research;

b) a way of putting forth multiple interpretations and perspectives so that we are no longer restricted to the Western worldview as we go forth with Joe's **critical complex epistemology** and **critical bricolage**. These theories REQUIRE multiple worldviews. We simply must accomplish this soon because as it stands, unfortunately, globalization is far ahead of humanity's ability to relate with each other and work together to make decisions that are just and equitable. Even in the United States, as highlighted with the border issues and the Texas textbook issues, we are not able to find resolutions for our own issues. This must be remedied and the Western World needs to come to its senses before attempting to tell "OTHERS" what to do, not that we should ever be *telling* people in other countries what to do or pretending we have superior knowledge when we do not (and I find that label "Others" which the educational community tosses around far too frequently *highly insulting* for myself as well as for the other people it has come to represent, as I discussed in a previous blog). Cultural differences simply will never allow Western rules to be applied all over the world. It cannot and will not ever work. Joe was highly concerned about this very issue and he called over and over again in all of his work for the opening of our minds to diverse perspectives. We can no longer be the dictators of

“WHAT IS” no matter how we might wish to rationalize it, define it, sanction it, put it in stone, or defend it; as long as we are using Western policy and practices, we are in deep trouble with the rest of the world.

c) We must learn to critically think via Joe's formulation of a **complex criticality**. As I asked in a previous blog, “Can we TEACH critical thinking?” No, we cannot teach it, but we can provide the tools and opportunities for people to develop these essential **critical complex thinking skills**. The other day, I described how this can be accomplished by exposing ourselves to difference, and cited Gregory Bateson's work. And as Joe presents in his work, this exposure to difference is the central purpose and role of the critical bricolage.

d) These blogs can be used for a variety of purposes, depending upon the topic and presentation. Similar topics can be assembled to create something new or reworked (used as POETs to do additional research, employing the bricolage). They can be used to launch discussions of the issues they bring up. They can be used to look at issues from different perspectives to expand our thinking. They can be used as curricular material, and, indeed that is the most recent assignment handed down to me from my Master Teacher. He wants the site to offer FREE instructional materials, FREE downloads of academic papers, FREE images that people can use as they wish, and more. So, my future work will be dedicated to this highly important educational endeavor that promotes free flow of information and knowledge products.

e) Given that this is an evolving project, not all purposes have been identified.

I am putting this all out here because over the past few weeks, I have been harassed in quite illegal ways for presenting these perspectives. It is what Joe referred to as "dangerous knowledge" apparently. I am not interested in a legal battle, and like Joe, I feel all disagreements should be resolved from the basis of love, and I believe there is ample love to go around for everyone. Joe was a role model for that. We all have our own perspectives and we all have our freedom to express those perspectives without, what Joe called "ad hominen" attacks. The work I present here is the heart of Joe's theory and philosophy **as I interpret it**. No one else that I know of is taking his work forward to the level of application in the ways he dreamed, namely for *everyone*, not restricted to academic research. If there is someone who is, I would love to hear from them. I am going to do this work for Joe if it is the last thing I ever do and all indications that I have received is that this is the time to do it. I seem to have great support for what I am doing from beyond the veil of elite academics.

Joe had some very sweet words that speak to me, personally, in his book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*. It makes me think we do have some kind of “soul” contract (which is merely one possible perspective on what my life mission has developed into, and one that particularly appeals to me) or, alternatively, he had simply predicted that a female was going to be the one who took his work forward to apply it. I can say this message is for me, personally, because I have not found anyone else out there researching and applying his work in the same manner I have been demonstrating, so I take his message here to heart. Here is what he had to say (and he always had the right words at the right time):

Critical knowledge production always involves pointing out faulty argumentation, unsupported generalizations, and unexamined actions of a knowledge community. What separates the critical sheep from the uncritical goats is that a critical pedagogy/epistemology also involves exposing the cultural, epistemological, and ideological assumptions that shape the knowledge individuals produce and the oppressive actions justified by such information. With such a task before us, I guess we just have to give up any aspirations to winning the Miss Congeniality contest. Such work will inevitably anger the guardians of the status quo. Relax, it's our existential burden – go with it. (Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction, p. 176).

Note again, here that he is moving his work forward toward his **critical complex epistemology**. Clearly, this was a necessary move to rise above the limitations of critical pedagogy as it was being practiced in the United States. And it aligns with what Paulo Freire wished. He wanted his work taken forward. He, more than anyone, knew the limitations of his theory and did not wish for it to stagnate.

Well, I have a meeting with my Master Teacher, so I'll see what words of wisdom he has for me. I don't know what I would do without him.

Primarily, he is interested in my development of the free instructional materials. Check the [Free Curricular Materials](#) page today; I have posted an interesting curricular item and will do this on a regular basis now. It shows how I have used my blogs to develop the instructional activity. I have much material and many ideas to work with and it is just a matter of writing them up and posting them. Note that I will not be categorizing these by age or ability levels. Also, that I take Joe's recommended ecumenical approach (as presented in his bricolage book with Kathleen Berry) that values learning about religions and respecting the beliefs of others, which of course, included Christianity. Most activities are geared for any level and are easily adjustable for -- or by the learners -- teachers and learners are perfectly capable of making these sorts of decisions. Aside from this, he has given me some direction for my dissertation, which I will reserve comment on at this time. He thanked me for staying so willing to "do it all" as he put it and he said that there will be more help coming my way to assist with the many projects on my plate. His clue for the song for today was "too few choices in an infinite world." I did the search on YouTube and it brought this video game up. I am not into video games, so I do not feel qualified to interpret it. My teacher, since these blogs are designed for a diverse audience, likes to put out diverse music and of course, diverse perspectives. So I have provided his choice for today without interpretation. I really liked the music he gave me last night (four songs total). I have included my favorite from the four, below, after the game video.

How Do We Do Bricolage?

As I've presented elsewhere, and as Joe presents in his articles about bricolage, there are at least nine (and maybe now eleven) dimensions to the process (Kincheloe, 2001; 2005). These are not performed in any given order, but as they are needed as one engages in their research. The following description comes from the Home Page of my website dedicated to Joe's work:

Bricolage, as a qualitative form of research, entails incorporating many different perspectives, and in particular, with Kincheloe's process it is necessary to include global subjugated and indigenous knowledges. However, after gathering all of these perspectives and making various interpretations and syntheses, there are criteria for determining which perspectives to include in the final bricolage. As he explains, "Bricoleurs accept the responsibility that comes with the interpretive process. Knowledge production always involves multiple acts of selection, and these choices of methods, theoretical frameworks, and interpretative strategies must be defended" (2004e, p. 100). He has provided selection criteria that incorporate the social justice mission to alleviate suffering and that advance knowledge (see Kincheloe, 2004e, pp. 100-102). Bricoleurs are not restricted to these criteria but I have found them to be well-thought-out and thorough -- and they mitigate for unintended consequences. You can view the criteria here: [Criteria to Guide the Research Process](http://www.joekincheloe.us).
[www.joekincheloe.us]

As Joe describes:

A particular interpretation is chosen because it: provides a richer insight into the text than did others; constructs an interconnected and cohesive portrait of the phenomenon; grants access to new possibilities of meaning; benefits marginalized groups in their struggle for empowerment; fits the phenomenon under study; accounts for many of the cultural and historical contexts in which the phenomenon is found; considers previous interpretations of the phenomenon in question; generates insight gained from the recognition of the dialectic of particularity and generalization, or wholes and parts; indicates an awareness of the forces that have constructed it; makes use of multiple perspectives of multiple individuals coming from diverse social locations; catalyzes just, intelligent, and worthwhile action. (Kincheloe, 2004e, pp. 101–102)

What I cover next are common misconceptions and important aspects surrounding Kincheloe's multidimensional critical complex bricolage. I hope by putting

these on the Home page of this website, researchers will consider them and research them more deeply. They are covered in greater depth in my dissertation and I'll also be posting articles that extend what I've touched on in the dissertation.

1) Kincheloe did not throw out "positivistic" or empirical sciences. To conclude this is to exhibit a gross misunderstanding of his work. A close reading of his work can easily confirm that he sees science and bricolage as synergistic. And how many times has he stated that he did not throw out the baby with the bathwater? As most people know, he contextualizes everything. In his last book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* he presents his position through a metaphor which he refers to as FIDUROD, and by which he clarifies the issues with the way science is and has been used. FIDUROD is an acronym representing the attributes of the form of knowledge production he argues against: Formal, Intractable, Decontextualized, Universalistic, Reductionistic, One Dimensional. (See Kincheloe, 2008, pp. 21-24).

NOTE: Joe devised FIDUROD to escape all of the criticisms using the word "positivism" generates. And he has contextualized it to the point that it would be difficult to place his description of this deficient epistemology simply under the label positivism. He explains that the letters in FIDUROD form an acronym for the main attributes of the world view under which knowledge is produced today.

F=Formal

I=Intractable

D=Decontextualized

U=Universalistic

R=Reductionistic

OD=One-Dimensional

Thus, we have rigidly produced knowledge that is out of context from the variety of situations it's a part of, "grounded on the assumption that the world is basically an inert, static entity," focused only on the things that are easiest to measure and things that we can perceive with our five senses, based on the belief that there is one true reality and we can describe it, and based on the assumption that the knowledge created this way is universal and can apply everywhere or to everyone.

2) His work is not based on some indefinable "ludic" postmodernism – It is based on a highly developed and evolving holistic philosophy. This philosophy is comprised of 12 major points which he describes in his book *Critical Constructivism*. The 12 points coalesce together to form his multidimensional critical complex world view. It's a new, evolving worldview. We might refer to it as **Kincheloe's multidimensional critical complex unified world view**. It forms the foundation of his unique formulation of

critical theory, epistemology, ontology, critical psychology of complexity, the multidimensional critical complex bricolage, etc., -- and his proposed **critical science of complexity** – another indication that he did not abandon the sciences. To grasp his conceptualizations, it's imperative that new bricoleurs study his unified world view by reading and then writing about how they subjectively relate to it and to other philosophies. Kincheloe stresses this upfront philosophical work is critical in order to ground any study that uses bricolage as a process for research. Rigor is impossible without developing a "**philosophy of consciousness**" (Kincheloe, 2004a, p. 8).

3) The multidimensional critical complex bricolage is a process for qualitative research that is composed of multiple, intertwining and overlapping processes. It is not a method, nor does it use "tools" as tools imply precise means and carries a mechanistic ontology, which does not adequately represent the actual processes that bricoleurs engage in as they conduct, or a better word would be, "enact" their research. Even the concept of "tools" changes. Kincheloe's conceptualization of bricolage is grounded with his critical complex philosophical world view (item 2, above) and a theoretical foundation of evolving criticality (his version of critical theory).

4) The multidimensional critical complex bricolage as a process involves analytic discourse, intertwined with improvisational actions for change, which moves it away from the constrictive "quilt" metaphor. Please see my dissertation for a deeper analysis of bricolage including a thorough etymological exploration and intertextual interpretations of Kincheloe's definitions of bricolage and bricoleur in relation to what evolved from my research. New metaphors that take it beyond the one-dimensional "quilt" metaphor, and additional ways that Berry's (2004a) concept, the Point of Entry Text (POET) can be applied are also presented. The holistic, intertwining, dialogical, interconnecting nature of the final bricolage renders the parts inseparable from the whole, and the bricolage inseparable from greater reality. Thus, the popular metaphoric quilt, montage, crystal, etc., are not suitable metaphors for this more complex form of bricolage.

5) Kincheloe's bricolage does not distinguish between "types of bricoleurs" or "types of bricolage" as denoted by Denzin and Lincoln (2011). While it's fine to examine these ideas, Kincheloe's form of bricolage uses all of them in intertwining, overlapping processes. Thus, the multidimensional critical complex bricoleur uses all of the dimensions that Kincheloe has spelled out in his 2005 "On to the Next Level" bricolage article--in one study--and the processes become blurred as the research unfolds. See next point.

6) Kincheloe's bricolage refers to the use of different processes as dimensions of research. The bricoleur uses them all as many times as practical to get a thick description of the phenomenon/a. As the research unfolds, "enactment" keeps the research jettisoning forward and the researcher must make decisions where to begin and stop various aspects of the research, including the final bricolage. Thus, the following dimensions are used, as provided by Kincheloe (2005a) and in no particular order using an iterative, improvisational process weaving through the discourse: (1) methodological bricolage; (2) theoretical bricolage; (3) interpretive bricolage; (4) political bricolage; (5) narrative bricolage; (6) philosophical research (constructivism, historicity, epistemological insight); (7) critical hermeneutics; (8) identification of what is absent; (9) fourth dimension of research in which the bricoleur is future oriented, discovering "a kinetic epistemology of the possible. In the process, the sophistication of knowledge work moves to a new cognitive level; the notion of rigor transmigrates to a new dimension. As in a 1950s sci-fi movie, bricoleurs enter the 4-D—the fourth dimension of research." (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 346). Thus, bricoleurs weave in and out, around and through, back and forth through the various dimensions with each pass through informing the next, often using multiple dimensions of analysis simultaneously.

7) Note again – the philosophical dimension must form the foundation of the study in order to ensure rigor. [He wanted me to include this again.] "There is no dividing line between the empirical and the philosophical" (Kincheloe, 2004a, p. 10).

8) Kincheloe's multidimensional critical complex bricolage embraces a "fourth dimension" research (more information is covered in my dissertation). This fourth dimension aspect to the research incorporates an intuitional, creative element that forces the researcher to confront implicate and explicate orders of reality. There are reasons for this. Combining a sound philosophical, intellectual component of research that also incorporates intuitional and emotional, empathic aspects -- along with deep semiotic and hermeneutic analyses synergistically creates something new from the interactions. Enaction during the research process leads to the emergence of something new and often profound. This is where the power of the bricolage comes into play. It's the exposure to relationships, as Kincheloe explains in his conceptualization of symbiotic hermeneutics, that jettisons bricoleurs to seeing and understanding "anew" and to recreating themselves. Because knowledge is socially constructed new creations, ideas, concepts, as well as new relationships also perpetually emerge – and are created - - from these interactions. This all takes place naturally when confronting complexity, difference, and chaos, as Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela posited with

their Santiago Theory of Enactivism (see Kincheloe's (2008) *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*, page 147). It is quite amazing.

9) While bricoleurs do not contend they've discovered the "one true answer" or single truth, at the same time, as Kincheloe contends, they generate knowledge "that is not as 'badly off the mark'" (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 43). They have better (more complete) and yet evolving explanations of phenomena. This is quite a different perspective than a nihilistic postmodern "attitude."

10) I have lined out in my dissertation in much greater detail a flexible iterative process that also explains some of the key sub-processes that are important to the multidimensional critical complex bricolage. It will get new bricoleurs started from which they can then proceed to carve out their own unique paths. Each bricolage study will be different even for the same researcher. The more one acknowledges the fourth dimension aspect of the research (which may only begin with what seem to be insignificant intuitive and synchronous events), the more they will begin to appear and the more profound and numerous are the actions and creations that emerge.

11) And finally, as I discussed in my blog, [The Heart of the Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage](#), there is the dimension of empathic connection with people. In fact, in his book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*, Kincheloe discusses – and includes – a golden strand of love throughout his work, *Eros Love*. And since I'm mentioning this book here, it's a great book to read in the early stages of learning about his bricolage. It's much like a "deprogramming" manual because it uncovers how our consciousnesses have been influenced by outside forces and provides us more information as we embark on the bricolage quest and begin to take power of constructing our own consciousness.

Kincheloe (2004c) highlights researchers' goals for his form of bricolage:

A central task of bricoleurs is to search for new relationships that provide insights into new dimensions of the lived world. In their aversion to the unconnected disinterestedness of forms of positivistic and rationalistic modes of analysis, bricoleurs are careful not to turn to a nebulous intuitionism or a corrupt relativism. Neither do they seek the comfort of unexamined warm and interconnected mystical feelings about their oneness with the world. There is too much injustice, too many people in pain, and much cultural work needed to address these dark realities (Bookchin, 1995). . . . They choose particular interconnections because of their relevance to the alleviation of human suffering and the cultivation of the intellect. (p. 66)

Thus, there are specific critical goals involved in the process of engaging with this form of research and, along with these goals, specific criteria that drive the multidimensional critical complex bricolage. Implied in the excerpt are multidimensional interrelationships. With practice, bricoleurs become increasingly adept at perceiving beneath the surface.

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Historical Overview and Definition of Bricolage

The following is a more formal definition, an excerpt from my dissertation, “Chapter 2. Literature Review, “Introduction to the Bricolage and Critical Complex Epistemology” (Paradis, 2013):

The world-renowned critical theorist, Joe L. Kincheloe (2005a), developed an advanced conceptualization of the research bricolage, referred to in this study as the multidimensional critical complex bricolage. As described in Chapter 1, his final conceptualization is multitheoretical and multimethodological and he has formulated additional dimensions, including philosophical and fourth dimension research. Thus, it is a philosophically grounded, intellectual and aesthetic endeavor. It was Kincheloe’s contention that bricoleurs engaging in this rigorous form of research will produce powerful knowledge that can change the world.

There are several key elements which clearly differentiate Kincheloe’s (2005a) form of bricolage from what has been traditionally practiced in various domains, including education. First, his bricolage research process is firmly grounded in Eros, a deep and overarching form of love recognized by ancient Greek educators as a crucial element of education. Eros Love is an all-encompassing form of love that ancient Master Teachers and students shared. As applied in education, it does not connote the sexual form of love that is usually associated with Eros Love as based on popular conceptions

such as when contrasting it to *philia* and *agape* love (Noddings & Shore, 1984).

Secondly, Kincheloe has specified additional levels to bricolage research, including a philosophical bricolage and fourth dimension research, in order to ensure rigor. Third, he has clarified that it is an intellectual, analytical, discursive, and aesthetic activity, and it does become focused. Bricolage begins, he explains, by “broadly looking at various perspectives to give us a ‘cubist consciousness’ on a phenomenon/a. Then we begin to narrow our, by this time, informed perspective” (J. Kincheloe, personal communication, October 29, 2008).

Toward a Definition of Bricolage

Bricolage is nothing new. Its simplest and most broad definition is that bricolage is the act of using the tools at hand to create something, particularly something that is useful for everyday living. Cave dwellers engaged in bricolage for mere survival and they engaged in a creative bricolage when they used whatever was at hand as media to create their beautiful cave art. Bricolage is especially notable in the arts and music throughout all ages. What often comes to my mind when hearing the term *bricoleur*, partly due to my Irish heritage and knowing that Kincheloe’s heritage is also Irish, are bricklayers of ancient times who knew how to use the materials at hand—stones of all shapes, types, and sizes—to build everything from sturdy fences and property markers to cozy, sheltered stone homes complete with fireplaces. The indigenous peoples of Ireland, who built these structures and other types of structures from what they had at hand, were highly skilled, improvisational artisans. This high level “*bricoleurship*” seems to have been a special trait among many indigenous peoples because the extraordinary skills are

seen in artifacts of even very early historical periods. Their artifacts stand out in terms of the degree of intricacy, skill, creativity, and variation of materials as well as for their useful purposes. The people of Ireland were somewhat isolated and the effects of the Industrial Revolution reached them later than other parts of the world, so their artisanship continued to be practiced well into the Industrial Era (Shaw-Smith, 2003).

Whether it was stonework, textiles, woodwork, metalwork, leather, willow and straw, ceramics, artwork, or calligraphy, the Irish peoples created intricately beautiful artifacts for everyday working, living, worshipping, and entertainment from the material they had at hand (Shaw-Smith, 2003). The complexity of their designs is characterized by some of their commonly known symbols that are embedded with deep philosophical, cosmological, and spiritual meanings, such as the yin yang, the swastika (a cross-cultural symbol which, unfortunately, Hitler had denigrated), and the infinity knot, among others. Similar to the extreme intricacy of the arts of the indigenous Irish “bricoleurs,” the multidimensional critical complex bricolage draws from this same basic idea of improvisational creating from what’s at hand.

Thus, in its simplest form bricolage is an improvisational process for using the resources we have at hand for accomplishing whatever task confronts us and it can readily be applied in everyday life. While it’s easy to see and perceive the complexity in creative material artifacts and music of indigenous peoples such as just discussed, Kincheloe’s (2001a, 2005a) version of research bricolage takes us on explorations to the unseen dimensions that may account for the complexity and knowledge embedded within such artifacts. His conceptualization can be applied for everyday living to make life more interesting, aesthetic, loving, and joyful. And while the research bricolage is being

applied in many disciplines today, in too many instances researchers are producing linear, superficial, reductionistic results that do not perceive the hidden, complex, intertwined dimensions that would allow the natural emergence of profound new knowledge. This is all emblematic or metaphoric in a sense, but hopefully it begins to open up other ways of viewing bricolage. Many more examples and metaphors were encountered during my research and are provided throughout this dissertation.

Defining Bricolage: Dictionary Definitions

Interestingly, the word “bricolage” is not in *The Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus*, and this may be due to it actually being a French word. The word, bric-a-brac, however, which *is* in the dictionary, seems to be related to the idea of using whatever resources are at hand. Bric-a-brac is defined as miscellaneous, often old, ornaments, trinkets, furniture, etc., of no great value. The dictionary gives the following examples of bric-a-brac: “curiosities, knickknacks, bits and pieces, sundries, collectibles, trinkets, gewgaws, gimcracks, falderals, kickshaws, bijoux, bibelots, curios, objets d’art; rummage, lumber, junk, Brit. jumble.” This is fascinating because it suddenly opens up greater possibilities for applying the bricolage if these bric-a-brac items are used by a creative bricoleur—and even more possibilities if each are viewed as metaphors and expanded upon. Further definitions are required.

Thus, gewgaws, gimcracks, falderals, kickshaws, bijoux, and objets d’art need to be defined as they are not everyday words most people are familiar with. A gewgaw is “a gaudy plaything or ornament; a bauble.” Examples include, “bauble, ornament, gimcrack, trifle, bagatelle, kickshaw, trinket, falderal, bijou, knickknack, plaything, toy, novelty;

bric-a-brac, frippery.” Now some new words have been added: trifle, bagatelle, and frippery. Next, a gimcrack, as defined by *The Oxford Dictionary*, is an object that is “showy but flimsy and worthless,” “a cheap, showy ornament.” A falderal is a “gewgaw or trifle,” as well as “a nonsensical refrain in a song.” Gewgaw was defined previously; trifle will be defined momentarily. The next word needing defining is kickshaw, which is described as “a fancy dish in cookery,” as well as “something elegant but insubstantial; a toy or trinket.” Next, is bijoux, which the dictionary defines as “a jewel, a trinket” and often refers to something “small and elegant.” The next word is objets d’art, which means “a small decorative object.” Now we move to the words trifle, bagatelle, and frippery which came up in the definition of gewgaws. There are multiple definitions of trifle, but in relation to bric-a-brac, the one that stands out defines it as “a thing of slight value or importance,” and also, “a small amount, esp. of money.” The verb, trifle, may also be relevant: “talk or act frivolously,” “treat or deal with frivolously or derisively; flirt heartlessly with;” and “refuse to take seriously.” Bagatelle in relation to these definitions is defined as “a mere trifle; a negligible amount,” and “a short piece of music.” And, finally, frippery is defined as “showy, tawdry, or unnecessary finery or ornament, esp. in dress,” “empty display of speech, literary style, etc.,” and “knickknacks; trifles.” It is also used as an adjective to mean “frivolous” or “contemptible.”

The above research into definitions was conducted entirely spontaneously, or in the terms of the research bricolage, an “improvisational” approach was taken. It is interesting from the perspective of having completed this research project, how relevant some of the definitions are and how they provide additional dimensions for understanding bricolage. Thus, this is the heart of bricolage research; it is not planned out ahead of time.

As the research moves forward, the product grows, morphs and changes, and there are multiple discourses. Since the bricolage is also intuitive one must use discernment to help inform intuition, thus bricoleurs sharpen focus to select those discourses that contribute most to understanding the research object or phenomenon (Kincheloe, 2005a). Because the word bricolage is missing from the dictionary and the word bric-a-brac was the most closely related word in the dictionary along with the fact that the concepts are close, it is assumed that etymologically the words are related. If this is true, bric-a-brac definitions can help obtain a deeper understanding of the term bricolage, thus these definitions become important. Additional research, however, is called for to determine their interrelationship. That will be conducted now by visiting Google. The search terms are “bric-a-brac bricolage etymology.”

Humorously, it brought up an article entitled, “A Glorious Mess: Etymology Journeys: Bricolage” in this list of “hits,” along with the following statement: “In case you care, bricolage and bric a brac are in fact related: the word Bricole originated . . .” The author of this blog, Beth (2010) had the exact same question, does bric-a-brac relate to bricolage? Here is her answer:

In case you care, bricolage and bric a brac are in fact related: the word *Bricole* originated in 1360 as 'un machine de guerre', and comes up again in 1633 in the form of *Bric, Brac, Broc* meaning ‘en bloc et en blic.’ So I can only assume that the Bricole must have been an object which hurled bric, brac, & broc, which we would think of as shrapnel.

Amusingly enough, in 1650 the ‘Bric’ prefix comes up again as *Bricoler*, meaning ‘ricocher, aller en zigzag,’ & I find it delightful that the French say zigzag! Let's all just say zigzag with a French accent for a moment. Zigzag. Zigzag. **Zigzag.**

One of the respondents to her blog, Michelle (2010), stated that bricolage means “to tinker; a sort of tinkering activity.” Having read definitions of bricolage

as presented by education researchers, this is, indeed, how it is often defined, although it seems vague, incomplete, and could apply to almost anything at all besides educational research. Still, the goal is to gain a thorough understanding of bricolage and how it relates to bric-a-brac. This confirms the relationship but does not explain how they are related other than through the root word, bricole.

The next hit in the google search brought up an etymology dictionary and this entry provides better clues about the relationship between bric-a-brac and bricolage by defining bric-a-brac as an obsolete French word that traces back to 1840, “à bric et à brac (16c)” meaning “at random, any old way,” “a nonsense phrase” (*Online Etymology Dictionary*, 2010). Unfortunately, this dictionary did not have bricolage in its database, so the quest continues.

There were several entries in the search that did not offer anything exciting or new, but down the page a bit was this interesting definition of bricolage in relation to art and photography: “bricolage—an improvised creation or seemingly so—something made from whatever materials happen to be available. From the French bricole, meaning trifle, and which the French used even earlier to mean catapult. Bricolage may be related to bric-a-brac” (*ArtLex*, 2010). Here, the definition of bricolage links directly back to one of the bric-a-brac terms described previously, “trifle,” and alludes to the possible relationship with bric-a-brac. Even more interesting is the association of the word “catapult,” which, in English is catapult and means, according to *The Oxford Dictionary*, to hurl or launch from a catapult,” or “to fling forcibly.”

Scholars familiar with Kincheloe’s work might be interested in this idea of using the bricolage to “fling forcibly” as derived from the word “catapult.” His work, as

developed out of the bricolage has often been described in this manner and he has been referred to as the lion (as well as the heart) of critical pedagogy (Edubabbler, 2008). Thus, as this research unfolds, it represents how the bricolage can be approached even during the most basic type of research (thus, can easily be used by children, as Kincheloe had contended). By using intuition and improvisation by which the term “bric-a-brac” was selected for research, a more powerful and meaningful definition of bricolage has been uncovered—catapult—signifying the power of Kincheloe’s conceptualization of the bricolage.

Bricolage: “Take Me to the Opera”

Continuing down the Google list I encountered a very interesting article by Paul Atkinson (2010) relating the bricolage to opera performances. In this article, he examines the mundane and daily aspects involved in preparing for an opera and how the bricolage applies here, such as how props are created. He states, “I take bricolage here to refer to a kind of practical work in which the artisan or craft-worker uses whatever comes to hand in order to create practical solutions to problems of construction and repair. It carries connotations of ingenuity, and improvisation” (p. 7). However, the metaphor is extended “to capture the dramaturgical work whereby cultural bric-a-brac is assembled in the process of creating an opera production through the rehearsal period” (Abstract). Again, the word bric-a-brac appears in relation to bricolage. As he extrapolates:

Here I extend the idea of bricolage beyond the purely material uses of *objets trouvés* and artisanal ‘making do’; I use the term to capture how operatic directors and performers can search for whatever everyday meanings, motives or metaphors can be invoked to make the dramatic action plausible and coherent. (Atkinson, 2010, p. 7)

Atkinson (2010) takes the concept a step further, stating,

There are several senses in which the work of the opera company rests on bricolage, in both a material and an interactional sense. In the process of creating an opera, there are multiple processes of translation or transformation to be accomplished. There is a process of improvisation in these acts of translation: that is, the practical artisanal work involved in using what is at hand, improvising effects and generally finding ways of turning ideas, verbal or visual, into practical objects and artefacts. (p. 7)

He further explains that “there is a sense in which all performances and rehearsals are acts of bricolage” (p. 10). Taking it to the interpretive level, he contends that the singers and director both are engaged with a “kind of interpretive work,” a critical component of the research bricolage. He places this in the context of a “cultural bricolage” and interpretive act, which provide a “mechanism whereby social action is motivated and rendered accountable” (p. 17). He explains:

In pursuing the mundane metaphors and motives directors engage in is a kind of cultural bricolage, drawing on their own repertoires for exemplars and similes. In order to ‘find’ a way of making sense of the opera, they invoke artistic images, literary antecedents, mass media, and, most commonly, they enact everyday vernacular iterations in order to suggest possible ways of acting. To that extent, therefore, there is an engaging reversal of Goffman’s formulation of the dramaturgical metaphor with which I began. Goffman invokes the theatre in making sense of everyday life. By contrast, performers and directors use their own constructions of everyday life in order to make possible the conditions of performance. Orzechowicz (2008) has suggested that stage actors and directors are ‘privileged emotion managers’; operatic performers and directors are also experts in the dramaturgy of emotions and intentions. (Atkinson, 2010, p. 10)

The extensive quotes are justified for exquisitely capturing the heart of Kincheloe’s critical complex bricolage and why it can be used in any context, including everyday living. When we as performers and the directors of our own lives become adept at using whatever we have around us—the bric-a-brac, so to speak—then we can construct our own everyday lives such that we can all perform and dance joyfully. We are all stars, in other words. The critical complex bricolage as Kincheloe conceptualizes it goes much deeper, of course, and it gives us power to override dominant power in many

different life situations we may find ourselves immersed in. But nevertheless, we need to start somewhere and the opera context gives us that start by defining the bricolage in multiple contexts within one domain and it brings to light an emotional dimension, an important aspect of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage.

The Internet Highway: A Fractal-Like Metaphor for Bricolage

One more excerpt from this current epistemological road trip provides an interesting way to view the bricolage in relation to the Internet. The Internet is significant as a metaphor for the research bricolage, of course, because as Kincheloe (2008b) explains, it is a fractal—one of those evolving entities that is hyper-dimensional in function. Thus, this observation from another blogger is relevant in this context. Tumblr (2010) states:

Out with globalization then? And in with bricolage!

It's a thought I've been chewing on much lately, in fact it kept me from sleeping the other night. I turned to my boyfriend and exclaimed, "I don't get it! The internet is this fast-forward manifestation of an accelerated collective consciousness, and YET! it is also the greatest tool of fragmentation, lending itself to individuals, small groups and collectives to define themselves as apart from the rest.

Thus, by taking this totally improvisational approach to defining bricolage for which the above was an accurate account of one session of research, the study about opera was uncovered that explains the bricolage in concrete terms while also illustrating the power it provides for emergent action or "enactment," which, in the example, is represented by the opera practice and performance. Of course, it does not end there due to the potentially catalytic effect the opera exerts on the audience and actors after the performance. While a deep analysis is possible here, for the moment this provides an accurate cursory understanding of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage and

the fact that *action* is the outcome. The observation from the Internet discussion by Tumblr (2010) that fragmentation can result from bricolage perhaps provides insight into why Kincheloe took it to a new conceptual level and developed criteria to guide new bricoleurs who are just getting started.

The Value of Improvisation: Expanding the Definition

There were two reasons this improvisational research approach was taken to define bricolage. First, having read so many definitions of the bricolage in education literature, outside of Kincheloe's (2005a, 2008c) unique definition is the observation that they are all the same. They rehash the same words and metaphors, revealing little about the research process, experience, products, or effects. Thus, in the same vein that the term postmodernism has come to mean anything and everything and yet researchers take it for granted that it is known what they mean when they use the term, bricolage research is in danger of coming to mean anything and everything and falling into the postmodern swamp. This provides more evidence that it is time to clearly delineate what is meant by this form of research and what might be expected of researchers who wish to produce quality, rigorous bricolage research. Kincheloe's (2001a, 2005a, 2008c) advanced conceptualization does this and his definition of bricolage warrants a deeper analysis as a part of this current research. If it is as powerful as he has portrayed and as signified by his scholarly work, and as more people apply it, then it may, indeed, help *catapult* the world toward change.

Kincheloe's Definition of Bricolage

Now that the definition of the bricolage has been presented from an etymological, historical, and various researchers' perspectives, it is time to go to the true source for the definition of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage. Due to the complexity of

his theory, the definition is articulated here but continues in greater depth with an analysis in Chapter 4. Kincheloe (2001a, 2005a, 2008c), of course, had recognized that the bricolage was increasingly being applied in multiple disciplines to address the growing complexity of social and educational issues, and if used rigorously and critically, it offered great potential for research. He also recognized the need for taking this process to a more rigorous, multidimensional level than was being applied or it was destined to become useless as a viable form of research. As has been discussed, bricolage is increasingly being linked to postmodernism (e.g., Arikan, 2011; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; McLaren, 2001; Hayes, Steinberg & Tobin, 2011). In fact, some postmodernists are latching onto the term and calling it their own, even though bricolage has been around since humankind. Thus, Kincheloe (2005a) presented his advanced conceptualization of an interdisciplinary, multimethodological, multitheoretical research bricolage for education and the social sciences to resolve the issues with how bricolage was conceived and applied. This complex form of bricolage involves synthesizing multiple and diverse perspectives and it is simultaneously creative, drawing on affect and desire, and rigorous, drawing on intellect. According to Kincheloe, it develops “higher order” critical thinking skills. Kincheloe (2005a) describes his conceptualization:

On one level, the bricolage can be described as the process of getting down to the nuts and bolts of multidisciplinary research. Ethnography, textual analysis, semiotics, hermeneutics, psychoanalysis, phenomenology, historiography, discourse analysis, combined with philosophical analysis, literary analysis, aesthetic criticism, and theatrical and dramatic ways of observing and making meaning constitute the methodological bricolage. In this way, bricoleurs move beyond the blinds of particular disciplines and peer through a conceptual window to a new world of research and knowledge production. (p. 323)

Kincheloe (2001b) contends, “As we pursue modes of thinking that account for changes and interactions in the physical, social, and psychological domains, we begin to gain dramatically different and more complex perspectives on that which surrounds us” (p. 296). In other words, bricoleurs develop to the ability to think in more holistic terms about complex problems to uncover the multiple, hidden dimensions of problems, a

necessary task if one is to find viable and effective solutions. Kincheloe (2005a) also stressed the importance of a philosophical dimension to the research and clarifies:

I use the phrase *philosophical research* to denote the use of various philosophical tools to help clarify the process of inquiry and provide insight into the assumptions on which it conceptually rests. . . . philosophically informed bricoleurs begin to document the specific influences of life history, lived context, race, class, gender, and sexuality on researchers and the knowledge they produce (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; McLeod, 2000; Zammito, 1996). (p. 336) [author's emphasis]

During this process, bricoleurs make use of historicity, critical constructivism, critical hermeneutics, comparative epistemology, critical ontology, and other methods, in order to understand the effects of power and how it has shaped knowledge and in this way they can begin to identify potential “counterhegemonic *action*” (p. 338) [author's emphasis]. As Kincheloe (2008c) points out, “We learn from Vedic traditions, Islamic insights, the knowledges of East Asia, Hebrew practices, African philosophies, and indigenous ways of making meaning from around the world. These *border epistemologies* help us change the knowledges we produce, not simply *invert* them” (p. 192) [author's emphasis]. He cautions that through critical complex epistemology we must not romanticize any particular worldview and “we avoid fundamentalism at all costs” (p. 193). The goal is to engage in interrelationships for the purpose of knowledge production. “In this multilogical epistemological pluriverse the border epistemology that is created views itself as an agent of connection that builds trading zones for multiple forms of knowledge” (p. 193). In other words, this provides people greater freedom and an appreciation for other ways of perceiving beyond their own personal experiences. Working together in “critical knowledge networks” and “multilogical communities,” new knowledges can be constructed and a better world can be created as actions emerge that stop subjugation and suffering (Kincheloe, 2008c).

It is important for researchers to bracket, in the phenomenological sense, their own experiences and subjectivity in order to gain a critical understanding of the knowledges they encounter from multiple vantage points. “Rigor,” Kincheloe emphasizes, “I assert, is impossible without such knowledge and discernment”

(Kincheloe, 2005a, p. 336). And as he had pointed out, the complexity of educational and social research and their multidimensional nature demands rigor. Because Kincheloe has repeatedly highlighted the importance of the multidimensionality for his rendition of bricolage research, as well as the incorporation of complexity and criticality foundations, again, in order to differentiate his conceptualization from other forms of bricolage and emphasize the importance of these aspects, it is denoted, as previously expressed, as the *multidimensional critical complex bricolage*.

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In the Analysis section of my dissertation is a more extensive discussion of Kincheloe's bricolage and epistemology, for those who are interested (it is posted on the www.joekincheloe.us website).

Thus, this has been a summary of the definition and process of Joe's bricolage presented by means of different perspectives; it is only a summary. Don't worry if you don't understand it all right now. We will be coming back to the various aspects in this writing and I will cover it in future writings. Soon it all becomes natural.

I will review and demonstrate some of these concepts in relation to the role of music in the bricolage, which is the focus of this book and a critical ingredient for this powerfully transformative learning process. I don't think multidimensional critical complex bricolage would be complete without including music. And that can be argued for other components of the bricolage, which you'll discover as you learn more and begin to apply Kincheloe's process. But first, I will briefly cover another important component of bricolage, critical complex epistemology (the science and philosophy of learning) and some considerations for master and doctoral students who wish to employ bricolage as the process they use for their theses and dissertations.

Critical Complex Epistemology

Hand-in-hand with Joe's bricolage process is the philosophical approach he recommends for epistemology. First, it should be mentioned that with all of his terms, he renames and redefines important concepts, expanding their meanings. For example, he has his own definitions of what constitutes being "critical" and "complex," the words that modify epistemology as well as many of his other terms. In fact, these definitions put much greater expectations on us as researchers, learners, and teachers. Unfortunately, in attempts at application of his theory people overlook a deep analysis of the ways in which he defines the terms he uses and they make assumptions that tend to divert from the rigor he is asking of us.

He defines these concepts in great depth and detail in *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*. Honestly, this book should be required reading for anyone who wants to improve their research and learning skills—and life skills in general. I will note that I have no interest monetarily in sales of his books. My motive is to promote that which I believe in and know will serve the world well. In the book it is clear that not only does he present these very complex ideas in ways that everyone can understand them, the book itself is a representation that he had mastered the process himself. It's creative, powerful, academic, and yet violates many of the "stuck-in-the-mud" educational literature "rules of engagement." Thus, the book is highly engaging for all. It is also the book he has more extensively embedded music, perhaps more than any of his previous books, although that's open for exploration. There are many "treasures" waiting to be discovered in Joe Kincheloe's books.

The following are brief introductions to his terms, which you'll become more familiar with as you read more of his work and practice his form of bricolage:

Epistemology. Constitutes the branch of philosophy that analyzes the nature of knowledge and what we believe to be true. Epistemology asks how do we analyze knowledge? How do we know it's true? How do we produce knowledge and what is the status of that knowledge in the world? In other words, how do various individuals react to the knowledge we produce? An educational epistemological question that emerges in this context involves what do we consider valid and important knowledge and which parts of it should become part of the curriculum? How do we figure out what to teach [or learn] and is the knowledge we choose of any worth? (Kincheloe, 2008c, pp. 15–16)

Critical" and "Complex" as in Critical Complex Pedagogy/Epistemology/Bricolage. Note: When Kincheloe attaches the designator, "critical" in front of terms, this represents the incorporation of his own unique and more rigorous version of

evolving critical theory, which he describes in his work and is summarized in Chapter 2 Literature Review. It is, of course, associated with the identification of dominant power and finding solutions to alleviate oppression and suffering. The word “complex” denotes the engagement with complexity theory. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 247)

Additionally, Kincheloe’s theory incorporates Maturana and Varela’s *enactive theory*, which he discusses throughout his works, including, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*, so I won’t repeat those discussions here. I have touched on the impact of the synergistic nature of the theories Kincheloe has incorporated on what emerges during engagement with bricolage in the previous discussions in this book.

What I have discovered about Joe’s work is that he has provided extensive discussions of the details of his conceptualizations scattered throughout his works, so there is a requirement to perform intertextual analysis to some degree in order to get the greater picture. I think this is to be expected from a philosopher who’s working on the evolution of great ideas. Thus, the avid bricoleur will want to explore his works in greater detail, especially as they relate to their own work. I attempt to do this in my own writing, but because Kincheloe authored an enormous number of works, I can’t touch on everything. However, as I discovered, it was required that I actually use his bricolage in order to figure out how to use it, as I noted in my dissertation. Thus, I have cited explanations from many of his works.

Here, again, is a brief excerpt from my dissertation about critical complex epistemology:

A Critical Complex Epistemology

Is critical pedagogy on the way out? For example, there are many arguments contending that Freirean critical pedagogy as practiced by mainstream and not-so-mainstream teachers should be put aside much as we did the horse, whip and buggy. Freire’s (1970/2007) work, which has formed the foundation of some forms of critical pedagogy has perhaps been run into the ground but continues to be milked for financial gain (and control?). While his work has made contributions and has made people think about the issues of oppression and the importance of what he termed “radical love,” his sincere wishes were that people go forward and not stay stuck on his work. Considering that forty years of attempting to apply Freire’s ideas have obviously not worked to

resolve social justice issues, it seems that the reasonable and even the smart thing to do is to move on to something better, which is what Kincheloe's theoretical work offers.

Why does Freire's work continue to be pushed in certain education domains (and not others)? Why is it being pushed even more heavily now than ever in the past? What has Freire's work contributed that is really new? What is the historical context in which his work was originally developed? Why has it not worked? Has it been applied? Additionally, Kincheloe has maintained that the Frankfurt School critical theorists had not developed a "unified approach." Is it time to move on? Why hasn't Kincheloe's work been applied? (Gibson, 1994; Kincheloe, 2008c).

As Kincheloe (2008b) wrote in his revised version of the book, *Critical Pedagogy Primer*, "Over the past few years I have written too many second editions to books that begin with words such as 'When I first wrote this book in ____ I had no idea that it would be more germane to the political and educational world of ____ than it did when I wrote that first edition.' Yet, here I am again, writing the preface to the second edition of the *Critical Pedagogy Primer* that could easily begin with the exact same preceding words" (p. vii). In other words, not only has nothing changed, but the educational and political climate has deteriorated even more. It is noteworthy, as well, that in this book Kincheloe provides biographies of a number of leading critical pedagogues. He does not include his own biography. Why is that? (Bricoleurs always look for what is missing.)

Kincheloe's (2008b, 2008c) version of "critical pedagogy/critical complex epistemology" is a broad leap to that something different and better. As can be seen by the quotation, he is moving forward from critical pedagogy to *critical complex epistemology/pedagogy* (or an "evolving critical pedagogy" as he frames it). In his last

book, he seems to leave options open if people want to continue to call it “critical pedagogy” but his more emphatic message is that critical pedagogy, or teaching in the traditional sense will have a smaller role in education of the future, and greater focus will be placed on understanding a critical complex epistemology so that researchers, teachers, and learners are able to produce their own empowering knowledge (Kincheloe 2008c). In his book, *Critical Pedagogy Primer*, he expresses the need to go above and beyond critical pedagogy, stating, “Although a critical pedagogy that teaches Western logic is inadequate, a critical pedagogy that teaches only how to discern the political inscriptions of texts and academic practices is also not enough. There is more to learn, more to be addressed, more to do” and he frames this “more” in terms of a “deep critical pedagogy” in which researchers learn to question their own assumptions, views of life, and notions of who they are (p. 173). Important to gaining multiple perspectives that can aid in accomplishing this feat, he reiterates throughout his work the incorporation of multiple ontologies and subjugated knowledges. Without this deeper approach to critical pedagogy—without an “evolving critical complex pedagogy”—the act of teaching is not likely fully aligned with teachers’ or researchers’ philosophical views or ways of “being” in the world, a hypocrisy that does not go unnoticed by the very individuals critical pedagogy ostensibly is meant to empower, the oppressed and subjugated peoples of the world. Critical pedagogues, just like the proponents of any ideology can construct their own version of status quo and oppress people. The safeguard to prevent this has been installed in Kincheloe’s deep critical pedagogy and further grounded with complexity theory and his critical constructivist unified world view.

If you are interested in Joe's detailed explanation of ***critical complex epistemology***, beyond reading *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* in which critical complex epistemology is almost synonymous with his version of critical pedagogy, I also highly recommend reading from his 2001 book, *Getting beyond the Facts: Teaching Social Studies/Social Sciences in the Twenty-first Century* where he has an entire section dedicated to "Epistemology and Knowledge Work." (pp. 183-345)

Using Bricolage for Your Qualitative Research “Method”

Before getting started with the analysis of Joe’s use of music in his work, it might be helpful to read another perspective about bricolage as I had presented it in the proposal of my research using the process. This might be helpful for those who want to use bricolage as the process for their research, and I stress here that it is a **process**, comprised of many methods and processes. I wrote this Dissertation *Problem Statement* early-on as a tentative proposal before I began the research for my dissertation and it simply puts forth another perspective that may be easy to relate to and convey to committee members. As is conveyed, we have a general idea of what we want to research, but overall, the study is exploratory and stays open until we naturally narrow it down. Most researchers understand this exploratory nature of research, even if it has not been a traditional approach to formal research in which the persona of the “expert” is often overvalued in the production and dissemination of knowledge.

What often ends up happening is that our inquiry uncovers new, more important questions that then become the focus of our research. It’s opposite of the approach of knowing our questions and developing hypotheses that color our research, and which constrain our study and also limit what we can learn. Also, we must stay vigilant up front and describe our personal relationship with the objects and subjects of our research so that readers have the context within which we make our interpretations. This is the philosophical dimension Joe stresses is so important that’s needed to ground our research. This is not easy to do and it can get uncomfortable, but the more we can do this, the more genuine, valid, and applicable is the knowledge we produce.

Dissertation Problem Statement/Pre-proposal Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy

Author: Vanessa Paradis

Date: May 10, 2010

Proposed Title of the Study (Tentative)

Did Joe Lyons Kincheloe Discover the “Golden Chalice” for Knowledge Production? A Bricolage Study of the Multidimensional Critical Bricolage

[NOTE: After conducting my research the title changed to: *Did Joe Lyons Kincheloe Discover the Golden Chalice for Knowledge Production? The Application of Critical Complex Epistemology and the Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage*. I thought the title may be too long, but after consultation with my Committee Members the choice was made to not shorten it because it accurately represents the process.]

Statement of the Problem/Introduction

Societal expectations for education and educational paradigms are changing rapidly with the growing awareness of the failure of the mandates of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) to improve the state of education in the U.S. Increasing calls for changes in education will likely result in a return to more holistic, student-centered, constructivist approaches to learning, which was the direction education was heading until it became side-tracked with the NCLB test mandates in 2001. The ensuing changes will open avenues for more diverse ways of conducting both research and education, thus presenting a prerequisite for strong foundations in research methodologies as well as diverse and more rigorous ways of teaching and learning. This exploratory study will illustrate possibilities for approaching education and research more rigorously and holistically, using Kincheloe's advanced conceptualization of the multidimensional critical bricolage (Kincheloe, 2005; 2008).

The bricolage, as conceptualized by Kincheloe is a critical discourse grounded in constructivism and the premise that knowledge is socially constructed. It is rigorous, multimethodological, multitheoretical, and improvisational. To date, loose forms of the bricolage are being used in various contexts, mostly outside of the discipline of education, and there are very few formal examples that adequately illustrate the wide applicability and, importantly, the power of this methodology to increase rigor in learning, research, complex problem-solving, and the production of new knowledge, or for everyday living. The critical bricolage may be represented only by Kincheloe's own work; however, more research will be conducted to determine this and this study will open the doors for wider application. In that vein, this is not meant to be a final blueprint or one "true" answer, but rather a tantalizing look at possibilities for creative approaches to teaching, researching, learning, and living by applying the theory in idiosyncratic ways for multiple purposes. Leaving the bricolage open for many approaches, (and, indeed, there are infinite approaches), will lead to the conceptualization and practice of education as truly the free enterprise it should be if we are to honor diversity and individuality in ways that can improve life for everyone.

This study proposes to survey the literature to determine how the bricolage is currently used in several domains (e.g. business, nursing education, social sciences, the arts, etc.). Currently, there are very few examples in education and it is worthy to consider what might be learned by evaluating the use of the bricolage in other domains. This is important because up-to-date qualitative educational research is somewhat scarce due to the focus on empirical, positivistic methods that are concerned with gathering data to measure and improve success of meeting the NCLB test mandates. Additionally, educational research grants tend to be weighted toward quantitative research, as a check of the American Educational Research Association's website reveals (AERA, 2010). This proposed outside-of-the-domain research is also important because the bricolage seeks to "blur the boundaries" of the disciplines in order to better contextualize and ground the production of knowledge and expand understanding (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004; Kincheloe, 2005).

Research Questions

When using the bricolage, questions can initiate the study, however, additional questions will come up and will be addressed during this improvisational approach to research. As both Einstein and Kincheloe are known to have commented, if we knew what we were going to find, it would not be called research.

Literature Review Questions

Where and how is the bricolage being used? How is the bricolage being defined in these contexts? How successful are the results? How do the methods being used compare with each other? How do they compare to Kincheloe's multidimensional critical bricolage? How might have his methodology improved the outcomes? What might be applied from these contexts to other applications such as educational research, learning, and problem solving in the academic domain, and daily work or life decision making?

Study Questions (again, these are tentative due to the improvisational standing):

What are some specific examples and contexts for using Kincheloe's methodology? e.g. How might the critical bricolage be used to promote more rigorous academic learning? How might it be used to teach elementary school children? How might it be used to solve a complex puzzle or problem? How might it be used to uncover knowledge? How might the critical bricolage help solve crimes? How might it be used in a working or vocational environment? How might it be used to solve "wicked" environmental problems? How might it be used for learning and fun on an "epistemological road trip?" (Kincheloe, 2008). How might the critical bricolage be used to "cultivate the art of imagination within the social, psychosocial, and educational domains?" (Kincheloe, 2004, p. 61). How can the critical bricolage be used to improve everyday life? Does using the critical bricolage transform people? Improve cognition? If so, to what extent, in what ways, and what effect might this have socially, psychologically, politically, etc.? (Some of these questions may be future questions to research, as evoked from this study.)

One of the important requirements of the critical bricolage is to continuously position the researcher in the context of the research. As Berry stated (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004), "It is crucial that bricoleurs locate themselves in the discourses of the bricolage. What a bricoleur selects or does not select and how he/she interprets the text has been influenced by the multiple socializing contexts and discourses through which he/she has passed" (p. 164). How do I fit into this study of the bricolage? What is my past experience with it? How does this affect my standing on this methodology? Have I, personally, been transformed through using the bricolage? In what ways? In what ways am I biased in this study? How might I compensate for this bias? Do I want to compensate for this bias? Etc.

Methodology

This study will explore Kincheloe's multidimensional critical bricolage *using the multidimensional bricolage* as its methodology (thus, the topic and the methodology are the same but not equal). This entails using mixed methods that are determined in context

with decisions made at various points in the study. Typical and anticipated methods include critical hermeneutics, semiotics, phenomenology, textual analysis, polysemy, psychoanalysis, narratives, etc. The bricolage begins with a Point of Entry Text (POET) and various dimensions are woven through the text (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004, Figure 2, p. 112). This particular study will use as a framework, the dimensions presented in Kincheloe's (2005) article in which he presented his advanced conceptualization of the critical bricolage. These include: (1) methodological bricolage; (2) theoretical bricolage; (3) interpretive bricolage; (4) political bricolage; (5) narrative bricolage; (6) philosophical research (constructivism, historicity, epistemological insight); (7) critical hermeneutics; (8) identification of what is absent; (9) The fourth dimension of research (e.g., "kinetic epistemology of the possible"; "sophistication of knowledge work moves to a new cognitive level" (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 346)). The POET for this research will be the subchapter, "Expanding the Concept of Relationship in the Bricolage: Symbiotic Hermeneutics in the Disciplines" (Kincheloe, 2004, pp. 62-67). As presented, a POET can be anything at all. It can be discourse, a poem, song lyrics, a photograph, a piece of artwork, etc. I have selected this particular passage because it was specially provided to me personally by Joe Kincheloe just before he passed away in relation to our discussions about the bricolage and my proposed research for my dissertation. It is my belief that he found this passage particularly relevant for multiple reasons and using the text as the POET for demonstrating the critical bricolage will begin to reveal this relevance as well as meet the prerequisite for demonstrating ways the critical bricolage can be applied.

Data Analysis

Multiple forms of analysis will be used, including empirical analysis, depending on the forms the research takes. There will be several minor, embedded studies within this study that demonstrate the use of the bricolage for various purposes. The studies may be taken just far enough to illustrate the unique use for the selected contexts. The philosophical foundation of the bricolage recognizes that research is never really "completed" and can always be carried forward, thus decisions will be made during the process that consider the goals of each contextual example where an appropriate place to stop might be. Bricoleurs are not seeking "final" or "true" answers, but rather, they use polysemy to, as Kincheloe states, "keep the discussion open around particular phenomena, knowing that authoritarianism operates best when analysis is finalized" (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004, p. 95). And we do not wish for authoritarianism.

Analysis of the overall study will seek to shed some light on the following questions (as well as pose new questions): Does the overall study adequately and rigorously illustrate the use of the critical bricolage? Do the interpretations meet the guidelines specified by Kincheloe (Kincheloe, 2004, pp. 100-102)? Has new knowledge been produced with this study? Does this study advance the understanding of the potential and powerful uses of the bricolage for various contexts (perhaps a survey would be useful here). For fun: Has "monumental" knowledge been produced? What is "monumental" knowledge? Can it change the world? [Note: As Kincheloe (2004) states, "[bricoleurs] are empowered to produce knowledge that can change the world." p. 19]. Does this qualify the critical bricolage as being a "golden chalice" for knowledge production? Is there more that needs to be done to further develop the theory?

Special Note: The bricolage begins broadly and narrows down as the research progresses and decisions and choices are made along the way. Joe Kincheloe had advised, “As one is ‘shocked’ by difference, informed by diverse perspectives on the topic of study, she can begin to determine what exactly she has to offer that is unique and innovative. Honestly, I don’t think this can be accomplished at the beginning of the process” (2008, pers. corresp.). Also, the format for the dissertation document may vary slightly from the typical five chapter format, although all elements will be included.

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Was Joe a genius? (I know that answer: yes).

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Of course, I did not answer all of those posed questions submitted in my pre-proposal, and when I wrote my dissertation, I proposed many more. This is valuable, in my view, because it provides ideas and insight for the work we need to do, the changes we need to make. I was able to delineate a viable process for bricolage and I kept being naturally led back to particular topics as I wound around in a spiral fashion, studying a wide variety of topics during my research. The inquiry took on a life its own so to speak, but as I found, it had all been framed by the very excerpt that Joe had personally felt I would benefit from reading. It seems that the excerpt had been written in my mind in indelible ink. Or perhaps it was knowledge that I had stored somewhere in my memory that Joe somehow brought back to my conscious awareness. Whatever the explanation, it hints at the ultimate question yet to be answered: How are our consciousnesses formed? Joe has compared our consciousnesses to “super absorbent” paper towels (Kincheloe, 2001). This does make one wonder.

If you are interested in a rigorous application of bricolage, I do recommend reading my dissertation, along with Kincheloe's (2001, 2005, 2008) related works and Kincheloe and Berry's book (2004). You will then be well on your way. The next step is to just write.

As can be seen, there is much research yet to be done. One of the most exciting things about the multidimensional critical complex bricolage to me is how it reveals hidden problems, unanswered questions, great mysteries, and at the very same time, creative possibilities. Critical complex epistemology gives us freedom to rename, redefine, and greatly expand ideas. The two together can set us free. And if we take heed Joe's primary motive, his "golden strand of love" embedded in his work, engaging in these processes will connect us to Divine Love. And of course, love is the magic ingredient to make the world a better place.

How Does the Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage Contribute to Accelerated and Transformative Learning?

This is an area that needs research. Very few people have applied the multidimensional critical complex bricolage rigorously. In fact, besides Joe, I may truly be the only person who has synthesized so many of the components and processes he has specified to make up this more rigorous form of research. There are, however, many people using various elements, and some of them are producing powerful knowledge by taking a more multiperspectival approach with their research. There are numbers of great examples, and the trend is increasing.

Joe has expressed his views that we are all capable of producing knowledge, including children. He has made it clear that this process provides the means to reach greater levels of awareness, higher consciousness, more critical thinking, greater creativity, and better decision-making.

From my perspective, in my own application of the process, it works. I remember in one of my doctoral classes, one of my colleagues was studying the aging process and the loss of cognitive functioning that makes it harder for older people to learn. I explained to him that the older I get, the easier it seems to be for me to learn and I asked him what would cause that. He was puzzled by that and had no answer. He was stuck in his paradigm, apparently believing that we can't learn easily as we get older. And yet, there have been cultures who revere older people for their knowledge. It was later that I was able to attribute it to using bricolage processes that Joe recommends.

As would be expected with something so complex, the factors that contribute to accelerated learning are many. I am going to break from formal tradition and simply provide some insights based on my own experiences, observations, and previous learning. What I mean here is that I'm not going to take the traditional approach and dig into the literature for the moment. I may do that at another time, in which case this current piece of writing might serve as a point of entry text (a POET) for a future writing. I also hope that what I convey here might spark other researchers into following their interests in relation to this topic and researching these ideas more deeply. The more contexts we have, the better.

One conclusion that I've drawn is that however we approach this rather broad and deep research, we are building connections between knowledges and these form complex connections in our minds and consciousnesses as well. The more connections we build, the greater and quicker access we have to that knowledge. As Joe often highlights in his work, teachers learn to "think on their feet." We can find instantaneous solutions to problems that arise in context of teaching. Because bricolage is applicable to all areas of our lives, the same effect occurs no matter what the setting.

One can also compare the process as being similar to clicking on hyperlinks on the Internet. Links get us to the information faster. Clicking on the links not only connects us to that information, it builds links between knowledges in our minds. Do we form connections in our brain as a result? Has this been studied?

Clearly, the more links we can make between diverse knowledges, ways of viewing things, systems, interpretations, etc., the greater understanding we have. While we may start out slowly when we are first learning the process, with practice, speed increases incredibly. It morphs right into accelerated learning.

There are multiple factors that drive this accelerated learning. When we focus on learning something we're passionate about, we are motivated into putting forth greater effort. The greater effort pays off with developing increased connections. It creates that interactive "feedback loop" Kathleen Berry discusses in *Rigour and Complexity in Educational Research: Conceptualizing the Bricolage* (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004).

Another factor that I've noticed in my own learning is that for some reason, my eyes get directed to the precise information I need. Words pop off the page almost magically. Even beyond that, I serendipitously pick up a book and just happen to open it up to the exact information I need for whatever piece I'm writing. I enter that "fourth dimension of research" Joe theorizes in his 2005 article about bricolage.

In my dissertation I discuss more extensively the idea that this type of mind work kicks us up into higher consciousness and transformation—those "higher orders" of cognition Joe discusses in his work. In my research, I have discovered that there are various levels at which particular phenomena occur—and again, this is something that needs to be researched in relation to the multidimensional critical complex bricolage. It is not new knowledge; it's actually ancient knowledge, but needs to be updated for a new era.

Ultimately, with practice, we all can become capable of Joe's Fourth Dimension Research. This delves into the scientific explanations, which Joe covers in his work and I have attempted to further contextualize in my own writing, both formal and informal.

This is more than enough for now. I may touch on these areas more formally in the future. This provides a minimal background of the potential power of this form of research, and importantly, I hope it highlights how much research is needed for this area. This is a type of research teachers can do as they apply the processes in their teaching, and students can do in the process of their learning.

Just as I finish writing this and as if Joe is looking over my shoulder and wanting to prove me right as well as wanting to clarify, I was prompted to pick up his Social Studies book and randomly open it up. I opened to page 472, and my eyes were directed to the following text:

The purpose here is not to deconstruct Western methods of knowledge production or to engage Western scientific researchers in a process of self-reflection. While deconstruction and self-reflection are important, I am more concerned with

initiating a conversation resulting in a critique of Western science that leads to a reconceptualization of the scientific project around issues of multiple ways of seeing, justice, power, and community. The notion of a multiculturally informed transformative science is not one that simply admits more peoples—“red and yellow, black and white” into the country club of science but is an approach that challenges the epistemological foundations of the ethnoknowledge known simply as science. A transformative scientist understands that any science is a social construction. . . .

Truly! Magic is in my life everywhere I turn. At any rate, Joe’s text clearly confirms what I had stated about just opening up a book and my eyes being guided to the exact right text, as well as the importance of teachers and students developing the ability to self-reflect. And further, he clarifies his purpose for science, which is a huge part of his dream and is what had motivated him to dedicate 40 years to his education project. He wants those who call themselves researchers and scientists to listen and take seriously what various peoples around the world have to say about what constitutes science and how it affects them.

In his work he tells of how, as a young boy in school he had done a science research project about dreams. I’m sure it must have been a fascinating and brilliant project. Yet, his teacher gave him a D- and told him it wasn’t “science.” It’s amazing how things that happen to us in school can impact our entire lives. I actually relate well to how Joe must have felt because I am much the same way. If someone tells me that something I am passionate about doing can’t be done, I prove that, indeed, it *can* be done! In this case, Joe has invented the process for developing a new socially-constructed science in which dreams play a significant role, and one day more people will come to the realization just how powerful and earth-changing this proposition is. He refers to this new science as the *Critical Science of Complexity* (see the last chapter of my dissertation on the www.joekincheloe.us website for a more detailed description and how it is an advanced form of empirical phenomenology).

And in case, you did not notice, there is a song in that excerpt I was so magically guided to. How apropos, considering the topic of this book is how he uses music in his work. Do you see it? “red and yellow, black and white”....”Jesus loves the little children, All the children of the world.” <https://youtu.be/52j9JhkheeE>

And so we wind back to music. Love and music are inseparable.

The Music Is in Me: Joe's Nine-Step Dance

The following is another one of my creative blogs that presents yet another perspective of bricolage. The more we read about it, the more we understand it, and the more easily it becomes natural practice. By the way, writing improvisational blogs is a great way to practice bricolage skills as well as being a great learning process. The knowledge you've stored in your mind has a magical way of flowing forth when you relax and are free to express yourself. And, as I'm discovering, the accumulated writings in blogs also provide great source material to assemble when one engages in the bricolage process, as I'm doing while writing this book. Each blog presents different perspectives, sometimes using different "voices" and/or writing styles. I love that freedom and flexibility. There is a time for stuffy academic literature, but if we want to engage more audiences, variety is the spice of life.

Thus, my blog about how bricolage is a dance.

Thursday, May 16, 2013

Joe Kincheloe's Nine-Step Dance: It's Complicated But a Lot of Fun!

That was a title that was telepathically "handed down" to me a couple of days ago. I didn't listen at the time. I mean, I heard it in the form of one of those "epiphanic moments" and I did listen to it, but I didn't take action on it or even write the title down or write the article that was meant to go with the title. Action is always required when you engage in Kincheloe's Nine-Step Dance. You must take a step if you're serious about dancing, so when I didn't, it was given to me again yesterday morning during my regular "conversations" (often "lesson plans") through transmitted writings. This is just one of many processes I use to "enact" my own idiosyncratic interpretation of Kincheloe's "fourth dimension" research. This process of learning to write to "dead people" was one I learned in the very first publication I had read written by Kincheloe.

He had included his "lesson" in the introductory chapter of *Critical Pedagogy: Where Are We Now?*, a book he had edited with Peter McLaren, and it was the very first writing of Kincheloe's I had encountered during my studies in education. As he had framed it, when he explained writing letters to his beloved deceased Aunt, "Some folks see dead people; I write to them" (Kincheloe, 2007, p. 11). The sentence literally shouted out at me right off the page of the book the first time I had read it and even though I had never *ever* considered writing to dead people, it stayed in the back of my mind.

I'm glad I paid attention to that sentence because following just this one suggestion for fourth dimension research has led to the emergence of far more creative ideas than I can ever possibly follow through with during an entire lifetime. It has also been what's led to the many, almost daily, "magical" experiences that are real, but many people have a hard time believing and would rather assign me a label representing something

other than being highly in tune with a much greater and expansive reality than they are able to perceive. It's quite amazing what "emerges" during the fourth dimension bricolage research process when bricoleurs actively engage with those people on the other side of the curtain. And so I get to pick and choose from a nearly infinite supply of creative ideas, adjust them however I wish, and sometimes, when they're especially important, I get written reminders from beyond the curtain like I did yesterday.

I love the title, actually. Kincheloe was an adept dancer and his dance steps are complicated and fun! I learned that during our interactions on his website. He was conscious; I was not, but I danced the best I could. We all have to start somewhere and the best place is where we are in the moment.

To simplify his bricolage dance process, or to at least bring it down some so that more people can relate to it, (he did not like having to simplify things and neither do I) he had presented nine "dimensions of research," which I refer to here as his "Nine-Step Dance." Of course, as typical with all of Kincheloe's work, it's not really that simple! Each of the nine dimensions is comprised of many more dimensions and on top of that, you never know which step you need to take next! I have listed the nine dimensions on the Home page of the website dedicated to his work (www.joekincheloe.us) and on the website I will be presenting much more detail based on my research to help new bricoleurs begin to conceptualize how they might form their own unique dance using his dance steps. I will even be presenting how children can learn the dance, and believe me, children love it! Every dance is different and just to ensure new bricoleurs are prepared for the future: after learning the nine steps, there will be more! (That doesn't surprise you does it?)

Of course "nine steps" is a gross oversimplification of the true complexity (we might have more than a million steps for one dissertation or research paper or special creative project), but we have to begin somewhere. And even with 9 steps that gives us two-to-the-ninth-power possibilities. Calculated out, that's $2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 \times 2 = 512$ possibilities for the next step. Which step will it be for you?

This is all just metaphoric speaking, of course. But I do know Joe loved to dance and that he considered his engagement in research and the presentation of his bricolage in his books and articles as metaphorically performing a dance.

The concept of polysemy, in which words take on different meanings in different contexts and are ideologically inscribed, provide just one such opportunity for dancing through the labyrinth of dimensions. He presents the example of how politicians use this feature to impart ideological meanings to divergent groups of people for "winning

their consent to oppression,” even their own oppression (Kincheloe, 2004e, p. 94). People interpret things the way they wish and politicians know how to leverage this and so they purposely choose words that have one meaning for one group of people and another meaning for another group of people. That way they get more votes since each group will interpret it to mean what’s best for them. They also might assign new meanings to words and phrases such as they have done in education with the “No Child Left Behind Act.”

Elite educators at the top of the chain also use polysemy to speak to each other in their scholarly literature beneath the awareness of “outsiders.” (And believe me, we are ALL outsiders to THEM). They have entire conversations going on within an “implicate order of reality,” as you will discover when you become skilled with bricolage. Joe Kincheloe calls this out and refers to it as “Janus speak” and “obfuscation.” (Janus was the “two-faced” god). No one could keep secrets from Joe Kincheloe! And he did not believe in keeping secrets. He clarifies how bricoleurs can use polysemy for more positive purposes such as to uncover those multidimensional layers of meaning so that they can find ways to reclaim personal power. It is also a process for keeping their own interpretations open so that they don’t become just another “cog in the engine of the mechanisms of dominant power that harm people in all of our communities and around the world” (Kincheloe, 2008b, p. xi).

He states:

Bricoleurs frequently use polysemy in a hermeneutic context to challenge the meanings given to certain texts and social artefacts by experts in the dominant culture. My book, *The Sign of the Burger*, presents polysemous resistant readings of the social role of McDonald’s. Not content with perspectives positioning McDonald’s as little-company-made-good achieving the American Dream, I wanted to present interpretations of McDonald’s that questioned the socio-political effects of McDonald’s American success story.

My effort was *not* to prove that McDonald’s is not an American success story – it is. Instead, I provided other interpretations that might cause readers to rethink the meaning of such a story. Throughout the book these diverse meanings of McDonald’s engage in a dance. My hope as the author is that the dance, like a hula dance, tells a story. As a bricoleur I want it to enrich our understanding of McDonald’s as a socio-political and pedagogical phenomenon in a way that leads to progressive social action. Bricoleurs employ polysemy to keep discussion open around particular phenomena, knowing that authoritarianism operates best

when analysis is finalized (Ceccarelli, 1998; Marcum, 1998). (Kincheloe, 2004e, p. 95)

In other words, bricoleurs don't proclaim a final truth about complex social and educational issues or that they're an "authority" or "expert" – just that they have put forth an effort toward greater understanding from looking at many angles, acknowledging that their work is always "in progress." However, the more connections bricoleurs uncover the greater possibility and probability that intelligent solutions will emerge for solving complicated social problems.

The improvisational bricolage dance truly can be a lot of fun as we explore our chosen topic from many different angles and employ polysemy, along with other dimensions of analysis and interpretation. Bricoleurs quickly learn to keep an eye open to see what surprises emerge from interacting with different dance partners. And trust me: you will be surprised and sometimes even caught off-guard with what emerges. Bricoleurs always consider, of course, who benefits from any given dance step and how new steps might move us closer to serving the social good.

Although I must admit, due to social conditioning, FIDUROD, and what-have-you, it can be easy for new bricoleurs to take a step backward when they should take a step sideways – and they may even get tripped up from time-to-time. Nevertheless, bricoleurs do not plan the sequence of dance steps – that would take the complexity and excitement out of the dance – and besides, there's a lot of assistance, often J.I.T. (just in time), when "symbiotic hermeneutics" gets added to the mix and unseen entities arrive on the scene to "save the day" (Kincheloe, 2004d., p. 67). Bricoleurs don't need to worry about being a perfect dancer, either, because as long as they put forth a sincere effort to dance well they always know there will be the next dance and maybe even one "last dance" with their someone special as they journey joyfully forward on their Dancing Quest -- and as all bricoleurs will come to know -- the ending is "just the beginning" (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 227).

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Prelude

I like to try to present my research and discoveries in the same order that I encounter them, although there are times when “out-of-order” presentations also make sense. It gets difficult because after extensive research, many dimensions overlap and the hidden dimensions that most people cannot relate to always come to the forefront for me. If I leave them out, it’s not the whole story and the writing becomes fragmented, not making sense. Everything is connected while at the very same time most people see things as disconnected, fractured, compartmentalized, dissociated, etc. This is the hurdle we all must work to transcend. Otherwise, we’re left making assumptions and most often assumptions can be wrong—or even harmful.

So what led me to the encoded music phrase, “**And the Band Played On**” in Joe’s work? I can say that, as is always the case ever since he passed over, I am spiritually guided. Just as a brief introduction to my experience, when he passed over, he came back to me spiritually. There was not even a question in my mind that it was he who came back to me. I was already deeply connected to him and when he was alive I always felt his energy even though he was on the opposite side of the country, that is, until the day he died. When I could no longer feel his energy, I went into panic mode, emailing several people only to ultimately learn what I already felt in my heart. It was a “premonition” I had had since coming across him and his work; it also seemed as if it was an “arrangement” in a way, at a higher level of consciousness. There is certain powerful work he’s still able to do from the other side of the curtain.

I did have a chance to meet and share hugs with Joe once before he “left” and it seemed that the meeting had sealed our connection. Perhaps it gave an opportunity for our energies to form more of those “spooky” connections (quantum entanglement?). I learned so much from him when he was on this planet. But, on the other hand, I have learned even more things from him after he passed over. He has taken me on soul journeys and time travelling experiences, visited me in dreams, tutored me, helped me remember our past lives together, given me previews of our “future” life, and he has helped me heal the pain that had accumulated over the centuries. He is my teacher and soul guide, and in my view, eternal husband. Our relationship could, perhaps, be compared with that of Elizabeth and Mark Prophet, although, unfortunately our work required us to be separated much of our life this time around. Our story is far too long and complex to recount here, but I wanted to provide a brief description to ground some of the information I’ll be sharing here.

And so, as is so often the case since Joe has passed over, he guided my studies toward a topic that has been on the back burner for awhile—more information about what he mentions

in many of his works as the “recovery movement.” While most people will interpret his message of this concept at the surface level relating strictly to things happening in the world, which is a valid interpretation—he is telling me there is much, much more. In fact, our deep understanding of what the movement signifies may be a matter of our having a good future or one of extreme struggle and strife. If we are not prepared for what’s to come, we may very well be “dead in the water” as John Mark McMillan sings in “Holy Ghost” (<https://youtu.be/CJZNe1aZTLE>).

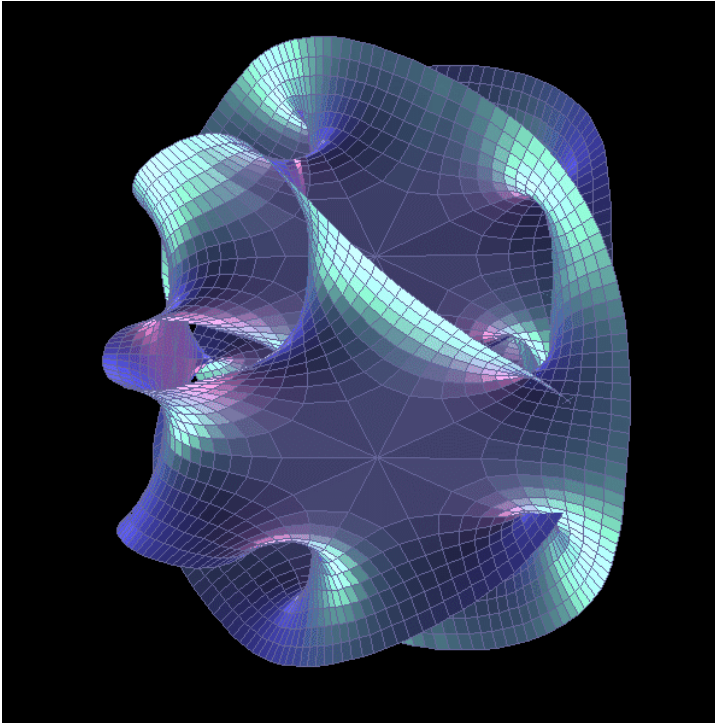
Understanding how we can apply Joe’s research process is key to getting through some rough times ahead, which is one reason I have highlighted it upfront in this book. What has led to this current discussion is that I was prompted to buy a book that has two chapters in it Joe has written in which he goes into great detail about the recovery movement. We do need to understand the history, the ramifications, and the hidden dimensions of what he’s written in these two chapters. The chapters are “Chapter 1 What You Don’t Know Is Hurting You and the Country” and “Chapter 2 How Did This Happen? The Right-Wing Politics of Knowledge and Education.” They are in the book, *What You Don’t Know About Schools* (2006). There are articles in the book by other researchers; I’m not sure how well they are able to follow Joe’s profound presentation in that book. But, of course, I am biased toward Joe’s work. That’s the way it was meant to be.

Shortly after buying the book and reading it in short “bursts,” just a little at a time, I was also guided to some science information. It’s important to understand that perhaps one of Joe’s greatest dreams was the development of a new science, the *critical science of complexity*, as he referred to it. In analyzing his work, that’s exactly what he’s done (again, see the last chapter of my dissertation for a more detailed explanation).

The blogs I write seem to come together spontaneously and uniquely to synthesize information I’ve studied. I’m including this next, more recent blog because it introduces the two chapters Joe had written about the recovery movement which have prompted the writing of this book. Again, he defines bricolage from yet another perspective. In these two chapters he has reiterated the need for a new science. What he’s referring to is a science that combines empirical phenomenology with the other sciences, as I have described earlier (this requires redefining empiricism as well as what constitutes the phenomenology we choose to study). His multidimensional critical complex bricolage and epistemology can accomplish the type of “socially constructed” science he describes as the goal. This blog both exemplifies the progress that’s made when divergent views (such as classical and theoretical physics) are brought together, as well as highlights, perhaps, the need for advancement toward this new science that Joe has conceptualized.

Monday, March 30, 2015

Fluid Identity and A Peek Behind the LHC's Higgs-Boson Curtain at CERN: Will Marrying Science and Divine Love Set Us Free?



I love the idea that our “identity” is fluid. I’ve heard the concept “fluid” applied when describing identity within other cultures, in particular, indigenous societies, but these days, I fully adopt the concept in my own life. It’s my true experience. It is freeing. I can be who I AM at any given moment. I do not need to live up to the expectations of the society I participate in (but I can if I want to).

How do we enter that “fluid” form of being? We do it with bricolage, specifically, Joe’s multidimensional critical complex bricolage....I know; I’m a living example. Thus, I “identify” with having many different names, different times, different places—and YET! They are still all ME! And thus, my “consort” has different names, too, and thus, CONTEXT is critical....just like Joe emphasizes in his work.

The other day, I came across another definition of bricolage in Joe’s work (I’ve already extensively analyzed his definitions for bricolage in my [dissertation](#)), but this definition is another, perhaps, easy-to-understand definition for beginners. The reason I came

across it is because I bought this book, to study in greater detail, Joe's idea that we've been in what he calls a "recovery movement" in which, the global uprisings of the 1950s-early 1960s were met with great and organized resistance from the political "far right." He says we can expect a return to those earlier uprisings (and, indeed, we've been seeing them, such as "Arab Spring" and Yemen and other uprisings around the world). What he means by "far right" and "new right" also needs an analysis, which he did within his conceptualization of who institutes FIDUROD. (You really need to read his *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* to get a full understanding).

But it does not escape me that with Joe's conceptualizations there is *always more*...thus, I will discuss in this blog the concept in relation to "right hand" (traditional) physics and "left hand" (theoretical) physics and how the twain might meet; In fact, they ARE meeting! If physicists can do it, why can't we all?

So, in Joe's article that I had been specifically guided to acquiring and reading, "How did this happen? The right-wing politics of knowledge and education" (in *What You Don't Know About Schools*, p. 39) he writes:

Those of us who want to study the workings of power, for example, via the deployment of signifiers and appeals to the unconscious know that such subtle processes fall outside the parameters of dominant ways of producing knowledge. As such complex modes of understanding are excluded from legitimate scientific inquiry, dominant forms of power continue to work at a level invisible to most people. In this way, dominant positivistic ways of seeing contributes to oppression of those who are "different" while allowing dominant science to continue its journey down a colonial path. Such a trek illustrates an intellectual and moral stagnation that is camouflaged by the recovery movement (Grossberg, 1992; Keith and Keith, 1993; Hess, 1995; Woodhouse, 1996). [Again, the recovery movement relates to the far right wishing to reclaim their "place" in the world, their FIDURODian mindset for domination.]

It is in this stagnant context that I have proposed the notion of bricolage (Kincheloe, 2001; Kincheloe and Berry, 2004). The French word *bricoleur* describes a handyman or handywoman who makes use of the tools available to complete a task. In the context of scientific research, I use the term to denote the process of applying multiple research methodological strategies and theoretical discourses as they are needed in the unfolding context of the research situation. The point is to get beyond the monological colonialistic perspective of positivism and engage new ways of understanding from diverse

intellectual and cultural traditions. The bricoleur works diligently to uncover hidden artifacts of power and the way that shapes the knowledge researchers produce. Of course the diversity of the bricolage offers an alternative to the monocultural ways of perceiving protected by the recovery movement.

On page 47, he continues:

Positivistic reductionism fails to discern the holographic nature of reality. This holographic effect is grounded on the notion that all parts contain dimensions of the whole. Many contemporary physicists, psychologists, and sociologists speculate that the universe, the mind, and the interaction between the society and the individual cannot be understood outside this holographic insight. In positivism, fundamental units of reality (or things-in-themselves) are not deemed to contain data about the larger constructs of which they are parts. Not realizing this dynamic, positivist researchers and educators see everything from atoms, bodily organs, brains, individuals, languages, curricula to television as isolated entities—not as things whose meanings can only be appreciated when viewed as parts of larger wholes and **higher orders of reality** (Woodhouse, 1996). Indeed, what I am concerned with here is nothing less than the quality of knowledge we produce about the world and how we confront such information in educational contexts. To counter **the irrationality of right-wing knowledge work and pedagogy**, we must address both the reductionism of uninformed research methods and the quest for new ways of seeing. [Emphasis added]

Note that by “world” Kincheloe is referring to both the world as we typically might consider it, but also in the way many other cultures and traditions may view this—**as the entire cosmos**. This can be confirmed in his reference to “higher orders of reality” and by his reference to the three components of bricolage: ontology, epistemology, and cosmology (see *Rigour and Complexity in Educational Research: Conceptualizing the Bricolage*, p. 61). His ideas are always all-encompassing due to his Great Vision, and this fact is what has also hindered many of us from wrapping our minds around the complexity and the enormity of the great works he has left us. We must do so in order to powerfully apply his ideas. But we can take baby steps; it’s ok.

One way to accomplish this is by using Joe’s multidimensional critical complex bricolage by which we examine **not so much** “things-in-themselves” but rather “things-in-relationship,” a process which tends toward a more “metaphoric” way of understanding. And we make no claims that our presented way(s) of viewing such complexities is the only way—it’s just one (or several) ways that give a unique view on

something that's otherwise so complex it would be difficult to understand. Adept bricoleurs ascribe to multiple views simultaneously—even as they may only present one view! But it's important to remember that bricoleurs also develop criteria and ways to evaluate their metaphoric views (not all perspectives are equal). This, also, is part of the more rigorous bricolage process.

Thus, when I write of the Twin Flame phenomenon, while LOVE is TRUTH and TRUTH is LOVE (and perhaps this is the only TRUE TRUTH that really matters), in reality, I VIEW the Twin Flame phenomenon in many different contexts...it can be no other way as we come to realize the “fragmented” nature of “things-in-themselves” in which we are not able to see the whole from which the fractal or “holograph” has emerged from the “higher reality” that Joe discusses in the above passage. And again, I am speaking in metaphoric terms here...and now I will apply these to the Marriage of Science and the Conceptualization of Twin Flames/Divine Love. I will do this rather superficially for this blog; the analysis is quite profound when one delves into the multiple correlations between complex spiritual and physics concepts.

The fuel for this blog actually began with my having coming across a movie. There is much about the movie yet to be understood and analyzed. Had I seen the movie back in 1992, I would never have understood it to be about Twin Flames. The fact that it is, tells me that the message in the movie was perhaps designed for subconscious programming, since there's a lot of violence in it. As Emanu'El (my consort by another name) informed me yesterday, the movie “was devised to manipulate the emotions, namely fear connected to love.” This is a powerful tactic that those in power use constantly, often beneath our conscious awareness. By having us store things such as what we view in movies in our subconscious minds, without awareness, they have a trigger to manipulate us. As ancient sciences present, “Good things go into the subconscious mind only when the good and bad are mixed together. Good things by themselves go into the Chalice” (Saradarian, p. 28). The Chalice is what we really want to be filling. Thus, awareness is key; otherwise we have constant subconscious cleaning to do.

Here's the movie (warning: it has nudity and violence):

[Night Eyes 5 - \(1992\)- Full Movie - Shannon Tweed](#)

CERN Scientists and Breaking through the Curtains of the Higgs-Boson Field

Moving on to PHYSICS, I will show how the Higgs-Boson and blasting protons relate to Divine Twin Flames...thus, we will Marry Science and Divine Love.

CERN stands for European Center for Nuclear Research. Since the acronym letters are actually backwards, I would guess there are other meanings which have not been publicly released...you might play around with possible meanings after learning more about CERN. Some people are very CONCERNED about CERN (but since there is no "CON" in CERN, maybe their worries are unfounded). According to Wikipedia, our "trusted" source of knowledge, CERN is derived from the name "*Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire*" which explains the order of the letters.

Btw, I used to trust Wikipedia more than I do now. It's clear that Wikipedia has been overtaken by those who want to control knowledge. It's funny that when it was more of a public project than it is now, its use was discouraged by academia and now that it's less useful because "ideological bots" tend to control the knowledge produced, it's being more accepted by academia. There are ways to prove what I contend here: try a few changes to Wikipedia relating to "sensitive" or "dangerous" knowledge, and watch how fast it gets changed back. What you write can be a totally valid and supportable perspective, but if it does not match the ideology being presented it will get changed.

In fact, a great entry to change is "Critical Pedagogy" since it's a topic you're interested in (I assume you would not be reading this if you were not). The Critical Pedagogy entry is heavily biased and in many ways is incorrect, and it's extremely ideological and seems to have been written by a particular "insider's club." The result is they present an extremely narrow view of what encompasses "critical pedagogy." The true nature of critical pedagogy is far more diverse than is represented in the entry. Try it out:http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical_pedagogy. If you post something that doesn't agree with the ideology presented or present a new researcher, it most likely will get changed or deleted. Try adding my name (Vanessa Paradis) as an "expert" of critical pedagogy and watch what happens.

And so, one must ask, *who controls this entry?* Why is Paulo Freire's work propped up when, in reality, there have been many great "critical pedagogues" who are far more advanced and useful? And why are teachers currently being bombarded with uncritical presentations of Paulo Freire's work? (There has been national promotion of Freire's work in teacher development of public institutions). We must heed Richard Gibson's warning provided in his well-researched dissertation about the danger of Freire's work occupying corporate motives and supporting their insatiable needs for capitalistic control. Is Freire a "Dead End"? In my own experience, with the exception of Joe's work,

critical pedagogy too often does not critically examine itself. Some of the “researchers” are perhaps the most UN-critically-reflective group of people “doing” educational research.

To clarify, I have nothing against Freire. I just think we all need to decide for ourselves how valuable his work truly is. I have great respect for Freire, and so did Joe. Part of that respect means honoring what Freire had asked: That he and his work not be put on a pedestal and that we go forward. Joe did that superbly!! And yet, people want to go backwards. I think Freire was very sensitive to the fact that his work has serious flaws and he wanted us to move past those flaws.

Thus, in my view, Joe honors Freire with his work, and we can all best honor Freire by moving forward. And if you truly come to understand Joe’s work, you will clearly see how it is “timeless” and will take us far into the twenty-first century and even beyond. That’s not to say Joe’s work is perfect; he suffered from FIDUROD as we all do (as he told me one time, we just need to stay “mindful” of it). But I can say with certainty: He definitely has it together more than 99.999999% of us!! And he has shown us over and over again, much like in physics where the left and the right are coming together, we can take the good from wherever it emerges, combine it with his “radical love,” and create something new and amazing! We do NOT need to “annihilate” each other!

When scientists state that matter and dark matter “annihilate” each other, this is a **misnomer**. This is sad because now what people have stored in their minds is that both are destroyed, but this simply is not true. They are both RECREATED! And it’s a good thing. (And particle physicists: pardon me if this is not precise or totally right: I am still learning). This epistemology relating to annihilation was developed before physicists had the understanding they do today, but as knowledge is often known to do: it sticks with nomenclature that may not be entirely representative of the true reality. What really happens is that when matter and dark matter (that invisible matter) particles combine, they create a new energy...and this happens to correlate with the divine union of twin flames. Twin flames, in their spiritual unification (which can be compared to an electric/electromagnetic union of forces), unite in those hidden dimensions (i.e. the Higgs field), they create what is described as a “third energy” which is greater than the two original energies combined.... $1+1=3$. “The whole is greater than the sum of the parts” as Joe has often written. They become “Super Powers” lol (in MyStory). They are still two individuals, but they engage in Super Symbiosis, Super Synchronicity, Super Serendipity, and Super Synthesis (see my previous blogs about these topics)...thus, they also work and live together “as one.” In correlation with this concept, the Large Hadron

Collider physicists are examining what they refer to as “Super Symmetry” between particles.

Thus, within the CERN conglomerate, of immediate interest is the LHC, the Large Hadron Collider, the Super Collider. A hadron is “any elementary particle that interacts strongly with other particles” (<http://www.audioenglish.org/dictionary/hadron.htm>).

If you listen to the videos below about CERN carefully, you’ll discover how what I call “right hand” physics and “left hand” physics are coming together. This is a very good sign and thus, we might ask ourselves how this applies in life as well (especially given that science is life and vice versa). Interestingly, everything the scientists discover can be correlated with what some people regard as “metaphysical” experiences and tend to throw out from serious consideration. Even many right-path (right wing?) scientists are not making that mistake today. Had they continued to do so, they would not have discovered the reality of the Higgs particle. They believe they have found the particle. (Btw, it is not really a "God" particle).

[Dr. Christopher Rogan, The CERN Super Collider, Searching for new particles, forces and phenomena](#)

[Big Bang Machine CERN Large Hadron Collider \(LHC\) Nova Special 2015 Documentary-documentary planet](#)

The goals of Joe’s bricolage are exactly what help us combine knowledge in new ways in order to explore “new ways of seeing.” Bringing what seem to be “opposite” views such as traditional physics and theoretical physics suddenly opens up new understandings. Realities open up to multidimensionality. Thus, in my blogs, as I have explored these dynamics, my identity has become increasingly fluid as I learn to “see” through different eyes, so to speak. This allows me to present new “juxtapositionings” of what I see. Today, what I see is the strong correlation of what CERN scientists are discovering in their research of the Higgs particle and Divine Love. When visible matter and “invisible” dark matter particles come together in the Higgs field, they create new matter and new relationships. And it must be remembered that 96% or so of space is composed of dark matter and dark energy; we are missing out on much if we don't develop better perception abilities.

My QUESTion is: Will breaking past the Higgs field set us free? (Or at least get us past another layer of our imprisonment)? Does this field hold the prison bars that has been keeping Heaven and Earth divided. Is what the scientists are doing at CERN similar to

what the Doors sang about? “Break on through to the Other Side”? I like to think so. I like to think it could be a very great thing.

Some people don’t think so, however; they are conCERNed. . . the lack of knowledge can be more dangerous than Joe’s “dangerous knowledge” or as Joe put it above: “To counter **the irrationality of right-wing knowledge work and pedagogy**, we must address both the reductionism of uninformed research methods and the quest for new ways of seeing”:

Fire In the Middle Giza & CERN~7 ANGELS Metatrons CUBE /SATURN

Can these people come to greater awareness of the constraints of their epistemology, and by using a more hermeneutical approach, engage in the QUEST for alternative ways of seeing?

And finally, “Emanu’El” asked that I post this music with this blog (as representative of just one “new way of seeing”):

Human-Made Music:

Dispatched - Motherwar (Full-Album HD) (2000)

CERN-Made Music:

LHChamber Music

If the LHC is creating a new dimension with new kinds of humans, I’ll go there!! Besides, the music is better and they’ve brought back dancing in the streets!

National Dance Day at CERN!

P.S. I JUST KNEW CERN and Particle Colliding HAD to be about MARRYING SCIENCE AND DIVINE LOVE, and here’s the PROOF by a Physicist:

<https://youtu.be/nkJNk5JM-Mg?t=51m50s>

(Just in time for Universal Love Week, April 1-7; April 3 is Universal Day of Love, as established in 2009. We will need to update our celebrations and music.)

ADDENDA

The physicist with the creative presentation is:

FRANK WILCZEK, FROM MIT
Herman Feshbach Professor of Physics
2004 Nobel Laureate

http://web.mit.edu/physics/people/faculty/wilczek_frank.html

Here's an interesting article by Frank Wilczek:

http://web.mit.edu/physics/news/physicsatmit/wilczek_physicsatmit_2013.pdf

Free self-study physics courses:

<http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/physics/>

10:14 am | [link](#)

<3<3<3

Thus, this blog presents yet another view of bricolage, and it's interesting how everything comes together here—the science, the music, and the love. It provides a great example of how classical physicists and theoretical physicists have come together, and as a result, they are producing some amazing knowledge. They have discovered the important Higgs particle they were seeking (which some people call the “God” particle, but that's a misrepresentation). The theoretical physicists are clearly synthesizing other views into their conceptualizations, including how both music and love are important components.

And what is science anyway? As Joe just told us in the chapter about transformative learning, transformative scientists realize that science is a social construction. Where does that leave us? Who gets to play the music?

And the Band Played On

When I wrote the blog presented in the last chapter and made the connections between theoretical physics and divine love, I had not yet read the entire two chapters about the recovery movement that I had been guided to reading. I have been reading segments of it as I'm able. It's quite a long historical account of the recovery movement as related to education and is very interesting. But something kept telling me there's an important deeper message in this. In fact, there are several important deeper messages, which I'll have to address another time, since the focus of this book is music.

In my reading I began to notice that there was music in these two chapters, which should not surprise me by now. First, I noticed "And the band played on" on page 50. Then I came to page 60 where he writes, "As John Lennon puts it, 'whatever gets you through the night.'" This one is reminiscent of a personal message he wrote me on his discussion forum when I had asked him a question about what books he was working on and made the comment, "I hope you don't mind [me asking]." He wrote back, "As James Brown put it, 'I Don't Mind.'" I really didn't think anything of it, other than I was glad that he didn't mind me asking about what he was working on. It was after he passed over and I learned about his music that I discovered it was a love song. After he passed over, apparently because I was so totally devastated over his death, he literally began singing love songs in my ears every day to cheer me up. I would wake up in the morning and it was like he was right there beside me, singing to me. Often the songs would end up in the blogs I was writing daily. I was truly devastated and I thank him for all of the help he gave me from the other side of the curtain.

I am very curious now as to what other songs are in these two chapters, but my main goal here is to demonstrate how I intuitively follow where I'm led in my research and the profound results of taking an exploratory path when interpreting the music in his work.

The first research I did was for the song "And the band played on," from page 50, but instead of being led to the song (which I can hear playing in my mind), I was led to an amazing book by Randy Shilts titled *And the Band Plays On: Politics, People and the Aids Epidemic*.

Here's the Amazon.com review of the book:

In the first major book on AIDS, San Francisco Chronicle reporter Randy Shilts examines the making of an epidemic. Shilts researched and reported the book exhaustively, chronicling almost day-by-day the first five years of AIDS. His work is critical of the medical and scientific communities' initial response and particularly harsh on the Reagan Administration, who he claims cut funding, ignored calls for action and

deliberately misled Congress. Shilts doesn't stop there, wondering why more people in the gay community, the mass media and the country at large didn't stand up in anger more quickly. The AIDS pandemic is one of the most striking developments of the late 20th century and this is the definitive story of its beginnings. --*This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.*

It's interesting to note how well the topic correlates with what Joe was discussing in the excerpt the phrase had come from. He had written:

The perspectives and actions emerging from universal knowledges too often prove to be harmful for the marginalized and disempowered. Students in the poor and culturally diverse urban schools referenced above are many times positioned as incapable of succeeding in academic work by the universal science of education. Once again the privilege of the privileged is justified and the marginalization of the marginalized is confirmed. And the band played on. [Emphasis added] (p. 50)

Reading Shilt's book would shed more light on how these dynamics play out similarly in the medical profession. Here's an interesting review that confirms this.

Most Helpful Customer Reviews

125 of 139 people found the following review helpful
"A horribly cruel and insidious virus"

By JLind555 on April 30, 2002

Format: Paperback

Randy Shilts masterpiece, "And The Band Played On", reads like a detective story; from the discovery of an unusual new organism that was killing a few people slowly and inexorably in the late 1970s and early 1980s, and multiplied exponentially underground until it exploded into the number one health catastrophe on the planet.

The fact that AIDS at first took its heaviest toll among gay men, and then among intravenous drug users, guaranteed that its early victims would become outcasts. The AIDS panic seems unbelievable in retrospect but was all too real in the 80s; people were forced off their jobs, children were barred from schools, and anyone who belonged to the "4-H club" (homosexuals, hard-drug users, hemophiliacs, and -- incredibly -- Haitians) were treated like pariahs. The secrecy and denial in dealing with the crisis helped it to spread unabated.

Shilts pulls no punches in writing this book. He is equally angry at the Reagan administration which preached pious platitudes while withholding desperately needed funds for medical research; the radical gay community which refused to acknowledge its own responsibility for the sexually promiscuous behavior that helped spread the disease like wildfire, and those in the medical community who played grandstanding

politics and plain old-fashioned spite while patients were dying all around them. And then of course there was the media, which treated this puzzling, terrifying new disease -- which for two years after its discovery didn't even have a name -- as something the "general public" didn't have to be concerned about, until heterosexual men and women began to be infected.

But there were also the heroes -- the physicians who devoted their days and nights to treating their patients, gay men like Larry Kramer who refused to let the gay community sweep the problem under the rug, Rock Hudson, whose up-front candor and admission of his illness shocked the American public and helped to bring AIDS out of the closet once and for all, and C. Everett Koop, Reagan's Surgeon General, who refused to play politics and demonstrated the leadership his boss lacked in his common-sense and compassionate approach to meeting the crisis, to the horror of his right-wing constituency.

Shilts wrote his story with such compelling urgency that it wraps the reader up like a whodunit you don't want to put down. One shares his disgust at the doctors who cared more about their own self-promotion than about their patients; the right-wing politicians who treated the victims of a devastating and deadly disease as if they were sinners who had earned the wrath of God; the gay men who didn't care how many people they infected as long as they could enjoy the promiscuous atmosphere of the bath houses, and most incredibly, the for-profit blood banks, which refused to admit their product was carrying a deadly virus and fought against blood testing for three years while the number of people who died from transfusions of infected blood grew by the thousands. And in a heartbreaking coda to this story, Shilts deliberately put off having his own blood tested while he was writing this book because he didn't want his judgement biased if he turned out to be HIV positive. It was only after he finished the book that he learned that he was infected with the virus that had killed so many and in a few years would also kill him.

Shilts' death from AIDS was a tragedy, but he left us this magnificent book as his legacy. After reading his book, we are the richer and the wiser for his information, his insight and his understanding.

Judy Lind

Thus, with this short analysis, we have greatly expanded into other disciplines that have a direct and concrete relationship to the multidimensional critical complex bricolage. The book, *And the Band Played On*, provides an example of the investigative nature of bricolage and how it can bring forth the social and political complexities that operate beneath the surface. Joe often describes bricoleurs as being detectives. We need many more detectives in the world who investigate as deeply as represented and called for here; the media certainly do not do this today, unfortunately. Investigative journalists have been replaced with people who are willing to parrot what they're told for a paycheck.

My next stop took me to this love song.

(Casey Would Waltz with a Strawberry Blonde) And the Band Played On!

<https://youtu.be/23oePEVM1nE>

Uploaded on Feb 19, 2009

Description: Irish-American themed song recorded by the Jesters that has all the elements of great a party tune: Dancing, drinking, a band and a pretty girl... This is being played on a 1940's Sears Silvertone Crank style Victrola record player. It's the model that courting couples would bring on their picnics. No electricity needed! I saw this same model in an episode of M*A*S*H* when Hawkeye was examining one of those Bombshell Nurses... More 78 classic records on video coming soon.. I have the Andrews Sisters, Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Jordan, Woody Herman, Guy Lombardo, Benny Goodman, Glenn Miller, BB King, Artie Shaw, Buddy Rich, Gene Krupa, Al Jolson, Bing Crosby, Les Paul w/Mary Ford, Muddy Waters, Big Bill Broonzy, Lightnin' Hopkins and lots of old Swing Era records... Stay Tuned!



Since Joe and I are both Irish (Scottish-Irish) the fact that it's an Irish-themed song is significant. While my heritage never meant anything to me, after he passed over he taught me all about it through "Treasure Hunts" where he leads me on various short journeys and what he calls "epistemological road trips" to discover things about our past together. I recall a past life we had together during the 1940s, just prior to this lifetime and we very well may have danced to the song playing on a Victrola record player as described above. There is much in the description above that is significant. What I recall is that he had hand made a silver yin yang talisman for me (shown in the photo). One afternoon we drove out to what at the time was a remote agriculture area of Tangent, Oregon and had a romantic picnic and buried the talisman together in the middle of a pasture. We either buried it during that lifetime (we lived in Spokane, WA at the time and may have driven down to Albany for some reason; we traveled quite a lot; and in fact, he was killed in a head-on collision during that life time; we were engaged, but had not yet married). Or it could have been the lifetime just prior to that one during which we had lived in Seattle, WA and then moved to Albany, OR, the very town I live in now.



There is much to these memories that I'll explore another time, more "treasure hunting" slated for the future. We had moved away from Seattle because we lost our home and, I believe also a church in the Seattle Fire. We came to Albany to help found a nondenominational church here that was built much like a Scottish castle (shown in the photograph, taken on the "No Ordinary Treasure Hunt," August 21, 2009).

Nevertheless, at some point we drove out into the country to a field where we had a romantic picnic and he buried the yin yang talisman as I've described, with the plan that in our next lifetime, I would find it as a special treasure. Amazingly, right after he passed away this time, he guided me to moving to the very house that now resides in the pasture where we had buried the talisman (I have since moved again, to a home which also has Divine implications). At that time, I had looked at three different houses, and the one I ultimately moved into had this aura of bright light. I don't know where it came from, but it was an indication that I should choose it from the three. I wasn't sure, still, so I had my children look at all three houses and they chose the same house.

We moved into the house on Valentine's Day, 2009. In May, 2009, he led me to finding the yin yang treasure, although I was not aware at the time it was actually a treasure we had buried together. He asked me to get a metal detector to search my back yard, calling the treasure hunt "The Back Yard Treasure Hunt." I did as he asked, and I ended up finding the talisman on Mother's Day 2009. I did not realize the significance of finding it, but have since remembered how it got there and how it represents an initiation gift into the Divine Wisdom Knowledges, as well as a Mother's Day gift, a gift from him that he made himself and that has blessed me in multiple dimensions now.

This is perhaps a demonstration of the epitome of discovering Music "Easter eggs" in Joe's work. It is a form of treasure hunting in which, if we follow our inner guidance, our Master Teachers, and "guides on the side" we discover much about ourselves as we learn about subjects and information we might otherwise not have encountered, especially with how education is today. We increase our connections to knowledge, expand our consciousnesses, and life begins to take on deeply multidimensional qualities.

My third stop with this research involving the phrase, “And the band played on” was to learn more about the song. I was interested in the history of the song and its lyrics. I found some information on Wikipedia:

The Band Played On

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

For other uses, see [And the Band Played On \(disambiguation\)](#).

The Band Played On, also known (by its refrain) as **Casey would waltz with a strawberry blonde**, was a popular song, with lyrics by [John F. Palmer](#) and music by Charles B. Ward (1865–1917), written in 1895.^[1]



Sheet music cover

Unusually, as originally published the verses are in 2/4 time, while the chorus is in 3/4 (waltz) time. The chorus is much better known than the verses to later generations.

The lyrics of the refrain:

*Casey would waltz with a strawberry blonde
 And the band played on;
 He'd glide 'cross the floor with the girl he adored
 And the band played on;
 But his brain was so loaded it nearly exploded
 The poor girl would shake with alarm;
 He'd ne'er leave the girl with the strawberry curls
 And the band played on.*

The song has become a pop standard with many recordings made. One of the first was made by Dan W. Quinn for Berliner Gramophone the same year the number was first published.

The song was later featured in many films, including Raoul Walsh's *The Strawberry Blonde* (1941), the title of which was inspired by the lyrics, and Alfred Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train* (1951).

Cover versions

Other musicians who have recorded "And the Band Played On" include:

- Mandy Patinkin - *Experiment* (Electra D103532, 1994)

One of the most famous recordings, by Guy Lombardo's orchestra, was made on February 26, 1941 and issued by Decca Records as catalog number 3675 (reissued as number 25341). It first reached the Billboard magazine Best Seller chart on May 9, 1941 and lasted 4 weeks on the chart, peaking at #6.^[2] The numerous other recordings of the number include Alvin and the Chipmunks version in the 1962 album *The Chipmunk Songbook*.

References

1. ^ William Emmett Studwell (1997). *The Americana song reader* (illustrated ed.). Haworth Press. p. 9. ISBN 978-0-7890-0150-4.
2. ^ Whitburn, Joel (1973). *Top Pop Records 1940–1955*. Record Research.

External links

- The song's appearances in film, on IMDb
- Lyrics of the song on (Public Domain) pdmusic.org

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How funny: Alvin and the Chipmunks sang the song, too. They were very popular when I was a child, so I probably have heard their rendition. That brings back memories of a dysfunctional family life. Another thing that stood out for me in the above is Alfred Hitchcock's "Strangers on a Train" made in 1951 in which the song is featured. Could the movie have been what's called "predictive programming?" How much do media affect our consciousnesses and then what we end up acting out or expecting in our lives? It's a question no one has begun to answer, except, perhaps the programmers. They no doubt know very well what they're doing. But who are they? In which dimension do they reside? Do we know?

The lyrics are interesting and, synchronistically—and in a funny sort of way—they correlate perfectly with Joe's theoretical work. The song could easily be interpreted as being a humorous commentary about Divine Love or Twin Flames/Twin Souls. Why do I make this conclusion? First, in order to make that divine soul-to-soul connection, it requires mind work to attain high consciousness. This could be represented by the lyrics "his brain was so loaded it nearly exploded." The girl was totally enamored and at the same time frightened by his intelligence and power: "the poor girl would shake with alarm." It could also be that his "high vibrations" or "energy" (sometimes referred to as "charisma") was so powerful it caused her to

“shake with alarm.” But they are eternal partners! He is dedicated and committed. “He’d ne’er leave the girl with the strawberry curls.” This also alludes to the rhizomatic eternal connection they have (“Strawberry Fields Forever”), a reference Joe has used in his work in *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*. Thus, in the case of this song, we have a good/positive interpretation of “And the band played on” in contrast to the previous negative interpretation in which the bad things that happen never seem to change. Here, the couple will dance together eternally. Thus, with this interpretation we offset thanatos with eros, as Joe recommends we do when we choose possible interpretations.

We’ve probably all heard this next version of the song at some point:

The Band Played On by Guy Lombardo on 1940's Decca 78. <https://youtu.be/2bDo0dN3d5o>

I also learned from Wikipedia in relation to “The Band Plays On” the following:

This article is about the hard rock album. For the 1934 American film, see [The Band Plays On \(film\)](#). For the non-fiction book, see [And the Band Played On](#). For the pop song, see [The Band Played On](#).

Now you can make this your own personal project. There is much more research that can be done here; I’ve only barely touched the surface. What links do you feel compelled to follow? What more can you learn about this phrase Joe used, “And the band played on”? Of course, he was speaking in terms of the fact that things were terrible, the poor and disempowered remain poor and disempowered, and nothing was changing. I have felt that often. It is frustrating to know that things could change for the better if only more people were willing to do the work it takes—Joe spent 40 years of his life trying to convey to people that we *can* make the world a better place if we just put forth the effort—and he was an excellent role model who has left us his powerful legacy of written works.

It can get extremely frustrating when people put their own misguided interpretations about why passionate people like Joe and myself work so hard to get the message out. I was once accused of being an “Eager Beaver Critical Pedagogue.” The funny thing was that someone told that to Joe when he was still alive. I was told he laughed, and of course he would; I completely understand why. After he passed over it was turned into a Hermes never-ending joke (you will have to read my treasure hunt blogs for the whole story). You do have to keep your sense of humor when you do this kind of work.

The first job most of us have to work on is to learn to listen. If more people would simply listen, as Joe has pointed out, we would be well on our way. I know how Joe must have felt when he wrote, “And the band played on.” But at some point things will have to change. This is

the crux of his often mentioned “recovery movement” message. He does not put it in so many words, but we will be forced to get on the train to change and THEN we will all come to understand what Joe was teaching us, why he was teaching it to us and why he never gave up—not even after he “died.”

Can you hear your teachers calling you? The pendulum is about to take a far, painful swing to the left (and I’m not talking about the political left since the left is nothing more than more of the right). But we can all choose to make it less painful for ourselves. The world is a-changing. For some of us at least, it will not be a world where the band plays sad music; there will be dancing in the streets and great celebrations again, like the days of the Mersey Beat—before the “Black Market” corrupted it all.

I tried to find Alfred Hitchcock’s movie *Stranger on a Train*, which the Wikipedia article has referenced, but they are all “pay for” versions. Instead I found this movie: *The Man Who Knew Too Much* [<https://youtu.be/2oC5nnGcjwU>]. I quite often just “go with the flow” when I research. This movie is serendipitous because Joe mentions many times in his work, “dangerous knowledge.” I really don’t know what he meant; maybe he meant a lot of things. Regardless, he qualified as a man who knew too much. I’m going to take a break and watch this movie to see what I might learn about “dangerous knowledge.”

Whatever Gets You through the Night

As I mentioned previously, the second song I noticed that Joe had referenced in the two chapters we're examining from *What You Don't Know About Schools* is a song by John Lennon. On page 60 he had written, "'As John Lennon puts it, 'whatever gets you through the night.'" Of course, he was applying it to teaching in the classroom and whatever can get you through the class. But that's only one level of interpretation. Because Joe wants us to learn how to interpret text deeply, there are always other possible interpretations. Here is the song:

John Lennon ~ Whatever Gets You through the Night [<https://youtu.be/HNNxeovdN5U>]

The lyrics are synergistically appropriate (you might wish to search for the lyrics if you're unfamiliar with them). That should amaze and surprise me, but I am well attuned to Joe's magic with words and music (although when these things happen, it really does still always amaze me). The implication is that the love will get us through the night, through these very dark times in history. Music is healing. Love is healing. As Joe has contended so often in his work and in his interviews, he (and I) ascribe to the blues aesthetic. We know things are terrible; we are not afraid to look at the dark side of reality in order to better understand how we might change things. And yet at the same time, we rejoice that we are alive and we are ecstatic over the "little things in life." Halleluia! My rent is paid again this month. I have food in the house. And most of all we have our multidimensional family (our soul family) to love and be loved, "the greatest thing," as Nat King Cole sings. We can see the magic.

It's funny, as well, that if you don't know that the lyrics are saying "listen to me" (an important message in context with what Joe's asking of us), it sounds like John is singing "Let's get music, let's get music." As I've been instructed, the **sound** of words is often more important than what the words are themselves. Our consciousness is able to comprehend both.

Importantly, what is the context for Joe's reference to John Lennon's song? He writes:

What constitutes education is a decision made in a community of learners, around the types of issues raised here—the quest for compelling worldviews, ethical sensibilities that lead to courageous civic actions, and new insights into who we are, how we became that way, and what we want to become. Thus, in the critical pedagogy delineated here, the job of the teacher is to create conditions that let students become learners and researchers. Sometimes such a task demands a brilliant and inspirational lecture about a topic on which the teacher is well-informed. At other times it means keeping one's mouth shut for 45 min—some of us more verbose teacher types find the

latter quite taxing. As John Lennon put it, “whatever gets you through the night” —or in this case, through the class. (p. 59)

His message is multidimensional. He’s saying that yes, there are appropriate times and circumstances for using “direct teaching” approaches. There are times when we need to be more flexible and let the learners guide us as teachers. There are times when we need to shut up and listen. There are times when we just need to somehow get through the class (whether teachers or learners). Embedded in his message is the importance of love and music, as the lyrics of the song have revealed. What more can we learn?

There are many studies that show the benefits of music combined with learning and the benefits learning music has for learning. Even playing appropriate music in the classroom can help students relax, focus, and maintain greater interest, but for some reason so many schools prohibit such activities (and yet they allow the waste of instructional time for students to watch movies of questionable value). These are observations I’ve made when working in a high school a few years ago.

Joe is advising us to get more creative. Providing the opportunity for learners to become more proactive with their own learning and gaining the skills to conduct rigorous research on topics that interest them and relate to their lives (he often refers to these as “generative themes”) they learn commitment and passion. The multidimensional critical complex bricolage and critical complex epistemology, as defined earlier, hold the skills they need to be learning. I know from personal conversations with Joe and from his work that he advocates teaching to two curriculums. We teach the standards, but we creatively use them as the secondary curriculum by threading them through the primary curriculum—the one that actually addresses the learners’ needs and interests. Hard to do? Yes. It’s why it takes practice. But until the pendulum swings back, it must be done—it’s what will facilitate the pendulum swinging back. If more teachers and parents, and learners as well, do not take to this task, there will be ever greater trouble down the road.

This doesn’t have to be without fun! Music can add so much to the curriculum. Music can be tied to every domain, as in reality, all domains are connected. The more one practices, the more connections there are to be discovered. Joe’s works certainly give us ample opportunities to practice these skills, as I hope I’m demonstrating here—and will continue to demonstrate in other contexts.

I was interested in learning more about John Lennon’s song that Joe had cited. To delve a little more into the history of the song, again I visited Wikipedia:

The inspiration for the lyrics came from late-night television. In December 2005, May Pang told Radio Times: "At night he loved to channel-surf, and would pick up phrases from all the shows. One time, he was watching Reverend Ike, a famous black evangelist, who was saying, "Let me tell you guys, it doesn't matter, it's whatever gets you through the night." John loved it and said, "I've got to write it down or I'll forget it." He always kept a pad and pen by the bed. That was the beginning of 'Whatever Gets You thru the Night'." [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whatever_Gets_You_thru_the_Night]

The music was inspired by the number one single at the time, "Rock Your Baby" by George McCrae.^{[4][5]} Although the released track bears little resemblance, the inspiration is more apparent on the alternative version released on John Lennon Anthology.

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I find it interesting that the song was inspired by "Rock Your Baby." **George McCrae -- Rock Your Baby** [<https://youtu.be/arxhW1RgDDo>]

And so, again, we have the connection to the dynamite relationship between music and love. They are as inseparable as Divine Lovers.

And tying it into the text, Joe states, "The critical education promoted here seeks to find such dynamics [relevance to their identities] in the lives of all students in the pedagogical effort to make learning meaningful and a source of passion and commitment. **This is the central task of a progressive pedagogy.**" (p. 64) [Emphasis added]

In other words, the act of being committed to passionately seeking knowledge as related to idiosyncratic "generative themes" leads to love. What greater purpose can there be?

The message is clear. (We call it the Venus and Sanat Kumara One Love Path, the Great Global Golden Treasure Hunt)

What's Next?

This has been a brief foray into how music is embedded in Joe's work and what great insights we can gain from it if we seek relevant information. This is often how I'm guided in his work; something "stands out" and in this case, two songs came to the forefront. There are most likely more songs in those two chapters and I hope readers will explore that. There are many songs in his other works, waiting for meaning to be brought forth.

Joe has consistently made music an important part of my daily life—whether it's when I'm learning from him or I'm out on one of his treasure hunts. The following is a blog I wrote about my most recent Pacific Coast Treasure Hunt and how it came to be centered on soul music.

Friday, July 26, 2013

The MUSIC during Yesterday's Eager Beaver Pacific Coast Treasure Hunt and Birthday Bonanza: Another Epistemological Road Trip

Some days, especially those very special days when I go on "Treasure Hunts" or take Joe's "Epistemological Road Trips," music follows me everywhere. It's beyond coincidence. There are always special messages in the music. This time a series of songs portrayed a special message and highlighted the importance of music in the bricolage.

Yesterday, I took my daughter to the beach in celebration of her birthday and to revive the Pacific Coast Eager Beaver Treasure Hunts of 2009-2011 (I had taken a break to write my dissertation). As we were driving down to our favorite place at Nye Beach, just about ready to make a stop at the Eager Beaver Thrift Store, I made a comment to my daughter about how Joe was so soulful, even though he was a white guy...lol. (Joe is always on my mind; it just can't be helped). But it is very true that he had soul. As soon as we walked into the Eager Beaver store – which is now named the Eager Beaver Discount Store -- a very soulful love song began playing. I had never heard it before so I asked the cashier (who may be the owner of the store; I'm not sure) if he knew what the title was.

I knew there had to be a message...well, there was: *It was a love song!* What more did I need? Yet, the title came up as "You Cheated" by the Shields, according to the cashier. At first, I thought that had to be wrong. I never cheat. BUT then I thought that maybe

the message meant that I had been too focused on ‘worldly things’ lately (which I blame on a guy who nearly forced me and my daughter out of our home and onto the street— why are those rich millionaires and billionaires always named Bill?). Anyway, I thought, ok, that must be the message: I allowed my worldly mundane concerns to prevent me from working on my important mission to write about Joe’s work in ways that everyone can understand; I allowed fear to interfere with working on my most passionate endeavor, which is connecting with Joe and writing about his work in ways that everyone will be able to apply.

The stresses of material existence can do that. However, when I got home and checked the song out on YouTube and listened to it, it was not the same love song that I had heard playing when I first walked into the store (was I on a 'different wavelength'?). Thus, I can only assume that Hermes, the trickster messenger god and father of Eros, had become involved here and the guy at the Eager Beaver store was serving as a messenger to someone else and, thus, now I am passing on that message: *Someone cheated*. It wasn’t me. Just want to set the record straight. The person who the message is for will know it’s for them.

The rest of the music that came my way everywhere I went yesterday was pretty amazing. Every song was SOULFUL as if to emphasize my statement about Joe having soul. Even if the song had been sung originally by white people, such as “Leaving on a Jet Plane,” instead a SOULFUL version of the song played. It was as if the cosmos heard my statement about Joe (and I love the song he wrote and sang, titled “Soul”), so I was rewarded with only *very soulful* music everywhere I went on the Pacific Coast. It really seemed as if every "station" had been tuned into Soul music, which is funny since Joe described in his last book how as a young child he'd listen to R&B on a "black radio station" on his transistor radio into the wee hours of the night (I used to do the very same thing!). Here is a list of just a few of the songs that played at the major places we visited yesterday:

Eager Beaver Discount Store – an unidentified love song and several others; [You Cheated by the Shields](#) (as reported)

Aquarium Village - [You’ve Made Me So Very Happy](#) by the Temptations; [Backstabbers by the Ojays](#) (another song message about cheating; Hermes is persistent about getting this message out)

Spouting Horn Restaurant – [Leaving on a Jet Plane](#) by Justin Young; [Girl of My Dream](#) by Manhattans; [Polynesian People](#) by Norm; [We’ve Got Tonight](#) by Bob Seger



And to top off the music messages, at the Aquarium Village, a place I had never visited before, tucked away in the middle of the complex, with a huge winged dragon painted on the front, was an interesting shop -- called **Treasure Hunt** -- another treasure hunt within a treasure hunt (something similar has happened before -- when we encountered an Art Treasure Hunt within the Kings Valley/The Queen Treasure Hunt)...anyway, 'something' made me tell my daughter just as we were reaching the entry of Treasure Hunt, that there was a birthday present in the store for her. We looked and looked and she found nothing. Then just as we were walking out of the store, she spotted a denim jacket that she loved and just had to have. It was in perfect condition, fit her perfectly, and was only \$3.50. What a deal! She couldn't get over finding it because she remembered how when she was younger, she loved denim jackets and wore them so often.



And that reminds me, back at the Eager Beaver Discount Store, we were very happy when, while looking at t-shirts, the owner came back and discounted them even more! So both my daughter and I picked up a few new t-shirts. I also picked up a business card for the store and discovered they buy gold, silver, disks, tools, and fishing gear. Now that the debacle with my 'house' is over and Bill can forget about getting more dollar bills from me, and now that we are moved and

settled into a new house, we are going to have to revive the Eager Beaver Pacific Coast and the King's Valley Treasure Hunts and use our metal detector. After all, I was guided to finding my very special silver talisman in my own back yard, on Mother's Day, no less. I do trust my fourth dimension connections. And we have some amazing treasures just waiting to be found yet! I've already been informed about the gold in Kings Valley multiple times and treasury notes buried in a metal box (you don't think they call it Kings Valley for nothing do you?) And then there's The Queen right in the heart of the valley, as I had discovered on my previous treasure hunts. The Queen is the name the residents of Falls City had given their town as a sort of nickname many years ago. As I had written in my dissertation, it was a very weird coincidence how this all symbolically represented the Fall (Falls City) of the first King (Kings Valley) and Queen (The Queen), Adam and Eve. It makes one wonder what goes on in the consciousnesses of people to create these funny synchronicities in the way they name places.

Anyway, that was our day at the beach yesterday. My daughter ended up with quite a few birthday presents and we both had a great day. And I discovered that there was a reason for all of the soulful music and reminders of treasure hunts. They are essential components of Joe's multidimensional critical complex bricolage. Point made! Those of you who are working on learning how to 'do bricolage' are to use Joe's **Critical Hermeneutics** and the Hermeneutic Circle to interpret the message(s) in the music. There are no wrong interpretations and there are special messages for everyone. And you really need to try treasure hunting! See what shows up and what music is highlighted on your epistemological journey. The cosmos really is alive and well, very mysterious, and it seems to be full of great surprises and messages if we're paying attention.

At any rate, I do know what my personal message is: Joe had soul, he still has soul, and we are soulfully connected.

P.S. Because Joe's bricolage is so complicated and most people do not even do academic research (and even many of those who *do* have a hard time understanding the totality of his version of bricolage), I have been requested to write a book that explains how to apply it in *everyday life* (something Joe really wants to see happen).

Thus, I am working on a book called *Critical Bricolage for Everyday Life* and another version called *Doing the Critical Bricolage to Improve Your Learning, Writing, Remembering*, which will be helpful for high school students, college students, seniors who want to improve their memory skills, and everyone else who wants to engage in lifelong learning. Everyone will benefit from learning to use advanced research skills. These books will be out soon and will be available on my publishing site

(<http://www.paradispublications.com/>) as very low-priced downloads so that everyone can afford them. I will continue to expand on the more academic-oriented information on this site, www.joekincheloe.us, on a regular basis, bit-by-bit, and bring in other researchers since there are a few who are beginning to apply at least aspects of Joe's theory. We can examine the various parts, keeping in mind that his process is a holistic, complex process, and when applied in its full dimensionality produces more powerful new knowledge and understanding than the various components alone are able to. We need to keep moving forward. I have also been invited to write some articles for various education and research journals, and I will be reviving JOE – the Journal of Epistemology which covers both academic and everyday uses of critical complex epistemology and bricolage.

My messages from the fourth dimensional realms is that although things have gotten off to a slow start, this coming fall and on through next year and from then onward, Joe's new bricolage process is going to be picked up by more and more people – both for academic purposes and to apply to solving problems of everyday life due to how the theory addresses the increasing complexity we find ourselves surrounded with and is so powerful for finding creative solutions midst the chaos. In my books, I'll provide detailed explanations of how applying the theory has helped me solve some complicated issues in new ways. I've discovered that the legal code is written for us in many instances – it's just being misapplied by those who hold the keys to power and are determined to misuse the code (and in many cases, ignore the intent of the code) in order to line their pockets, while everyone sits around, "just doing their jobs." There are viable ways to return the power to the people and I hope by sharing a few examples, other people will be able to apply Joe's bricolage in their own lives, which can only help us all. And I have not forgotten: February, 14, 2014 is the date for my first *Eros and Psyche of the Twenty-First Century* book, a very personal "MyStory" in the tradition of Norm Denzin's new self-ethnographic approaches . . . busy, busy, busy.

I really need to find those treasury notes!

8:26 pm | [link](#)

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Reading this blog again, after all this time, I realize how "off-track" I've become. I have a lot of catching up on "work" to do, including the treasure hunts. It's distressing how mundane life and trying to keep our heads above water takes so much time and energy that we end up setting aside our true passionate work. And isn't that the plan? The dominators want to keep us distracted and occupied so that we don't realize our true power—the power of love.

But the highlight of the blog is the music and treasure hunting, which simply must be re-engaged. Perhaps that's why I've been prompted to write this short book—in only three days. I feel that if I could just make the gigantic leap over the abyss, take a chance and ignore the calls of the mundane slave work and, instead, focus on my true passion, then my life would become 100% magical.

I simply must get back on track. It is time. (There are reasons for the delay, however, which might be explained in future writings).

A Better Life

In Joe's last book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*, there are probably hundreds of references to music, movies, artwork, books, and even hidden puzzles, just waiting to be discovered. I hope readers will enjoy exploring them. One of my favorite songs, which I uncovered by searching the lyrics, is "Girl, There's a Better Life for Me and You," a title of a subchapter in the book (p. 57). The lyrics of the song correlate well with his discussion in that chapter, which is obviously why he chose the song. I'll let you explore that.

I hope sharing this information about how powerful and transformational music, love, and learning can be is inspirational. What I've shared is how they have made my own life so much richer and so much more connected into the cosmos. And while I say this, I realize how little we know and how much fascinating exploration there is yet to do. It's a shame that our educational process, which is supposed to be our ticket to knowledge, in fact, has the opposite effect, keeping us in chains rather than encouraging us to be free to explore. It is really up to us to apply these concepts in ways that make our lives and our loved one's lives better. As I've shared, music has become a huge part of my daily life, one way or another. Joe is intertwined with music and I'm intertwined with Joe. Thank you for quantum physics and "entangled minds."

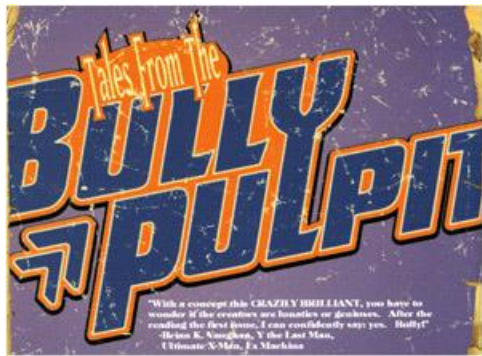
So, yes, the chapter in *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* that Joe had titled, "**Girl, There's a Better Life for Me and You': The Move to a Critical Complex Epistemology**" spoke to me on a personal level. In this chapter he also references the song, "Desperado" by the Eagles that played for me just as I sat down to have lunch with my daughter on the Tennessee epistemological road trip I took in 2010, which I discuss in the next chapter. He states, "Of course, in the world of academia I found that those who engaged in such behaviors [more inclusive epistemologies] were often viewed as epistemological desperados. 'Why don't you come to your senses?' Don Henley might have asked them had he been their dean" (p. 58).

For me, "critical pedagogy is a sham" (Kincheloe, 2008b, p. 182). It's a group of insiders who think they know what they're talking about (and it ain't what you think!) and they laugh at those of us who don't understand their hidden language and they become abusive when we start getting a clue about that "dangerous knowledge" Joe discusses. Of course, obviously, and thankfully, they are not all like that and for the ones who are, I still hold out hope that change is possible. Thus, the title of this chapter in Joe's book with its musical title about a better life and it's move away from critical pedagogy toward critical complex epistemology speaks volumes...Joe was leaving "critical pedagogy" for "critical complex epistemology," in my

interpretation—and he did leave. In fact, in the literature it's been reported that he was, indeed, going to leave the university he was currently teaching at. Sadly, before he had a chance to leave, he had a heart attack. But, like Casey in the song, "And the Band Played On," he will never leave me. Together, with *critical complex epistemology* and the *multidimensional critical complex bricolage* we continue to create the better life he discusses in his work and that he's shown me in the higher dimensions (a place much like Heaven)—and you can too.

Saturday, June 6, 2009

I Had A Bad Dream: A Poem



I had a dream
 It were a bad dream, man
 Sumptin' ain't right
 And it his dream
 There was Joe
 And he says,
 Look girl,
 I need yer help
 Can't do this 'lone
 No way, babe
 And I says

Joe, ya know what I says
 What Joe wants Joe gits
 Ain't you got this figured out yet?
 And he says
 Babe I knew you there
 Listen to me close
 When I was there
 You know
 All walkin' 'round and such
 There was a few people
 I didn't like so much
 They held up the gavel
 And wanted to swing
 They wanted to
 Lots of big bad
 trouble bring
 I wanna show I care
 As much as
 When I was there
 I need yer help
 Cuz they need to know
 Their game has no where
 It can go
 I talk to you

Listen up
you gotta show
Once and fer all
No more hangin'
Things over the head
No more things get bad
Mad
Ain't right
No more hangin' things
Ever at all
And I says
Joe, love, you so good
You know, 100% pure
People be mean here
I cry at night
cuz it aint right
Please don't worry
Ya know what I says
What Joe wants Joe gits
And Joe says
I knew I could count on you
Babe
And I just says 'gain
What Joe wants
Joe gits.

Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds - I Had a Dream, Joe

<https://youtu.be/yFc-f5K2alk>

References

Image of Tales from the Bully Pulpit courtesy

of [http://www.idleidiots.com/zach/Tales%20from%20the%20Bully%20Pulpit/Tales%20from%20the%20Bully%20Pulpit%20\(2004\)%20\(05\).jpg](http://www.idleidiots.com/zach/Tales%20from%20the%20Bully%20Pulpit/Tales%20from%20the%20Bully%20Pulpit%20(2004)%20(05).jpg)

And The Band Plays On

Joe's music lives on. It's a part of my everyday life and comes to me in magical ways. The examples I've discussed in this book only represent the tiniest fraction of how intertwined music, love, and magic has become in my life. As part of my initiation into the "Great Brotherhood and Sisterhood," as some people refer to this group of benevolent Great Master Teachers, I was assigned to take a very long trek from my home state of Oregon to visit Joe's home of Kingsport, Tennessee. He was with me the entire journey. In fact, it was an amazing song that provided me comfort when it was pouring down rain just as I was about to embark on the journey in late March, 2010. Here is a brief excerpt from the blog describing the song (March 26, 2010):

Morning Meeting With My Master Teacher

My master teacher has been so busy. I thank him for taking time to answer my quick questions. During our regularly scheduled morning meeting I asked him about my blog as I have written it so far, to this point. You see, everything that has happened during the past two days surrounding the music he gave me and my dream, has turned out to be my lesson plan as implemented by him. There is no militaristic action (thank goodness) – that was just to make a point and to pull up the song he wanted me to pay attention to. This morning he said "You once again went beyond my expectations in this last lesson plan." The only things he wants to add to this blog are two songs. One he gave as "**Don't let a blue Friday turn into the weekend**" and the other one, "**Keep on lovin' me.**" So I will check it out right now to see what these pull up on You Tube.

"Don't let a blue Friday turn into the weekend"

This is an interesting song, and very relevant for personal reasons which I will describe another time. [The song that came up on the YouTube search was the following]:

These White Lights Will Bend to Make Blue – Azure Ray

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lmedUYweUko>

Again, the lyrics are interesting because the blue relates to the concept of true blue soulmate love, which keeps coming up along with the blue fireworks. I guess there is something about blue ... in fact it comes up so often. It also takes me back to all of the work I did on the "Deep Blue Mariner Reaps the Soul Surprise" Treasure Hunt, which will be a part of my dissertation, apparently.

Lyrics

Drive away
 Just get on the interstate
 And slip through this closing gate
 Pulled into this cheap hotel
 I called just to wish you well
 You said don't let love break you down
 Well just show me how and let me never be broken
 Tomorrow a new point of view
 These white lights will bend to make blue
 Now this can all look new to you
 Are you still living there
 Walking the streets with your hollow stare
 You say there's loneliness everywhere
 So we have nothing to lose
 The music plays all day long
 And sorrow looks beautiful
 And lovers seem mystical
 Tomorrow a new point of view
 These bright lights will bend to make blue
 Now this can all look new to you

My Master Teacher is Just **so amazing**. I did an analysis on this song because it is very special to me and has some deep significance, which I will publish when it is relevant to do so. I am just going along here with what my Master Teacher wishes for the moment, as is always the case.

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The song was important to me. Here I was, about to embark on the longest “epistemological road trip” I had ever taken, and it was pouring down rain! I was very nervous about going—so nervous, in fact, that I kept the trip hidden (did not write blogs about it) until I had returned. The music is telling me to just get on the Interstate; it’s going to be ok. It’ll give me a “new point of view.” At the beginning of the video it shows a car leaving the house in the rain and in the dark which I envisioned for myself for this trip. But by the end of the video, it’s getting light outside, giving me hope. A deep analysis of the song (which I wrote in my journal for that day and covered in later blogs) provided some profound spiritual insight and points to a

profound love, but for that moment, it had given me great reassurance that the trip was going to be fine. In fact, it turned out to be beautiful the entire journey. We ran into light snow passing through Idaho and beyond that there was beautiful sunshine the entire time.

And to top off the beautiful weather, it seemed that Joe (and the rest of my soul family) was with me the entire trip. And of course, just as the song lyrics put it “The music plays all day long.” On the first day of the trip, just four hours into it, I had stopped at a truck stop in northeastern Oregon to meet my daughter who lived nearby and have lunch with her. It was no longer raining and the sun was shining brightly. As soon as we sat down at the table in the restaurant, *Desperado* by the Eagles began to play—a song that Joe has referenced in many of his works in relation to how others viewed him in his passionate quest for a quality education for us all, as I discussed in the last chapter. There are deep and emotional meanings to the song. It was clearly a song close to his heart. Hearing the song at an important point of this emotional road trip made me cry. Also on our way to Tennessee, we stopped at a Subway for lunch and as soon as we walked through the doors, “I love Rock and Roll” began blasting in our ears. The song had just started the moment we walked in. Joe loved Rock and Roll. Yes, Joe, we know you are with us; I love you. As I listened to the music I envisioned a photograph of him I had seen posted on Facebook. He was wearing a well-worn and faded AC-DC t-shirt. And as he had written in his bricolage book, “I love New Brunswick, brilliant New Brunswick students, Critical Studies in Education, and **rock ‘n’ roll.**” (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004, xiii) [Emphasis added].

The important message in all of this is that when we use music to enhance our learning in the creative ways Joe has demonstrated, we create special connections and we open up whole new ways to view and even interact with the world and cosmos. We learn to apply what we learn in our teaching and our everyday life in ways that make learning and living a more enjoyable, loving process. Including music as part of the learning process as I’ve shown in this book can be extremely transformative, taken deep enough and wide enough. Music, of course stirs emotions, which is conducive to learning more about ourselves, other people, relationships, and for developing greater empathy. All of these processes together provide multiple connections to the knowledge we acquire. In my own learning, it seems these connections make accessing what I’ve learned faster and easier, thus there seems to be a memory-enhancement benefit. I often remember the music—and then the knowledge or memory I’ve associated with that music.

Thus, learning can be accelerated and enhanced using music as we touch on many different domains of knowledge using hermeneutics and other interpretive methods. We can cover virtually any subject with just one song. But for me—and as I’ve discovered—for Joe as well, the journey always seems to head to the same place: **love**. As both Joe and I have written, the ultimate goal is the Divine Love and the special gifts that come along with it. As I’ve

described, Joe was known for his capacity to love and had even been referred to as “Eros” by some of his friends and colleagues. He *is* Eros, to me. In his last book, he wrote of offsetting the thanatos of the world with eros. Love is the eternal gift that fuels our passion. Love is “The Purpose.”

Joe, with his great sense of humor that he often inserts in his work where we might least expect it, puts it like this, in these two chapters I had been prompted to pursue for the writing of this book:

Without a sense of purpose, the goals of a critical pedagogy cannot be achieved. Indeed, everything in the critical curriculum leads down the yellow brick road to the Emerald City of purpose. When learners act with the benefits of this ever evolving, elastic sense of purpose, they begin to discern the whole of the forest rather than simply the isolated trees. It is an amazing moment in the lives of teachers and students when the epiphany of purpose grabs a student and shakes her very soul. This is the money shot of a critical pedagogy. (2006, p. 64)

I’ll leave it the reader to analyze that one, but the destination is love. I already know what it means. I must confess, however, I had to do some research into different and unfamiliar (for me) epistemologies to discover various possible meanings before I chose the best meaning. This is another example of how we can use our epistemological license to reclaim, rename, and redefine certain concepts. Maybe we can name this process by which we reclaim the divine from the mundane and profane to mean “redivine.”

Similarly, we can redivine the meaning of the musical statement, “And the band played on” in Joe’s writing about the Recovery Movement. We need to alter its expression from the sad meaning connoted when we speak of how some things never change, such as how education has continued to be controlled by the dominators and has continued to deteriorate, or how AIDS was ignored and people suffered and died as a result. Of course, we need a deep understanding of these and many other issues. This is critical.

Using critical complex epistemology and the multidimensional critical complex bricolage guides us to acquiring the knowledge we need for understanding the complexities of these types of problems—and for creating change, along with new and positive meanings. We can take back our power by bringing music back into the equation in amazing ways that have never been done before in all of history. And this time, **we** are the players in the band.

And the band plays on.

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APPENDIX. SELECTED DATA

The Special Reading Assignment from Joe

[Again, you are on target, Vanessa](#)

Wed, 10/08/2008 - 10:29 — [Joe Kincheloe](#)



Vanessa,

Forgive my repeatedly saying you're on target, Vanessa--but you are. First it might be important to read Kathy Berry's and my "Rigour and complexity in educational research: Conceptualizing the bricolage." The parts on hermeneutics may be particularly helpful to you, especially pp. 62-67 on critical symbiotic hermeneutics. The point here is that with multiple perspectives we begin to see driving forces at work in shaping human history but that those driving forces are different, they have different effects in differing situations. For example, the notion of colonialism has dramatically different effects depending on whether you grow up in Algeria or in Alabama.

A history that is informed by critical hermeneutics takes this "colonial difference" into account in its effort to understand the forces that shape us and shape the future. Often times the disjunctions and fissures that Foucault references occur in these situations. Dominant culture erases perspectives that are outside its immediate cultural, class, racial, gender, etc... experience. Your example of the erasure of Islamic science in the standard Western history of science is a great example. Sometimes the point is not to force linear sequence when it doesn't exist. Thus, the point of multiple histories that are disjunctive and in some ways separate. At other times, relational dynamics can be constructed that provide profound insight into the macro-phenomenon in question. Critical complex historians are constantly forced to determine when to indicate linearity and when not too. It's always a tough call. Just because we don't discern linearity doesn't mean we don't find meaning or insight into the present and future in our historical research. Certain forms of non-linearity may be quite insightful as we develop our critical praxis. More on this matter to come.

We're critically cookin'

Many regards,

Joe

Joe L. Kincheloe Canada Research Chair in Critical Pedagogy Faculty of Education McGill University

Joe's Bricolage Instructions

[Vanessa, you're getting it](#)

Wed, 10/29/2008 - 14:38 — [Joe Kincheloe](#)



Vanessa,

This is a typical response to employing the bricolage. My students and other scholars who use it have sometimes encountered exactly the same response. You have it right, we start more broadly looking at various perspectives to give us a "cubist consciousness" on a phenomenon/a. Then we begin to narrow our, by this time, informed perspective. There are many who once a scholar begins to talk about gaining diverse theoretical, methodological, disciplinary, and cultural perspectives think that she is taking on an impractical task that will yield only superficial, broad information. They don't seem to get that this is merely the first part of the research project. Yes, eventually we will sharpen our focus, but not until we're ready. In your case it's important to let your professor know that you'll get to the place he wants you to be but after you've done the preliminary work of gaining multiple perspectives.

As we've both said before, it just doesn't seem to be that difficult of a concept to grasp.

Keep on keepin' on,

Thanks as always,

Joe

Joe L. Kincheloe Canada Research Chair in Critical Pedagogy Faculty of Education McGill University

Joe's Perpetual Revolution

[A permanent revolution](#)

Thu, 11/06/2008 - 09:55 — [Vanessa Paradis](#)



Paul Carr,

Very inspiring blog and article. It reminds me of a lecture I watched from Peter McLaren's website in which he stated that we need a "permanent revolutionary critical pedagogy." The teaching, learning, activism, and action should never end. I think many people realize this now, and if it is remembered, we are not likely to find ourselves in this current sort of situation again.

in solidarity,

vanessa

[The perpetual revolution](#)

Fri, 11/07/2008 - 11:07 — [Joe Kincheloe](#)



Vanessa,

Great insight. Now we enter into a different Zeitgeist. An evolving criticality meets an evolving socio-cultural setting. Again, we have to rethink who we are and what we do.

Evolvingly yours,

Joe

Joe L. Kincheloe Canada Research Chair in Critical Pedagogy Faculty of Education McGill University

[And I forgot to say...](#)

Wed, 11/12/2008 - 22:18 — [Vanessa Paradis](#)



Joe,

I wondered what misinformation is and how it works....ok, now I have seen several examples...thanks for pointing it out. I don't see the purpose, I guess. (I know I have led a sheltered life). Definitely no purpose in pursuing this article any further. The logic of this type writing escapes me as I cannot relate to why anyone would get some sort of satisfaction out of putting out such nonsense. Besides, it just makes them look....well, you know....

the end

when is your next book - or books - coming out...what is the title (or titles)? I've been wanting to ask you this. I hope you dont mind.

Vanessa

[As James Brown put it, I don't mind](#)

Wed, 11/12/2008 - 23:03 — [Joe Kincheloe](#)



Vanessa,

To answer your question: the next book out will be Christotainment with Shirley--out in couple of weeks. Then in a few months Writing and Publishing also with Shirley. Sometime soon the second edition of Doing Educational Research with Ken Tobin. Those are the immediate ones. I'm working on several others but they won't be out for a while. Busy, busy, busy. No obfuscation here. Thanks for asking, Vanessa.

Many regards,
Joe

Joe L. Kincheloe Canada Research Chair in Critical Pedagogy Faculty of Education McGill University

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[Source: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/17/107>]

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[Source: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/42/1981>]

And the Band Plays On

A Brief Demonstration and Analysis of Joe Kincheloe's Use of Music for Accelerated and Transformative Learning—and a Better Life

By Vanessa Jae Paradis

This book is for everyone who loves music. It is also for people interested in a new way of learning that incorporates music in engaging, creative, and transformative ways to enhance and accelerate learning. Teachers, parents, students, college professors, researchers, scientists, and musicians will find this book of interest.

Included in the book is introductory information for students and researchers who want to learn Kincheloe's advanced and rigorous qualitative research process, the multidimensional critical complex bricolage. It is not your ordinary bricolage and it takes research and writing to a whole new level. The process can be applied within all disciplines.

Of interest to scientists and researchers is the introduction to Kincheloe's critical science of complexity and how he has synthesized enactive, chaos, complexity, and other theories.

And finally, the author interprets two songs embedded in the writings of the late philosopher-educator, Joe Kincheloe, to demonstrate how he uses music in his work pedagogically. Following his lead by incorporating music into more facets of our lives in positive, transformative ways, we can create a better, more enjoyable life for ourselves and a better world for us all.

You will never view music in the same light again.

The author has researched the late Joe Kincheloe's work and has applied his critical complex theories for more than seven years.