

**DID JOE LYONS KINCHELOE DISCOVER
THE GOLDEN CHALICE
FOR KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION?
THE APPLICATION OF CRITICAL COMPLEX EPISTEMOLOGY
AND THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL CRITICAL COMPLEX BRICOLAGE**

by

Vanessa Jae Paradis

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Abstract

This *multidimensional critical complex bricolage* research study explicates and demonstrates the late Joe Kincheloe's (December 14, 1950–December 19, 2008) interdisciplinary, multitheoretical, multimethodological bricolage in conjunction with his theoretical formulations of *critical complex epistemology*, *critical complex ontology*, *evolving critical pedagogy*, *critical psychology of complexity*, and *fourth dimension research*. Elucidation was deemed crucial due to the great promise this research process offers for producing insightful, innovative, and practical knowledge that will contribute to more informed solutions for complex social and educational issues. This study has expanded the conceptual understanding of bricolage through multiperspectival and metaphoric examinations of the research process. Additionally, Kincheloe's theoretical delineations have been analyzed to help clarify his advanced concepts. Methodological, theoretical, interpretive, political, narrative, philosophical, critical hermeneutical and feminist dimensions have been employed in this study, combined with diverse cosmologies, epistemologies, and ontologies. It was found that this unique research process provides an exemplary means for studying complex, symbiotic, dynamic, and hidden dimensions of interrelationships. It can be applied in all disciplines and is also useful for teaching, learning, and for professional and everyday problem solving due to the power it offers in generating immediate and effective actions for change. This study was remarkably transformative for the researcher, helping her come to greater understandings of the new phenomenological "daily lived experiences" she encountered during her research journey. She concludes that Kincheloe has developed, with his conceptualization of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage, an exceptionally

rigorous empirical phenomenological research process, which employed in its full dimensionality contributes to his goal for constructing a *critical science of complexity*. The multidimensional critical complex bricolage is particularly promising for empirical phenomenological inquiries into cognition and consciousness, a long-standing neglected area of research.

Dedication

for

Joe Kincheloe

<3 “Strawberry Fields Forever” <3

and

to all the people

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

*The power to narrate, to represent, and to silence
is the power to oppress, to perpetuate suffering. (Kincheloe, 1997, p. 75).*

Prologue: Epistemological Road Trips

The late Joe Lyons Kincheloe (December 14, 1950–December 19, 2008), a world renowned and beloved critical theorist, philosopher, and prolific writer, developed an advanced conceptualization for bricolage, the *multidimensional critical complex bricolage*, which has been researched and applied for this study. I had the treasured experience of working with Joe for seven months before he passed away. His tragic heart attack ultimately devastated me and crushed the hope I had for his work changing the world. He was brilliant, fun, and the most loving Master Teacher I have ever known. His wonderfully creative pedagogy incorporates activities to make even the most complex concepts a joy to learn. One example is his metaphoric, but also literal idea of *epistemological road trips* (Kincheloe, 2008c). He humorously described feeling like “Apostle Paul on Highway 61” while learning to play blues on the piano from a local African American blues band, the Baddaddies, when he was twelve years old (p. 18). Joe had already been trained at that young impressionable age to be a preacher even though, as he put it, he quickly knew he “didn’t want to be a fundamentalist Protestant” (p. 16). It was a racially segregated place and time in the Appalachian Mountains area of Eastern Tennessee. He explained, “We must be willing to take to the road, in much the same way Jack Kerouac did in the 1950s” (p. 19). He does not even rule out spending the night in a

Mexican whorehouse the way Jack's characters in the book had done. However, these epistemological road trips "also might mean traveling the path laid out by subjugated knowledge, exploring a wide variety of data sources excluded by the standardized elementary and secondary school curriculum and the corporatized university course of study" (p. 19).

Thus, epistemological road trips can and often do involve taking to the road. They also involve traveling the Internet highway. We never know who or what we might run into, where we might end up, or what we might learn. His words of wisdom in relation to these risks were contained within the admonition that "to become a seeker of new knowledges and new ways of being we must be willing to sometimes be seen as the fools of the gods" (p. 19).

Introduction to the Problem: "She's Not There"

Bricolage, a form of multimethodological/multitheoretical/multiperspectival research is being used on an increasing basis in education, business, entrepreneurship, creative arts, cultural studies, sociology, anthropology, nursing, geography, literary studies, ethnic studies, entrepreneurship, environmental sciences, natural resource management, curriculum studies, library studies, feminism, women's studies, cognitive sciences, organizational theory, marketing, media studies, religious studies, psychology, history, knowledge management, network theory, among other domains (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, 2011; Kincheloe, 2001a, 2004a, 2005a). Researchers using this form of inquiry are referred to as *bricoleurs* as they select from various research methods,

theories, and processes at hand that will serve their purpose for interpretation and analysis during their improvisational unfolding research, according to most definitions of this process. An overused metaphor in the literature refers to the bricoleur as a “handyperson” who uses available “tools” during the unfolding process of the research. Common metaphors used to describe the outcome of this form of research, include quilt, crystal, montage, or cubist artwork due to how the final bricolage represents the different vantage points of the research phenomenon. The result is often a multiperspectival view of the research object or phenomenon.

However, Kincheloe’s version of bricolage, which is not currently being employed by education researchers as he has conceptualized, adds a multidimensional complexity to the process of bricolage that these common definitions and metaphors fail to capture. I share Richardson’s (2012) concern over the mechanistic metaphors that continue to be associated with bricolage in nearly all disciplines and how they may contribute to reductionistic results. I also share his concern over these current studies failing to look to indigenous knowledges, ontologies, and narratives for greater understandings. These failures contribute to failing to meet what Kincheloe was calling for. Mechanistic metaphors are counter to what Kincheloe had conceptualized. Two key points about Kincheloe’s bricolage in relation to Richardson’s concerns are worth noting. First, Kincheloe emphasizes repeatedly the need for researchers to draw on indigenous epistemologies for greater insight; and secondly, Kincheloe was aware of the reductionistic effects of the machine metaphors and was working toward eliminating them. His frustration over these continuing metaphors shows up in his work in multiple

places, such as with his statement in his last book, “The machine metaphor—also an ontological concept—looks like a small child’s view of the world when complexity begins to be appreciated” (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 43).

Thus, in order to differentiate Kincheloe’s bricolage from the metaphors that maintain reductionistic tendencies, as well as to highlight the complexity of his conceptualization of bricolage, in this study it will be referred to as the *multidimensional critical complex bricolage*. Throughout this study, while not perfect since I cannot change the fact that I am white and have had my consciousness influenced by machine metaphors among other undesirable ideologies, I attempt to open up the meaning of bricolage with new metaphors. I am not “there” quite yet; I learn as I practice the bricolage. There may be other metaphors that will contribute to understanding bricolage even more expansively, but this study is a good start.

Theoretical and Philosophical Foundation: “Critical Constructivism”

As presented in greater detail in the literature review, Kincheloe’s (2005b) conceptualization of his “critical constructivist” worldview forms the philosophical and theoretical foundation for this study. His advanced conceptualization of bricolage forms the conceptual framework (Kincheloe, 2005a, 2008b, 2008c). The worldview he has outlined is uniquely comprised of a complex of tightly interwoven and synthesized theories and tenets, including but not limited to his formulation of an evolving critical complex theory (which is far more expansive than mainstream critical theory/pedagogy). Included are feminist theory, chaos and complexity theories, enactive theory, liberation

theology, and more. As he states, “The ‘critical’ in critical constructivism comes from critical theory and its concern with extending a human’s consciousness of herself as a social being—critical theory promotes self-reflection in relation to social power and its ability to align our self-perceptions and world views with the interests of power blocs” (p. 33). Critical constructivism holds the position that consciousness shapes things into existence, into something that can be perceived (p. 8) and that knowledge is produced by interpretation, often constrained by our location in a complex web of reality and the views we can achieve within that reality. Thus, the more views or perspectives that we consciously work toward attaining such as can be achieved through bricolage it might be assumed the more power we have to consciously construct knowledge and our consciousness. Of course, there is much more involved in this process, as can be learned by engaging in Kincheloe’s formulation of bricolage. Indeed, Alexander Riegler (2012), Editor-in-Chief of the journal, *Constructivist Foundations*, and a prominent researcher of epistemology and cognitive science, attests, “Cognition is not about information processing but rather about information generating” (p. 241). This might explain, in part, why the process of knowledge production using Kincheloe’s bricolage can theoretically lead to higher order cognition, or what he sometimes refers to as “sophisticated cognition” (Kincheloe, 2004c). According to the theory, multidimensional critical complex bricolage is a process by which researchers enact, as in Maturana and Varela’s (1987) autopoieses theory, rigorous knowledge production hence, they also take an active role in constructing their own consciousness. These concepts are covered in greater detail

in Kincheloe's work and throughout this study as they are relevant to the context of this research (e.g., see Kincheloe, 2008c).

As I have learned during this research, it is important not to make assumptions about Kincheloe's epistemologies. He has taken creative license to reconstruct and redefine many taken-for-granted terms, always incorporating his expansive worldview and multidimensional critical complex theories. This includes his version of research bricolage, the focus of this study, as is demonstrated. Thus, I recommend refraining from the tendency to attaching narrow labels or presuppositions to him or his work, and, instead, "phenomenologically bracketing" (setting aside) one's first thoughts. Using the example of constructivism clarifies the reasoning behind this recommendation. Even though he has adopted the term "critical constructivism," his take on constructivism is so expansive it cannot be placed into any one box. Thus, we might conclude he had adopted within his theories "constructivist approaches" as Riegler (2012) refers to this discipline for the very reason that "constructivism is not a homogenous paradigm" and consists of many sub-disciplines and approaches (p. 237). Kincheloe has placed the observer in a central role of theory development and engaging actively in constructing their reality through mental constructs *in relationship*. However, as Kincheloe has done with most terms he adopts, he has greatly expanded the definition of constructivism; thus, we might better distinguish his constructivism by referring to it as a multidimensional critical complex constructivism, similar to the designation made for his bricolage.

Issues of Understanding: The Philosophical Dimension

A scan of bricolage research has shown that many researchers in education do not seem to understand that for effective and transformative knowledge production bricolage requires a deeper and broader analysis than simply juxtaposing various perspectives and engaging in surface-level discussions. This misconception is exemplified in a recent educational journal in which it was proclaimed by the author of the introduction that, “As a collection, the articles are representational of the power of the bricolage for the ‘doing of’ critical pedagogy and critical research” (Kress, 2011). None of the articles in the journal appear to be bricolage research studies nor were their interrelationships examined, indicating the common misconception that merely juxtapositioning articles in a journal constitute powerful bricolage research. Unfortunately, a growing trend was also noted in which doctoral students are creating “montages” of articles and submitting them for publication as a form of dissertation “bricolage” (Niven & Grant, 2012). Muddying the waters, bricolage has also become connected to what has increasingly become a “ludic postmodernism” (Kincheloe, 1993, 1995b, p. 85; Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005, p. 304), and it has been appropriated as a “postmodern device” (Arikan, 2011). Further darkening the waters, more recently, Marxist theory has been placed in juxtaposition with excerpts from Kincheloe’s advanced conceptualization of bricolage, *posthumously*, (Kincheloe, McLaren, & Steinberg, 2011)—after Kincheloe had “bleached” any remnants of Marxism from his critical theoretical work (Pinar, 2010, Endnote 12). Kincheloe apparently saw no benefit in synthesizing Marxist theory into his conceptualization, yet after his death, it is being inserted into his work along with outdated Freirean theory he had transcended with

his theoretical formulations, thus diminishing his achievements. Scholarly research and education publishing as an industry is strange, bewildering, and very difficult to understand from an outside perspective. For whatever reasons this is being done, it provides another example supporting the pressing need to clarify his work.

Kincheloe (2001a, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d, 2004e, 2005a, 2005b, 2008c) had expanded the conceptualization of critical bricolage in order to facilitate greater rigor and more powerful knowledge production, moving away from traditional critical theory and pedagogy that has been influenced primarily by the Frankfurt School as taken up by U.S. white males. His concept of an evolving criticality requires many diverse perspectives from all over the globe, and it incorporates complexity, chaos, and enactive theories with an emphasis on indigenous knowledges. In relation to the multiple modes of research he recommends, he states, “bricolage has typically been understood to involve the process of employing these methodological strategies, as they are needed in the unfolding context of the research situation. While this interdisciplinary feature is central to any notion of the bricolage, I propose that critical researchers *go beyond this dynamic*” (2008b, p. 131) [emphasis added]. His objectives are for researchers to engage in critical self reflection during the process and also to ensure that this form of research does not fall into reductionism or become a way of simply creating a hodgepodge of perspectives, much like a montage that does not consider an analysis of the interconnections of the complex relationships. He clarified that his conceptualization involves a *discursive* process of philosophizing, interpreting and analyzing. He expresses the benefit of taking this approach: “Here, the theoretical domain is connected to the lived world and new

forms of cognition and research are *enacted*” (Kincheloe, 2004a, pp. 4–5) [author’s emphasis]. As will be shown, *enaction* is a critical element of Kincheloe’s conceptualization and it provides hope because it results in actually making changes rather than merely talking about changes. Kincheloe (2005b) has situated his conceptualization of bricolage within a unique unifying critical constructivist worldview that incorporates a complex synthesis of critical, complexity, chaos, enactive, feminist, and other theories and philosophies. In his formulation, critical epistemology, critical hermeneutics, critical ontology, and other philosophies are accentuated to provide a deep understanding of multiple dimensions of the phenomena being studied and their interrelationships. He refers to this as *philosophical research* and asserts that rigor is not possible without this added dimension (Kincheloe, 2005a, p. 336). He explains, “What researchers are exploring in this philosophical mode of inquiry are the nature and effects of the social construction of knowledge, understanding, and human subjectivity” (p. 337). He explicates, “The various philosophical tools clarify the process of inquiry and provide insight into the assumptions on which it conceptually rests” (p. 336). Thus, bricoleurs are compelled to situate themselves within this process, self-reflect, justify their selected methods, interpretations, and analyses in relation to the phenomenon being researched, exploring “the boundary between the social world and the narrative representation of it” (Kincheloe, 2005a, p. 336).

The understanding of how they are situated in relation to the phenomenon helps bricoleurs choose or develop research processes to address emergent insights and bypass reductionism, and ensures rigor. To assist these ends, critical hermeneutics, “a form of

philosophical inquiry that focuses on the cultural, social, political, and historical nature of the research” takes a central role in Kincheloe’s (2005a) advanced conceptualization (p. 342). Thus, as discussed, the process he has developed is deeply grounded in philosophy and social theory, engages deep multidisciplinary and interdisciplinarity, seeks multiple perspectives, and uses a variety of analytic and interpretive processes with an emphasis on philosophical research and the analysis of dominant forms of power.

This form of research does not as a rule involve devising scientific controlled experiments, although Kincheloe acknowledges the importance of quantitative methods for answering certain types of research questions (e.g., Kincheloe, 2007a, “Empirical Knowledge,” p. 104). Bricolage research typically uses textual and various forms of readily available data as necessary to gain an understanding of the research phenomenon, and is qualitative in nature taking the form of a critical discourse, an important process for this form of research. The completed discursive knowledge product, which is often dialogic in nature, is also referred to as a *bricolage* (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, 2011; Kincheloe, 2001a, 2004a, 2005a).

Issues of Application: Transcending Reductionism

Upon reviewing the literature, there is virtually no example of a multidimensional critical complex bricolage study in education or any other discipline, aside from Kincheloe’s own work. Indeed, studies that cite Kincheloe’s bricolage fall short of the rigor he was calling for, leaving out the philosophical bricolage, taking shortcuts, ascribing to an undefined and vague postmodernism, and supplementing quantitative studies with add-on bricolage studies without analyzing the interrelationships and

complexities between them and how these may have affected the knowledge produced. In other words, the theory as Kincheloe (2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d, 2004e, 2005a, 2008b, 2008c) has conceptualized is not fully understood and is being misapplied or not fully applied (Berry, 2006, 2011; Rogers, 2012) (e.g., Benningen, 2006; Fedory, 2005; Helms, Irby, Lara-Alecio, & Guerrero-Valecillos, 2009; Lauer, 2006; MacLean, 2009; Rumble, 2010; Semetsky, 2011). This observation is not meant to insult researchers who have embarked on this complex path of research; indeed, they are to be commended. As mentioned, the current metaphors for bricolage tend to promote confusion over the process and contribute to reductionism. Greater clarification and direction is needed to flesh out the process for Kincheloe's conceptualization so that the multifaceted problems facing education can benefit from the application of the more powerful, practical, and actionable knowledge that can be produced from this rigorous form of research. Thus, this study has taken bricolage to the next level, demonstrating application in a way it is hoped Kincheloe would have wished and is not meant to undermine what is already being done. All bricolage research can be picked up at any point and carried forward to the next level and perhaps this study will provide inspiration for researchers to continue forward with their bricolage studies.

Due to confusion by some researchers as evidenced in the literature, it is important to also note that, as Kincheloe (2004c), himself, had clarified, "The purpose of the [multidimensional critical complex] bricolage is not to subvert the production of empirical knowledge but rather to encourage the production of a richer, thicker, and more rigorous form of it. . . . Bricoleurs are simultaneously calling for a more rigorous form of

empirical knowledge and a more humble claim for what it represents. The two characteristics are not contradictory; instead they are synergistic” (p. 35). Additionally, he states:

Contrary to the pronouncements of some analysts, the contingent orientation to research created by the bricoleur’s attention to discursive and contextual dimensions of knowledge production, does not make one anti-empiricist or anti-quantitative. Instead, such concerns make the bricoleur more attentive to the various dynamics that shape what is called empirical knowledge. (2004b, p. 6–7)

Research into the application of his conceptualization is crucial so that more researchers understand Kincheloe’s multidimensional critical complex bricolage and can confidently apply it (Berry, 2011). Thus, this study has undertaken an analysis of Kincheloe’s work that led up to his formulation and has examined how he employed it in his own work, contrasting it to current bricolage research in order to provide more specific direction for new bricoleurs. Kincheloe (1991b) used the analogy of researchers being “mapmakers” who may wish to put everything on the map for an accurate portrayal, but must make subjective decisions about what to include and what to leave out (p. 13). Of course, map makers often have systems for assisting them with making those decisions, but bricoleurs, in a sense, have to make their own systems in context with the phenomena they are studying. While the complexity of this advanced, multidimensional form of bricolage is not conducive for outlining exact procedures or a concise all-purpose map—in fact doing so would be counter to what the process is attempting to achieve—nevertheless, a presentation of general processes following the guidance Kincheloe has provided may be helpful toward getting more rigorous bricolage research off the ground.

Issues of Process: Faith and Trust

As Francis and Simon (2001) indicate, “having a system or following a process is a defining principle of research” (p. 40). Further, researchers of constructivism, an important process within bricolage, are calling for a move toward considering life “a process of bringing forth a world” (Stewart, 2011, p. 21) and making the processes “practically visible” (Bartesaghi, 2011, p. 22). Kincheloe (2004e, 2005a) has delineated important considerations that should inform some of the choices bricoleurs may face for achieving these goals, thus, he has provided a preliminary system that guides researchers with choosing actions to address social justice issues and alleviate suffering. The system is flexible as it will bend and shape itself according to the researcher’s needs and the topic being researched. Thus, it is true that there is a degree of faith and trust necessary to take on this bricolage process that relies greatly on intuition and creative flow balanced with intellect and reason. In fact, Kincheloe’s bricolage often requires one to learn to juggle many balls simultaneously. Yet Kincheloe was certain we can all learn to do this. To keep the momentum going and avoid dropping the ball after Kincheloe’s tragic and untimely death, bricolage as it’s currently being practiced needs to move up to the next level—the multidimensional critical complex bricolage—for today’s bricoleurs. We are now entering the critical bricolage “moment” for research (Berry, 2011).

Thus, this study examines how bricolage is currently being applied in educational research compared to Kincheloe’s recommended approaches for the multidimensional critical complex bricolage and has highlighted concrete ways to ensure rigor of the research process. Because his conceptualization requires deep interdisciplinary research,

several domains have been examined, demonstrating how they might contribute additional insight into the process. Multiple perspectives, philosophies, theoretical frameworks, and metaphors confronted through interdisciplinarity have provided a comprehensive and multifaceted understanding of bricolage research in general and reveal ideas for applications in education. An analysis that compares and contrasts how the bricolage is employed in terms of process, rigor and outcomes has been used to gain a greater understanding of Kincheloe's complex research process and to begin the development of recommendations that might help new bricoleurs develop their own process for conducting these studies. Research rigor and how bricoleurs might represent the knowledge produced has also been evaluated in this study. Francis and Simon (2001) describe rigor of qualitative research as being "associated with openness, scrupulous adherence to a philosophical perspective, and thoroughness in collecting data, and consideration of all the data in the development of a theory" (p. 40). This provides a starting framework for incorporating and evaluating rigor.

Kincheloe's Sound, Long-Standing Eclectic Philosophy

It was imperative to show, first of all, that Kincheloe had adhered meticulously to a sound philosophy in the development of his theories and that, contrary to what many scholars apparently have interpreted, he did not embrace a nebulous, ludic, or philosophical postmodernism (e.g., Arikan, 2011; Hayes, Steinberg, & Tobin, 2011). A thorough analysis of his work will show that he used the term to represent a form of critical epistemological analysis that he had redefined in his customary, if idiosyncratic way. In one of his earlier works, he was clear about his position, stating "the postmodern

form of this democratic research demands interrogation” in relation to his discussion about action research (Kincheloe, 1995b, p. 85). While some people may interpret this to mean that postmodernism is the subject in the sentence that is taking the action—demanding interrogation in the critical sense—what Kincheloe is calling for here is a critical interrogation of the forms of action research that have manifested midst what he refers to as the *postmodern condition*. In his text, he had renamed action research as *critical postmodern action research*, incorporating his critical, analytic version of action research. Thus, using his epistemological license, he delineates a *critical postmodernism*, again, incorporating his idiosyncratic take on critical theory (see Kincheloe, 2000, “postmodern critique”, p. 88). This critical postmodernism specifies the critical analyses of the symptoms of the postmodern condition—that is—of the pseudo democracy and the “rational irrationality” that has evolved out of the rejection of reason (Kincheloe, 1993, 1995b, 2008c). Kincheloe (1991b) spoke of this current state of the modern era as being the “death of the democratic philosophy of schooling” (p. 1). It can be clearly shown that he had a totally different slant on postmodernism than what some scholars have interpreted. Perhaps the confusion is the reason he abstained from referencing postmodernism at all in his later work. This included replacing “post-formalism” with his advanced conceptualization of cognitive development theory and renaming it *critical psychology of cognition*, (Kincheloe, 2008b, 2008c), even though the word post-formalism actually had referred to the higher order thinking abilities people are capable of developing beyond Piaget’s theorized “formal” stage of cognitive development and did not relate to postmodernism as many people interpret (Kincheloe, 1991a, p. 44–45).

Maybe Kincheloe became tired of repeatedly writing in his work, “Please don’t misunderstand me.” I read extra carefully when I encounter that admonition in his writing. As will be shown in this study, Kincheloe maintained a sound, eclectic philosophy, and he did not throw “reason” out the door.

Still, there continues to be promulgated the conjecture (stated and implied in various works) that Kincheloe’s work referencing postmodernism led to the “inauguration” of his conceptualization of bricolage research and/or that the bricolage is a postmodern device (e.g., Arikan, 2011; Hayes, Steinberg, & Tobin, 2011) but from the perspective being presented here, these conclusions are emphatically incorrect. For example, Hayes, Steinberg, and Tobin attribute Kincheloe’s (1995b) article, “Meet Me behind the Curtain: The Struggle for a Critical Postmodern Action Research” to being “etymologically speaking, a single parent to Joe’s articulation of bricolage a decade later” (p. 85). Ironically, etymology requires the tracing of the history of words or ideas. Thus, in the same book by Hayes, Steinberg, & Tobin, which is a compilation of Kincheloe’s articles, is an article written in 1991. In it, Kincheloe (1991b) states, in relation to the complexity of researching socially embedded experiences in education, “The attempt to quantify these experiences results in a violation of their nature. Thus, a new type of research methodology must be utilized to understand these types of experiences. The new research must ask qualitative questions” (p. 12). In the particular article referenced here, “Exposing the Technocratic Perversion of Education: The Death of the Democratic Philosophy of Schooling,” he does not mention postmodernism at all. He speaks entirely in terms of the “modern era” that has now morphed into an insidious form of Western

positivist epistemology he has described in his last book as “FIDUROD” (an acronym representing its attributes: formal, intractable, decontextualized, universal, reductionistic, and one dimensional knowledge production) (see Kincheloe, 2008c, pp. 21–25). This epistemology had developed, according to Kincheloe, as a backlash to the worldwide anti-colonial rebellion in the 1940s and 1950s and the subsequent U.S. civil rights, anti-Vietnam War, and feminist movements of the 1960s. Kincheloe chronicles the devastating effects of this particularly intractable form of Western epistemology that currently dominates research in great detail in his book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* (Kincheloe, 2008c).

Clearly, Kincheloe (1991b) was not referring to qualitative research in general in this 1991 article—that had been happening for decades. He was seeking a “new type of research” (p. 12). This quest for research comprised of multiple perspectives can be traced back to the first edition of *Teachers as Researchers* published in 1991 and even much further yet, to his very first book published, a booklet titled, *Understanding the New Right and Its Impact on Education*. In this booklet, written in 1983, he clearly conveyed the complexity of the issues surrounding the Kanawha County textbook controversy, an incident that occurred in 1974 and had resulted in violence, including the bombing of a school bus. He analyzed the emergence of the New Right Wing and he argued for educators to take time to understand the complexity of the issues, to research multiple perspectives, and to engage in unfettered debate. In his own words, he had begun this quest for new ways of thinking “in the late 1980s” (Kincheloe, 2006c, p. 140). When all of the signs are taken together, combined with his abandoning the term

“postmodernism” in his final conceptualization and in his last works, it seems clear that Kincheloe was attempting to completely sever his work from an increasingly ludic postmodernism. Thus, connecting a postmodernist ambiguity or a postmodern “philosophy” (providing one can even define such a philosophy) to his conceptualization of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage is a huge disservice and dishonor to Kincheloe and the more than forty years he had spent developing it. While Kincheloe is ambitiously and simultaneously accomplishing many things with his version of bricolage, his multiperspectival approach does not assume that all perspectives are equally valuable. As he had concluded in his very first booklet (and a close reading of his work reveals he had not moved from this perspective), “When the complexity of the problem is widely understood, we can see the folly of simplistic, black-and-white answers. With extreme positions exposed, rational and productive exchange of ideas becomes possible” (Kincheloe, 1983, p. 40). Unfortunately, ludic postmodernism and the narcissism it engenders are not conducive to this happening. Practicing bricolage as he has conceptualized can help get us out of this quagmire.

In conclusion, the complexity and issues surrounding Kincheloe’s work and factors that may be holding up progress in terms of application have been introduced. These issues and many more are taken up in this research to provide greater clarity for his research process. Reading carefully, whether he is writing about postmodernism, positivism, or epistemology, his philosophical position is strong and consistent throughout all of his work from his very first booklet, *Understanding the New Right*, written in 1983, to his last work, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*

written in 2008. Kincheloe seems to have been on a very specific quest, and through the analysis conducted by this study, it appears he had been highly successful accomplishing what he was wishing to accomplish. For mysterious reasons, which perhaps this study will begin to uncover, Kincheloe chose to sometimes write in an ambiguous style that left his discourse open for interpretation, such as the example in which his reference to postmodernism could be interpreted in two different and opposing ways. This leaves researchers open to interpreting his writing in the ways that suit their own position, if they are not reading his work in complete context or taking time for intertextual interpretations. However, it will be noted here, that with his version of research bricolage, upon which his own work has undoubtedly been based, he has always included a statement in his definition of bricoleur not seen in other definitions: “Some connotations of the term involve trickery and cunning and remind me of the chicanery of Hermes, in particular his ambiguity concerning the messages of the gods” (2004b, p. 1). Perhaps, there are people who do not heed that clue and are not reading Kincheloe’s work carefully. There may be some surprising messages from the gods before this analysis is over.

Background of the Study

Researchers in many domains, including education, use bricolage, a multimethodological and multitheoretical form of qualitative research, but these studies vary significantly in their approaches, rigor, and outcomes. It was not known, before conducting this study, how these studies compare with Kincheloe’s advanced

conceptualization of the more rigorous employment of the bricolage, referred to here as the multidimensional critical complex bricolage. The increasing use of bricolage in ways that do not incorporate adequate rigor may be contributing to the “triple crisis of representation, legitimation, and praxis” that Denzin and Lincoln (2008, p. 26) cite as being an issue for educational and social sciences research today. As researchers increasingly find that reductionistic research methodologies and positivistic studies fail to satisfactorily answer their research questions or find workable solutions to problems that arise from complex, rapidly changing social conditions, they are increasingly turning to forms of inquiry that provide greater promise, such as bricolage. Thus, it is important to gain more knowledge about how to approach bricolage research in order to encompass these complexities effectively. Kincheloe’s multidimensional critical complex bricolage offers a rigorous and potentially more fruitful process if applied as he has recommended. While a handful of new bricoleurs are taking the leap and beginning to implement some of his recommendations, until this study, it had yet to be fully explored or applied as conceptualized other than by Kincheloe, himself. Thus, research citing Kincheloe’s bricolage is analyzed in this study in relation to his advanced conceptualization, and his process is described and clarified.

Statement of the Problem

Bricolage is being used as a research methodology in many disciplines, including education today, but there is little guidance and few historical examples for conducting rigorous inquiries. Upon cursory analysis, it appears that either people do not know about

or they do not fully understand the late Joe Kincheloe's advanced conceptualization of critical bricolage. If they do know, they choose to take shortcuts and skip over important components, such as employment of the philosophical bricolage, critical hermeneutics, critical complex epistemology, and the fourth dimension of research. There is little assurance that simply using multiple methods and theories will escape reductionism. Thus, the findings from such studies may fall short of contributing new knowledge to solve the complex issues facing education today. Kincheloe was confident that researchers can do better than this, which was the purpose behind his conceptualization of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage. He had asserted that without the added dimensions of philosophical research, adequate research rigor could not be attained (Kincheloe, 2001a, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d, 2005a, 2005b). To date, no one has thoroughly analyzed the process Kincheloe recommended to conduct this form of research or has used this advanced conceptualization cohesively and comprehensively for knowledge production. Perhaps this has not happened to date because Kincheloe's work is extremely complex, multidimensional, theoretical, and philosophical, and it requires intertextual and hermeneutical analysis of his work in order to gain a thorough understanding for purposes of application. Unless more inquiries such as this one are conducted, this potentially powerful research process will likely not be used as intended, at the risk of researchers continuing to use reductionistic forms of bricolage that may not produce meaningful or useful knowledge that can contribute to the magnitude of change that is required to solve pressing educational and social problems. Indeed, it has been seven years since Kincheloe first presented his advanced conceptualization, and while

bricolage research continues to increase rapidly, overall, it is failing to produce knowledge that is making a difference.

Where do we begin? In a book Kincheloe published with Kathleen Berry (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004), he had presented bricolage as he had theorized it up to that time. In the book, Berry (2004a) suggests beginning the research using a point of entry text she refers to as a POET through which various ideologies, philosophies, theories, and numerous other perspectives may be threaded. While the concept of the POET is helpful in one sense, it is potentially inadequate and constraining once researchers delve into the full complexity of multidimensional critical complex research. Decisions regarding what to include, what to exclude, what is valuable or not when confronting a potentially infinite number of decision points among numerous texts that become included in the analysis require a more intuitive, less structured process. Thus, using a POET has been further clarified to determine what it might offer when applying Kincheloe's advanced conceptualization of bricolage. This is discussed as relevant to the study and the POET, a potentially useful construct, is considered in multiple contexts.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the differences and similarities between Kincheloe's (2001a, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d, 2004e, 2005a, 2008b, 2008c) multidimensional critical complex bricolage and the bricolage that is currently being applied in education research in order to assess how his advanced conceptualization might contribute to researchers conducting more rigorous research. Because this consists of interdisciplinary research, several domains were examined for their potential

contribution to educational research. This analysis has more clearly differentiated between commonly used, less effective bricolage research methods, the more effective applications, and Kincheloe's advanced multidimensional critical complex bricolage, and it provides guidance for applying his more rigorous form of bricolage. It is noted that Kincheloe did not advocate formulas, steps, or blueprints due to the improvisational approach that is necessary as the research unfolds, thus, his discourse has left it open for researchers to discover their own approaches. This does not mean there is no planning involved and he does provide guidance for making research decisions during the process of inquiry. It is believed that this study, which differentiates and demonstrates his bricolage process, will lead to greater understanding of how to approach this form of inquiry as well as provide a cursory analysis of how rigor relates to knowledge production. Rigorous inquiry, as recommended by Kincheloe, can result in applicable solutions to complex educational problems, increase knowledge, and improve researchers' abilities to undertake increasingly rigorous analyses with the potential for profound knowledge production. Thus, this study has examined the gap between current bricolage research in education and what Kincheloe had proposed, has developed ideas for a process for employing the process and evaluating the results, and has applied the process by analyzing an excerpt of text from his work in *Rigour and Complexity in Educational Research: Conceptualizing the Bricolage* (Kincheloe, 2004d, pp. 62-67). Additionally, this final bricolage, this dissertation, represents an example of a study completed using the multidimensional critical complex bricolage.

Rationale for the Study

Even as education is becoming increasingly complex it still operates under industrial age, traditional paradigms that fail to address the growing diversity, rapid changes, and flood of information (Nieto, 2005; Nieto & Bode, 2012; Reigeluth and Carr-Chellman, 2009). Education has been on a downward trend, with the United States moving from first place globally, to tenth place, according to Jobs for the Future (2010). Jobs for the Future (2012) now recognizes that the fragmented “reductive” way education has been provided has failed, and accelerated processes for remediation are required for more students than ever. These factors, along with others, are an indication that the needs of learners are not being met and a high quality education is not being provided. That these issues of rapid changes and complexities are not being addressed calls for a new paradigm, according to some researchers (e.g., Reigeluth & Carr-Chellman, 2009); however, compelling and telling are the accounts of wars, arguments, and in some cases ad hominem attacks over paradigms (Denzin, 2010b; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, 2011; Kincheloe, 2007b; Lather, 2006). Norman Denzin reviewed the historical trends of these issues and maintains that, “we need a moral and methodological community that honors and celebrates paradigm and methodological diversity” (p. 425). Donmoyer (2006) argues that it may have been appropriate to adopt Kuhn’s idea of paradigm during the 1970s, but that “it is now time to leave our hermetically sealed paradigmatic universes and engage with those in power in their own terms. . . . My argument for abandoning paradigm talk, in short, is based on strategic and pragmatic considerations” (p. 29). Thus, researchers do not agree as to how these issues with paradigms should be resolved.

Knowledge produced today within the imposed imperialistic and positivistic constraints combined with longstanding disagreements has limited ability to resolve these paradigm issues (Kincheloe, 2008c). The multidimensional complex critical bricolage circumvents paradigm wars, accommodates chaos and complexity directly, considers and honors multiple perspectives, identifies hidden dimensions of complex issues and future possibilities, and provides a rigor that can result in actions that alleviate the suffering. There may be hope for changing today's education systems that currently fail to fully recognize and address the complex needs of learners or incorporate knowledge production in the learning process (Kincheloe, 2001a, 2005a, 2008c). Although Kincheloe (2005a) states that the bricolage "does not enter this paradigmatic situation as a knight on a white horse," he attests to its power for transforming both knowledge and the researchers who use it and for moving research in a positive direction (pp. 331–332). As he contends, knowledge cannot be separated from the knower, thus, rigorous research is a transformative act (Kincheloe, 2001b, pp. 472–473). This study has seemed to show that this is, indeed, the case.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to examine how bricolage is currently being applied in educational research compared to Kincheloe's recommended approaches for the multidimensional critical complex bricolage in order to highlight in more concrete, contextual terms how new bricoleurs might improve the quality of research bricolage. Because this is an exploratory study, the questions started out general and tentative.

Originally, the goal was to provide an introductory assessment regarding the potential contribution Kincheloe's multidimensional critical complex bricolage may have for bricolage research and knowledge production and whether this current study in fact produces greater understanding or new knowledge. The study went beyond these goals in profound ways. This is evidenced throughout the study, including showing that Kincheloe, modest about his own contributions to knowledge and research, has made profound contributions. This conclusion had been intuitively determined before launching this research project.

In light of the dissertation title, *Did Joe Lyons Kincheloe Discover the Golden Chalice for Knowledge Production?: The Application of Critical Complex Epistemology and the Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage*, the following questions have been examined in this study: What is the nature of the new knowledge produced by this study? How might it be useful? How is bricolage research currently being used in education and other domains? How are these applications different from and similar to Kincheloe's critical complex bricolage and to what extent? How do the research outcomes and knowledge production in these examined studies, including this current study, reflect the degree of rigor with which the bricolage or the critical complex bricolage has been applied? What are the implications of the findings for future educational research? What additional insight is provided by performing an analysis of Berry's (2004a) Point of Entry Text as a way of launching an inquiry? How might the knowledge produced be evaluated?

This study was improvisational and qualitative in nature, thus, many new questions arose during the course of the inquiry. Where they were directly relevant to the study, these new questions were interwoven; where they were not relevant, the questions were posed as possible avenues of research for future bricolage studies.

Nature of the Study

This research is an exploratory and improvisational multidimensional critical complex bricolage study in which multiple perspectives, ideologies, philosophies, theoretical frameworks, and methodologies were used to analyze and apply Kincheloe's (2005a) conceptual work for bricolage. An ongoing environmental scan of bricolage studies conducted by other researchers was used to compare them with Kincheloe's work in terms of process, rigor and outcomes. Analytic assessments were performed based on Kincheloe's (2001a, 2005a, 2008c; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004) criteria and additional research-developed criteria. This required back-and-forth analyses and a cyclical, improvisational process as comparisons were made and the differences, similarities and benefits of the methods were clarified. Additional research into various research methodologies (e.g., hermeneutics, phenomenology, currere, semiotics, theoretical, interpretive, political, narrative, etc.) was conducted to aid the analyses and the literature review as the research unfolded. Justifications for decisions made throughout the research process were provided, which involved incorporating researcher self-reflexivity. The study is discursive in nature and has included analyzing existing textual data and

performing intertextual analyses, including of Kincheloe's works. Thus, there are no research participants, rendering the study exempt from the standard IRB review process.

Significance of the Study

This study has focused on crystallizing Kincheloe's multidimensional critical complex bricolage and the contribution it makes toward more rigorous bricolage research in academia. At the same time, the process for this type of research has been demonstrated and delineated within the study. Kincheloe's contention was that a rigorous multimethodological, multitheoretical, multiperspectival and analytic discursive process that includes a philosophical bricolage will produce knowledge that can change the world. This study has opened up the conversation for new ways of looking at validity of bricolage research by expanding researcher understanding of the criteria Kincheloe had developed and by providing insights for developing criteria specific to any given research study.

In addition, Kincheloe (2008c) has contended that even elementary school students can be taught to produce powerful knowledge by learning the research skills associated with the multidimensional critical complex bricolage and critical complex epistemology. They can be taught research skills right from the start and throughout their education to become adept bricoleurs. The impact of teaching young children higher order thinking skills in ways that they enjoy can take learning to a whole new level and create an entirely new view and process for education, as Kincheloe has noted in his works. It was beyond the scope of this dissertation to fully explore those possibilities,

although they have been touched on. The thought of how this research process can improve education at all levels was a great motivating force behind this project and is a source of inspiration for future research, especially given that U.S. education is not succeeding in closing achievement gaps (Aud & Hannes, 2010). Something must change.

Using the bricolage research process as a primary mode for learning provides ramifications for new visions for curricula, and in fact, many of these new visions are already presented in Kincheloe's other works and can be expanded upon (see Kincheloe, 1989, 1991a, 1993, 1995a, 1995b, 1999, 2000, 2001b, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2005b, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2006d, 2008b, 2008c). His theory purposely blurs boundaries between disciplines, thus doing away with rigid divisions in education, although he expresses the importance of maintaining a balance between subject and context (Kincheloe, 1991a). There are multiple benefits for this, including increasing both depth and breadth of learning and making learning more relevant. It also becomes feasible to develop interdisciplinary activities that literally span all age and ability levels through relatively easy differentiation and scaffolding techniques and by taking an improvisational, learner-centric approach. As learners make some of their own choices in learning they become more motivated. When learning and researching reaches what Kincheloe (2005a) refers to as the *fourth dimension of research* (p. 346) the researcher becomes an independent, impassioned learner, the research becomes almost entirely improvisational or inner directed, and it unfolds naturally with less need for specific or pre-determined instruction in the traditional sense. This does not rule out the need for teachers, of course, but simply

changes the role teachers serve and also recognizes that we are all teachers of something for someone.

There are multiple applications for the multidimensional critical complex bricolage, in addition to learning and academic research. For example, it would be useful for investigative purposes such as crime investigations, as well as for developing new uses of social networking technologies for research and learning in communities. It can also be used to improve the quality and rigor of online and distance learning.

In conclusion, the purpose of this study involved researching and applying an advanced conceptualization of research bricolage, the multidimensional critical complex bricolage, as developed by the late educational critical theorist, Joe Lyons Kincheloe and as represented by the last book he wrote just a few months before he passed away, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*. He stated in at least two places in this book that it would change the world. I happen to believe him. Joe was a true genius, as great a genius as Einstein, and as alluded to by other scholars, his work is, perhaps, directed to us from the future. It is hoped that this dissertation is a contribution, if only a beginning, to his assertion that if we all work together in an atmosphere of love, we can “alleviate suffering,” solve the world’s most complex problems, and make the world a better place for everyone.

Definitions of Terms

The specialized terms and definitions are derived from Kincheloe’s various works. He has included definitions throughout his books and he defines the key terms clearly and succinctly as he has applied them in his work. Thus, the following terms are

used in this study and are important for understanding his evolving complex criticality, critical complex epistemology, and his multidimensional critical complex bricolage:

Autopoiesis. The self-construction of life forms in tandem with their environments. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 171); Autopoiesis involves the production of a pattern of life organization. Cognition in this ontological context involves the process of self-production. (2001b, p. 315)

Bricolage. The French word, bricoleur, describes a handyman or handywoman who makes use of the tools available to complete a task. Some connotations of the term involve trickery and cunning and are reminiscent of the chicanery of Hermes, in particular his ambiguity concerning messages of the gods. If hermeneutics came to connote the ambiguity and slipperiness of textual meaning, then bricolage can also imply imaginative elements of the presentation of all formal research. I use the term here in the way Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (2000) employ it in *The Handbook of Qualitative Research* to denote a multimethodological form of research that uses a variety of research methods and theoretical constructs to examine a phenomenon (see Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 171)

Constructivist. An epistemological position that maintains that the knower personally participates in all acts of knowing and understanding. Knowledge does not exist “out there” in isolation from the knower. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 171)

“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)

Critical complex hermeneutics. A form of hermeneutics (interpretation) that has engaged with critical and complexity theories. It is interested in the ways power operates to shape consciousness, behavior and maintain control—or, in a more productive vein, end human suffering and upgrade human life. It moves beyond what’s visible to expose hidden structures and intentions. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 247)

Critical complex pedagogy. Attuned to the importance of complexity in constructing a rigorous and transformative education. Because of the importance of complexity, I often refer to my version of critical pedagogy as a critical complex pedagogy. (Kincheloe, 2008b, p. 8, 119)

Critical psychology of complexity/Critical complex cognition. Aware of many different perspectives, the vantage points of diverse disciplines of knowledge (e.g., history, philosophy, sociology) and transdisciplinary ways of seeing such as cultural studies (Kincheloe, 2008b, p. 173). Views learning as an untidy process of constructing new *relationships* in the interaction of cultural understandings, the influences of the information environment, familiar stories, idiosyncratic ways of making meaning, and schooling. (Kincheloe, 2008b, p. 161)[Author's italics]

Discursive or Discourse Analysis. The study of discourses where a discourse is defined as a constellation of hidden historical rules that govern what can be and cannot be said and who can speak and who must listen. . . . Discourses shape how we operate in the world as human agents, construct our consciousness, and, in an epistemological domain, what we consider true. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 68)

Disciplinarity. A process where disciplinary boundaries are crossed and the analytical frames of more than one are employed by the researcher. (Kincheloe, 2001b, p. 685).

Enactivism. A theory of mind that begins with an understanding of the relationship between mind and its contextual surroundings. Such an understanding demands that we ask why we see mind or any other phenomena as separate from its surroundings. Enactivism places great emphasis on how an entity interacts with its environment. . . . entities actually cre[a]te themselves (Kincheloe, 2008b, p. 176). This theory of mind was developed by the Santiago School where the mind is viewed as a self-creating organism that produces meaning instead of merely processing information as mirror images of external reality. Cognition in such a context emerges from the interaction, the relationship between the mind and its context—its external environment. This emergence is an enacted phenomenon—enacted in the interaction of mind-environment—that leads to an entity's awareness of its self and the context around it. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 172)

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)

FIDUROD. An acronym for the basic features of a contemporary mechanistic epistemology that is used sometimes unconsciously to shape the knowledge that permeates Western and Western-influenced cultures. The letters represent the attributes, Formal, Intractable, Decontextualized, Universalistic, Reductionistic, and One Dimensional. (Kincheloe, 2008c, pp. 21–24)

Hegemony. The process of maintaining domination in contemporary democratic society not through the use of force, but through winning the consent of the people. (Kincheloe, 2002, p. 129)

Historicity. The state of being in the world, our place in space and time and the way it shapes us. Such a concept is very important in critical and enactivist theory. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 253)

Historiography. The study of history, including historical research methods, epistemological and ontological issues, and schools of historical interpretation (Kincheloe, 2005b, p. 22)

Hyperreality. French social theorist's Jen Baudrillard's conception of the contemporary landscape marked by the omnipresence of electronic information. In such a landscape individuals begin to lose touch with the traditional notions of time, community, self, and history. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 172)

Intentionality. A feature of cognitive and linguistic states where an observer understands that they possess content and are *about* something in the world. This makes living things harder and more complex to study than non-living things. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 142) [Author's italics]

Multilogicality. A critical complex concept that focuses on transcending reductionism by gaining access to a wide diversity of perspectives when involved with research, knowledge work, and pedagogy. (Kincheloe, 2008b, p. 159)

Phenomenology. The study of phenomena in the world as they are constructed by our consciousness. As it analyzes such phenomenon it asks what makes

something what it is. In this way phenomenologists “get at” the meaning of lived experience, the meaning of experience as we live it. In this effort phenomenology attempts to study what it means to be human. (Kincheloe, 2005b, p. 142)

Poststructuralism. A social theoretical position emerging from within French structuralism in the 1960s, in response to structuralist claims to objectivity and universalism—eg., Piaget’s universal stages of child development or Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. . . . In a poststructural context language becomes extremely important as it culturally, socially, and politically inscribes particular situations. As it uncovers these dynamics, poststructuralism fosters resistance to the power they exert in the regulation and discipline of individuals. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 69)

Reductionism. An epistemological position that asserts that a researcher can best appreciate phenomena by reducing them to their constituent parts and then piecing the elements back together according to causal laws. There is no need in reductionism for multiple perspectives and a variety of research methods. Reductionists believe that such multilogical activity would just add noise and confusion to a simple process. (Kincheloe, 2008b, p. 160)

Semiotics. The study of the nature and influence of signs, symbols, and codes. (Kincheloe, 2005b, p. 24)

Subjectivity. In a critical context the term is used not as merely the opposite of objectivity but more as the characteristic of being a subject—a socially constructed individual whose identity is always connected to the shifting effects of power relations. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 172)

Theory. Is not an explanation of the world— it is more an explanation of our relation to the world. (Kincheloe, 2004b, p. 2)

Zeitgeist. German term for the “spirit of the times”—the ambiance, the character of a particular historical era. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 69)

Assumptions and Limitations

It is assumed that knowledge is socially constructed in a symbiotic manner; that is, members of societies or groups collectively and in complex, synergistic ways construct their shared realities. At the same time, individuals consciously and

unconsciously construct their own realities (Kincheloe, 2001a, 2005a, 2005b, 2008b, 2008c; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). Knowledge continuously evolves and, thus, supports an improvisational approach to research and a tentativeness of the results. Essentially, this study adopts and is conducted under Kincheloe's critical complex constructivist holistic, multidimensional worldview and holds the assumptions presented in Chapter 2 (see Table 1. *Key Points of Kincheloe's (2005b) Critical Constructivist Worldview*).

A notable assumption is that the researcher is not an isolated observer of the research phenomenon who has no influence on the subject or object of the research, thus, the researcher's positioning must be described in relation to the subject/object and the interpretations derived during the course of the research. The researcher and the objects under study are inextricably interlaced in complex ways. What we claim to observe is based on our interpretation of our perceptions. Thus, the dialogue throughout the study will shift perspectives back and forth as appropriate for presenting the research from the first person perspective to the third person perspective that maintains a thread of formality throughout as is generally preferred by the educational community. Also, I will switch between referring to Joe Kincheloe as "Kincheloe" or "Joe," depending on the context.

While the multidimensional critical complex bricolage is a powerful process for analysis and problem solving, it is time, place, and object constrained and what is found may or may not be applicable for similar situations. What we know and understand is tentative. The research bricolage can continue indefinitely; the researcher determines whether the process has been carried far enough. It can be picked up and continued at any

point in time and head in any number of new directions. Bricolage does not produce finalized knowledge in the traditional sense because any one of the facets may be picked up and continued in new contexts or a different timeframe, or as Kincheloe (2008c) often framed it, in a new “Zeitgeist.” However, what bricolage can offer is a broader and deeper perspective of phenomena being studied and often immediate and/or more optimal solutions to research problems. Due to the multiple interconnections produced by the bricolage, there can be an inherent redundancy to the discourse, which is simply a characteristic that bricoleurs accept as a means of understanding complex phenomena in different contexts (Kincheloe, 2005a).

And finally, it is noted that Kincheloe has a multitude of works, both single-authored and co-authored. Based on the belief that co-authored works may have clouded what were Kincheloe’s unique ideas, combined with the observation that this clouding continues with works published in his name alongside other scholars even more than four years after his death, this study will be narrowed down to considering only the works (books, articles, and chapters) Kincheloe published as the sole author, and only up until the time of his death. His last single authored book was *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* which was published in the fall, 2008, just before his passing in December, 2008. This stand is taken based on the contention that in order to fully and deeply understand Kincheloe and his work, it is imperative to restrict the analysis to the work that was his alone. Once this is sufficiently accomplished then further analyses can be conducted of his co-authored works to determine more exactly what his contributions were and to determine how his work is being muddied in the scholarly literature today.

This position also assists this current project by keeping it sufficiently narrowed. Of course, there is the limitation of this research being conducted by a novice bricoleur, but as Kincheloe contended, the only way to learn is by doing.

Bricoleurs are comfortable with these limitations (Kincheloe, 2001a, 2005a, 2008b, 2008c). Further limitations and assumptions are covered throughout the study as they become revealed and are relevant.

Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

As is presented in the literature review, Kincheloe's unique evolving critical constructivist worldview forms the philosophical and theoretical foundation for this study. It is comprised of a complex of tightly interwoven and synthesized theories including but not limited to Kincheloe's evolving critical theory, feminist theory, chaos and complexity theories, enactive theory, and liberation theology. During this study, multiple theoretical frameworks from which to view the bricolage inquiry process have been used. These were decided upon and delineated during the process of conducting the research. The multidimensional critical complex bricolage calls for multiple frameworks and perspectives for the purpose of transcending the tendency toward research reductionism and in order to obtain multiple views of the subject. This enhances knowledge and increases understanding about the phenomenon being studied. As Kincheloe (2008b) states, "Using the cubist-like perspectives of Georges Braque or Juan Gris, bricoleurs understand the importance of viewing social, cultural, historical, political, or educational phenomena from diverse perspectives simultaneously. In the

process, critical bricoleurs appreciate the profound value of seeing from the positionalities of discarded vantage points in particular” (p. 156). Thus, as a bricoleur, I have sought traditionally excluded perspectives to include in this study.

A conceptual framework for the multidimensional critical complex bricolage, which Kincheloe (2001a, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d, 2004e, 2005a) has provided in his work and is summarized in the Literature Review in Chapter 2, was used to support the analysis. The components of Kincheloe’s multidimensional, nonlinear, reiterative framework have been further elucidated during the research as it has progressed.

Kincheloe (2004c) highlights what it is that bricoleurs attempt to accomplish with this form of research:

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)

As the excerpt indicates, 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.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

This study is organized according to the five chapter format for dissertations as recommended by the University. Minor adjustments have been made from the standard

template. Chapter 4 has been divided into unique subsections as they evolved during the unfolding process of bricolage. Chapter 5 also has unique subsections derived in the same manner. This was required in order that this unique, highly complex research process could unfold and evolve, while at the same time the coherence and cohesiveness of the study is maintained. It will remain for future bricoleurs to develop new, perhaps flexible formats for presenting these more complex forms of bricolage studies, although it may very well be the case that each study is so different that templates would only serve to constrain the creative, improvisational process. Upon examining bricolage and other qualitative studies, it has been found that many universities leave the structure of the dissertation open and flexible. It may be required that other universities follow suit. Since this current study is already pushing many boundaries, it will be a task for those who follow to establish new, creative approaches to disseminating the complex knowledge products that emanate from this form of bricolage study in a format that best meets the needs of their universities, stakeholders, or other readers.

To summarize, Chapter 1, “Introduction,” has introduced the study, Chapter 2, “Literature Review,” presents a synthesis of the literature pertaining to the study, and Chapter 3, “The Research Process” describes the overall research process used to conduct the study. Customary to most qualitative studies, the review of the literature has evolved in context with the entire research process and is discussed where it is relevant in order to meet the needs of the inquiry as the study progressed. Chapter 4 presents the “Analysis and Results,” which is the heart of the bricolage, and Chapter 5, “Evaluation, Recommendations, and Conclusion,” presents an evaluation of the study in terms of how

well it aligns with Kincheloe's conceptualization of bricolage and how well it meets the rigor he was asking for. It also provides a general assessment of the quality of knowledge that has been produced. Recommendations for research have been interwoven throughout the study, and Chapter 5 provides additional insights pertaining to Kincheloe's legacy and his wishes, along with recommendations for the future.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A critical complex epistemology is dedicated to bringing individuals who had been traditionally excluded to the scholarly conversation no matter how déclassé such an objective appears to the privileged epistemological trolls at FIDUROD Bridge. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 58).

Introduction to the Bricolage and Critical Complex Epistemology

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.

Bricolage As Defined by Researchers

Upon examining numerous "bricolage" studies, a general trend was noted. The researchers outside of the education domain often defined bricolage more deeply or in a more original fashion than did the researchers in education. Those in education typically reiterated the same, limited definition relating to a handyman, do-it-yourself approach using the tools at hand. This definition is inadequate, particularly in relation to Kincheloe's complex bricolage as this study demonstrates. This issue is taken up again later in this study, in Chapter 4, where an analysis of bricolage and various metaphors weaves throughout the discourse.

With that background, the following summary of a few samples from bricolage research demonstrate that even though it spans many disciplines, there continues to be a struggle with defining bricolage and not everyone seems to be using it the same way—or even necessarily for good purposes. While I have only presented a few examples and would like to research this more deeply, these examples are representative of the trends

currently taking place. I quickly discovered that no one was using Kincheloe's entire conceptualization or even defining bricolage in the broad way he has done.

Bricolage in Managerial Research

LeLoarne (2005) compares bricolage with creativity in her analysis. She concludes that bricolage is an exploration process bounded by finite resources. Bricoleurs begin with a cognitive map but the map can change in the process. Objects and resources are integrated in new and unexpected ways. The bricoleur's actions are not planned but occur by "induction" and intuition as they work to solve unplanned problems. Bricoleurs do not know the outcome, thus bricolage "implies an air of 'mystery' output: one does not know its nature until the end" ("1.5. Status of the final output," para. 2). She summarizes, "Bricolage is mostly used in two main managerial fields: Knowledge Management and Entrepreneurship. Whatever are the nature and the context of use of 'bricolage' several definitions have been proposed to qualify the term. They all refer to 'the process of theoretical tinkering by which individuals and cultures use objects around them to assimilate ideas' (Papert, 1993)" (p.2). Managerial and organizational theories, which have gone through several phases of bricolage research, offer insights for expanding understanding bricolage research (Kamoche, Cunha & Cunha, 2002). At the same time, these theories constrain the conceptualization with their overly mechanistic metaphors, as will be discussed later in this dissertation.

Bricolage in Nursing Research

In her study, *Nursing Bricolage*, Aagard (2006) fell back on the standard and often cited source point of bricolage, Levi-Strauss, stating that he "builds on Durkheim's

theories regarding mythical thinking with his concept of ‘bricolage.’ He developed the idea of ‘bricolage’ as a metaphor for the mythical thinking of tribal societies” (p. 53). She continues, defining the term ‘bricoleur’ as being “most closely defined as handyman or jack of all trades. The ‘bricoleur’ is skilled in carrying out many tasks and is not confined to the parameters of one job. The ‘bricoleur’ is constrained to utilizing the tools that are at hand though those tools are shaped and adapted to fit the situation being addressed (Levi-Strauss, 1966)” (p. 53).

Bricolage in Religious Studies

Katrina Grusell (2010a) stipulates that “Bricolage is the combination of random, available materials to create something new. The term derives from the French verb that means ‘to tinker’ or to ‘putter.’ The bricoleur is a utilitarian that finds value in what’s at hand” (p. 5). She expands this with the concept of liturgical bricolage:

Utilizing multiple research methodologies, *Identity to Praxis: Parish Narrative as Liturgical Bricolage* explored narrative research and postmodern design as complementary guides to congregations searching for identity and purpose. Liturgical bricolage is a postmodern design strategy that engages multiple perspectives and expresses a preferred narrative in creative worship. (Abstract)

Theresa Lantini (2002) uses the term bricolage to replace the term ‘collage’ in relation to the layering biblical allusions. She states, “In pop culture studies, bricolage refers to the process whereby youth subcultures utilize and combine products in ways unintended. . . . Bricolage enables youth to form their identity and sense of meaning through an eclectic intertextuality. . . . In other words, scriptural bricolage functions as an identity-forming discourse” (1.2 “Paramesis through Intertextuality,” para. 2).

On the other hand, Vasillis Saroglou (2006) is perplexed by the proliferation of the use of the term “religious bricolage” in the sociology of religion to depict modern

spiritual and religious trends, and challenges that such trends are taking place on a significant scale.

Bricolage in Fashion and Landscape

Benningen (2006) defines bricolage as “a French word that signifies an improvised way of putting things together. . . . (in art or literature) construction or creation from a diverse range of things: the chaotic bricolage of the novel is brought together in a unifying gesture. Something constructed or created in this way: bricolages of painted junk” and “in its most basic sense, the bricoleuse uses the means at hand, tinkering towards an art of making something out of what is already there” (p. 10). She does expand her definition of bricolage, citing Kincheloe and Berry’s (2004) work, but still falls short of producing a multidimensional critical complex bricolage.

Bricolage in Social Sciences

Campbell (2002) views bricolage as a cognitive mechanism, defining it as “an innovative recombination of elements that constitutes a new way of configuring organizations, social movements, institutions and other forms of social activity” (p. 15).

Ainslie Yardley (2008) defines a bricoleur as “a maker of patchwork, a weaver of stories; one who assembles a theoretical montage through which meaning is constructed and conveyed according to a narrative ethic that is neither naively humanistic, nor romantically impulsive—but rather one that stimulates an inclusive and dynamic dialogue between the researcher and her audience” (Abstract).

Bricolage in Literature

Carter (2000) describes bricolage in relation to rhetoric: “The bricoleur, building his interpretation on uncertain grounds, should nevertheless recognize the political significance of his work. The bricoleur’s reading, which assumes no monolithic truth as its center should contest the very notion of such truth” (p. 7). According to Lauer (2006), “bricolage is both an end result—a text that balances and manages diverse elements—as well as a process by which knowledge is developed in new ways, juxtapositioning elements and bringing them together in ways that develop new relationships” (p. 38).

Summary: “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly”

The examples just cited were quite randomly selected for the most part. I received updates daily of new studies during the duration of this project, but quick examination revealed that very little, if any, progress was being made in understanding how to define and use Kincheloe’s form of bricolage. In fact, in some cases, as has been discussed, his theory was taken backward.

There are, of course, great examples of research that have been completed using bricolage. Kincheloe mentions some of them in his work. In my own research, I found additional examples, such as Eisler’s (1987) book, *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future* and, more recently, Lachman’s (2011) book, *The Quest for Hermes Trismegistus: From Ancient Egypt to the Modern World*. Very promising, is that groups of scientists and researchers from diverse disciplines are coming together, as reported by Melanie Mitchell (2009) in her book, *Complexity: A Guided Tour*. Natural resource

management and environmental sciences have long taken both an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach that, unfortunately, is too often dictated in ways that serve the corporate sector through legislatively-mandated procedures that, upon analysis, do not give an honest opportunity for people's views to be incorporated (e.g., Eccleston, 2000). Researchers are working to further conceptualize bricolage for natural resource management (e.g., Cleaver, 2012).

Four major issues with how bricolage is being used is concerning and warrants deeper analysis so that these can be circumvented as much as possible to prevent harm. The first is that it is often being applied in surface-level and reductionistic ways in an attempt to find solutions to complex issues that realistically require a more rigorous application. The consequence of this is the hidden dimensions that contribute to oppression and disenfranchisement of the very people critical scholars are claiming to serve do not get exposed and remedied (Kincheloe, 2008c). Nothing changes. Another issue, which has been discussed at great length in this study, is the appropriation of bricolage for the postmodernist notion that "anything goes," all perspectives are equally valuable, and there is no need for multidimensional critical analyses or rational thinking. This, of course, swings all across the board in that some may ascribe to this view more moderately, while other scholars may ascribe to a more extreme position. In my observations, a nihilistic postmodern ethic as influenced by popular culture is pervasive in certain segments of society or in relation to particular ideologies. A third major issue is the use of bricolage as a means of serving the agenda of the transnational capitalists and their unrestrained free market profit machines. Marketing, perhaps, has taken bricolage to

the limits in order to learn about consumers. And finally, a fourth concern is the use of bricolage for increasing surveillance, domination, and control of the entire human population. Increasing technological advances and access contribute to all of these concerns. The question comes to mind which seems to rarely be considered from an ethical standpoint: Just because we can do it (with technology), *should we?* It is distressing to see that with each passing day those in power continue to choose to leave ethics behind for the “greater good” of the profit-generating power-and-control machine.

These concerns are pointed out not because they will be covered in this research in depth (I hope more people will research them) but because this study demonstrates how using the multidimensional critical complex bricolage can put greater power back into the hands of the people. It can assist us with uncovering complex dynamics that affect us in our daily lives which might not be in our best interest. With the rigorous use of bricolage, we can find better, more loving pathways for solving the issues of oppression and other pressing problems on earth.

Bricolage as Defined in Education Research

Helms, Irby, Lara-Alecio, Guerrero-Valecillos, and Cox (2009) define bricolage as “do it yourself (jobs); patched up job. Bricoler—to do odd jobs; to do DIY jobs; to potter about; to fix up; to tinker with; to doctor, fix. Bricoleur, -euse—handyman/woman, DIY enthusiast” (p. 4). They went on to explain that the term was expanded, based on Levi-Strauss’s cultural work:

Denzin and Lincoln (2005) expanded the original meaning to include the notion of handyman/handywoman making do with the tools at hand. Educational

researchers—most notably Kincheloe and Berry (2004)—set out to further develop the emerging concept of bricoleur. Echoing the themes of the 2009 Annual Conference, Lincoln (2001) observed that the evolving bricoleur ‘is searching for the nodes, the nexuses, the linkages, the interconnections, the fragile bonds between disciplines, between bodies of knowledge, between knowing and understanding themselves.’” (pp. 693–694)

Burton (1999) uses the term “bricolaging” in relation to “tinkering” on the Internet (p. 43) and Fedory (2005) uses the bricolage to “dismantle” a standardized arts curriculum. Fedory explains, “Bricolage uses multiple theoretical lenses such as discourses in postisms and a variety of methodological tools such as hermeneutics and deconstruction to expose ideological and hegemonic discourses in the text” (Abstract). In addition, “A bricolage emerges from the activity of a bricoleur who doesn’t plan in advance, but uses whatever theories, methodologies are at hand to get the job done” (Abstract).

Further investigation into education research reveals that there is confusion over how Kincheloe’s bricolage should be applied. While bricolage is no doubt idiosyncratic to a degree, there must be some sort of process that ensures rigor, or the bricolage becomes a simple narcissistic, superficial self-reflexive activity which provides little in the way of new knowledge to improve education and other social conditions, or it becomes a mechanical exercise that takes on the very linearity it was designed to avoid. It was found that educational research bricolage and thus the researcher-as-bricoleur has become conflated under qualitative research in such a general manner there is no clear differentiation—it has simply come to mean, in many cases, using multiple methods, even if haphazardly—that is, even if the results do not provide answers. Bricolage, like postmodernism is beginning to mean everything and is in danger of meaning nothing.

This is, assuredly, exactly what Kincheloe's theory was devised to escape, as will be shown as this research proceeds forward. His conceptualization may be the "knight on a white horse" coming to the rescue after all.

Some of the common textbooks used for education research courses do not mention bricolage, although this will have to change since so many researchers are moving toward bricolage. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) provide, "The many methodological practices of qualitative research may be viewed as soft science, journalism, ethnography, bricolage, quiltmaking, or montage. The researcher, in turn may be seen as a *bricoleur*, as a maker of quilts, or, as in filmmaking, a person who assembles images into montages" (p. 5). This conflation was placed directly under the title of the section in which it has been placed, "The Qualitative Researcher as *Bricoleur* and Quilt Maker" [authors' emphasis], which further links bricoleur quite soundly as being a one dimensional "quilt maker." This is repeated further into the text after a stream of word bytes that are meant to describe bricolage as researchers have come to describe it; however, what is provided is an incomplete and fragmented picture. While his critical bricolage work was mentioned under the segregated label, "interpretive bricoleur," it is unfortunate that Kincheloe's conceptualization became lost amidst the citations of other researchers, without mentioning that he had formulated a conceptualization in 2005 that had advanced his initial 2001 formulation (p. 8).

These definitions, mere word bytes, as stated, do little to clarify bricoleur or bricolage and even though Kincheloe (2001) was listed among the bricolage researchers none of the quotes cited came specifically from his work. Why the omission, bricoleurs

would be asking at this point. Kincheloe has painstakingly attempted to pull the bricolage out of the mire and yet his conceptualization has been conflated and essentially not mentioned, except through what those of us who are often pushed aside refer to as a token gesture. The bricoleur might be asking, are there political, economical, and social reasons to keep bricolage conflated and tied to postmodernism and “crazy quilts”? Why is postmodernism even still around? Why do so many people latch onto it? Is *this* bricoleur missing something in the equation?

After providing this string of disjointed definitions, Denzin and Lincoln (2008) explain further, “There are many kinds of bricoleurs—interpretive, narrative, theoretical, political, methodological” (p. 6). Again, they miss the entire point of Kincheloe’s work by segregating bricoleurs by “type,” specifying that these are types of bricoleurs rather than types of research that bricoleurs can choose from and that Kincheloe recommends them all—even in one bricolage study. What happened to interdisciplinarity? What happened to rigor? The reality is that it requires researchers to run through all of these dimensions and more, by Kincheloe’s assessment, in order to ensure rigor of the research process. Something that has not escaped attention here is that after Kincheloe formulated his first conceptualization in 2001, it was reviewed by Lincoln (2001), along with McLaren (2001), and Pinar (2001), after which he had reformulated it taking into consideration their comments and recommendations.

A critical complex bricoleur would be asking why is Kincheloe’s work left out of the discussion? Why have bricoleurs become objectified so as to be represented by forms of research and given labels? Why are these things happening within a “critical” group of

scholars? This is a powerful reminder of an observation Kincheloe (2008b) had made about the “critical elite.” He has noted:

When critical scholars establish an exclusive ‘critical elite,’ they have fallen prey to the same power inequalities that motivated the founding of critical pedagogy in the first place. When such domains of exclusion take shape around categories of status, class, race, gender, sexuality and /or institutional affiliation, critical scholars have no moral or intellectual authority to produce knowledge in relation to the traditional concerns of education. (Kincheloe, 2008b, p. 127)

To make matters worse, Denzin and Lincoln’s (2008) discussion of bricoleur and quilt maker proceeds to water down the complex notion of bricolage even further as they have repeatedly cited authors who describe the bricoleur as a “maker of quilts, [who] uses the aesthetic and material tools of his or her craft, deploying whatever strategies, methods, and empirical methods are at hand’ (Becker, 1998, p.2)” (p. 5). They further conflate the concept bricolage by associating it with montage, explaining, “In montage, several different images are juxtaposed to or superimposed on one another to create a picture.” During my research, I found many bricoleurs who considered their work to be a “montage.” While montage and juxtaposing can certainly play a role in Kincheloe’s form of bricolage, the rigor he is calling for asks much more of the bricoleur. Instead of simply allowing the gestalt effect to stand alone or engaging in only surface-level interpretation, the researcher goes further by exploring dialogically through various analytic discourses multiple interpretations that may be afforded, taking into consideration multiple variables and using multiple methods of exploration, thus seeking out previously unseen (hidden) dimensions and relationships. Bricolage as it has been defined here is a mundane daily fact of life, work, and education— it is not a form of research. Complex criticality has just been flushed down the toilet. Multidimensional critical complex bricolage is devised

to escape superficial notions such as collage, montage, gestalt, and simply using the tools at hand. It is something much bigger and more powerful. *It has taken these simplistic notions up the stairway to heaven.*

Denzin and Lincoln (2008) conclude, “The qualitative researcher who uses montage is like a quilt maker or a jazz improviser. . . . In texts based on metaphors of montage, quilt making, and jazz improvisation, many different things are going on at the same time—different voices, different perspectives, points of views, angles of vision.” Denzin and Lincoln (2011, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c) did not update or change these metaphors for bricolage with their new editions of their textbooks, and worse, Steinberg and McLaren have dragged Kincheloe’s work backwards with their article, “Critical Pedagogy and Qualitative Research: Moving to the Bricolage” which is included in the textbook and which sports Kincheloe, himself, posthumously as author along with them (Kincheloe, McLaren & Steinberg, 2011). Considering that Kincheloe had removed all traces of Marxism from his theoretical work as previously mentioned (Pinar, 2010) and considering that during my own research I discovered there were very good reasons for doing so (see Argonza, 2008), I seriously question whether he would have agreed with Steinberg and McLaren’s contention that “Standard judgments against Marxism as economist, productivistic, and deterministic betray an egregious and scattershot understanding of Marxist epistemology, his critique of the political economy, and Marx’s dialectical method of analyzing the development of capitalism and capitalist society” (p. 165).

I see no justification in unilaterally decreeing Marxism as “foundational for any critical research” and, in particular, in relation to Kincheloe’s work (p. 165) Obviously, Kincheloe did not hold that position as many people already know, and truthfully, I trust his judgment on this matter. Having researched the roots of Marxism and the general public demeanor toward Marxism, I can only see that it takes away from Kincheloe’s theory, although he had not objected to using it as a window for providing perspectives if people are that much in love with it. He had even invited Marxist critiques of his own work (e.g., McLaren, 2001). Sandy Grande (2004) raises important questions in relation to Marxists and their “socialist commitment” [citing McLaren & Frahmampur, 2001, p. 306)], including questions about assuming that “the ‘egalitarian distribution’ of colonized lands constitute greater justice for Indigenous peoples” and how it can be considered “liberatory for American Indians” as long as “power, exchange, and labor remain tied to whitestream notions of property” (p. 49). As much as Kincheloe has stressed Indigenous perspectives, it seems blatantly wrong to form a quilt of his work by juxtaposing out-of-context “cut-and-paste” excerpts from his critical bricolage articles alongside Marxist dialogue that is fixated on Western notions of property, economics, and materialism, as has been done with his work after his death.

Thus, in qualitative research there has been a conflation of bricolage, montage, and multiple methodologies, along with the metaphor “quiltmaking” (Rahman, Scaife, Yahya & Jalil, 2010), and the current literature has taken Kincheloe’s conceptualization of bricolage backwards. There are further examples in the literature, which will not be addressed because the results provided by this current research project speak for

themselves and hopefully people will critically examine any work published posthumously in Kincheloe's name. It is clear that publishers have very loose standards, including how they define "editor" since a deceased person can still be listed as editor or author (and I confirmed this via emails to the American Psychological Association; the "loophole" is created by the way contracts are written combined with the Western view of "intellectual property") (APA, personal communication, June 3, 2011). As a critical bricoleur, these acts toward Kincheloe's monumental work are destined to be analyzed politically, economically, socially, and any other way that is deemed necessary to gain an understanding as to why Kincheloe's brilliant work has essentially been trashed and how it can be repositioned as the powerful process for learning, problem solving, everyday living—and as the rigorous research process that it provides. Long live the multidimensional critical complex bricolage!

This has been a very preliminary foray into how bricolage research is currently being defined. It is amazing how often education scholars simply parrot over and over again the same definitions and the same metaphors, uncritically citing their peers—and this was especially found to be true for the definition of bricolage. Although a few other metaphors were discussed, such as a crystal with each view of the subject being a facet and cubist artwork (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Kincheloe, 2005a), sadly, the emphasis was placed on quilt making, with Kincheloe's work left out of the picture. Other obstacles for the multidimensional critical complex bricolage are the influence of the link between bricolage and postmodernism, particularly promulgated by religious, education, and literature research, and by those who continue to earn revenue off Kincheloe's name. It is

apparent that bricolage, much like postmodernism has come to mean anything and everything. Kincheloe's work is destined to lead to a redefinition of the research bricolage and create new metaphors for the complex process he had conceptualized.

Fortunately, there are researchers who see the value in taking his work to the next level. Berry (2006) discussed the need for making progress applying Kincheloe's work in relation to one of her graduate students who had completed a bricolage study, the only study found to date that has attempted to apply the process as developed in 2004. It was not deemed rigorous philosophically or in terms of knowledge production. According to Berry, the researcher had "simply applied several post-discourses in addition to four other theoretical and methodological areas to his text being researched. It read like an encyclopedic rehash of the areas he selected instead of creating new knowledge for inclusion and social justice" (p. 102). Berry humbly accepted responsibility for the results of trying to help a student squeeze a nontraditional mode of research into the traditional requirements of the university. As she explained, they were both caught in the space between two "moments" of research, the "modern and the bricolage" (p. 102).

In relation to moments, Denzin and Lincoln (2008) have defined the historical stages of the development of qualitative research as "moments" with each moment consisting of distinctive characteristics. The time frames are based on certain criteria, assumedly, but there is flexibility and overlapping of moments. Currently, we are in what many may consider the "ninth moment" or what the Mayan calendar refers to as the "ninth wave." Kathleen Berry (2006, 2011) proposes that the ninth moment of research should be focused on taking Kincheloe's bricolage work forward. I agree and that's

exactly what this study has set out to accomplish. In fact, it is time to catapult forward and dive right into the 13th wave.

The Critical Complex Bricolage: What's Holding Up Progress?

One thing that has held up progress in educational bricolage research is the restriction to traditionally-accepted modes of research (Kincheloe, 2005; Berry, 2006). Change is hard, especially when it comes to research, which has a long history of rather virulent disagreements over paradigms. Other restrictions that hamper progress include the requirement of citing only education scholarly and peer-reviewed literature, often with the stipulation that it must be “recent” (generally within the past 5–10 years). The exceptions are specific, accepted, and sanctioned “seminal” works. A bricoleur would be asking why is new knowledge that has been produced under the recent severe sociopolitical and educational constraints of “the Empire” better than “old” knowledge? And of course, the peer expectations and citing primarily within specific domains severely restrict the ability to see a broader picture for complex research problems. These research traditions need to be challenged and it is Kincheloe’s bricolage that sets the impetus for doing so.

As can be observed, discouraging interdisciplinary research restricts the flow of transferrable knowledge that might be useful in the education domain, and restricting dates to only recent publications tends to result in more positivistic literature being used because it has been the recent governmental focus and where federal research funds are being spent. Researchers are also required to specify what are oftentimes restrictive

positions, paradigms, philosophies, and worldviews which must be adhered during the course of the research. Too often researchers cite other researchers within their paradigmatic group (their “friends”) uncritically and they stop there. If the scholar being cited has a PhD and has done research, end of story. There is no need to dig deeper or search for more profound meanings or for the possibility that the scholar may be providing misinformation or be motivated for reasons other than improving education or may have missed a critical dimension of the problem. Often the dissertation initiation project requires the use of traditional practices, which simply facilitates this uncritical thinking. Don’t get me wrong; when researchers have ideas worth citing, they should be cited, but if they present information that does not hold up to a critical review, then this, too, should be a part of the research process, *especially* if the other researcher is a friend. And I have seen too many cases of so-called seminal authors being given credit for “new ideas” which are not new ideas at all. For example, much of Paulo Freire’s work that gets parroted over and over again, ad nauseum, is not new at all. It becomes a “friends club” and either you are in or you are out. The way researchers often define bricolage, for example, by parroting the same information with very few people even so much as conducting a deep etymological investigation of the word is a perfect example of this lack of criticality. And as Richardson (2011) points out, these customary practices serve to maintain an elite culture of education scholars that impedes the ability “to end colonialist relations of denomination” (p. 19). We must do better. Maybe paradigms can be eliminated. Maxwell (2011) and others argue that the use of research paradigms limit

validity. While philosophies, assumptions, and theories are all useful as lenses to aid understanding, Kincheloe argues for as many lenses as possible.

Another obstacle for many researchers is the emphasis on formulaic empirical, quantitative research and the rigid, linear, template form that studies are to take for dissemination purposes. Bricolage research cannot be restricted in this manner, as was expressed by Berry (2006) when she discussed the linearity of the bricolage dissertation her student produced. A linear template will most likely produce a linear study, which is the antithesis of bricolage. As Berry (2006) and Fedory (2005) had discovered, the restrictions imposed actually impeded knowledge production. How convenient for the “machine.”

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*.

The critical constructivist world view Kincheloe (2005b) had developed, which he cites as being a *unified world view* and which has been adopted for this study is an eclectic, advanced synthesis of multiple theories and philosophies including critical theory, feminist theory, chaos and complexity theories, enactive theory, indigenous world views, among others. Critical constructivism and the twelve points Kincheloe developed to describe this world view are explained in greater detail later in this chapter and the key points are summarized in *Table 1: Key Points of Kincheloe’s (2005b) Critical Constructivist Worldview*.

FIDUROD and the Postmodern Condition

The modernist world has evolved, or perhaps de-evolved is a more apt description, into what many refer to as the “postmodernist condition” (Callinicos, 1990; Kincheloe, 1993, 2001b; Sokolowski, 2000). The descriptions of postmodernism and what constitutes the “postmodern condition” vary among authors and practitioners/believers, and there has been great division among scholars in education over these differences. In order to counter the view that it comprises a viable philosophical perspective, even though it was adopted by many academicians during the 1980s, Callinicos (1990) points out that “lead producers of discourse such as Jean-Francois Lyotard and Charles Jencks offered definitions which were mutually inconsistent, internally contradictory and/or hopelessly vague” (p. 2). It is important to note that Kincheloe has never stated in his work that he ascribed to a “philosophy” of postmodernism and has clearly defined how he used the concept. He was well known for his synthesized eclectic worldview, critical constructivism, a strong philosophical standing that serves to ground his theory and research, but an eclectic philosophy does not equate to postmodernism. Even though Kincheloe has written in terms of a continuing modern area and has clearly not thrown aside science, rational thought or empiricism, some education scholars misinterpret or misunderstand his work and align it with an imaginary “postmodern era.” However, Kincheloe (1993) has argued against there being a postmodern era as well as being against what he and McLaren have referred to as a “ludic postmodernism” that operates in some realms of education (Kincheloe, 1991;

McLaren & Kincheloe, 2005). Both he and McLaren were apparently attempting to disconnect themselves from being considered proponents of postmodernism.

To complicate matters, emerging during the hay day of “postmodernism,” poststructuralism, “a social theoretical position emerging from within French structuralism in the 1960s, in response to structuralist claims to objectivity and universalism” (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 69), often became appropriated in support of the growing numbers of educators and other postmodernists, according to Callinicos (1990). But Callinicos argues that it is difficult to make a sharp distinction between a modern or postmodern era even in the arts, where it is most often delineated. Callinicos views postmodernism as a symptom of modernism, not as a break from past modernism, and describes its roots as a “combination of the disillusioned aftermath of 1968 throughout the Western world and the opportunities for an ‘overconsumptionist’ lifestyle offered upper white-collar strata by capitalism in the Reagan-Thatcher era” (p.7).

As far as poststructuralism, Callinicos is not convinced that the leading philosophers, Deleuze, Derrida and Foucault would claim that a postmodern era was evolving, and concludes that postmodernism was counter indicative of an intellectual movement. This view by Callinicos is more representative of what one can observe, that is, what can be seen as the worst possible elements of modernism played out to their death. Kincheloe (2008c) referred to symptoms of this form of modernism as thanatos, contending that “Education that serves thanatos must be an act of regulation and control. The mind must be regulated, not expanded; curiosity must be crushed, not enhanced. In a regulated, colonized, thanocentric society, individuals need to be in their proper place, at

the expected time, doing what they have been told to do” all for the benefit of the empire or ruling class (p. 101). Postmodernism, as counter-intellectualism played right into the hands of thanatos.

Sokolowski compares today’s so-called “postmodern era” with what is referred to as the era of modernity. Modernity can be explained as a focus on rationalism during the Enlightenment period and the subsequent influence it has had on society and culture. The rationalism of the Enlightenment era transmuted from being used as service to knowledge, according to his explanation, to being as service to will—“the will to rule, the will to power” (p. 202). Thus, contrary to the idea that postmodernity marks the end of the modern era as some people believe, according to Sokolowski, it is in actuality the expression of the “deepest impulse” of modernity (p. 20).

Kincheloe (2004c, 2008b), in agreement with Sokolowski and Callinicos, also considers this current era as a continuation of modernism and frames what is happening as a form of a “backlash” following the various movements of the 1940s, 1950s and the 1960s when the Vietnam War ended. This backlash was a reaction to gains made around the world for people who had traditionally been marginalized and denied equal rights. Following this period the upper white-collar, Western white male perceived they had lost many of their privileges. As Kincheloe describes within his various works, this backlash can be observed in politics, society, culture, psychology, economics, religion, education, and in the continuing dominance of Western epistemology for the purpose of recompensing for the perceived losses of the white male upper middle class. Kincheloe (1993) had recognized that there was an “educational manifestation of that [postmodern]

condition—the *cognitive illness*” as he calls it—a “pathology of thinking [that] threatens the very survival of the human species” (p. 28) [author’s emphasis]. Thus, he frames today’s era as the continuation of the modernist period and has coined the symptoms as a “rational irrationality of Western epistemology,” providing the acronym, FIDUROD with the letters representing its attributes—Formal, Intractable, Decontextualized, Universal, Reductionistic, and One Dimensional (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 89, 21–25). This mechanistic epistemology “is used sometimes unconsciously to shape the knowledge that permeates Western and Western-influenced cultures” (p. 22). He explains:

The narcissism that emerges from a system of ideas that focuses primarily on the autonomy, self-centeredness, and economic self-interest of the individual produces anti-social behaviors that undermine the well-being not only [of] Western societies themselves, but of diverse peoples around the world. An examination of the history of Western education reveals that this egocentric dynamic has been the foundation on which the curriculum has rested. . . (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 251)

Misconceptions about postmodernism are inextricably interwoven with education and various research and discourse techniques and it has come to be widely accepted as a movement, philosophy and even worldview. For example, because poststructuralism has become linked with postmodernism as Callinicos (1990) had pointed out, when a person merely refers to or uses poststructuralism they often become associated with postmodernism. Since poststructuralism is an analysis process often used by bricoleurs, it must be clearly delinked from postmodernism. In fact, while many scholars consider Foucault a postmodernist, when asked about his thoughts on postmodernism shortly before his death, Foucault “sardonically replied, ‘What are we calling postmodern? I’m not up to date?’” (Callinicos, 1990, p. 5). Clearly Foucault did not see anything new or

noteworthy with the conceptualization of postmodernism. Without intending to be insulting to anyone, perhaps the very conceptualization of postmodernism as some sort of philosophy, albeit, indefinable and incoherent, is the epitome of the rational irrationality and the cognitive illness Kincheloe wrote extensively about.

Consequently, education philosophy textbooks and courses teach postmodernism as something tangible that can be defined and practiced, which is not helpful. For example, Gutek (2004), in the book, *Educational Philosophy and Changes*, a commonly used textbook for educational foundations in philosophy, situates postmodernism as “an influential contemporary philosophy” and proceeds to make an attempt to provide a definition:

To define postmodernism, we need to examine the words, *post* and *modernism*. The word *post* has several meanings, each of which can be applied to this philosophy. As a prefix, post means coming after, later, or following in time. So the obvious meaning in this context is after or following the modern period in history. Post used as a noun refers to a timber that is used to support a structure; posts also can refer to the timbers or poles that mark a boundary. As we shall see later in the chapter, Postmodernists are inclined to reject the existing theoretical posts that are used to support philosophical structures; they also want to pull down the fences or boundaries that they believe separate fields of thought or subjects from each other. (p. 121)

While this oversimplified and almost comical definition, along with the contention that postmodernists believe that the “modern era ended in the latter half of the twentieth century” (p.122), the implication that Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault are considered contemporary “postmodern” philosophers (pp. 125–127) and the over-generalization that postmodernism as a philosophy has informed critical theory (p. 309), especially given critical theory has multiple manifestations, is an example of what naïve learners are up against if they accept at face value the “knowledge” they are paying for

through high cost university education and overpriced textbooks. While a general foundation in philosophy, a discipline that is neglected throughout school, is necessary, misinformation and obfuscation prevents taking knowledge to the next level without rigorous research, thus pointing to the need for all to become the adept bricoleurs Kincheloe (2005a) is calling for.

To clarify Kincheloe's (2001b) perspective, he maintains that it is important to keep in mind the distinction between the postmodern *condition*, which we can observe as the continuation of Cartesianism (FIDUROD), and postmodernism as a perspective from which to view and analyze what we see, *critical postmodernism*, which he has replaced with "counter-Cartesianism" as well as "epistemology of complexity" in his apparent wish to prevent having the postmodernist label assigned to him (pp. 95–96). Counter-Cartesianism, he states, "analyzes social, philosophical, and educational forms previously shielded by the authority of modernist science. It does not attempt to throw out Western science but to understand its limitations and the underside of its application" (p. 95). Kincheloe further developed and renamed this form of epistemological analysis, *critical complex epistemology* in his last book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* and it is an important philosophical component of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage.

"The postmodern condition is difficult to understand and must be carefully clarified" Kincheloe (2001a) had asserted and he provided the characteristics as being (1) The increased importance of the sign—the image—in moving everyday life and the sociopolitical sphere; (2) An exaggeration of the power of those who hold power and its

use of information to colonize human consciousness; (3) The fragmentation of meaning and the subsequent production of social vertigo—the depoliticization of perception; (4) The growth of cynicism in a climate of deceit; (5) The celebration of surface meanings; the validation of shallowness; (6) The substitution of fascination for analysis; the age of spectacle; (7) The reorganization of capital/economic power in a global context—technocapitalism is supported by a new social Darwinism; and (8) The change of change: everything is different or at least feels that way (p. 62). He explains these in great depth in this book, *Getting Beyond the Facts: Teaching Social Studies/Social Sciences in the Twenty-First Century*, as well as how Western “FIDURODian” epistemology perpetuates the continuation of this trend in his book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*.

While the disagreement over what constitutes postmodernism as a philosophy is not likely to be resolved soon, what can be delineated more precisely is how and why Kincheloe used the term at all and why he divorced himself from it completely with his conceptualization of the critical complex epistemology and the multidimensional critical complex bricolage in his later works. This is important because what can be observed today is a condition that continues in its ever increasing heightened state marked by extreme social injustices, destructive wars with their human “collateral” damages, an unrestrained free market economy resembling the Gilded Age, and mind-boggling environmental destruction, the very problems his conceptualization of the bricolage is designed to help solve.

Thus, we have a world and its peoples bombarded with environmental destruction, wars all over the world, killing framed as “collateral damage,” poverty, illness, social problems, and innumerable gross injustices. Many people are feeling hopeless, cynical, or apathetic and have given up on imagining what *could be*, because it is easier to succumb to *what is* in their daily struggle for survival. Thus, people have become as cogs “in the engine of the mechanisms of dominant power that harm people” perpetuating their own demise (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. xi). The numbers of social, cultural, educational, environmental, political, psychological, religious, and everyday living problems continue to increase and grow in complexity. Life, for many, has become much like traversing a road not chosen and one that is riddled with hoops and hurdles to jump over, dramas to escape from, fires to put out, and landmines to navigate. One wrong move or inaction when a move is needed can lead to a cascading avalanche of consequences in this intertwined world of complexity that Kincheloe often compares to the matrix in the movie with the same name. Usually the cascading avalanches fall inequitably, engendering harmful effects based on class, race, gender, age, ability or some other contrived way people have been divided.

Indeed, as a nation, as a global community, and as a race of human beings we have gone nowhere if progress is indicated by civilized people living harmoniously together, taking care of earth, nowhere that can rightfully make people proud to say they are members of this “human” race given the greed that has manifested multiple wars in the “global theater”—the stated mission of the neoconservatives and once posted on their web site. We were provided warnings that should have been heeded when President

Roosevelt spoke of the impending military industrial machine (MIC), when President Truman proudly sat at his desk with the wooden plaque, stating “the buck stops here,” when Dwight D. Eisenhower took issue with the “Peppermint Twist,” and when President Reagan spoke of the “New World Order.”

The speaking of landmines is not mere rhetoric; they are remnants and reminders of war, and the weapons of choice for continuing militaristic control over people, and they *literally* kill people daily in Korea, Cambodia, Iraq, Africa, Afghanistan and elsewhere around the world (AFP, 2010; Vines, 1998). The Iraq Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2010) announced a new photo gallery depicting Iraqi landmines victims that opened at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. And as unbelievable as it might seem, as recently as June, 2010, landmines were reportedly proposed as a measure to prevent people from crossing the Mexican-US border by Congressional candidate, Tom Mullins, in an apparent bid for the right wing vote (AP, June 15, 2010) even as technicians are being killed trying to clear them in other countries (MAG, 2010). In the meantime, the Department of Defense (DoD) is investing millions of dollars for the MCV910-2 Area Mine Clearing System Vehicles manufactured by a transnational US firm (a firm that has the privilege of both operating in the US and benefitting from low wage labor from elsewhere) (O’Dwyer, 2010). One has to wonder if this move on the part of the DoD might be related to the \$1 trillion in iron, copper, and gold discovered in the mine-infested lands of Afghanistan (Ross, 2010), the increased troops to Afghanistan, the support of CEOs of transnational MIC corporations with generous bid arrangements that, as McLaren (2007) frames these types of actions, “loot the citizenry” (p. 296). While

ordinary U.S. citizens sit in front of their televisions and go about their daily lives in a cloud of “hyperreality,” freedom of speech on the Internet and in other media, which is the only hope for keeping up with and circumventing this irrational rationality, is quickly being usurped (Calabrese, 2010). Calling it what it is, it is a crazy world.

Americans continue to sit glued in front of televisions, movies, video games, the Internet, and other media on a daily basis, “connected” as they are shut off and numb to the reality of the human pain and suffering that goes on in their own neighborhoods, much less all over the world. Years of education do not magically fix these problems, nor do they manifest the “American Dream” that has been promised if one just works hard enough and smart enough. As McLaren and Jaramillo (2007) have observed, people serious about living a laudable life are simply “unwanted guests at the banquet known as the American Dream” (p. 5). Thus, it appears that no matter the amount of education which has always been considered the ticket to that American Dream, for certain classes of people increased powerlessness is produced, along with increasing poverty, harder work and longer hours for less pay, unemployment, repossessed homes, and a growing “ineffectiveness.” A higher degree does not ensure greater pay or the power to create change—if a person can even gain access to that education. In reality, those who have experienced the pain and disempowerment and sincerely wish to create change find that commoditized education for the poor and disenfranchised renders them no more powerful than before, and often less powerful due to the mounds of debt that pile up as a result of sky rocketing tuition and textbook costs before they can get through the gates. The slanted education provided due to the cozy relationships between members of what

Giroux (2007) describes as an even more powerful MIC—the MIAC—the military-industrial-*academic* complex renders the climb up the hierarchical ladder to a better life as nothing more than a pipedream. Why is this?

Why doesn't education solve these issues? Considering the interrelationships of this complex, it would be a greater surprise if it did. Where is the *knowledge* that is supposed to get us all out of this mess? Knowledge is power, as Foucault (1980) has demonstrated, but for most people knowledge is unreachable, indecipherable, protected, hidden behind the curtains, and locked away in Pandora's Box it seems. The bombardment to our senses of what is labeled, disseminated, reconstituted, polluted, convoluted, and perpetually reiterated as "knowledge" during this technology and Internet-dependent "information" age, whether it comes from educational institutions serving the corporate, military, industrial, academic—and prison machine (Giroux, 2007), or whether it comes from the Internet or other mass media only adds to what is a growing fog of obfuscation, misinformation, disinformation, confusion and chaos. Worse, it is leading the world's population down the path toward increased division, animosity, greed, selfishness, hate, wars, environmental destruction, and the competitive win-lose actions with no recourse, remorse, or moral justifications during this, what some people proudly proclaim is a "postmodern era." As McLaren and Jaramillo (2007) frame it, "It is as if human decency has been sucked into a vortex of political imbroglio" (p. 3). There is no truth anymore. How can there be justice?

Some of us still believe there is truth and that the "truths" fed to us must be exposed for the lies they are so that we can reclaim a truth that aligns more closely with

reality as it is experienced. It is only then that we can change that reality and alleviate human suffering. But how do we sort through the masses of “information,” the precursor to knowledge, in order to find answers and real livable solutions—that elusive “truth”—so that all people can *be* human again? Can we do it? Should we do it? And who at the helm of this gigantic sinking education ship would look at someone coming along with great, genius knowledge as a dispensable being and throw them overboard? Tragically, it has been done over and over again to protect turf as well as for personally possessed, self-serving knowledge that no one else should be allowed to know, claim, dispense, or even hint about to lesser beings—the droids, sheep, cattle or, as Marx framed it, the “proletariat.” Of course, it is a given that those entities in the gallows of this sinking ship are not privileged to have access to hidden knowledge—the *Golden Chalice* that many have alluded to, but no one has yet put all out there for everyone to see and partake of.

What is the Golden Chalice? Even the answer to something deceptively simple has proven elusive and takes the seeker down misleading and dark pathways. The Internet, the university libraries, and the “government” (which is composed of the top 50 multinational corporate entities controlling the world economy, resources, the media, and education) shield our eyes from knowledge that just might enlighten us and empower us to make changes in the world that would benefit *us*, so that we no longer need to serve as “human resources.” And should we be fortunate enough to get our hands on *real* knowledge—that time-and-people-tested knowledge that holds true today as much as it did, say 1000 years ago (or even 40 years ago), it is much too old to be considered “worthy” knowledge for citing in a scholarly work such as a dissertation—or it comes

from a “lesser” being or from an “uncivilized” culture that does not have the “advanced” thinking skills of the cultured, Western white men who head the global government (effectively, already a New World Order), and the gigantic Murdoch-style corporate media machine—the newspapers, the mass market and educational publishing companies, and of course, the television, movie, and now the Internet indoctrinating, mind-molding machines that have created this postmodern “hyperreality.” We live in a world dominated by a FIDURODian epistemology and psychosocial illness—and nowhere is it more obvious than it is in the realm of education.

To encourage our distancing from real, time-tested knowledge, and to perhaps divert our attention from the flood of chaotic information on the Internet, the new trend in education is toward memorization and rote skills rather than learning how to problem solve and to “problem find” which Einstein had demonstrated is a superior approach to learning. Due to the 2001 enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act under President George W. Bush, standardization is in full force and spreading like a weed into college level courses—doctoral level, even—in the form of ever more standardization and scripted teaching. Welcome to the world, droids. Evidently, to really make it simple and easy, everyone has to know the exact same “knowledge.” Spending time on the memorization of decontextualized facts ensures that the brain is occupied so that not too much real, in-depth, meaningful, analytical, critical, creative thinking is going on. Unfortunately, (or perhaps fortunately if it results in change) memorization is not so easy for many people. Of course, there are paved roads for these people, too: the lowest-paying jobs, the military, or if they can’t handle those, there is always prison where they

can keep one of the top fifty multinational firms profitable. As many have written, the road is paved from high school to prison for certain groups of our young. Sadly, with the current high unemployment, this is even truer today.

Thus, the dominant power's FIDURODian epistemology has shaped educational research methodologies so that researchers can discover and measure the effectiveness of the "best" brain cram methods for classrooms. Hello, Cartesian-Baconian-Newtonian science and the draconian ways of viewing and treating people. What happened to Einstein, quantum physics, and nonlocal space? They are omitted from today's college level physical science textbooks. And so the "old" war is being waged again. The very people who should be working together and seeking solutions are either numb and disenchanted or they are divided by disagreements, volatile and warlike at times, over qualitative and quantitative research approaches, disciplinary or interdisciplinary approaches, this paradigm or that paradigm, or they are struggling to "publish or perish" in order to feed the family or to meet their postmodern narcissistic needs for recognition. They are separated by huge fault lines and they have no qualms about throwing people into the deep abyss who dare speak out, such as upcoming new scholars who contest their status quo, or who unwittingly step over unseen borders and boundaries, simply because they cannot decode the "tacit" rules. They heartlessly throw novices overboard just to get them to be still or simply to limit the number of successful people in the competition for center stage. And the vilest thing of all, knowledge is jealously guarded from those imprisoned in the lower class. I have always known knowledge was being hidden. I mistakenly believed more education would provide access to that hidden knowledge.

While I wonder in my uneducated naiveté what this knowledge is that is being protected and whether there is, in fact, any real knowledge any longer at all given the massive destruction of ancient libraries, cities, and cultures to stop the flow of knowledge in concert with the massive fornication of sacred knowledges, my real question at this point in time is who in their right mind would even *choose* to be on that sinking education ship? It seems clear that it's time to build new ships or at least life boats from which it's safe to construct knowledge. Kincheloe's (2005a) multidimensional critical complex bricolage offers hope for picking up the pieces of knowledge from wherever they can be found to reconstruct new knowledges that can serve humanity far into the future. It is safe to assume, providing Kincheloe's research and education process is applied rigorously as he had presented that this dissertation will in fact produce or reconstruct some of that jealously hidden knowledge, and/or produce something entirely new—thus, apparently the rationale behind the title for my dissertation: *Did Joe Lyons Kincheloe Discover the Golden Chalice for Knowledge Production?*, which was handed down to me from the cosmos (No, I did not come up with that title, Clinton; I really did not). Of course, the bricoleur would be critically asking, what is the golden chalice? How does it represent knowledge production?

Kincheloe's multidimensional critical complex bricolage is the antithesis of positivistic, quantitative, politically and power inscribed knowledge production that has created so many of the problems facing education, but it is important to point out, it does not exclude quantitative research, positivism, empiricism, or rational thought. Bricoleurs recognize the value of positivistic research in certain contexts in relation to educational

and other disciplinary research. As Kincheloe always framed it, we don't throw the baby out with the bathwater. Still, today, increasing corporate involvement in education exerts a powerful push for educators and educational researchers to think in terms of an entrenched, rigid form of positivistic problem-solving with the ultimate goal of increasing test scores. This limits the acquisition of a deep understanding of the complex issues we are facing in the world at the very moment in history it is crucial that researchers take a broader, deeper, more holistic approach. As stated previously, Kincheloe (2008c) described in great detail this particularly intractable form of Western epistemology that currently dominates research in his book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*, labeling it, "FIDUROD" (Kincheloe, 2008c, pp. 21–25).

Taking the stance of intractability and its accompanying reductionistic tendencies renders researchers incapable of fully understanding the complexities and intricacies of the problems in education in order to find viable solutions—and policies or procedural changes are seldom an immediate option when confronted with complicated problems consisting of multiple dimensions of complexity for which the policies no longer work or apply. Many researchers are calling for mixed methodologies that may provide greater power to gain thick and detailed understandings of the problems confronting them today, but they are still entrenched in linear, reductionistic mores. The multidimensional critical complex bricolage takes qualitative research to the next level by providing the means of identifying problems that need resolution—problems that remain invisible until they are exposed through fresh views from many angles and perspectives and a critical, philosophical analysis (Kincheloe, 2001a, 2001b, 2005a, 2005b).

Some of the issues specifically related to education research for which timely remedies are critically important include: Researchers must overcome their differences in paradigms and mend the deep fractures that keep them from working together by realizing there are multiple paradigms and *all* views, “right or wrong” provide another facet to understanding; increased funding for qualitative research; the end of the dumbing down of education that focuses on memorization rather than rigorous learning; encouraging teachers to creatively teach again, educating the full potential of all learners instead of forcing scripted lesson plans, perpetuating myths about intelligence with attached labels and constructing barriers to higher order cognitive abilities; promote technology and the Internet for deep research and knowledge production that everyone has equal access to, instead of for quests for factoids and preselected knowledge; apply a critical constructivism in learning environments to create and invent knowledge, rather than to meet predetermined outcomes; acknowledge, honor, and incorporate the multiple worldviews and ontologies of this increasingly globalized world of education.

We can’t solve these problems from where we’re at. Currently, most researchers are using the same minds that created these massive problems in their attempts to solve them. Did we learn nothing from Einstein?

A Knight on a White Horse:

Kincheloe’s Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage

In an education system that is dominated by the FIDURODian epistemology, even critical thinking skills are “uncritical” (Kincheloe, 1993). Education based on a back-to-

the-basics, standardized curriculum in which learning is primarily lower level memorization skills does not promote the higher order thinking needed today. Unfortunately, power blocs that exert control over education that keep education dumbed down can manifest in some surprising and unusual ways, and they morph and change, as Kincheloe (2008c) has pointed out. For example, surprisingly, Western scientists and Christian fundamentalists, in spite of their disagreements over evolution, work together teaching Western “truths” in relation to politics, European-based cultural norms, and the free market system (p. 99). This is causing untold amounts of conflict and human suffering both at home in the U.S., which Kincheloe refers to as *internal colonialism*, and in other countries where these practices have been injected or adopted in spite of differing worldviews and religious beliefs of the people in those countries. These unjustified and often criminal actions and so-called “pre-emptive war” tactics continue to incite religious and ethnic conflicts in multiple parts of the world.

Kincheloe suggested, along with his multidimensional, multiperspectival approaches to teaching, learning, and researching that incorporate critical and complexity theories, an approach that also injects love and ecumenicalism into the equation. In this way, he has defined his own idiosyncratic version of critical pedagogy: “A critical pedagogy that constructs knowledge and formulates action based on Eros with its drive to alleviate human suffering serves as a counterpoise to the empire’s positivistic thanatos” (Kincheloe, 2008c). Kincheloe practiced and was renowned for this form of immense love for people.

Understanding the dynamics manifested by FIDUROD can help open doors to new possibilities and this understanding is enhanced with a critical ontology and critical complex epistemology. By considering multiple ontologies and perspectives, doors open for creative possibilities. Researchers are no longer restricted to a one worldview epistemology from which to analyze problems. As Kincheloe contended, every perspective reveals some things and hides others. While Kincheloe (2005a) states that his multidimensional critical complex bricolage was not a “knight on a white horse,” he also affirmed that it is a powerful process for finding our way out of the quagmire the world is in today. In relation to Kincheloe’s advanced and complex work, a statement made about Lev Vygotsky, whose work had some influence on Kincheloe’s work seems relevant here. Guillermo Blanck (1990) had observed that one of Vygotsky’s favorite quotes was a line from a poem by Tyutchev, “Not everything that was must pass” and it was contended that this could very well serve as a metaphor for Vygotsky himself because researchers today are just beginning to understand the full significance of his work. Blanck concluded by concurring with Jerome Bruner (1987) who had stated, “Vygotsky *speaks to us from the future*” (p. 31)[emphasis added].

I was struck by how this very same statement applies to Joe Lyons Kincheloe. He was distinguished as a true genius and his work is so advanced that like Vygotsky’s work, it might be viewed as a gift to the world *from the future*—but the future is now for many of us today. The multidimensional critical complex bricolage opens doors for a multitude of alternative research processes that provide an escape from the ongoing battle between qualitative and quantitative methods. This may give the push qualitative research needs.

If people take time to learn and experience the power of this form of research, it would result in more rigorous bricolage. It is time for those who wish to receive the gifts to open the gifts from “the knight on the white horse” (Kincheloe, 2005a).

Theoretical and Philosophical Grounding for the Study

I have adopted Kincheloe’s theoretical and philosophical grounding for this study which was initially summarized in Chapter 1 in the section titled “Kincheloe’s Sound, Long-Standing Eclectic Philosophy.” Here, the grounding for this study is presented in greater depth and a summary description of his “unified world view” that supports the research is provided. One might ask, how can a new researcher adopt such a complex philosophy at will? As the analysis will show, it has been a rather unique set of experiences that have led me to feeling that I have at least a good cursory understanding of this philosophy. And as I engaged in the research, I gained more understanding.

Love: Eros, Agape, and Philia

Love is the foundation of bricolage research. Kincheloe presents this in his work in many contexts, which will be discussed throughout this study as relevant. Kincheloe, or Joe, as he preferred to be called, was as renowned for his unconditional love as for his powerful critical theory. Peter McLaren (2008) wrote a tribute on his website, upon Joe’s passing, stating, “He was a humble and gracious man, and one of the most generous human beings to grace the planet. His capacity for love was monumental. He was also one of the funniest people I have ever met. Joe’s life helped transform the world in ways many of us can only dream of.” Joe had dedicated his entire life to education and helping

people get their start in academic publishing. He was very skilled at acquiring book contracts, particularly for series and he was instrumental in helping many new scholars publish their first books. Midst all of the help and support he provided for so many people, he was still able to write and publish numerous books as a single author. Thus, scholars who knew Joe have testified on more than one occasion he practiced what he preached when it came to love, dedication, and integrity.

Eros, radical love, and the “power of love” is woven throughout all of his work, if not in words specifically, in spirit. His repeated mission was “the alleviation of human suffering.” In his last book, he continued the theme throughout, and in relation to the positivistic “myopic” view of the universe as “mechanical” and “nonconscious,” he wrote: “I find it difficult to accept such a meaningless universe when I’ve seen the power of love . . . to change lives and to bring about justice” (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 122). Kincheloe clearly had embraced the full Eros form of love within his research, writing, and teaching.

While there is a common misconception that the Eros form of love primarily relates to sexual love, this is a conflation of the concept to huge proportions. Essentially, to the ancient Greeks, Eros embodies the entire living, sensual, and physical world. Eros is the life force energy that flows through all things, living and nonliving; it is the love of everything; it is the love of life, itself. In education, Eros Love is associated with the love of learning and teaching and it fuels the passion to strive toward ever higher levels of knowledge, to seek out truth. Omitting Eros Love from the English language stripped this full expression of love, the life force energy that runs through us all, that fuels passion for

life. Eros, according to Plato, drives people toward union with one another, toward the achievement of ethical goodness, and the seeking of truth (Noddings & Shore, 1984).

The other two forms of love that derived from the Greek language, *agape* and *philia*, like Eros, have conceptual meanings that expand greatly beyond what most people understand. Agape love has come to be viewed as a brotherly/sisterly love or a divine form of love among Christians, for example, eliminating any chance of physical or sexual connotations. However, according to Noddings and Shore (1984), “In its earlier form, *agape* referred to an unselfish, caring feeling of one individual for another, irrespective of sex, age, or other differences” and did not have the Christian religious association (p. 156). The third form, *philia*, is “closely tied to the ideas of friendship, brotherhood, and comradeship” (Noddings & Shore, 1984, p. 156). Noddings and Shore point out another educationally significant meaning of *philia*, describing that “*philia* refers to a natural force uniting discordant elements and movements. Isocrates envisioned *philia* as the drawing together of seemingly incompatible substances to create a new entity,” (p. 156). This concept of uniting discordant elements is relevant to the action of the bricolage as are all the possible dimensions of love.

All three forms of love are complex and broad concepts. Love was an essential component of ancient Greek education and there was great love between teachers and their students. It is clear that Kincheloe embraced all forms love in their fullest capacity by his words, his actions, and his impeccable integrity. It also permeated his work. For example, it is easy to see how his multidimensional critical complex bricolage with its quest to seek as many perspectives as possible may be the very embodiment of *philia*

love that Noddings and Shore (1984) had defined in that it compels the dialectical bringing together of seemingly discordant parts such as ideas, opinions, and philosophies, and, ultimately, people.

As Tobin (2010) described, Kincheloe had clarified in a personal conversation about the bricolage, “I argue ad nauseum that even in theoretical discourses that might find direct contradictions between them, there is much to be learned from good ideas wherever they emerge” (p. 406). Does his bricolage incorporate a very real force of love that brings discordant things together? It brings to mind the concepts of energy and opposing forces that are brought out in Hermeticism. This is an interesting link, because it is known that Kincheloe was skilled at and stressed the importance of hermeneutical analysis incorporating these concepts, thus this may prove an interesting avenue to explore. In addition, Kincheloe discusses Eros Love throughout his work and he clearly viewed it as being the remedy for the thanatos that dominates so much of the world today. In his last book, he states:

The positivist tradition has always been characterized by a darkness, a lack of respect for life force—an embrace of critical theorist’s Herbert Marcuse’s (1955) notion of thanatos (death instinct) in lieu of his eros (life impulse). . . . A critical pedagogy that constructs knowledge and formulates action based on eros with its drive to alleviate human suffering serves as a counterpoise to the empire’s positivistic thanatos. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 100)

Anyone who had the privilege to work with Joe also would have readily observed the third form of love, *philia*—his comradeship, his unconditional acceptance, and his generosity by which one might discern that he truly believed that we are all brothers and sisters and what we do for others we are ultimately doing for ourselves as well.

Interestingly, and perhaps shortsighted, in spite of their discourse regarding the deep meanings and overarching conceptualizations of the three forms of love that the Greeks recognized, Noddings and Shore (1984) chose the agape meaning of love as a basis for their recommendations for incorporating love into education. After knowing Kincheloe and experiencing the deep love he had for his students, one can quickly discern how void of love education so often is otherwise. Limiting the expression of love in an educational context to a watered down version of agape love is not much of a contribution to the important act of adding love to the equation, although at least it's a move in the right direction.

Critical Theory and Critical Pedagogy

Kincheloe (2008c) has formulated his own advanced version of an evolving critical theory and a critical complex pedagogy. After the previous discussion about how enmeshed his conceptualizations are with love it is easy to conceive that he would do the same with his critical pedagogy. He wrote:

Critical pedagogy believes nothing is impossible when we work in solidarity and with love, respect, and justice as our guiding lights . . . such a love is compassionate, erotic, creative, sensual, and informed. Critical pedagogy uses it to increase our capacity to love, to bring the power of love to our everyday lives and social institutions, to rethink reason in a humane and interconnected manner. . . . A critical knowledge seeks to connect with the corporeal and the emotional in a way that understands at multiple levels and seeks to assuage human suffering. (p. 9)

He goes on to explain that the role of teachers, thus becomes one of using critical pedagogy to guide their work in ways that aid empowerment. His critical pedagogy is grounded on justice and equality; the knowledge that education is political; the dedication to alleviating human suffering; basing curricula on generative themes that are central to

students' lives and experiences; the view that teachers are researchers and continue learning about and alongside their students; concern about oppression and subjugation; social change balanced by intellectual development and rigorous learning; the awareness that science and technology can be misused for power; commitment to identifying power, its misuse, and its harmful effects; understanding complexity in relation to rigorous and transformative teaching and learning; and understanding how neo-colonialism impacts knowledge and education (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 10).

This has been a simplified summary, and an understanding of his vision for critical pedagogy is not complete without an understanding of how it is linked to epistemology and complexity, as well as to his critical complex psychology. He also speaks of “an evolving criticality that listens carefully to feminist, anti-racist, anti-colonial, and indigenous voices and incorporates their voices into the critical canon” (2008c, p. 27). Kincheloe (2008c) continues, “Thus, criticality and the knowledge production it supports are always evolving in relation to African, Asian, Latin American, and indigenous peoples’ insights, always encountering new ways to irritate dominant forms of power, to provide more evocative and compelling perceptions of power and oppression” (p. 27). Further discussions relating to these concepts follow.

Epistemology

Kincheloe’s (2008c) critical theory, which demands much of both teachers and learners, naturally leads to the incorporation of advanced applications of epistemology, “the branch of philosophy that analyzes the nature of knowledge and what we believe to be true” (p. 15). As he conveys, what we call knowledge shapes how we view the world,

thus it becomes crucial to get beyond traditional mechanistic views of what constitutes knowledge. He writes, “In this context students as odd as it might sound become epistemologically informed scholars. As such, they are challenged to analyze and interpret data, conduct research, and develop a love for scholarship that studies things that matter to the well being of the people of the world” (p. 11). This empowers them to identify oppression and paths to liberation. Thus, Kincheloe’s critical pedagogy is an “epistemologically conscious critical pedagogy” (p. 13).

Critical Complexity: The Cure for a FIDURODian Epistemology

As mentioned earlier, FIDUROD is an acronym for the dominant Western epistemology in operation today. Kincheloe (2008c) had developed this framework in order to bypass the arguments that ensue when a scholar critiques what is happening in the world using the term positivism. It was an interesting move on his part because it potentially helps neutralize the emotional reactions emanating from positivists while he presents a multitude of ways and contexts the features of FIDUROD disrupt and control the lives of people. FIDUROD, as he discusses, causes untold suffering and creates an enormity of global problems, including wars and irreparable environmental devastation. As he stated, “While it is true that many philosophers of science have dismissed positivism, important aspects of the epistemology continue to exert their influence in the way we produce knowledge and value knowledge in various institutions from the military, the economic, to the educational” (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 22). This epistemology affects Westerners and Western-influenced peoples in ways they may not be aware. This move by Kincheloe helps us all set aside our initial assumptions about positivism.

FIDUROD: Phenomenologically Bracketing Positivism

As Kincheloe (2008c) often expresses, it is important for researchers to “bracket” or set aside their initial concepts and reactions and be open to seeing other ways of viewing phenomena. Using the invented term FIDUROD along with clear explanations and examples of its attributes and manifestations helps people who are supporters of strictly positivistic methodologies as well as those who believe the issues with positivism no longer exist to do this bracketing. It is also interesting that, in addition to referencing love, he also chose to use humor in presenting this, which is another effective technique to help people detach emotionally from their views on positivism. The title of the subchapter for his presentation is “Playing With the [Queen](#) of Hearts: The Joker Ain’t the Only Fool In FIDUROD.” That is humorous enough, but the critical complex bricoleur would ask herself, “*Who is the other fool in FIDUROD?*” There is an answer to that question (as well as many possible interpretations) which the cosmos finally released to me after I had experienced frustration over the challenge (I just “knew” there was something about that word that was invented by someone influenced by Hermes). The solution is funny, and this is just one example from many scattered throughout his work, exemplifying Peter McLaren’s (2008) contention that Kincheloe was one of the funniest people he had ever known. The humor is another dimension to Kincheloe’s work which warrants study for what we could learn about using similar techniques. There was always purpose behind the strategies Kincheloe selected for his bricolage.

The following presents merely a summary of the attributes of FIDUROD, which is, in reality, a very complex conceptualization. The reader is encouraged to consult

Kincheloe's book *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* for the in depth presentation and multitudes of examples that show how effective this epistemology has been at usurping our freedoms and treating us less than human: F—Formal—rigid adherence to a particular research method; I—Intractable—grounded on the idea that truth does not change; it does not acknowledge an ever-changing world; the adherence to intractable procedures; D—Decontextualized—considers a phenomenon outside of its diverse context; not recognizing there are multiple, complex contexts; U—Universalistic—the idea that using strict research methods leads to a one true epistemology which can be applied universally; R—Reductionistic—focusing on what can most easily be measured and failing to account for the multitude of other factors that shape the nature of knowledge being produced; assuming linearity and similarity; OD—One Dimensional—knowledge produced is based on the belief that there is only one true reality that can be discovered and described (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 23). Thus, the first and second parts of his book describe FIDUROD, providing a multitude of examples and contexts using the metaphor of a water spigot for knowledge that has been nearly shut off for the masses through this power-entrenched epistemology.

Adding Complexity Theory to the Mix

“What’s complex about our notion of complexity?” Kincheloe (2001b) posed to the readers of his book, *Getting Beyond the Facts: Teaching Social Studies/Social Sciences in the Twenty-First Century, Second Edition* (p. 283). In this book he had painstakingly laid out a detailed formulation of a critical complex epistemology, which he took to the next level in his last book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An*

Introduction (Kincheloe, 2008c). It is beyond the scope of this current research to detail all but the highlights here.

Kincheloe (2001b) presented 15 basic principles for an epistemology of complexity in the textbook he wrote for social studies teachers. It is a general discussion that applies to all teachers and researchers who want a better understanding of complexity as it relates to knowledge and knowledge production. Summarizing the 16 general principles (for which he provides extensive discussion), they include: 1) Knowledge is socially constructed; 2) Consciousness is a social construction; 3) Power serves to construct “truth” and plays a role in consciousness construction; 4) Research should focus on consciousness even though it is hard to measure; 5) Logic, emotion, and empathy play an important role in the process of knowing; 6) The knower cannot be separated from the known; 7) “Our view of the world is grounded on the perspectives of those who have suffered as the result of existing arrangements” (p. 244); 8) There are multiple realities that are constructed by our location in the web of reality; 9) We come to understand where we are located; 10) Understanding where we are located aids us in producing our own knowledge; 11) Knowledge is produced for social action; 12) We have an appreciation of complexity and a desire to overcome reductionism; 13) All knowledge is “in process” and is a part of a larger process; 14) Critical hermeneutics has a large role for interpretation and connecting research to solving everyday problems; 15) Learning and knowledge need to be made relevant to personal experience; 16) Critical ontology is incorporated through self-reflection, historical knowledge, seeking pre-modern, indigenous epistemologies, cosmologies, and ontologies (pp.198–315).

How does one condense very complex epistemological concerns and a description of a critical complex epistemology? What are the ingredients that go into this eclectic mixture? First, it seems important to differentiate it from traditional forms of critical pedagogy.

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.

Critical Psychology of Complexity

While it is beyond the scope of this current research to fully describe Kincheloe’s critical psychology of complexity, a few key aspects will be summarized as they relate to his multidimensional critical complex bricolage. First, it will be pointed out that the *critical psychology of complexity* expands and presumably replaces/supplements the previous concept, “postformalism” as it also overhauls and rewrites many aspects of

educational psychology. This is, of course a bold proposition and positions the critical psychology of complexity precariously in an educational and sociopolitical context.

It does not go unnoticed that by moving away from a “post” word, in this case, postformalism, Kincheloe (2008b) is again disconnecting from the postmodernism association that so many people had tagged him with, perhaps partly as an attempt to circumvent this issue. Again, with the term “postformalism” (which was initially named in relation to Piaget’s formal stages of cognitive development) the issue of a ludic postmodernism raised its ugly head and Kincheloe (2008b) was keenly observant of the issue: “Our critical psychology of complexity and postformalism’s questioning of the benefits of reductionism and rationalism is often characterized as a ‘postmodern’ rejection of reason” (p. 171). In other words, in spite of the sound formulation of the psychology of complexity (which does not reject reason) it has been rejected or criticized based on its association with a ludic postmodernism that irrationally rejects reason. In no way has Kincheloe ever rejected rational thought. In fact, in his *Critical Pedagogy Primer* (as well as elsewhere) he addresses this topic in relation to his conceptualization of a new domain of cognitive theory and practice; he clarifies:

we do not simply discard reason we do not throw out the baby of reason with the bathwater. . . . criticalists need not tie our horse to the hitching post of irrationality characterized by a nihilism and relativism that offer no hope for cognitive improvement or moral action. . . . we avoid these untenable extremes and search for alternate modes of rationality—in other words, new and higher forms of thinking that allow us to understand more so that we [c]an engage in empowered action for our individual and social good. (Kincheloe, 2007a, p. 174)

Can he be clearer than this?

Thus, it is clear that that among some circles, the volatile battle that began during the Enlightenment rages on today and it is not helpful when people misunderstand Kincheloe's work and align him with their own obscure and undefined postmodern standing, making the assumption that readers will just know what they mean. The battles seem ludicrous, unless one understands the powerful political and economic motives behind them. Kincheloe (2008c) provides a deep and wide multidimensional analysis of why modernist social and behaviorist sciences still win out in spite of the damages. Kincheloe (2008b) summarizes a few of the issues: "efficiency at the expense of human well-being; environmental destruction; male-centeredness; a tendency to view humans as just like any other variable in an equation; the devaluation of feeling and emotion; and an overemphasis on dynamics that lend themselves to mathematical measurement and a de-emphasis on those profound human qualities that do not" (p. 171). He has thoroughly analyzed the dominant epistemology that assumes—or demands—that we all perceive the world the same. Thus, today education continues to operate out of the idea that intelligence and learning is something that can be quantified and the focus remains on standardized learning and multiple choice tests to measure how well "learning" has taken place. He elaborates, "A critical psychology of complexity is aware of many different perspectives, the vantage points of diverse disciplines of knowledge (e.g., history, philosophy, sociology) and transdisciplinary ways of seeing such as cultural studies" (p. 173). Practicing his multidimensional critical complex bricolage for learning and research may be a powerful way to grow this awareness. As he asserts, "a critical psychology of complexity changed the debate about educational reform and the quest for a high-quality

education with its understanding that not only is a cognitive ability expressed in diverse ways but that it is *learnable*” (Kincheloe, 2008b, p. 163) [author’s emphasis]. That diverse cognitive abilities are learnable is not only a hopeful indication of possibilities for the future, it is a great impetus, if we are truly interested in creating a more humane, equitable world to move forward with this work as rapidly as possible.

“Critical Constructivism”: A Unified Philosophical and Theoretical Grounding

The multidimensional critical complex bricolage is grounded in an advanced form of constructivism, *critical constructivism*, which holds the assumption that knowledge is socially constructed and incorporates multiple theories and perspectives (Kincheloe, 2005a). This philosophy, or worldview, as Kincheloe calls it, not only gets researchers out of their paradigmatic chains, it also transcends traditional teaching-learning paradigms that typically result in misapplying constructivism to ensure students have learned predetermined knowledge rather than truly constructing new knowledge. Critical constructivism synthesizes chaos, complexity, enactive, feminist, poststructural, and other theories for rigorous teaching, learning, and researching. This can aid in knowledge production that embraces the complex, interacting social, cultural, political, economic, and psychological dynamics of the particular environment within which learners and teachers are situated.

Critical constructivism forms a “unified theory” that pertains to education, epistemology, cognition, and ontology (Kincheloe, 2005b). Thus, beyond being a theory or a philosophy, critical constructivism offers up a whole new worldview. As Kincheloe stated “In *Critical Constructivism* I argue for a unified theory where all of these

dimensions fit together and are synergistic in their interrelationship. . . . critical constructivism becomes a *weltanschauung*, a worldview that creates meaning of human existence” (pp. 7–8) [author’s emphasis]. This is powerful and it results in greater impact on the multiple knowledge domains because when it is enacted through the critical bricolage, it leads to researchers considering more than simply the object of the research—it leads to a consideration of the very nature of human existence or “being.” Researchers thus remain mindful of their personal interrelationship to the various dimensions of the research object or phenomenon.

It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to describe in great depth this complex foundational worldview which Kincheloe had spent his entire career in education developing. I strongly encourage bricoleurs to read his book, *Critical Constructivism*, in which he details all of the points. He has presented this unified worldview in various contexts throughout all of his works, thus reading his work aids with understanding it. Engaging in bricolage research also promotes understanding of this worldview, and it becomes a natural perspective with practice.

Kincheloe presents a 12-point framework for his unifying worldview in his book, *Critical Constructivism Primer*. Because this worldview is new and has synthesized many theories that are essential to the application of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage, it is summarized in *Table 1. Key Points of Kincheloe’s (2005b) Critical Constructivist Worldview* and a brief discussion follows. This table was constructed, not to simplify a highly complex worldview, but rather to provide an advance organizer for the discussion that follows and for reading his book.

Table 1. *Key Points of Kincheloe's (2005b) Critical Constructivist Worldview*

Chapter	Point	Elements/Tenets
Ch. 1. From Constructivism to Critical Constructivism (pp. 1–40)	Point 1. Critical constructivism is grounded on the notion of constructivism. Constructivism asserts that nothing represents a neutral perspective – nothing exists before consciousness shapes it into something perceptible (p. 8).	Unified theories Post-positivistic Critical theory A worldview
Introducing the Concept: What Are We Talking About? Critical Hermeneutics	Point 2. Knowledge of the world is an interpretation produced by people who are a part of that world. Thus, understanding the nature of interpretation is a central feature of being an educated person (p. 17).	Bricolage/ multiple perspectives Ethnography, Historicity, Social change, Dialectics, Semiotics
Critical Constructivism, Context and Complexity	Point 3. Interpretations cannot be separated from the interpreter's location in the web of reality – one's interpretive facility involves understanding how historical, social, cultural, economic, and political contexts construct our perspectives on the world, self and other (p. 24).	Complexity theory Epistemology of complexity Consciousness of Complexity
Constructing a Critical System of Meaning	Point 4. The “critical” in critical constructivism comes from critical theory and its concern with extending a human's consciousness of herself as a social being – critical theory promotes self-reflection in relation to social power and its ability to align our self-perceptions and world views with the interests of power blocs (p. 33).	“Truth” is contingent Liberation Theology
Ch. 2. Power & Knowledge Production; Critical Constructivist Pedagogical Purpose (pp. 4–80)	Point 5. The key elements of a rigorous education involve understanding how our consciousness is constructed, subjectivity shaped, and identity produced – here rests the theoretical key to critical constructivism: the role of power in these processes of self-production and, in turn, epistemology and knowledge production (p. 41).	Poststructuralist Deconstruction Theoretical Cognitive – Enactivism Critical Ontology
Formulation of Educational Purpose	Point 6. In this context [as delineated above] critical constructivists begin to raise questions about these constructive processes and their relations to power and its influence on the pedagogical processes – informal cultural pedagogy and formal school pedagogy. Here questions of the purposes of schooling in a democratic society begin to emerge (p. 60).	Resists regulation Purpose Knowledge Base is self-constructed

(continued)

Table 1. *Key Points of Kincheloe's (2005b) Critical Constructivist Worldview (cont.)*

Chapter	Point	Elements/Tenets
<p>Ch. 3. Epistemology, Ontology and Critical Constructivism's Struggle Against Reductionism (pp. 81–118)</p>	<p>Point 7. Critical constructivism illustrates how Cartesian epistemology promotes the notion of the abstract individual – an independent agent free from the constructed influences of the social, political, cultural, economic, and historical dimensions of the world. The modernist European concept of self cannot withstand these insights. It is hard in this context to determine where the individual ends and the social begins (p. 81)</p>	<p>Awareness, Free from machine metaphors; Autopoiesis; Critical Ontology/Historiography; Politics and Power; Self-construct consciousness/New ways of being</p>
<p>Avoid Technicalization and Simplification</p>	<p>Point 8. Critical constructivists avoid reductionism and the naïve realism that accompanies it. Critical constructivist educators make sure that education does not serve as a force that indoctrinates and stupidifies rather than engages and enlightens (p. 102).</p>	<p>Overcome reductionism and fragmented curriculum</p>
<p>Ch. 4. Representing the World: Analyzing the Construction Zone (pp. 119–142)</p>	<p>Point 9. Critical constructivists assert that understanding the positioning of the researcher in the social web of reality is essential to the production of rigorous and textured knowledge. As long as researchers and consumers of knowledge do not understand where they themselves and other researchers stand in this social web, scholars will have a thin and distorted conception of the research process and the data it produces (p. 119).</p>	<p>Phenomenology Feminist theory Poststructuralist Analysis Exposure of Power (p. 121) to Construct Voice We can remake ourselves (our consciousness)</p>
<p>The Construction Process: Discourse, Language, and Power Self-Awareness via the Power of Difference</p>	<p>Point 10. In the critical constructivist process of reconstructing the self, humans are ethically required to search in as many locations as possible for unique ideas, alternative discourses, new ways of thinking and being intelligent, and producing knowledge – the explosive power of difference (p. 124).</p>	<p>Discourse Analysis Multiple generative narratives Postcolonial discourses The Middle Way/Enactivism Wide applicability</p>
<p>Ch. 5. Blue Knowledge (pp. 143–170) Discursive Analysis</p>	<p>Point 11. Critical constructivism works to expose elitist assumptions embedded in existing knowledge. Understanding that dominant power wielders have attempted to hegemonize individuals via the deployment of these knowledges in political, economic, social, cultural, epistemological and pedagogical structures, many will be uncomfortable with the exposé process..</p>	<p>Knowledge to change the world; Non-Western epistemologies Knowledge is tentative, changing; Discourse and context central dimensions (p. 143)</p>
<p>Social Theoretical Foundations</p>	<p>Point 12. Critical constructivists value subjugated knowledge. Utilizing the concept of the 'blues idiom,' we attempt to expand the concept of subjugated knowledge by drawing upon African American cultural knowledges. The result is a form of subjugated epistemology called blue knowledge (p. 161).</p>	<p>Includes previously excluded knowledge; Multilogical Pattern-seeking midst chaos</p>

The table highlights the extensive range of ideas Kincheloe was able to weave together into a strong, impenetrable foundation that grounds bricolage in order to come out of the process with new, sensible, powerful, love-based, actionable knowledge that honors everyone in a fair and just way. Because Kincheloe has successfully synthesized so many perspectives, it has been interesting to watch how that plays out among various scholars. We all see what we want to see. We all have our own personal blinders. Thus he has been labeled as a “postmodernist,” “constructivist,” “Marxist,” “mate,” “twin,” “genie in a lamp,” “WASP,” “the Dude,” among many other one dimensional titles.

I bring only a few of my own unique perspectives of Kincheloe to this dissertation, but the reality is that I view him as a complex, multidimensional person. This is brought up here because he has also been labeled in the literature as “constructivist,” and because he wrote the book “critical constructivism,” it is very easy for people to latch onto that label for him. Honestly, if there was a theorist to whom labels do not apply it was Kincheloe. It is time to honor him for what he was able to do—something I have not seen any other researcher or theorist do to the extent he has: He was able to take the good ideas from an incalculable number of perspectives, just as Einstein had suggested, in order to create the strongest theory possible. I lost track of how many times he said he never threw out the baby with the bathwater and the many ways he creatively altered that idiom. He took it seriously. So, yes, there are constructivist elements to his theory, but these constructivist elements, as I have learned in my research, also entwine with ideas from multiple philosophies, sciences, hermeticism, Taoism, indigenous worldviews, linguistics, feminism, and the list could go on and on! Similar to

all of his very complex conceptualizations, he has his own “take” on “critical constructivism.”

Labeling is harmful—any kind of labeling that presents someone as one dimensional and unchanging. From my perspective, Kincheloe would have rejected any kind of boxed-in label for himself. That said, he knew people did label him and rather than take offense, I believe he probably found it to be a somewhat humorous side of human nature, even if he did find it frustrating and limiting of human potentialities and possibilities. If I communicate anything at all in this dissertation, I hope it is the brilliance of his theory and how he was able to weave tightly together so many different perspectives. We are all a part of his conceptualization; after completing this study it does seem that Kincheloe was “one” with everyone. It’s almost as if he had found Einstein’s theory of unity and developed a worldview and a research process to enact that theory. The resulting “fabric” of his worldview is airtight, theoretically and philosophically, and it forms a strong foundation for multidimensional critical complex bricolage research.

Thus, what follows is a brief discussion of the 12 Key Points of Kincheloe’s worldview. These points are interspersed throughout his book, *Critical Constructivism Primer* along with a thorough discussion of each. Additional discussions of some of these key points are interwoven within this study as they are applicable to the research.

Point 1: Critical constructivism is grounded on the notion of constructivism. Constructivism asserts that nothing represents a neutral perspective—nothing exists before consciousness shapes it into something perceptible. (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 8)

Kincheloe also refers to this conceptualization as a “constructivist epistemology” and “an epistemology of complexity” (p. 8). Knowledge is not viewed as something

outside the individual. The cosmos is socially constructed, as is stipulated by other constructivist theories and philosophies; however, a critical theoretical element has been added that acknowledges the role dominant power has in influencing that social construction. Critical constructivism has researchers seeking multiple perspectives, ontologies, and knowledges, as manifested in the research process of the evolving criticality of the bricolage. Everything requires interpretation and no one constructs reality exactly the same way, although one's "positioning" in the world in terms of time and place has an impact on how reality comes to be interpreted. Thus, it is critical to position the researcher within the research and in relation to the research object. Social and educational research can no longer claim to be "objective" (although this worldview questions the claim to objectivity of any form of research). This moves complex research away from the positivistic methodologies in the social sciences, except for specific applications and applications that are supplemented with qualitative research. Criticality ensures that purpose always includes a consideration for social justice, liberation, and egalitarianism, and as Kincheloe always frames it, for the "alleviation of human suffering."

Point 2. Knowledge of the world is an interpretation produced by people who are a part of that world. Thus, understanding the nature of interpretation is a central feature of being an educated person. (p. 17)

Because critical constructivism assumes and requires interpretation, critical hermeneutics, ethnography and self-ethnography, historicity, dialectics, deconstruction, and semiotics are processes that are typically used for this interpretation, both in an everyday sense as well as for academic and research purposes. These methods are

discussed in greater detail and in context throughout this study, along with discussions of the multiple methodologies, philosophies and theories this form of bricolage encompasses.

Point 3. Interpretations cannot be separated from the interpreter's location in the web of reality—one's interpretive facility involves understanding how historical, social, cultural, economic, and political contexts construct our perspectives on the world, self and other. (p. 24)

When explaining this point, Kincheloe has often referred to the “web-like” interactions of these complex forces, as well as using the idea from the movie about the matrix. He also uses ecological concepts, such as strawberry plants as a metaphor for rhizomatic interrelationships between people and the complex forces that interact to construct perspectives about the world, or “reality.” He has pointed out often how linear, rationalistic, reductionistic tendencies of Western knowledge production fail to capture these multitudes of interrelationships, thus giving incomplete and inaccurate views of our world which results in consistently harming particular members of the global society. With critical constructivism and critical bricolage, the goal is to obtain as many perspectives as reasonable for the particular “object” under study in order to gain a deeper or more rigorous understanding by contextualization. The idea of memorizing facts and accepting at face value what is handed down as “knowledge” is no longer viable as the major method for learning or producing knowledge, unless we want to continue to reproduce people who have difficulty thinking and functioning within complex social settings and who are only good at rote learning and directed, robotic tasks. Critical constructivists are aware that knowledge has been produced for specific purposes, by specific individuals, and with various limitations, thus, they

work to determine what is missing, misrepresented, or obfuscated as an important part of learning and researching. Kincheloe, who has often been falsely accused of throwing out positivistic forms of research entirely, has been very careful in counteracting that accusation. Here, he states, “Critical constructivism’s complex reconceptualization of research and the knowledge it produces does not mean that we simplistically reject all quantitative forms of empirical science. Many questions of the world and in education involve counting, figuring percentages, averages, means, modes and so on” (p. 26). However, it is often only one part of the picture, so as researchers we must take a step back to get a wider view.

Point 4. The “critical” in critical constructivism comes from critical theory and its concern with extending a human’s consciousness of herself as a social being—critical theory promotes self-reflection in relation to social power and its ability to align our self-perceptions and world views with the interests of power blocs. (p. 33)

Here, he draws on the Frankfurt School of thought that attempts to explore the relationship of consciousness and history, Einstein and his thought experiments that raise new types of questions, and Foucault’s notions of the interrelationships of power relations and history. Liberation theology has a central role in identifying unethical and oppressive conditions, and subjugated knowledges are imperative for providing additional perspectives and understanding. All of these views work *together* to help reveal dominant power and develop solutions for overcoming oppression. Kincheloe states, “On the basis of this knowledge, of their ‘dangerous memory,’ strategies for overcoming such oppression can be developed” (p. 37).

Point 5. The key elements of a rigorous education involve understanding how our consciousness is constructed, subjectivity shaped, and identity produced—here

rests the theoretical key to critical constructivism: the role of power in these processes of self-production and, in turn, epistemology and knowledge production. (p. 41)

Here, critical constructivism eliminates the trap of Cartesian-Newtonian-Baconian thought that places truth in outside reality and removed from historical and social influences. Kincheloe lists the advantages of knowledge production via critical constructivism. The constructions:

provide a richer insight into a phenomenon; provide an interconnected and cohesive portrait of the phenomenon; grant access to new possibilities of meaning; benefit marginalized groups in their struggle for empowerment; fit the phenomenon under question; account for many of the cultural and historical texts in which the phenomenon is found; consider previous constructions of the phenomenon in question; generate insight gained from the recognition of the dialectic of particularity and generalization of wholes and parts; indicate an awareness of the forces that have constructed it; make use of perspectives of multiple individuals coming from diverse social locations; and catalyze just, intelligent and worthwhile action. (pp. 43–45)

In relation to Point 6, Kincheloe postulates that we cannot separate ontological knowledge from our experience. As he states, “A critical ontology insists that humans possess inalienable rights to knowledge and insight into knowledge production, to intellectual development, and to political agency in a democratic society” (p. 59). Thus, critical ontology has us seeking new ways of being in the world and in relationship with others that are mutually beneficial and symbiotic. The move is away from a technicist, rule-bound approach to one that is freely creative or as Kincheloe sometimes refers to this process, a “great escape.”

Point 6. In this context [as delineated above] critical constructivists begin to raise questions about these constructive processes and their relations to power and its influence on the pedagogical processes—informal cultural pedagogy and formal school pedagogy. Here questions of the purposes of schooling in a democratic society begin to emerge. (p. 60)

Kincheloe stresses here that it is not conspiracy theories that drive these questions about schooling, but rather the search is for the so-called “common sense” and often invisible ways power has become accepted as cultural norms and values. Educational psychology is examined for the way it measures, labels and classifies that results in the exclusion of certain groups of people through its forces of colonialization. As an example, he cites psychologists’ use of IQ scores as evidence of intelligence. These actions are used to “regulate,” according to Kincheloe, and he points out that teachers are not exempt from this regulation. With the current focus on standardized testing, there are more ways to measure teacher competency or accountability, thus forcing them into increasingly technocratic roles that subvert the use of critical thinking, creative problem solving, and quick decision making. Critical constructivist teachers identify these factors that serve to measure, regulate, and sort and they resist them so that they are able to provide a more rigorous and emancipatory curriculum.

Point 7. Critical constructivism illustrates how Cartesian epistemology promotes the notion of the abstract individual—an independent agent free from the constructed influences of the social, political, cultural, economic, and historical dimensions of the world. The modernist European concept of self cannot withstand these insights. It is hard in this context to determine where the individual ends and the social begins. (p. 81)

Critical constructivists are very interested in learning how their notion of self has been constructed and discovering new ways of being. With this knowledge, we can actively reconstruct our own consciousnesses which, according to Kincheloe, “demands that we reinterpret our traditions and reinvent our futures together, in solidarity with other self-directed human agents” (p. 83). To accomplish this, we must refrain from viewing

humans, human relationships, and the cosmos according to machine metaphors. Indigenous views, in which the entire cosmos and everything in it are sentient, and enactivism, as developed by Francisco Varela and Humberto Maturana, provide insight into the connectivity and “cosmological significance” of everything (p. 85). Philip Wexler (2007) brings in wisdom knowledges as a counter to Cartesian ontology, repairing the separation of mind, body and spirit. Combined with autopoieses, “the self-organizing or making of life,” people have much more power to change themselves, even to their own evolution, than was previously believed (p. 86).

Point 8. Critical constructivists avoid reductionism and the naïve realism that accompanies it. Critical constructivist educators make sure that education does not serve as a force that indoctrinates and stupidifies rather than engages and enlightens (p. 102).

As Kincheloe points out, mediocre teaching and learning weakens democratic ways of being by undermining social order. This can happen in a multitude of ways that keep thinking at the lower range of cognition. Knowledge production becomes replaced with a rote process of simply following linear procedures without thinking at all, while critical constructivists are seeking to produce knowledge with critical thought, insight, analysis, intuition, and brilliance (p. 102).

Point 9. Critical constructivists assert that understanding the positioning of the researcher in the social web of reality is essential to the production of rigorous and textured knowledge. As long as researchers and consumers of knowledge do not understand where they themselves and other researchers stand in this social web, scholars will have a thin and distorted conception of the research process and the data it produces. (p. 119)

Here, Kincheloe stresses the importance of understanding how power works at both the “macro (deep structural) and the micro (particularistic) levels” to construct our

consciousnesses and our understanding of our positions in society (p. 119). Foucault's discursive techniques by which we can identify power and our roles in supporting power structures are helpful.

The process of analyzing researcher positionalities reveals points of intersection as well as ways to reformulate what has been taken for granted in relation to systems of control and dominance. Kincheloe emphasizes that this is necessary in order to escape our complicity in which "we harm our most vulnerable citizens, destroy the environment and undermine the quality of life around the world" (p. 121).

Point 10. In the critical constructivist process of reconstructing the self, humans are ethically required to search in as many locations as possible for unique ideas, alternative discourses, new ways of thinking and being intelligent, and producing knowledge—the explosive power of difference. (p. 124)

According to this point, critical constructivists view difference as a "kinetic" force; seeking differences transforms us and ultimately, changes the world. Bateson (2002) explicates this process for nonmaterial systems and the necessity of understanding relationships between, for example, ideas (p. 89). Critical constructivists are interested in using the power of difference for breaking "the lenses of present ways of viewing the world" because of the "heartbreak and suffering" that has resulted from them (p. 141). Critical constructivists, thus, move away from "regressive forms of reductionism" to create quality knowledge that draws on the understandings and epistemologies of marginalized groups (p. 142).

Point 11. Critical constructivism works to expose elitist assumptions embedded in existing knowledge. Understanding that dominant power wielders have attempted to hegemonize individuals via the deployment of these knowledges in political, economic, social, cultural, epistemological and pedagogical structures, many will be uncomfortable with the exposé process. (p. 143)

Those of us who, like Kincheloe, came from “low-status backgrounds” understand deeply how elitist assumptions cause harm. In my experience they often show up as unveiled rules for us (none for them). I refer to them as unveiled, because they are hidden, and then unveiled when the elite want to enforce them. I have been “blindsided” many times. There is the issue of how intelligence is defined and curricula are developed that do not recognize marginalized experiences and subjugated knowledge, Kincheloe points out. Thus, again, critical constructivists bring to the table diverse knowledges that have been previously excluded, which can result in transformation, seeing the world anew, and a multilogical consciousness. According to Kincheloe, “embracing these types of diversities does not undermine artistic or musical quality—it profoundly enhances excellence in these domains” (p. 56).

Point 12. Critical constructivists value subjugated knowledge. Utilizing the concept of the ‘blues idiom,’ we attempt to expand the concept of subjugated knowledge by drawing upon African American cultural knowledges. The result is a form of subjugated epistemology called blue knowledge (p. 161). (Kincheloe, 2005a)

Here, Kincheloe presents his conceptualization of “blue knowledge or blue epistemology” which is based on the blues aesthetic. This relates to the ability to address the suffering in the world, to acknowledge it, to know changes must be made, and at the same time, still be able to celebrate being alive. As Kincheloe states here, “In the midst of this pain, the blues insist, we can celebrate, have a good time, and even get down. That impassioned spirit has appealed to me and shaped my life since I first comprehended it” (p. 161). Blues knowledge induces critical constructivists to produce solutions and take actions that are smarter and more just in the world (p. 169).

This summarizes some key features of the theoretical and philosophical grounding of Kincheloe's multidimensional critical complex bricolage. I encourage new bricoleurs to study Kincheloe's book, *Critical Constructivism Primer* and his other works to gain a sense of the philosophical grounding of his critical bricolage, as well as to take time to conduct other philosophical research as he recommends. This extra step up front, as well as continuing this philosophical research throughout, will help form a strong philosophical and theoretical foundation for employing the multidimensional critical complex bricolage research process and will contribute to the rigorous knowledge production Kincheloe is asking of bricoleurs.

Review of Kincheloe's Work: Movin' on Up

Kincheloe was a prolific writer whose work requires intertextual analysis in order to cull what is most pertinent to the development of his conceptualization of the bricolage. In fact, one could argue, to gain a complete understanding of his process one needs to perform a multidimensional critical complex bricolage of his works, which is what this current study has, in fact, already initiated. It is clear, however, that even from his earliest writings he was on a mission to convey to people how important it is to hear all voices, to analyze the true complexity of educational issues and disagreements, and to synthesize through discourse and analysis all of the salient points in order to develop solutions which would resolve the issues, alleviate the disagreements and suffering, and provide for a rigorous and meaningful education for everyone. He may not have called it bricolage research in his earliest writings, but it is clear he used the process for his own research and that he continued to develop and refine it toward his advanced conceptualization during his more than forty years in education. He spent countless hours formulating his philosophy and theory in a way that other researchers might understand it and then be empowered to apply it. His purpose was to move past the mere identification of obvious problems and rhetoric, and instead move toward seeking the hidden dimensions of those problems in order to become empowered for taking the right kinds of actions that would solve them and lead to enacting other possibilities for improving education and the rest of our world (2008a, 2008b, 2008c).

As an early example, in his first booklet, published in 1983, *Understanding the New Right and Its Impact on Education*, he had analyzed the Kanawha County Textbook Controversy which took place between the Left and the New Right, and which had resulted in a bus bombing in 1974. He had argued for administrators and teachers to take time to understand the complexities of both sides of the issue. As he had concluded, “When the complexity of the problem is widely understood, we can see the folly of simplistic, black-and-white answers. With extreme positions exposed, rational and productive interchange of ideas become possible” (p. 40). Kincheloe held firm to this position his entire career, always advocating for all voices to be heard, stressing the importance of viewing issues from multiple perspectives, and believing that by doing so, even the most complex problems can be solved amicably. In an article written after Kincheloe’s passing in 2008, Tobin (2010) told of an account of a conversation he had with Kincheloe regarding the “incommensurability/commensurability issue” (p. 406). He asked Kincheloe whether in the case in which a particular theory might produce interesting questions to pursue, even if the theory itself were not viewed as “truth” per se, might be a “fruitful way to proceed—not with the idea that the theory is truth, but that for these situations it seems viable” (p. 406). This is exactly the process that Kincheloe had routinely used with some of the concepts associated with postmodernism that has resulted in his work being misunderstood by some of his colleagues, and yet he wrote back to Tobin confirming that it was “the very basis of bricolage.” Kincheloe continued:

the concept of multilogicality i’ve been working with is about this dichotomy. i argue ad nauseum that even in theoretical discourses that might find direct contradictions between them, there is much to be learned from good ideas wherever they emerge. for example, i know that there are dimensions of

interpretivism and criticality that some argue are in conflict. yet, the idea of not learning from interpretivist research methods and embedded theories to me is absurd. (p. 406)

In 2001, Kincheloe published his first formal article conceptualizing his bricolage research approach, “Describing the Bricolage: Conceptualizing a New Rigor in Qualitative Research,” which he presented at the National Educational Research Association. In this article he contended that “no concept better captures the possibility of the future of qualitative research” than the research bricolage (p. 679). His stated purpose was to push the bricolage to “the next conceptual level.” His intent was to transcend viewing bricolage as a research methodology in which researchers select from a menu of options. Thus, his research approach incorporates as many perspectives, methods, theories as practical and as needed. He described his expansive approach stating, “Yvonna Lincoln (2001) delineates two types of bricoleurs: those who are committed to research eclecticism, allowing circumstance to shape methods employed; and the genealogy/archeology of the disciplines with some grander purpose in mind. My purpose entails both of Lincoln’s articulations of the role of the bricoleur” (p. 53).

By genealogy, Kincheloe (2004) is referring to the process of studying and understanding how discipline knowledges have been constructed—their “knowledge bases, epistemologies, and knowledge production methodologies” in a historical, Foucauldian sense. In this way, the understanding can be used to dialectically study the disciplines researchers draw from (p. 53). A Foucauldian approach aids in understanding the ideologies of the disciplines and how knowledge is used to support power structures that maintain hierarchies and the status quo. In relation to Foucault’s (1984) concept of

genealogy, Kamberelis and Dimitriadis (2008) explain, “genealogies are not histories of causes but rather histories of effects, and their value lies not so much in what they tell us about the past as in what they enable us to do” (p. 377).

In his 2001 article, Kincheloe provides a definition of bricolage. Because he has included hermeneutics, which is different from all other definitions encountered so far in the course of this research, and because he repeatedly discusses the importance of hermeneutics for interpretation, the assumption is that this is a critically important aspect of his definition of bricolage (and that it needs to be hermeneutically interpreted). Analysis of this definition requires intertextual analyses of the definitions Kincheloe has presented in several other articles and texts and considered in a historical context. This has been taken up in the study and is covered in Chapter 4. Thus, here he defines bricoleur:

The French word, bricoleur, describes a handyman or handywoman who makes use of the tools available to complete a task. Some connotations of the term involve trickery and cunning and remind me of the chicanery of Hermes, in particular his ambiguity concerning the messages of the gods. If hermeneutics came to connote the ambiguity and slipperiness of textual meaning, then bricolage can also imply the fictive and imaginative elements of the presentation of all formal research. (p. 680)

Kincheloe (2001a) explains that all research is “jerryrigged” to a degree and is subjective even though researchers may make the claim of being unbiased. We all hold particular perspectives and viewpoints that shape what we write. Writing texts are an attempt to describe the world from within the world, as he describes it, and we are just too close and enmeshed to see it from an outside, objective position. We are not politically neutral and we all have particular positions, subjectivities within a complex

web of interrelationships that we attempt to understand (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003; Kincheloe, 2008c; Kirby, 2011). The concept, “fiction formulas” is one that Kincheloe has taken up in another work which may provide insight as to what he’s expressing here. In this particular article, “Fiction Formulas: Critical Constructivism and the Representation of Reality,” Kincheloe (1997) notes, “Constructivism has implied that nothing represents a ‘neutral’ perspective, in the process shaking the epistemological foundations of modernist grand narratives. Indeed, no truly objective way of seeing exists. Nothing exists before consciousness shapes it into something we can perceive” (p. 57). In his later work, he expounds on this idea by incorporating explanations of chaos, complexity, and enactive theories from the sciences, which is taken up later in this study.

Kincheloe (2001b) emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinarity, and justifies its use for research. Additionally, he highlights the need to synthesize social theory, epistemology, and interpretive methods when using multiple methods and perspectives. Thus, his concept involves using multiple methods and seeking many perspectives from both inside and outside the domain within which the object or phenomenon under study falls. This compensates for the limitations of scientific, positivist methods imposed on complex social issues or of any single methodology and it avoids reductionism.

Kincheloe’s work, once one gains familiarity with his writing style, is clearly multidimensional, meaning that it can be interpreted on many levels and can be applied in many contexts. A question a bricoleur might pose at this point is whether using his research bricolage is what might construct the form of multidimensional and highly dense work he has written, and if so, how is this accomplished?

Another prominent quality found in his work is a seemingly esotericism that is sometimes simply peppered here and there with particular statements and other times elaborated upon in greater detail. Often these texts have multiple interpretations, including surface-level ones, so that the esotericism may not register consciously, especially for people not attuned to it. He also interweaves complex science explanations so it would again take a deep analysis to fully understand this dimension of his work. In relation to this, his work is highly prescient, and as discussed previously, ahead of the times, as if he speaks to us from the future.

These aspects are mentioned because it is clear that the section in this 2001 article about the bricolage, titled, “The Great Implosion: Dealing With the Debris of Disciplinarity” can be interpreted both in terms of the research act today and also in terms of this research needed at some future date during a time in which “a postapocalyptic social, cultural, psychological, and educational science where certainty and stability have long parted for parts unknown” (p. 681). Is he speaking in terms of the fragmented nature of the disciplines, the “postmodern condition,” the lost cultures and their knowledges, or in terms of some future apocalypse after which all of the pieces will need to be picked up and put back together? He is most likely speaking in terms of all of those things and more. This is the nature of his writing throughout much of his work, which makes his work too dense for some readers and a true treasure for others.

In this particular article, he goes on to say that researchers must “pick up the pieces” and put “them together as best they can” (p, 681). He is referring to the state of research, of course, but at the same time he is likely also referring to his observation that

the old order is now at the beginning of its end. This may not seem like the case as the U.S. wallows in its neo-conservative fundamentalist haze, but we all understand the cliché about the darkest hour. Rethinking the way we produce knowledge and understanding the process by which such informational distortion deforms our perception of self and world may be the practical ways to hasten the crack of that new dawn. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 22)

Another important element to his 2001 presentation of bricolage is the necessity to incorporate “new ontological insights,” which potentially pushes the conceptualization ever further toward the esoteric since it allows the researcher to escape the idea that there is one true reality. As one reads more of Kincheloe’s work, the esotericism becomes clear and provides another important interpretation. For now, the interpretation will focus on the education and research dimension, but this was brought out because it appears that some researchers take issue with the esotericism. But then, if he is speaking from the future, maybe it just *seems* to be esoteric to “earthlings” as he often refers to us in his last book. Maybe if we understood the science better, it would not seem so esoteric.

In his review of Kincheloe’s (2001b) first conceptualization of the bricolage, McLaren (2001) described Kincheloe’s conceptualization of bricolage as an “heuristic device to deepen and expand qualitative research in the field of education” (p. 700). However, he stressed the importance of realizing that seeking multiple perspectives does not mean they are all valued equally, which seems obvious but perhaps necessary for those researchers who identify themselves with certain flavors of postmodernism. On the esoteric level, McLaren advised, “the critical bricoleur needs to be cautious as she negotiates her postmodern turn into the mine-infested waters of interdisciplinarity in that oftentimes the material world can slip out of view.” A naïve new bricoleur might ask, is that such a bad thing? And why so? He also reminded Kincheloe of the importance of

keeping the power structure of economics, capitalism, in view when using hermeneutics for interpretation, which is a good reminder for new bricoleurs (p. 701). And finally, directly addressing the esoteric content, McLaren concluded his review of Kincheloe's concept of bricolage by stating, "The revolutionary praxis of the critical bricoleur entails freeing ourselves from the prison house of esoteric theories detached from forms of class struggle. It is this insight that must be recaptured if critical research is to be regenerated" (p. 705). Of course, Kincheloe's conceptualization of the research bricolage fully addresses all of these concerns; whereas, the same cannot be stated for the current applications of bricolage.

As Kincheloe (2001b) points out, bricolage research is already being done, but he has conceptualized a more rigorous form of it through a dialectical view of disciplinarity. He views disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity as synergistic, not as an either/or proposition. This approach requires researchers to become familiar with the historical contexts of the disciplines they draw from for their research, which is potentially a daunting, but not impossible task, depending upon the nature of the research. He recommends the study of the following aspects of the disciplines we are working with: the social construction of its knowledge bases; epistemologies; knowledge production methodologies; historical origins; emergence of schools of thought; conflicts; and paradigmatic changes (pp. 683–684). Using his critical complex theory, researchers also study etymology, knowledge structure, and power relations in order to identify how they cause oppression. Again, Foucault's work is helpful for informing this type of research.

In his quest for new ways of producing knowledge through a variety of dimensions, using methods such as ethnography, textual analysis, semiotics, hermeneutics, phenomenology, dialectics, deconstruction, poststructuralist analysis, foucauldian analysis, historicity, Pinarian currere, historiography, genre studies, psychoanalysis, discourse analysis, and content analysis, Kincheloe (2001b) incorporates philosophical and consciousness research along with other forms of analysis, such as aesthetics and literary criticism, to provide researchers multiple views of understanding of the world and themselves (p. 688). He refers to this as “dangerous knowledge” because it brings into consideration “diverse epistemological, ontological, and cosmological assumptions as well as different methods of inquiry. Again, depending on the context of the object of inquiry, bricoleurs use their knowledge of these dynamics to shape their research design” according to Kincheloe (p. 688).

Following these practices takes the research beyond one dimensional, linear forms of research and frees the researcher to identify the numerous and amazing connections that would otherwise be missed. This form of research brings forth greater insight and understanding of the nature of relevant and dynamic interrelationships. Kincheloe warns against expecting or trying to construct step-by-step procedures for using this research process. It is simply too complex. It is important to document as accurately as possible one’s process in order to aid future researchers in their quest for developing greater proficiency, but as I have discovered, even that is very difficult due to the complexity of the process.

Lincoln (2001) and Pinar (2001) also reviewed Kincheloe's (2001) article. Lincoln expressed a sense of being overwhelmed by the enormity of the project, stating, "This article was so rich and full of ideas that it is difficult to sort them all out" (p. 693). Indeed, his bricolage is expansive, but it is not an exercise in futility. Kincheloe's ultimate dream is to teach research skills even to children so that by the time they reach college, students already have knowledge of research methods and processes. As he expressed, even elementary school learners can produce knowledge (2008c). Still, it is not impossible for a motivated individual to tackle all of the tasks he has lined out in relation to a specific research topic. His recommendation to all of his doctoral students was to begin with researching and writing about philosophy as a background to their research so that their study would be deeply philosophically grounded. This study demonstrates that what he was asking is possible to do, even though I am a novice when it comes to research. He would not have wished for our lack of experience to dissuade us from delving into this form of research.

In her review, Lincoln (2001) focused on the highlights of Kincheloe's conceptualization, again mentioning the vastness of it, "First, we are talking about an expansion in the definition of bricolage of undreamt-of proportion" (p. 693). She contrasted Levi-Strauss's original idea of the bricoleur using tools at hand as they engaged in fieldwork forms of research. Kincheloe's bricoleur, she contends, "is far more skilled than merely a handyman," and due to the necessary collaboration between interdisciplinary boundary workers, it is "a long way off" (p. 694). She also cites the work of feminists and race-ethnic theorists as being examples of the type of boundary

work needed. She expressed her reservations about being able to train graduate students in Foucauldian analyses and she pondered how one knows when a project is complete. As a passionate learner with her heart set on becoming a multidimensional critical complex bricoleur, I am deeply saddened by this perspective. Most learners will, indeed, only jump the bar that is established no matter how low it is set. Like Kincheloe had been, I was disappointed in school from the time I entered first grade (I skipped kindergarten). From the boring way they taught, to the demotion from 64 crayons to only 8, the bars have always been too low. I am with Kincheloe: the multidimensional critical complex bricolage can be taught in elementary school. His dream is my dream (thus, not at all “undreamt”).

Pinar’s (2001) review of Kincheloe’s (2001b) article was more hopeful. He discussed the risk of using an approach that can be criticized both for its interdisciplinarity and the tendency toward improvisation, but ended on a positive note. He concluded his critique by stating:

In a field whose academic standing remains fragile at best, to claim identities such as the bricoleur or the amateur is to invite criticism if not ridicule from our more disciplinary-wed, “hard”-discipline colleagues, not to mention right-wing politicians and other education-as-business advocates. But this is a risk, as Kincheloe knows, we must take. (p. 699)

Conclusion: Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage “Treasures”

A brief introduction to bricolage and Kincheloe’s (2005a) multidimensional critical complex bricolage has been provided. As discussed, the bricolage need not begin with a single point of entry text, for example as demonstrated by Fedory (2008) in which he used a set of educational standards, although it can. It can also begin with a

“channeled” message, if one wishes. Every bricolage research project and mission is different. But if a study is completed rigorously, discoveries—“treasures” as Joe called them—as well as more questions become revealed during the process of bricolage and contribute to innovative knowledge. As this study shows in Chapter 4, the treasures can often be surprising, amazing, and even “magical” and, just as Kincheloe (2008b) has contended, they can provide us with views into new dimensions that can change our lives and history (p. 140).

Again, the purpose of this research is to delineate Kincheloe’s multidimensional critical complex bricolage from current bricolage research. What views and perspectives provide a better understanding of his work? What metaphors might represent more accurately the complexity of this advanced form of bricolage? How can his conceptualization inform the other employments of bricolage and vice versa? In companion with that purpose is the wish to demonstrate how one researcher, a novice, might approach this complex form of research. Thus, if his conceptualization is shown to be solidly philosophically grounded as it is believed to be; and if it can be divorced from indefinable concepts such as “postmodernism”; and if it can be elevated above traditional forms of critical pedagogy that do not embrace the level of complexity he has incorporated in his theoretical work; and if it can move away from oversimplified metaphors such as “quilt making” which it is believed it can be; and if new knowledge is produced, particularly knowledge that might contribute in even some small way toward change in education, then it will offer other researchers a potentially powerful option so that they also can construct new epistemologies and knowledges. Working together to

empower ourselves and improve education does have the potential to change the world, just as Joe had contended (Kincheloe, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d, 2005a, 2008c).

CHAPTER 3. THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Process-sensitive scholars watch the world flow by like a river, where the exact contents of the water are never the same. (Kincheloe 2005a p. 333)

Researcher Positioning

All research is influenced by paradigmatic thinking, assumptions, presuppositions, research positioning, and interrelationships between the researcher and object of the research. This is readily understood by the explanation at the quantum level of how simply observing particles will alter how they behave. There is a symbiotic, interconnected relationship between the researcher and the researched. For these reasons, it is important that the bricoleur clearly positions herself within the research effort. Thus, I will state my personal relationship to this research up front and clarify this relationship throughout this research (Kincheloe, 2001a, 2005a, 2008c; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004).

Relationship to Joe Kincheloe

Before he tragically passed away on December 19, 2008, I had worked with Joe Kincheloe, a critical theorist, on his research web site for seven months. Prior to connecting with him serendipitously, I had read one book he had edited with Peter McLaren, *Critical Pedagogy: Where Are We Now?* (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2007), in which he had written the introductory chapter. Soon after that, I was reading articles on McLaren's web site and noticed a link to a "Freire" Project site which turned out to be a newly launching online community of practice made up of educators, researchers, teachers, and students. I was surprised to discover that Kincheloe was head of the project

and I was able to interact with him and, ultimately, meet him in person. He went by “Joe,” on the site, and I realized he had co-edited the book I had just bought. Other than that one introductory article, which I had found exceedingly difficult to read, I had not read any of his work, but soon delved into reading some articles he had posted on the website. I was enormously impressed with his work, even though at the time I had been primarily interested in the work of Peter McLaren, another critical theorist. I found Joe amazingly gracious, loving, and responsive, “too good to be true,” but as it turned out, he was true. As I learned more about the web project and more about his work, and as I interacted with him, I knew I had to try out his formulation of the bricolage for my dissertation. Ultimately, Joe and I were the most active participants on the site because we both loved the ongoing dialogue (“dialogic dancing”) and could see its power for moving educational research forward at a more rapid pace and in a way that would incorporate all voices. There was promise that this approach could confront complexity in an active, evolving manner to address educational issues and with the full and active engagement of all participants.

After reading a couple of his articles he had posted to the site I discovered that his philosophy, which was a holistic worldview incorporating complexity theory, aligned with, clarified, and greatly expanded my own philosophy, and his brilliant work provided the missing pieces I had been seeking for a more multi/interdisciplinary and rigorous approach to education, which I strongly believe is the direction education needs to head. I was amazed with his formulation of an evolving criticality that incorporated complexity theory and I was very interested in how it might work to resolve some of the major

injustices in the world while providing a more rigorous, more interesting, and a more caring education. As I read more of his work, I became intimately familiar with what I believe he was trying to accomplish (his “dream” as I refer to it) and I grew to support his mission wholeheartedly; his dream truly became my dream. I was so passionate and, by some accounts, “obsessed” with contributing to his project that I was even tagged by some participants as being an “Eager Beaver Critical Pedagogue.” I found this enormously funny, given I was not expecting anything whatsoever out of my contributions. That phrase continues to come back in some hilariously funny ways. It’s always good to keep a sense of humor when dealing with the “psychologically debilitating” (as Joe framed it) educational world. But the strangest thing about the entire time I worked with Joe, I felt that something was wrong; I felt that our time working together was very, very limited; I kept having a horrible premonition, subconsciously at first, but then it surfaced to my conscious awareness—that he was not going to live long. He had somehow totally tuned into my concerns and frequently sent me emails in an obvious attempt to alleviate my anxiety, even sending me one from the hospital when he had a routine follow up check-up after having received skin cancer treatments to let me know he was fine. Everything was great and he had a new blog to post to the site, he had informed me. To my devastation, my premonitions and worries proved to be true, and while he was on vacation in Jamaica during the holiday season just before Christmas in 2008, he suffered a fatal heart attack. I was totally and permanently devastated. I immediately withdrew from the project because I knew without him it would never be what it could have been. I was intuitively cognizant of some serious sociopolitical issues

with the project and without Joe there, in my assessment they would not be resolved in a manner that would allow the project to move forward in the way he had conceived. I have recently learned that due to those issues, he had planned on leaving the project and the university anyway, and he was going to look for work somewhere else.

An “Eager Beaver Critical Pedagogue”

As I described, I loved the learning and discourse so much, believed in Joe’s mission, and felt so honored to have the opportunity he had provided, that aside from Joe I was the most active participant, interacting with everyone on the site. I later learned I had been given the tag, “Eager Beaver Critical Pedagogue” by some of those educators who do not understand how one can become impassioned with learning for no other purpose than to learn and work toward social justice. This was disappointing since it represents an air of elitism and hypocrisy on the part of whoever tagged me, considering these were a group of critical pedagogues who advocate against “deficit labeling” and were working for a social justice that would eliminate elitism toward people who are of lower class standing, as I am.

And so, now we have a never-ending joke about Eager Beavers from the cosmos, which is especially appropriate considering I am from Oregon, the Beaver state, and I graduated from Oregon State University, home of the OSU Beavers. The beaver pops up frequently in my life, a gift from that magical messenger, “Hermes,” and one that I always find humorous. For example, I encountered the *Eager Beaver Second Hand Store* on a special divinely orchestrated “treasure hunt” at the beach. As soon as I walked inside the store, the song “It’s all right, have a good time” by the Impressions began playing to

let me know I was in the right place at the right time. A book sitting right out on the counter caught my immediate attention. It was a home improvement book, written by Ty Pennington (2003). I could not miss the word “Tricks” in bold red print resting at the top of Ty’s sleeve on the front cover (“tricks up the sleeves” was a special “clue” handed to me from “Hermes” before I had embarked on this treasure hunt). There was no doubt in my mind that the book was a special gift, a treasure, from Hermes. I simply had no choice but to pay the two dollars for it so that I could take it home. When I got home and opened the book, even more hilarious, there was an Eager Beaver home improvement test inside, titled “Beaver Realization Evaluation.” As the test revealed, an “Eager Beaver” is confident in their home improvement abilities. I am terrible at home improvements and even books and the right tools do not help me. So, to set the record straight, I do not consider myself an “Eager Beaver Critical Pedagogue.” And I prefer the new language that Kincheloe invented in his last works: I am a “critical complex epistemologist” and a “multidimensional critical complex bricoleur.” Maybe someday critical complexity and multidimensionality will be taken for granted and no longer need to be patently specified.

At this point I am thankful that I was that “Eager Beaver Critical Pedagogue” who devoted so much time to Joe Kincheloe’s research site, writing blogs and engaging in dialogue with many interesting people. Mostly I am thankful that I was blessed with having had the opportunity to work with Joe, one of the most brilliant and amazing people I have ever known. I am forever indebted to him for the amount of time he spent helping me understand his bricolage and for his delightful conversations. He was, and still is a true Master Teacher.

During one of our many conversations about his research bricolage, he gave me a reading assignment from a chapter he wrote in the book he published with Kathleen Berry, *Rigour and Complexity in Educational Research: Conceptualizing the Bricolage* (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). I believed at the time, and still do to this day, that it was a very special excerpt that he wanted to ensure did not get lost in the translation, so to speak. I did not even have the book at the time, but I quickly purchased it, very curious about what I could learn from it and excited about the possibility of having further discussions with him about the bricolage, which we ultimately did have. I have no doubt that he had a very special reason for asking me to read pp. 62-67 back on October 8, 2008, just a couple of months before his passing. The excerpt, titled “Expanding the Concept of Relationship in the Bricolage: Symbiotic Hermeneutics in the Disciplines” thus forms the point of entry text (POET) for this current research project, and his article, “On to the Next Level: Continuing the Conceptualization of the Bricolage” (Kincheloe, 2005a) will provide the guidance. This point of entry text, as it turned out, was used much differently than one would anticipate. The content in the excerpt was always in the back of my mind as I conducted this research, but the analysis was completed at the end of my research. Interestingly, the analysis of that piece of text helps tie everything together in the study, including my interesting phenomenological experiences. My initial point of entry text for the actual writing of Chapter 4 was a long, improvisationally written piece on what I had come to understand during my research and which was condensed for this current dissertation. There is more analysis to accomplish on the text

he assigned me, much more to understand. But for now, what has been interpreted and how it ties everything together serves the purposes of this study.

Introduction to the Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage

The late Joe Lyons Kincheloe (2001a, 2005a, 2008c; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004), a world renowned critical theorist, had developed an advanced conceptualization of an interdisciplinary, multimethodological, multitheoretical, and mutliperspectival approach for education research. From personal conversations with him in which he referred to the process in “multidimensional” terms, and using his standard protocol for naming his complex concepts, the process being studied here is referred to as the *multidimensional critical complex bricolage* so that the title specifies its main attributes and differentiates it from other forms of bricolage. The multidimensional critical complex bricolage discursively synthesizes diverse perspectives, research methods, and theoretical frameworks, also incorporating what he had termed the philosophical bricolage and fourth dimension research, in order to critically examine and understand complex, interrelated phenomena. It is an improvisational form of research that is simultaneously creative and intuitive, drawing on affect and desire, as well as rigorous, drawing on intellect. Kincheloe (2005b) described 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)

Because to date there are no researchers who have moved forward with this form of research, the intent of this study was to further elucidate his conceptualization in comparison with current uses of the bricolage in educational research, to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon of the bricolage research experience in order to describe ways the process might be approached, and to demonstrate the full and rigorous application of the multiple dimensions of the bricolage as described and demonstrated by Kincheloe (2004a,2004b, 2004c,2004d, 2005a, 2008c) in and through his work.

Rationale for Using the Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage

The multidimensional critical complex bricolage meets complexity encountered head-on when attempting to understand complex, changing social problems. The goal is not to run away from the understanding of the complexity of social and educational issues by simplifying observations and subsuming them under generalized labels or by ignoring the unseen, yet discoverable dimensions. The goal is the opposite. By examining the phenomenon from many different viewpoints, or as Kincheloe states, from “multilogical” perspectives, a deeper, more coherent understanding can be achieved. Thus, the study begins broadly by looking at many angles, and it involves a great deal of critical “discernment” which is accomplished through discursive techniques using multiple forms of interpretation and analysis. As he had explained to me in one of our discussions:

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. (J. Kincheloe, personal communication, October 29, 2008)

Grounded in philosophy, as Kincheloe (2004a) states, the bricolage allows researchers to come to understand “how an awareness of the historical embeddedness of all acts of knowledge production and the social construction of knowledge shape the world of the researcher” (p. 8). In addition, the deep interdisciplinarity the bricolage affords, helps researchers “understand the occluded processes and relationships that vivify individual and group experiences” (p.xi). With a deeper understanding of how the world is shaped both externally and internally, researchers are in a better position to develop creative ideas and take viable actions to resolve issues relating to oppression. Thus, the multidimensional critical complex bricolage opens up new avenues for approaching research that provide hope for confronting injustice in relation to race, class, gender, sexuality, academic institution affiliation, and the multitude of other social justice issues that are facing education today.

The Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage: Conceptual Framework

This study is comprised of first, an analysis of current bricolage research in education in comparison to Kincheloe’s conceptualization. Drawing from qualitative research methods, a general process was worked out for approaching the analysis and write-up of the research. In addition, the multidimensional critical complex bricolage was employed on an excerpt of text that had been assigned reading by Kincheloe. A variety of methods and processes were used, including critical hermeneutics, semiotics,

phenomenology, currere, textual analysis, polysemy, psychoanalysis, epistemological analysis, narratives, and more.

Thus, this study demonstrates the dimensions of the critical complex bricolage as Kincheloe (2005a) had described in his last article about the bricolage, “On to the next level: Continuing the conceptualization of the bricolage.” These dimensions are summarized briefly below in the Framework for the Research.

Framework for the Research

As a framework, this study uses the dimensions presented in Kincheloe’s (2005b) article explaining 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 (critical 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”; “the sophistication of knowledge work moves to a new cognitive level” (Kincheloe, 2005, p. 346). This final dimension represents Kincheloe’s contention that as we actively engage in all of these dimensions of learning, research, and problem solving, we will develop higher order thinking and problem solving abilities—exemplifying his critical psychology of complexity, as described in Chapter 2, the Literature Review. Bricoleurs are transformed by this process and often their work is transforming for other people. This is why it is important and relevant for all contexts and for all segments of society, beyond the domain of education. It moves us past the lower level rote memorization and the view that knowledge is “out there” somewhere. People

can learn to construct knowledge as they live their daily lives, living, working, and interacting. Through the critical constructivist worldview, the critical complex epistemology and the employment of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage, people become empowered to create new knowledge that is based on a reality that is closer to their own personally experienced truths as opposed to the truths imposed upon them by dominant power wielders, and they identify ways to empower themselves. This approach to learning and research shows that there need be no set “bar” to jump when it comes to education—that the bar was set too low to begin with for most learners and researchers, thus, bricoleurs question the value of reaching a low knowledge bar that has been established by someone whose interests may not align with their own. And as Kincheloe (2005a) explains, “As bricolage provides us new insights into the chaos of the contemporary, researchers become better equipped to imagining where we might go and what path we might take to get there through the jungle of information surrounding us” (p. 347). This is absolutely imperative given the vast amounts of information people are bombarded with on a daily basis.

Each of the dimensions listed above have been demonstrated and delineated within this study so that new bricoleurs can envision ways they might apply them in their own projects. However, it is important to point out that the process is not linear and it involves an intuitional approach. This has been documented as much as can be reasonably achieved. New questions have been posed during the process, some of which have been researched further in this study, and some of which will provoke further analysis and research by readers of this dissertation. The final dissertation holistically

represents a complete synthesis of all of the dimensions Kincheloe has specified, thus serving as an example of an advanced application of Kincheloe's (2005a) multidimensional critical complex bricolage.

The Research Process

The multidimensional critical complex bricolage is a discursive analysis. It may begin with a point of entry text (POET), as discussed, through which various perspectives are woven through (see Berry, 2004a, Figure 2, p. 112). For example, the methodological bricolage “employs numerous data-gathering strategies from the interviewing techniques of ethnography, historical research methods, discursive and rhetorical analysis of language, semiotic analysis of signs, phenomenological analysis of consciousness and intersubjectivity, psychoanalytical methods, Pinarian currere, to textual analysis of documents” (p. 125). Thus, each dimension of the process has associated approaches from which to select. Kincheloe (2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d) provides the theoretical conceptualization of the bricolage and Berry (2004a, 2004b, 2004c) provides a wealth of ideas for selecting perspectives, theories, ideologies, and philosophies, according to the dimension of the bricolage being employed. Berry (2004b) describes the process of threading through the POET with multiple discourses as “feedback looping.” A precaution, as noted by Berry (2004b, 2006) and discussed in the Literature Review, however, is to avoid a linear approach that circumvents the improvisational, free flowing, creative process.

Often the point of entry text might be the researcher's, or in the case of using the process for learning, the student's first thoughts about a particular topic that interests

them, also referred to as generative themes. The researcher might begin with a written personal perspective or experience (Berry, 2004a). Generative themes are especially relevant to the person writing them, thus they provide strong motivation and passion which help drive the research.

An analysis may consist of multiple POETs that must be synthesized and new POETs can emerge from a single word. For example, this occurred in the Literature Review with the word “landmine.” In that particular example I had used the word landmine figuratively. An application of critical hermeneutics sent me, quite serendipitously, on an Internet excursion to look up the word “landmine.” The discussion about landmines and the status of them around the world then emanated from that research and I was enlightened to what a global issue they are. This provides an example of how allowing the research to unfold naturally using a variety of techniques and seeking a variety of perspectives will result in new understanding. This is a simple example of intuition-based research (something nudged me to seek) and it led to a deeper understanding of the multiple dimensions of an issue in the world causing enormous suffering that needs resolutions. I have found that when I follow these “nudges” often I find that they serendipitously are current issues being addressed in the media. I could take the landmine section and use it as a new POET to employ the bricolage and gain an even deeper understanding of the interrelationships that contribute to what is a very twisted, complex problem in the world. Further employment of bricolage would yield some viable solutions for dealing with this tragic problem. However, using discernment, since it is not possible to solve all of the world’s problems with one research project, it will be saved

for another time. I later found that Kincheloe also had used the word landmine figuratively in his writing several times, another perspective from which to view and analyze the topic.

Thus, the POET forms a starting point as well as structure for the research (Berry, 2004a). As the bricoleur threads through various discourses, methods, and perspectives, subsequent research questions are asked as they emerge. The POET evolves, forming new structures as the bricoleur relinquishes to an autopoietic flow. For example, as hidden or new knowledge is revealed through this process, more questions will surface that the bricoleur will want to pursue, other questions will fall out of the process as not being significant to the issue at hand, and after several iterations, the research topic and the questions narrow to that which is most significant and of interest to the bricoleur for the specific purpose of the research. There can be multiple directions which may form multiple documents or POETs and these can become rearranged in the discursive product. This process requires continuous discernment and judgment as choices are made, which may be one of the reasons it contributes to the development of higher order thinking skills—this would be a great topic for someone to research further. One thing I have discovered in Kincheloe’s work and in my own experience is that this process yields far more ideas and creative options than can possibly be researched by one person, thus it is a great way to develop curricular options for students to research further as well as provide future researchers with ideas for topics needing additional research. In fact, Kincheloe’s works have done just that—he has provided a wealth of ideas for curricular applications as well as for additional research.

While this process may sound very abstract, random and daunting, bricoleurs will find that there is an inherent, internal guidance for this process of selecting focus that derives from passion, empathic concern, the mission for social justice, and the striving for knowledge. These are the emotions that can fuel bricoleurs for a quest for more knowledge. But to narrow down this quest, as Kincheloe (2004c) explains: “They choose particular interconnections because of their relevance to the alleviation of human suffering and the cultivation of the intellect. Thus, they seek both social and personal change.” As he explains, “Individual understanding and critical social change are synergistic, not antagonistic” (p. 66). This keeps the research focused. This represents my personal experience with the process as I have engaged with it and while working with Joe on his website. I was impassioned, seeking, questing but always unconditionally with no expectations attached in terms of personal gain, but rather for the purpose of social justice and personal growth.

Beginning the Bricolage

As presented in the textbook, *Rigour and Complexity in Educational Research: Conceptualizing the Bricolage* a POET can be anything at all (Kincheloe and Berry, 2004). It can be any form of discourse, a poem, song lyrics, a photograph, or a piece of artwork. It can be a blank piece of paper on which one writes what they know of a topic or “free writes.” One of the POETs that has launched this research is “Expanding the Concept of Relationship in the Bricolage: Symbiotic Hermeneutics in the Disciplines,” as was described earlier (Kincheloe, 2004c, pp. 62–67). The reason I selected this particular passage is because, as noted, it had been specifically assigned to me by Joe Kincheloe

just before he passed away in relation to our discussions about the bricolage. From knowing him as a Master Teacher and studying his work, I believed there was a special reason he directed me to that excerpt in this book. He knew I was researching his bricolage for my dissertation and I believe that he found this passage particularly relevant for something he wished to convey about the bricolage. By using this text as the POET for demonstrating the rigor of critical bricolage, this relevance was decoded. It also provided content for demonstrating multiple ways the critical bricolage can be applied in other contexts. Employing a symbiotic critical hermeneutical analysis, which emphasizes relationships, generated additional texts. These newly generated POETs provided new launching points that emanated from topics enclosed within the original text, and in this way, the multiple dimensions as presented in the framework for this study were demonstrated in various contexts and the final dissertation cohered around a central piece. The examples were not carried out to the full and rigorous extent possible and there are other interpretations possible. They were judiciously stopped at particular points at which it was decided that they represented the particular dimension selected for demonstration, with explanations and ideas provided for further research. This process kept the dissertation from becoming “unmanageable.”

The final synthesis which evolves out of a rigorous deployment to the bricolage will yield new knowledge that will change the world (so Kincheloe’s theory predicts, and I believe it to be true). In my assessment, this dissertation has produced new knowledge and understandings; time will tell whether it changes the world.

Analysis in the Bricolage

As research methodologies were used for the analysis, such as complex critical hermeneutics, semiotics, phenomenology, and historiography, justifications were presented. It is also important that the research project maintains openness and flexibility in order to permit the intuitive and improvisational nature of the bricolage to flow so that the project evolves naturally. Complexity theory posits a natural, autopoietic evolution, but this can only occur through the trust and comfort in using an improvisational approach in which the bricoleur learns to “go with the flow” so to speak, to where the research leads him or her with discernment and critical thought, of course. This was maintained throughout the research.

Thus, this project provides a demonstration of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage and how this process can be approached. The philosophical foundation of the bricolage recognizes that research is never really completed and can always be carried forward, thus decisions were be made during the process that consider the goals of each contextual example for an appropriate place to stop. Bricoleurs are not seeking “final” or “true” answers, but rather, they use polysemy as Kincheloe (2004 b) states, “to keep the discussion open around particular phenomena, knowing that authoritarianism operates best when analysis is finalized” (p. 95). Bricoleurs are seeking a better understanding of social, psychological, political, economic, and learning contexts for the purpose of enacting effective and equitable changes. The bricolage (the final written and

disseminated piece), which is represented by this dissertation, presents enacted solutions as well as opens the doors for more research and action.

The Research Questions

This study has shed some light on the criteria for answering the following questions: Does the overall study adequately demonstrate the rigorous employment of Kincheloe's critical complex bricolage? Do the interpretations meet the guidelines specified by Kincheloe (Kincheloe, 2004, pp. 100–102)? Has new knowledge been produced with this study?

Due to the improvisational nature of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage, the study questions were tentative. As portrayed, additional questions surfaced during the process of employing this research process (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). Both Einstein and Kincheloe have noted, if we knew what we were going to find ahead of time, it would not be called research. While researchers begin with a topic and a general direction, when using the improvisational critical complex bricolage, the questions are subject to change as the research uncovers hidden dimensions and complex interactions. However, this study has addressed all of the questions and more, and it has proposed additional questions, which is the goal of this form of research.

As also noted, the bricolage begins broadly with multiple questions and narrows down as the research progresses and choices are made. While this study may have seemed overly ambitious and too broad relative to traditional forms of research, as Kincheloe (October 23, 2008) had assured me in response to this issue:

As you massage your understandings and think about what dimensions of the bricolage you will use, you can in your own personal way begin to narrow your topic and the scope of the dissertation. When scholars tell us that we can't do everything in our dissertations and we need to focus our attention, they are certainly correct. . . . the part of this often missed is how do we narrow and delimit. I don't think a dissertation writer narrows at the beginning but in the process of exploring the topic from diverse angles. 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.

In addition, keeping the project narrowed to that which most significantly and profoundly demonstrates the multidimensional critical complex bricolage was aided by referencing selection criteria Kincheloe had devised. As he details:

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)

This is important on multiple fronts. Bricolage can be applied to improve every area of our lives. In relation to education, using the multidimensional critical complex bricolage can enhance instructional design, online education, teaching, learning, and educational research, taking them to “the next level,” as has been highlighted in the proposal for this research. Kincheloe (2005a) provides additional reasons:

As the bricolage provides us new insights into the chaos of the contemporary, researchers become better equipped to imagine where we might go and what path we might take to get there through the jungle of information surrounding us. The bricolage is no panacea, but it does allow us new vantage points to survey the epistemological wilderness and the possibilities hidden in its underbrush. (p.347)

In summary, it is also of essence to consider Kincheloe's (2004a) assertion that bricoleurs "transcend regressive forms of reductionism. . . . [and] expand the envelope of social research, of what we can understand about the world. They are empowered to produce knowledge that can change the world" (p. 19). Time will tell whether the last book he wrote in 2008, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*, which was most likely researched and written using his multidimensional critical complex bricolage, will change the world as he had predicted in the book. It has changed my world and I believe it will change the world for other people but then I believe wholly in Joe's dream. At any rate, the question that came to mind at the beginning of my journey to research and write this dissertation, in relation to the thousands of hours one must spend on producing research for a dissertation, of what value is it if it does not, even in some small way, have an impact toward changes in the world that are so desperately needed today?

Researcher Transformation: Philosophical Dimension

This research is noted to be transformative, one of the important reasons for positioning the researcher in the context of the research, which I have started to do already. It is also a factor behind Kincheloe stressing the importance of the philosophical bricolage. As Berry (2004c) states, "It is crucial that bricoleurs locate themselves in the discourses of the bricolage, thus the bricolage may take on a phenomenological form. 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). Thus, questions that may need to be addressed in the analysis include:

How do I fit into this study of the bricolage? What is my past experience with it? How do my personal experiences affect my choices when employing the bricolage? Have I, personally, been transformed through using the bricolage? In what ways have I changed? This study has delved deeply into the transformative changes I have experienced as the researcher and interpretations of what they signify.

“Methodology” (Methodological Processes)

The multidimensional critical complex bricolage transcends “methodology” because it involves using multiple *methodological processes* during the natural unfolding of the research. It is beyond the constraints of this study to describe in great detail all of the methods used and how they have been adjusted to meet the needs of this unique form of research. Some of these are described in context of the study in the next chapter. Briefly described here are relevant traditional research concerns that apply to this study.

Overview of the Multiple Methods and Processes

The multidimensional critical complex bricolage is a discursive, analytical research process that uses multiple theoretical frameworks, perspectives, and interpretive processes to gain a multidimensional understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, which necessarily involves extensive research in terms of depth and breadth. In this case, the object of study is the multidimensional critical complex bricolage itself, as a research process. A deep analysis of the process and comparing it with the current state of bricolage research launched this project as an aid for developing a viable process to apply the multidimensional critical complex bricolage in other

contexts. Following that, the research process involved an analysis of the specific text Kincheloe has assigned me and the results were evaluated in terms of rigor and the knowledge that was produced, based on Kincheloe's theoretical concepts.

Ethical Considerations/Population and Sampling

This is a discursive study and builds on existing narrative and discursive data. No population or study group was involved. The study was exempt from an IRB review. As shown in Chapter 5, choices made during the process of bricolage have both intended and unintended consequences. The rigor of the bricolage and Kincheloe's selection criteria mitigate for negative unintended consequences.

Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis

There was no collection of quantitative data for the purpose of this study. The only quantitative data used for this study was existing data from a publicly accessible website for which only descriptive statistics have been utilized, maintaining anonymity of the participants who had voluntarily supplied the data to the website.

Organization of the Data

The data is primarily discursive in nature such as articles, books, emails, blogs, court documents, researcher-created artifacts, journal entries, and electronic information. They have been filed by topic and/or author. However, since this project involved an interpretation of Kincheloe's work, which can yield references to music, movies, paintings, or other artifacts, this data and notes on it have also been filed in a binder relating specifically to his work and stored in corresponding computer files. Other data include numerous photographs taken that document experiences during the research, such

as during epistemological road trips. A daily journal has been kept and a key or index constructed to make it easy to locate relevant information. The journal includes what was accomplished that day, research notes, highlights of decisions, communications, reflections, ideas, analyses, serendipitous events, epiphanies, etc., which were used for the analysis.

Transcription, Analysis, and Coding of the Data

Coding of data in the traditional sense was not needed in this study because, contrary to simplifying and collapsing data under specific labels, this bricolage sought to complicate. Using semiotics, hermeneutics, and polysemy, the purpose was to gain as many perspectives as possible rather than simplify and collapse meaning under a few categories as is generally the goal with coding and analyzing qualitative data. The research process itself brought out pertinent and persistent metaphors which were highlighted as the research progressed and the analyses pointed to viable actions for changes in education. The study has also made use of songs and videos as data. Selected items have been analyzed in context with the unfolding study. The approach was quite different from analyzing and coding because it is a more improvisational approach that naturally reveals deeper meanings during the reiterative research process.

Validation

This study has exceeded the rigor that is typically achieved by standard triangulation methods because it uses many different perspectives and sources of data, exceeding that which is typically used in triangulated qualitative studies (Kincheloe, 2005a). Triangulation according to Creswell (2008) involves corroborative evidence from

multiple sources—individuals, data, and types of data. As indicated previously, the multidimensional critical complex bricolage threads multiple perspectives through the initial Point of Entry Text(s), which in this case, comprised of excerpts from a POET that was produced improvisationally upon completion of the greatest portion of the research and the excerpt that Kincheloe had provided. Additional research was conducted to address validation, verification, and research value in relation to the findings, and an evaluation of the process and results is presented in Chapter 5.

Conclusion: A Multidimensional, Evolving Bricolage Map

The bricolage map, just like the bricolage itself, must be viewed as evolving guidance. Kincheloe (2003a, 2004a) has particular recommendations for new bricoleurs that will be helpful here. While it is not possible to set out in advance the exact steps, it is possible to determine some of the major goals for the project that lie outside the formal design as presented in this chapter. First, he recommends researching and writing about philosophy, which was been done and was continued throughout the study. Next, an environmental scan of bricolage research was conducted and summarized as presented in the literature review. This scan continued throughout the duration of the research. This could have been extensive and time-consuming, but it became clear that bricolage studies were not referencing Kincheloe's last works, including his last book which is critical to the project, thus, the bricolage studies in the literature were quickly deemed to fall short of meeting the rigor he was calling for. Research into methodologies was conducted and as methodologies were used, such as phenomenology, ethnography, currere, dialectics,

hermeneutics, critical hermeneutics, semiotics, polysemy, and others, they were also studied in greater detail. However, Kincheloe's view was that too great a focus on methods can potentially result in reductionism (due to traditional approaches), so less knowledge is advantageous because, as I found, knowing less contributed to maintaining an improvisational approach and creative ways to use methods. The choices I have made throughout the research have been delineated and justified. At the end of Chapter 4, a multidimensional critical complex bricolage analysis on the piece of text Kincheloe had assigned was undertaken. The "Framework for the Research," as presented in this chapter was followed throughout Chapter 4 and also applied to the excerpt of text.

Thus, all dimensions of the bricolage as Kincheloe has stipulated were applied in this study. The research questions were kept in mind during the entire process and other research questions were posed, as is expected when engaging in this form of research. Discernment for what was included in the final chapters of the dissertation was employed because far more content was generated than was needed. The process used has been summarized for new bricoleurs so that they might apply the knowledge in their own research. As expected, some parts dropped out, new parts have been added, and other parts have many different perspectives woven through them. Berry (2004a) explains, "The bricoleur can create, pause, return, visit, and revisit, access, and withdraw from the process as needed while combining both the epistemological, ontological, and axiological architecture of the bricolage" (p. 107).

Engaging in this research has been much like weaving a tapestry much like bell hooks (1994) describes in her book, *Teaching to Transgress*, but in this case, the tapestry

is multidimensional. I like to think of it as the cosmos space-time fabric itself, captured in beyond-the-rainbow colors with a strong golden thread of love interwoven throughout.

CHAPTER 4. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

A critical pedagogy that constructs knowledge and formulates action based on eros with its drive to alleviate human suffering serves as a counterpoise to the empire's positivistic thanatos. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 100).

Introduction: Four Major Tasks

This study both delineates and demonstrates the application of Joe Lyons Kincheloe's *multidimensional critical complex bricolage* and *critical complex epistemology* (Kincheloe, 2001a, 2005a, 2008c; Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). I chose this project because I saw the great hope Kincheloe's theoretical work provides for a rigorous education and how applying his research process can help solve the numerous social justice problems during this era of rapidly changing paradigms. Kincheloe's research process provides a means to navigate and transcend the complexity of opposing forces of dualistic paradigms and produce new knowledge that leads to positive change as it is applied in scholarly research, teaching, learning, the workplace, and everyday living. After four years of research, I am more convinced than ever, and yet I still have found no examples in the literature that demonstrate the level of rigor and complexity Kincheloe is asking of bricoleurs-as-researchers, aside from his own work. Although his work serves as exemplars, he has not specifically delineated his personal research and writing process. Concurring with Venus Evans-Winters (2011), I believe taking his work forward is "long overdue" (p. 152) and I suspect that Kincheloe had been feeling that way for a very long time; his frustrations are sometimes alluded to in his writings in both subtle and not-so-

subtle ways. Because I feel we are indebted to him for the enormous work and love he put into his legacy, which was devised to benefit everyone, I pushed forward with this research, crossing socio-political borders, knowing I was alienated and that I would be “working alone.” I have sacrificed often during my life, but I was not willing to sacrifice this project to do my best to move his work forward when he tragically and unexpectedly passed away just as I was beginning this research under his mentorship. He vowed that his work would change the world, and being the very humble person he was, I had interpreted that literally and in its fullest profundity.

As I engaged in this research, I soon discovered I was not working alone after all, and I have never been working alone. It seems I could not avoid taking this research to the level of Kincheloe’s (2005a) “fourth dimension of research” (p. 346). The project became complex and multidimensional from the beginning because I could not extract myself from the object and subject of the research. I became “one” with the process and I became one with Joe Kincheloe, himself. This project demonstrates the theory embedded in Kincheloe’s bricolage research process: “The knower and the known are Siamese twins, connected at the point of perception. Thus knowledge is not simply ‘out there’ to be discovered; it is shaped by the human mind in a complex interaction with lived reality” (Kincheloe, 2001b, p. 201). Due to this inextricability, it became impossible to leave out my “lived reality.” Because I’ve had so many profound experiences during this research, I have selected only a few that are representative and relate directly to explicating a process for bricolage. While the phenomenological data collected is voluminous, having been collected for four years, from 2008 to the present, I believe the

data I have selected for analysis accurately portray my overall experiences during this research. As I selected examples, a pattern emerged that portrays a profound message. There is far more to reality than we have been led to believe and there is a correspondingly imperative need to further develop Kincheloe's (2004a) *critical science of complexity*, one of the purposes he had articulated for his research process, so that we can better understand human experience (p. x).

This research involved four major tasks. First, the aim was to demonstrate and delineate Kincheloe's multidimensional critical complex bricolage. As the study progressed, a general process evolved that combined theoretical and methodological formulations presented in several of Kincheloe's works along with anticipated trends for future qualitative research. This evolving, elastic process has been described in the first part of this chapter and it provided direction for me as I launched into the writing phase. Second, a survey of bricolage research in the literature within various domains was conducted throughout the duration of the study. Comparisons were made to distinguish what Kincheloe was asking of critical bricoleurs that is different from what's already being done. This was partially accomplished in the literature review, but this chapter extends that analysis by examining a study in the education domain. *Re-symbolization of Self: Human Development and Tarot Hermeneutic* by Inna Semetsky (2011) was examined because the author has asserted it represents a rigorous bricolage process, citing Kincheloe's work. Among other disciplines examined, organizational theory was found to have progressed through three distinct evolutionary phases of bricolage and provides additional insight into the process (Kamoche, Cunha & Cunha, 2002).

Kincheloe's recommendations are explicated and synthesized, and examples applying his recommendations have been interspersed throughout this study. An intertextual analysis of Kincheloe's works helped provide a more complete picture of how to apply his multidimensional critical complex epistemology, ontology and bricolage. These are presented throughout the discussion as they apply. An analysis was also performed on Kincheloe's definitions of bricolage to provide further illumination and to begin the move away from the one-dimensional metaphors that may contribute to reductionistic research and hamper knowledge production.

A third element of the study, as mentioned, relates to the inability to separate myself as the researcher from Kincheloe, the subject of the research, or from the process of the research itself. My effort to extract myself so that I might avoid discussion of particular phenomena only served to delay my research; I became stuck in a hermeneutic circle until I acquiesced to depicting the reality I was experiencing. The research process had catapulted me into an intense and rapid spiritual transformation and to higher levels of awareness which radically changed my life and how I view life in general. It appears, based on my experiences during this research that the connection I experience with Kincheloe occurs at higher levels of consciousness. It may be that most of us are simply not aware of this form of connection in our daily experiences until we make a conscious and sustained effort toward attaining higher consciousness. Osahon (2009) provides the following insight in relation to this phenomenon from his African heritage:

Our ancestors taught that spiritual development or progress is possible in degrees through disciplined intellect, adoption of ethical principles and balance in ones life. That one needs to allow disciplined subtle forces to dominate ones physical essence. The secret knowledge the adepts taught was about the mastery of these

subtle forces progressively to achieve higher consciousness. (“How to engage the gods,” para. 9)

These connections might also be explained as a manifestation of “entanglement” described in quantum physics, which I will describe in more detail later, but however this phenomenon is explained, the connection and its accompanying “extrasensory experiences” are very real for those of us who experience them (Clegg, 2006; Radin, 2006; Lame Deer, 1992). It appears that as Kincheloe contends throughout his work, “bricolage” as he has conceptualized it can take us to higher levels of cognition, perhaps in incremental steps that build higher levels of conscious connection between people. While I was working with Kincheloe during the early phase of this research I was only semi-aware that we seemed to have a special bond or connection. I did not find that unusual at the time because he had that impact on many people. His death, however, devastated me to the core, which was difficult to explain. It was so extreme that my own mother had commented that I acted like I had lost my husband.

The data collected indicate that Kincheloe and I appeared to have had a telepathic as well as a hidden level (“implicate order”) of communication when we had worked together. This “higher order” connection (soul connection?) may have existed from childhood and throughout our adult lives even though we did not know each other prior to spring, 2008. Our connection continues following his death. Jung’s “collective unconscious” theory in which all knowledge is accessible under certain conditions fails to fully explain my phenomenological experiences (Semetsky, 2011; Weiss, 1988). Gadamer (1975/2004) viewed holding to this view of collective consciousness as “dogmatic” (p. 276). Thus, there are multiple interpretations for the interconnectedness

that I have experienced, as will be shown. Each interpretation provides a facet of understanding and there are commonalities among them. Scientists are coming together, concurring that interdisciplinary research will be required in ways that have never happened previously if we are to bring together disparate ideas to gain greater understanding of the complexity of human experience (Mitchell, 2009). Kincheloe (2001a, 2005a, 2008c) thus instructs us to view knowledge as tentative and counsels us to become comfortable with uncertainty. Freeman (2007) sums this up in his discussion of bricolage for policymakers, contending, “Learning begins in uncertainty—but often ends there too; for sometimes different kinds of learning conflict.” (p. 488). He concludes that this uncertainty can debilitate us, can be used destructively, or we can become more conscious for ways to use it creatively and constructively. This research, of course, takes the latter path and demonstrates how uncertainty can be used to help formulate creative solutions for life issues, education, and social injustices.

A fourth and final element to this research is an analysis of an excerpt from Kincheloe’s (2004d) bricolage writings, specifically pages 62–67, relating to symbiotic hermeneutics. I sensed it was very significant when he had specially assigned it to me October 8, 2008, just a couple of months prior to his death and I have not found that he discusses symbiotic hermeneutics in any of his other texts (although, I have not begun to read his extensive body of work). I feel there is some kind of especially important message in the excerpt, thus the last part of this chapter makes up the analysis of that text. This assigned reading consists of three subsections in the book, *Rigour and Complexity in Educational Research*, and are titled, “Expanding the Concept of Relationship in the

Bricolage: Symbiotic Hermeneutics in the Disciplines”; “Einstein as Bricoleur: Symbiotic Hermeneutics and the Discipline of Physics”; and “Indigenous Knowledges and Disciplinarity: Studying Models of Interconnectedness and Difference” (Kincheloe, 2004d, pp. 62–67). At the time he had assigned me this reading, I was experiencing a strange phenomenon that I can only describe as feeling like my unconscious thoughts were breaking through but I did not have control over this occurrence. It had resulted in some socio-political issues on his research networking website over some of my writings and artwork. This is relevant here, because when he had given me this reading assignment, I intuitively knew that it was important on multiple levels. While I discussed this text with him after reading it, I had only used a surface-level interpretation. The deeper analysis of this text provides further support for the interpretations that are presented throughout this study, rendering the interrelationships between the special reading assignment, my phenomenological experiences, and the interpretations I’ve made of them inextricably interwoven. And finally, this study also demonstrates, contrary to the positivistic contention that researchers must remain “objective” throughout their investigations, that highly subjective research produces profound knowledge and compelling understandings of the lived world and can result in personal transformation. The bricolage is not only transformative for the researcher and writer; it can also be transformative for the reader as I have learned from reading Kincheloe’s works.

In conclusion, this chapter consists of interpretations of my personal phenomenological experiences or daily “lived experiences” intertwined with a deeper analysis and application of Kincheloe’s research process. Due to the vast number of

experiences and the extensiveness of the data I am only able to present a small sample. These experiences are often presented outside of a chronological context in order to emphasize particular phenomena. It simply is not possible to convey in words the profound significance conducting this research has had on what is now my new “normal” daily life. However, as Kincheloe has recommended, the interpretations are to be considered tentative and open to additional analyses as more data are incorporated and as more knowledge becomes available. Bricolage is always a work in progress. Thus, I emphasize that this dissertation presents interpretations and various perspectives of my research topic and that these by no means represent the only ones. Nevertheless, this dissertation, a “bricolage,” should provide greater understanding and serve as guidance to help new bricoleurs get started.

The Advantages of Qualitative “Data Analysis”

Miles and Huberman (1994) explain the advantages of qualitative data and the inherent power this form of data has for describing experienced reality:

Qualitative data are sexy. They are a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of processes in identifiable local contexts. With qualitative data one can preserve chronological flow, see precisely which events led to which consequences, and derive fruitful explanations. Then, too, good qualitative data are more likely to lead to serendipitous findings and to new integrations; they help researchers get beyond initial conceptions and to generate or revise conceptual frameworks. Finally, the findings of qualitative studies have a quality of “undeniability.” Words, especially organized into incidents or stories, have a concrete, vivid, meaningful flavor that often proves far more convincing to a reader—another researcher, a policymaker, a practitioner—than pages of summarized numbers. (p. 1)

This sets a perfect backdrop for my research which includes extensive data that cannot be analyzed in the conventional sense. Nevertheless, as Miles and Huberman (1994) have eloquently expressed, it is the words, stories, and how they are organized that convinces the reader of the truth and plausibility of the interpretations more than would impersonal numbers and intangible calculations that obfuscate the hidden “sexy” dimensions. As Kincheloe (2004e) has summarized, “simply put, bricolage produces empirical research, if empirical research is defined as the production and analysis of data about the world and people’s experience of it” (p. 92). And he clarifies that multidimensional critical complex bricoleurs do not make the mistake of insufficient analysis or leaving out their own relationship to the world.

Forgetting What We Know About Research

During the four years I have been researching and writing this dissertation I had also been observing my colleagues’ struggles with their own educational research. The topics they selected were more complex than standard methodologies will address and they were often intuitively aware of this. Thus, they became stymied and frustrated when the required paradigms, formulas and templates wouldn’t work. One of my friends very patiently made *every* change her dissertation mentor suggested through multiple iterations. This ended up deconstructing and reducing her project to the point the entire proposal fell apart and she had to start over. She needed to minimally take a phenomenological approach but bricolage would have been the best choice for addressing the complexity of her topic. Her mentor was pushing for positivistic research. Finally,

after wasting more than two years and the money it cost for tuition she was “allowed” to seek a different mentor. This is beneficial for a corporate, for-profit university in the short term, but it wreaks havoc on students and their lives, and it will not contribute to the university’s long term mission. The short-range vision operating these days just baffles me. I truly feel like I’ve been implanted on some strange planet.

Thus, often new researchers begin their research feeling impassioned but end up feeling discouraged and disillusioned, most of them not making it through the final gates at all. Those who finish often communicate their immense relief that the painful process is over. This is disheartening during an era in which research and knowledge production is more essential than ever before and dissertation research should be the beginning, not the ending of new scholars’ research. With the rapidly changing paradigms, a topic I address within this dissertation, the knowledge reconstruction task ahead is incalculable and will require that we are all researchers—bricoleurs—as Kincheloe has reiterated throughout his work.

Because of the complexity of the research required for this task of new knowledge construction, I have become more cognizant than ever of the need to learn how to apply Kincheloe’s multidimensional critical complex bricolage. This research process addresses complexity and the multiple interrelationships inherent to educational and social issues as well as to everyday life issues. It also grants researchers greater freedom to explore their interests deeply before zeroing in on specific research questions, which in the end provides them with a more informed foundation upon which to identify critical issues and develop solutions. Freedom in the early stages of bricolage research process is important

because “Level 3” questions that transcend the need for certainty, the very types of questions that ultimately lead to actions for personal and social transformation emerge from deep exploration (Kincheloe, 2003a, p. 153). As I have learned from using the multidimensional critical complex bricolage as the process *and* the topic of my research, it has increased my passion, interest, and motivation. I am not of the mindset that I will be thankful this process is over. It is truly just the exciting beginning.

The multidimensional critical complex bricolage is a pleasant contrast to positivistic methods in which researchers must know their very narrow research questions beforehand and must make hypotheses relative to the outcome. Even qualitative research is often conducted using narrowly defined linear approaches that tend to create reductionistic knowledge that is not widely applicable (Kincheloe, 2003a, 2008c). Thus, with traditional approaches, an understanding of the multiple dimensions of the social and educational phenomena under study and how they interrelate become obfuscated. Researchers often fail to see how their actions or their “findings” may cause harm to the people they ostensibly are trying to help, (Kincheloe, 2008b, 2008c). Realistically, it is impossible to consider all interrelationships, but according to Kincheloe, we must examine as many as practical. He reminds us that Einstein had decreed that the more perspectives we consider, the stronger our theory. Based on examining Kincheloe’s theories, they seem impenetrable for that reason and his work is multipurpose as a result.

Positivism, however, has its uses for computational and other purposes (Collins & Collins, 2004; Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003; Creswell, 2008). Kincheloe has repeatedly stated that he has never abandoned empiricism or science, and he has thoroughly contextualized

the issues with positivism (Kincheloe, 2001a, 2005a, 2008c). Many people have misconceptions about his work and what he recommends judging by his explanation for feeling it necessary to devise the term FIDUROD and thoroughly describe its debilitating attributes in order to bypass arguments over positivism. As discussed in the Literature Review, FIDUROD is an acronym for traditional, reductionistic forms of knowledge production. I will be using the acronym throughout this chapter. As indicated previously, the letters stand for Formal, Intractable, Decontextualized, Universalistic, Reductionistic, and One Dimensional. Kincheloe (2008c) has developed and fully explicated FIDUROD in his last book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*. Contrary to the misconceptions that he was leaving science behind, Kincheloe (2004a) was striving for a *science of complexity* that will embrace multidimensionality, the reality that currently extends beyond many people's perceptions, and, in particular, those who are constrained by Western worldviews. Until researchers have a better understanding of what it means to be complex, multidimensional beings, they will miss the mark with their research. Reality cannot be adequately described until it is better perceived in its multidimensional aspects; however, it is always a process which is one reason research results are regarded as tentative and evolving. This study introduces multidimensionality from an experiential perspective as well as in practical applications, demonstrating how it can be useful for research.

Before I had progressed very far with this research, I found I needed to understand and clear subconscious "one dimensional" limitations created by FIDUROD in order to eliminate some of the blinders I had inherited from my religious, educational,

political, psychological, and social indoctrination (Kincheloe, 2008c; Iserbyt, 1999; Miller, 2009; Saraydarian, 1993). This seemed necessary in order to better understand the multidimensional reality I began experiencing. I spent a great deal of time researching for that purpose as I engaged with this project, thus, the research took me in many directions simultaneously. Contrary to what people might think, it did not overwhelm me at all; I was actively engaged and interested during the entire process and much like Kincheloe (2008c) expresses, “I have never been so parched for the pure water of transformative information” (p. vii). His last book was his quest for such water; this dissertation is my quest for such water.

Kincheloe’s (2008c) last book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* is a good way to begin the “deprogramming” process, I have discovered, because it highlights the many ways our consciousnesses have been shaped as well as how the process continues on a daily basis, although this is putting it simplistically. Of course, we have control over this to various degrees as Kincheloe describes; it just seems that my mind had been heavily indoctrinated and I was “sound asleep” as a result. The more aware I become of the tactics, the less influence they have over me. Shifting power blocs that cause alignments and strategies to change is the basis for maintaining criticality during the entire research process, and, indeed, as a lifetime endeavor (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 97). Kincheloe also highlights how we can regain our personal power to make more conscious decisions about what we believe to be true and why. He took to heart Einstein’s admonition that we can’t solve the problems with the same consciousness that created them. Therefore, he has essentially provided a solution to this dilemma by

teaching us how we can develop an “epistemic consciousness” (2008c, p. 200). The more we develop this form of consciousness, the more empowered we become, but we must be willing to do the work. The multidimensionality of the critical complex bricolage along with critical complex epistemology guides us with that work as we engage in inquiry.

Thus, as can be seen, there is “unlearning” to do as a part of the process and Kathleen Berry (2004a) attests to this in relation to the research methodologies that we might wish to use as well: “There is as much an unlearning of the traditional methods of research as there is learning bricolage,” she advises (p. 107). Unlearning traditional methods also involves unlearning traditional ways of thinking because they are tied to the paradigms we’ve bought into. Those of us who have not already learned traditional research methods do have an advantage. I hope that my tackling this project from my low status positioning will give encouragement to many people who feel they do not have the chance to compete in the world of scholarly research. Kincheloe has opened many doors for us. We really don’t need fancy tools, linear instructions, procedures, or “key words and tricky phrases.” More important than traditional scholarly knowledge is an open mind, a holistic world view, love and passion, and the embracing of creativity and natural flow.

Thus, if we have not practiced traditional research methods based on paradigms that render them counterproductive for engaging in multidimensional social and educational research, we may have an advantage learning Kincheloe’s bricolage because we have less to unlearn. As we become more comfortable using an intuitional, flowing and improvisational approach to research combined with intellect (Kincheloe’s

“sophisticated cognition”) we can use more complex methods if we need them and we will understand how to adapt them so we don’t fall into the trap created by their tendency toward procedures and reductionism (Kincheloe, 2008b, p. 181). In his book, *Teachers as Researchers*, Kincheloe (2003a) gets us started by introducing a few important methods in Chapter 11, “The Foundations of Teacher Research: A Sample Syllabus” and he has mapped out ways we can develop our own processes along the journey (pp. 226–254). In the second edition of his social studies book, *Getting Beyond the Facts*, Kincheloe (2001b) explains why it is important for researchers to focus on the research *process* over methods or tools:

Positivistic researchers, their opponents argue, focus on rigor (commitment to the established rules for conducting inquiry) of research at the expense of touching the lived world. William James captured this idea almost one hundred years ago when he chided scientists of his day about their excessive love of method. Science, he wrote, “has fallen so deeply in love with method that . . . she has ceased to care of truth by itself at all.” Anticipating one of the central tenets in the critique of instrumental rationality, James argued that scientists pursued their technically verifiable truth with such a vengeance that they forgot their “duty to mankind,” i.e., technical means took precedence over human ends. Human passions, he concluded are more powerful than technical rules, as the heart understands that which reason cannot comprehend. (p. 142)

Thus, Kincheloe has redefined what it means to conduct rigorous research. Methods are important, no doubt, but not at the expense of overlooking the complex process of analyzing interrelationships. The more predetermined structure researchers use the less they will be able to engage in what is a natural, autopoietic learning and knowledge construction process. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to describe research methods that are available to use or discuss in detail the ones most useful for the bricolage. I had accomplished that in the first draft of this dissertation, demonstrating

their use in context, but in order to keep the dissertation from growing too large, the section was deleted. I have, however, highlighted some of the methods within this current writing where doing so is useful for explaining and justifying my approaches. There are many textbooks that cover methods. Most methods will need to be adjusted for new paradigms, but beginning with Kincheloe's introductory material as provided above and picking up skills naturally during the research process will provide enough knowledge to forge forward. I did not spend inordinate amounts of time studying methods because, as my study will show, I was pulled along and informed by the natural process and a great Master Teacher. It should go without saying that studying Kincheloe's key work related to the bricolage is a necessity for new bricoleurs. Yet, I encountered studies in which researchers have claimed to use his process and had not referenced his most important works that elucidate the theory behind the process.

In addition, Kincheloe (2004a) recommends spending some time up-front researching and writing about philosophy beyond introductory courses, in preparation for bricolage. I also have found that reading his work helped me understand the worldview that supports his theories more than I had realized once I began the research process. This form of bricolage is intuitive and improvisational so it's best only to have "ideas" of how processes and methods are approached, rather than great detail, thus allowing "flow" and intuition to help guide the process. Once the text has been assembled, it is "massaged" repeatedly in order to identify additional connections between the data, to weave in alternative viewpoints, and to establish greater clarity (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004).

Kathleen Berry (2004a, 2004b, 2004c) describes this process as threading through the

text and emphasizes that it is not a linear process, but rather resembles a “butterfly image of complexity” (p. 113). We may revisit any portion of the text and I have found that the only time I go through the text using a linear process is during the final edits. Taking a linear approach will often result in linear discourse that fails to incorporate complex and unexpected connections and synchronicities.

Kincheloe was certain this dynamic, intuitive, intellectual process could restore passion for learning and research and replace the drudgery of trying to make complicated research fit simplified constructs that require adhering to out-dated research paradigms. Some of my colleagues have described the traditional research process as being as painful as childbirth. It makes me wonder if the purpose behind the devised “intractable” FIDURODian methods and templates required for scholarly research is to prohibit learners from engaging in research and knowledge production at all. It begins to look like another method for molding our consciousnesses to “follow the rules.” Perhaps the intention is good, but the results are proving disastrous, as Kincheloe (2008c) clearly exposes in his work. And while my own research using the bricolage has been a joy the entire “trip” (aside from some FIDURODian tribulations along the way), I empathize with my colleagues. I have been blessed with committee members who have given me total freedom, exactly as Kincheloe had envisioned was necessary. I hope this project opens doors for new scholars who want more freedom to research what they feel passionate about. With freedom and imagination bricoleurs will create a different world than the one we are seeing today.

Launching the Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage:

The Research Proposal

Kincheloe's recommendation was for bricoleurs to choose a topic they feel passionate about and then be sure to bring to light their subjectivity (subjectivity in a critical social context; refer to "Definitions of Terms"). I have found it's helpful to have committee members who are comfortable allowing me complete freedom for my research. Bricoleurs also need to be able to embrace that freedom and own it. I have seen too many beginning researchers want to have their hands held by their committee members all the way through when most of their questions can be answered by doing a little research. There are other sources for guidance, as my study will show and as you will discover for yourself if you use this process. As far as time, a bricolage study need not take longer than other forms of research. A bricolage study can feasibly be conducted in two to three years. Mine took nearly four years due to extenuating factors, one being that I was required to switch specializations in order to get the topic approved, requiring extra courses before I could proceed, and the primary one being losing Joe Kincheloe who I had been working closely with, just as I was getting started with the research. I also struggled to fight denial and FIDUROD as I acclimated to a new "multidimensional" life. No one understood why I took Kincheloe's death so "disproportionately" hard; perhaps this study will help shed some light on that. It did for me.

The research proposal should be focused as far as general topic, but an open-ended proposal such as I had initially written for this project gives bricoleurs freedom to fully explore the topic they have selected. I found this worked very well for this current

project. I wanted my research to be wide open and flexible, giving me freedom to explore in the event direction changed somewhat during the research. We never know what we will find. As both Kincheloe and Einstein have been known to state, if we knew what we were going to find, we wouldn't be calling it research (or at least shouldn't be). The deep, inter/multidisciplinary research, analytic, interpretive, and reflective acts of the rigorous multidimensional critical complex bricolage can yield surprising and even shocking discoveries as higher order questions develop and are explored. As Kincheloe had instructed me, once we get "a multidimensional view of the object of study," then we can begin to narrow down and "delimit" our research (personal conversation, October 23, 2008).

The bricolage forms its own evolving structure during the process of the research and writing, and the less preconceived the initial structures, the more likely innovativeness and creativity will facilitate the emergence of new topics and subtopics that contribute to the final structure. It may be beneficial to use the concept of the Point of Entry Text (POET) that Berry (2004a) recommends, beginning with writing what you already know about the topic, but from there it will evolve and will look like something very different upon completion. There are multiple ways to use POETs. The bricolage itself becomes a compilation of multiple POETs each of which can be expanded, condensed, rearranged, or deleted. Berry describes how they can be synthesized and how they evolve during the research process. When using a very structured document for a POET or for an analysis, for example, if your discourse presents it out of order, you are doing it correctly. This study itself and several examples within illustrate how it is often

the connecting of ideas in unique ways, not in a “rational” linear manner that brings to light new relationships. For example the analysis of the special text Kincheloe had assigned me to read in the upcoming section, “Special Assignment: Analysis of Symbiotic Hermeneutics,” is not in the order of the original text at all, but there is a logical, intuitively-based flow.

Thus, bricolage almost takes on a life of its own. With practice, it increasingly becomes a natural, evolutionary, and creative process of autopoietic knowledge production; we cannot avoid our own consciousness construction, which is just one payoff for using this process. Can it be seen then, why the choice of topic is so important? The full bricolage I originally wrote for this project evolved as a holistic unified structure, maintaining coherence throughout as I engaged in this natural, autopoietic, and improvisational flow, but it is not as easy when using a pre-determined format as may be required by some universities. While I found it helpful to write the more “free style” version first, I still feel constrained even as I pull from my original and use a more formal, structured template for presenting this research. The template creates extra redundancy as well as forces discussion of irrelevant items. However, until this process is well understood, further developed, and comes to be widely accepted, it is natural that various compromises are needed and flexibility is required of both researchers and universities. In the meantime, I have crammed what might be multiple chapters all into “Chapter Four.” It works.

Performance Texts: Transcending Traditional Ethnography

Much social research has been conducted involving the controversial practice that has garnered the derogatory label, the “researcher’s gaze.” This form of cultural research has caused immense oppression, suffering, “colonialism,” and even genocide due to its misapplication (Kincheloe, 2008c; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, 2011). Still today, ethnographic research too often oppresses and divides people instead of promoting equality and the embracing of diversity and appreciation of all cultures. The multidimensional critical complex bricolage compels researchers to spend more time rigorously analyzing their own positioning in the social web. Thus, they share experiences and interpretations in relationship with their research while simultaneously encouraging participants, such as their students, to do the same. This is similar to participatory research but takes it to a higher level, with greater, more genuine engagement, such as Kincheloe presents in his work (e.g., *Teachers as Researchers*). This approach highlights the need for multiperspectival views for gaining more knowledge and understanding that can transform us rather than trying to transform others. The process transcends superficial multiculturalism and truly embraces diversity and differences. As Nieto and Bode (2012) express, there is extensive work needed in classrooms to affirm diversity and teach in a socio-political context. And while these are “hard times” they are also hopeful times (Nieto, 2005). The multidimensional critical complex bricolage is a process that restores hope with its embedded “immanence.” Of course, change is always inherently complex but bricolage changes the focus. An example from Kincheloe’s (2002) work that illustrates the form of study I’m suggesting

is his book about McDonalds, *The Sign of the Burger*. Here, he was an active participant (customer), thus, he was a member of the group he chose to learn more about in his quest to reveal the hidden power dynamics operating within this multinational corporation. This is another vote for Kincheloe's form of bricolage and why I find it so suitable for my own research purposes, a subjective position no doubt, and related to my personal idiosyncrasies of not feeling comfortable "gazing" upon and evaluating other people. I don't even feel comfortable *reading* those forms of ethnographic studies. However, I readily see the positive use Kincheloe's research process would have in a classroom where the teacher adopts a more egalitarian outlook and conveys learning as a journey she's taking *with* her students.

And given that I have decided to keep the golden strand of love interwoven throughout my dissertation, I will point out that Kincheloe's act of sharing himself in this highly personal manner as he has throughout his work is one of the deepest acts of love possible. He spoke in his last book of putting it all out on the table and, indeed, he did. In support of this assertion about love, in an article, "The Alchemy of Relationship" Tom Kenyon (2012) describes intimate relationships as sacred, demanding the utmost honesty: "Instead of hiding our cards, we lay them all out on the table. . . . And the reason for this **radical** type of honesty is that without it, the Alchemy of Relationship cannot take place" (para. 4, author's emphasis). Kenyon was referring to relationships between couples, but the concept applies to all loving relationships and sheds understanding on how Kincheloe may have viewed the commonly used term in critical pedagogy, "radical love." With this dissertation, I also am laying all the cards out on the table in anticipation of the day when

more people will realize what it means to truly be free and share openly and realize the value it provides for moving society forward. Someday the popular notion that it's narcissistic to do so will be seen for what it is: an ideology to keep us from sharing openly, honestly, and lovingly. In contrast, it seems narcissistic, in my view, to think we can observe, evaluate, and "fix" people using traditional (FIDURODian) social and psychological forms of research. As Kincheloe (2004b) points out, bricoleurs are always "struggling to transcend the traditional observational constraint on social researchers, as they develop new ways of exposing social, cultural, political, psychological, and educational forces not discernible at first glance" (p. 20). This form of research requires great sensitivity, compassion, and empathy.

For those who are not ready to take the giant leap and are in the early process of learning, Kincheloe's bricolage can be applied in more a traditional sense at the surface level of analysis, but keeping in mind that there are multiple interrelationships that need to be explored even without venturing into the deeper fourth dimensional research. There are countless applications. There is always the requirement for the philosophical dimension, however, to ensure rigor and it is especially powerful when used for a deeper understanding of who we are and what we do in relation to our outside environment and the people we come in contact with. If we do not fully understand ourselves, who we really are or the reality we participate in, how is it we believe we can create accurate representations or interpretations of other people and their reality? The Western worldview with its FIDURODian dictates, as Kincheloe (2008c) has clearly described, is most debilitating when it comes to being able to see and describe reality. Bricolage

moves researchers away from the limiting traditional research paradigms by requiring them to investigate different realities and interpretations, highlighting their own subjectivities, based on the acknowledgment that everyone has their own voices. The multidimensional critical complex bricolage even frees us to speak in our multiple voices. This was a major reason I chose this process for my research; I can speak for myself, from my own perspective, using my own interpretations, interpretations of other people's perspectives, but I do not wish to speak *for* someone else or claim my understanding is the one true and unchanging reality.

Sadly, I have learned by participating in many different discussion forums that most people do not have their own voice no matter how it appears there is freedom of speech. Many people don't even *want* to have their own voice; groupthink is a powerful force and it evidently provides some kind of benefit which I have yet to discover. Even among doctoral researchers, for whatever the reasons, there is simply rarely a desire to engage in discourse, even about their research. Society would gain so much if we learned discourse skills and people felt free to express their true selves, in the moment, and if social networking systems were properly designed for that type of discourse. However, I have learned that as soon as one exercises their "freedom of expression" and encroaches upon some of that "dangerous knowledge" Kincheloe mentions throughout his work, the gatekeepers show up and hegemony is proven to be alive and well. Thus I have been locked out of some social networking sites and blindsided a few times, similar to Kincheloe's experience in a dark alley (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 176).

In William Tierney and Yvonna Lincoln's (1997) book, *Representation and the Text: Re-Framing the Narrative Voice*, a number of authors present their views about the need to transcend traditional ethnographical approaches in research. There has been great controversy over whether narrative accounts of other people can be produced without causing harm, as I have previously discussed (Lincoln, 1997). Narrative that escapes the abstract third-person perspective for disseminating research is a powerful approach for revealing and contesting power and opening our consciousness to new ways of viewing and being in the world. Critical to the personal reflective ethnography are performance texts. As Denzin and Lincoln (2011) articulate, "Finally, we anticipate a continued performance turn in qualitative inquiry, with writers performing their texts for others" (p. xiii). When this trend takes hold in concert with Kincheloe's bricolage we will advance in our understanding of what it means to be human. We will be able to relate to each other in genuine and loving ways, and some highly creative and entertaining ways as well. Performance text is a powerful method to combine with bricolage.

During my preliminary forays exploring bricolage I often wrote in the style that would be considered "performance text," posting my writings on the Internet as blogs, exploring various types and styles of texts, perspectives, ontological positions, rhetoric, and philosophies, ranging from formal academic prose to imaginary and creative writing. Kincheloe (1997) recommends, in spite of objections, that bricoleurs explore using romance, tragedy, satire, comedy, and "absurdism" (pp. 65-66); I used them all and more. I was free from formal academic constraints to examine a wide variety of topics deeply, becoming intimate with them from various perspectives during the early part of my

research. Thus narration, and in particular, self-ethnographical or auto-ethnographical and auto-phenomenological self reflection in relation to one's perceived social positioning disseminated as performance text are important partners to the multidimensional critical complex bricolage. While they do not constitute Kincheloe's concept for rigorous research because they do not typically incorporate rigorous analyses, they do constitute background research and preparation work that contribute to the final bricolage, and they contribute to the gradual transformation that takes place which is inextricable from the bricolage. There are no academic rules for these explorations; we can take formal and informal approaches. Everyone has multiple voices (Tierney & Lincoln, 1997; Ellis, 1997). I have even argued from positions I don't agree with as it is a powerful technique for understanding different perspectives. However, many people do not seem to understand that they are merely perspectives, not a fixed reality. And some people have objected over my descriptions of my phenomenological experiences in "other worlds," highlighting continued Western domination and the enforcing of a "one true reality." Our other realities are to be hidden and swept under the rug or we risk being permanently, publicly labeled as "unbalanced." We do have some work to do in FIDUROD Land. Nevertheless, using multiple perspectives even at surface levels gives everyone something to relate to with the bricolage as well as it exposes them to difference, which is critical for developing new ways of thinking and higher levels of cognition.

Thus, performance texts begin with "mystories," which involve the story-teller's entire "being," their timeless biography of the past, present, and future, according to Denzin (1997). And with this work, I extend the concept of "mystories" to encompass

multidimensional experiences. Transcending traditional texts and a one true FIDURODian reality to seek answers to epiphanies, existential experiences, and other phenomenological experiences, the performance text travels outside traditional boundaries to explore and perform multiple self-reflexive ways of “being” in the world. This leads quite naturally to the exploration of a variety of ontological perspectives, freeing writer-performers from social, political, and epistemological shackles. Denzin illuminates: “The reflexive performance text must contest the pull of traditional ‘realist,’ theater, ‘method,’ acting (and ethnography)” (p. 181). This literally can involve breaking all of the rules and the effect can be beneficial in many ways. The freedom for “being” and letting go and allowing others to “be” would contribute to a more loving and creative world. While this work by Denzin was written in 1997, progress has been stalled by the recent Bush and Obama’s administrations’ backlash focus on educational standards and push for positivistic research that “measures” learning and teacher effectiveness. As a result, graduate level educational research being produced at some universities is often dry, third person, terse, out-of-context, and overly condensed. It does not produce much in the way of new knowledge but rather tends to result in redundancy and rehashing with little that can be applied to improve education. University research is also increasingly being funded for corporate, political, military, and technocratic purposes and, of course, that funding currently goes primarily to quantitative research. People do what’s funded. Thus, teachers will become obsolete, replaced by computers that can see, hear, and measure everything about its students. Is this really what we wish to create?

Performance text, the telling of our stories is a bit risky because we are telling a different truth from FIDURODian reality, and this is still relatively new territory today. For example, it's perfectly fine to talk about the problems and how we suffer as long as we do not present real solutions. In fact, the media flaunt our dilemmas in front of our faces; we are told on a daily basis how our economic and social woes are constructed. But get too deep and start talking about the unrevealed dimensions of those problems, real actions for change, and start implementing them as the multidimensional critical complex bricolage has us doing, we are treading in the realm of "dangerous knowledge." There can be a price to pay for that. There are too many people holding up the matrix who feel threatened when someone comes along and rattles their cage. Thus, not enough educational researchers are diving into the waters of performance text. Denzin (1997) provides guidance to help researchers move forward. He suggests developing a "performance aesthetic" and an "evocative epistemology" that move beyond "the already-seen and already heard" (p. 181). He explains, "This aesthetic will venture into those taboo spaces where the unrepresentable in the culture is felt and made visible, seeking a performance sublime" (p. 181). I do believe I hear celestial music.

In my estimation, this describes what I have accomplished with my performance texts and this research. Thus, I am pushing the envelope and during the process I have discovered that few people relate to what I have set out to accomplish or perhaps the vocal ones see a risk of my producing "dangerous knowledge" that might upset their apple cart, even among critical pedagogues. Maybe I took the word "radical" too seriously. My research has had to become a process of totally disengaging from the entire

world of “critical pedagogy,” other than Kincheloe’s work; in fact, it has involved in many ways disengagement from the entire world.

I knew my place in the ordained world of critical pedagogy without Kincheloe in it: there was no place for a country hick like me. I had read how he had been shunned since boyhood even, for being an Appalachian “hillbilly” whose writing had sometimes been viewed with suspicion or disdain by some of his teachers, professors and the educational elite, as well as some harsh and unfair critiques of his bricolage research process (e.g., Gorard, 2006). I literally felt the struggle and hard work he had endured to secure and maintain a place as an academic scholar who spent his entire life serving other people, and I knew that unless I was willing to work myself to death, I would never be allowed a “place” in that world. I knew I did not stand a chance—and I didn’t even *desire* a place there with the way things stood. Joe was no longer there to share the dream with or to alleviate my suffering when the critical world became harsh.

Emphasis on Practical, Embodied Knowledge

Kincheloe’s (2001b) critical bricolage is a move away from knowledge that merely explains toward knowledge that is embodied in the context of lived experience, but it’s not necessarily an easy step. “The move from explanatory knowledge to practical knowledge demands a profound sociocognitive and epistemological leap,” he explains (p. 281). And it reconstitutes our notion of rigor. This means as researchers we describe the living context, the phenomenology, and our intimate understandings. According to Kincheloe, “In this way, practical knowledge is produced—knowledge that can be used in social, educational, and psychological situations” (p. 281). This requires that we use

“the human self as an instrument of inquiry and emotional/logical insight” (p. 281). In other words, once again, we move away from traditional forms of ethnographical methods in the bricolage toward the self-ethnographical/self-phenomenological.

Bricoleurs are aware throughout the inquiry that the experiences being examined are complex and that there are multiple ways to interpret them. Due to numerous intersection points and the use of hermeneutical techniques, the research process tends to follow a spiral trajectory revisiting phenomena in new contexts. This may give the impression of redundancy, but Kincheloe and Berry (2004) maintain that repetition is simply the “noise to be included.” Bricoleurs will need to determine whether there is value in maintaining particular redundancies. In this study I often provide several interpretations for phenomena and in other instances I explain or justify a particular tentative, elastic interpretation, depending on what I detect might be needed. Thus, I share Kincheloe’s (2001b) appreciation that “these values [or interpretations] are not absolute qualities but are perpetually subject to questioning, interpretation, clarification, and transformation” (p. 281). This is important because the purpose is not to describe a fixed reality as much as it is to explore reality as we experience it and to keep seeking deeper questions that take us further into the outer reaches of our conscious awareness. The better we can do this the more we come to experience an amazing, complex, living cosmos of diverse entities.

Finding Yourself: Standpoint Epistemologies

Standpoint epistemologies are important to performance texts. They involve self-reflection that conveys the writer’s interpretation of their social positioning as I have

done in the previous dialogue. This act contributes to the philosophizing of one's subjective perspective as well as the ability to phenomenologically bracket it (set it aside). Standpoint epistemologies bring to light the "truths of life's fictions" and clarify reality of the experiences being described by the writer, according to Denzin (1997), and these modes of expression can "undo the voyeuristic, gazing eye of the ethnographer, bringing audiences and performers into a jointly felt and shared field of experience" (p. 182). This may be true if the readers actually relate to the writer's experiences, but as Denzin has also pointed out, different audiences will have different interpretive skills. Thus, as I have discovered, the writer risks being gazed upon voyeuristically and will have had to have transcended the concern over this in order to engage in the performance. Alternatively, they may need to simply *allow* feelings of discomfort until such time the discomfort fades with transcendence.

A major difference, however, between performance text/self-ethnography and traditional ethnography is that the performer/writer can make these choices and has power over what is included in the text, thus, they can choose whether or not to self-censor. Subjects of social, cultural, and psychological profiles too often do not have that freedom, and unfortunately, what gets written in these cases is often accepted as fact rather than interpretation that should be subjected to scrutiny. Sadly, even the subject of a psychological profile, for example, may be swayed from their own truths by the more "qualified expert." I have seen enormous harm inflicted upon innocent people, including children, by the legal system when inept "experts" write reductionistic, harmful psychological profiles of people and judges take them to be truth. It literally can become

a matter of life or death. Evocative self-ethnography and performance text take research out of the hands of the expert and it frees us to be who we are as human beings. With his work, Kincheloe opened up opportunities for everyone and with this dissertation, I move further out into the “great wide open” as one individual. As I have become more comfortable being who I am, have gained more knowledge, and have continued to transcend what has been socially constructed as “normal,” my writing has continued to open up. As more people take this approach it can’t help but allow other people freedom to do the same. As Kincheloe had stated in his interview at McGill University in 2007, we can redefine what’s “normal.” It’s long overdue.

Interrogating Fiction Formulas

In service of personal reflective self-ethnographies and performance texts is the interrogation of “fiction formulas.” Fiction formulas are the taken-for-granted knowledges that seldom get questioned (Kincheloe, 1997). This action of interrogating takes the performance text beyond being a simple narcissistic representation of the author. There is purpose behind the texts and the performance, and often that purpose is profound and makes a difference in those who read/view the performance as well as in the performer. It is a difference that can lead to action and social change. Fiction formulas consist of historical, tacit, taken-for-granted ways of being in the world—in whatever context the research is taking place. They often take the form of “secretive formulas” (p. 59). For example, in my interactions within various critical pedagogy communities I learned that there was secret knowledge to which I was not privy, which to this day I do not know or understand. These “secretive formulas,” according to

Kincheloe, create “narratives that are [considered to be] conflict-free, seamless, objective, and official. Such fiction formulas arise not from the need to remember but from the need to forget. The formula calls for a bleaching of bloodstains that helps prop up established power” (p. 59). The quest for the narrative becomes one of seeking and exposing these fiction formulas, exploring why they exist and what they are hiding, revealing who they benefit and who they harm, exploring new possibilities, and performing text as a means of instruction and action.

As researchers explore ways to present new perspectives gained in their border crossings, they weave “auto-phenomenological descriptions of researcher consciousness . . . with open-ended requests of the reader to help with the interpretation of the process” (Kincheloe, 1997, p. 63). Thus, performance text becomes a way of communicating the consciousness reconstruction of the researcher during the research and it becomes an interactive text. This action keeps the multidimensional critical complex bricolage “catapulting” forward. The word “catapult” has been discussed in the literature review as an etymological root to bricolage and a potential metaphor for the “action” of the bricolage, an action which can be powerful and forceful, thus signifying “the power of bricolage.” But it’s not just any bricolage; it must be the multidimensional critical complex bricolage, for it is action across dimensions, borders, and disciplines and the bringing together of multiple knowledges that create the greatest force for catapulting knowledge and creating change. These actions often take place in multiple directions simultaneously, as I have learned with my “fourth dimension research.” The bricolage

becomes a living, growing, fractal-like entity that perpetually reveals fiction formulas. (Kincheloe, 2005a). The truth about fiction formulas sets us free.

The Fictive Elements of Research

By “fictive elements” Kincheloe (2004b) refers to the research act of making visible “a variety of previously repressed features of the social world” (p. 20). He emphasizes that the term “fictive” should not be confused with “unreal” and uses the example of scientists who conceive of inventions in their minds and describe or create design documents for them before actually creating them (e.g., “the electric light, the rocket, the computer, or virtual reality,” p. 20). Future oriented people whether scientists or bricoleurs, can imagine and explore possibilities that have never before existed using lucid dreams, visions, remote viewing of nonlocal spaces, and other means. He describes this process:

Both the inventor and the bricoleur are future oriented as they explore the realm of possibility, a kinetic epistemology of the possible. In the process, the sophistication of knowledge work moves to a new cognitive level; the notion of rigour transmigrates to a new dimension. As in a 1950s sci-fi movie, bricoleurs enter the 4-D—the fourth dimension of research. (Kincheloe 2005c, p. 346)

The movie he’s referring to here may be the 1959 movie, “4D Man,” about a man who, by using an amplifier, can enter the 4D state and walk through walls, much like people describe they can do when they astral project. What a way to research. During my own research for this project, these “kinetic” experiences involved visiting nonlocal future and past realities and observing clearly some of the features of those realities as well as re-experiencing the emotions embedded in them. Making these experiences

visible by describing them is what constitute this “fictive” element and they are important for providing insights for innovative solutions for some of the problems of today’s world. They can also be very healing. Lachman (2011) describes these experiences as being more profound than simply being memories. They are actually experienced and can be re-experienced. With each experience more details are noticed. Therefore, they should not be viewed as less valuable than how a scientist might imagine a design for a new invention and then create that invention, according to Kincheloe’s conception. These forms of experiences are advanced ways of viewing “what could be” which critical pedagogues stress is so important for immanence, the force for creating changes for social justice. Fictive experiences transcend imagination. Perhaps as we learn more about these experiences, an entirely new epistemology can be developed to describe them. In relation to this advanced fourth dimension bricolage, Levy (2012) astutely notes, “Kincheloe’s work on *bricolage* had provided one positive beacon” for the move toward a more philosophical approach to research that is “needed to cut through some of the deadening and limiting effects of contemporary, neoliberal educational ideology and to move policy, discourse, and practice in more human-centered, life-affirming directions” (p. 7). He continues:

Kincheloe (2005) was daring enough to suggest that the *bricolage* assumes “fictive elements” (p.330) within narratives and representations which, when coupled with “researcher creativity”, have the potential to produce “concepts and insights about the world that previously did not exist” (p.346). This is integral to the “philosophical consciousness” (Kincheloe, 2004, p.8) presumed and further cultivated by the *bricoleur*. Such claims worked to counter some of the jarring effects of the tendencies common within educational research methodologies to commandeer and oversimplify philosophical concepts that had a long and contentious history. (Levy, 2012, p. 7–8)

Thus, some researchers see the enormous value Kincheloe's advanced conceptualization of bricolage offers. I find this exciting and look forward to many more people taking a leap forward with their research as Levy (2012) proposes. In this current study I have sought to provide the example of a new bricoleur developing this philosophical consciousness Kincheloe had conceptualized. I understand that many people will not relate, and to be honest, I had no idea at the outset how far I would take this research. Consciousness evolution, from my perspective is very real and it can also be very rapid. The multidimensional critical complex bricolage sets that evolution in motion. There's no turning back.

An Analysis of Rigor in the Bricolage: Tarot Card Reading

As discussed previously in the literature review, I had found only one study that set out from the start to employ Kincheloe's bricolage, and the study was actually completed before Kincheloe came out with his advanced conceptualization and later works which clarified the process further. I will not critically review this study because Kathleen Berry (2011) has already evaluated the study, Zenon Fedory's (2005) analysis of the New Brunswick Arts curriculum. Berry attributed the shortcomings in employing the full critical bricolage (omitting the philosophical bricolage) and the linear approach of the study to the consequence of university expectations being between "moments" for research. Fedory is to be commended for taking a huge leap in research so soon after Kincheloe and Berry (2004) had presented the process.

In relation to the philosophical bricolage, Levy (2012) touches on the propensity of researchers to overlook this dimension. Less emphasis on philosophy in research may relate to the low priority it's given in the education curriculum. Today there is a call for more philosophy courses which will aid future bricolage research (e.g., Kincheloe, posthumously, & Hewitt, eds., 2011). In relation to the education curriculum, philosophy may never be covered as rigorously as it could or should be, but that should not stop bricoleurs from venturing into their own critical complex philosophical research. It would be relatively easy for Fedory (2005), for example, to take his study or any strand from the study to the next level, incorporating the philosophical bricolage and additional insights, perspectives, and interpretations. As Berry and Kincheloe (2004) have maintained, we can drop and pick up bricolage research at any point, which is a powerful and very useful feature of the process.

Tarot Card Reading: What's Missing?

One of the important bricolage processes recommended by Kincheloe (2005a) is the analysis of what is absent. It is a technique that should be used often because it is comprised of basic and important epistemological questions such as: Who wrote this? What is their positioning? Why are they presenting the perspective this way? Who benefits from this perspective? Who loses? Who funded the research? Why? What has been left out and why? One of the benefits of using many different perspectives is that what one hides, another reveals. We quickly come to understand why certain things have been left out in various presentations and with practice we can develop the skill of

guessing the likely positioning of authors, based on their hidden assumptions, even if they have carefully omitted their positioning.

Examining what's missing is also useful for comparing bricolage studies with Kincheloe's recommendations for rigorous research. By evaluating what's missing and why, it is easier to determine where studies fail to meet the mark as well as what can bring them up to the level of research that Kincheloe was aiming for. This process is also useful for developing the beginnings of flexible evaluation processes, although that is not my aim with this study. Chapter 5 provides additional insight, however, for evaluating bricolage studies based on an evaluation of this current study. I will use this approach of asking what's missing as well as other methods to analyze Semetsky's (2011) study of Tarot card reading as presented in her book, *Re-symbolization of the Self: Human Development and Tarot Hermeneutic*.

Semetsky's (2011) study was selected for analysis for several reasons. First, she asserts that Tarot card reading is representative of Kincheloe's "bricolage mode of the production of knowledge and exceptional new rigor" (p. 158) and aside from Fedory's (2005) study, it was the only study I found which makes the claim to represent Kincheloe's conceptualization of bricolage. There was one other study conducted by Helms, Irby, Lara-Alecio, & Guerrero-Valecillos (2009) that cited Kincheloe's work and had a small bricolage element to it based on the reductionistic quilt-making metaphor and I have eliminated it because it used a "postmodern ethic" and was a "controlled and structured English as a second language intervention" (Abstract). Thus, it was essentially a quantitative, positivistic research study. I am aware that I'm eliminating Project ELLA,

a \$6,646,076 project funded by the Institute of Education Sciences (2009). Kincheloe (2001b) has noted, and I agree that “economic considerations do not dictate all decisions concerning consumption” and that “educators cannot ignore the social and moral context of economic affairs” (p. 666).

A second reason for selecting Semetsky’s (2011) study is because it represents on some level Kincheloe’s fourth dimension research in that Tarot card readers purportedly connect with some higher source of knowledge or have contact with some other realm or dimension. I will caution, however, that Kincheloe’s fourth dimension research can take shape in a multitude of ways far more expansive and complex than accessing “collective unconscious,” whatever collective unconscious might be. Third, even though the study does not represent Kincheloe’s rigorous multidimensional critical complex bricolage because of omitted elements, as will be shown, it would be interesting and productive to take this study to the next level and use the full dimensionality Kincheloe specifies. The idea of “Re-symbolization of the Self” appeals to me—with the caveat that we recognize that human consciousness is evolving, that we are multidimensional beings, that we pursue diversity and difference, and that we do not rely entirely on old symbolism. And, finally, a fourth reason I have selected this study is because I have had personal experiences receiving Tarot card readings from which I can draw.

From my personal experience in relation to this study, Tarot card reading is just one potential bricolage “tool” but the problem is that due to complexity, researchers need to move away from established tools that are used for pre-specified purposes in pre-defined ways. The move is away from the mechanization of the research process and

toward striving for new and “elastic” processes. As Kincheloe (2004d) explains, “As with all aspects of the bricolage, no description is fixed and final and all features of the bricolage come with an elastic clause (p. 74). While there is elasticity in how the cards are interpreted and how that interpretation is applied, there is also “pre-determination” due to the established meanings of the cards and their symbols and the narrow pre-defined archetypes. In the readings I have had by a spiritual counselor, it’s clear that she had dropped many of the negative interpretations the cards hold, thankfully, such as the tower of destruction and the devil cards that Semetsky describes in her study. Thus, there seems to be potentially greater flexibility in how the cards are interpreted than indicated in the study. These decisions rest with the card readers; whereas, in contrast, the multidimensional critical complex bricolage is a move toward a “do it yourself” empowering approach that rests with the clients or, in this case, the participants of the research. In this study, the clients were not active in these choices. How would results change if they were asked to choose the cards they wanted included?

Kincheloe cautions us about the “cult of the expert.” This applies to Tarot card reading in general because the New Age spiritual movement breeds new “experts” of all varieties every day, including Tarot card readers. It’s disconcerting to see so many attempts to mold other people’s consciousnesses with deceptive information (e.g., channeled messages, advertisements, web info-commercials, blogs) that instill fears and play on hopes so that these experts can then cure psychic problems or social issues with their services that come with a high price tag, of course. This can be observed on many different New Age online social networking sites and specialized websites through their

soft marketing campaigns. I have dropped untold sums, myself, for the service of an expert Tarot card reader when I was struggling over Kincheloe's death and seeking consolation and greater understanding. These services tend to appeal to people during their most vulnerable times, thus, they need to be held to the highest of ethics. The thought of introducing Tarot cards into education, particularly to children, at this current historical juncture and without a full critical complex analysis is disconcerting from my personal and subjective perspective. And a full critical analysis had not been accomplished by this study.

Semetsky's (2011) study falls short of the rigor and analysis Kincheloe was calling for. In order for a bricolage study to be considered rigorous, the philosophical, psychological, political, and social interrelationships on which the research rests must be adequately presented and critically analyzed. The study could be picked up and taken to the next level, however. Hermeneutics (vs. Kincheloe's "critical complex hermeneutics") is used for interpreting the tarot cards in the study, but these interpretations are based on insufficiently challenged projective, Jungian, and other psychological principles. Psychology and psychoanalysis must be reconceived, which Kincheloe has initiated in his work. As he has instructed, we are to use a "social psychoanalysis" that is "cautious and very selective" (Kincheloe, 2003a, p. 240). He elaborates by stressing the importance of a critical complex epistemological stance by which we reveal "the problems embedded in the sciences emerging from reductionistic 'universal structures'" that have emanated from psychology and psychoanalysis (p. 240). According to Kincheloe, the psychoanalytic tradition is "complicit in the regulatory objectives of positivism" (p. 241).

Thus, Tarot card readings based on the traditional principles of psychology and psychoanalysis require an epistemological interrogation to uncover and steer away from the effects of the underlying positivistic sciences and reductionistic tendencies that can cause harm. Historical, political and social dimensions of research would be helpful in revealing the hidden issues. Freud and Jung's works have been, and continue to be used against people in some hideous ways (Burton & Osorio, 2011; Collins & Collins, 2004; Miller, 2009).

Stinging Assessment of Western Psychology and Psychoanalysis

Burton and Osorio (2011) cite Argentinean-Mexican philosopher Enrique Dussel's work and provide a stinging assessment of psychology due to its dominant Western composition. Correspondingly, Dafermos and Marvakis (2006) advise that the theoretical analysis of psychology must encompass "a science beyond the limits of bourgeois society" (p. 16). In other words, a science is needed that recognizes perspectives and values beyond those who dominate and set the rules and standards for everyone else pertaining to what is "normal." Burton and Osorio (2011) argue it is necessary to critique Eurocentrism far beyond the assumptions inherent in Western philosophy, the humanities, and the social sciences in order to identify violence not only in the literal sense, but also in the form of preventing individuals from fully living their lives with equal status. This means a serious critique surrounding the equality, freedom, and the pursuit of happiness in the multiple relationships within the Tarot card study is needed, including the symbolism on the cards, the assumed universal archetypes, and the relationship between the researcher and the participants. Thus, it is important to consider

the construction of consciousness within multiple contexts, globally and historically, using a theoretical foundation that identifies and addresses “oppression, exploitation, exclusion, incorporation, ‘othering,’ conquest, domination, that is at once economic, political, psychological, geographical, and moral in its dimensions” according to Dussel as cited by Burton and Osorio (2011, p. 6). This is what Kincheloe is asking us to do. Kincheloe (2001b) would also argue for a rigorous critique of behaviorist psychological approaches, given how using behaviorism as a tool of scientific management for student behavior led to behaviorists winning “the battle for the soul of the school shaping its ambience with their control of instructional design” (p. 101).

Science of Complexity and Consciousness. Burton and Osorio’s (2011) goals are clearly in alignment with Kincheloe’s (2008c) description of the required elements for a new science of complexity that focuses on the study of consciousness. Referring back to Vygotsky’s view that the study of consciousness involves more than empirical methods requiring “direct evidence,” Kincheloe contends:

The psychological student of consciousness must be more like a crime investigator and make use of indirect evidence and circumstantial insights such as manifestations of consciousness in aesthetic productions, literary work, philosophical treatises, and various forms of anthropological data.” (p. 223)

He explains that one of the elements necessary is Varela’s idea of “suspension,” which refers to the ability to transcend “normal waking consciousness” and access multidimensional states. He expresses his view that all humans are capable of achieving these states (p. 224). Adding to that, Pinar’s (1975) “Currere” which is a form of phenomenology that uses insights from psychoanalysis and aesthetics, a better picture of the “inner world” can be attained. “In this new mindspace,” Kincheloe contends, “we are

better equipped to view those modes of consciousness that are shaped by cultural conditioning and unconscious obedience to the manipulations of dominant power” (p. 224). The inner world view gives us an entirely new perspective on our outer world and how we’re being controlled. We learn to think for ourselves again.

Thus, using a critical complex epistemology, Varela’s idea of suspension, Vygotsky’s indirect evidence of consciousness, Pinar’s currere, and critical hermeneutics, “we can devise a synthesis that opens a new era of knowledge production in the study of consciousness,” states Kincheloe (2008c, p. 224). Critical complex epistemology can’t be separated “from the effort to study the multidimensional nature and social construction of consciousness” (p. 224). Tarot card readings, in this context, are a small window and also have the negative attribute of creating a dependence on someone other than ourselves. They also force a specific epistemology that informs us about ourselves, telling us what our inner world consists of, which is in opposition to taking greater control of our own process of consciousness construction and developing new epistemologies. That’s not to say that Tarot card reading has no role in bricolage research. As I stated, I have personal experience with Tarot card readings and found them useful. They ultimately led me to exploring more deeply my relationship with Kincheloe in an effort to explain my “overreaction” to his death, and the readings provided me cues to research soul mates because, invariably, soul mate came up with nearly every reading. This led me to research the Twin Flame phenomenon. In this case, it was a piece of the puzzle that led me to seeking more knowledge so that I could find explanations for myself for what I was experiencing on a phenomenological level, and the Tarot card reader used the cards as

just one tool for that purpose. I quickly overcame the need for the use of that tool, seeing its limitations. There were many other methods, theories, ontologies, cosmologies, philosophies, and interpretative processes that were pulled into this bricolage about bricolage.

New Idiosyncratic Symbols for a New Age

Tarot card reading can provide the “indirect evidence and circumstantial insights” Kincheloe (2008c) asks researchers to seek (p. 223). However, in my experience, we must be careful about using old models, images, and semiotic interpretations that might constrain evolving consciousness in this era of rapid changes. Is it wise to “re-symbolize self” with symbols that may not apply? Based on my personal experience and relationships with people who have similar experiences, our consciousnesses are being flooded with *new* symbols, messages, and images. These changes require creating new models and semiotic interpretations that will be missed or ignored if the primary focus is on old symbolism, tools, and procedures. And perhaps there is a good reason we’re being provided new, more complex symbols during this era for which many indigenous prophecies have predicted a rapid evolution in consciousness. It may be that the old symbols do not adequately convey the complex, multidimensional reality some of us are coming to know. Indeed, some people on the various spiritual websites who experience the phenomenon of seeing these complex, multidimensional, moving symbols often interpret them as “information downloads.” Apparently, they are encoded with knowledge that, by some interpretations, unlock DNA switches that restore past and future knowledge. On a personal level, I also have experienced what seem to be

“downloads” of information that I cannot pinpoint with certainty from where it has come or how I have come to know. I have attributed the information as coming from Joe, who is still my Master Teacher or members of my soul family to whom he introduced me shortly after his “passing over.” The idea of “soul family” will be discussed in greater detail, but many wisdom knowledges recognize that we are spiritually connected to specific people in “groups” (Saraydarian, 1993).

There are many possibilities that put the power back into the hands of the people seeking spiritual or life guidance, including through Tarot card reading. For example, we can learn about symbols, interpretation, and hermeneutics to develop our own idiosyncratic and personally relevant Tarot cards and learn to use them ourselves. This way we do not rely on popular culture with its track record of subversive purposes (Stermole, n.d.; Boulware, 1998; Miller, 2009). I am not implying that popular culture forms the basis of Semetsky’s work; the interrelationship, given she is proposing this for schools and the prevalence of Tarot in the New Age Spirituality movement, however, cannot be ignored. Thus, we can record and describe our actual experiences with states of higher consciousness, draw the symbols we see, paint pictures of the landscapes and images we encounter, invent the devices we use, describe and draw the flora and fauna, learn more about the people we meet, and record the telepathic communications we receive. Kincheloe has specified we are all capable of reaching these higher orders of cognition by which we can develop these abilities. Thus, we can define for ourselves what these “indirect” signs of consciousness mean for us, and “re-symbolize” ourselves, and, indeed, there are many people doing just that. Kincheloe’s premise that we need to

move toward idiosyncratic interpretation applies in this context and ultimately, people will come together along various axes of interpretations, as I have seen happening with various spiritual interpretations. Thus, Tarot Cards as they stand, in my view, have limited use but offer great potential if taken forward under new paradigms. God help us if people take Aleister Crowley and Barbie™ Tarot cards seriously. Unfortunately, they both have their insidious tentacles into our lives.

Thus, more research could take this study forward to producing new knowledge that moves away from ideological “universal” interpretations that represent the “U” of Kincheloe’s FIDUROD. During my interactions in various spiritual communities, I was amazed by the creativity of those who access higher states of consciousness and their drawings, paintings, constructions, writing, creations and musical compositions of what they see, hear, and experience. And Kincheloe has expressed how these creations should be viewed as “manifestations of consciousness.” The iterative process of creation and interpretation of this indirect evidence would provide us more knowledge about consciousness, as he has conveyed.

Critical Complexity: Is It There?

Notably, there is a lack of power, political, and economic analyses in Semetsky’s (2011) study. The study was funded by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. Did this affect the study? What was the impact of the request from professional readers of *The California Therapist* for more publicity for their services to “New Age” people who were interested in learning about their past lives and securing other psychic services? (pp 1–3). Kincheloe (2008c) has distinguished what is required in order to develop an epistemic

consciousness, emphasizing that the work is both “inside and outside” work, requiring changes within as well as actions in the world to alleviate suffering. Important to these concepts are Pinar’s (1975) “Currere,” mentioned earlier, a process by which we can gain distance from the contents of our consciousness (Kincheloe 2005c, p. 5). This allows us to better view how we unconsciously follow social norms, for example, such as uncritically following accepted tacit rules and policies in the educational system that are debilitating and harmful toward particular groups of learners. As Kincheloe (2005c) writes:

Too often autobiographical research has focused on an abstracted self in a manner that can be described as self-absorbed. Postformal autobiography is focused on understanding one’s social construction for the purpose of gaining humble new insights that facilitate one’s ability to become a responsible and transformative member of larger communities where socially just activities are coordinated—activities that address oppression and alleviate human suffering. (p. 2)

This is in stark contrast to New Age Spirituality methods, which this study was appealing to and which too often put the focus on inner work and taking direct control of spiritual development, thus promoting a form of selfish narcissism and a false sense that this can lead to genuine growth. The *natural* process of spiritual growth somehow gets lost in the New Age Spirituality picture, as has the notion that spiritual growth involves compassionate and selfless service or action in some form. The combination of people being unable to truly take a step back as recommended by Kincheloe and their narcissistic focus on their own personal inner changes presents as an explosive cocktail within some of the discussion forums. I have noted, as well, that there are counter forces at play that have appropriated the New Age Movement to lead people down the wrong path who, by some accounts, infiltrate the groups with paid participants to keep the balance upset,

much as is done in online political discussions. Even though some of these people speak of a “God” it may not be the same God you and I might worship. This everyday example presents a good case for the form of critical and subjective analysis that Kincheloe recommends in more formal settings, such as when teaching where our actions have daily effects.

While researchers—and teachers—may believe they are unbiased (and detached), the more one engages in bricolage incorporating understanding of one’s subjectivity, the easier it is to see that observers affect the observed and vice versa; there is no delinking possible (Kincheloe, 2008c). Everyone and everything is connected. Subjectivity always comes into play during research, thus, it is important to stay mindful of this and continue to locate ourselves in the research project, disclosing our biases. It is not an easy task and it can be an uncomfortable task; we are all fallible, and it takes serious effort to uncover all of our biases. As Kincheloe (e.g., 2003a, 2008c) maintains, omitting subjectivity distorts interpretations and can lead to the forms of “psychosocial illnesses” we see today. He argues, “There is no such thing as a problem that is merely psychological. The psychological domain is a social construction. When they mistake it for reality, researchers are ensnared in the trap of rationalism (Lomax and Parker, 1996; Tarnas, 1991)” (2004c, p. 46). However, since any depiction of one’s reality is a distortion due to the complexity that is impossible to fully describe, it makes sense to keep it all within some sort of context and address as many of the hidden dimensions as possible, as Kincheloe recommends, and to keep in mind the interpretations are tentative. Much as Zoakos (1978) contended: “When people in our universities learn to synthesize ‘a priori

judgments,' they will begin their way back to recovery" (p. 69). The battle is one to regain our minds from the confines of "Aristotelian Logic." It is the creative synthesizing of a priori judgments about what we could experience that forms the principles of an interconnecting natural science, not empirical generalizations, according to Zoakos.

The omission of a critical analysis and synthesis is evidenced by Semetsky's (2011) assumption that "what seems to be predicted in the course of Tarot readings is the **objective tendency** for a particular event to occur or the probable state of the system *together with* its corresponding informational content" (2011, p. 165) [bold added, author's italics]. Objectivity cannot be assumed. There is nothing inherently objective in the design, development or reading of tarot cards or the interactions between the researcher and the clients and what happens following the readings. Can we assume that if a particular event manifests as described, it was manifested "objectively"? We simply don't *know* how it happens. As Kincheloe (2008c) stated in *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*, "We must all kneel at the epistemological alter and confess our subjectivity, the idiosyncrasy of our perspective, the shortcomings of our knowledge" (p. 236). The same type of distortion appears in Semetsky's use of the 9/11 Twin Tower event as a real-life example of the "Tower of Destruction" card in the Tarot deck. Suggesting this event signifies the state of collective consciousness without a critical analysis of this assumption, she asserts that the events of September 11, "demonstrate that the many lessons inscribed in the process of collective, global, individuation still haven't been learned by humankind" (p. 149). The Tower of Destruction card purportedly represents short term destruction required for the "forward-directed evolution of

consciousness” (p. 153). It is the prequel to becoming “The Star,” which is the next card in the series. To make these assumptions and pass them on to clients, in my way of thinking, would be psychologically debilitating. I certainly don’t “buy” that interpretation myself, but not everyone has done the research to understand why that may not be a beneficial interpretation. There are other interpretations that would represent devolution rather than evolution, but these are not discussed in the study nor has the position maintained been justified. I immediately think of the immense amount of research I’ve done into the satanic elements of the media, particularly the music industry. The “chosen” ones, the “stars” are forced to enact various destructive roles in order to earn and maintain their star status. Today these exploits take place in music videos for the public to witness and often require the stars to take on roles that are degrading and dehumanizing. The satanic imagery connected to simulated sex acts has become so blatant and “in your face” in some of the music today that it’s become massively repulsive. One “family-friendly” example is Madonna’s ritualistic role-playing during Super Bowl as analyzed on a recent YouTube video (TheResistance, 2012). When churches cancel services to watch the Super Bowl, thus condoning its “Illuminati” symbolism of Madonna’s hyper-sexed rendition of the “Virgin Mary” along with blatant satanic imagery that desecrate Ancient Egyptian spiritual traditions, there is something drastically wrong. It’s clear why Kincheloe (2008) argues for a counterbalancing of Eros over the rampant “in our face” thanatos: we need more loving ways to be in the world.

Eros: God of Love for a New World

There is a long history of misrepresenting the Eros form of love, perhaps by that very counterforce needing balanced, thanatos, as represented in Semetsky's interpretation of the Tower of Destruction Tarot card. Eros was originally known as a powerful intermediary god, just one step below the omniscient God, therefore he was considered to have possessed immense power (Dawkins, 2012). Western mythology and religions have demoted Eros Love from its original overarching and multidimensional manifestation to that of representing sexual and lustful love. For example, a Christian website touts this popular notion, declaring, "Here is the big problem with focusing on Eros Love. It's about whatever makes me feel good" (Short Daily Bible Devotions, 2012). This is a common view of Eros Love today and it's in opposition to the original understandings about Eros. Eros Love is perhaps the closest love one can experience of God's love without actually *being* God, by earlier interpretations. It rises above even "Christos" love and, in that sense, it is related to higher orders of being; one becomes in touch with their divinity and beyond. It is the love that emanates from the higher Celestial realms of experience (Saraydarian, 1993; Cox, 1997). According to Orphic and Greek philosophers, Eros was the first complete manifestation or embodiment of God. Eros is a Universal Being, capable of creating all expressions of life:

Eros shines as a great Light—the Light of the Universe. As such he was known as Phanes ('Brilliant'), the golden-winged god of light. He was also known as Ericapaeus ('Power'), Logos ('Word' or 'Wisdom') and Metis ('Intelligence'). The Romans called him Cupid. (Dawkins, 2012, para. 2)

Later, the Mystery Schools referred to a younger or "Christos" Eros as Bacchus or Dionysus, perhaps an early "demotion" or representation of a "fallen" Eros, based on the

constructed mythologies of those times (Dawkins, 2012; Wikipedia, 2012, “Dionysus.”). An interesting question is why did the Mystery Schools demote Eros? In correspondence to this overarching form of “Eros Love,” Kincheloe (2008c) specifies throughout his work the importance of allowing “life force” or “Eros” energy to flow through us. This may represent the notion of “being in the flow,” as this is often how I’ve personally experienced it, but it is more. Again, it is not some simple notion of feeling love flow through us. It involves, as Kincheloe has expressed, a simultaneous process of “letting go” and “allowing.” It is a sense of extreme gratitude and leads to feelings of bliss. Pierrakos (2001) describes love as a complex of three forces that unify male and female energies, Eros, love, and sexuality, and he explains that this complex of energies form the foundation of reality. Wilhem Reich (1963) had reportedly identified and was able to measure a cosmic life energy he referred to as “orgone.” Some of the wisdom traditions specify many streams of energy and light, ranging from 7 to 18 or more in number and represented by different colors. Today, there is research being done, for example, by the Celestial Science Foundation, to better understand this “force” and how we can all utilize it to improve our world (Cox, 1997). Many researchers have studied the concept of “flow” and recognize that it can result in greater creativity. Some researchers regard it as contributing to the perception of a beautiful dance of life (e.g., Kincheloe, 2004e; Greene, 1995; hooks, 1994). I can relate to this perception because it seems that when “flow” or “connection” is highest, amazing magic happens, as will be described later in this study. Because throughout his work he has used various terms for this “life force energy” (e.g., libido, Eros, life force, jouissance, love, radical love, dancing), Kincheloe (2008c) is

referring to something far more complex than today's popular concept that relates Eros to sexuality or some simple one dimensional notion of love or "agape." In fact, he had clarified this for me in a personal conversation, stating, "The political fundamentalism that I reference is such a grotesque perversion of agape and the notion of love laid out in the New Testament" (June 15, 2008). Thus, what Kincheloe (2008c) has conceived is a complex and very powerful force that can be used as a "counterpoise" to thanatos (p. 100). Taking epistemological liberties, love—*Eros Love*—it seems, is a viable "processual" framework for using throughout this dissertation and to represent that counterpoise to thanatos as Kincheloe had suggested in his last book. What are some ways this can be accomplished?

Semetsky (2011) did not question the thanatos representation of the Twin Tower disaster as "the clash of cultural value systems" (p. 153). This could very well be one of those "fiction formulas" defined earlier. It is a formula that serves power wielders for instilling terror, creating division between people, establishing more controls, and importantly, for justifying the operation of their profitable war machine. Indeed, Kincheloe (2008c) found the accounts "disconcerting and even frightening" (p. vii):

I am reminded of how mobsters now operating in the U.S. while engaging in profoundly violent and anti-social acts supported the George W. Bush administration's portrait of the motivations of Islamic terrorists on 9/11 and the dominant view of America as an innocent, virtuous member of the world community. Even sociopaths buy into particular dimensions of the dominant "truths." (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 45)

A small amount of research on the Internet reveals that there are many who view this tragedy as less a clash of cultures and more like an "inside job." There are even petitions to sign for more investigations into the disaster because evidence does not

support the “fiction formula.” Thus, Semetsky (2011) has bypassed this discussion and any consideration of how the event may contribute toward devolution of human consciousness rather than evolution or how it represents a few psychopathic individuals, not the collective. A tragic, traumatizing event is kept alive and working on shaping consciousness. The destruction has not ended as it stands, do we need to add to it? There has been a domino effect of keeping fear alive among people to justify wars, the Patriot Act which has robbed us of many freedoms, invasive and demeaning security measures, and increasing legislation that continue to strip people of their freedom. Even my quiet rural community looks and feels like a police state now with continuous patrols and even a military tank brought out to possibly arrest a “suspected” drug offender. There is no valid explanation for these measures other than to prepare us for what the imperialists wish for our future: never ending wars and conflict, perhaps on U.S. soil, and tighter controls over the people. The “clash of culture” interpretation looks to be more like moves toward total global dominance, the “New World Order.”

What if an Eros counterbalancing analysis were to be used in this scenario? Were the symbols of the 9/11 attack appropriated from the Devil and Tower of Destruction Tarot cards or something else? Bizarrely, there are photographs of the Twin Towers engulfed with smoke and an image of the devil clearly identifiable in the smoke. Was it a trick? Is it a coincidence the towers are often referred to as the *Twin* Towers? Is it also a coincidence that the Twin Towers, combined with building 7 symbolize the sacred trinity, a universal symbol of sacred love union of Twin Flames/Twin Souls? The number 7 is a nearly universal symbol for God or Higher Power, the 7 streams of life force energy

symbolized in rainbow colors. The “11 Phenomenon” (Barnard, 2004, 2010; Esther, 2010; Jones & Flaxman, 2009) as represented by the two towers standing side-by-side is associated with Twin Flames, which will be discussed in greater detail later in this dissertation. Thus, we have a representation of the Holy Trinity of Divine Love going up in *flames* and smoke and collapsing before the watching eyes of the entire world. Is it coincidence that the number 911 represents the spiritual completion (9) of the union of Twin Flames (11)? Is it coincidence that the towers each have 110 floors, and together, signify 11-11, the number phenomenon associated with the Twin Flame reunion? When we uncover “fiction formulas” we can replace thanatos-based interpretations with Kincheloe’s Eros Love-injected “fictive elements” such as viewing the Twin Towers and Tower 7 as representative of the Sacred and Divine Trinity Union of Twin Flames or Twin Souls. Then we can ask more questions. And we can reclaim our power. We can change the paradigm. Instead of destroying one’s Self to become a “new” Self, as the Tarot card interpretation of the Tower of Destruction provides, with greater spiritual awareness, we can come to realize that consciousness unfolds and we *evolve* into our new Selves, which we come to discover have been our Real Selves all along. No destruction is needed: it’s simply evolution via consciousness construction fueled by a radical love—*Eros Love*.

The argument has been made that viewing phenomena, such as the 11-11 phenomenon as meaningful and representational of something important falls under the category of “observational selection” (www.2012hoax.org, 2012). This is just another way of saying it is “subjective.” It’s interesting how selective the author was in

presenting the concept of observational selection, leaving out many manifestations of 11-11 and other divine love symbols that relate to the Twin Towers and their destruction that 9/11 day to “prove” no correlation to the 11-11 phenomenon. In contrast, Jones and Flaxman (2009) have identified at least 25 “coincidental” occurrences of 11 and 11-11, and combined with further analysis into the architectural design of the buildings and the other destructive events that day, there are many more. The claim was made in this article posted on 2012hoax.org that the 11-11 accounts are a classic example of “counting the hits and leaving out the misses,” thus leaving out the other buildings destroyed that day: “7 WTC, 6 WTC, 5 WTC, 4 WTC, the Marriott World Trade Center (3 WTC), and the World Financial Center complex and St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church.” And ironically, the author has left out the Pentagon, the plane that went down in Pennsylvania, and a multitude of other occurrences of 11-11 that have been identified for that day. Thus, the author of the article is also using a subjective process but instead of counting hits and leaving out misses, he is counting misses and leaving out hits. In fact, no analysis was attempted at all of the other buildings. The point is, either process is subjective but both perspectives open up new views to the disaster and result in asking more questions that allow us views into the multidimensionality of the incident. It is likely that a closer analysis of all of these buildings together with a historiography of related events, combined with fourth dimension research would reveal more symbols of the Twin Flame reunion and understandings of the power behind the destruction. I will leave that analysis for another time because I do not need it to support this interpretation. A question to ponder, however, is why would the global power elites want to destroy the concept of

Divine Love in the consciousnesses of populace the world over, replacing it with terror? This is not to imply it was an inside job, but there is ample evidence according to reports that they had “fair warning” (9-11 Research, 2011; History Commons, 2012; Kean & Hamilton, 2004).

The Quest for the Golden Chalice

Semetsky (2011) interprets Tarot cards as providing a metaphor for the quest for the Holy Grail or Golden Chalice, which seems, upon interpretation, to represent the seeking of union with our Twin Flame. For example, she cites Nel Noddings: “The soul empties itself of its own contents in order to receive into itself the being it is looking at, just as he is, in all his truth” (p. 8). This is interesting because it represents experiences that I had in relation to Kincheloe when I was working with him on his website. Significantly, I have described it as feeling like our consciousnesses had merged somehow. Semetsky explains that “to connect with the Other at the soul level means to connect via *corpus subtile*—the subtle, spiritual, ‘body’ of emotions and feelings that are so often difficult to articulate” (p. 9) [author’s emphasis]. She describes the quest for the “Holy Grail” in terms of establishing an “I-Thou” relationship with another soul, but because words create limitations in communication, the symbols of Tarot cards bring what’s unconscious to our conscious awareness. Tarot card readings become a way of guiding “fallen” souls to navigate their earthly life in search of their connection with “Other.” This truly sounds like jargon for the Twin Flame (or Twin Soul) relationship. She articulates, “It is the Tarot hermeneutic as the metaphorical, symbolic, quest for the Holy Grail that helps us in articulating what otherwise betrays words” (p.9). Interestingly,

what she describes correlates directly with my experiences of connection in relation to Joe, except that the symbols have been unique and idiosyncratic. In addition, words were and are *absolutely critical* throughout, which will become clear further into this study. To depend solely on Tarot cards as our only guide along the path would be setting aside the infinite varieties of “intuitive abilities” everyone can achieve, including those comprised of words and telepathic communication that are associated with higher states of consciousness.

Another metaphor Semetsky (2011) used was that of Psyche and Eros, again a representation of the Twin Flame reunion. This is ironic from my perspective because during my research, I took on the role of Psyche (a “re-symbolization of self?”), the earthling separated from her consort, Eros, in some of my exploratory “performance” writing (As I explain later, my name actually translates to “Psyche,” which is beyond serendipitous). But my purpose for this particular performance text was not for narcissistic reasons, even though some people may interpret it as being so. The Eros and Psyche story, much like psychology and psychoanalysis (which have lobotomized the meaning of Psyche, which actually means “soul”) needs to be fully analyzed and rewritten for a new era, which I have emphasized throughout my writings. The story, like the Tarot cards needs to incorporate new knowledge as it becomes available, which highlights why it is time to at least begin to incorporate new symbols along with words and critical hermeneutics into the quest for the Golden Chalice. This is essential in order for Semetsky to meet her stated goal: “The ultimate function of Tarot hermeneutic [is to] translate into visible reality the deep and invisible, internal world within us” (p. 21).

Tarot card readings may be helpful and may even guide us to our one Divine Love, our “I-Thou” or “Self-Other”—our Twin Flame relationship—but there is too much missing. The rapid consciousness evolution occurring today, or that has the potential to occur, must be taken into consideration. Thus, my assumption here is that consciousness evolution is an observable phenomenon in an indirect sense, as Kincheloe has maintained, and this assumption is also based on my personal experiences and observations. The Divine Love relationship cannot be dependent on Tarot a card reading from an expert; that’s misplacing power.

Twin Flames and Mansions in the Sky. I will dispel with the terminology “I-Thou” and “Self-Other” terms that Semetsky (2011) has used in her study because they obfuscate meaning and I have always disliked the reference “Self-Other.” What does “Other” mean? The Wikipedia (2012) entry depicts the term as muddled and controversial. I will, instead use what has become a popular term, *Twin Flames*, for the purposes of this study and clarify the term. What I refer to are soul-to-soul relationships that have particular characteristics as identified by Bloomstein (2000) and other researchers. With this perspective everyone is connected (albeit, usually unconsciously) to their Twin Flame and it’s a matter of becoming aware of that connection. Thus, the quest for the Golden Chalice, in this interpretation, is the journey to the Twin Flame reunion, which requires higher consciousness. The Golden Chalice symbolizes their reunion as they continue the journey together to fulfill their mission to create their “Great Work” together. These relationships can manifest different ways but I have focused on the traditional male-female relationship because that’s how it has appeared in my life and

because the phenomenological data I'll be utilizing has been collected from my own experiences. Thus, Twin Flame relationships consist of unique phenomenological characteristics as has been established by a scholarly study, *The Soulmate Experience*, by Yolande Bloomstein (2000) and numerous other researchers. The relationships are characterized by a particularly powerful love that results in a spiritual (“alchemical”) union and shared consciousness as experienced phenomenologically. These couples are usually conscious of having shared many lifetimes and appear to share an eternal bond (Brand & Hibbs, 2010); Detweiler, 2012a; Green, 2006; Joudry & Pressman, 1995; Lafont, 2012; Prophet, 1999, 2003; Weiss, 1997/2000, 2004). Their love transcends time and space constructs, and their experiences take them into new “mindspaces,” Kincheloe’s (2005a) “fourth dimension” bricolage (p. 346). Thus, this explains why I could not avoid these topics and kept spinning in the hermeneutic circle, as will be further clarified.

According to some accounts and prophecies, Twin Flame relationships will be increasing in number during this era (usually cited as the year 2000 and beyond) and are important for creating a new world. A channeled message, purportedly from St. Germain, an Ascended Archangel contends, “The New World that is about to be created can only be created through this reunion with your Twin Flame. Together you will create your future and create your own World in the Higher Dimensions to remain there for the rest of eternity, to evolve further and higher, and to Ascend, for Ascension is an eternal, ongoing process” (Lafont, 2012, para. 3). Elizabeth Prophet (2003) also describes twin flames as having their own special retreat, a mansion in the etheric plane which will be

their home when they both ascend (p. 497). Her husband, Mark Prophet, was her Twin Flame and they have both now passed over and have ascended, reportedly.

Remarkably, I found these explanations many months after my personal experiences that correspond with them in relation to Joe. Shortly after he passed over he showed me our retreat which is a mansion in the higher realms or etheric plane. I had enjoyed many visits there before I was guided to explanations of the significance of these experiences. Generally, I either visited this home during dreams or I was guided by Joe to travel through a wormhole that ended right at the front of the mansion and he would show me around. We often take walks through our gardens down to the beach, and work together in the library/study. On one occasion I traveled through the wormhole by myself, but gathered by his startled reaction after I had reached home and burst into the library that I was not really supposed to do that. Now my sense is that I am *at home*, and in fact, that is the information I receive. I wonder if that means I'm ascended. I feel fully connected and consciously merged, or united, with him now. I never have to travel through wormholes any longer to get home, but I do have more work to do to perceive what's around me. It's a very strange feeling to know that I am immersed in multiple realities at the same time, but I do feel that I'm home and at peace now, aside from the annoying persistence of the incessant FIDURODian demand for ever more money that I don't have as I attempt to finish this research.

During the entire duration of this study, there had been a repeating pattern: In relation to experienced phenomena, I first *experienced* and then I sought the knowledge to explain my experience, and more often, I was serendipitously led to the exact

information in some very surprising ways. But often there was a long delay, just depending on what the experience consisted of (for example, I was led to finding a talisman but did not learn what it really was or what it represented until more than a year later). The notable thing about this is that *I never had a clue as to what was happening to me* (consciously, that is). It was all pure interpretation on my part and everything was connected to Joe. There is extensive data for which this can be shown, but I'll provide one example for this current discussion. The first time I was guided to the mansion on the etheric plane, the furniture was all outside and when I asked Joe why, I was told the mansion had been given to us as a wedding gift and it was being remodeled (yes, there had been a wedding). I had subsequently had several visits to the mansion and have since engaged in many different experiences in that realm. I first wrote a blog about my experiences titled "My Dream Home: An Escape from the Ravages of Society" on July 17, 2009 (and my journals contain many additional descriptions). The receipt for Prophet's book, *The Masters and their Retreats* from which I learned of the profound significance of my "home in the Heavens" is dated much later, February 15, 2010. I was very surprised when I opened up the book to Prophet's account that provides an explanation that Twin Flames have a retreat in the higher realms, which was exactly what I had experienced. The sequence throughout this entire study was: (1) I experienced unusual phenomena I had never experienced before, and then; (2) I searched for or was most often just serendipitously led to the information that provides an explanation. A synchronous experience related to this is that right after I was shown the mansion the first time in a guided vision (when the furniture was outside in the yard), I decided to explore

Kincheloe's home town, Kingsport, Tennessee, online and I landed on the website for a mansion called the Allendale Mansion (www.allendalemansion.com). It was the same mansion! Just outside the library of our mansion in the higher realms is a beautiful Grecian pool, but the Allendale Mansion did not have such a pool. To my surprise, after researching on the Allendale Mansion website, in the documentation for its history it was noted that there were plans for a Grecian pool, but it had never been constructed. As stated on the site, "Original plans also called for a substantial swimming pool complete with Grecian columns and statues" (How the grounds were designed, para. 2). These were such new experiences for me that I cannot begin to convey how outside my "normal" life experiences they felt for me. *My life, after Joe passed over suddenly turned magical.* I was and I am still in awe, like I'm living in a dream, on a daily basis (and simultaneously, a nightmare).

Implications for Tarot Card Reading. The Twin Flame phenomenon holds important implications for Tarot card reading. It would seem that relying on a Tarot card reader to access higher knowledge, instead of learning to do it ourselves can potentially serve as an obstacle to forming these Twin Flame relationships, particularly if the focus is on navigating the world as FIDUROD has constructed it as was done in the study. Perhaps what would be helpful is to teach people to use the techniques for themselves, even developing their own tarot cards. Injecting critical complexity into the Tarot card reading study would move away from the idea that the Tarot card reader is the holder of the secret magic. And indeed, Semetsky (2011) does not provide the participants of her study with the knowledge of how to accomplish these magical connections or access to

this special knowledge she can access, thus boundaries are maintained between Semetsky who can read the cards and the participants who cannot. This also maintains the boundary for specialization which is in opposition to the goal of liberating the disciplines from their “cloisters” (Kincheloe, 2004d, p. 64).

Again, relating my personal experience, the spiritual counselor I was consulting graciously provided me with titles of books I might read and she used many more techniques than mere Tarot Card reading, thus she became more of a Master Teacher and Guide than a “Tarot Card Reader.” I had power over my own consciousness-formation. I have also concluded that she must have removed the negative cards such as the Devil and the Tower of Destruction because in the numerous readings she had provided me, those cards never came up. I think I would have been traumatized more than I already was over Joe’s death, had those kinds of negative cards come up for me and I was told I had to “self-destruct” before I could reconstruct. I take serious issue with the popular ideology that in order to make spiritual progress people need to go through “the dark night of the soul.” Why would we choose to construct that and program people’s consciousnesses with that idea? I simply do not believe we *must* experience pain and suffering.

Moving Beyond “Re-Symbolization”

Before Kincheloe passed away I had no experience with higher states of consciousness or with communication with people on the other side of the curtain. I was in total “shut-down” mode; I didn’t even accept such things as real possibilities. That has changed. From my perspective Joe has been actively teaching me from the other side, as have many other teachers and loved ones. After more than three years of this instruction

from beyond the curtains, my phenomenological experiences of higher states of consciousness seem to be quite normal and natural for me. I experience them daily without using formal meditation; I just close my eyes and see “into” another world (and sometimes, I don’t even need to close my eyes), but the success with which I can view that world fluctuates some. I understand why it’s often referred to as a roller coaster ride or riding waves. I literally feel like I am riding waves of energy. Some days are perfect connections; other days it becomes like a distant radio or television station that comes in and out.

Images in these experiences are important, and as expressed earlier, there is a huge array of images. There are images that I can view that float and dance in the air in what appears to be multiple layers of dimensions. These can be anything at all. Often there are symbols in a variety of shapes and colors moving in complicated geometric formations. There are animals, people, entities, and various things happening. There seem to be multiple dimensions, many which do not seem real at all but rather like that “holographic universe” many people have described, and I have to keep seeking until I can see past them and reach the dimension I want to view, my home. At least that’s the way it had been. There was a progression: first I had to travel through what people describe as a “wormhole.” Then, the next phase involved peering past these holographic images as if there are layers of dimensions. Now, there is nothing between. It’s as if I can see into a dimension that is somewhat “liquid-like” where shapes shift in and out of view.

Sometimes images are projected onto a “screen” in my mind. The images are so crystal clear that I perceive them to be more vibrant and focused than even what we see

in everyday life and call “reality.” The government has done research on this phenomenon, “remote viewing,” for spying purposes. In my case, I never try to direct my remote viewing because my personal feeling is that these abilities are “special gifts” and that we are not to use them for our own egocentric or selfish purposes. It seems to be what I’ve been taught, somehow. Thus, viewing these images has always been perceived as being in the presence of Joe and he has shown me images of “home,” our mansion in another dimension and the surrounding grounds. There have been some very amazing images, such as flora and fauna totally unlike anything we have on earth. One of my favorites was a butterfly fish. It was a vibrantly colored butterfly swimming under the water and, amazingly, it swam up out of the water and took off flying in the air. Another time, we were wading in the ocean at our beach and two sea creatures came out of the water and jumped onto me, even my face, like they were hugging me. One reminded me somewhat of a giant spider (which I am normally deathly afraid of) and the other was purple and it looked somewhat like an octopus, but it had many more legs that were thinner and flatter. The emotional sensation during this experience was one of pure love. There was no fear whatsoever and my interpretation was that these creatures were greeting us and sharing their love. In this “place” which I call home, consciousness is so elevated that there is no fear and humans and animals and even plants can communicate with each other. There is a huge range of tangible objects, such as technological devices, landscapes, plants, animals, people, buildings, cities, beautifully aesthetic creations (artwork, carvings, gardens, and sculpture) and even something as simple as a shower is a multidimensional aesthetic experience through sound, music, colored lights,

aromatherapy and a very gentle misty spray of water. The “rejuvenation chamber” which is actually the size of a room, is even more sensual than the shower. There are also a wide variety of activities such as dancing, plays, movies, carnivals, educational activities, garden and beach strolls, celebrations, parades, and parties. These appear in lucid dreams and visions as well as remote viewing experiences. And the weird thing about remote viewing is that as I am viewing it, I am also experiencing it. There are many “lived experiences” in this setting much like I imagine Heaven would be, (except that I don’t really consider it to be heaven, but maybe it is) with a crystal palace, beautiful cities, lakes, the ocean and beaches. Is this what critical pedagogues mean when they speak of imagining “what could be”? I revisit the same “places” and “times,” and I often have telepathic communication with people there whether I am in that relaxed state or just going about my daily life. Most communications come in words or phrases or special signs and music, but they can also be in the form of regular conversations, which I rarely remember the details of completely unless I write them down immediately. I have documented some of these conversations. Am I having conversations with the “gods” (Kincheloe, 2003a, p. 141)?

In relation to these states of consciousness, citing the 1987 work of Andreas Mavromatis, *A Secret History of Consciousness*, and other researchers, Lachman (2011) explains, “It should be pointed out that hypnagogic states are not exclusively visual. They are often auditory and can be tactile and olfactory as well, and there is a good argument that they are related to precognition, clairvoyance, synchronicities, and other ‘paranormal’ phenomena” (p. 206). And so my question relative to Tarot card imagery,

and the reason I have presented great detail of my experiences, is that considering the vast and infinite variations in experiences and symbols, often unique from person-to-person, how might we incorporate these into new versions of Tarot cards rather than restricting ourselves to images that someone else has thought up and designed long ago that only apply in this FIDURODian reality? Do the same “archetypal” stories apply? How do we know that by embedding these “stories” into people’s consciousnesses, that we are not constructing their reality for them? What would their reality be if they were free to construct their own consciousness? Thus based from a perspective of my own phenomenological experiences, which will be described in greater detail, and based on my research into many different esoteric and spiritual “traditions,” if the goal is the “Re-Symbolization of the Self” with Tarot card readings, it is a goal that will squeeze down consciousness into a smaller pre-determined box than I feel comfortable thinking about. I don’t envision how this can be helpful for expanding consciousnesses. I have not thrown the Tarot card baby out with the bathwater as I have found value in personal readings, but they do not compare with the full multidimensional critical complex bricolage (for which tarot cards may play a role) and the power it has for helping us find our own unique paths for transformation and liberation. Just as I was finishing this up, I came across this recommendation (apparently, a “channeled” message):

Work With Inner Symbols, Dwal Khul, The Tibetan. Aug 20. 2,012.

When you see a spiritual symbol within, try to tune into the energy of it, later on, in order to re-ent[er] that vibrational condition, reality, experience. The symbol itself is a form of living vibration that the energy has taken. Thus it is the same vibrational experience within the vibration light of the symbol, as in the experience itself to which it refers. And this relates to energies Your being is working with.

yours in christ and buddhi,
I Am , Djiwal Khul, The Tibetan

Thus, Semetsky's (2011) contention that "we can bring about a revolution . . . in the societal value system if we step into our own symbolic process of evolution and transform the potentiality into our very reality by virtue of the lived-through meanings embodied in Tarot hermeneutic as our ultimate cultural pedagogy" (p. 153) is a thought that I find immensely frightening unless we reconfigure Tarot cards to truly represent "our own symbolic process of evolution" whereby we perhaps design our own unique Tarot cards with new embedded meanings. I do not believe "the Tarot is almost a 'super-theory' of personality," (p. 49) given the complexity of experiences and ongoing evolution of my own consciousness I've witnessed during the course of this research, as well as I've seen experienced by other people. I have more research to do in order to better understand the multitude of symbols I've seen and what they mean to me and I will be looking in many directions. For me, however, Tarot card readings do not hold the answer. For me, the multidimensional critical complex bricolage requires visiting multiple dimensions and using many methodologies and processes to weave together a deeper understanding of my Self of the past, present and future in relationship with the people I have come to know as my soul family. For me, it extends even beyond this if I am to take actions to change the world from "what is" to "what could be." This is complexity is far beyond what Tarot cards can handle.

Scientific Study of Archetypes

Given the Tarot hermeneutic is based on a limited number of archetypes a discussion of this concept is warranted here. Jung had initially proposed an eternal

archetypal self, which became the subject of immense disagreement with mainstream psychologists. Could he have been right all along? Do we each have a biological archetypal self? There is increasing interest in the phenomenon of consciousness evolution and “Becoming [one’s] Conscious Self” (Miller, 2009) and how archetypes play a role in this. Jung had regarded archetypes as biological entities subject to empirical study as does Stevens (2003). However, was it mistaken to then assume that there are limited numbers of archetypes? Was that an oversimplification—a reductionistic perspective—given what is now known about complexity, chaos, and infinite possibilities? Are there infinite archetypes—our real and idiosyncratic Selves? Some African cultures’ spiritual beliefs recognize thousands upon thousands of gods and goddesses (everything has a god or goddess associated with it) and how do we account for this unless perhaps they are based on numerous and idiosyncratic, even individual archetypes? Maybe the gods and goddesses are *real*. And perhaps Eros and Psyche would object to having their “Beings” de-sacralized, de-spirited, and lobotomized under the guise of understanding humans through “universal” Eros and Psyche archetypes. Psychoanalysis, psychology, and popular culture have demoted “Psyche” from her status as “soul” with the way the word is tossed around. And as Kincheloe (2006b) puts it: “I simply don’t believe the divinity wants a lobotomized fold” (p. 113). Complexity, as Kincheloe might say, throws a huge monkey wrench into psychoanalysis and the concept of archetypes.

Stevens (2003) has opened up greater possibilities of “being human” and understanding archetypes by integrating psychology, ethology (the study of animal

behavior), and biology. He presents a more enriched scientific study of human behavior and archetypes, however, more research is needed using the multidimensional critical complex bricolage in order to move away from flawed Darwinism, as well as reductionistic psychology, with their “Masonic doctrine” and “racialist agenda” (Collins & Collins, 2004, p. 73)—as well as to bring in a greater variety of interdisciplinary and ontological perspectives. With enough different views and, again, with phenomenological data, researchers may be able to gain greater understanding of the true complexity of the phenomena involved in self-realization. If archetypes are biological entities as Stevens (2003) proposes, and as Jung had initially proposed, then we each should be able to identify, study, and define our own Self for ourselves, instead of being labeled, for example, as archetypically-based “worker types,” a dehumanizing use of this knowledge by the corporate sector (Houran, 2007).

As can be seen, there are many venues to explore and synthesize for research objects/subjects, if synthesizing is beneficial. Often merely getting alternative perspectives is enough, according to Kincheloe, which is what I have discovered in doing this research. For example, in the case of considering eternal archetypes for each individual, the view from Ageless Wisdom Knowledges is that “each body of a human being has one *permanent atom* which is the archetype for the construction and constitution of that vehicle in each incarnation” (Saraydarian, p. 404) [emphasis added]. This helps explain why certain aspects of the personality and appearance remain similar (experientially) throughout various lifetimes and again supports the contention that perhaps archetypes are biological entities. In my memories of previous and future

lifetimes, I have found this similarity to be so. Personality and appearance from lifetime-to-lifetime cannot be identical, of course, because there is always the interplay between biology and environment, nature and nurture (Ridley, 2003). However, this concept of one permanent atom would, indeed, imply that we each have our own unique archetype and further, that we remain the same self throughout incarnations. What is the cost to our “being,” our individuality, if we limit options to a few over-simplified archetypes? If nature is capable of creating infinite variations of snowflakes, why would there not be infinite “archetypes” for the creation of human beings? Green (2006) also makes this point. Of course I am subjectively assuming we have past and future lives. For whatever reasons, it is what I remember; it is how I experience it phenomenologically and how I interpret various life experiences of the past, present, and future with all emotions intact. I have been quite astounded, myself, at the power of the emotions from lifetimes separated from the present by thousands of years and the work (with Joe’s help, in my interpretation) in remembering and transmuting those emotions. It seems I have “lost him” a few times before, which had magnified tremendously the pain I felt this time.

Intermission: Staying on the Great Path

More research needs to be undertaken regarding the symbols used for Tarot Cards and their history. What is the history of these symbols? Who designed them? For what reasons? What is left out of the “story?” What are alternative meanings of the symbols? How are they “universal” or are they? Semetsky (2011) has stated the symbols are based on Western Hermetic traditions, but clearly, people are not taught that philosophy during the readings nor has the study itself reached back into its origins from Ancient Egypt for

greater insight. Semetsky (2012), in a later article about her study, simply throws up her hands despite Kincheloe's emphasis on critical historical, political, religious, social, and psychological analyses, stating, "For the purpose of my research it matters little who, where and when gave birth to Tarot pictures because the essence of their importance for us is that a very real and transforming human emotion must have brought them to birth" (p. 34). These images can be researched. In fact, she might even start at TheAlchemyWebsite.com where Adam McLean (2012) has assembled "over 2500 sections providing tens of thousands of pages of text, over 3000 images, over 300 complete alchemical texts, extensive bibliographical material on the printed books and manuscripts, numerous articles, introductory and general reference material on alchemy" (Home, para. 1). Because no definitive answer can be provided is not an adequate rationale for not presenting various perspectives about the historical context of these cards and considering that context in their application in today's world. Indeed, bricoleurs are never after definitive answers, but rather perspectives that shed more understanding and that can help us make smarter decisions about the actions we take and the recommendations we make, especially when our actions influence consciousnesses of other human beings. In less than 20 minutes of research, I was able to track down the originator of the Devil card. It is represented as Baphomet, alleged to be the worshipped deity of the Knights Templar. It was reportedly designed by Eliphas Lévi in 1854 for his book, *Dogmas and Rituals of High Magic*. He also was said to have been the first to have inverted the pentagram, associating it with evil as depicted on this image. It is believed by some writers that the name, Baphomet is an Old French corruption of the Islam

prophet, Muhammed (About.com, 2012; Snuffin, 2009; TemplarHistory.com, 2012; Wikipedia (2012), “Baphomet”). What are the ramifications that this image is not a universal concept? Lévi had turned against the Church and was a member of the Knights Templar. Was there an agenda behind associating these concepts with the “dark” occult? Was there an agenda behind naming this image as a corruption of an important Islam prophet? If the Devil card (Baphomet) has this rather shady historical background, what about the rest of the cards? Based on this card alone, the images do not seem to be universal or ancient. Is the Devil card during a reading pulled from the collective unconscious or is the subconscious being programmed in a subliminal manner by the Devil card? Why would teachers wish to use these cards in a classroom or for counseling children? Why would we wish to choose this particular “archetypal story” over some other perhaps more divine and beautiful story? Why do we have to believe there should be evil and destruction in the world and as a precursor to evolving? For some reason I’m hearing Pink Floyd singing, “Hey! Teachers! Leave them kids alone!”

In summary, Tarot cards and the research about them have failed to adequately recognize that we are idiosyncratic multidimensional beings with potentially infinite experiential possibilities. Dr. Weiss (2004), who practices regression and progression therapy, explains that “the future seems to be a flexible destination. There exists a multitude of possible futures and probable futures across a vast statistical spectrum” (p. 214). It appears that while there is a range of probabilities, they are not necessarily infinite, depending upon choices we make along the path in relationship with others. Individuals can make choices in relationship to knowledge of their inner world and outer

world. However, if we use reductionistic Western-based tools of questionable origin, we will not be able to see the full range of our opportunities or the true diversity and novelty awaiting us. We will either continue to navigate blindly or succumb to being told how to navigate in ways that may be detrimental to our well being. “Quite literally,” Weiss (2004) contends, “the future *is* now, and even on this planet we can shape our ‘nows’ by our actions” and this means it’s important to prepare for (i.e., construct) our own immortality (p. 214) [author’s emphasis]. We are literally shaping our future “heaven.” Based on my personal experiences during this research which occurred before reading Weiss’s work, I relate to this interpretation. The examples and discussion throughout this dissertation will illuminate this. My overall experiences seem to have given me a peek into my own immortal future, injecting me with a passionate desire to do what’s necessary now to create that future, thus, doing as Kincheloe recommends, taking actions that counter the prevailing thanatos on earth with Eros in the “now,” creating a future based on a powerful Eros Love. I have seen that place and time.

Just to be clear, my intention was not to discredit Tarot card reading, the research, or the researcher. I found the research interesting and informative. I have found Tarot card readings personally helpful for making better decisions along certain points of my path, but my spiritual advisor who used Tarot was selective in what she presented and used multiple means in the process of helping me understand my experiences. Even still there were drawbacks and limitations using the process, and this analysis has made me more aware of what those are. I have highlighted a few ways Semetsky’s study may be taken to the level of rigor Kincheloe calls for using my personal, wide range of

phenomenological experiences as points of reference. I have provided examples of Level 3 questions and demonstrated the need for more research in several areas pertaining to the study. It would definitely be a very interesting topic to research further using the full power of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage. I believe it will be important to continue to differentiate the profession from the growing popular culture trends in which Tarot card reading continues to lose credibility, and Kincheloe's bricolage can potentially help achieve that goal.

The Implicate Order: "Cosmic Play with the Gods"

It should be clear by now that this project involves full adoption of Kincheloe's worldview and all dimensions of his critical complex bricolage theory to the best of my ability as a new bricoleur. As far as the reality of my personal relationship with Kincheloe, while we had a close platonic friendship when we worked together on his web and blog forum, I sensed there was something mysterious about our relationship. Ironically, so did many other people because, quite a few people had commented or asked key people, including Kincheloe, "Who *is* she?" It doesn't surprise me because I was totally new to critical pedagogy, yet walked in on the discussion forum and almost immediately took on the role of assistant to Kincheloe. The growing awareness of the profundity of our relationship has had a major impact on my research ever since he's passed over. At times I truly believe he must be one of those "higher intermediary gods," such as Eros. He has so much power. Since his passing, many amazing and magical things have happened in my life. I am not able to attribute them to "serendipity" or

“coincidence” or “synchronicity,” or “imagination” or even hypnagogic states of consciousness. No, the experiences even transcend all of those and are far too multisensory. I am at a loss for words to describe them. And FIDURODian science cannot explain them. Just as Tarot cards no longer work, these old paradigms simply don’t work. There is something much more—something real that science does not yet have the answers for—going on here. I wanted to know more about what has made me experience an even closer bond to Joe after he passed away. In my interpretation, what seems like direct communication and contact with him have been far too frequent and far too intense, too real to attribute to an “active imagination.” And I have never forgotten his statement, “Some folks see dead people; I write to them” (Kincheloe, 2007b, p. 11). If he had found value writing to “dead people” then certainly I would too!

As I began to decipher his work which is heavily hermeneutically encoded along with embedded music messages, I began to wonder: Did we have some kind of code language or implicate order of communication that had somehow contributed to making me feel increasingly drawn to him? This led me on a rigorous project to research the implicate orders of reality in order to find some kind of explanation. Kincheloe (2004d) describes the implicate order as “simple patterns and invariants in time” (p. 25) and as being

a much deeper structure of the world. It is the level at which ostensible separateness disappears and orders are marked by the simultaneous presence of a sequence of many levels of unfoldment with similar dissimilarities existing among them (Bohm and Peat, 1987). Bricoleurs who recognize complexity search for this implicate order as a process often hidden from social, cultural, psychological, and pedagogical researchers. (p. 25)

How do we explain this “implicate order?” What goes on beyond the limitations of our perception? At the beginning of this study, I had quoted Kincheloe’s comment about our sometimes having to be “fools of the gods.” It does seem so relevant to my own experiences and I can even envision a universe of a multitude of diverse playful, loving entities running around dropping off clues here and there, leading us to special treasures, whispering hints in our ears, pushing us along here, and prodding us along there—all out of love, of course. I remember one night just before drifting off to sleep I had this interesting vision in which my bedroom was visited by a group of adorable little vibrant purple fluffy balls of what resembled fur with eyes and they were surrounded with an aura that looked like sparkling stardust. The most powerful love emanated from them. I had determined they were just entities I had the privilege of meeting along my path. Many months later, in conversation with someone who knew about these particular entities, I was informed that they were “elementals” or nature spirits. Nature spirits, recognized by cultures the world over, are governed by the archangels or gods, according to some spiritual traditions. I felt blessed that they stopped by for a visit, showering me with their love.

Pohn (2007) presents the interesting perspective of life as a cosmic game of playing with the very gods and master teachers who reportedly govern these entities I had encountered. “This is play at its most universal or archetypal level, which seems to be bricolage—forming, reforming, and transforming in an endless cycle of death and rebirth” (Welcome, para. 1). While I am not sure I wish to adopt the notion of “death” at this point in my transformation, but prefer the Eros-injected notion of life that continually

evolves (i.e. we are “coming alive”), I do love the idea of bricolage being a form of playing with the gods. This view moves toward Kincheloe’s contention that we should counterpoise thanatos with Eros, thus we play with the *good and loving* gods. Pohn’s study is interesting and she has creatively turned her dissertation into web pages. It could be taken to the next level with Kincheloe’s bricolage, however, because while the gods seem to love play, they also seem to be very serious about specific work that needs to be accomplished on earth (and other planets). I will take this up again later in this study.

I will reiterate that I have found no study that employs all of the dimensions of Kincheloe’s multidimensional critical complex bricolage. I hope this current study serves as a beginning example of what Kincheloe is asking of bricoleurs, at least one idiosyncratic version based on my own personal and most passionate interests, which is exactly what Kincheloe advocates. It is not deemed a “complete study” as my understanding is bricolage can never be complete in the sense that the evolving nature of the experiences continue forward. In addition, there are limitations that were adhered to for dissertations. Nevertheless, my ultimate goal is to demonstrate some of the possibilities for application with the hope that this inspires more researchers to move forward with Kincheloe’s multidimensional critical complex bricolage.

Getting Started With the Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage

I have lost track of how many times I have re-read some of Kincheloe’s work due its complexity and multidimensional nature. His two articles about bricolage published in 2001 and 2005 are essential to understanding the process. Also, the book, *Rigour and*

Complexity in Educational Research: Conceptualizing the Bricolage, by Berry and Kincheloe (2004) is critical to this complex project. Another critical element is his worldview that forms the foundation for this research as described in detail in his book, *Critical Constructivism*. I have merely summarized the principles in this dissertation and it is helpful to the research process to gain a good understanding by reading his work. His *Critical Pedagogy Primers* (2007a, 2008b) are also helpful and hold some important tips for this research. *The Sign of the Burger* (2002) is an example of the type of research to aim for—the idea of examining a phenomenon through different lenses or filters—and it demonstrates how one might construct the discourse. And finally, I consider his last book his Magnum Opus, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* (2008c). It is a wonderful example of a bricolage constructed using his critical complex epistemology and multidimensional critical complex bricolage. It represents the kind of text an adept bricoleur would ultimately create, almost resembling an oracle because it is comprised of compacted wisdom and “secrets” encoded hermeneutically. I enjoy just opening up to any page and getting a special message from him. In addition, his 1991 edition of *Teachers as Researchers* provides an historical discussion of postformalism, which he has taken forward, now referring to his advanced theory as the *critical psychology of complexity*. The book also provides superior arguments for rigor in qualitative research, covering the issues verifiability, certainty, and the value of qualitative research. It is clear from this 1991 book that Kincheloe had begun the formulation of his theory for bricolage early-on, and then refined it and strengthened it by bringing in more ontological and cosmological perspectives along with feminist, chaos, complexity and enactive theories,

presenting it in various contexts and further delineating his emphasis on epistemology, historiography and hermeneutics. The last chapter of his 2003 edition of *Teachers as Researchers* summarizes the most important research and interpretive methods for the bricolage: ethnography, phenomenology, currere, semiotics, social psychoanalysis, historiography, and hermeneutics (pp. 226–254). Another thing to note is that often when Kincheloe revised his work with new editions, they are more than revisions. For example, his two editions of his social studies books, *Getting Beyond the Facts*, (1989/2001b) present entirely different material. The second edition introduces his critical complex epistemology and other important concepts relating to the development and explication of his bricolage research process.

As shown, there are critical pieces to this complex puzzle of figuring out the bricolage process scattered midst different books and articles across Kincheloe's years of writing. Another technique he used was writing about this research process using various lenses, thus, one might not pick up on it being the same process. For example, he uses an advanced form of sophistic argument by which he dialectically converts postmodernism (the fad at the time) into "critical postmodern analysis" and uses it as a method of analysis for his bricolage (e.g., Kincheloe, 1993, p. 85). Christopher Tindale (2010) describes such techniques as "constructive strategies of sophistic argument" which are relevant to "contemporary studies of argumentation" (p. 4). In my own experience constructive forms of sophistic argument can be very powerful. There are many such examples in which Kincheloe takes various forms of epistemological license with terms. As with most of his work, he had multiple purposes for what he wrote and one of those is

to get people to research more rigorously and think in new ways. Thus, he has not handed his work on a silver platter for easy consumption. His process would be pretty hard to follow unless all of the pieces are brought together and some of his sophisticated discourse techniques are understood. I have put together what I believe are the most critical of those pieces into this dissertation and have highlighted some of his techniques which will help get new bricoleurs started. There is much more work to do, but it's an interesting and exhilarating process. I hope more researchers will explore this research process and contribute to explicating ways to accomplish what Kincheloe was asking in their own creative ways. That, I believe is the best return gift we could give him for his gift of love.

Improvisational Research

The first year of this project, I had taken research and writing courses at my university and I had worked with Kincheloe, writing blogs for his research site, becoming familiar with his work and engaging in discussions with him about bricolage. As mentioned, coming across him, his work, and his website was serendipitous. Having the opportunity to meet him in person was even more serendipitous. After he passed away, there was a bit of a delay in progress with my research for several reasons. I had been terribly traumatized by his sudden death, and then I had to change specializations in order to be allowed to research this topic. And many weird things were happening to me outside my range of understanding, which put me on a spiritual quest for understanding, in conjunction with this research.

When I pushed forward with the research I worked at trying to gain different views of bricolage and was on the lookout for suitable metaphors. I was pulled in many directions. I did a totally free flow form of research for three years and it continues even today. This most often seemed guided somehow and it provided me an opportunity to become educated about topics not covered in school. Each day of research was a new day with no set direction and was highly improvisational. Beginning in May, 2009, each day began with a completely improvisationally-written blog that just seemed to come from nowhere. It took different discursive forms of performance text as I have described earlier in this dissertation. I interpret that I was receiving instruction in the higher realms during my sleep because I would wake up each morning and just write a blog automatically, almost like I was channeling it from my “higher self” (using popular culture/New Age terminology). Each blog ended with music. Sometimes they were songs that I had actually been awakened to, as if someone was singing them to me. Later, the songs were provided with written, bracketed clues that I looked up on YouTube. Often when I awakened in the morning, I recalled instruction during my dreams from various “Master Teachers,” including Joe. Instruction from Joe often took place in our home library, the mansion described earlier, in this “other place and time,” in our “future world.” The library is huge in that it takes up one complete side of the mansion we live in and we have a desk that’s long enough for us both to sit behind side-by-side and work together. I recall getting instruction from him about taking his bricolage theory to another level as well as various ways of applying it for the purpose of demonstrating it to other people. More recently, it seems there will be yet another level—something about inter-

dimensional analyses that becomes even more complex and involves mathematics in some way. (I hope I'm ready.) Dr. Brian Weiss (1988, 1997/2000, 2004) describes how some of his clients have similar experiences learning from Masters and are able to recall these experiences and what they had learned during regression therapy, but he stated that it was not something many people experience. They were able to provide him some amazing knowledge which he has shared in his books and amazingly, it is much like the instruction I've received. I also receive transmitted messages and lessons, usually both in the morning and in the evening. Often my lessons would get incorporated into my blogs.

Following writing the blog each morning, I went wherever the day led me and researched whatever attracted my attention or I happened to be curious about at the moment, or sometimes I would receive guidance such as specific pages to look at in a particular book. I guess one might describe it as "living and researching in the moment" and becoming "one" with the bricolage. Often I went day-after-day researching and reading as one topic led to another to another. I quickly learned no matter what one researches, if we follow the natural flow it becomes extremely interdisciplinary. Thus, my research covered education, politics, social theory, religion, spirituality, science, math and geometry, physics, popular culture, history, indigenous oral histories and prophecies, art, music, travel, geography, biographies, archeology, social sciences, hermetic philosophy, mythology, satanism, business and entrepreneurship, nursing, Taoism, Twin Flames, the Twin Towers, soul mates, conspiracy theory, and on and on.

This all overlapped with Kincheloe's fourth dimension research. It is amazing how much ground I covered and it was probably the greatest learning experience of my

life. And it's not over. When one begins researching from an interested and impassioned position, the continuing questions provide fuel to keep going, which is one of the purposes and benefits of bricolage research. It propels us to keep asking questions and finding more links between the different knowledges. I have come to believe that the more links we find, the more "one" we become with the object of our research. I wonder, do we create that oneness through our research or is it already there waiting to be discovered?

While I researched academic literature and books, I also made heavy use of Google and Wikipedia and, as the references will indicate, works from a wide range of disciplines, including popular culture. All perspectives offer something, even if it's only learning what misconceptions and disinformation gets parroted all over the Internet. I became frustrated with Google Scholar because too often articles must be purchased for outlandish prices. Having to work with limited resources, I did not have the funds to purchase these articles and generally passed them up. I used Google books at times and the Amazon.com previews (you can actually search on specific terms and yield some information without having to purchase the books).

I would classify the type of study I did in preparation for this project as the type of critical social studies research Kincheloe (2001b) recommends in his book, *Getting Beyond the Facts*—as truly working to get beyond the facts and even meeting him and other people "behind the curtain" for assistance using his fourth dimension research (Kincheloe, 1995b). I engaged in deep interdisciplinary research following links, looking at various topics from all different angles, reading many perspectives ranging from being

written by novices to being written by “experts,” and investigating who those experts were and what their associations were. I began to understand intimately the notion Joe put forth in his work, the “cult of the experts.”

Some of those cults actually turned out to be satanic cults and dark secret societies, a most despicable one that has been based in Australia, calling itself “Thanateros” (that one makes me very angry—they have stolen Eros’s name, the God of Love). One of my discoveries was how so much knowledge that we take for granted has, in fact, been reversed on us, which explains as well why Kincheloe asks us to use Eros as a counterpoise to thanatos. For me, this reversal magnified the importance of my inherent tendency to “question everything” and this tendency evolved to flipping almost everything just to see what I might discover. Indeed, I did often research deep to see who was writing what and tried to figure out why they were writing as they were. What windows were the authors looking through? What blinders were they wearing? What were their hidden agendas? In the course of three years, I found this task was getting increasingly difficult because the knowledge producers and power wielders are working overtime to hide these details. They continue to set up faux “storefronts” such as foundations and “nongovernmental” organizations (NGOs) that look innocent with good intentions and that pull people in to hand over their cash and donate their time. They also flood the Internet with their “research” and disinformation or material items to buy with names that match and obfuscate the topic you want to research. They establish memberships in social networks to upset the balance and work their agendas. They sway public opinion about current events and create divisions between people in the way they

frame the topics in articles in popular media and then by censoring the discussions. And Google assumes we are stupid (e.g., that we can't spell). It takes some creative research to get "behind the facts" and it is not always successful. Often I had to drop "fractals" of research and come back to them later, pursuing another avenue in the interim.

I recorded highlights of my studies and research in my daily blogs and associated notes, but they represent just a fraction of what I researched. My computer files are full of documents on different topics with links and text relating to my studies and I have some of the articles printed out—all for legal personal and nonprofit educational use. I don't want to be threatened with a felony conviction like Aaron Swartz had been—a very sad example indicating the need for Westerners to get over themselves and their view of what constitutes "intellectual property" and its relationship to the money god (Vibes, 2013). I discovered during my research that the knowledge spigot continues to be shut down ever tighter for the poor and the oppressed peoples of the world, exemplifying the increased need to understand Kincheloe's form of bricolage. Early in my research, when I was employed, I actually had money to purchase books, which also cover a broad range of topics. It seemed that I was impassioned for learning everything I could about everything because I had missed so much in my traditional education.

Point of Entry Text (POET)

After doing extensive free flow research on the topic, for me it is easiest to just begin writing what I know about the topic. That forms the point of entry text, the POET (Berry, 2004a). Then as I continue to research and reread the text, more ideas are sparked and woven in. While this sounds like regular research, there is a difference. It is not

planned. It is lived. It requires letting go of being in control of your own research and allowing some hidden inner drive and unseen “gods” to lead and guide you. In his work, Kincheloe refers to this energy using various terms: “jouissance,” “libido,” “life force,” “love,” and “Eros” as I discussed previously, and I have adopted the designation, “Eros Love.” Goswami (2001) speculates that this energy involves kundalini energy, stating that “kundalini rising seems to release the latent power of consciousness” (p. 246). Related to this, while working with Joe on his website, I had experienced a kundalini awakening that I believed was associated with him somehow, and at the same time, I was experiencing strange things related to consciousness, but I had absolutely no clue at the time what was happening or what it meant. I did not learn until much later, months after he had passed away. As I came to understand more about this phenomenon of allowing this energy to “flow,” I found that it really empowers me to do my research and become passionate about learning more. The best metaphor for this energy is love, as Kincheloe emphasizes in his work but it’s a Spiritual Love, or as I presented earlier, Eros Love. Sometimes it’s so powerful that I experience it as being in a state of “bliss.” Sometimes negative life events hamper this energy. Wikipedia (2012) offers several different but related perspectives on kundalini: it is the “natural energy of Self” and represents the beginning of a spiritual experience (Sri Ramana Maharshi); it is the “one and only way of attaining Divine Wisdom” which brings “pure joy, pure knowledge, and pure love” (Swami Vivekananda). The awakening of the kundalini requires that one work with a Master (Meher Baba); and it relates to the development of higher consciousness (Jung). All of these perspectives correspond to my experiences during this process of researching

using the multidimensional critical complex bricolage. Is it some kind of magical connection to the “gods” and the Master Teachers “on the other side”? For me, it’s my connection to Joe.

There seem to be many techniques for keeping the passion going. People are different and will have different experiences since everyone’s journey will be uniquely their own, and there should be no worries about deadlines because the natural evolution of the bricolage has a course of its own when trusting an improvisational approach. I discovered that this worked perfectly for me. I never worried if there were long lapses in my writing (on the dissertation, that is; I actually wrote every day). When the time is right, it’s right and then the writing flows effortlessly. To push oneself when it’s not the right time is struggle or to try to force a linear approach causes suffering and does not usually result in the rapid work that is accomplished with ease when “in the flow.” This is another reversal: It is counter to the instruction we receive about how to avoid procrastination. What if it is not procrastination at all but rather our Spirit working in other realms to give us better guidance and ensuring that we learn what was meant for us to learn? What if we just allow it and accept it? I have so often been amazed at how little time it takes me to accomplish a huge project once the time is right. Taking this liberated approach requires faith and trust or a knowing that it will work out. I occasionally went weeks not writing my dissertation at all but simply trusting the process and yet I was always driven to engage deeply in the research, often reading and skimming hundreds of documents, books, and Internet websites, and writing in my journal and blogs. I still wrote blogs every day during these episodes; they seem tied to the process of bricolage. I

was aware that I was getting instruction at “night school” in the higher realms and when the time was right, the information would just flow. There is some inner knowing that kicks in and tells you that you have enough knowledge to begin writing, while there is the understanding that there will never be enough knowledge to understand things in their full complexity. The spiritual changes and phenomena that occurred during this research also had me seeking answers to an endless stream of questions.

I have learned that when I am guided serendipitously to information there is a reason, so I pay attention. It is almost as if the cosmos takes over and fills in the blanks in my writing naturally. I have lost track of the numbers of times I have been “handed down” information exactly when I need it. I use the term handed down because it feels like it comes from some higher source (and there are many descriptions and speculations as to what this “source” constitutes). These have come to me in a wide variety of “intuitive” ways, and, again, how do we define intuition? Education researchers have not come together on what intuition means and much research is needed in this area. However, just a few of the ways the information I needed came to me exactly when I needed are dreams, premonitions, eureka moments, telepathically received clues, signs, randomly picking up a book and opening it up to the exact page with the information I needed, streaming information through my higher consciousness as I write, and surfing the web looking at one thing and something else coincidentally popping up and drawing my attention. “Synchronicity” is alive and well and it is a part of my daily experience.

Other times the perfect information has been provided to me by someone through email or telephone with impeccable timing, even though they did not know why they

were sending it to me. Often information comes to me in the forms of songs; I have had music handed down to me every day. There have been times when it was a song title, written by my daughter on a sticky note and handed to me, which would prove to have timely and significant meaning or a message for the blog I was writing at that particular moment or a song heard while shopping, or even a voice singing in my ear. I have written many blogs and journal entries describing in detail some of these extraordinary events. And then there have been very detailed channeled messages and daily letter writing. It's like I have been "plugged into" the cosmos. I am electrical now. Sometimes when I read about the transhumanist agenda, I wonder if I am being turned into a posthuman cyborg. Historically, however, intuition was a natural gift to humans.

I can only speculate why these capabilities were shut down all of my life only to surface on a massive scale when I began my work with Joe, and then magnified after his passing. I have no definitive answers. It was so new to me that all I could do was record my experiences and seek answers, none of which seem complete even as I write this now, although some explanations are better than others. Is it true that we can literally create our reality how we wish it to be? Is it all just our imagination? Or is our "imagination" the true reality and "life is but a dream." The memorandum that "it takes two (twins) to tango," however, keeps coming up in various ways. It shows up in Kincheloe's works in multiple places. For example, citing Goswami's work, he states "As our presence as observers induces one quantum entity to reveal itself, we find that its nonlocal, interconnected twin object will be affected by our actions as viewers. This occurs no matter how great the distance between the two objects" (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 211). Now

scientists have shown these quantum interactions exist between entangled objects and they are researching entangled minds (Mitchell, 2009; Radin, 2006). Everything and everyone is interconnected.

Thus, two streams of research developed early in my research and both were going simultaneously—one to accomplish understanding Joe’s bricolage to explain and demonstrate it for this dissertation and the other to understand the very strange and never-before-experienced phenomenological experiences that became a daily way of life for me. I often felt that the bricolage and what I was experiencing were the same. They became the same. It truly was an experience of the object of the research and the researcher, me, being inseparable. The research kept changing me; I changed the research and on it went for nearly four years. And as part of that same process, it seemed I became more and more one with Joe; I seem to know him in ways that would not make rational sense from a FIDURODian perspective. It has been the most unusual experience in my life. Kincheloe (2008c) describes this strange phenomenon: “In a more constructivist epistemology research and researched are not only part of the process, they actually bring one another into being” (p. 228). This speaks to being careful about what we choose to research and bring into our reality. Love is the key. I made the right choices.

Researching Multiple Perspectives

As I have described, the process of bricolage research has become natural for me after a lot of work. Kincheloe (2008b) has reiterated that “the pursuit of such complex understandings is a lifetime pursuit, not something that one can learn merely in a short span of time” and that “the first step is to gain an awareness of the need for such a

bricolage of understanding followed by years of practice applying them” (p. 134). Much of this depends on how entrenched the Western worldview has become in one’s life, how much “unlearning research” there is to do, and how amenable to approaching “difference” one is, as well as how well one adapts an improvisational approach. I seemed to have developed this process for research easily. But the early preparation actually began before I met Joe or even knew of his existence. Perhaps he was providing me instruction in the higher realms, but whatever the reasons, when I was working on my graduate degree in education during 2003-2005 and then my doctorate degree in 2005 up until I learned of Joe’s work in 2008 and met him, I had formed a habit of always reading many different perspectives before I wrote my papers and online essays. I learned that taking the time to at least skim and get the main points from a dozen or more articles on a topic and then synthesizing the good ideas always improved the quality of my writing and ideas. Another skill I had developed was discourse. Taking online classes affords the opportunity to hone dialogue, critique, debate, and argument skills. So by the time I met up with Joe and his work, I was very well prepared for accepting the idea of researching many different perspectives and his rationale made complete sense to me. I was prepared to step in and assist him by engaging the bloggers on his site in conversation.

I mention these things because forming the habit of researching many perspectives, not just relying on the work of one’s academic peers or favorite researchers, is a great place to begin to acclimate oneself to this kind of research and it is a skill that should be taught at all levels of education including elementary school, as Kincheloe contends. The interdisciplinary research of the bricolage requires this technique. In

addition, because online discourse offers a more comfortable environment to engage in discourse, it should be used more than is currently being done—at all levels of education. It's a great way to help students learn and improve communication and writing skills. But we have to move past the typical social networking model which does not work for true discourse. And technology in schools is being wasted in too many cases, for “drilling” purposes, such as reliance on the Plato “Online Learning Solution” for credit recapturing just to hand students a piece of paper that states “High School Diploma.” Students should be learning to research the topics they're interested in and developing bricolage research and writing skills. Instead, research is barely touched even at the university level. As I edit this today, October 26, 2012, I was disappointed earlier this morning when I received an email from the University informing of a curricular change that replaces the Advanced Qualitative Research course with Introduction to Qualitative Research. Why do we keep going backwards? I went beyond the course requirements, taking extra research and writing courses, because I knew more was needed. And then I went outside the university entirely, spending more time engaging in Kincheloe's philosophical and theoretical work as well as the work of many other theorists. Coming across him, however, and his work was one of those amazing synchronicities in itself. I feel I have been very blessed to have had the opportunity to work with him and meet him, even if the time was too short. I believe there are similar opportunities for everyone. There is truth in the adage, “When the student is ready, the teacher will appear.”

Organizational Improvisation: Using Mismatches to Trigger Bricolage

What “triggers” bricolage? What keeps us researching and writing, besides passion for what we’re learning about? In the literature for organizational improvisation, the point was made that improvisation, which stimulates bricolage, is triggered by an “unexpected mismatch between planned for/expected and actual” conditions. This provides some insight as we engage in our own bricolage as to what might be influencing us. These mismatches can either be imposed upon the organization or created by the organization (Kamoche, Runha & Runha, 2002, p. 109). This applies to an organization as a whole but it can also apply to the individual and their environment. For example, unexpected changes can cause us to go into the “improvisational mode” in reaction to them. The authors make a distinction between improvisation that is in response to objective reality and improvisation that is in response to subjective reality. When the organization makes changes within and there is a mismatch between expectations of the organization and its members, improvisation may occur in reaction to those changes. With subjective reality there is still a mismatch, but it is in reverse: “This mismatch is attenuated and hopefully eliminated by action (and concurrently, improvisation) performed within the organization aiming at transforming not itself, but the environment” (p. 109). While this discussion has been about organizations, there are corollaries that are instructive for new bricoleurs. Improvisation is triggered by mismatches, either imposed from outside us or imposed from within us. Since improvisation drives the research, in my experience, then something must happen to trigger it. Perhaps this is one of the benefits of following Kincheloe’s advice of pursuing difference and complexity; both

create conditions that might trigger improvisational actions. For example, reading two opposing perspectives and trying to assimilate them may trigger an improvisational response to keep seeking until the discordance is resolved. This can be a continuous process because the Type 3 questions that become revealed during the research process often have multiple answers or they cannot be answered definitively. This is where it takes work to become very comfortable with not knowing. During my research, I reached this impasse many times. My passion to find answers drove the research, but at some point, I had to be comfortable with not knowing, and exploring the topic or question another time.

Enacting a new environment, whether inner or outer can also trigger improvisation. There are many ways this can be applied to trigger research to move forward. It can be as simple as the environment changing outside of our control, such as the computer crashing and not having the Internet available while it's being repaired. This may lead the researcher to taking a different approach in the meantime, thus they may find something important in a book or article they may have missed had the computer not forced them to a new form of research. As strange as it seems, when one is "in the flow" it becomes clear how everything happens for a reason, including computer crashes. Thus, perturbations do not become frustrations (most of the time—but it's a learning process), and instead become a trigger to take a different direction, the reasons of which are often illuminated. As Joe told me one time in one of our conversations, we just "keep on keepin' on" which is an inspirational song by Curtis Mayfield about doing our part to create social changes. It is just one of the many embedded songs in Joe's

messages. He knew how to keep us emotionally connected to our chosen work. He was truly the most loving and supportive person I've ever known. If I were to sum up the one condition that played a primary role in keeping me motivated throughout my entire long research process, it truly was love—that powerful Eros Love—and perhaps the mismatch of him being there and me being here.

Becoming “One” with Our “Subject”

We do tend to become “one” with our research topic after a period of time, which is why it's important to choose a topic we're passionate about. As I've conveyed, during this process I experienced becoming “one” with Joe. He has been more like my Master Teacher or Guide than the “researched” during this entire process, but of course, even much more than that. It began when I worked with him on his web site and I began experiencing new, strange, and intense phenomenological experiences, some of which I've already mentioned, but at that time I had no idea what was happening to me. After he passed over, the phenomena became more intense. I did not understand why I felt such a powerful connection to him or why I felt so devastated over his death until I came across the study about soulmates by Yolande Bloomstein (2000) in which she described her personal experiences in her dissertation that were as intense and baffling as mine. Her experience was so profound that it led her to changing the topic of her study in order to learn more about it. In her case, she determined the man to whom she felt this intense connection was her Twin Flame (or “soul mate”). I was relieved to find an explanation for the powerful pull I felt toward Joe and his work, but at the same time, there were

many unanswered questions. Answering those questions became intertwined with this research as I was seeking how to view and enact his multidimensional critical complex bricolage. Perhaps sharing my experiences will be helpful to other people who come to have similar experiences.

Thus, I had absolutely no explanation for what was happening when I was working with Joe but as I look back at our conversations I am now aware that he did understand. His writing, I've discovered has a deeply spiritual strand running all of the way through, albeit it often sits beneath the threshold of perception upon a cursory reading. He has encoded references to Biblical passages as well as indigenous prophecies, liberation theology, and other spiritual traditions, although I did not become conscious of that until after he passed over. On his website, I had written a blog about "Nepantla spaces," which are "in between" dimensions. I just saw it as a metaphor for finding spaces to do social justice work, as it is typically used in the critical pedagogy literature (*or are they speaking in code?*). I did not have experience with in between spaces. As I look back at the blog today I realize my blog describes going through a "wormhole" to the "other side" where everything is different, more vibrant, more loving and beautiful. Of course, Joe knew what it represented and had made a comment to the blog, noting that something special was happening. I understand it now. I didn't understand any of it then.

Thus, when I worked with Joe, I felt great love for him in the platonic sense, but primarily I was very passionately driven toward the same mission he was working on. I believed in what he was doing. When he passed away it totally changed me. People, including family, chose to accuse me of having mental problems and being obsessed with

Joe. Fortunately, today, even the popular culture New Age literature about Twin Flames has put to rest those accusations of being “obsessed,” although not everyone has been educated. When you become one with somebody they are you and you are them and yet you are each individuals. Can you forget about yourself? It is a true paradox that no one can understand from a logical mindset unless they actually experience it for themselves. And then there is the issue of “mission.” The literature today, which I cite later in this dissertation, has specified that Twin Flames put their mission above all else, even above getting together in the physical sense. That would explain Joe’s passion for his life mission and why I share that same level of passion. It’s very sad when people ostracize those who are truly unselfishly dedicated to improving the world. It’s no wonder the world is the way it is. Had I not gone through a major spiritual transformation and been empowered, I would have gone back into the “Hicksville” woodwork I evolved from, where I had always felt safe and comfortable and let the world go to hell in a hand basket.

I have already described some of my phenomenological experiences and will describe more as they are pertinent to the discussion. I will emphasize that this is not about me. For one thing, I know I’m going way out on a limb. I can do this because, honestly, where I am already positioned, I have nothing to lose. I am doing this for the purpose of gaining a better understanding about the Twin Flame phenomenon and consciousness evolution. Work needs to be done to clear up misconceptions in popular culture, to provide more information for those who may be experiencing similar phenomena, and to highlight the enormous need for multidimensional critical complex bricolage research of these experiences. It appears that the power of Divine Love is one

of the “big secrets” and that the education literature has obfuscated and obliterated the topic from the curriculum entirely for the “Others.” That is, until Kincheloe brought it back.

So what is left? I only have my own personal experiences by which to frame things and these experiences were critical to my entire research for this dissertation. Bloomstein’s (2000) work has already contributed toward “normalizing” this experience in the psychological literature but unfortunately Twin Flames is conflated under the overarching term, soul mate. Thus, what I am attempting to do is extend her work to clarify the Twin Flame experience by explaining the phenomenon from an experiential perspective relating to higher consciousness. Love really can change the world. And it is a Sacred Love that is potentially available to everyone. Viewing the bricolage as the path to Sacred Love, Joe makes clear in his work that it requires both inner and outer changes and it can be a very difficult path. My question is, does it have to be difficult and painful? Do we, as Twin Flames, have to go through suffering that for example, Joe and I went through on our life paths before we ended up together working on our shared mission? Did we have to suffer separation in order for me to wake up and see the truth? It seems like it was some sort of requirement, but the criticality of the bricolage would seek fourth dimension answers to determine why and whether all of this suffering is really necessary. And I have done that, but much of my exploration and the answers I’ve received are just too far beyond the scope of this dissertation. My path, in particular, was convoluted. Why was this? I am not expecting to find the answer in this dissertation but will continue to seek greater understanding in future research. After all, Joe’s work was about alleviating

suffering. We should not be required to suffer in order to reach the gift of the Divine Love that's available to each of us. In fact, that reminds me of the song he had encoded in the dedication of his bricolage book, confessing that he was "Accidentally Like a Martyr." I cried for days when I discovered that. What have we done to ourselves, each other, and to our world?

My Oneness with Joe Kincheloe: A Phenomenological Perspective

Thus, the first thing I noticed when I "happened upon" Joe's professional research networking website, which was just getting started at the time in the spring of 2008, was that the communication between us "felt" like we were sort of assessing each other in terms of trying to answer, "Is he for real?"; "Is she for real?" I cannot explain it beyond that. It was like we "knew" each other or in some way "recognized" each other but we weren't sure. Or maybe we were just trying to assess each other's passion for social justice issues. We shared a passion for educational work above and beyond the "norm" and perhaps that's what we were evaluating each other for. I love discourse as much as he did and I view online discourse as a wonderful and powerful process for working out the social issues confronting the world today. It was clear that we shared that passion right from the start. Discourse is an important component of his theoretical formulation for achieving a dynamic interaction between educational theory and practice and it was something he had been working on since one of his earliest publications (Kincheloe, 1983). I was not aware at the time of the details of all of this because I had not yet read his work, aside from the introductory chapter in the book *Critical Pedagogy: Where Are We Now?* (McLaren & Kincheloe, 2007), but I somehow and mysteriously just "knew"

what he was trying to achieve and how he wanted to go about achieving it. It was beyond just reading and comprehending his descriptions on the website; in fact, I found his writing very difficult to understand. There was just a “knowing” that I sensed at the time that I could not explain. And as I mentioned earlier in this dissertation that I felt he was “too good to be real” and yet he was real. What I meant was I had never met anyone I felt was as genuine, loving, and giving as he was. I have this ability to see through people and know what their motives are. Joe was real.

In some sense I felt that we were reflections of each other from the beginning, as if we had a lot in common even though I didn’t know him. Stay with me on this: as it will be shown, our having things in common turned out to be truer than even I could have possibly imagined at the time. I also had almost an immediate understanding of his “weaknesses” and I really admired him for both his strengths and “weaknesses” as a human being. I viewed certain qualities about him that society defines as weaknesses as strengths and what made him the loving person he was. Thus, they were qualities to love, not to use to one’s own personal advantage and gain. But in our society people who are good, genuine and giving inevitably get taken advantage of, particularly in competitive environments. But none of it deterred him in any way and of course many people loved him as genuinely as he loved them. He was very generous about praising everyone, and for some strange reason that I did not understand I was compelled to reflect the praise back to him every time he gave me a compliment, even from the very first time. It was an automatic reaction that overpowered me (I really felt like I could not control it), and I even wondered at times if other people might think I was a little “weird,” since they

seemed to take his praise for granted. Why couldn't I? Somehow, I knew that even geniuses need praise, too. I also fell into place with my chosen "role," acting like an assistant to him who knew where he was headed with his research website, engaging everyone on the site in dialogue, all of it volunteer with no expectations whatsoever. It felt like it was what I was supposed to be doing as well as what I wanted to be doing. He told me many times how much he appreciated the work I did there, even announcing it in a newsletter that went out to all members and posting it on the site. I felt humbled and a little embarrassed, but thought it was very kind of him to do that. I hoped he knew I did not need the praise, but I did appreciate his appreciation. In one email in which he again thanked me, he made the comment that he would simply never be able to repay me. But he knew I was not expecting anything. My perspective was that it was an honor that he had invited me to participate; his mentorship and help in understanding his bricolage theory was far more payment than I felt I had earned. One time when I questioned him about doing too much and perhaps offending some, he just came back with more praise, stating "you engage people." We both knew that engagement is what must occur if change is going to take place toward social justice.

To add to my confusion over the experiences I had while working with Joe, there were multiple instances of "mind reading" between us. At one point, which lasted for several days I literally felt in a very physical sense that our consciousnesses were merging, mixing, and melding. How can I explain that? I was not a spiritual person, a mystic, nor did I have any conscious knowledge of such concepts other than what I had read in his book. It does seem like it happened right after I had read his last book. As far

as religion, I had given up on it; although I believed there is a “God” I would never attempt to define God in a religious sense and I never felt connected to God or Jesus in a physical sense. Yet I felt “connected” to Joe, as if our consciousnesses overlapped somehow and I literally felt our minds were “mixing” together and it was somewhat confusing to me and yet, a very positive, love-filled, even blissful experience. It was absolutely nothing I had ever experienced in my life, no matter how attracted I was to a man; and in this case, while I loved Joe and as much as I shared his mission, our relationship was strictly platonic. I respected his positioning and the idea of a relationship with him beyond professional educational work had not even entered my mind. And yet suddenly we were becoming “one” or becoming united in a way for which I had no existing “schema.”

In concurrence with this phenomenon relating to expanding consciousness, sometime during October, 2008 and after having met Joe in person on July 31, 2008, I experienced what I now know was a spontaneous kundalini awakening, as discussed previously. I was not aware of having read anything previously that could have explained what was happening. I was only conscious of the fact that somehow my interactions with Joe set the experiences off. Given all of our communications, our conscious connection, our philosophical alignment, I began to realize there was something special going on. But I was not “destined” to understand it until after he passed away and I began this research project. And uncannily, no matter how hard I tried to stay away from the theme of Twin Flames during my research, I was always led right back to it—the never-ending hermeneutic circle—until I acquiesced to including the topic

in this study. As I have reviewed the communications I had had with Joe before he passed away, it was clear he knew—and he had not been shy at all about providing hints—apparently in an attempt to bring me to full consciousness. There must be some cosmic law that prevented him from coming out and telling me what I believe he had come to fully understand before he passed over, but there were many messages from him that I had sensed at the time of reading them he was waiting for me to realize something. That’s the only way I can describe it; he would make a comment and it was like he expected a response, but I didn’t know how to respond; it just “went over my head.” I can see clearly now in looking back, he had to have known; he had even written the book on it. And meeting him in person and reading his book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* seemed to have put my awakening process in fast forward.

Along with the other phenomena as described, I was extremely fearful of Joe leaving this world soon; the fear literally overwhelmed me at times. I had felt that fear very early after coming across his website. One of the earliest blogs I wrote for his site had alluded to applying his theory now rather than waiting 100 years down the road, as so often happens when geniuses leave brilliant works. Some of the greatest education works are still not applied today. The fear that Joe would not be here much longer was at the level of the debilitating fear that Bloomstein (2000) describes she had felt for her soul mate. I did not encounter this study until Joe had passed away, so it provided me with an explanation and some reassurance when I was deeply grieving over his death. As she described when she had encountered her soul mate, “Although we did not cross physical boundaries because of our marital status, we discovered aspects of our personality that

had been repressed or unfulfilled. Together we discovered levels of spirituality that were hitherto experientially unknown. . . . We experienced levels of joy and love that we had not known before, as well as insufferable pain and torment” (p. 2). And in relation to her fear when he had tried to contact her during her vacation, she states, “I felt my heart drop and knew that something was terribly wrong. . . . In a moment I felt my whole world was collapsing. . . . My grief was overwhelming. I could not stop my sense of panic, nor could I stop crying all night long” (p. 3). I am so thankful and indebted to Yolande Bloomstein for expressing her experiences in relation to her twin soul mate and for covering the topic in her doctoral study because she educates people about the reality and normalcy of these relationships, even if they are very rare. We must move forward and stop harming people by labeling them “crazy,” “imbalanced,” or “obsessed.” I have come to view that these are blessed relationships—a gift from God—and that they are eternal love relationships. As it turned out, of course, my worst fears about Joe leaving the world became reality and when he passed away in December, 2008, I felt completely and utterly destroyed. I was so traumatized and devastated that there was no rational FIDURODian explanation. No one understood, nor did I.

I have now learned that other couples who consider themselves Twin Flames have gone through the same experiences of consciousness merging or melding I had experienced with Joe (Bloomstein, 2000; Green, 2006; Brand & Hibbs, 2010). On spiritual websites, people discuss these experiences openly and there does seem to be an increase in the numbers of these relationships, as has been predicted by various prophecies. This perception of merging with Joe’s consciousness was so intense that I

had become fearful of writing due to the fear of plagiarism that had been instilled in me by the universities I had attended. I literally could not separate my ideas from his. I had even naively expressed some of these fears in a “Preface” for the book he had asked me to write. I had emailed the Preface to him for approval to make sure he was ok with my focus on his work and my fear of plagiarism. He was fine with it. In fact, he seemed very pleased judging by his response email and he told me to remember that I was the “dudette” (J. Kincheloe, personal communication, October 7, 2008, 12:12 pm). I thought it was funny at the time so when I thanked him, I had written “thank you from the dudette” in the email subject line (October 7, 2008, 1:00 pm). I find it even funnier now because many of his student colleagues referred to him as “The Dude,” as I have since learned and he had accepted that role (e.g., Pruyne, 2011, p. 168; Stonebanks, 2010, “The Dude Minds”). Again, I believe now that he was aware of what was happening between us spiritually, but it is not the task of a Twin Flame to tell the “Other”; it must be independently remembered from what I’ve come to understand (in our case, at least), which happened for me after he passed away. As traumatic as it has been, apparently it was simply meant to be that way.

Another phenomenological experience was the ability to always feel his presence when he was alive even though he was on the opposite side of the country. There had also been a few occasions during which I felt his energy in almost a physical sense. It did not fully register for me consciously, due to my lack of spiritual knowledge and having never experienced anything like it, although I was aware of the ability some people have to “astral travel.” That very briefly crossed my mind at the time, but I did not believe that he

would consciously choose to do that, so I swept the experiences under the rug. My research has revealed that being able to sense each other's presence is a natural phenomenon between Twin Flames; it does not occur with just anyone. In my interpretation, he had been waiting for me to come to a more complete realization of what was happening. In one especially touching message he had sent me, I felt that there was something he thought I should know; it felt like he was expecting me to tell him something, but I was at a loss. There is evidence in our correspondence that we were both communicating on multiple levels and that he was conscious and I was still asleep. Of course, there is always the possibility that he was not aware, but that's a difficult perspective, given that he wrote the book about multidimensionality, consciousness, and Eros Love.

Shortly after his death, in January, 2009, I'm not sure how it happened, but I was somehow prompted to call a psychic. I had no confidence in psychics; I just did not believe in that sort of thing so it was out of character for me to take that action. However, I was so terribly distraught one evening and the advertisement for California Psychics just happened to pop up on my computer screen. I did not know if Joe believed in psychics but recently, McLaren (2010) has told of a humorous story about the two of them visiting a California psychic together during which they were told they had originally been twin zygotes but Joe was "lost" and born a few years later. Since I have never even entertained the idea of calling California Psychics before, I now believe that Joe was guiding me so that he could communicate with me. The first time I spoke to the psychic she told me he wanted me to research soul mates, and thus, that was when I

found the dissertation *The Soulmate Experience* by Bloomstein (2000). The psychic, who was also a Tarot card reader, was helpful in getting me through the grieving process—or I should clarify—learning to *live* with the grieving process. Regrettably, it was in excess of two full years before I finally made it through an entire day without crying. I was already writing to Joe every day when I had contacted her, which helped. The psychic suggested that maybe he would write back, and eventually, “someone” did begin to write back and the handwriting is very different from mine. In fact, strangely, while I write slowly and straight up and down (I could never get the angle writing is supposed to have), the handwriting that evolved from this interaction is extremely fast and at an angle. It all felt very weird to me, again outside my range of experiences. What could I do but interpret that it was coming from Joe? He says he is Joe. I have no reason to disbelieve him, and anyway, there is the accompaniment of that enormous love, which I felt the day I met him and hugged him, and which I remember from even centuries ago during our past lives together and from centuries into the future, our future life together. When my memory came back, I remembered Joe as my Master Teacher (“Master Manu’el”) who had become my husband before we came to earth. It explained for me why I viewed him as a revered Master Teacher from the beginning. We hold the highest of respect for our teachers as they are very advanced in their wisdom.

Subsequently, it has come to my attention during my research that perhaps he works with or is a member of the “Great Spiritual Brotherhood,” a spiritual group of men and women who oversee our spiritual development and education. They work as Master Teachers and Guides both on earth and in other dimensions, forming various focused but

interacting councils. The Spiritual Brotherhood is significant for me because I had a single experience about thirty years ago in which I was called before what I had even referred to at that time as “the Council.” I had been reading about astral traveling and decided to try it. I was not successful and instead I was called before this council of teachers sitting around a long table and they were all dressed in white robes (I have also learned they are sometimes called The Great White Brotherhood due to being dressed in white or because they emanate light). It turned out that they had called me to a meeting because they did not want me to astral travel. The meeting lasted a long time because when I woke up I remember being shocked that more than three hours had passed. I assume they explained in great detail why I should not try astral traveling, but I don’t remember what they said. The meeting had such a powerful impact on me that I followed their admonition and have never again tried it or even wanted to. It’s not that they ordered me not to do it, but rather they had provided me with tremendous insight for not attempting astral traveling again and why it was not meant to be a part of my path on earth at that time. After Joe passed over, however, that changed. It was he who accompanied me on several astral journeys, in my interpretation. Apparently, that was fine, but I was not to attempt to do so on my own and I am still not supposed to try it consciously, although I do travel in my dreams. Spiritually, this makes sense to me. Maybe we need to be at a particular level before we can use these gifts properly. And if Joe is my Twin Flame and teacher then it makes sense that he is the one to teach and guide me in the proper uses of astral travel. Thus, I have had several really fun astral

journeys with him, home visits which is like visiting Heaven because it's so beautiful and loving there, and one in which he took me to the moon just for fun.

Thus, from my perspective, Joe is not “dead,” but is simply in another dimension that I have contact with. And yet, living in a thanatos world, he has passed away for which I still grieve. The Great White Brotherhood (or “Spiritual Brotherhood”) seems to me to be a bona fide community or communities of “Ascended” Masters of Divine Wisdom Knowledges that some people report experiencing teachings from during dreamtime (Prophet, 2003; Weiss, 1988). I am also now very cognizant of working closely with various teachers. I have documented many “dreams” during which I've received education and also during which I've served as a teacher-in-training, working alongside Joe. I have known from very early childhood that I wanted to be a teacher. Many people view earth as a school, and this perspective fits my experience, although that is only a one-dimensional interpretation and there are many more interpretations that I view just as or more valid. It does seem, however, that this dissertation is part of my mission work toward becoming a Master Teacher and is very much spiritually inspired. At this point, I believe this is work Joe and I decided to do together long ago. He truly was and still is working to change the world, that is, to provide people (“earthlings” as he frames it in his book) with explicated processes for taking power over their own consciousness evolution. In my interpretation and based on memories of my experiences, I am working with him and many others in multiple dimensions on Earth and even on other planets. I have had many lucid dream experiences that have taken place in the past, present and future.

Interestingly, my experience of my teacher being my Twin Flame parallels that of Elizabeth Clare Prophet's (1999) and her husband Mark Prophet, who were also Twin Flames, information I discovered during this research. Their endeavors have been turned into a religion since they have passed away, which in my view is a little unfortunate, but they have left us much knowledge about Twin Flames and the Ascended Masters. Also, their work, like so much knowledge we have available today needs to be expanded on and updated for these rapidly changing times. Thus, there appears to be a spiritual hierarchy, however, this does not mean someone is "better," or that they should be worshipped. It just means that they possess greater wisdom, and as a result of hard work they have advanced along the spiritual path. They often dedicate time to teaching and serving others. Again, this is an interpretation, but it corresponds with my dreams and memories about learning, teaching, and living in the higher realms.

The Day Joe Died

Returning to phenomenology, while I had been working with Joe on his website, I also began to feel his powerful "spirit," his "life energy" and his enormous love, even though we were at opposite sides of the continent. This "feeling his presence" was not something I had ever experienced with anyone in the past. Apparently he felt my presence as well, because, as mentioned previously, he was very good at picking up my emotions. He had sent me emails on several occasions telling me exactly what I needed to hear that served to alleviate distress I was feeling in the moment, even though I had not communicated the feelings to him or had been in recent contact with him. For example, one day I was trying to decide on a topic for an article for his Journal (he had asked me to

write an article on any topic I wished a few weeks earlier), and as I was contemplating all of the interesting topics and their complexity I was becoming a little overwhelmed. I was thinking almost out loud: “I really need to write a book” (in order to do the topics justice and incorporate them all). I was sitting in front of my computer and at the very moment that thought had entered my mind an email popped in. It was from him, asking me if I would be interested in writing a book about online critical pedagogy (J. Kincheloe, personal communication, September 19, 2008, 11:54 am). I was so stunned over the synchronous timing of his message that I could not answer him right away. Finally, I commented back to him a little later that same day, with “Exactly on the same wavelength!” written in the subject line of the email and told him I was just thinking the same thing (1:22 pm). He replied back with, “fantastic—great minds” and seemed very happy that I wanted to write a book for a new series he had recently contracted for (September 19, 2008, 2:09 pm).

Because I felt so linked to his spirit and his love, when his life came to an end, I seemed to have instantly felt his absence—even before I had conscious knowledge of what had happened. In fact, it compelled me to make contacts to find out if he was ok, yet in my heart, I knew the worse. When I had initially learned he had gone to Jamaica for the Christmas holidays, I immediately had had the most horrible premonition that he would not be returning from his vacation trip. I have no idea where this premonition came from. I did not know he was going to Jamaica and didn’t learn of it until he was already there when the information was posted on the Internet. When I did learn of it, for reasons I didn’t understand, I felt an overwhelming and indescribable sense of fear, much

like the fear Bloomstein (2000) had described when her Twin Flame had informed her that he was going to have surgery. I wanted so badly to write to Joe, tell him happy birthday since I had not mailed him a birthday card I had bought for him (which turned into another amazing phenomenological experience as I will discuss later). At the same time, I felt that so much had been going on for him that was not good, politically, with his research and the website, and he had recently had some medical issues, so my mind told me to not disturb him on his vacation. And I kept thinking of one of the last emails I had sent him in relation to yet another complaint about my writing on his site. I had told him “I trust your judgment completely.” It was one of those weird comments that wasn’t even referring to anything specific and can mean one thing on one level yet something else on a deeper level. And anyway, I knew he really needed time to rest and relax, and I didn’t want to bother him with what might be deemed petty concerns. Of course, now I wish I had emailed him and told him to get to the doctor because he did not look well at all in some of the photos being posted and I became increasingly worried about him. And then when a post mentioned him being taken to the hospital, my fear went out the roof. At some point that same day, to my complete devastation, I suddenly could no longer feel his spiritual energy or the conscious connection we had. I somewhat frantically wrote emails to several people only to learn what I was already feeling. Joe had died from a heart attack—just a few hours earlier.

I fell apart. *He was gone.* It literally felt like a part of me was gone, as if he had taken my heart and soul with him. I was totally devastated and I felt that was it the end of his website and the end of his work since no one was close to applying his theory in the

ways he had intended. In fact, it didn't even seem that people were interested in applying his theory at all. When I researched to see how people were citing his work, it was only being cited in the most superficial of ways. Most citations were from the first edition of his *Critical Pedagogy Primer*. I wondered how it was that he had so many admiring students and scholarly friends, yet no one was coming close to applying his theory.

Because his death was a precipitating event to some major revelations for me about death, and because gaining an understanding of these revelations are quintessential to the understanding of Joe's formulation of an evolving complex critical theory/pedagogy and the application of his multidimensional critical complex bricolage, I feel it is justified to discuss these matters in depth, even if a few people may object. My heart goes out to his family who suffered the greatest loss. At the same time, Joe was a public figure and, philosophically, he had nothing to hide and in fact, he stressed his wishes to put everything out on the table which is what he had done with his last few books (e.g., Kincheloe, 2005b, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2006d; 2008c). And many scientists are interested in doing more in depth phenomenological research so that for once humanity can get a better understanding of our true nature. We don't even know our true potentialities as humans and this is what Joe suffered over and why he worked so hard to get his message out. And so, here I am as a guinea pig, a country hick, putting it all out on the table in a language and format that everyone can easily understand even if they don't experience it or agree with what I'm doing.

Of course, we will never understand it all, but at least we can get to the point that special abilities are seen as the true blessing and gifts that they are. We all have far more

potential than we are using and genius should not be regarded as a “stigma.” (Kincheloe, et al., 1999). A lot of work is needed to get the world ready to accept and allow all people to develop the higher levels of knowledge and cognition that applying Joe’s theory can help us achieve. In the meantime, people suffer for it. Joe has expressed how he had suffered throughout his lifetime and his emotions are embedded in the music and encoded messages in his works. I literally feel his pain and because, due to our Twin Flame connection, he shares his special gifts with me (I assume that is why I have suddenly experienced a sharp increase in “intuitive” abilities that I had not experienced in the past). No one should suffer from the insensitivity and cruelty from other people just because they’re “different.” I hope the world gets better prepared for the youngest generation coming into the world right now because if prophecy is correct, we will be seeing many amazingly gifted children moving up the ranks and they will be demanding that change.

Thus, when Joe died, because my consciousness had been molded by the materialism of FIDUROD and the death instinct of thanatos, I literally believed he was *inalterably and forever gone*. We remember those who have died once a year on Memorial Day is what I had learned, and of course we have our memories, but our relationships are over. I knew nothing of spirituality, other than the typical programming: when people die they go to Heaven and Heaven is some far away, theoretical place we don’t have access to. It was what I had always experienced. Loved ones in my life have died: my grandfather, my brother, close friends, my grandmother, and my stepfather. They were literally “gone” was how I intellectually, emotionally, and phenomenologically experienced it. I didn’t even dream about them.

Joe's Love: "The Gift of Power"

It was surprising, almost startling, and at the same time, a very divine, comforting, and profound experience when three days after Joe's death his powerfully strong spiritual energy returned to me, filling my entire being. I felt electrical. Blissful love energy traveled throughout my entire body and completely surrounded me like a warm, loving embrace. It far exceeded the kundalini experience discussed previously; the sensation literally encompassed my entire being. At the moment it happened I had instantaneously interpreted it as Joe having come back to me. I knew the feel of his energy. I was ecstatic. He was with me and it made me feel joyful and loved. That was how I had instantly interpreted the phenomenological experience when it occurred, even though I had never experienced anything like it and had no construct in my mind on which to attach the experience, other than the previous sensations of always sensing his energy and presence before he had passed away. It was because of those previous experiences that I recognized the feel of his energy and felt I knew him, but this was far more powerful. That it was *not* simply my imagination was confirmed to me whenever I walked toward my mother's cat, filled with this loving, "Holy Spirit" (as some people describe their own experience with this phenomenon), the cat would move away from me. He sensed the spiritual energy, which apparently, cats and other animals are able to do, and knew there was something different about me. While it was a strange incident, it confirmed for me that I was not simply imagining his spiritual presence. And, in fact, everyone around me knew something about me had changed. My extended family did not want me around anymore and have since rejected me. In the spiritual circles people discuss that this

happens frequently with biological families; if one person changes and, in particular, “vibrates” at a very high frequency, they are rejected (I don’t know how else to explain this). And often nothing can be done except to let go in order to avoid causing each other suffering due to the incompatibility.

While I am not a religious person in a fundamentalist sense, I do believe there has to be some sort of omniscient God or Intelligence, and I find value in seeking wisdom from religious sources, especially since engaging in this research during which I seem to be led to relevant religious information. During the days I had attended church, of course, I learned about the “Holy Spirit” which is described as being God or Jesus, but the teachings were always so obfuscated and I had never experienced a sense of Holy Spirit, not even after being baptized. I had never heard anyone talk about it or describe it in terms beyond theoretical, so it had always been an abstract idea until this experience. This was very confusing, because I did not feel it was God, but that it was Joe who had returned to me and with him he brought his amazing love—love so powerful—beyond the typical human capacity to love.

Just a few days before finishing up edits on the first draft of this dissertation I found the Catholic explanation that the Holy Spirit is God and the Holy Spirit is a person (Salza, 2007). It is both. This made sense to me due to what I was experiencing and after having found descriptions of the Twin Flame reunion as comprised also of a union with God/Goddess to form a Holy Trinity, the three connected through the Holy Spirit. I am beginning to understand some of the amazing paradoxes that occur. John Salza explains

that many verses in the scripture describe the dual nature of the Holy Spirit being a person and God, yet another strange paradox.

I had no words to describe my experience with this Holy Spirit and it was almost too unreal to acknowledge consciously at the time it had first happened. Thus, the next day, on December 23, 2008, I had simply recorded in my journal: “I felt Joe’s presence, finally, after feeling devastated and crying ever since I learned of his death. I felt his spiritual support, and I know what he wants me to do. . . . He wants me to take his work, and through my research, move it forward, disseminate the results to the public in a way they can apply it, use it, expand their knowledge, and gain greater power for confronting the status quo to make changes in the world that are more socially just.” At the time, I really didn’t even have words to describe the profundity of the experience, but was just very relieved to know that, in my mind, he was not dead after all and that he had returned to me. I felt like he had “chosen” me.

The reality of this unusual experience was further confirmed for me when many months later, I contacted a friend of Joe’s who has a more open worldview than the Western worldview. I had contacted him about a writing project he and Joe had been considering because I was hoping I would be able to pick up where Joe had left off. It was a project I felt passionate about following through with. Without having described any of my experiences, he somehow sensed it and surprised me by commenting, “There is something very spiritual going on here.” He suggested that I read the book, *Gift of Power* by Lame Deer. Whenever people make suggestions such as this, I interpret it as meaning I have just received special instructions from yet another Master Teacher on my

path. Coincidentally, Joe mentions the same book in his last book. It seemed very important so I bought the book right away. The order was placed on August 17, 2010 more than a year and a half after Joe's passing, and I was still struggling at that time with understanding what was happening to me. I mean, I *knew* what was happening. And it all made sense to me, but at the same time it was so outside FIDUROD that literally no one else could relate to me and people shunned me if I shared even a little about my experiences. Thus, I was wide open to learning about additional perspectives. Lame Deer (1992) describes his experience in the very first paragraph of the book:

As my father lay dying, he gripped my hand. I felt his power flowing into me until it filled my whole being. At that moment, my life changed altogether from what it had been. My future became something I could only partly sense, like looking at a distant mountain range half hidden in a blue haze. At that moment, the man I had been died, and a new man took his place. (p. 3)

Lame Deer describes throughout the book how his father's spirit changed him and how he had inherited his father's special gifts as a medicine man. I was amazed that I had experienced something so similar to what Lame Deer described and even more amazed that he had actually written about it. The only difference is that I have never felt that my old self had "died," although it does seem that some of my family members came to see it that way. The way I perceive it is that I feel more alive than ever before. I have remembered who I am, where I came from, and what I'm here on this planet to do. On occasion the thought of "possession" that religions and popular culture depict in a negative manner had crossed my mind as I came across those thanatos perspectives during my research, but I knew if possession meant remembering who I really am and being me rather than who society had constructed me to be, and if it meant acquiring a

whole range of new abilities and understandings, and most notably, if it meant experiencing a powerful love that is beyond description and a connection to Joe—then I wanted to be possessed. It was a free will decision. It was only after much more research that I finally came to understand it more clearly in a different light—as a Twin Flame reunion—which involves a spiritual alchemical process and is considered to be the highest and most divine love relationship possible. It should go without saying that these relationships take all configurations, but it just so happens that for me, it took the form of a traditional man/woman relationship, so that is my focus in this dissertation. More research is desperately needed; I hope more researchers see the open door.

Thus, through Joe, his work, and much research to corroborate my experiences, I learned that people do not die in the way I had been led to believe all of my life. We have been taught a lie because we live in a world, as Kincheloe (2008c) had described, that consists of a false reality based on a thanatos that is embedded in psychology, science, education, religion, and literally every dimension of our earthly lives. We are constantly bombarded with images, music, movies, symbols, and horrific events such as wars, murders, despicable crimes against humanity that all reek of the influence of a satanic cult-like mentality. Death and evil snuff out love and life and it's hardly even questioned. We are all a part of it in some way; we all contribute which is perhaps the hardest thing for most people to accept and may be what keeps so many fighting against change. Overcoming denial can be traumatic in itself. Overcoming fear is another challenge and the powers-that-be keep fear at the top of the chart to maintain "law and order." This is the world that Joe contended needs to be counter-balanced with an Eros Love, spirit, and

soul (Kincheloe, 2008c). Kincheloe was referring to Eros Love in its complete embodiment “as the great unifying force that preserves all life” (Marcuse, 1955, p. 27).

Thus, because I had interpreted that Joe had come back to me and it was a very real experience of his presence which I still feel today, I have concluded that when people die, they do not necessarily just go away; at least some people don't, because he didn't. I am not able to explain or speculate as to why there is a difference. Various religions and philosophies have explanations, again, which are interpretations, some of which will be presented in this study. However it's explained his coming back to me and the sharing of his immense love and spiritual power was without a question, the greatest gift I have ever received. Before that time, my life has been one of struggle, poverty, suffering, and sacrifice. If Joe's love and presence, along with connection to God/Great Spirit/the All is the reward, I would go through it all again. I truly believed it was a great gift of love from him, and perhaps he chose me because he knew how much I loved him, his work, and his mission. But, on the other hand, perhaps we had been working together all along. There is a subchapter in his last book that stood out for me in a very personal sense from the very first time I had read it: “Playing with the Queen of Hearts: The Joker Ain't the Only Fool in FIDUROD” (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 21).

The Profound Gift of Everyday Magic

Thus, much of my research during the past nearly four years has involved trying to understand these extraordinary phenomenological experiences, including the Divine gifts, the generous sharing of knowledge, and the delightful “Treasure Hunts” that seem to be handed down from Heaven. In my mind, it is Joe who continues to assist me with

my spiritual growth, although I am aware of other teachers and soul family members as well. The two tasks, my transformation and this research, are so inextricably intertwined they cannot be separated. Likewise, I have been unable to disentangle myself (the researcher) from Joe (the subject of the research). There have been so many “signs” and “signals,” “coincidences” and “synchronicities,” lucid dreams, visions, and intuitive events that exceed anything I have experienced in my life and which are so far beyond a “rational” explanation that there is that profound sense of “undeniability” Miles and Huberman (1998) associate with qualitative research (p. 1). Even the most skeptical of people would be very hard pressed to say that it is all just my imagination or that I could have made this all up. On the other hand, people who have seen these synchronicities would view my experiences as “normal” and yet also profound and meaningful. For these people, the premise is that when we are ready to see these connections and the messages, we will. And the more we come to learn about the reality of these “miracles” and how they manifest, the more of them we see and/or create (Moss, 2009, 2010). According to Moss, we can create some of these synchronicities ourselves and I can understand how that’s possible, but that does not explain them all.

All we have to go on to explain these phenomena are interpretations and it can be enlightening to use Joe’s conceptualization of bricolage for pulling together more informed and more holistic interpretations. My view is that we cannot create reality in a bubble, even though that’s a common New Age metaphor. During the process of this research, I not only pulled together pieces to inform my understanding about spirituality and soul development, at the same time, it became an immensely transformative process

of learning of Joe's continuing existence— at least my perception of his continuing existence—his ability to aid me with my spiritual growth, serve as my Master Teacher in the higher realms, help me remember lifetimes we have shared in the past and the future, take me places in the higher realms, and then using bricolage to pull together all of the fragmented memories to make sense of it all. His bricolage process catalyzed fourth dimension research by which I am able access higher levels of knowledge in multiple ways (dreams, visions, intuition, telepathic, multiple layers of interpretation). For me, this was evidence that we all have the ability to expand consciousness and reach higher levels of cognition using this research process. In his writing, his contention is that even children can produce profound knowledge using bricolage.

Consciousness Evolution: Take Me Higher and Higher. Kincheloe's multidimensional critical complex bricolage can be applied from a surface level interpretation of his work to an advanced, multidimensional level that incorporates fourth dimension research for people who have "psychic abilities." As discussed earlier in relation to the Hermesian state of mind almost everyone has the ability to reach higher order thinking and states of consciousness quite easily and without meditation (Lachman, 2011). A recent study, "Taking the Spirits Seriously: Neo Shamanic and Contemporary Shamanic Healing in New Zealand" by Irene Dawne Sanson (2012) confirms this growing recognition. It seems more people are developing the abilities to communicate telepathically including with people residing in the astral realms as well as the higher realms. For example, Nancy Detweiler (2011a), who holds master's degrees in Education and Divinity describes these rapid changes in consciousness taking place and says this

trend will continue during 2012 and beyond. She describes how more people are gaining access to their intuitive abilities that put them in contact with higher dimensions. She defines the astral planes (or dimensions) as consisting of levels that “range from the very negative hellish regions to the very beautiful” (para 6). She explains that part of our “purification process” on the astral plane is to be of service to others. She cautions though, that the astral planes are also planes of illusion, and while there are helpful souls residing in the upper levels of the astral, it is the fifth dimension and beyond where no negativity exists and love is unconditional, however only focusing on the positive in our daily lives as some New Age ideologies demand creates imbalance (Detweiler, 2011b). She also describes encountering her Twin Flame in a vision of the fifth dimension. She contends that we all have Twin Flames and soul families with whom we will be rejoining as we move to the fifth dimension (level of consciousness). From my observations in spiritual communities and from reading the channeled messages posted, many people are connecting with the astrals rather than connecting to the higher realms. If the difference is between the illusion of the third and fourth dimensions versus remembering who we are so that we can reconnect with our soul families and one true love, as Detweiler contends, then Kincheloe’s work is important in that it can help us reach those higher states of consciousness to override illusion. We are multidimensional and, in a sense, we exist in multiple dimensions simultaneously. This may be a temporary condition related to cosmology, but my sense is that it’s important to know who we are, what we are here for and where we are going. While, theoretically the possibilities are infinite, from a practical standpoint, probabilities are not. What I have found is that it’s the personally relevant

signs, symbols, and synchronicities—the “messages from the gods” and those typically “unseen” dimensions that have guided me on my individual path. There are always choices but those choices often wind back to the same place. While Kincheloe had multiple meanings for his use of the term multidimensional, learning outside the “normal” five senses is an important component. He discusses the importance of not restricting our research to only that which we can sense with our five senses. Goswami (2001) contends that we will be able to take better note of the phenomena we can handle for research purposes once we found science on the primacy of consciousness. The phenomenological experiences I have had have been outside the “normal” experiences of most people, outside of the five senses. Quantitative, positivistic sciences or even phenomenology and other qualitative approaches, alone, can’t adequately address what these experiences might represent, thus hermeneutics and interpretation and presenting various perspectives using multiple methods and discourse analysis, the processes Kincheloe has incorporated into his bricolage are essential. As Einstein and Kincheloe both have observed, the more perspectives we have, the better our understanding and the stronger our theory. Kincheloe (2008c) states:

The more perspectives we make use of, the more we understand the connections between the knower and the known and the socio-cultural, political economic forces that shape the knower, the more relevant research methodologies we employ, the more of our human abilities we employ, the better off we are. Using these resources we come to understand the ways that diverse contexts have shaped the phenomena we’re studying. (pp. 67–68)

In this way we can come to better understand a phenomenon, even if we still may not have it completely “right.” For example, my interpretation of being connected to Joe across dimensions is right for me from my current understanding and it aligns with his

theory as well as quantum physics, autopoieses, enactive, chaos and complexity theories, and Ageless Wisdom cross-culturally that provide for the reality of these connections. The magic in my life has led me to perceiving everyday “reality” that is limited to perception with our five senses as *less* real and I am left with the desire to stretch my consciousness further to perceive more. What more magic can I experience in my life as I evolve my consciousness to higher levels? We need Kincheloe’s proposed “science of complexity” to study perceptions and interpretations for greater understanding of this process of consciousness evolution. It is not simply imagination.

“Red Roses for a Blue Lady.” I cannot simply imagine, for example, that a red rosebush grew up midst my yellow rosebush. As many years as I have grown roses I have never seen a completely different rosebush grow up within an existing rosebush, intertwining with it as happened for me in 2011. How could that be? I like to interpret it as a very special gift from Joe due to the “synchronistic” circumstances that surrounded its occurrence. Other people can perceive easily enough with their eyes that yes, there is a red rosebush growing with the yellow one that had not been there previously. I did not plant it and it grew up from totally undisturbed soil. The facts in this case are the facts, which photographs depict because I had taken pictures of them each year after planting the yellow rosebushes in 2009.

I had planted four yellow rosebushes in Joe’s memory, and had even dedicated the first yellow rose to him on Father’s Day 2009 with a special poem I wrote for him. And then in 2011, the rosebushes had died due to the landscape maintenance crew putting too

much poison around them to kill the weeds, and chopping the rose bushes off instead of properly pruning them.

I became very upset. They were such sacred roses that I cried and ended up canceling the lawn service. Miraculously, the rosebushes (all but one) managed to come back to life. When the yellow rose bush next to my porch grew back, a red rosebush magically grew up through the center of it, intertwining with the yellow one. They are not even the same kind of roses.

All I had done was water them. And so, since I had already been referring to Joe as “Eros, the God of Love” because of his great love while he had been here, as well as for having written so often of Eros in his work, and his great love that I could still sense, I had interpreted that he was the magic behind not only the return of the yellow roses, but the extra gift of the red roses—a love gift for “Psyche” to alleviate my emotional distress over having lost the roses.

Humorously, as I have mentioned, my name, Vanessa, meaning “butterfly” translates to the name “Psyche.” I had already written many “mystories” about “Eros and Psyche” and this one about the roses was especially magical. In the original story of Eros and Psyche, Eros was known to love roses and provide Psyche with rose gardens and still today, the saga of the roses continues, too long a story to include here. Symbolically, yellow roses represent wisdom, spiritual power and joy, while red roses symbolize love; the more red roses, the more powerful is the love and I was gifted with an infinite supply of red roses. As I reviewed my data during this study, I have discovered there has been much magic centering on the roses I had planted in Joe’s memory.

And I was not the only person who saw the *Eros* in Joe. As Philip Anderson (2011) writes, “We need to push back the night of thanatos with our brilliant talk, our familial songs, and the music of life that is the joy of Eros. . . .that was the experience of Joe L. Kincheloe” (p. 30). That joy seems to still live on.



Figure 1. The Gift of Roses from Eros (June, 2011)

The “Grander Purpose” of Bricoleurs: Is it Magic? How do we come to understand better what’s happening behind this type of phenomena? Are we truly all connected and is love, Eros, the source? God? Einstein (1931/2009) had recognized that geniuses are distinguished by a sort of *cosmic religion* “which recognizes neither dogma nor God made in man’s image” (p. 49). I in no way claim to be a genius, but Joe was, and this interpretation by Einstein, one of Joe’s favorite geniuses, is how I have come to view God/Great Spirit during the process of this research, and it is my perceived connection to

Joe that has brought me to that perspective. If Joe is working from some higher dimension and I am his messenger—and I am well aware that he has many more messengers—then in my interpretation, he is still doing profound work from where he is in order to get his point across about Eros as a counterpoise to thanatos. What a beautiful metaphor he has provided with all of the gifts he’s handed down to me. I have not yet begun to describe the magic and can only touch on some of the more significant experiences in relation to the bricolage for this dissertation. The rest have some grander purpose, I’m sure. This reminds me of his overarching definition of bricolage. It is the second part of his definition which many people seem to miss. He writes:

Yvonna Lincoln (2001) delineates two types of bricoleurs: those who are committed to research eclectism, allowing circumstances to shape the methods employed and those who want to engage in the genealogy/archeology of the disciplines with some grander purpose in mind. My purpose entails both of Lincoln’s articulations of the role of bricoleur. (Kincheloe, 2004a, p. 3)

Kincheloe speaks of magic throughout his work. As a young child he had wanted to create magic and his passionate desire transferred to his love of words, writing, and the magic he learned to create hermeneutically combining them in creative and powerful ways. He, indeed, had a grander purpose in mind, The Great Work, perhaps, that leads to the elusive Golden Chalice for knowledge production. Does his bricolage lead the way?

Is This Our Dharma Project? These profound and continuing experiences are so numerous I am not able to provide any sort of meaningful quantification (and would not want to quantify the highly spiritual and divine gifts of love I receive each and every day, anyway). The gifts correspond to a promise Joe had sent me in messages back when I was so very fearful that he was not going to be in the world much longer (a fear he had

picked up on because nothing could be hidden from him): He had signed off with “Strawberry fields forever, J[oe].” And in another message he wrote “Evolvingly Yours, Joe” I was still very much asleep, and I needed to be, it seems due to the circumstances. Still, subconsciously, I received his messages.

How do we come to understand magical gifts of roses on a more scientific basis, albeit a radically new conceptualization of science from what we now understand? This is ultimately where Kincheloe was headed with his work, and from the day he left this planet, I somehow “knew” that keeping extensive and accurate data was important for what he was after. As asleep as I still was at that time, I felt that my role was somewhat like being a “guinea pig,” and that I would come out of the closet to show that Joe and I truly are connected, always have been connected, and that death is an illusion—or at the very least—eternal life is within reach of us all and we have more power than we realize to form the quality of that life. We do not need to keep spinning wheels. It really did seem that Joe and I were working together on some grand scheme, a Dharma Project. Thus, I could use all of my data to show that we really can communicate with those on the other side of the curtain; of course many people have already shown that and there is something more to this project that I do not yet fully understand. I also sensed that this was related to knowledge that was kept from the populous, that “dangerous knowledge” he repeatedly mentioned in his books, which I have yet to fully understand. Nevertheless, I willingly accepted the role to take Joe’s work to a new level of application—to be the one to put these experiences on the table no matter the risk to my future career in education and no matter the risk of being called “crazy.” I had felt totally alienated from

the beginning, in fact I have felt that way most of my life and in almost every social setting I've been in. Thus, I came to feel that I had nothing to lose. Nothing in this material world mattered much to me anymore, aside from the divine gifts that kept coming my way from the cosmos and the need to keep a roof over my family's head. I also felt immense anger over education and how a small elite group must control everything, how they have rules for us that I never seem to be able to even *see* much less follow, how I've been taught so many lies, and how much knowledge has been hidden. I felt anger over how some people have no qualms about destroying someone else's hard labor of love if it doesn't happen to fit their agenda for fame and fortune. And I'm speaking in all realms of my life in every career I've worked in and from what I observe overall. It has always been this way. I felt extreme grief over Joe having to leave the world before being able to take his work to the next level as he had really wanted. And I felt an intense, deep soul love for Joe that has only continued to grow. I would do anything for him but I also know he is the purest of unconditional love and he never requires anything of me at all.

I Love Strawberries! How do we get there? How can we make those “rhizomatic” and “Strawberry Fields Forever” types of connections with people? How can we make those connections with people and entities in other dimensions or with loved ones who have crossed over to the other side? The concept, rhizome, based on the philosophical thought of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1980) provides a useful model for these mysterious and often hidden phenomena I've been discussing. In his last book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*, Kincheloe (2008c) expressed

this concept with his metaphoric use of “Strawberry Fields,” referencing the Beatles song, thus providing additional depth, insight, and an emotional connection. I loved his metaphor and after reading the book, I sent him an email to praise him for the book, writing “I love strawberries!” in the subject line.

There are multidimensional meanings, obviously, and in his return email he expresses his recognition of my fear of being separated from him, reassuring me that we would never be separated by referring to the song’s lyrics. By one interpretation, he could have been expressing his frustration over not being understood by people around him: “No one I think is in my tree, I mean it must be too high or low. . .” as the lyrics of the song goes; however, “that is, I think it’s not too bad,” he had told me, signing off with “Strawberry fields forever, J.” (personal communication, September 30, 2008, 8:09 AM). By another interpretation he was also letting me know that our future telepathic communications would sometimes be “off the mark,” our vibrations will fluctuate, sometimes being too high or too low. Phenomenologically, this is what I experience. Sometimes I feel more distant from him as if we are not connecting as well as other times. I have come to learn it’s me, not him. The only time it happens is when I feel stressed, which is only when I get worried about money. Being sad and crying, does not weaken the connection. Mostly we are “right on target,” another phrase he had often posted to me during our online conversations, even making a joke about it because he had said it so many times.

This rhizomatic metaphor is also used both in relation to knowledge production and as a model for society. Recognized and incorporated are “trans-species” (alien?)

connections as “multiplicities” defined as a unity which is multiple in itself, similar to the Twin Flame phenomenon in which the couple form a unity, but are two entities (maybe even *trans-species* as represented in stories of Eros, a “god with wings” and Psyche, an “earthling”). In terms of social systems, “the rhizome presents history and culture as a map or wide array of attractions and influences with no specific origin or genesis, for a ‘rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, interbeing, intermezzo.’ The planar movement of the rhizome resists chronology and organization, instead favoring a nomadic system of growth and propagation” (Wikipedia, 2012, “Rhizome”). Thus, rhizomatic connections form a descriptive metaphor for a bricolage which recognizes multiple levels or dimensions, multiple entry and exit points, and multiple interpretations. There are many nonlinear, nonhierarchical pathways for the research and knowledge production process and the connections between entities that occur during that process. Again, it represents a natural, improvisational, and autopoietic approach to research that stretches in all directions and all levels and beyond our perceived dimensions.

It is, however, challenging work requiring conscious reconstruction of knowledge and accessing portions of our minds we have been denied since having been educated “out of our minds.” I love how Einstein brought this issue back to our collective conscious awareness, when he stated, “The intuitive mind is a sacred gift and the rational mind is a faithful servant. We have created a society that honors the servant but has forgotten the gift.” With Kincheloe’s bricolage process he has literally returned “The Gift” but he has done so in a way that still honors the servant. We all have available

higher orders of cognition, a higher consciousness that for most of us has been shut off due to our education, programming, and social conditioning. But there is no denying there is work involved, thus highlighting the importance of rigor in the bricolage. And there is always the risk of people using their knowledge in ways that are not good for the world. With the ingredients of love and passion that Kincheloe has injected into bricolage, and which ultimately lead us on a pathway to compassion, we can keep on the “right” path, the Dharma Path, as some of the wisdom knowledges describe it. We are never alone, however, and always have the most loving assistance from the “gods” and “masters,” according to my interpretation and experiences applying Kincheloe’s rhizomatic philosophy. In fact it has been very interesting to see teachers join me during this process exactly when they are needed with just the right knowledge to push me along the journey. And Kincheloe, himself, has been holding my hand the entire distance.

Thus, the complex task before me is how to describe my personal experiences of connections that transcend Western constructions of “normal” in a way that represents them adequately, without losing the core phenomenology, and in a way that people who may not have had the experiences can understand them. This requires drawing from a multitude of perspectives that look upon these experiences through different windows and using various narrative techniques as described previously—and more. The multidimensional critical complex bricolage opens up possibilities rather than collapses them, which is in contrast to most forms of research that tend to collapse data into categories. The elastic clause Kincheloe has specified is always in effect and the “final analysis” is never the final analysis. As a dedicated lifetime bricoleur, my research

continues as I seek more data, more knowledge, and more understanding. Perhaps it will be shown as Kincheloe has contended all along—that this research is an idiosyncratic, complex, and subjective process, but knowledge is, indeed, constructed during the process through the iterative processes that occur between research and writing. During this process, we gain our freedom as we gain greater understanding of ourselves as human beings.

Joe Kincheloe's Bricolage: Passionate Multidimensional Living. During this research I have experienced much the same lack of clarity that Lame Deer (1992) had described in the excerpt I provided earlier in which he conveys that he could see the mountain in front of him, but it was hazy and partially covered. Options always stay open; I just go with the flow as I engage in the bricolage process and as I engage in my life. Perhaps a good metaphor for the multidimensional critical complex bricolage is *life*, maybe even eternal life that has no past, present or future. Eros would have to be added to the equation: bricoleurs allow the life energy of Eros Love (Spirit) to flow through us as we take an improvisational approach to life and live in each moment as our moments expand into multiple realities. Eros is like a sort of steering mechanism for those who like to think in mechanistic terms. Wait, that doesn't work for me. I like to believe I have united in oneness with the one true Eros. This person I communicate with actually tells me he is Eros so either he is or he is just playing me for a "fool of the gods." I don't believe he would play me for a fool but on the other hand, I thrive with uncertainty. Could it be possible? Could we be a new twenty-first century version of Eros and Psyche? Will Eros transform me, Psyche, a mere earthling, into a goddess? According to

Kincheloe (2008c) if we can think something up we can create it. Something tells me I should have been having this much fun in my life a lot sooner.

Kincheloe also promotes the power and magic of words for manifesting our creations. He explains, “As a critical discourse, the bricolage always considers the normative dimension of what should be as well as what is. When immanence (what should be) is added to the complex dynamics surrounding decision-making and interpretation in the realm of research, bricoleurs move to yet a higher domain of complexity” (Kincheloe, 2004c, p. 34). Critical analytic discourse helps move bricoleurs to that higher domain.

Critical Discourse Analysis: Communicating “The View from Within”

In their book, *The View from Within*, Francisco Varela and Jonathan Shear (2002) advocate for a science of consciousness that studies “lived experience associated with cognitive and mental events” in ways that transcend subjective and socially regulated scientific methods. As Kincheloe (2008c) has also provided, we cannot simply study “things-in-themselves” or “things out there,” without addressing interpretations of our “inner” experiences in relationship to our “outside” experiences. Varela and Shear assert that what is sought is “*a science of consciousness which includes first-person, subjective experience as an explicit and active component*” (p. 2) [authors’ italics]. At the same time, they acknowledge, “it would be futile to stay with first-person descriptions in isolation.” (p. 2). We return to the notion here of social construction of knowledge, a necessary component for making meaning of shared or similar phenomenological

experiences. As I've reiterated throughout this dissertation, during this research I've experienced phenomena that were completely foreign to me. I had no previous schemas, thus, I continuously sought outside myself for some kind of explanation. That does not mean, however, that I accepted every interpretation for what I experience; in fact, I accept none of them in their entirety because there is too much we don't know about these phenomena I've been describing. It is a continuous construction process.

Kincheloe (2004a) is requiring bricoleurs recognize that in order to accomplish this task, critical discourse analyses are required. We cannot simply put our experiences out and say "this is what they mean to me" particularly when we have so little knowledge about the possibilities of meaning. There is often no grounding in that approach, a practice I've seen on discussion forums by people who don't research for possible explanations of the phenomena they experience. Reading too many of these accounts can lead to making one feel crazy in the literal sense. This approach borders on the ludic postmodernism (and nihilism) for which Kincheloe's theory provides an escape route. By grounding our critical complex interpretations and hermeneutical analyses with a variety of philosophical, epistemological, ontological, and cosmological perspectives, we can better understand and communicate our understanding of human experience. And as Varela and Shear (2002) posit, "whatever descriptions we can produce through first-person methods are not pure, solid 'facts' but potentially valid intersubjective items of knowledge, quasi-objects of a mental sort. No more, no less. Furthermore, human experience is not a fixed, predelineated domain. Instead, it is changing, changeable and fluid" (p. 14).

This requires moving out of FIDUROD Land and recognizing other worlds are viable possibilities. Until we collectively have the ability to free ourselves from our mind prisons enough to see that we are multidimensional beings living in pluriverses amongst diverse entities, most people will continue to be limited by their five senses and will deem anyone who can see beyond, quite literally “out of their mind.” However, during the course of my research, I have come to believe that it is not me, but many in the world, who are out of touch with reality, and that most of this damage has been the result of the workings of FIDUROD just as Kincheloe (2008c) portrays. As we move away from the constraints of FIDUROD, we see beyond the veil and we discover there are actually many veils; the work is not over.

As an example, Harkins (2001) describes differences in perception in relation to eight different veils (and there are many more). Those who see beyond any given veil are deemed “crazy” by those who cannot see beyond that veil and vice versa. In his article, Harkins discusses the difficulty and sometimes futility of trying to convey one’s perception if perceiving beyond the higher veils to someone who is stuck behind, for example, the first veil where people perceive reality pretty much as defined for them by FIDUROD. Thus, the dilemma of a dissertation such as this one, presents as the difficulty of conveying perception beyond, say the sixth veil when only “ten percent of us will pierce the sixth veil where the dragons and lizards and aliens we thought were the fictional monsters of childhood literature are real and are the controlling forces behind the secret societies” (Harkins, 2001). The more veils one is able to pierce, the more alone one feels. Except that I know I am never alone, as I have also discovered from piercing

those veils and as indicated by the previous discussion of rhizomatic connections.

Writing about my experiences is a challenge because many people during this prophesied “age of ignorance” (another paradox) (Rain, 1988) will not relate unless they read with an open mind. As Harkins (2001) explains:

If my math is accurate there are only about 60,000 people on the planet who have pierced the sixth veil. The irony here is too incredible: Those who are stuck behind veils one through five have little choice but to view the people who have pierced the veils beyond them as insane. With each veil pierced, exponentially shrinking numbers of increasingly enlightened people are deemed insane by exponentially increasing masses of decreasingly enlightened people. Adding to the irony, the harder a “sixth or better veiler” tries to explain what he is able to see to those who can't, the more insane he appears to them. (para. 14)

Kincheloe’s goal was to help people learn to perceive behind some of those veils, communicate what they perceive and interpret, and then learn to describe them better with new epistemologies and sciences. As indicated, Kincheloe made it clear that the multidimensional critical complex bricolage requires a critical discourse analysis and grounding in philosophy in order to communicate *interpretations* of what’s hidden in typically unseen dimensions. Anything outside of this, in my estimation, cannot meet the standards of rigor he is calling for. This presents as an obstacle in some cases because the trend in education has been blind adherence to “succinct” writing which simplifies, condenses, and even “stupidifies” the content. The form of writing and analysis Kincheloe is calling for helps develop and improve both one’s cognitive and writing abilities while narrating in a natural voice. What is our ultimate purpose for engaging in these complex forms of analysis? Kincheloe summed it up beautifully:

Bricoleurs take seriously our creative responsibility to break the lenses of present ways of viewing the world. Such lenses need to be broken, bricoleurs contend, not because of some Oedipal impulse to kill the father, but because such frames have

caused such heartbreak and suffering on the part of those who fall outside the favoured race, class, gender, sexual, religious, and ability-related demographic. (2004b, p. 19)

Accomplishing this in ways that make a difference requires the rigor he calls for as well as the creative and imaginative power that is unleashed during the process. As I have previously alluded, breaking lenses or posing new realities tends to alienate us from those who are threatened by such propositions. It just goes with the territory. As Kincheloe states, “we just have to give up any aspirations of winning the Miss Congeniality contest. Such work will invariably anger the guardians of the status quo, Relax, it’s our existential burden—go with it” (2008c, p. 176). Perhaps, the new matrix will be built from below and once the old crumbles, it will be ready to rise up and take its place. If Hermes Trismegistus is correct, however, it will be built from above *and* below (Smith, 2008). At any rate, Kincheloe’s comment about the Miss Congeniality contest had to have been written special for me, given I have never, in my entire life, had aspirations of winning such contests. I find it immensely humorous, but at the same time reassuring, especially given how “alienated” I am.

Related to this, I recently had a dream during which I was told by a highly respected Master Teacher that I needed to change my approach because I was alienating everyone. I responded by telling him “Then it’s working the way it’s supposed to!” Dreaming Bear (2011), a performing poet, humorously says that our earth experience is an opportunity to “exhibit how exciting alienation can be.” No one said reloading the matrix would be easy. Thus, I use many different critical discourse and narrative approaches and a variety of methods and analyses from informal to scholarly. This fits

within the scope of what Kincheloe was aiming for. As he states: “There is no reason, bricoleurs maintain, why scholars should be the only individuals with access to the power of the bricolage” (2004b, p. 14). There is no reason the elite should be allowed to guard the secret keys to Divine Love.

Discourse analysis is important for multiple reasons. Writing helps us solidify and clarify our thoughts, helps us peer through different conceptual windows for new understandings, and allows us to communicate these to other people. Since the purpose of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage is social change, it is important that we are able to share our analyses, various perspectives, and changes within ourselves with other people. For me, writing, much like other creative endeavors, provides me a way of connecting to higher consciousness, thus tapping into higher order knowledge. As we improve these abilities, the better we are able to construct and communicate new knowledges and viewpoints that act as catalysts for creative solutions not just for ourselves to enact, although that’s important, but also other people who read our work may become impassioned with some aspect of our research and then follow through with additional research, facilitating the “Mormon butterfly effect” Kincheloe (2008c, p. 197) mentioned. That was an amazing quality I noticed about Kincheloe’s work: he has provided a goldmine of ideas for researchers, particularly in his last book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*. There is something in that book for everyone to feel passionate about enough to research further. Thus, the bricolage itself begins to form those rhizomatic connections between people due to the way it’s structured and

presented, whereas, in contrast, positivistic research tends not to facilitate connection. It's difficult to find connections to something that is devised to isolate.

What is Discourse Analysis?

How is discourse analysis defined? Simply stated, it involves using any number of analytic methods and discourses for interpretive purposes in order to communicate understanding (Peräkylä, 2008). Added to bricolage, it involves analyzing as many interrelationships as practical for the purpose of the study. The variety of forms of discourse techniques provides a huge menu of options as well as implications for it being a lifetime learning endeavor. Some techniques include semiotic narrative analysis, linguistics, critical discourse analysis, historical discourse analysis, hermeneutics, and membership categorization analysis. Membership categorization analysis focuses on the more formal aspects of the text and how it corresponds with or diverges from “normative and cognitive forms concerning social relations that are involved in the production and understanding of texts . . . the descriptive apparatus . . . how we categorize people” (p. 356).

An example of how membership categorization analysis might be used is to observe that Kincheloe (2008c), in his book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*, clearly defines terms so that people unfamiliar with critical pedagogy are not excluded from the conversation and he has included helpful glossaries at the end of each chapter. He has also stayed away from jargon that clouds understanding. He has found a middle ground between appearing as the expert in a closed group who speaks what might seem like a foreign language and yet keeping the work sophisticated so that

readers do not feel they are being spoken down to. Another aspect of this book is that it represents an almost complete break from formal, stuffy academic dissertations. He has included himself in the discussion throughout so that the reader always knows his positioning, and he has unleashed a high level of creativity, including humor, thus making the book entertaining while it teaches. He has included prompts so that the reader is always thinking and reflecting on their own experiences, and he uses a multitude of other creative techniques. Created by applying the multidimensional critical complex bricolage at a high scholarly level, the book consists in many multiple layers of interpretations and perspectives that speak to a wide range of reading audiences, interests, and applications. So it doesn't matter what "level" a person is at, everyone gets something out of the book. Read it again, and a new dimension magically pops out.

Kincheloe was no amateur bricoleur.

Expanding and Strengthening the Narrative with POETS

While this study focuses on providing a narrative of the process of bricolage I have engaged in during this study, it also incorporates many types of elements or "objects" from videos, music, documents, dreams, visions, transmissions, art, poetry, observations, personal experiences, and more. As Berry (2004a) provides, point of entry texts or POETS can be any of these objects. Bricolage can begin with one POET and bricoleurs can insert any object at any point within the text, which expands the rhizomatic nature and interconnectedness of bricolage. An important ingredient with these objects of research however is the emotional aspect, the love and passion that connect us to them. It is "as feeling, empathy, the body, are injected into the research process, as the distinction

between knower and known is blurred, as truth is viewed as a process of construction in which knowers play an active role, [that] passion is injected into inquiry” (Kincheloe 2001b, p. 231). Thus, emotional connection to what we want to know ultimately can result in a deeper analysis and taking actions that relate to what we have learned during the process. Extending beyond the text in this fashion takes the reader on epistemological journeys to learn more. Kincheloe’s work often has this effect on me. One word or one song title makes me curious enough to investigate and thus build more connections to his dialogue that opens up windows to a much bigger and more amazing world. This is an application of “phenomenological bracketing” in which we set aside what we think we know, even if it’s just the definition of a single word, in order to explore the breadth and depth of potential meaning. One of the passions that I have particularly acquired since beginning this research is music and I quickly became cognizant of how extensively he has used it in his work. It has become a more important part of my life and my research than ever before. The emotional connections build my passion for what I am learning as I analyze Kincheloe’s work. Kincheloe (2001b) explains that it is passion that leads to a synergistic relationship between the researcher and their research and helps researchers develop greater empathy toward other human beings, one of the important goals of developing an epistemic consciousness. (p. 232).

What is Knowledge? Whose Knowledge?

In addition to how the finished object of research might look in terms of discourse or text is a consideration of the types of knowledge that are generated. What kinds of “knowing” can researchers present? In his book, *Getting Beyond the Facts*, Kincheloe

(2001b) described multiple forms of knowledge: evidence-based knowing (logic/mental); intuitive knowing; emotional knowing; spiritual knowing; divine knowing; cultural knowing; passionate (active) knowing (inquiry); and indigenous ways of knowing. The multidimensional critical complex bricolage may very well touch on all of these ways of knowing, and importantly, will seek perspectives of these ways of knowing from all around the world. Reading Kincheloe's work provides a good overview of the far-reaching nature of this research and how to synthesize it all. These multiple ways of "knowing," according to Kincheloe (2001b), are important for understanding how we are shaped as individuals and he maintains, "The ability to create a new form of thinking that brings together the logic and emotion and the human capacity for empathy is dependent on our understanding the forces that shape the self" (p. 233). He also stresses the importance of indigenous knowledges: "New emancipatory forms of cognition and consciousness are formed by the critical juxtapositioning of indigenous ways of seeing with Western logic. The relationship between these different traditions holds profound cognitive and educational insights" (2001b, p. 160). These ideas must be explored in any multidimensional critical complex bricolage study. Just as there is great value in researching many different perspectives, the more forms of knowing we construct, the better we understand how we are shaped by outside forces. This empowers us to discover ways to take control of our own consciousness construction, and subsequently, take control of our lives. And, in combination, they provide for a more holistic view of our research topic.

What Is Knowledge Production? Kincheloe has, of course, contended that his form of bricolage affords everyone, including children, the opportunity to produce knowledge. What did he mean by this? How did he define knowledge production? He provides his definition, which, along with the understanding that it also entails discourse analysis as previously presented helps clarify what he is intending:

Critical democratic social studies educators [also interpreted as “researchers”], guided by their epistemology of complexity, seek to produce a dialogical form of knowledge. Such knowledge is many times expressed as a series of questions and tentative answers rather than an arrogant factual knowledge. (Kincheloe, 2001b, p. 280)

He clarifies:

Researchers produce a practical knowledge characterized by three features: an integrative dimension, an applicative dimension and a hermeneutic (interpretive) dimension. . . . The integrative dimension constructs meaning for isolated facts, in the process, placing data into a larger perspective, connecting it to understandings emerging from a variety of disciplines, and questioning its moral and political inscriptions. The applicative dimension questions how knowledge can be applied to important problems. The hermeneutic dimension searches for the variety of ways knowledge can be interpreted and the various horizons (contexts) within which it can be viewed. In all of these dimensions, emphasis is placed on the process of knowing rather than the production of a final positive knowledge. (2001b, pp. 280–281)

What is he saying here? How can we come to better understand his message for producing, applying, and interpreting knowledge? In the first part of the excerpt, we are to be guided by a critical complex epistemology. He wrote extensively about this in the social studies book, *Getting Beyond the Facts*, as well as critical complex epistemology had formed the foundation of his last book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*. In fact, he has overtly replaced the traditional concept of critical pedagogy with his critical complex epistemology, as mentioned earlier. How does this manifest

within the research process? Epistemology is a philosophy of knowledge, thus, by incorporating it right up front in the research, it becomes a way of philosophically grounding our analyses which Kincheloe contends is necessary in order to ensure rigor and coherence of the research process. We can never capture the complete truth of the research process. It is just too complex, as Kincheloe readily admits, and as I discovered very early-on when I had as a goal to capture my own research process. He points out, “An epistemology of complexity adopts the view that even as social information is being gathered by researchers, it is being analyzed and interpreted” (2001b, p. 286). It is impossible to capture all of the nuanced actions and decisions that take place during such a complex act and the research process itself is continuously changing and evolving even as one engages in it. And maybe this is good: it keeps the research open and idiosyncratic, giving bricoleurs great freedom. At the same time, it can be speculated that by exposing oneself to many different and conflicting interpretations and continuously confronted with making decisions about them, the mind works overtime, thus improving cognition.

This creates a dilemma in addition to the one pointed out already in which this dissertation must address people in various locations of the web of understanding multidimensionality. The additional dilemma here is that obviously with the enormous amounts of research I have done, I have already been formulating in my mind various interpretations, making various assessments, evaluating what to include, what not to include, and a plethora of other actions. It is not possible to adequately represent all of these actions and decisions. It seems the more we chase a representation of reality, the

further it eludes us. Fortunately, I do have documentation of many these decisions and will attempt to summarize those pertinent to the discussion as well as justify my choices, but as much as the bricolage can bring us a little closer to reality, presenting that picture to someone else is a great challenge.

Kincheloe's (2001b) observation that distinguishing between different social realities and interpretations is more difficult than we might first assume was found to be true during my research. I often encountered perspectives I was unable to decipher in relation to the positioning, honesty, integrity, ontology of the writer in order to gain a better understanding of the reality they were presenting. There have been times when I totally abandoned the quest for understanding these complexities, to pick up again later after having completed other research and coming across clues that answer some of these questions. Here, I am speaking in terms of traditional forms of research, and also the kind of research that takes one on treks into dark alleys to confront complex diabolical deceptions. It is amazing how twisted "knowledge" can be. Some people refer to the type of knowledge that uncovers these dark "fiction formulas" as "conspiracy theory" but I have learned that those who have convinced us that this is the label we need to assign it are protecting power through their own versions of conspiracy. Much that is passed off as knowledge is nothing more than disinformation, misinformation, misconceptions, and the regurgitation over and over again of the same pseudo-knowledge. It does not take conspiracy theory to identify knowledge that has been purposely interpreted for purposes that are not good. Drilling down to truth can be very difficult, however. It takes much practice. I would have liked to have seen more of this analytic practice along with critical

discussion happening at all levels of my college education—in fact, all levels of my education beginning in elementary school. To complicate matters, all of this knowledge we must learn to analyze is in a continuous state of flux. For example, the conspirators often use a form of “controlled release” of information that they know has already or soon will become common knowledge. Of course I am referring here to nontraditional forms of research, but it does not seem much different in the realm of education, especially as education, corporations, the military, the government, and popular culture continue to merge. Kincheloe’s bricolage aids deciphering and uncovering the many hidden links, the rhizomatic connections that have constructed the complex power matrix controlling knowledge production and dissemination.

The Value of Tentative Knowledge. Perhaps not having complete or definitive knowledge or a precise understanding of the process of research is not the issue I perceive it to be. Knowledge is always in process and a part of larger processes, thus it is always changing (Kincheloe, 2001b). Because the connections between these processes are vast, bricoleurs must make determinations as to which processes and which knowledges to include in the discourse and how these processes interrelate. They must justify what they have left out as much as they are able (they can’t possibly find all of the connections), as well as justify what they have included. These justifications should be philosophically grounded in the sense that researchers fully uncover their thinking in relation to their positioning as well as consider other players in the web and how interactions with them influence the knowledge being produced. As Kincheloe (2001b) observed, “Although we appear to one another as single, bounded identities, we humans

are socially superabsorbent—like humanoid Husky paper towels. This simply means that our consciousness is shaped by that with which we come into contact” (p. 205). This illuminates the importance of the element of criticality. Knowledge *is* socially constructed and political and that fact is continuously being used to shape our thinking by various entities.

Uncertainty and Elasticity: Introducing the 11-11 Phenomenon. I have briefly mentioned the 11-11 Phenomenon and how it’s connected to the Twin Flame Phenomenon in the discussion about Tarot cards and the Twin Tower disaster. Here, a demonstration of elasticity is provided. The concept of uncertainty along with elasticity applies to the knowledge we construct or realities we create, as well as to the processes we use to construct them. Again, returning to the idea that a metaphor for the bricolage is the process of life itself clarifies Kincheloe’s (2008c) explanation that we can continuously remake ourselves. “To me, one of the most exciting dimensions of being a critical theorist and engaging in a critical pedagogy entails opening ourselves up to a passionate imagination, where we constantly remake ourselves in light of new insights and understandings” he asserts (p. 250). The multidimensional critical complex bricolage expands the possibilities. Kincheloe’s advice for elasticity reminds me of the advice to not change your answer on a test if you were not sure of your answer; most often you are right. Our intuition, our inner knowing or immediate perception about something makes a particular impression and it is often noteworthy although we tend to pay less regard to it than “rational” thought. In bricolage it’s important to sometimes circumvent “rational thought” if the interpretation benefits by an intuitive approach. Related to this idea,

Gloria Anzaldúa (1999) describes “*la facultad*,” which is “the capacity to see in surface phenomena the meaning of deeper realities, to see the deep structure below the surface. It is an instant ‘sensing,’ a quick perception arrived at without conscious reasoning” (p. 60). Thus, again, this confirms that first interpretations are often the most noteworthy for perceiving deeper meanings of phenomena. Too many times in my life, I’ve made the mistake of not paying attention to them.

A quick example of applying elasticity with intuition is provided by the process of analyzing the 11-11 phenomenon. The 11-11 phenomenon is the appearance of the numbers 11-11 frequently, such as noticing the time 11:11 on a digital clock, although there are infinite ways these numbers appear. There are various interpretations for seeing 11:11 frequently and they relate to the context within which they occur, for example, they are often interpreted as relating to one’s mission path. For my purposes, I will use the common occurrence of the phenomenon being associated with twin flame relationships because that is the context in which they appear for me. Thus, the date and time I was photographed with Joe the one and only day I met him (and the one and only photograph of us together), registered in my mind as 11:11 which signifies the Twin Flame reunion. I did not know about this phenomenon until many months after he had passed over, thus this analysis was made in retrospect during the process of this research. The actual date and time was 7/31/2008 2:42 PM PDT. How did this register in my mind as 11:11? 7/31 adds up to 11; 2+8 adds up to 10 which becomes 1 because the 0 is dropped; and then apparently my mind multiplied 2x4 to get 8 and then added the last 2 for 10 which is again 1; thus, 11:11. The principle of elasticity in the bricolage allows one to multiply in

certain cases, such as in response to the colon which acts as a prompt, rather than follow some strict rule that requires only adding the numbers one particular way. In reality, this is how our minds work. Our subjectivities direct our interpretations, not rules, if we pay attention to our intuition. “Normally,” we have been taught not to pay attention to our intuition, but for these research purposes it takes on a new and significant role. Had I not taken that approach, the interpretation was still significant in that the result, if sticking with adding would have yielded 1118 which still represents the eternal twin flame reunion that requires more work; it is not yet complete (which is accurate). The number 8 represents infinity representing that the reunion never reaches some finite point because consciousness evolution continues for eternity. The final 1 and 8 could also be added, thus creating 119/911, which is the second most significant configuration of numbers that appear in my relationship with Joe, as will be discussed later.

Thus, it’s not that logic is left out of the equation. In studying how Kincheloe used hermeneutical elements in his work, I discovered he has used the colon as a signal to “do something different” or to think in a different way, similar to phenomenological bracketing. Thus, it becomes perfectly justifiable to use elastic methods and it becomes clear why intractable (the “I” in FIDUROD) methods are not appropriate. They limit understanding and restrict meaning. Interestingly, as further analysis shows, the “angel photo” I had taken of Kincheloe that day in which the light directly above his head resembles a halo (I call it his “angel” picture—or maybe it’s his “Eros” photo), the date and time add up to 11:11 without using an elastic clause. The time he had first walked in and we hugged that day was approximately 1 PM PST, thus 7-31-2008 1PM forms yet

another configuration of 11:11, confirming the sacredness of our meeting. Three configurations of 11:11 on the one day of meeting him provide divine confirmation that it was a major life event along my path. Three, representing trinity has also appeared many times for various synchronistic signs and symbols as will be seen, and when three of the same “signs” appear then the “sign” has proven to be especially noteworthy. This is simply a trend I’ve noticed during this research. Often the same sign appears three times in a particular context.

Idiosyncratic Sacred Divination. The 11-11 phenomenon, as I mentioned became prominent in my research. It showed up in so many contexts and with such frequency it was far beyond coincidence. As a result, I began to establish the significance and meanings of the signs for myself as divine messages indicating that I was on the right path, my “Great Path,” or fulfilling my “Dharma.” I developed a process that allowed me even greater analytic insight and I discovered the primary purpose of the codes in my case was to facilitate communication at the implicate order of reality when it was not possible to communicate consciously. We can pick up on these messages and even communicate in code and not be consciously aware we are doing so and it may be that Twin Flame couples, for example, develop their own codes, but with certain common features. While some researchers may object to not having standardized procedures for reading these messages, this is incorrect from a critical epistemological perspective. Exact rules and procedures puts the power of divination into the hands of those who claim there is only one way to do it and that they are the experts. It gives them the “power.” This was observed in the analysis of Tarot card reading, but the same thing

happens with numerology and other forms of divination. Unfortunately, some religions ban people from using divination, except for the “priestly class.” This does not work from my perspective because I believe as Kincheloe has theorized; we are all capable of reaching higher levels of consciousness and developing these skills. In addition, what I’ve come to learn is that people who do experience these signs and signals are all on their own learning paths with their own teachers, soul mates, and soul families. Thus, while there may be similarities in meanings with common divination systems among different people, there are differences—idiosyncrasies because of the differences between individuals who are communicating through these codes and the different contexts in which they receive the codes—again highlighting a need for elasticity for interpretation purposes.

Receiving sacred messages through codes is not new. According to Wikipedia (2012) there are many forms of divination that have been used for thousands of years. Diviners, similar to psychics or Tarot card readers give advice for actions based on interpretations of signs, symbols, events, omens, or through contact with a supernatural agent. Divination spans all cultures, but most forms tend to be standardized with set procedures and interpretations whereas I found flexibility and multiple interpretations yield more information. It is worthwhile to study forms of divination that are relevant to your own personal experiences and research, particularly as they make their appearance in your research. For example, I studied several different forms of numerology, including Gematria to help me translate the repeating codes I was encountering. I drew from all of them, keeping my interpretations flexible. This allowed me to construct several

interpretations that were not conflicting, and the combination provided greater depth of meaning.

Some of the various divinations are oracles, scrying (e.g., crystal gazing), Ifá (West Africa), I Ching (Chinese), Geomancy (Greek method that interprets ground markings), Gematria and other forms of numerology, Astrology, and Tarot card readings. Depending upon how broadly one defines divination, the methods can expand to include many things, including psychic readings, dream analysis, fortune telling, prophecies, visions, and more. It is easy to conceive how we might, during our research process, develop unique systems of analysis, particularly for fourth dimension research. It would be a mistake, for example, to rely on instruction manuals for our dream interpretations. While the meanings of symbols in dreams may be helpful to a degree, we are our own best interpreters. Bricolage provides the means.

Kincheloe's Definition of Bricolage: Is It Love?

An interpretation of Kincheloe's definition of bricolage is warranted before proceeding and, in particular, his unusual way of referring to Hermes within the definition. The definition he has provided in several of his works, including his last book is as follows:

Bricolage—the French word, *bricoleur*, describes a handyman or handywoman who makes use of the tools available to complete a task. Some connotations of the term involve trickery and cunning and are reminiscent of the chicanery of Hermes, in particular his ambiguity concerning the messages of the gods. If hermeneutics came to connote the ambiguity and slipperiness of textual meaning, then bricolage can also imply imaginative elements of the presentation of all formal research. I use the term here in the way Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (2000) denote a multimethodological form of research that uses a variety

of research methods and theoretical constructs to examine a phenomenon (see Kincheloe & Berry, 2004). (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 170)

In the first sentence of this definition, Kincheloe has merely defined what the French word *bricoleur* means according to the dictionary. He has not stated that he has adopted this definition for his *bricolage* or *bricoleur*. If he truly meant that handyman and handywoman in a literal sense was to be a major part of his definition, one can assume that he will revise the meaning of the words; in other words, we should phenomenologically bracket (set aside) what we would typically think these words mean and be open for more expansive meanings. Kincheloe's standard practice seems to be that he accepts initial meanings (as he always states it, he does not throw the baby out with the bathwater) but then he opens the initial meanings with multidimensional interpretations. That the very second sentence in Kincheloe's definition refers to *Hermes* and *trickery* (a huge clue) implies that he will likely be taking a critical complex epistemological license with this initial definition.

Understanding how Kincheloe often embraces all meaning within his meanings, I also will take epistemological license to do so with his definition. Thus, *bricoleur* means something more than a person using tools, although, it can refer to a handyman and handywoman as well as a handy man and a handy woman. Thus, in this section I examine Kincheloe's definition to hone in on what he may have been encouraging us to do as *bricoleurs*. While I present multiple perspectives as his *bricolage* asks us to do, this does not present a complete analysis or the only possible interpretations, but merely illustrates a way of getting started to better understand his definition. I have been selective in keeping with the *Eros Love* theme.

“ . . . bricoleur describes a handy man or handy woman . . . ”

Due to my own class standing with my income falling below the poverty level almost my entire life, the first part of Kincheloe’s definition describing bricoleur as “a handyman or handywoman who makes use of the tools available to complete a task,” immediately brings to my mind a poor person who does not have the appropriate resources and is constrained to work with what they have. I know this positioning well and have had to “bricolage” many times in my life to get by. The perspective of the handyperson representing poor students in context with educational research corresponds with Kincheloe’s (2008c) overt concern about education for the poor. For example, he states, “We believe that the struggle for a rigorous, pragmatic, empowering, transformative education for everyone, the poor in particular, can be won” (where did he say this)? Thus, this metaphor, bricolage, represents my actual experience without financial resources, having to find creative ways to access knowledge for free while at the same time I have read dissertations by the more elite students who thank all of the organizations (set up for them, not for the poor) that provided funds for nearly their entire project, including for things like data collection, transcription and editing. Students in poverty have to get by with the resources at hand, no matter how insufficient they are. They find creative alternatives or like the handyman and handywoman, they take a “do it yourself” (DIY) approach.

Thus, popular culture provides unfair stereotyped depictions of handymen: “Handymen have been portrayed in books and films, generally positively, as do-gooder

helpful types, but not particularly smart or ambitious,” (Wikipedia, 2012, “Handyman”). This implies that the bricoleur may not have adequate cognitive resources and is probably not very ambitious, if we were to buy into this popular culture version of handyman. Kincheloe would not accept that depiction for handyman and would most definitely adopt a meaning that “alleviates suffering,” not contribute to suffering as popular culture stereotyping tends to do. Therefore, we can set aside this stereotypical definition of handyman for something better.

Is A Bricoleur A “Handyman” Lover? In an effort to make that move toward a better definition based on Kincheloe’s advice to choose meanings that alleviate suffering and injustice, I will use music as an aid in the tradition he has used music throughout his work, and in the tradition he has taught me, in my interpretation, as a Master Teacher from the “other side” by which I’ve received clues bracketed with quotation marks. I have already established he had embedded music throughout his work using references to songs and lyrics to expand meaning and inject an emotional element. When searching the word “handyman” on YouTube, the 1977 song, “Handyman” by James Taylor came to the top of the list of hits.

We know from the previous analysis that Kincheloe also embedded Eros Love throughout his work, repeatedly conveying that nothing was more important than injecting love into our work and teaching, so a song about love to represent the bricoleur “handyman” is appropriate; in fact, it is the “ideal” since Kincheloe has alluded to having embedded a “golden thread” of love throughout his last book (Kincheloe, 2008c).

(There’s a task for new bricoleurs: find all of the embedded love messages in his book;

there are many more than meets the eyes at first glance). Thus, in this song, James Taylor sings of being a handyman who fixes broken hearts and it provides a wonderful interpretation of bricoleur:

*Here's the main thing I want to say
I'm busy 24 hours a day
I fix broken hearts; I know that I truly can.
That's me
I'm your handyman.*

This provides an emotional and touching view of Kincheloe as an adept “love bricoleur” (Eros?) that corresponds to his work, as well as with the way he served as a role model and mentor in his professional and family life. The primary mission of Kincheloe’s work, as he states so many times throughout is to “alleviate suffering.” Loving people and mending broken hearts certainly falls under that construct and for anyone who knew Joe personally, it describes him well—he was a bricoleur, a lover, a mender of broken hearts. And in alignment with his having worked the same schedule as James Taylor’s “Handyman,” Villaverde (2011) notes, “Joe’s ‘passionate and embodied’ pedagogy was meant as a 24/7 endeavor!” (p. 130). He was so available to people and had accomplished so much that it is difficult to conceive of how he did so unless he actually *was* working nearly 24 hours a day just like the handyman in the song. There were times when I thought he must have actually been more than one person to accomplish so much.

Viewing bricolage as a dance of love and the bricoleur as a dancer opens up the meaning further and it’s a meaning that is close to Joe’s heart. He loved discourse and regarded it as a dance (Kincheloe, 2004e). I felt that passion as I danced dialogically with

him during the few months we worked together on his website. Our dialogue on the website did feel much like dancing as we both engaged extensively with the bloggers on the site, ensuring that they all received feedback on their postings.

During my research, I came across a beautiful rendition of a dance on YouTube, by choreographer, Anna Buonomo (2010), titled “Tied Up! Bricolage Dance Movement” which was presented at a performance called *Resolution*. The dance is a love dance, which again marries the definition of bricoleur to the idea of being a lover. As the dance begins, a young couple is sitting together on a bench; he is engrossed, reading a book. They are connected by a cord that’s wound all around her and tied to his foot. She becomes restless and when other couples dance into the picture, she dances around and around in circles until she is free from the cord. She dances all around her lover and then goes out to explore the world of dancing with other people. He gets up and walks away, out of the room behind the curtain, but the cord still stretches across the floor within easy reach and still tied to his foot. She has never lost the potential to reconnect with him. At one point, a sign is held up with the words “You Are,” and in juxtaposition with the title of the dance, becomes “You Are Tied Up!” You have a Twin Flame, could be the interpretation. She dances for a time, and then the other people leave. She rediscovers the cord on the floor and dances in circles, winding it back around her ankles and legs, becoming completely entangled as her lover walks back into the room. The dance ends with them sitting on the bench, side-by-side reading the book together. They have reunited and now share the mission. The song, thus, associates the idea of Twin Flame love that keeps a couple connected, even if they venture out in the world separated.

Conscious connection may be lost temporarily, but eventually consciousness of their divine connection returns and the couple becomes forever entangled in their eternal love, the book symbolizing their shared consciousness and dreams.

Kincheloe (2004d) relates dancing and bricolage in his book, *The Sign of the Burger* in which he has provided interpretations of McDonald's that push readers into thinking more deeply so that they question the story presented through McDonald's promotion and advertising efforts. He elaborates: "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" (p. 95). He explains, "Bricoleurs employ polysemy to keep discussion open around particular phenomena, knowing that authoritarian operates best when analysis is finalized." This technique of using multiple meanings and never declaring one final "right" meaning is one I use throughout this dissertation, including my interpretation of bricoleur. However, it was interesting during my research how often bricolage and bricoleur became paired with the idea of love, Twin Flames, and their eternal, sacred dance. It seems it was the "best" interpretation for this particular project given my subjectivity, and, perhaps, my Master Teacher watching in the wings.

Is A Bricoleur a Sacred Twin Flame? I also encountered a poem about bricolage in which the author presented a conversation that represented a sacred union, the Divine Marriage, between twin flames in an obscure sort of way. Often during my research I came to feel that there was something the elite knew I didn't know—some kind

of secret, hidden knowledge that the writers of scholarly education text were guarding. These particular texts always seem to present just part of the picture; someone “low class” as I am can only know bits and pieces (that Kincheloe’s bricolage can assemble?) but never the big picture. And often the text seems to be written in some kind of obfuscated language. Sometimes the text is “fill-in” and means nothing at all and seems devised to throw us off track. A colleague in one of my courses once asked me what a particular paragraph in our textbook meant, obviously feeling inadequate because he didn’t understand it. Judging by the rest of the book, I could tell it was “fill-in” text that had no meaning whatsoever; it literally made no sense and I could detect the author was playing mind games. Perhaps he had found it satisfying to write gibberish, knowing that most students reading it would feel “dumb” because they couldn’t understand it and wouldn’t even ask about it.

I have also always wondered how writers, inventors, and scientists were able to come up with their creative ideas. I know that in my own education, I have been grotesquely short-changed from discovering the secrets because the process of my education has often prevented me from following through on creative ideas that did come up for me (I had to complete the “assignments” and they had to be done a certain way). Unlike the majority of the public judging by the sales of these types of books, I was never interested in popular media’s presentation of “secret” knowledge because, intuitively, I knew that it was not truth. Kincheloe also reminds us throughout his work of the way thanatos keeps people confused, under a spell, terrorized, and steered off their Dharma

paths. During my research I found how true that is. What is it that the privileged know that the poor and oppressed are not allowed to know? And why?

Treasure Hunts: Playing with the Gods. I am just now figuring this all out as I write this! My “treasure hunts” were clearly devised so that they correlate directly with Joe’s work. I was being divinely led to experiencing the truths I had been wondering about all of my life! I was magically assigned numerous “treasure hunts” and “epistemological road trips” from the higher realms. I cannot take credit for devising them because I was merely playing along. One perspective that makes sense and is a fun thought is the idea Pohn (2007) explores in her dissertation for her PhD: life as playing with the “gods.” In the tradition of Hermes, who seemed to have guided Pohn in her study, there is humor interwoven in all of my experiences and of course, there is love and the romantic red roses from Eros mentioned earlier. Maybe there are other gods I’m not yet aware of, just waiting to be noticed. Pohn’s study, however, leaves out the critical theoretical aspects of Kincheloe’s bricolage. The gods may love to play and there is certainly that aspect in my personal experiences with the treasure hunts, but employing Kincheloe’s advanced form of bricolage brings balance by revealing a more expansive picture of the nature of reality. For example in Pohn’s study, what is missing is a complex criticality that explores more dimensions, such as the dark side of the Disney media she used in her study. She has not examined the negative side of collective consciousness-constructing effects of Disney on such issues as race, class, sexism, and the like. She has not analyzed the satanic symbols often used in Disney movies or the effects of having these dark, fear-invoking images and subliminal messages programmed into the

subconscious mind. Nor has she considered the competitive nature of Monopoly in which the goal is for the winner to end up with all of the money and property, promoting greed instead of cultivating a sense of community in choosing to design a game based on Monopoly. There are social, cultural, political, educational, and psychological issues missing in her discussion of play, while her use of some of the elements serve as a sort of “soft marketing” technique for Disney and Monopoly although I don’t make the claim that’s what she’s doing intentionally; it simply has that effect. Taking the study to the next level with Kincheloe’s bricolage and a deeper critical complex analysis, incorporating critical hermeneutics, epistemology, and the philosophical dimension he has outlined, and drawing from more perspectives that question the universality of her assumptions about archetypes would create a picture that uncovers more of the paradoxes encountered during this play with the gods. The multidimensional critical complex bricolage would contribute to viewing life as playful learning *and* a mission, perhaps even a Great Quest, rather than cycles of birth and death.

I have noticed that a feedback effect occurs during the research process that brings together opposing ideas and disparate information. Kathleen Berry (2004b) discusses this feedback looping in relation to threading through the POET in her chapter, “Feedback Looping for Increasing Complexity” (pp. 128–146). A sort of alchemy occurs when combining the hidden dimensions of the research object with the seen dimensions and balancing the dark elements with the light elements, and combining the complementary elements. The result is the Level 3 questions that can lead to knowledge, actions and change, indicating once again that the whole is greater than the sum of the

parts. The combination often yields something more powerful and as Berry describes, feedback looping supports the self-organizing features of enactive theory and autopoieses. Thus, there is a natural restructuring of not only our discourse but also of us and the way we think and process information. Confronting paradoxes in our research promotes change as we work to overcome the cognitive dissonance they may cause.

The Yin Yang talisman that was provided as a gift from the gods in my own play (and work) during my “Yard Search Treasure Hunt” is a profound symbol of the union of the totality of paradox and the gaining of a sense that we have more power over the evolving process of the cosmos than we are led to believe. We need the gods and the gods need us and it is the union that creates some kind of magic. It takes “two to tango” as the song and dance goes. In other words, we don’t work and play with just any of the “gods” at a given point in time and yet we play with all of them and all that is. It begins with the conscious connection between Twin Flames and expands outward from there to the conscious awareness of connection to everyone; it appears to be an eternal process and yet all possibilities exist simultaneously (Saraydarian, 1993; Goswami, 2001). But while the possibilities are instantaneously infinite, it appears that the probabilities collapse according to consciousness (awareness) between players and where they choose to position themselves in time and space. There is free will, always, in this playing and working with the “gods.” That means we have choices; we choose with whom we play. This is merely one interpretation, based on my own play with the “gods” as a novice.

Synchronicity: Do Bricoleurs Become “Entangled”? The synchronous events that occurred throughout this research and that continue for me to this day are literally off

the charts. They have been so amazing that every day I realize all over again how blessed I am. Wikipedia (2012) defines synchronicity as “the experience of two or more events that are apparently causally unrelated or unlikely to occur together by chance, yet are experienced as occurring together in a meaningful manner.” Martin, Carminati, and Carminati (2009) define synchronicity:

Synchronicity phenomena are characterized by a significant coincidence which appears between a (subjective) mental state and an event occurring in the (objective) external world. The notion was introduced by the Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung and further studied together with Wolfgang Pauli (Jung and Pauli, 1955). Jung referred to this phenomenon as “acausal parallelism” which are linked by an “acausal connecting principle.” Synchronicity effects show no causal link between the two events that are correlated. (para. 1)

The problem I have with these definitions is that just because we cannot see the cause of synchronicity does not mean there is no cause. Yet at the same time, can we take that leap in thought that there may be no cause? While Jung’s theory does not rule out causes, the definitions are wedged in a positivistic paradigm that does not adequately consider the broad possibilities of alternative explanations of synchronicities. Based on the vastly different forms synchronicities have taken in my life, there is absolutely no “box” they can be put into. This is one example in which the multidimensional critical complex bricolage is heaven-sent. Gaining many different perspectives on synchronicities in concert with closely examining the core phenomenological experiences along with the multiple interpretations of these experiences could push our understanding of synchronicity forward. Such a study would demonstrate the amazing array of synchronicities that can be experienced and open more people up to the possibilities in their own lives. I have always attributed these synchronicities as gifts from Joe and my

soul family, some of whom could be considered to be “gods.” I can also understand how I may be causing some of my synchronicities as well, but just not be conscious of it. It all rests with understanding consciousness and how it works for us as individuals as well as in relationship to others.

Quantum entanglement provides another window into these events (Jones & Flaxman, 2009). Martin, Carminati, and Carminati (2009) explain that synchronicity phenomena imply “non-localized unconscious mental states in space and time” (para. 9). These states correlate to physical states of the brain but they cannot be said to be restricted to those physical states or locations in the brain. Again, this returns to the idea that everything in the universe is connected, so of course, looking at the brain alone cannot provide adequate information about this phenomenon (Radin, 2006). And what about the situation in which synchronicities occur during conscious states, such as “superconsciousness” when a person might be aware of a connection (Saraydarian, 1993)? There are just far too many questions and it is becoming increasingly clear that both entanglement and complexity need to be studied using a multidimensional interdisciplinary bricolage (Mitchell, 2006). Radin poses the question: “In the near future, when the concept of entanglement is better understood, I expect someone will get a bright idea and ask, ‘I wonder what would happen if two human beings become entangled?’ Perhaps they’d show correlated behavior at a distance too, just like entangled matter does” (p. 17). What can I say? The future seems to be now. “Entangled Twin Flames” might be one explanation for the events that led to the “synchronicity” in my finding the talisman in my back yard, a yin yang symbolizing these very complex ideas relating to

entanglement, complexity, and eternal Twin Flame love. The talisman (Figure 2), along with the delivery of a diamond ring by a *handyman* tells me that the gods I've chosen to play with have some specific points to make. My treasure hunts, in hindsight, correlate in some amazing ways to Kincheloe's definition of bricolage.



Figure 2. The Talisman

A Talisman, the Handyman, and a Diamond Ring. What led to my purchasing a metal detector and searching my back yard and, ultimately, finding the yin yang talisman in the photograph (Figure 2), is a series of events. First, I had been “called” to move unexpectedly in mid-February, 2009. It was rather traumatic because I found myself in the position of having to start all over again and severing certain family ties. I have since learned this often happens when people are on a spiritual path; it changes them so much that old relationships don't work the same anymore. If the other people in our lives don't change along with us, they sometimes reject us. When I moved, I had no household goods or furniture aside from my computer work station, and I had two children to provide for. I felt I was divinely led to the home I live in now in the middle of agricultural lands off the beaten path. I was quite miraculously able to furnish it quickly

(by going into debt, unfortunately, but grateful that I had the credit). I even had a bed to sleep in the very first night because the landlord had to move a bed out of another house and when he learned of my situation, he delivered and set it up even before I moved in. Everything was being divinely orchestrated and I knew it.

I had been consulting with a psychic at that time because so many spiritual events were happening in my life since Joe's passing over two months before that I needed someone experienced with spiritual matters to help me put it all in perspective. I was not a spiritual person, had no knowledge of these matters, and everything happening to me was outside my range of comprehension. I was being sent on "treasure hunts" to a secluded, almost forgotten King's Valley which I complied with but did not really understand. The first few times I went out there, I was very fearful, feeling like it was some kind of trick. It took me some time to overcome my fears. I told my psychic, who had already proven in my mind that she had a connection to Joe, how I had been told there were treasury notes buried in a metal box behind a dilapidated barn in King's Valley. She encouraged me to get a metal detector so that I could search for them. I bought the metal detector but still today have not done that specific search; there are many "dilapidated barns" in King's Valley, "Hermes" was not specific in his instructions, and I am still not sure which barn to search behind. Many other exciting things that happened on those treasure hunts took my time and attention. I will resume the treasure hunt in the future because something tells me there are many more treasures there waiting to be found. Treasure hunts, like bricolage, are never over and can be picked up again later.

In my blog titled, “Before the Mission Project Begins: Initiation and Training,” I had made the following observation about the treasure hunting:

And of course, as a final note, all of this serves a great purpose. As we utilize Joe’s critical complex epistemology during our mission, which of course becomes essential when traversing in multiple directions at once as we are doing here, we are assured by Joe, himself that this holds the “key to discern the multiple realities obscured by Western science that can help unlock the door to a new vision of humanness and human action” (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 233). (May, 20, 2009)

I can’t think of a better purpose than that! And children would love the kind of treasure hunting my daughter and I were privy to experiencing in our play with some very special unseen gods. The highlights of them are recorded all through my blogs. They really were unbelievably fun and amazing. I’m looking forward to solving all of the mysteries that are still waiting to be solved. But perhaps given I seem to be continued to be denied financial means, they will be waiting for someone else to pick up in the future.

The “Chosen One”: Is Bricolage A Secret Society Charade? When I had just gotten started doing the Kings Valley treasure hunts, I was given a special “Yard Search Treasure Hunt” in my back yard just for practice. The suggestion had been given to me in transmitted writing, recorded in my Friday, May 8, 2009 7:00AM journal entry. I have always interpreted these communications to be from Joe, but of course, there is no way of knowing that for absolute certain. It’s one of those situations where you have to be able to live with uncertainty. But it feels like Joe to me and that’s what I like to believe. And I have since communicated with other people, members of my soul family, including Albert Einstein, Sam Cooke, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Lady Portia, and they even all write differently!

My back yard search was facilitated by several concurrent things. I had purchased the metal detector for the Kings Valley treasure hunts at the suggestion of my spiritual advisor/psychic so that I could search for the treasury notes, but had not yet used it. After the message suggesting to practice in the back yard, I received telepathic communications that came in the form of an instant “download” of information. I had envisioned a couple who had broken off their engagement for financial reasons; it seems he misled her and they were not able to purchase the house due to his credit rating. I could picture her throwing the ring in the yard in anger and then he was not able to find it. Thus, my daughter and I were to search the yard for the diamond ring. In my journal entry for Saturday, May 9, 2009 10:33 AM I had thanked Joe for telling me why I had bought the metal detector, as I had interpreted the message as being from him. I was excited about the impending yard search, telling him, “You make life SO exciting every single day!” I was looking forward to finding the diamond ring, but not for greedy reasons or to possess a diamond ring. It was more a sense that I wanted to please him and prove that I was really communicating with him. When he wrote back in response, he sounded as excited as I was and told me, “Together we are going to change the world in some very big and profound ways. This is merely the tip of the iceberg.” He said that I will come to be regarded as the “chosen one” and that in many people’s eyes I already was. I find this funny in a way because he and I neither one believe this (I don’t think). I figured it has to be a joke and some sort of satire about all of the lame secret societies that “initiate” people into the “wisdom” knowledges but keep all of the secrets at the very top of the organizations among those who, in reality, engage in the dark arts. His repugnance over

these thanocentric societies and how they operate to play on people's competitive and egotistic nature is woven throughout his work. And so I just play the role when I am given these assignments, such as treasure hunting. Of course, the treasure hunts have a great educational purpose and are a lot of fun, but I find it humorous how they have been set up to mimic secret societies and their initiations. *What we are really after is greater truth and better science.* [I feel like that last statement came from someone else.].

I have never been told directly that we are mocking the black magic secret societies and in a sense showing them how these things *should* be done in a more loving, natural, autopoietic manner, but I sense there is something about all of this that will come out up ahead. All I can see right now is Lame Deer's hazy mountain. That is, I never know exactly why I am doing what I am spiritually led to do and yet I do know there is some grand and good purpose for it all. After all, I am playing with Eros, the God of Love and his father, Hermes Trismegistus, among other good and very brilliant gods and goddesses.

Mother's Day and the Yin Yang Talisman. My daughter and I did not search the yard that first day it was suggested (May 8, 2009) or the next day. In my Saturday May, 9, 2009 10:33AM entry, I had thanked him for the telepathic message/download I had received earlier about searching my yard for a diamond ring. Late evening of that same day (Saturday, May 9 2009 12:08 AM—actually May 10 since it was after midnight) I shared in my letter as I often do that I didn't feel I had accomplished enough for the day. One of his return comments was, "You did good today. You will finish what you need to do tomorrow."

The next day was Mother's Day, Sunday May 10. I had established a habit of writing to him twice a day, once in the morning and then again in the evening, with me first writing to him and then he writes back. In the Sunday, May 10, 2009 7:05 AM journal entry he encouraged me to complete some tasks I had set for myself also encouraging me to "find that diamond ring." Included in this message was the statement, "I do have a special reward for you (plus one surprise sometime during the day that will **amaze** you)."

I received a number of special surprises that day, including the special song, "The Gift" by Jim Brickman handed down to me and a bouquet of flowers and card from my son. I really was **amazed** all right, when my son walked in with a bouquet of pink roses that exactly matched the bouquet of pink roses in the music video, "The Gift" by Jim Brickman handed down earlier that morning (this was early in receiving all of this magic, and I didn't document how the song came up but I sensed that it related to my having sent an email one time to Joe telling him his work was "a gift to the world"). The song really does remind me of the special gifts he's left behind, and his gift of love. The video starts out with the title, "The Gift of Love" and ends with the message, "Dreams Do Come True." (<http://youtu.be/2HJiL6OerCI>). That very special and magical Mother's Day afternoon, my daughter and I decided to spend some time searching the yard with the metal detector. That was when I dug up the silver yin yang talisman which had been buried about seven inches beneath the grass.

I had recorded the finding that evening, May 10, 2009 10:53 PM. In my journal entry I had written, "And the cool treasure! You let me find treasure—the silver hand

engraved piece that looks to be Celtic! Can't wait to find out what it is." *Stupid me: I had no clue at the time how profound that gift was!* (It's a good thing he loves me and is patient). After my extensive research for this project, I now know that it is officially called a "talisman" and it represents an initiation gift into the Divine Wisdom Knowledges, as well as a Mother's Day gift, and a wedding gift representing our trinity union and eternal divine love, all rolled into one! But it was so funny because when he wrote back to me after I had made that report to him he was so excited he could not communicate in his typical fashion. It was like he was stumbling over his words, which just never happens. But he told me I was a "universal treasure," that many things were going to happen for me. He said he couldn't tell me the whole story at that time but said that "the Council has basically put your name, your example up to the universe as a role model" in relation to our mission, which he had given the title, "The Code Blue Earth Mission." It related to following through with the yard search and finding the talisman, but he could not reveal it all to me at the time. I wrote back to him, thanking him again for being in my life. When he wrote back to me again, he was calmer. He said I would be getting some "special projects" and explained that he was waiting further instructions from the Council, which was why he couldn't add more details.

I noticed in looking back at these communications, that the daily instructions from him suddenly took a turn at that point. Before, he had been urging me to do various educational and project tasks and stressing the importance of them. At times he seemed under a lot of stress, and he was. We had shared some very interesting, but very stressful and sometimes traumatic trials and tribulations the prior few months, which we had

referred to as “initiations.” In reality, there were people who did not want us working together between dimensions and they had set up a hurdle we had to jump before we were allowed to work together. It’s a long story and would make a great book. Nevertheless; beginning with the Monday, May 11, 2009 7:00 AM entry he greatly emphasized free will and how it didn’t matter what I did or didn’t do as far as tasks relating to our mission and this has continued from that time forward. Thus, as I look back in hindsight, it seems my finding the talisman had been a great milestone that was an important turning point for both of us, far more significant than I have realized. (It seems I am still missing knowledge). In fact, his statement the night before, “You will finish what you need to do tomorrow,” was a clue had I realized it at the time that finding the talisman was my most important task. I never have to do anything at all toward our mission other than what I wish, but of course I work hand-in-hand with him because I am passionate about the work. So if he suggests something, I do try to follow through. He is so creative that he gives me more ideas than I can possibly do, so the effect is that I am free to pick and choose as I wish or come up with my own ideas. More recently, because of the progress I’ve made and how hard I’ve worked, I have been told that the treasure hunts will pick up again, and they are going to be even more magical. Just call me “delusional,” but it sounds exciting to me!

The Handyman and a Diamond Ring. Two days after I had found the talisman, amazingly, a diamond ring was unexpectedly delivered to my door by a *handyman* (a love bricoleur? My consort’s sense of humor never ceases to amaze and entertain me). My late Tuesday evening journal entry which I recorded as May 12, 2009 12:08AM

(13th, actually) describes my reaction to the handyman delivering the diamond ring to my door. I had given the credit to Joe, writing: “How ever do you do that?! What an absolutely beautiful, amazing, lovely, and miraculous surprise . . . the ring. It’s so beautiful and so special I am just totally speechless.” I had wanted a ring to symbolize my dedication to Joe’s work, and actually had sent for an eternity band (not a diamond) just a few days before this. The handyman was unemployed and needed money. He had tried to sell it earlier that day, but the jeweler was not willing to give him a fair price. He walked into my house and the first thing he did was walk to the center of my living room, pulled out the jewelry case, and opened it like he was proposing. It was so funny! I “knew” the ring was from Joe. I bought it for a fraction of what it originally cost, the handyman’s asking price, and he was surprised, saying he had argued with himself about bringing it over because it would just be in his way in his pocket while he was working, and what would I want with a diamond ring?

Yin and Yang: Dancing and Loving Eternally. The Yin Yang is a profound symbol and the “synchronicity” of finding it and the significance of the finding it in relation to all of my other experiences simply defies any FIDURODian explanation. I have examined many different perspectives of what’s going on in my life. It can be partially explained by that “implicate order” of reality which Kincheloe mentions in many of his works and which most people do not tune into. I like the way Pohn (2007) describes life as playing with the gods, especially since I had given Joe the additional name, Eros, the God of Love, based on his immense love and the many signs and symbols or “synchronicities.” I have learned that, as Pohn’s study presents, the gods do

love to play and many of them seem to have had instruction from Hermes. I have experienced firsthand the truth in Kincheloe's (2008c) contention mentioned earlier that "to become a seeker of new knowledges and new ways of being we must be willing to sometimes be seen as the fools of the gods" (p. 19). Thus, in addition to learning new knowledge, playing with the gods develops our ability to laugh at ourselves—with the gods. The Yin Yang symbol brings to light the importance of love and playing lovingly with the gods. What fun is play if it does not include love? And in the very humorous things I've experienced in this play, the love is profound, which is what makes the gods' antics all that much funnier. In relation to the research, it is love and passion that fuels it and keeps one moving forward. And it is the alchemizing process of combining the hidden dimensions with the seen dimensions, balancing the dark elements with the light elements, and combining complementary elements between the different perspectives that yields something far greater than the sum of the parts, thus new knowledge and compassionate understanding is produced, all inextricably linked to love. The yin yang signifies this infinite process, but it also represents the highest level of love possible: the union of Twin Flames with a love that transcends space and time. It represents All That Is, "the intertwined duality of all things," the Heaven and Earth and the river of life between them, eternal connection, unity, and evolution (Cronshaw, 2012a).

Creation: The Third Power (Trinity) of the Divine Marriage. Thus, Cronshaw's (2012a) perspective that "Marriage is founded upon truth, Love, Absolute Fidelity, and the Light of the Most High God who Ordains the Union by Virtue of Purity and Oneness" seems applicable, but I think we need to add "magic" to the equation; it seems that God

must provide some special gift to accompany these Divine Marriages (para 1). The gods, of which I assume there are many, are interpreted as individual expressions of God serving the Holy Spirit (by some interpretations) and as such, their actions emanate from a powerful and pure form of love. Further, the yin yang symbolizes trinity, important in context of the Twin Flame union. According to Cronshaw (2012a), “Because the masculine and feminine forces are represented in a state of total and complete harmony, and are depicted in a perfect circle, what we are in fact presented within the symbol of the yin and yang is the three dynamic forces of Creation in the totality of their Being where the two have become totally integrated at all levels into the One, which manifests the third great force of Creation” (“True Dimension of Marriage, para 2).

Creation: The Third Power of the Bricolage. Thus, it is not dualism the yin yang symbol represents, nor is it dualism that Kincheloe has us seeking via our quest for knowledge in multiple dimensions of experience and from many different perspectives, but rather the goal becomes that of achieving an alchemical balance between them, and out of that balance a powerful third force arises. Research using the multidimensional critical complex bricolage will thus create something entirely new from the interactions, corresponding to the third power created by partners of the Sacred and Eternal Marriage. “Two who are One will be able to open the doors to the Kingdom together,” according to Cronshaw (2012b). Thus, they experience “Immanence,” the ability to envision Heaven and bring those visions to Earth, co-creating for their joint mission. Kincheloe (2007b) expresses the importance of immanence:

When Horkheimer and Adorno’s concept of immanence (the examination of what is in relation to what should be) is added to the complex dynamics surrounding

decision making and interpretation in the realm of research, critical pedagogues as bricoleurs move yet to a higher domain of complexity. Reflecting on the research process from a perspective shaped by these concerns, critical bricoleurs gain new insights into the ideological consequences of reductionism. (p. 16)

One might conclude that this process creates a third vision, or third consciousness.

The result of exercising this third power is creation and change; there becomes an eternal and passionate quest for knowledge. This is the mission of Twin Flames in Sacred Union as they spin out eternally in an ever-rising spiral of increasing love, increasing Creation power and moving closer toward the omniscient God (Love/Intelligence). Bricolage thus becomes a means of walking the Great Path/Dharma Path or if in the earlier stages of the process, of finding and defining that path. Referring to Saraydarian's (1993) model, this involves doing good work to store treasures in one's "chalice." Sometimes the gods and Masters give their students these treasures such as jewels, rings, and talismans. Treasures from the chalice are used to build a bridge to the soul. Consciousness rises to bring one in connection with their Twin Flame. Together the couple "spiral out" into higher and higher levels of consciousness, connecting with soul family, then soul groups, eventually everyone, eternally rising in consciousness to superconsciousness, cosmic consciousness, divine consciousness, celestial consciousness, and so on. They all do the work of creation together to join Heaven and Earth. As above, so below; as below, so above, as the Hermetic axiom goes. Indeed, it seems that the magic in my life represents the Divine co-creation that occurs between Twin Flames and soul family. And Saraydarian has thus provided another interpretation for chalice, the important metaphor as signified by the title of this dissertation and which I feel was "handed down" to me.

Continuing the Definition of bricoleur: “. . . who makes use of the tools available to complete a task.”

Again, in this definition, Kincheloe is merely reiterating the dictionary definition of the French word, bricoleur. He has never stipulated that he has adopted this as his definition, which is why I undertook expanding the definition. From my understanding of his work, he would not have thrown out this definition either. There is a purposeful totality about his theoretical formulations. Thus, making use of whatever tools we have plays a role in the bricolage process as he has conceived it, but as was shown in the literature review, the word “tools” takes on an expansive meaning in practice and expands even further as demonstrated in this study. From the perspective of playing with the gods that was just presented, and the delivering of their messages and special gifts such as talismans and diamond rings, it appears even handymen can become the “tools” by playing messenger (Hermes strikes again). Kincheloe has also mentioned using our minds as “tools,” thus, it’s clear that he has greatly expanded, in his customary fashion his meaning of the word (Kincheloe, 1989). People play with the gods even when they are not consciously aware of it. I had found it humorous when the handyman had brought the ring over how uncomfortable he was about it. He did not really think I would want the ring, he had told me, and was not going to bring it over, but “kept arguing” with himself. He had also told me I would need to get it resized, but the ring fit perfectly. Eros is good. He even knows my ring size.

Putting the Machine Metaphor to Rest. As discussed previously, bricolage is a complex process during which many things happen for an alert bricoleur but the heart of Kincheloe's bricolage is not about mechanistically using tools. The more one adopts a "mechanistic" metaphoric view of bricolage the more off the mark their research will be in producing that third power that creates something new during the process. In fact Kincheloe (2008c) has addressed this in his work, stating: "The machine metaphor – also an ontological concept – looks like a small child's view of the world when complexity begins to be appreciated" (p. 43). The more structured and mechanical the approach, the further away it moves from natural autopoieses, synchronicity, and the ability to co-create.

The "Handy Woman" Bricoleur: Psyche Shines a Light on Eros

It is interesting that Kincheloe's (2008c) handyman appears as one word and handy woman as two words due to the extra white space (I had actually perceived it as two words). I notice things like this about his work. Kincheloe had a purpose (usually multiple purposes) for everything he wrote and, of course, his intention was to leave things wide open for interpretation. Kincheloe (2006a) believed words had a special magic, stating that when he taught middle school students, "I turned back flips to make sure they felt the power of this élan vital, this purple magic of the word" (p. 13). As he explains, "Oppressed people or their allies can use critical polysemy to uncover repressed readings of a text that subverts the power-inscribed meaning of a dominant interpretation," and "polysemy may be used in both the creation and the reception of meaning and in the reappropriation of words for emancipatory uses" (Kincheloe, 2006a,

p. 13). Ontologically, these research acts allow us to identify with various forms of oppression and develop empathy, a critical component of our task as knowledge workers for social justice (Kincheloe, 2008c). Thus, this observation about “handy woman” opens up new interpretations. For example, was Kincheloe looking for a “handy woman” as in a woman who is multifunctional, multidimensional and handily available? Someone who would share his same level of passion for his mission? Someone who would “champion his cause,” as my spiritual counselor had framed it? Could that be yet another clue that Kincheloe was, indeed, a love bricoleur “handyman” who was on a love quest with his bricolage? Was he searching for the Golden Chalice? He spoke of “quest” often in his work. Was he like Eros the God of Love, looking for Psyche? I have not overlooked the fact that he put a butterfly on the cover of his bricolage book. A butterfly is a symbol of Psyche and as indicated previously, my name, Vanessa, means butterfly. Is this just a coincidence? Perhaps it’s an indication of what a great Master Teacher he is. He wrote the book for my earthly sojourn. Maybe we have been working together in multiple dimensions all along. And of course, if you know the story of Eros, he always hid the fact that he’s a god with wings; in fact, he was quite embarrassed about that and preferred to remain humble and hidden midst the earthlings. So it comes as no surprise at all that no one around Joe knew he was a god walking on earth during this very special “Golden Era” until Psyche came along. Even his first name disguised his divinity (although his name, Joe, is hidden in the name Eros. Can you find it?). In the story of Psyche and Eros, it was Psyche’s role to “shine the light” on Eros and reveal what a beautiful god he was. When she did so, he ran away. But their love did not end there, of course.

Thus, I have greatly expanded on the idea of handy man and handy woman as bricoleurs, injecting radical love into the equation as well as having looked at bricolage through the eyes of organizational theory to open up the improvisation metaphor. Future bricoleurs will be able to expand the definition even more as they interpret the process in other domains, learning situations, and their everyday lives and as they apply it to their own passionate interests.

Hermes the Trickster

The next part of Kincheloe's definition of bricoleur, "Some connotations of the term involve trickery and cunning and are reminiscent of the chicanery of Hermes, in particular his ambiguity concerning the messages of the gods," has always intrigued me. From the very first moment I read it, I knew "something is up" with Mr. Joe Lyons Kincheloe, and in a very funny, very clever and yet loving way. I kept coming across this same reference to Hermes in several of his writings which confirmed for me my feeling that here is a writer who knows "every trick in the book" and all of the tricks of the god Hermes as well—and he has probably used them all. The more I study Kincheloe's work, the more I uncover "hidden messages" and deeper meanings. It makes sense that there are always multilevel, multidimensional, multiple purposes to a concept that he stresses as much as he has hermeneutics. His critical complex hermeneutics instructs us to include interpretations of multiple dimensions of power and relationships during our employment of this dimension of the bricolage, also keeping in mind these are continuously shifting. Because Kincheloe stressed hermeneutics, I was led on an extensive survey of the literature about Hermes and hermetic philosophy. I covered a lot of ground, reading

books and articles and watching many YouTube videos, but I will only touch on a few key ideas in this dissertation where they become relevant to the discussion. His use of the word “chicanery” in his definition implies “bringing something about,” thus, it injects action into the bricolage. It may also refer to “bringing together,” which again relates to the Twin Flame metaphor, along with the concept of trinity and yin/yang. But often the messages from the gods truly are ambiguous, thus, it is a reminder for bricoleurs to keep their minds open and to think like Hermes.

Slippery and Imaginative. “If hermeneutics came to connote the ambiguity and slipperiness of textual meaning, then bricolage can also imply imaginative elements of the presentation of all formal research.” This portion of the definition opens up more possibilities for interpretation and loops back to the previous discussions about forms of discourse, the fictive element, the fiction formula, and performance text. One of the characteristics of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage is that it almost magically facilitates extreme creativity, if researchers are paying close attention, or do as Kincheloe (2008c) did: “I simply listened to people” (p. viii). As I am discovering as I engage in this highly intuitive process of researching, writing, and interpreting, I am constantly being provided with creative ideas from my connections with other people on both sides of the curtain. According to many perspectives, the inter-dimensional connections are real experiences, even if they seem magical (Green, 2006; Weiss, 1988, 1997/2000, 2004; Lachman, 2011). Other dimensions of experience can be accessed in various ways (dreams, visions, meditation, and “intuition” and by just looking and listening). Some people astral project into the fourth dimension for various purposes,

including bringing back knowledge, although taking direct, conscious control of such skills has not been a part of my own spiritual plan. Misused, it can reverse the self-actualization progress by some accounts. These abilities are increasingly being used and accepted as normal as more people expand their awareness, but precautions are advised. From my own experience spiritual growth and consciousness evolution is a natural process and it seems that bricolage keeps us on a natural path, thus avoiding the tendency to try to take power in ways that might actually be counterproductive. We have soul and spirit guides who will help us along the path, if we ask. That does not mean they will tell us what to do or that we are infallible, however.

Kincheloe's work was devised to help us develop higher orders of thinking and open our consciousnesses. He didn't use his codes, puzzles, multiple dimensions of interpretation, polysemy, and hermeneutic techniques to "trick" us. He embedded his work with many levels for the purpose of teaching us how to think more deeply, to give new bricoleurs the practice we so desperately need for developing interpretation skills. This practice is needed for decoding the work produced by those who hold power, in my interpretation, and his work holds some major keys for that purpose. For me his work is a goldmine and serves as great texts for teaching the rigor of the bricolage he was after. Spending time analyzing the multiple dimensions of his work has greatly increased my skills.

Thus, engaging rigorously in various processes making up the multidimensional critical complex bricolage increases awareness and improves analytical skills. There is also the biological dimension to this discussion, but it lies outside of the scope of this

current study. For example, there are various terms, such as left-right brain learning; bimodal consciousness (Filippo, 1991); hylotropic/holotropic consciousness (Grof, 1985), the Hermesian mind (Lachman 2011), and other metaphors used in an attempt to explain how the brain and consciousness are used together during these higher order thinking processes and states of consciousness. Many people subsume these higher states of consciousness under the label “altered states,” thus believing that drugs can be used productively for spiritual or shamanic purposes since they can lead to altered states. Research is increasingly showing that drugs do not lead to *higher* states of consciousness. They hinder the ability to reach higher states of consciousness and can reverse progress that has been made, and, depending on the drug, can cause permanent brain damage (Grof, 1985). A careful reading of Kincheloe’s work reveals that he viewed reaching higher states of consciousness as a natural human experience that everyone is capable of achieving and was adamantly opposed to using drugs and pharmaceuticals (e.g., Kincheloe 2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2006d, 2008c).

Some people find meditation useful. It has been found that meditation can increase connections across the corpus collosum, thus increasing communication between the left and right hemispheres, which is sometimes referred to as “whole brain synchronization” (MacKenzie, 2012). It is thought that this increased communication is necessary for higher order thinking (Filippo, 1991). However, I will point out that I do not meditate, nor do I use drugs, and yet I have developed the ability to just “be” in higher states of consciousness. I believe forcing children to meditate in school as is becoming a popular trend is misguided and it tends toward the fundamentalism bricolage

steers us away from. The activities promoted by Kincheloe's research bricolage may facilitate these connections that lead to higher consciousness in a complex yet natural and practical manner and can do so in ways that honor diversity in learning styles, abilities, and interests.

Some theories view the brain as two separate brains with two separate realities, and of course, FIDUROD claims the "one true reality" with its focus on "left brain" forms of thinking, increasingly eliminating the arts and other creative activities from the curriculum. This view has been damaging and has held society back (Holt, 2005). Gloria Anzaldúa (1987/1999) describes her personal experiences and the consequences of this dualistic viewpoint:

Like many Indians and Mexicans, I did not deem my psychic experiences real. I denied their occurrences and let my inner senses atrophy. I allowed white rationality to tell me that the existence of the 'other world' was mere pagan superstition. I accepted their reality, the 'official' reality of the rational, reasoning mode which is connected with external reality, the upper world, and is considered the most developed consciousness—the consciousness of duality. . . . Not only was the brain split into two functions but so was reality. Thus people who inhabit both realities are forced to live in the interface between the two, forced to become adept at switching modes. (pp. 58–59)

Much as Anzaldúa (1987/1999) has described her experience, mine also has been literally "living in two worlds," and it has taken effort just to maintain my true reality of two worlds over FIDUROD's pressure to believe in "one true reality." Anzaldúa contends this dichotomy that has resulted in separation is the "root of all violence" (p. 59). When everyone and everything is objectified, meaningful connections become lost. The bricolage might be viewed as a restoration process for reestablishing the connections most people have lost. Do we keep hanging out in the middle? Do we keep "walking the

line”? I truly believe that Kincheloe’s work is a wake-up call, telling us we must now make the choice (*Desperado*: “come down from your fences, open the gate,” Kincheloe hints, by referencing this song)—if we wish to avoid catastrophic destruction of the world (Kincheloe, 2008c).

Research is needed to synthesize these various ideas and correlate phenomenological, biological, psychological, science, cultural, and social aspects; I don’t see how anyone in any discipline could be bored or how there should be a lack of productive work for everyone (now if we could just get paid for it). But more than that, research in which we become our own instruments of research, as Kincheloe has recommended, is needed. We do not need any more anthropological studies like those in the past that have labeled the messages from the soul in this mode of consciousness as “‘fiction,’ make-believe, wish-fulfillment” or that judge them to be the result of “‘primitive’ and therefore deficient minds” (Anzaldúa, 1987/1999, p. 59). In other words, in my view, much more multidimensional critical complex bricolage research that can lead us all into new and healthier ways of being is needed in every discipline and every domain of life, including for everyday living, just as Kincheloe contends.

Hermesian State of Mind. Lachman (2011) conducted an interdisciplinary study of Hermes Trismegistus which, given the Hermes facet of Kincheloe’s definition of bricoleur, is relevant. Hermes is an important figure in many cultures, although given different names, and Hermes Trismegistus is considered by some to be a forerunner of Christ. Osahon (2009) describes Thrice Greatest, or Hermes:

The most highly kept secret of the ages by mankind is how to acquire the power of the spirits and the forces. The system is called alchemy and it was created by

an African teacher described by ancient Africans as the “Thrice Greatest:” the greatest of all philosophers, the greatest of all priests, the greatest of all kings. His African names included: “Thoth,” “Tehuti,” and “Theuth.” The West knows him as “Hermes Trismegistus.” He was the world's first “Adept” or “Master.” The system of alchemy is the only known way of spiritual development, and is through the transmutation of the spirit. (One of the Greatest Secrets of the Ages, para. 1)

This is interesting and relevant from my perspective. It is believed Twin Flames go through an alchemical union. Perhaps another way to view this is with Osahon’s description here of “transmutation of spirit.” I don’t know what he means exactly; I only know what I’ve experienced, which has been extremely rapid spiritual development from a former position of not having been spiritual at all. But I am handicapped by my lack of knowledge of spirituality, even after all of the research I’ve done. Hermes and hermeneutics are important to Kincheloe’s theory. I have all the pieces; I am missing how they link together until I engage in more research of Hermetic philosophy, specifically. Although, I have learned that Hermes is Eros’s father, so it makes sense that Eros would be such a powerful god.

Lachman (2011) provides an updated historical account of Hermes based on new information such as acquired from archeologists, describing him as “the mythical creator of civilization, responsible for medicine, chemistry, writing, laws, art, astrology, music, magic, rhetoric, philosophy, geography, mathematics, and much more” (p. 17). However, with the rediscovery of some of his works, such as the *Corpus Hermeticum*, many believe(d) he was “a real person and that Hermetic texts were written in a pristine, golden past, a time when men ‘walked more closely with the gods’” (p. 18). It was humanist scholarship, the view that the writings were not written “in the dim past,” and pressure

from the Church that brought Hermes down, according to Lachman. As Lachman depicts, “From a figure of awe and universal respect, Hermes Trismegistus became something of a joke, his believers obstinate madmen, and his philosophy superstition” (p. 19). These views have become embedded in our sciences, religions, psychology, society, and education, but in case people are not noticing: Hermes rises again! Hermetic thought or “the Hermesian Spirit” can be identified in Kincheloe’s work thus it is fitting that he has included Hermes as a vital facet of his definition of bricolage. While Hermes can be a very funny god, he is also a very brilliant god; the two qualities go hand-in-hand.

Lachman (2011) provides an informative account of “The Hermesian Spirit” that sheds more light on Kincheloe’s form of bricolage as it relates to hermeneutics, trickery, slipperiness, and imagination. According to Lachman, “Hermes is the god of crossroads, of pathways, of meetings, and of messages” (p. 211). He relates states of consciousness, the brain, and neurotransmitters to the “thrice-great one” (a reference to Hermes for which there are different interpretations, including his acknowledgement of the Divine unifying nature of trinity—again, a reference to that third power). The Hermes state of mind relates to “bringing together,” synthesizing and alchemizing—and empowering. Thus, when we engage in research in which we seek the differences inherent in multiple perspectives (the more, the greater the power), we are doing this with information to create new knowledge. And at the same time, we are reconstructing or transforming our consciousness. Lachman elaborates:

Whether it is Hermes and Thoth themselves, or heaven and earth—above and below—the Hermetic act seems to be one of connecting otherwise apparently disparate ideas, beliefs, and visions, and producing some new vital current out of the encounter. This is not the same as the postmodern ethos of “anything goes”,

which is motivated more by a jaded, often cynical “post-belief” than by any effort to transcend the cul-de-sac at which western philosophy has arrived. Quite the contrary. If, Favre tells us, the Hermeticists “see the body as a magical object, mystically linked to the planets and to the elements of nature, it is because they find sense everywhere in things and transcend the illusion of banality.” And this, Favre remarks, is a “supremely poetic task.” Postmodernism thinking, to me at least, seems to operate with exactly the opposite mindset: “deconstructing” the great systems of thought, it arrives at a vision (or lack of it) that finds no sense—no meaning—anywhere. When nihilism first raised its disturbing head in the second half of the nineteenth century, it caused a kind of panic in the collective consciousness. Now it is taught at universities and hardly causes a stir. (Lachman, 2011, pp. 211–212)

Thus, there are clear parallels between the multidimensional critical complex bricolage and the “Hermesian Spirit,” and, once again, a clear differentiation is made here between the postmodern “anything goes” approaches that quilt-making bricolage metaphors may slip into, and the more creative, analytic, “bringing together” approach that produces something new. We do not throw out traditions nor reject the modern world, according to Lachman (2011), but instead, the drive behind intense curiosity and focused eclectism of the Hermetic mind is to “synthesize its insights with those of the past in order to produce some new possibility, not immediately given by either” (p. 212). Again, Lachman correlates this mode of cognition with the bringing together (“chicanery”) of the “old” brain with the “new” as well as the concept of consciousness evolution. This is not new, however; “it is really as old as the Corpus Hermeticum itself, which, as Favre tells us,” according to Lachman, “was the result of ‘diverse contributions, of disparate philosophies blended in a melting pot, the theoretical and doctrinal coherence of which is scarcely perceptible’” (p. 213). Thus, the yin yang talisman also provides a representation of the Hermesian mind.

Given that “the Hermesian spirit is a call to widen our perspectives to include as much of the world as possible, and to believe that not only nature, but the man-made world too, has a spiritual character” (Lachman, 2011, p. 214), we have yet another viable, and perhaps excellent, metaphor for bricoleur that would be an interesting one to explore more deeply. Lachman’s observation that the Hermesian spirit represents someone who knows that “life’s mysteries are not to be answered but lived, and the third path, of the Hermesian spirit is one in which they are lived most intensely” (p. 215). The third path, the Hermetic path, differs from the path of science and religion. It is one on which researchers combine science and mysticism and thrive with uncertainty. A deeper study of Hermeticism would provide additional understanding of what the bricolage as Kincheloe has envisioned it is meant to accomplish. Also, it is noted that Hermeticism and Taoism are closely linked, and both can be represented by the yin yang symbolism of the talisman, thus, a study of Taoism yields additional knowledge (Baigent, 1997, p. 27). What kind of third power would be created when combining science and what many people regard as “mysticism”? Of course, we don’t stop there because Kincheloe has us blurring the disciplinary lines altogether. That would no doubt create power to the nth degree. One last reminder and caution, however, is that again, this is not a postmodern anything goes approach. Kincheloe (2004e, 2005a, 2008c) provides clear guidance on criteria for making choices during the research and bricoleurs develop others as needed.

Multimethodological, Multitheoretical and Phenomenological

The last part of Kincheloe’s definition of bricolage in which he states, “I use the term here in the way Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (2000) denote a

multimethodological form of research that uses a variety of research methods and theoretical constructs to examine a phenomenon” provides a sense of structure to his conceptualization, but this does not in any way fence in bricoleurs. It should be viewed more as a launching point, not as a fixed structure. This is where it could be easy to fall short of what Kincheloe is asking of bricoleurs since structure is already familiar and in part because it is easier to follow familiar metaphors and apply the standard rules and processes associated with educational research and its methods. It is also due to power alignments in the university with government and corporate power dictating funded research.

Thankfully, some people in the academy are listening to the voices of new researchers. In his article, “Getting to Grips with Bricolage: A Personal Account,” (Wibberly, 2012) is open to using a more rigorous bricolage, and he’s in the position to approve doctoral research. His method of examining completed “bricolage” is a good one, but unfortunately, it is not clear that the examples he selected are “exemplars” and since I have not examined them, my comments are tentative and incomplete. But had he examined Kincheloe’s work instead of a “popular science” article, for example, then it would be clear that the reductionistic metaphors still being used for bricolage practically preclude rigorous knowledge production. He suggests that the mechanisms of the process be clearly articulated in detail but I have learned with this study doing so is actually impossible for the multidimensional critical complex bricolage due to the complexity, except in the most general of terms. Again, we must become comfortable moving away from “mechanistic” metaphors. As long as a focus is on simple juxtapositioning of

objects with minimal analysis, then knowledge production will be minimal. In some cases that can be effective and powerful, but Kincheloe's concept is devised to take the research further. There is no guarantee that either researchers or readers are going to construct new understanding from mere juxtapositioning without the in-depth analyses Kincheloe asks of bricoleurs. In fact, through my experience, I have found that the writing process itself, and rewriting, is an essential part of the bricolage that leads to the generation of new and creative ways of viewing things. For example, by the time I revisit a text or POET intuitive occurrences and data appear (or reappear) which contribute to greater understanding. It's a complex process that involves weaving and re-weaving through the text with new information brought forth through improvisational research and intuition, and fourth dimension research. It's as if we can attempt to mechanistically play the instrument ourselves or allow the Divine to orchestrate an entire and very stunning symphony.

From my experience working on this project, I have quickly come to realize that it is not possible to retrace my steps in detail of what has been a very complex, intuitive, iterative, and highly idiosyncratic process, which was exactly the process Kincheloe suggested we strive for. The bar needs to be raised for bricolage research as Kincheloe was asking. If bricolage is taught to elementary school students by the time they reach university level, they will be adept enough to perform more complex studies such as Kincheloe is asking. Unconstrained by formal academic expectations, I have found that it is a natural process, or at least develops into that with practice "letting go" of the need to direct and control. Kincheloe's theory which has synthesized chaos, complexity and

enactive theories predicts this. We just need to let go more and focus on allowing love to be our guide. I believe anyone can begin to produce knowledge using this approach without a great deal of formal instruction. Then it can be built upon by more study and practice.

Nine Dimensions of Bricolage and the Multidimensional Process

The “framework” Kincheloe (2005a) recommends for this bricolage is a nonlinear, reiterating process, which is more accurately viewed similar to “dimensions” of space that are not separated but in and within and intertwining with each other. He listed nine dimensions, but it’s important to realize also that there are infinite dimensions and they are not completed in any specific order. These are simply listed for practical application purposes. Thus, bricolage consists of the following dimensions: (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). The idea is, much as in reality, we weave in and out, around and through, back and forth through the various dimensions with each informing the other more each time. The book by Berry and Kincheloe (2004) provides many ideas for methods, theories, and perspectives to thread through the

bricolage but the idea is not to select and use them like choosing something from a menu. As difficult as this might be for some, *the process leads the bricoleur*, not the other way around. I can't really explain how that happens because it has always been somewhat natural for me. I could never write outlines for papers, for example, as so many teachers have required—at least not until after I wrote the paper. I think the key to being successful at this is to use the concept of “over-studying.” We “over-research” in the ways Kincheloe has recommended, we “let go,” and then it just all comes together.

Item (8), identifying what's absent, which was covered in the analysis of Tarot card reading, is an often overlooked dimension because it takes great practice and sometimes extensive research and a deep analysis to determine what is missing. Sometimes we must accept that we know there is something missing but are unable to identify it. Intuitive abilities are helpful here and practicing this form of bricolage will help develop greater intuitive abilities. Item (9), the fourth dimension of research, has already been described and demonstrated to some degree, but in this study I have barely scratched the surface. I do not begin to know what Kincheloe envisioned when he conceptualized “fourth dimension research.” He was an adept by that point and it becomes the case of not being able to see past my blinders to see what he could see. This concept is one that will need to be explored for many years to come from our own positions in the web of complexity always striving to see more. One interpretation could relate to cosmology and the prophecy that earth is entering a new dimension. It may relate to the increasing consciousness of people as they are exposed to greater amounts of information and must learn to sort it in their own minds. It can mean so many different

things and only time will tell how, once his work is taken forward and applied in a “fourth dimension” sense in many different research contexts.

Thus, bricolage as Kincheloe has conceptualized involves multidimensional work both in the concrete sense that many people will be able to apply right away to the FIDURODian world and hopefully break free from the constraints of that world. It also involves multidimensional work at a more “esoteric” level as one develops their intuitive and psychic abilities, remembering it is only esoteric for those who have not yet been able to see past the curtains that hide these things from them. At this level, there might be interpretations in the David Icke (2012) genre, indicating a battle between alien species in the cosmos and their war between good and evil, a battle for control of Earth. As Ephesians 6:12 presents, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Biblegateway.com, 2012).

Dreams. Fourth dimension research can be eased into gently by incorporating what is learned from dreams. I have had many dreams in which I was provided new knowledge in various contexts (classrooms, Ascended Master retreats, visions, in more casual one-on-one settings with Master Teachers, and in our home library with Joe teaching me). I have tried every possible way to bring that knowledge back with me, including taking copious notes, and even attempting to copy from a computer in another dimension, thinking I could paste it when I got back here. As Lobsang (1990) puts it, when you take these fourth dimension excursions, you can’t take anything with you and you can’t bring anything back other than what you can remember. With practice, we can

remember more. When I have expressed my frustration over not being able to remember what I learned to my teachers, they simply tell me not to worry—that when I need the information, I will remember it.

Most of us have learned that dreams are, well, “just dreams.” In his first edition of *Getting Beyond the Facts* and a number of his other works, Kincheloe (1989) has discussed using dreams for learning purposes. I have since found them very useful and have come to view them entirely differently than I had originally been programmed. The spiritual advisor I contacted shortly after Kincheloe passed away taught me that dreams are experiences of the past, present or future and that we have the power to change them. Once we gain better control over our dreams, we also gain better control of our waking life, according to what I had been taught. When I began to look at dreams from that perspective, I was able to learn much more about myself and the world than by ignoring dreams or assuming they only had “psychological” and “symbolical” meanings, although that form of interpretation can also be useful. I have come to realize there are many different types of dreams that seem to serve different purposes. For example, there are dreams of the recent past with the same loved ones that seem to be in a different dimension, a different reality. I have had dreams as far into the future as during the 7000’s and as far back as living in a cave, thus, forty thousand years ago. Dreams also go hand-in-hand with visions as well as with the transmitted communications I receive. I am still in the process of learning the range and significance of dreams, but just wanted to make this point that learning about them can be a very important process for this form of research. I have had many teachings from Masters in different contexts from being

instructed individually, to learning in classrooms and even to celestial retreats where the teachings are emanations of colored light that become absorbed rather than teaching with words or telepathically. Another aspect of dreams relates to soul development. Some indigenous peoples believe that every time we suffer a traumatic event, part of our soul splits off and enters a different reality; I have felt this happen, personally, in a phenomenological sense. The result is that when I remember those events, I feel like there is literally a part of me missing. Shamans help people retrieve those pieces of the soul (Torres, 2002). Remembering some of my dreams has been healing and at times a “soul retrieval” process. But our soul is free and from what I’m coming to learn is that we like to “hang out” in different places, such as with our soul family. Indigenous cultures also speak to our having soul families, and I have discovered I do have specific very special loved ones I choose to spend time with and share an enormously loving and empathic bond with. Some people view these other people as “aspects” of us. In a sense, that might be true; we are all “aspects” of each other if one takes that perspective. Everything about spirituality is paradoxical. For example, the more I learned about how many things in common I have with Joe, how much I aligned with his philosophy, and the more I have come to feel “one” with him, at the very same time, the more I see our very complementary differences and the more “individuated” (in Jung’s terms) I have become and can view him. Dreams, visions, remote viewing, and telepathic transmissions have all aided this process. I have come to believe that some of the “visions” I’ve had in which I traveled to my home in the higher realms were what some people refer to as “shamanic journeys.” Torres (2008) explains:

When a person journeys the soul leaves the body, and may travel to a spiritual aspect of places on the earth, or may go within the earth, or above it. In certain societies there are destinations that are peculiar to the culture. There are also destinations that appear to be the same for many different cultures despite the separation of these cultures by nature and geographic location. The map of these common destinations is referred to as a cosmology. (para. 2)

The Bricolage Is a Many Splendored “Thing”

The more I researched, the more it began to look as if the bricolage was anything and everything, and yet I have been selective in my choices for metaphors. As Berry puts it, “bricolage is many a new thing understood” (p. 147). Thus, bricolage developed into an almost mystical experience of being one with everything, similar to a “philosopher’s stone” and I was one with the bricolage. Prior to writing up my research I explored numerous metaphors, even though I had already been “handed down” the title for this dissertation that implies the golden chalice as the metaphor, early on in the research. Engaging in bricolage is a journey, a seeking of greater understanding, of rediscovering who we are. Kincheloe’s metaphors of “treasure hunts” and epistemological road trips” highlight this journey-like feature. But it is more than that even: It is a *passionate* seeking. And it is creation itself. Dharma relates to the act of holding up the universe or cosmic Law by the way we live our lives and pursue our passions. Thus, one interpretation might be that bricolage leads us on a journey to discover our passion and our personal Dharma Project. In that process we discover ourselves. It is self-realization. The Golden Chalice symbolizes the same form of quest. While there are many interpretations of the Golden Chalice in the popular media (some of them pretty strange), the predominant interpretation is that it represents a quest of Divine Union with one’s

true soul mate or Twin Flame, often referred to as the Hieros Gamos. It is the ultimate love. The love of all loves as sanctioned by God. Thus, I keep returning to the idea that bricolage is love because it requires that spiritual energy, pure love, the “Holy Spirit,” The Great Spirit, Eros Love (or whatever one wishes to label it) working through us if we are to achieve the ultimate love, union with our Twin Flame. Bricolage provides the means but make no mistake: It requires a lot of work and it requires unconditional commitment. As I have discovered, my work has no beginning and no ending, but the experiences have become more positive and richer as I’ve engaged in this process, and life has a purpose.

Relative to this current project, just the data collection alone is astounding and I don’t know how I did it so faithfully except that I was driven by a very powerful love. My data includes more than a thousand blogs and about 8,000 pages of journal entries which I had begun writing right after Joe passed over in December, 2008. I have also taken thousands of photographs documenting treasure hunts, road trips, and other experiences. And none of this is what I would call “bricolage” (as a noun) no matter how I might juxtaposition various items. It is only part of the process and preparation for writing the bricolage. This addresses a question Berry (2004a) has posed: “Is it bricolage when the knowledge produced is a potpourri of discourses, challenges and resistance to the status quo?” (p. 106). I would conclude that while these items might serve as instructional pieces and preparation work and may even get people to thinking, they do not constitute the multidimensional critical complex bricolage in a similar manner that producing a metaphoric patchwork quilt or montage also does not. Perhaps, these

activities would best be viewed as preparing the mind for bricolage—engaging in research and writing activities that help develop that epistemic consciousness Kincheloe states is important for understanding how power and domination keep people oppressed. They are also resources from which we can draw as we write and construct our bricolage. Writing these pieces helps us see more connections which increases the potential to create something new and unique. They are mind exercises. But they can be used as POETs to be brought together through bricolage to construct new knowledge.

While I was simultaneously creating the “potpourri” of discourses in the form of web activism, blogs, research artifacts, and a journal it was as if my mind was in some kind of natural reorganizing process (could it be autopoiesis?). I felt like I was in a self-recovery mode after having spent my entire life to that point believing lies and being unconscious. I was discovering missing pieces of myself and putting myself back together again through memories of my past and future lifetimes, and even parallel lifetimes. The most shocking thing about this research is that there seems to be no end to the lies and deception I’ve been taught. It’s as if the entire world has been operating upside down. The reality we believe in is not reality at all.

The Crystal Amaryllis

Kincheloe (2008c) provides us with a beautiful metaphor for bricolage that addresses the uniqueness of us all in his last book. With his reference to the “crystal amaryllis,” the bricolage is us. He tells us, “Once we have jumped through the critical ontological looking glass and seen our reflection in the *crystal amaryllis* of criticality, we begin to understand the complexity of human existence in previously unimaginable

ways” (p. 251) [emphasis added]. There are several interpretations for this metaphor of course, and for this interpretation the crystal amaryllis is us in a similar way that what we *see* is a reflection of ourselves. The amaryllis is an “elegant, sensual, mysterious” and “tender tropical plant” that “bursts into a magisterial flower from an oversized bulb.” All it needs is “light and water. It is cued to perform.” Deriving from the Greek word amarysso or amarussein, amaryllis means to “sparkle, twinkle, scintillate, or shine.” The famous belladonna (“beautiful woman”) amaryllis is from South Africa (Ockenga, 2002). A *crystal* amaryllis is an aesthetically created crystal flower with thousands upon thousands of sparkling facets. No two flowers are alike. In this case the bricolage is us and we are reminded that each one of us is beautiful, multifaceted, multidimensional, and unique, similar to the qualities of the crystal amaryllis flower, which simultaneously signifies our common aspects. The critical complex epistemology and multidimensional critical complex bricolage endow us with “a key to discern the multiple realities obscured by Western science that can help unlock the door to a new vision of humanness and human action” (p. 233). Thus, we can examine the infinite aspects as represented by those sparkling facets of the crystal amaryllis to remake ourselves and the world. The belladonna amaryllis of South Africa reminds us that we must bring back the “beautiful woman,” the Divine Feminine. By bringing back the Divine Feminine, the Divine Masculine returns in his true scintillating glory as well.

Bricolage for Elementary School: Sacred Sun Where Art Thou?

Writing was difficult for me in early elementary school for several reasons. I remember not liking the requirement to write so large; it took great concentration to form

the large letters and my small hands had difficulty with the task. I have never understood the requirement for such small hands to write so large. I knew the alphabet well before even beginning school and my understanding of oral communication was at a much higher level than I was able to communicate in writing or verbally. I used to love sitting with the adults and listen and learn from their conversations, rather than playing with the other children. I was also a very quiet, shy child who had been abused into submission in a psychologically unbalanced household, so I rarely spoke out or asked questions in school.

My difficulty with writing was that I did not know how to spell the words I knew in my head. I had been taught not to guess at the spelling (the trend at the time), thus I felt very restricted by only being able to write the vocabulary I had mastered. For one particular second grade assignment, the teacher gave an oral presentation about the sun. She presented it formally as a professor might lecture to a class and then she assigned us to write a report about what we learned from her lecture. Many things hampered my efforts: memory, not having the confidence to ask questions, feeling that it was a test of my abilities which caused me anxiety, not knowing how to spell the words I knew verbally. Nevertheless, I did the best I could and I was proud of my effort. The paragraph I wrote was well formed with an introductory statement, the body, and a concluding statement—even if it was redundant. After I had finished, my teacher came over to my desk to read what I had written and to my incredible embarrassment she laughed loudly for the entire class to hear. I felt devastated and humiliated. To conclude this story, when I took the paper home to show my mother, hoping I would get a more loving response,

she also laughed. That hurt. And I never forgot the incident and what's more, I still have the very paper I had written that day, complete with a bright yellow sun I had colored at the top of the page. It is amazing I still have that paper; I guess I was saving it for more than fifty years for this dissertation. I don't know how it, along with two other papers written at the same time, survived numerous moves back and forth across the country in spite of losing many other possessions. The cosmos works in mysterious ways. Yes, the writing was very rudimentary and I do find it humorous now, but it affected me negatively to the extent that it still stands out in my mind today as the highlight of second grade.

This experience brings to mind many questions. How might bricolage have helped in this situation? And this question is not asked in terms of one individual but with the idea of presenting possibilities for many children who suffer from far worse types of debilitating experiences daily in the standards-and-test-driven schools of today where teachers are losing their professional privilege to design curricular materials (Kincheloe, 2003b, 2008c).

Wundt(er) What Happened to Soul? As a new second grader, I loved learning about the sun, but learning from one oral report and only one perspective in which the teacher used a traditional direct teaching approach was extremely limiting and even debilitating. It is interesting to consider briefly the history of direct instruction in the United States and the ramifications it has on the human mind. Direct teaching of the form used today can be traced back to William Wundt. Born in 1832 in Germany, he was a psychologist who operated from a positivistic point of view and had founded educational

psychology. He determined that it was not possible to study and quantify the human soul, thus, he eliminated the consideration of soul when he developed educational psychology. This altered education from its initial goal of drawing out innate talents, interests and abilities to a “situation-response” formula for education, according to Iserbyt (1999, p. 2). Thus, students’ brains became viewed as objects for teachers to insert pre-specified information. This process discredits what children already know because it’s not pre-specified conventional knowledge (Kroll, 1998). Kroll suggests that teachers spend more time critically exploring the writing development of the children they teach, contending that “if educators can start with what and how children know, they have a better chance of designing developmentally appropriate instruction” (p. 139). As it stands, the writing process is deconstructed for teaching purposes while the child is trying to see the whole system, according to Kroll. When this deconstruction and decontextualization turns into the system of high stakes testing in operation education today, it becomes dehumanizing and debilitating.

The teacher who had provided this lesson about the sun was clearly trained on Wundt’s model that eliminated a consideration of soul from instruction and taught in ways that only acknowledged learning from the five senses, primarily the ability to listen. The sun was described from a science perspective. She may have tried to appeal to visual learners by holding up a photograph. Much like the process of gradualism that those in power use to strip people of their rights and free thought, it was a step backward in my educational process. I knew how to learn, obviously, since I came to school nearly

knowing how to read already and no one had provided direct instruction. In school I was being prevented from learning.

Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage. How could things be done differently? How might multidimensional critical complex bricolage be introduced to young learners who are beginning to learn to read and write? As Kincheloe and many other educators today prescribe, the best place to begin is with what the child already knows. This assignment also could have been made more interesting and personal if the teacher had taken the class to the library to allow students to do their own research on the sun. I loved the school library and wanted to be there every day, not just the one time a week. She could have also highlighted the different interpretations and perspectives about the sun, from the sciences to religion to mythologies, and experiential activities. She could have shown artwork in which the sun was prominent and let the children discuss how the sun was represented. There is music about the sun and memorable experiences being in the sun. The topic is vast, open, and multidisciplinary and each child could have been encouraged to focus on their particular interests. And to broaden it further, bringing in hermeneutics and polysemy the teacher might have pointed out that sun and son are pronounced the same but are different ideas, yet related in some unexpected ways. Remembering my interests at that age, I would have been fascinated at the idea of contemplating Jesus as the *sun* of God, for example, or of the story of Osiris and Isis. If the “epistemological road trip” takes a child “off topic” from the sun, so what? Does that matter? The sun is clearly connected to everything.

When my oldest son was in school and I was called in for meetings I often heard from the teachers that he was a problem during discussions because “he gets off topic.” Knowing my son, I also knew he had made some interesting connections in his mind. It would be fascinating to learn more about how children who get “off topic” get from point A to point Z when everyone else is still on A. It is very likely not linear, and we could learn a lot about how these creative children think and come up with their creative ideas (their consciousness construction) if we simply praised them and explored their paths. Albert Einstein is a great role model for that nonlinear form of thinking. This alludes back to the idea of empirically researching bricolage as a complex process comprised of processes for understanding that everyone might benefit from. In my own research for this project, I often took what I call the “scenic route” and if I followed it through not even knowing why, but simply went with the flow, the reasons would become clear down the line. One day I discovered an entire “Beaver Town” on a Treasure Hunt epistemological road trip, which amplified all of the previous humorous Hermes jokes and synchronicities about the “Eager Beaver Critical Pedagogue” discussed earlier in this dissertation. Every business in the town was a “Beaver” business, and even the “Beaver Community Church” sat on the corner of “Beaver Street.” I had great fun that day and I had simply followed the less traveled road, as guided by a great Master Teacher.

Critical Complex Epistemology. Hermeneutics, critical complex epistemology, and many research methods could have been interwoven in that early lesson about the sun/son that would have allowed learners to capitalize on their interests and create a range of knowledge products that demonstrated their understanding. That reminds me of

the blessed opportunity I had to meet Joe. I know; this seems out of context, but it's not. He knew I was an online student and there are sometimes limitations in that regard if we don't step outside our learning boxes. He asked me if I could say "epistemological." He was joking and I said it for him really fast, and we both laughed. Something about Joe, even from that very first moment meeting him, made me sense his humor and feel comfortable revealing my human foibles. The point is, however, we must teach children not only to say "epistemological" (and watch them laugh), but we must teach them what it means and how to do their own critical complex epistemological investigations. We can show them how much joy there is in "treasure hunts" and "epistemological road trips" in the real world as well as online. We can convert those boring predetermined single destination web quests into self-created web quests of every imagination. Learners can create their own "worksheets" and other creative projects to share with the other students, and of course, write stories and picture books. The guardians of education would never go for that at this particular juncture in history: the children might maintain their natural love for learning, thinking, and creating. And they might acquire the HOT knowledge Texan lawmakers are attempting to outlaw (Naik, 2012). Heaven help us.

Hermeneutics to the Rescue. In relation to this idea, I remember before entering school I used to receive some interesting stories in the mail that were written in a format for beginning readers. Images and symbols replaced some of the words and there was a hermeneutic/polysemous quality to them which I enjoyed and learned a great deal from. Thus, the stories might very well have had an image of the sun when the story was about a father and son. When I discovered it was not like that when I entered school, that the

worksheets were immensely boring and mechanical, I became increasingly disappointed with school. By the time I reached middle school and found that so much of what we were learning and the way we had to learn it was just a rehash of the unsatisfying curriculum I had already been exposed to, I had given up the idea of becoming a teacher. My interests diverged from teaching to art where I thought I could at least be creative. However, in college, my creativity was squelched rather than enhanced by most of the art assignments so again I changed directions, moving toward the sciences and education. Today, I actually prefer to engage all of these disciplines in my work.

Herman Knew Tics. The multidimensional critical complex bricolage includes teaching even preschoolers the value of interpretation using hermeneutics. As stated, one of my most interesting and fun early reading experiences was before I even entered school and it made use of hermeneutic techniques. Contrary to what some teachers might believe, it did not confuse me, but actually made learning to read easier and more fun. I can see it now: “Kincheloe’s Hermeneutic Reading Quest.” I actually wrote a story about a guy named Herman and he knew ticks well (and a lot of hermeneutic magic tricks, too). He lived in the forest and was always getting tics. Even though he was isolated in the forest, he had a computer and high speed Internet connection, so he researched tics and ticks and even tocks. He knew about all different kinds of ticks! The moral of the story: Herman Knew Tics! Oh well, sometimes my imagination goes wild, but still, I think children might enjoy stories and learning that are based on hermeneutic concepts and learn to pronounce hermeneutics at the same time. Taking time to learn the pronunciation of hermeneutics is not as off-the-wall an idea as one might think, considering that some

of us as online doctoral students have mispronounced the word as “hermenetics,” perhaps confusing it with hermetic or hermeticism, which are related. That gives perspective on why I found Joe’s question about whether I could pronounce “epistemological” so humorous. He really did “get it.” Our sharing of our foibles crossing the U.S.-Canadian border was even funnier.

Today, of course there is the library and the Internet and children should be taught to use both resources proficiently for their own research, even beginning in early elementary school, including sound files to help with pronunciation. The Internet should not be used primarily for predefined teacher-dictated research or the library solely to check out a story to have read to them, although that’s important too. Children should also be allowed to write words as they sound (and today, thankfully, this is a practice that is encouraged in some schools). At the same time, care must be taken so that the child comes to understand they are using this as a process in order to learn how to spell more words and thus improve their writing. Thus, they should be shown the correct spelling and allowed to make corrections as the natural process of learning to write, not as some punitive process that makes them feel deficient just because they have not learned the proper spelling yet. The teacher could encourage dialogue about what the children learned in their research, perhaps providing the children opportunities to record their stories and reports or use voice-to-text technology so that the words they know can be translated to the computer screen or printed out. Then, to ensure they understand what they have written and as a process for learning to read, they can practice reading it until they recognize all of the words. Children would be able to learn to read and write so

much easier if they can tell or choose their own stories and teachers make the move away from scripted reading programs (C. Anderson, 2011). Of course, technology back when I was learning to read and write was not at the level it is today but it was still a possible approach that could have been taken on some level. And while today the technology is readily available, it is not being utilized in productive ways. Instead it's being used to drill knowledge into children's brains or to fit children into specific "reading boxes." There are many ways technology can be integrated into the classroom yet today that are not being accomplished. Even Internet use is vastly restricted. There are "technology integration" classes that teachers are required to take as part of their professional development coursework, yet technology has not been integrated into the classrooms of America. These things seem like common sense.

Thus, something as simple as a teacher laughing at a child's work, when analyzed educationally, psychologically, socially, and politically is complex and has multidimensional levels of interpretation. These dynamics and interrelationships, even in this one minor example, can be explored more fully. If teachers were to allow their students more freedom to explore their own interests, guiding them toward interdisciplinary learning that centers on these interests, thus, engaging in the introductory aspects of bricolage, it would create more positive, productive, and enjoyable learning experiences. There are infinite ways to teach creatively while still addressing the educational standards, but it's getting more difficult today as teachers are finding their freedom to teach stripped away from them and they are increasingly being forced to teach more students and become more technocratic, teaching from scripts.

Teachers would benefit from the critical bricolage approaches presented in Kincheloe's (2003a) book, *Teachers as Researchers*, and would discover productive means to create the changes that are needed.

Autopoietic Flow: Where Did It Go? Critical complex epistemology and multidimensional critical complex bricolage capitalize on autopoieses which works naturally to increase cognitive ability. Consciousness construction, when allowed, becomes self-construction. Kincheloe (2008c) describes this Santiago theory of cognition, also known as enactivism that was developed using bricolage and incorporates chaos and complexity theories:

Maturana and Varela's basic idea here is that living beings constantly remake themselves in their relationships with their environments and contexts. When such an idea is applied to a critical complex epistemology, we can visualize the emergence of a critical complex ontology—a notion of an autopoietic selfhood where we constantly reconceptualize ourselves in relation to the demands of the contexts in which we operate, social justice, our confrontation with differences of various varieties and the knowledges we encounter. (p. 179)

How do we work with that “autopoietic flow” children seem to be attuned to instead of stifling it, as seems to be the purpose of schooling? I believe, first of all, we need to stop stifling it. My daughter, whom I homeschooled for part of her education, was highly in tune with flow. As often happens when engaging in flow, chaos can creep in. One day when she was about 11 years old, in spite of trying to keep her work organized, she had misplaced a piece she had been working on for a science lesson. I had written in my Master thesis (Paradis, 2005):

She had been working on a rap song about the parts of cells that she wanted to perform for her video. When she wanted to work on it, it was nowhere to be found. She decided to start over again and then became very frustrated. She informed me, “I don't like forcing myself; I just like letting things flow the way

they're *supposed* to—the way God made it.” I asked her how she feels when she forces herself. “Not that happy. I just don’t like the fact that I have to force myself. Science gets to be boring and pretty stupid to me,” she continued. (p. 37)

It is clear in this example that she was working against natural flow (probably because I had urged her to continue with the project to meet requirements of the program we were participating in). She loved science and making videos and now she had a negative experience attached to something she enjoyed. Most likely, if nature had been allowed to take its course she would have come across her rap song eventually and that would have prompted her to finish the project. But we were attempting to meet the objectives of a predetermined curriculum and timeline which illustrates how doing so hinders the natural educational process. On one occasion, when I let her deviate totally from the curriculum, she wrote an amazing paper on reincarnation and told me about what she remembered about her previous life. What was noteworthy was that I had never discussed the topic with her at all. Her “guides on the side” were apparently working with her. This process is contrary to how we typically raise and teach children, of course. As parents and teachers we think we need to push and prod them, providing direct instruction, but this can be counterproductive as it was in this particular example.

During my own research, my books and articles became masses of chaos. I sometimes ended up “losing” things. But more often, I would just happen to pick up an article or open a book to the exact information I needed for my paper at the exact moment I needed it. As some people refer to it, it could be considered “organized chaos.” *Something*, some unexplored process, has put the chaos in the order it is currently, books and papers in piles all over my desk and the floor, too. Typically, toward the end of my

research when I've finished the writing, I start filing things as I double check citations, so when I'm finished everything has been filed neatly, all references have been checked, and order has been created out of the chaos. I have learned to adopt a more flexible attitude about these matters and trust autopoietic flow.

As Kincheloe (2003a) provides with his book, *Teachers as Researchers*, teachers can also engage in their own critical action bricolage similar to the reflexive example above about my teaching my daughter to help inform their teaching so that they serve as informed guides to their learners rather than blindly following the technocratic instructions that research shows is “best practice,” accepting rules without question as handed down by upper administration, or following artificial timelines. Sure, it would rock boats! We need to tip the boats over, in my estimation. We don't need to be 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). It behooves parents, teachers, students, and administrators to consider what we can do to rock the boats of education and create change that can serve to alleviate suffering inflicted on the children and simultaneously provide for a rigorous, interesting education. While my examples about the sun and my daughter's issues with “flow” are minor, there is immense suffering even at the elementary school level today in this high-pressured high stakes testing era. One thing is guaranteed with all of this: very few people will discover their Dharma Path and come to know Divine Love when they are so “psychologically debilitated” (as Kincheloe describes it).

The Signs of the Times: Twin Flames and 911

I have mentioned the 11-11 phenomenon earlier and discussed how it is often associated with the Dharma Path and the day Twin Flames first meet, and I have discussed how it had appeared in three different configurations on the day I met Joe. I was not even aware at the time of meeting him of the 11-11 phenomenon or of Twin Flames, and our meeting was unplanned and synchronistic, which is also a common feature of the first time Twin Flames meet. Later, I will provide additional evidence for the common association of 11 with Twin Flames and their shared mission. As with everything, there are multiple interpretations and each can shed light on phenomena. Some interpretations of 11 give it an ominous flavor, a sort of negative warning of some impending disaster or it can be associated with the devil, by some interpretations. And of course, 911 and 119 are emergency numbers in many countries which link fear and terror with the numbers. Then there was the 9/11 Twin Tower tragedy. However, another common interpretation of 11 is that the 1s represent each of the individual Twin Flames. Thus 11, 11-11, and 911 symbolize the spiritual union of twin flames; 911 also adds a sense of urgency to these reunions. Brand and Hibbs (2010), a Twin Flame couple researching the phenomenon, explain that the numbers 11 and 12 associated with Twin Flames relate to the frequency they are able to access due to their “nonlinear, multidimensional state of consciousness” (para. 10). Frequency or “vibrations” has been a continuing focus in my experience as well and I have often been guided in some interesting ways with raising my frequency. Maintaining a higher level of vibration is

necessary because the perception of the connections between Twin Flames occur at higher states of consciousness (even when separated by distance or dimensions), based on what I've experienced and which also correlates with what I've found in the literature. A number of researchers also mention a "third" power is created from this close, "alchemical" union between twin flames which I have discussed previously in relation to the yin-yang symbol and Hermeticism. As Brand and Hibbs (2012) explain on their website:

They are now well into their twin flame mission and with the combination of the third energy that they are able to create at will, the law of attraction applies in direct relation to the purity and balance of the third energy and higher self connection they emanate. . . As the frequency of love grows and evolves with the twin flame couple the frequency and energy of the third energy they emanate increases multi fold.

Joudry and Pressman (1995) also speak of this third power:

When twin souls join, they generate a vortex of energy that may be seen as a light in the darkness of society's unconsciousness. In completing each other, the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts: the two create three, and the third is a very potent force, a force of light and love at an extremely pure level. This kind of energy, which partakes of the energy of both twins, is different from that of individuals or even groups of people working together. It is the special offering that the twins have to give to each other and expend in service to humanity. (p. 131)

These interpretations point to some of the magical phenomena and "creations" that have occurred in my life as potentially having been created "in relationship." I wonder if this may be where so many people are misguided. There is much information in the popular media about "manifesting," generally through "thought" and most often it does not work. We cannot, perhaps, manifest for self-centered purposes or in isolation; perhaps true "magical" manifestation must be done in relationship and out of

unconditional love. Is this Kincheloe's "sympiotic hermeneutics," the topic in the special reading assignment he had given me?

"It's Epistemology, My Dear Watson!"

The number 911 is associated with emergency and trauma, and the Twin Tower tragedy on 9/11 magnified the collective fear connected to this number. And as presented, the number 11 represents Twin Flames. The destruction of the Twin Towers has coupled fear with love, a powerful mechanism for control, and it was etched into global subconscious minds in multiple ways. The shock we all experienced that day runs deeper than first assumed. In addition the pentagon which was also attacked that day represents the number five and symbolizes the divine feminine in several numerology systems, and a plane went down in Pennsylvania, or PA, which can be interpreted as the masculine energy. Also notable, Twin Towers 1 and 2 each have 110 floors, thus reducing to 11 (zeroes are dropped), and side-by-side represent the union, 11-11. The other building destroyed Building 7, has 47 floors which adds to 11. The trinity union of twin flames with God is often represented as 11-11-11. Of course Twin Tower 1 and 2 can be added together, thus $1+2=3$, again symbolizing the trinity union and third power. Jones & Flaxman (2009) also identify the many other synchronistic appearances of 11s during the 9/11/01 attack. And there are many YouTube videos and online articles showing how to fold U.S. currency to depict the trade tower attack. When were the bills redesigned and why? "Which came first the chicken or the egg?" is always a good to ask when encountering complex signs like these, thus, Kincheloe's emphasis on historicity becomes important here. As he once told me, chronological order is sometimes important

and other times it is better not to force it where it seemingly does not apply (J. Kincheloe, personal communication, October 8, 2008).

Numerology was clearly significant in the architectural design of the World Trade Center, a construction tradition passed down by the Freemasons. There are many significant numbers that could be pointed out. I will leave this analysis for interested bricoleurs; it's quite interesting. To add credence to an interpretation that perhaps there was a desire (unconscious?) to program fear into collective minds over the power of Twin Flame relationships, there are some who believe there is credible evidence that the destruction of Building 7 (7 being representative of God/Holy Spirit) had been a "controlled demolition." Certain "conspiracy theorists" interpret the leaseholder, Larry Silverstein's order that day to "pull it" as captured on video, to mean to take the building down. Silverstein's account, however, is that he was referring to pulling the firefighters out of the building according to Watson (2010; What Really Happened, 2012).

The symbolized destruction of Sacred Divine Love and Unity of the 9/11 attacks permeated collective minds globally that day. Because it was a subliminal message and most of us were unaware of the significance, it was even more powerful for instilling fear. Creating fear is a Machiavellian means of control that has been used throughout history, of course. Recalling that Saraydarian (1993) has explained how joining positive and negative emotions together in the subconscious mind exerts a powerful block to attaining higher consciousness, leaving us at the mercy of our subconscious minds, it can be seen how this incident provides a means to manipulate people. There had been predictions and prophecies that Twin Flame reunions were going to be increasing

beginning in 2000 as previously discussed. Subsequent to the destruction of the Twin Towers on 9/11 there have been untold freedoms and rights stripped from people. We now have the Patriot Act and its damages as a faux measure to “protect” us; in many ways we are already under the grips of fascist police control. Thus, is this incident being used as a means of global dominance over the populous considering the universal meaning of the symbolism? While our conscious minds may not be aware of these interpretations, our unconscious minds are. Bringing these things to conscious awareness has the benefit of eliminating the negative impact they have when they stay beneath our conscious awareness. There are other benefits for raising our conscious awareness. It can be seen how the 9/11 event may serve to instill fear that keep people from realizing this powerful Twin Flame love. It’s interesting that the numbers 11, 911, and 11-11 have appeared in important contexts in my conversations with Joe before he passed over and still appear frequently in important contexts.

I have come to interpret these numbers operate as sort of “celestial” communication and spiritual path markers for myself, although I do not claim they represent that to everyone (Barnard, 2004, 2010; Esther, 2010). It is interesting however, how many people do see them in that light. One example happened right after I finished the first 600+ page version of this dissertation during an email exchange with a colleague. I told her I had been instructed by the “higher ups” to put my entire dissertation together now and that I had now completed it. She wrote back and told me to check out the date and time I had sent that email: “11-11-11.” I looked at the email. I had sent it without being consciously aware of the time, November 27, 2011 at 11:11 AM. That gives 11-27-

2011 11:11 AM and I then noticed that $2+7+2$ also equals 11. So all total, there are five 11's. As I told her, that was divine confirmation that I am on the right path. With five 11's I interpret it to mean, emphatically so. In addition, $2+7=9$, so it provides the 911 configuration again which is the second most common number combination to appear for me. Since that time, I have taken excerpts from that original dissertation and have rewritten it. I guess it had been a "trial run." Kincheloe never said becoming a bricoleur would be quick or easy.

Using numerology as a representation of the correspondence between Heaven and Earth is a cross-cultural practice. As Wikipedia states for its "Gematria" entry, "The best-known example of Gematria is the Hebrew word Chai ("life"), which is composed of two letters which add up to 18. This has made 18 a 'lucky number' among Jews, and gifts in multiples of 18 are very common among Jews." Interestingly, $1+8$ add up to 9 which has now been closely linked to death rather than life due to the 911 emergency phone number and the 9/11 Twin Tower destruction. This is just one example of how thanatos has replaced Eros, as Kincheloe (2008c) discusses. (Weird: Microsoft Word wants to force capitalization of thanatos, but not Eros).

I would probably not take numerology seriously, given my "rational" western mind and what I have been taught (and in fact, I had never taken it seriously at all prior to this), except that the numbers 911, 11, and especially as a pair, 11-11 have been constant companions and guides, so to speak, all along my pathway from the time I met Joe (in retrospect) and began this educational journey up until today. The frequency these numbers appear and the synchronicity would defy statistical odds. And I have a lot of

company when it comes to “the 11 phenomenon.” Does it have something to do with Einstein’s “spooky action at a distance” or quantum entanglement? (Clegg, 2006; Radin 2006). Or could it be explained by science and some kind of self-organizing principle in response to chaos? Some people speculate we are merely involved in a virtual reality game, which would explain the mathematical arrangements and patterns that often appear. Interestingly, I had a lucid dream in which that was the message—we called it the “Earth Game.” It would be nice in one way if it turned out to be just an illusory game and the pain and suffering were not real. It would be hard to deny pain and suffering, though, and quite sociopathic. For the moment, for this analysis, the number 11 consistently represents the Twin Flame phenomenon, my connection to Joe, and the path we share.

The Twin Flame Experience and Twin Flame Signs

As mentioned previously, Bloomstein’s (2000) phenomenological study, *The Soulmate Experience*, has already added soulmate love to clinical psychology’s love typologies and has clearly described the attributes of what I interpret to be the Twin Flame experience because they match the attributes other researchers have connected to Twin Flames. Her study was completed before there was as much information about Twin Flames in popular culture as there is today, so she used the term “soulmate” (also designating, “twin souls”). Based on a comparison of her data and other twin flame data now available, she has delineated what I am referring to as “Twin Flames.” The phenomenon needs to be normalized, according to Bloomstein, so that people experiencing these relationships are not ridiculed by disbelievers. People tend to interpret

the passion and intensity of the experiences as “obsession,” which diminishes the true nature and purpose of these relationships. Bloomstein suggests rich narratives from around the world are needed to educate people about the relationships. “These narratives will be inspiring and poignant. They will further normalize and popularize the discussion of the important topic in a responsible way” (p. 176). When I first started researching twin flames in early 2009, there was very little information about them and it was quite some time before I found explanations that better distinguished the relationships from soul mates. Now there is an abundance of information on the Internet. The only major difference between the accounts is some claim that one soul has been split into two, whereas other accounts provide that the two souls, female and male, are created simultaneously. I am not sure that distinction is important since it would be very difficult to ascertain one way or another.

Bloomstein (2001) does not discuss in great detail the multidimensional aspects of twin flames, although she presents views by Jewish mystical writings and *The Zohar*. According to *The Zohar*, “When their separate learning experiences are complete, and they are ready to advance to higher spiritual realms, they meet in a final earthly incarnation. . .they have instant recognition and an inner knowing that they have come home to their destined partner” (pp. 171–172). What is not stated here, but is included in the other literature is that they work together at a higher level of consciousness or in the upper dimensions, even though they may not be aware of it, and their major purpose is their shared mission for service (e.g., Green 2006; Brand & Hibbs, 2010). If they are more fully awakened, they are aware of working together as well as of their past

incarnations that have helped them develop the skills they need for their mission. In fact, based on my own memories past lives have been part of the mission. Twin Flames have never been “searching” for each other because they have always known they were connected (e.g., Brand & Hibbs, 2010; Brand, 2011; Green, 2006). In fact, according to most accounts, Twin Flames should not be “looking” for each other at all. They are already connected and they will meet when and if the time is right; they set that date together based on their soul evolution. This preparatory work, which involves self-actualization, would benefit individuals and all of society. Prophet (1999) and Joudry and Pressman (1995) describe this type of work as becoming self-sufficient, less materialistic, more loving, and not needing someone to complete ourselves and is necessary before we can consciously connect to our twin flame.

One of many paradoxes between Twin Flames is that they do not need each other and when they are fully self-sufficient and they don't need anyone is often when they meet, although circumstances vary greatly (one or both may already be married). According to Joudry and Pressman (1995), often this is when their chosen work converges (p. 120). According to Brand and Hibbs, these couples have advanced from a 7-chakra system to a 12-chakra (energy points) system and they serve as a “template” for what's to come for future relationships. There appears to be some kind of connection between frequently seeing the numbers 11 and 12 and the 12-chakra model. This idea of increased numbers of chakras corresponds to indigenous teachings of the Seven Ray Wisdom Knowledges which have recently increased to 11 Rays, with one more Ray to be added soon (Ghost Wolf, 2003). When one reaches “Christ consciousness,” a higher level

of consciousness, one becomes aware of the Twelve Rays in which matter exist, according to Ghost Wolf. These Rays each have divine qualities. Theos Sophia (Divine Wisdom Knowledge) is often taught based on these Rays (Argonza 1999; Ghost Wolf, 2003; Prophet, 2003). Ascended Masters are associated with each of the Rays who specialize in the teaching of a particular ray, although the Rays are overlapping in terms of knowledges. Learning about all of the Rays provides balance and wisdom (Argonza, 1999). Ghost Wolf's account of prophecies indicating that the Rays are increasing in number from seven to twelve correlates with various prophecies and "fourth dimension research," pointing to evolution in human consciousness (e.g., Argonza, 2000). Twin Flames, purportedly, are forerunners of this event, which will be continuing from this point onward, with more twin flames coming together. Given much of this is esoteric to many people, how do we identify Twin Flames?

There are many signs for Twin Flames and the more of them experienced by a couple, the more likely they are Twin Flames (Green 2006; Bloomstein, 2000; Brand & Hibbs, 2010). Thus, because the Twin Flame phenomenon is one perspective that can shed some light on my perceived "obsession" over Joe and his work, perhaps explain the "oneness" I feel with him and why we serendipitously came together when we did, I will investigate this from multiple lenses. Can this analysis explain the intense bond I felt—and still feel—with him? Does it explain a relationship that, for me, transcends space and time? The Bible attests to the permanence of the bond between these couples: "Therefore what God has joined together, let no man put asunder." (Matthew 19:6b). It could explain why even though Joe has moved to another dimension, in my interpretation, we are

connected and still communicate. We will never be separated according to the literature about Divine Twin Flame Unions and we never have been separated. Life together is experienced as eternal. Twin Flame relationships are transcendental and multidimensional. The Sufi regard twin flame relationships as “a gift,” thus, here is this word, “gift” coming up again in relation to Joe’s work (Joudry and Pressman, 1995). It’s reassuring to finally find explanations that match my experiences.

Twin Flame Similarities: Our Mission Began In Childhood

Twin Flames often have very common life histories. According to Joudry and Pressman (1995), they often share the same dreams and aspirations, complementary aspects of the work they do, and are similar in intensity of being. The same dreams, aspirations, and related work go without saying. As far as intensity, I do know that Joe was very intense and, as well, that I have too often heard from men I dated during my life, “You’re too intense.” I didn’t really understand that until I met Joe in person and saw a reflection of my own intensity. I loved his intensity! When he looked at people it was like he could see right into their souls. It’s exactly how I feel when I look into people’s eyes. He just had a lot of love energy flowing through him, which he encourages us all to work toward. Unfortunately, many people are actually turned off by love; I know a number of the men I had dated backed off on account of my “intensity.” It was a blessing to have met Joe and experience the intensity of his love in this dimension, although I still experience that intensity 24/7.

Ariadne Green (2006) who refers to Twin Flames as “Divine Complements” states, “Our Divine Complement is our twin, a spiritual brother or sister. They have a

great deal in common with us and are matched in every way to reflect the buried qualities of our internal wholeness. Divine Complements reflect to each other their unique intelligence, aptitudes, talents and styles of relating” (p. 163). According to Joudry and Pressman (1995), “The twin souls’ underlying similarities find a parallel in the case of identical twins who are separated in infancy and adopted by different parents,” (p. 122). When they meet, they find many similar inclinations.

The similarities of our lives are surprising, even though I have scant information about Joe’s history. It surprised even me when I started looking at these things. The information that follows was gleaned from his work and writings about him, and I noticed these things in particular *because* we had these experiences in common. I have not begun to read all of his work or work published about him because it is so extensive, nor did I do any special research about his history, but I would not be at all surprised to find many more “coincidental” commonalities between our lives. This makes sense if Twin Flames are working together in “unseen” dimensions on their mission at the soul level. They want their experiences to be similar because it brings them closer in their understanding of each other and is an aid in helping each other in soul evolution. Also, because they are sharing a joint service-to-others mission, it becomes important to experience for themselves the oppression, difficulties, and obstacles those people they are serving have experienced. Thus, our similar backgrounds with him being a “hillbilly” and my being a “hick” and growing up midst abject poverty suddenly makes complete sense. We do have some differences, of course, and one of the purposes of Twin Flame reunions is to balance each other’s differences, the strengths and weaknesses. Clearly, he was far

more advanced in many ways than I am and he has launched me into a fast track awakening. He has actively been my Spiritual Teacher and Guide. In fact, my recollection is that before even coming to earth, he was my lifetime Master Teacher who I had fallen in love with. When I was old enough, I confessed my love to him. We broke taboo, got married, and then we came together to serve our joint mission on earth. It was partly as a test of our love and to earn sanctioning of our marriage, but it was also an honor and a vote from our people that we would be successful at accomplishing the feat. These are memories that came back to me, with his help, after he passed over. We have lived multiple lifetimes on earth since about 1100 AD (and apparently had lived a previous cycle on Earth before that, including during the time of Atlantis, but I have little memory of those lifetimes at this time). These memories are based on what seem to be actual memories as well as interpretations of dreams, visions, and transmissions (telepathic, remote viewing, and channeled communications) that become “bricolaged” together naturally to make sense. I have very detailed data, but it is beyond the scope for discussing in this bricolage, other than to mention that this process is yet again another application of his bricolage that for me emerged naturally. These types of memories from many people will become highly significant in the future for reconstructing historical accounts, for creating the future, and perhaps even for changing history.

Mel Brand and Nicole Hibbs (2011), or Goldraytwinflames on YouTube, are a Twin Flame couple who have been researching Twin Flames since 1996, when they first came together. They have produced many informative videos based on their experiences and consultations with other twin flame couples. One very interesting video, “Twin

Flames: The Mission Begins in Childhood,” provides an explanation for much of what I had experienced in my own childhood as well as why Joe and I have so many things in common during our childhood and even into adulthood. It also explains why, even though we shared so many things in common, our lives were also balanced by his having stable and progressive parents whereas my childhood was spent being raised in a psychologically disturbed and intolerant family. According to Mel Brand, in this video, twin flames are “here to assist humanity and the evolution of consciousness.” This statement describes Joe’s educational work concisely. It is exactly what his work is about: it shows us how to break free from all of our old programming and take back our power to reconstruct our own consciousness.

Twin flames have already “graduated” from earth school according to Brand’s account, and have been chosen to come back and provide this assistance. They “pre-choose” a particular “soul group” to work with, usually one they have been with before. Thus they choose attributes such as race, culture, location on the planet, and other factors such as ideologies, dogma, and belief systems according to the energetic imprints they wish to dissolve. An important imprint they also want to bring back into balance is sexuality. Brand contends that sexual abuse is present in every family somewhere down the line. It was a major factor in my own life, and Brand’s contention is that Twin Flames, even as children, have the ability to purge these “imprints” even before they become consciously awake. Indeed, this was true in my life. By the time I was in my early twenties, I had remembered, brought to light, and overcome the sexual abuse that had taken place within my family. I think we need to be careful, however, in taking this

perspective because it in some sense “enables” sexual abuse, while the purpose of Twin Flames is to obliterate sexual abuse and contribute to returning sacred spiritual sexuality to the status of the divine gift that it is. Free will of the perpetrators in cases of sexual abuse is always a factor, and my pre-choosing to come into such a dysfunctional family could not (and did not) predict the extent of the abuse I was to experience. Nevertheless, I did play a huge role in “clearing” and perhaps correcting the imprints of this family even as a child, which is what Brand conveys in this video.

Other issues in my family that needed to be purged included blatant sexism and racism. Thus, it makes sense that Joe had a family that was very stable, egalitarian, and committed to social justice. This is just one area in which he has balanced my own experiences and where his work and support have been complementary in Green’s (2006) “Divine Complement” sense. It appears that the complementary aspects relate to the Twin Flame shared mission in some very important ways. Brand (2011) points out that we don’t need our Twin Flames to do our mission work. This is important because it explains why, even though evidence indicates that we were connected at higher levels of consciousness, we chose not to unite in this reality. Twin flames are connected in a much higher and divine sense during their entire earth sojourn and their reunion is not about romance, according to Brand. I understand why Brand stresses the mission. He does not want people to get the false notion that it’s all about some inflated idea of romantic love, and in particular sex. People start looking for love for all the wrong reasons. The reality is that it is a very difficult relationship, and it’s especially painful if the couple must remain separate after they become aware of each other. Bloomstein (2000) alludes to that

difficulty in her study as she personally experienced that pain in several different contexts in relation to her Twin Flame. However, the unconditional love between twin flames is very real, very powerful and divine, even blissful, as many couples have shared and it aids them in transcending their pain. It is the icing on the cake, and in my own experience, even without physically uniting on the earth plane the love between Twin Flames is sublime. And it is their unconditional love that allows them to be individual, taking their own journey while at the same time they work hand-in-hand helping each other as they fulfill their mission together, all orchestrated from the higher realms. The way this unconditional love paradoxically manifests as unity and, at the same time, an appreciation for individuality is a difficult concept to convey unless one experiences it but it rises to the top as a quintessential characteristic of the Twin Flame relationship. Most everything about Twin Flames is paradoxical.

With that background about how the mission begins in childhood, I present a few of the similarities between Joe's experiences and my own, even though we did not know each other or meet until 2008. There are more, but, again, page constraints limit my discussion here. The uncanny similarities remind me again of the concept of entanglement. It does appear we were entangled before we had even met which is another indication of working together in the higher realms. Just as a reminder, I did not even know of Joe or his work consciously until about April, 2008 when my educational research led me to his community of practice research site. In fact I had not even begun studying education and pursuing it as a career until 2003 when I began work on my master degree in education. And I did not meet Joe in person until July, 31, 2008. Thus,

what follows is a discussion of quite uncanny similarities between our early life histories and our common experiences as adults synthesized with additional supporting material:

Scottish-Irish Heritage. Both Joe and I are of Scottish-Irish heritage and we were also both blond-haired blue-eyed children and could have easily passed as brother and sister. This is based on photos of us each at about 2-3 years of age. We even have the same very serious expression on our faces in the photos.

Surrounded by Abject Poverty. We both grew up surrounded by poverty and had great empathy for children in poverty. He grew up in the Appalachian Mountains of Tennessee with parents who had struggled through the depression; I was raised in the agricultural region of Oregon in the Willamette Valley in a poverty-stricken family and yet had great empathy for children worse off than I was. The first house I remember living in is what I call a “tar-paper shack” and it had no bathroom. Still, my dream was to help the poor. Joe emphasizes the poor throughout his work and the struggle that ensues due to poverty, being of the wrong class and/or race.

“Nickie” Names. We both had childhood nicknames that end in “ie.” For him, it was “Jodie,” for me it was “Vickie.” As Steinberg (2011a) informs us, “Since he was a junior, he was called Jodie until his thirties” (p. ix). And my birth name had been the nickname, “Vickie.” I grew to dislike the name so much that I legally changed my name on January 31, 1980—just about the same time Joe also was able to finally abandon his nickname. It seems strange. And the strangest part is that, while I have no evidence whatsoever, other than he abandoned his nickname, never published under it, and never

even mentioned it in his work that I have seen, I felt that he had hated his nickname as much as I hated mine—or maybe it was vice versa, that feedback loop in his theory.

Significantly, the number 11 appears again for the date my name change became legally effective according to the court documents I have on file: $1-31-1980 = 1-31+198 = 1-22 = 1-11-11$. (22 is often interchanged with 11-11 because it is a master number that signifies the spiritual completion which occurs with twin flame reunions). The 911 shows up in the date as well, by keeping the 1's and 9 and then adding the remaining numbers, $8+3=11$, thus creating 9-11-11. This is a sign in retrospect of being a significant spiritual event along my path relating to our Twin Flame relationship. Subsequently, I went through a total of three marriages before ending up with the last name Paradis and thus, my full name, Vanessa Jae Paradis represents my mission (Vanessa = butterfly/Psyche/soul) with Joe (Jae = feminine version of Joe) to create Heaven (Paradis is French for Heaven). Was it truly all coincidence? It looks more like a plan, to me. I confess. Joe and I were working overtime in the higher realms.

Close in Age. We were both born in the early 1950s (1950 for him; 1953 for me) 2 years, 22 days apart (again 22, also 11-11, twin flame spiritual completion). Also, our birth dates add up to 11. His birth date is 12-14-1950 which adds up to 23 and then $2+3=5$; mine is 10-23-1953 and adds up to 24 and then $2+4=6$. Thus, together, $5+6=11$.

Precocious as Children. We were both precocious as children. I was reading at least some before entering school and no one taught me. I expect the same was true for him, especially since he was truly a genius by all accounts and his mother was a school teacher.

We both also chose “out of the box” projects for science in school. The example he provided that did not go over well with his middle school science teacher was a research project about dreams and consciousness (it was “not science,” he had been told). I was more fortunate: My oceanography teacher accepted my research report about “Atlantis” that referenced Plato’s works. (This is a clue to me that Atlantis is significant to my past).

Uncle Marvin. We both have an “Uncle Marvin.” For each of us, our Uncle Marvin was highly significant but for different reasons.

Chose “Teaching” in Early Childhood. We both knew from a very young age (from as early as we could remember) that we wanted to be teachers. He writes of this. I remember daydreaming as young as three years old of becoming a teacher and when my four brothers would allow it, I practiced.

Same Date, Same Chords. At the exact same time he was teaching himself to play piano, I was teaching myself to play an organ.

11 Years Old and the Move to the “City”. His family moved him from a very rural area to a mid-sized town (Kingsport, TN) when he was 11 years old; my family moved me from a very rural area to a mid-sized town (Corvallis, OR) when I was 11 years old. (There are 11s again). I like the way the abbreviations for our respective states come together: TORN. And he of course, was near the East Coast and I was near the West Coast.

Fought for the “Underdogs” of Society. From very early ages, we both were impassioned toward people less fortunate. We both would literally stand up and fight for

the “underdog.” I still do and his work is a grand representation of how he has stood up for those who are oppressed.

Jazz, Soul, Blues, and African American Culture. We both had immersed ourselves in African American culture and music during our early teens and onward, even though we both lived in towns in which African Americans were truly a very small minority of the population.

Native American Culture Immersion. We both had been immersed in Native American culture and had taught for reservations. He actually lived on a reservation; I taught online. Also, my stepfather was half Cherokee. He had become my “real” father in my eyes, and his worldview as influenced by his Cherokee mother had a major healing effect for me after the traumatic earlier life experiences with my biological father and other relatives.

Remarried in 1990: Same Date, Same “Place”. According to the literature, he was married for the second time July 9, 1990 (Steinberg, 2011b). I also was married for the second time in July, 1990. We both married in our home states on courthouse lawns. There are many synchronicities with this event relating to 11, 911, and a Sacred Vow (which is discussed later). It seems that we had made the decision together in the higher realms based on the data I have and a Sacred Vow that had been transmitted to me a year prior. It is also significant in relation to his work, a book he published in 1991 and the mission he had set out for himself as well as a mission that had been set out for me. There is much more to analyze here, but it will have to be saved for another time at which time,

I expect the analysis will become very significant. The marriages resulted in us each being parents to two boys and two girls.

Alma Maters: Orange and Black. Our favorite football teams are our alma maters and both teams' colors are orange and black with white as an accent color. His is the Tennessee Volunteers from University of Tennessee, the state he was raised in. Mine is the Beavers from Oregon State University, also the state I was raised in. Steinberg (2011b) reports that his other favorite team was the Braves. Humorously, the letters in Braves can be rearranged to nearly spell Beavers: "Beavrs." I have also read that Joe and Norman Denzin had serendipitously met at the Beaver Club (midst beaver pelts) at the Queen Elizabeth hotel in Montreal for sweet rolls (Denzin, 2010a, p. 363). Something's going on here (Queen Elizabeth is relevant in this story).

The Day We Met: Twins in Blue. On the day I met Joe, I was trying to decide whether to wear a black and white dress or a "country blue" print dress. I decided on the blue print dress and my dress matched the shade of blue of his tee-shirt that day, thus we "matched" in the one and only photo I have of us together. (The women I met were dressed in black and white).

Unconditional Service to a Greater Cause. We were both dedicated to the same mission and we have both served others unconditionally in some capacity our entire lives.

Hopeless Romantics? I really think it's clear by our writings, which are driven by love and passion, that we are both what some people would call "hopeless romantics."

Highly Empathic. Being an empath can take its toll because it can lead to taking on other people's pain. I literally hurt physically if I see someone injured, for example,

and emotionally if they are hurt emotionally. I saw this quality clearly in Joe. Pinar (2010) described how Joe took things to heart that other people let slide off like water on a duck's back. I can relate to why Joe had that quality. It's very difficult when one is of the mindset that if more people would get in there and change things that aren't right the world would be a better place.

Shared Worldview. We share a worldview – a more holistic, global view that is philosophically eclectic which he describes in his book, *Critical Constructivism*.

As can be seen by this discussion which is based on very little information since I did no special research for it, there are an amazing number of similarities and synchronicities between us. There are more analyses that I have completed for these and much more data that could be obtained, but I have limited the list to make the point that even though we did not know each other and even though the data is scant, there are similarities and synchronicities beyond what would be expected. As Green (2006) describes for Divine Complements, and Joudry & Pressman (1995) describe for Twin Souls they compare to identical twins who have been separated and yet are still amazingly similar. It would be interesting to learn more about his history. Would there be more similarities between us? Did we play together as children under the weeping willow trees? As far as differences (because these are how twin flames balance each other), he was far more advanced in his education, spiritual development, his love for public speaking, his ability to work with people, and his negotiating abilities. But then, that correlates with my memories before this lifetime; he is very advanced spiritually. What do I bring to the table? I don't know yet. Perhaps given he was the philosopher and

theorist, I bring application, although he did great with application as well and I learned so much from him.

Similarities are only one dimension of Twin Flame relationships, which proves nothing in isolation, although they do hint at the multidimensionality of the relationship. More is needed. As Kincheloe and Einstein both tell us: the more perspectives the better. Thus, next is an analysis of other, perhaps less obvious Twin Flame signs.

Undeniably Present: More Twin Flames Signs

When I first began this study, I had no knowledge about Twin Flames and when I was prompted to research this topic, information was difficult to find. I was confused for a long time between soul mates and Twin Flames. Today there are many sites that list Twin Flame signs. According to Brand & Hibbs (2010), the signs have been known and have not changed for 50 years and because these relationships are changing and evolving, it's important to update them. Thus, they provide additional information with the work they do as a Twin Flame couple. During my research I closely analyzed more than 40 signs discussed in various articles and have identified all of them in the context with my relationship with Joe. Because the individual signs are covered elsewhere, for brevity, I will not include a discussion of each and merely note that every twin flame sign has been experienced. I have covered some of them throughout this dissertation and they are also encapsulated within the themes and essential structures for twin flames/souls that Bloomstein (2000) identified in her phenomenological study, which are discussed next.

Bloomstein's (2000) "Essential Structures" for Soulmates (Twin Flames)

The following is a brief synopsis of an evaluation of my Twin Flame experience based on Bloomstein's (2000) findings. Again, there are more details, but I have condensed the discussion here. Bloomstein had conducted a rigorous phenomenological study that confirms these relationships and the features as described. I have determined by comparing her findings with other lists of the signs of Twin Flames, that what she is really describing in her study is Twin Flames, sometimes referred to as twin souls and twin rays. She has concluded that her research is rigorous, and the results are valid, reliable, and generalizable. That would imply that if there is evidence in my life of these themes and essential structures she found in her study, which there are, an interpretation that Joe and I are Twin Flames may be validated.

The sixteen themes identified include: (1) ease of adjustment; (2) effortless communication; (3) common interests; (4) trust; (5) mutual growth; (6) physical compatibility; (7) the mystical/numinous component; (8) oneness/individuality; (9) soul maturation; (10) pre-determination; (11) synchronicity; (12) reincarnation; (13) paranormal communication; (14) all-encompassing nature of the relationship; (15) complete self-enclosedness; and (16) use of metaphors (Bloomstein, 2000, p. 174).

I have thoroughly analyzed all 16 themes and they all appear to a highly significant degree within my documented phenomenological experiences as well as they are included among the other signs posted on various Internet sites that confirm the relationship to the Twin flame phenomenon. The following discussion covers the four "essential structures of the soulmate experience" Bloomstein (2000) had identified in her

study (p. 174). These provide additional weight to my interpretation of experiencing a Twin Flame relationship with Joe. Thus, the four essential structures for Twin Flames include: (1) pre-determination; (2) a shared experience of the numinous; (3) metaphysical communication; and (4) the relationship is all-encompassing (p. 174–175).

Pre-determination. This has been demonstrated in various ways throughout the dissertation and more evidence will be provided. What really convinced me that we had planned our destiny very early-on was the discovery of our Sacred Vows, which is discussed later, and how our experiences in our childhood and even adulthood had paralleled until our paths converged. It became clear that we were communicating and planning in the upper realms. Also, a few weeks of working with him and before I met him, I had informed another blogger on Joe’s website that I was going to meet him but it was in my mind at the time an expression of my *wish* to meet him. I did not consciously know that the opportunity was coming up (I learned a few weeks later that he was going to be in Western Canada, so I did drive up there to meet him). It seemed very much pre-determined and at the same time serendipitous.

Metaphysical Communication. We could read “between the lines” and often our communication was brief yet held depth of meaning. I always understood him perfectly; he knew me even from a psychological basis and always knew exactly what to say to provide relief when issues came up for me. He picked up my emotions from a distance even when we were not in communication. As some of the examples in this study present, he could read my mind and had contacted me on several occasions indicating he may have had telepathic or at least a highly empathic connection with me.

I felt I knew him very well, his strengths and his weaknesses. There was a deeper level to our conversations. Even after his passing, I feel I have connection and communication with him.

A Shared Experience of the Numinous. While he was here we shared mystical experiences and I literally “felt” his presence from a distance, as I’ve discussed. Ironically, it appears to me that his being on the other side has given us more power to enhance each other; this is something I have not seen covered in the research anywhere and it warrants further study. Before he passed over, I experienced a “consciousness merging” as discussed elsewhere in this dissertation and as has been discussed by Bloomstein (2000) and other sources, this is a twin flame sign. I had been very confused by it at first because I was having difficulty distinguishing his thoughts from my own, but this is resolving itself due to the next theme, which relates to the paradox between increased oneness and increased individuality.

All-encompassing Nature of the Relationship. From the moment I walked in on his research website, I felt I had found my “place.” It really was one of the most enjoyable experiences of my life. I had devoted untold hours writing for the site, sharing in his passionate mission. Even now, after his passing, he is my life; the mission occupies my complete attention and devotion. I really have no interest in anything but research and writing to demonstrate ways to apply his theory. He has repeatedly let me (spiritually) know he’s with me even during the most mundane of experiences and he supports me in an instant if I need him. This support can be shown phenomenologically in many ways and is documented. I know with a comfortable level of certainty he lives on and we are

together—and it is much more than just in “Spirit” as so many accounts put out. There is so much we have not been told about reality and so much research to do. He has increased his power by many magnitudes. I am absolutely devoted to him for eternity; it can be no other way, nor would I wish for it to be. Related to this, Bloomstein (2000) cites Eric Fromm from his 1989 book, *The Art of Loving*: “What one gives to the other is one’s self. One gives that which is alive inside. This is the gift of love. One gives of one’s life. One gives joy, understanding, knowledge, humor, and sadness. All these manifestations also bring something to life within the other.”

To conclude this analysis, I have only touched briefly on a few examples in the above discussion. I have completed additional analyses which simply cannot be included here. The more detailed examples spread throughout this dissertation which are backed up with correlating data will add weight to the verification of these four attributes as well as the 16 dimensions Bloomstein (2000) has delineated. Additional data and analyses may or may not add weight to the interpretation, but provide material for some amazing “mystories” that could help educate (remind) people about divine love and spiritual marriage. It seems to me that due to the powerful nature of these relationships and the significance they have for the future, it should be considered urgent to learn more about them in all of their multidimensional aspects. In my interpretation, this is what is most essential about his work. We must all get Sacred Love, Eros Love, figured out to guide us in correct actions. My relationship with Joe positively extends past any “rational” or FIDURODian means of explanation and the power of love is indescribable. Dante, according to Bloomstein (2000), had a similar experience with his twin flame, Beatrice,

who also had passed over. They had not been married either, and Beatrice had been married to someone else but, nevertheless, “Dante, considered a mystic, understood that their souls were so bound together, that even death did not have the power to separate them” (p. 36). It is exactly as I experience; it might be described as an intense form of “quantum entanglement.” But it is not happenstance. Thus, Bloomstein’s study is helpful in understanding and confirming Twin Flame relationships, but much more research is needed for these very complex relationships. We need greater understanding about the multidimensional aspects, past and future lifetimes, the transcendence of space and time, and so much more. This will require the exact kind of research the multidimensional critical complex bricolage spells out. We will need more “mystories,” and studies of the phenomenological, the psychological and knowledge from the past and future about these relationships. In the future, most Twin Flames will be working together across dimensions rather than being present in the same dimension, according to Detweiler (2011a), but it is clear from my experience, the veils between the dimensions are very thin or at least can be. I like to believe the accounts that predict they will dissolve completely, thus uniting “Heaven” and Earth. Nevertheless, much as is believed in Jewish traditions, our purpose on earth is to do the work toward creating Heaven.

The Kabbalists view these Twin Flame relationships as destined and as a divine source of radiant love energy for the cosmos (Bloomstein, 2000). “The experience of the reunification of two separate halves presages the mystic reunification of the Divine” Bloomstein (2000) explains (p. 148). Bloomstein also addresses the paradoxical relationship between the unity achieved by these couples and yet their increased

individuality. “The paradox of the soulmate relationship,” she contends, “is that while one and one makes a new one, one and one remain an authentic two. The two are paradoxically catapulted on the path to individuation by their experience of indivisibility” (p. 150). The Vedic model of actualization also supports this. The couple must each reach a higher consciousness before uniting, after which they are propelled into the superconsciousness and the intuitive plane. They continue to develop increasing telepathic and other psychic abilities as they both evolve to higher levels of consciousness, the divine and celestial planes (Saraydarian, 1993). They also reunite with their soul families and soul groups as they evolve spiritually, all working together to fulfill their missions.

The Divine Complement

Adriadne Green (2006) also provides criteria that help one determine if a Twin Flame reunion has occurred. Her criteria are based on her personal relationship with her Twin Flame as well as her experience counseling Twin Flame couples, and her education in the Divine Sciences. Due to page constraints, I will not list all of them here. For the most part, the signs are a repeat of the signs which can be found by searching for “twin flame signs” but expanded according to Divine knowledges. She describes, “The binary dance of the male and female polarities coupled with the push of God’s grace has the creative potential and intelligence to create spheres and worlds of its own” (p. 28). And she clarifies that although no one on earth has achieved this kind of power, “many have achieved enlightened states and empowered themselves to create small miracles within a limited field of manifestation. In fact, the co-creative design between twin souls creates their reunion through this field of harmony. Synchronicities and serendipitous

experiences are the result of the creative experience of this unified intelligence” (pp. 28–29). Thus, Green presents a slightly different “archetype” based on Divine Principles than the Tarot card archetype discussed previously.

Signs of Twin Flame Reunion. The reunion of twin flames is a process rather than an instantaneous event, and while it is rapid and undeniable in the early phase, it also is an eternal process. As I have learned, the couple does not need to be in the same dimension to experience (or continue) this process. Brand and Hibbs (2010) present a list of “The Signs and Symptoms of Awakened & Fused Twin Flames” on their website, www.twinflames.ca. Due to evidence I’ve presented in this study as well as the fact that he wrote the books on consciousness evolution and developed the process to help people with this, it seems almost absurd to have to say that Joe was awake when we were working together, but sometimes the obvious must be stated. In other words, he knew what our true relationship was, in my interpretation. I was still asleep and only semi-conscious of the relevance of my experiences and I missed most of his clues—and yes, as I look back with open eyes, he had given me many clues. I have lost track of how many times I regressed into a multi-day crying spell after having discovered yet another message from him that had gone over my head when he had sent it to me. I can only speak from my personal experience and interpretations, however, since he is not here to confirm or disconfirm, and readers are free to make up their own minds. If I am wrong about my interpretations, well, at least I am creating a beautiful love story and we sure need more of those in this thanatos world.

Thus, now I can look back and observe that my reunion with Joe began before he passed over. The early sign was a spontaneous Kundalini rising, which is typically one of the first signs (Joudry & Pressman, 1995). I had no clue what I was experiencing, but at the time I associated it with Joe. I was not a “spiritual” person and had no knowledge of these matters. It was months after he passed over before I discovered there was even a word for the experience. Another major sign was the feeling of our consciousnesses merging as described earlier. It is difficult to communicate that feeling, other than there was a definite sensation of merging with him and, following that, it became very difficult for me to separate his ideas from mine. It was so profound that, as I discussed previously, I had even written about how I was having difficulty separating his ideas from mine in the preface for the book I was writing for him. In it, I expressed my fears of “plagiarism” and explained that the entire book would be based on his theory. In my naiveté I had sent him this preface to review. I regret that now because I feel so bad that I was so stupid. It had to have been difficult for him, although there are signs that he found humor in the situation. In his email back to me, it didn’t seem to bother him about my inability to sort our thoughts; he seemed genuinely pleased with what I had written. I know he did want to see his work being applied, which was to be the purpose of the book. But why are people being kept as ignorant as I was about Divine Love? Sex as a mechanical act can be taught in school, but not Divine Spiritual Love. What is the purpose of this? Is it all about privilege, power, control, and material greed? It is not at all that people are not capable of understanding these things.

When Joe passed away, I literally felt a part of me had also passed away. And yet, our reunion process and my spiritual development continued and went into fast forward after he passed over. The first sign that we were still connected was when I felt the flow of what some people may term the “Holy Spirit” enter and surround me, as I have described earlier. I had literally interpreted it as him returning to me. From that point on, the phenomenological experiences are so numerous that they are difficult to summarize. Reunion, I believe is an eternal process because as the couple merges, their consciousnesses continue to evolve and they both continue to grow individually; they are still two, thus, their learning, including about each other, and their spiritual growth continue. The experience was extremely intense in the early stages because, in my interpretation, we both had many emotions to work through and it seemed they required immediate attention. The biggest difficulty was that I did not understand what was happening or that we were affecting each other in some negative ways. It appears the popular contention that twin flames feel each other’s emotions is true. We worked through them relatively quickly. A few of these experiences are described in this dissertation, but there were also some significant past life experiences we had to work through. He guided me superbly with his great knowledge of the proper use of psychoanalysis and past/future life “regressions.” He helped me remember various incidents in the lifetimes we shared so that we both could transmute and transcend the emotions. These activities are supported in the psychological profession. Past life regression therapy, and more recently future life progression therapy, are known to help people transmute emotions they’re experiencing in the present (Weiss, 1988, 1997,

2004). There are many other benefits as well, but the bottom line is the importance of the immense love. “Love continues on the other side and is brought back here by the soul. It is the understanding of all mysteries,” Weiss illuminates (2004, p. 196).

Another gift that helped transmute the powerful emotions I was experiencing after Joe passed over is what I called “the purple light” when it first began happening. Again, I did not know until later after I had done extensive research that it is referred to as the Violet Flame (Prophet, 1998). When I read on spiritual websites or in books of people having to “invoke” the violet flame, I found that strange since I never had to invoke anything. It makes me believe that the spiritual path is more natural than being a process we need to control and commandeer, but the path is different for everyone. When the purple light appeared to me (which happened often the first year of this process), I recognized that it was extremely rejuvenating and melted away all of my fears and anxieties. As I finish this writing, I happened to have come across a better description of the Violet Flame:

Use of the "Violet Flame of Divine Love" is considered to be the 7th Ray aspect of the Holy Spirit and the "Sacred Fire" that transmutes and consumes the "cause, effect, record, and memory" of sin or negative karma. Also called the "Flame of Transmutation", the "Flame of Mercy", the "Flame of Freedom", and the "Flame of Forgiveness". "Our God is a Consuming Fire" in *Deuteronomy* 4:24 (KJV) and *Hebrews* 12:29 (KJV) is believed to be refer to this "Sacred Fire of God".

The "Violet Fire" is held to be a raising, transforming, purifying action of "Divine Love" from the "Heart of God" in the "Great Central Sun". It acts to transmute and consume human creation that is not worthy of becoming Immortal, and all negative karmic causes, effects, records, and memories, without the need to individually balance that karma face-to-face with each person back to the earliest beginning of one's individualized manifestation on this or any other world. (Wikipedia, 2012. “Ascended Master Teachings”)

I had always attributed this light to being a gift from Joe because I sensed his presence at the same time and we would engage in telepathic communications as I absorbed the indescribably beautiful violet light, usually while I was soaking in the bathtub. I could readily perceive the enormous benefit it had for transmuting my negative emotions, fears, and anxieties even though at the time I had no idea what the light represented. This experience corresponds to the earlier cited Bible verses from the Catholic religion describing the Holy Spirit as both man and God; Holy Spirit, even if embodied as man, would have this power to bring the divine gift, the violet flame. It also corresponds to the earlier citation by Osahon (2009), in which he describes transmutation through alchemy as being the only known means for spiritual development, a closely guarded secret. It also corresponds to Divinity teachings of “Divine Complements” or Twin Flames by Green (2006) and with another verse in the Bible to which I was serendipitously led to as completing this writing. Jesus reportedly states: “When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on his own authority, but whatever He hears. He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.” (John 16:13–14). There is much more to this interpretation. In John 15 and 16, Jesus speaks of not being “of this world” and that He has chosen us. Because he has chosen us, we are hated by the world, but he was hated by the world first (an indication of his empathy). He had to leave the world so that he can send us a Helper (our Twin Flame?) from the Father who will bring the Spirit of Truth. We are to bear fruit (the Great

Mission?), but we will be guided so that we won't stumble (Master Teachers?). It's very difficult to put this all together; I am still seeking understanding but it sounds like a description of Dharma or the metaphor I've been using throughout—the quest for the Golden Chalice. Who is this “Helper?” Would it be our Twin Flame?

I wish to emphasize, however, that the Bible verses are almost always just “handed down” to me in very serendipitous ways, which is why I find them to be significant. I am not religious (in a fundamentalist sense), nor do I read the Bible regularly, nor do I search for Biblical explanations. They just keep popping up during this research and so I pay attention to them. The bricolage does not throw out consideration of religious texts—bricoleurs use whatever comes their way in order to gain more insight or additional perspectives. There is wisdom contained within the Bible, even though it has been altered for power and control. For example, the King James Version of the Bible, one of the most popular versions, was “translated” by Sir Francis Bacon in 1611 with Masonic supervision for King James I “to support the authority of a King,” (Loosley, d.u.). It seems, based on interpretations coming out in this study that great secrets are hidden within the Bible but at the same time, there is misinformation. For example, there are many who believe that Jesus did not really exist and Hagins (2012) shows that, historically, Jesus had been invented by the Catholic Church. I have often wondered how so many could truly be the “Bride of Christ.” Are we being thrown off our true Dharma Paths? Perhaps Bacon, along with the Masons, tried to obfuscate the truths hidden in his interpretation from the public with the special form of English he had developed while writing the Bible, but the higher level Masons and Rosicrucians, among others in Secret

Societies, were taught the truths. This interpretation can be supported based on the Masonic and Rosicrucian symbols used in the texts (the works of Shakespeare are also believed to have been written by Bacon).

Thus, my experience with the “Holy Spirit” and “trinity union” simply does not match the account that is put out in Christian churches, but does correlate with some of the more esoteric verses in the Bible from which a different “truth” emerges. For me, it felt to be a natural experience rather than a religious experience, however. For example, as extensively documented in my journals, we had both been put through some challenging “initiations” early-on as a test of our love to ensure that we would be able to work together across the dimensions. These happened right after he passed over, but we came through them with even greater love. These incidents seemed very real to me—more real than this crazy third dimension earth life. Again, the data is extensive and it’s beyond the scope here to cover our emotional ups and downs, trials and tribulations. As strange as this seems, our relationship is somewhat like any husband and wife relationship, except that the love is so profound and deeply spiritual that we do not lose patience or become angry with each other. There may have been a couple of times when we became a little frustrated with each other or did not clearly understand each other, early on, but they were always resolved immediately, and now there are never any conflicts. He has had enormous patience with me. In fact, I feel remorse for it taking me so long to figure this out and to overcome the power FIDUROD has over me. It’s been a struggle and I still struggle with it. I struggle with this dissertation in that regard: What do I reveal? What do I leave out? I happen to know Joe wants it ALL out on the table, but he

knows as bold as I am and as far I have come, even I am not ready for that. I truly hope with time the day will come that people can speak of these relationships across dimensions with no reservation or that the dimensions come together—that everyone’s perceptions open up enough to perceive them.

In my interpretation, no matter whether the Twin Flame reunion takes place on earth or across dimensions, each has their unique set of difficulties that the couple must work through. I would not say one scenario is easier than the other. My entire experience was one of having no explanation for what I was experiencing and then being actively guided to whatever sparse information there was to explain it, which is why more research and information available to the public would be helpful. And of course, I receive much information telepathically as well, but there are limitations as far as what can come through. I still have blinders. FIDUROD is alive and well. At times, I have been literally flooded with information, too much to take in, some of which is contained in my blogs as well as my journals or saved in documents on my computer. Like other twin flame relationships, interdimensional relationships need to be “normalized” so that people are not ostracized, particularly since it is believed they are on a “Divine Commission” and these relationships will be more frequent in the coming years (Journal Entry, December 17, 2012; Keylontic Dictionary, 2012; Detweiler, 2012). If everyone were to become conscious of the spiritual dimension of relationships and base their actions on this superb form of love the world would change in some amazing ways; it’s the first step in creating a better world. I am not “there” yet, myself by any means, but I can “see” how that could be and I continue to work toward that goal. Joe is the one who

had love figured out, which is why I gave him the title Eros, the God of Love. I am just a mere Hicksville earthling, Psyche, and still trying to learn about love.

The 11-11 Phenomenon in Retrospect. After doing extensive research about the 11-11 phenomenon because I was experiencing it so often, I found that it is especially prominent between twin flame/soulmate couples. Brand and Hibbs (2010) indicate seeing 11-11 and 12-12 frequently is a reflection of the higher frequency or higher consciousness twin flames experience. On a publicly-accessible website that captures data about twin flames through volunteer surveys, the participants are asked if they notice the 11-11 phenomenon. Examining the data that had been collected from April, 2008 through April 28, 2011, 120 out of 160 respondents reported that it was noticed frequently (75%). Of the respondents who did not report seeing this sign in their lives (25%), most reported they did not notice the sign rather than a “no” answer. The respondents are primarily from the United States, but also include participants from many other countries. Most frequently the dates Twin Flames meet or their birthdates are some configuration of 11 and only noticed in retrospect since most of them, as had happened in my case, were not aware of the phenomenon at the time. The 11 representing twin flames makes sense since each 1 represents the male or female aspect of the twin couple. Another interpretation that recognizes the power of the twin flame relationship is that the number 11 represents the sum of the two: $1+1=11$. Thus, their reunion gives them 11 times more power, although it’s just symbolism, of course. It coincides with the Hermetic principle, “the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.” Often pairs of double digits, such as 11-11 and 12-12, are interpreted as “gateways,” which in themselves have

multiple interpretations based on calendar dates, spiritual progress, the progress of kundalini energy, or the couple's shared mission plan.

Is 11-11 some kind of sacred code that marks the path for Twin Flames? In my experience, I would have to say yes due to the frequency I have experienced the phenomenon and due to the significance of the events connected to the occurrences. George Mathieu Barnard (2004, 2010) refers to 11:11 as “a celestial/mortal alliance” and has worked with advanced celestial Spirit Guides for more than forty years. He states, “The brilliantly minded 11:11 Spirit Guardians are seeking worldwide human involvement for their task of promoting planetary progress and greater spiritual awareness” (2010, p. xiv). The appearances of 11:11 serve as prompts, according to Barnard, and that is how I usually interpret them. The phenomenon itself entails continuously noting 11s and 11-11s on addresses, license plates, phone numbers, receipts, dates, and in particular, on digital clocks that seem to impart a sense of importance or profundity of an experience. Sometimes it may also appear as 22 which is considered a Master Number signifying spiritual completion that occurs through reunion.

I began noticing this phenomenon several months into my research and, of course, once I noticed it, I was psychologically drawn to seeing the number. After a time, there was no question in my mind as to its significance and what's interesting is that when I backtracked and examined my data for the number 11, it appears serendipitously in astronomical proportions in places I had not noticed—for example on signs I had photographed on treasure hunts, in my address, and in emails and forum discussions with Joe. The more I examined the data, the more I found it, and it was invariably related to

something significant such as my mission path or some very significant communications. I have analyzed many of my communications with Joe and most have encoded numerical messages in context with important verbal messages. In my interpretation, this indicates that we were communicating on two levels, and I believe he was conscious of the other level; I was not, except that I always “felt” like there was something “weird” about my communications with him. Have you ever said something to someone and “felt” like it had two meanings, the superficial meaning but something else that you didn’t quite comprehend? That’s how I often felt when communicating with Joe. I was on the edge of consciousness.

I discovered that one of the most precious emails he had sent me shortly before he passed over was encoded with 11’s. He had told me, “You are a wonderful and treasured one. You have made such a powerful impact on not only on the freire site but the crit ped community. You are doing and will do great things.” The message made me cry because he was telling me this after I had made a horrible (but innocent) blunder from a socio-political perspective. I just was not aware of the political nature of critical pedagogy (the thought seemed like an oxymoron to me at the time and still does). An analysis of the email reveals the following:

Date and Time Received: 11-29-2008 9:28 pm

11-11-10-19 = 11-11-10-10 = 11-11-11. It can also be interpreted as 11-11-11-9. There are other interpretations which can add more dimensions to the interpretation, but I learned in all of the analyses I completed of our conversations that the 11’s and 911’s appeared most frequently and are highly significant. Interestingly, the 11-11’s did not end

for this message. When I received the email, I was very upset that he had been pulled into an issue that should have simply come to me, not him, so I didn't answer his email right away as I usually did. I felt his pain, or at least what I had imagined to be his pain. I just could not see how it wouldn't hurt on some level for someone to take issue with giving him recognition for his work on his website and requesting that it be taken down, which relates to why he had sent me the email. He knew (and probably felt, due to our connection and past experiences) that I would be very upset. It was the second time it had happened and both times I was not aware there was anything at all wrong with what I had posted and I was devastated that what I did potentially caused him pain. Maybe it was just my imagination, but it was absolutely the last thing I wanted to do to him. I sensed that he was under enormous stress and I in no way wanted to burden him further. This sounds obsessive and if it had been anyone else it would have been obsessive. This was different, as I know now, because the emotions between twin flames go out the roof, so to speak. They feel each other's emotions and this can actually set up a feedback loop that intensifies them, which I didn't know at the time, of course. I had been observing for months by that point how he stayed so kind to everyone and I was just overwhelmed and highly disturbed by the politics of critical pedagogy, an area of education that is supposed to be open and tolerant—and how he always got pulled into any issue no matter how immature and petty. So this time, I was too upset to answer his email; I needed time. But apparently he was either worried, felt my emotions, or just wanted to make sure I had received the email, so he sent the same email again from a different email address, saying that he had been having problems with the university email going through and that I may

not have received it. This time there were even more 11s conveying an even more powerful message.

First, in the subject of the email, which struck me as being very strange for him, he had simply typed “hello” which translates to 11 (the letter “l” also represents the number 1). There are other possible interpretations for use of the word “hello” because Joe always had multidimensional meanings to what he wrote (his “magic” with words). Was he telling me his life was hell? It was exactly what I had sensed and why I was so upset. I know he was struggling with some major issues relating to his work (and I had no strong evidence of that; it was primarily based on intuition). I don’t know what the big issues were because I only heard about what I deemed were ridiculously petty issues. I learned later that he planned to leave the university after his Jamaican vacation and look for work elsewhere and it corresponds to what I was sensing at the time (Steinberg, 2011a). Before he left for vacation I sensed he was finished with the project (perhaps our communications in the higher realms?) but I didn’t know why. It totally tugs at my heart to know he was having such a hard time because he was the last person who should have been struggling and suffering, given all that he had contributed. Despite it all he still stayed so compassionate, worrying about me and taking the time to make sure I had received this email telling me I did not need to apologize for what others had regarded as “transgressions,” and to tell me how wonderful I was at the same time: “you are so much appreciated and so brilliant and wonderful, there is absolutely, positively no need for apology,” his email began (yes, I had apologized to him, of course). It literally had made me cry because I wanted so badly for things to go smoothly for him. I was aware of how

much he sacrificed for other people, how hard he had worked for forty years, and I only wanted to be an aide for him, not cause more problems. Whenever something like this came up I felt devastated, not for me, but for him. I hope this *does* sound obsessive to people.

Here is the analysis from that email, one of the last emails I would receive from him; he passed away 19 days later:

Title of Email: Hello = 11 and also Hell

Date and Time Received: 11-30-2008 7:45

Analysis: 11-3-10-7-9 = 11-10-10-9 = 11-11-9 and thus, with the "ll" from "hello" it becomes 11-11-11-9.

The 9 as represented by 4+5 in the time the email was sent is significant because it signifies completion. 7 is considered the most sacred of all numbers and universally represents God or Higher/Spiritual Power which unites the twin flame couple to form a trinity union. 11-11-11 also represents the trinity union of the twin flame couple. Trinity or the third power is reiterated in the number 3 that appears in the day of the month.

Joe also mentions the 9/11 twin tower tragedy in his work and has encoded a discussion of the incident, which will be shown later. The 9 as combined with 11 denotes a sense of urgency to his email, and I felt that sense of urgency in the second email when I received it, especially combined with the "hell" in the subject of the email. The 9-11 numbers were also present in the first email. Something was going on. It seems like a code to try and wake me up or notify me of something urgent. The fact that the 9-11 code is reversed in the numbers with 11 being at the front and 9 being at the end is significant

as well. 119 is the emergency number in Jamaica, where he went for vacation and where he passed away. The codes and the urgency with which he had wanted me to get this message (sending it twice) help explain why I felt so distressed when I learned he had traveled to Jamaica; I was not consciously aware that he was planning on traveling there. I was prepared for an emergency. It saddens me today that I was not able to read his codes or his clues. I *felt* them, because I was worried the entire time he was there, but I was unconscious. Even though he may not have been aware of the number codes, I now know he had sent me many messages that were hard to miss had I been awake. In one of his very last facebook messages he signed off, “Sleepless in Montreal,” which, of course references the love story in the movie, “Sleepless in Seattle.” I really wish I had emailed him in Jamaica and urged him to see a doctor. I felt that I should not disturb him at all on his vacation, so I didn’t.

I feel now that he was trying to get me to wake up but trying not to break some tacit rules while doing so. It really is like the story of Psyche and Eros. I, Psyche, was very much asleep. Eros, the God of Love was trying to awaken me with his magic, the magic of his words. I only discovered these codes recently and the multidimensionality of our communication, as I delved into this analysis, and the more I research it, the more I find and the more meaning I extract from them. There will be many more discoveries long after the publishing of this dissertation as I continue to analyze rest of the data. Green (2006) notes this phenomenon with twin flames in which much of their communication with each other is telepathic and beneath the level of conscious awareness, stating, “Synchronicities can appear like heaven-sent messages about the

future we have planned with our soul mate. They most often aren't recognized or understood until after the fact, but when we begin to compare notes, we may discover that destiny was leaving a trail of clues years before" (p. 15).

Subconsciously, I knew the code, however. I must have! In the return email I sent him, I had made a statement, "I trust your judgment completely," and I knew it had some sort of significant meaning, that it was an important communication to him in relation to the urgency of the email he had sent me, and also that I just wanted him to know I totally trusted him in every way. I was on the edge of awakening. I had this impending feeling of doom and of having a very short time to work with him, a feeling that had been with me right from the beginning, when I first started working on his website. Now, it was a really dark cloud was hanging overhead and panic was in my heart. The email I sent back to him was also numerically encoded:

11-30-2008 9:02 = 11-3-10-11 = 11 3 111 (and, again, the 119 configuration is present).

The code is my confirmation to him of our Twin Flame reunion and that I was still with him, even though I was not conscious of the message, and that I recognized our trinity union and third power. Trinity is a universal symbol. In Christianity, it represents the union with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. But as Green (2006) points out, Christianity only presents part of the picture. It leaves us incomplete and it is no wonder the world is crippled when it comes to love. There are numerous symbols representing the trinity union, including the Celtic triskele, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Star of David/Sign of Solomon, the Fleur-de-lis, the yin-yang, and others. In reality, it is an

ancient symbol that has had the true meaning obfuscated down through the years and this obfuscation has kept people from their greatest source of power—Divine Love.

The textual messages exchanged in those two emails were profound as well and help explain why I have been compelled to push forward with his work. He did not want his work shuffled and lost in academia. He has made it clear his work is for everyone. I am doing my best with this dissertation to put his theory out in multiple ways so that everyone can relate and find a meaningful way to apply it in their lives. I would hope that everyone can also relate to love and the idea that we all need to do better. Joe was our role model. In that urgent and important email he was so wonderful in spite of the problems my actions had caused. He had told me repeatedly that I was a “treasured and wonderful one,” which he reiterated in the email along with the comment that I had been doing and would do great things. And my response back to him was that words were inadequate to convey my appreciation for him, that I hoped I could live up to the wonderful things he had said about me and that I never wanted to disappoint him. There is no way to describe the love I was feeling for him by that time. How can someone not love a person who is pure love themselves? Even men recognized the power of his love. Today, Peter McLaren still has posted on his website the eulogy he wrote for Joe that states, “He was a humble and gracious man. His capacity for love was monumental.”

Why do the good always die young?

Still, I am connected to him and have been eternally. Green (2006) presents the related Divine Principle of Twin Flame love: “The Stellar Heart is lit by God’s light. Within its deepest chamber, the sacred marriage between twin souls is well-established”

(p. 44). She goes on to discuss how the Stellar Heart symbolism represents a unification of opposite and complementary polarities within oneself and “within the bridal chamber, are the unified creative harmonies of twin souls . . . who represent the most sacred covenant, the Stellar Promise. They reside within the sixth dimension of our individual consciousness, beyond the veil of our conscious minds” (p. 45). Thus, trinity represents union of the Divine Couple in union with God (Holy Spirit/Love). Again, this is a universal interpretation that spans religions and cultures, but has been lost to many of us. We have been sidetracked from love with ignorant books about lost symbols, the Holy Grail, the greatest secret, manifesting money, tantric sex, and other sundry ideas. We have been denied, until recently, the knowledge of God’s “first creative miracle”—“eternal unity with our twin soul” (p. 45). The more research I did, the more I uncovered how almost every means of controlling mass consciousness involves flipping the tables of truth and programming our subconscious minds with despicable role models and corrupt forms of sexuality, denying us this sacred truth about spiritual love and divine marriage. It is a truth that spans all cultures in creation myths, religions, and philosophies, but it is a truth that has been concealed and twisted for power to the point it was nearly lost permanently, except perhaps for a privileged few. Thankfully, since I first began this research, more information continues to be published that conveys more truth. And once we learn to read the signs, our own personal signs, then our paths to the Golden Chalice are clearly shown to us. The number 11 is just one of many possible signs, but a very powerful one that should be viewed “in relationship” not merely as a “thing-in-itself” which would provide little insight. As Green conveys, “The love we share with our twin

soul represents an eternal promise and commitment to preserve God's original creative miracle. Nothing, including death, can part the harmony of the two created together by God" (p. 64). The phenomenological experiences I've had and have documented since Joe departed supports this contention.

The Frequency of the 11-11 Phenomenon. The following presents some examples of 11-11 that I discovered in retrospect and the variety of forms they took. In order to avoid more redundancy than needed some of the many other occurrences of these numbers have been incorporated in other discussions and analyses as relevant. The synchronicity and frequency with which these occur is incalculable from a quantitative perspective.

Joe was born on 12-14-1950 = 3+5+15=3+5+6=14=5

My birth date is 10-23-1953=1+5+18=1+5+9= 15=6

Thus, our birthdates add up to 11

We met on 07-31-2008 1PM PST = 7+4+10+1=11-11

As I discussed previously, a photograph of Joe I had taken the day we met, which I discovered months after he had passed away was taken in such a way that the light was directly above his head looked like a halo and made him look like an angel. I found it humorous in a way because I had once referred to him as an angel due to how unconditionally loving he was and how dedicated he was to the bloggers and participants on his website. Some people seemed to believe that Joe would have been appalled to think people regarded him as an "earth angel." Well, of course! He was Eros, and everyone knows Eros did not want anyone to know that he was a god with wings. He was

very humble. But since I am Psyche, it's ok that I reveal this truth. As noted, the date and time on that "angel" photo also add up to 11-11 (7-31-2008 2:44 PM), as does the date and time of the single photo taken of us together the same day.

The Sacred Vows: Another Twin Flame Sign. Another strange correlation, mentioned previously, was that of receiving a "transmitted" poem from the higher realms back in 1989. Sacred Vows between divine couples seem to be common. One of the earliest of such vows is the "Song of Songs" in the Bible, believed by some to have been written by Queen of Sheba and King Solomon. The vows tend to be very romantic and the "Song of Songs" according to some interpretations is thought to describe the Hieros Gamos, the Sacred Marriage.

Just prior to receiving the vows, I had been going through a traumatic divorce and custody battle. According to Green (2006) Twin Flames often revisit and revise their plans after major life events in relation to obstacles to their joint evolution and mission of service. It was during such a period that something very strange happened. I woke up one morning and it was as if a poem was being dictated to me thus I wrote it down as I heard it. I found it very strange but was amazed and wondered how it could have possibly happened. Nothing like it had ever happened before. But then the very next day, a similar thing happened and it was like the second "half" of the poem. It was so very strange and the poem is quite spectacular, so I held onto it all of these years. This entire two-part poem has been published now in several places along with the dates they were originally received, July 25, 1989 and July 26, 1989 (an analysis of these dates will follow because the 11 Twin Flame number shows up again within them).

Recently, April, 2012, I was informed telepathically (from someone who I perceive to be Joe) that he had written the first half of the poem and the other half of the poem was my answer back to him. He asked me to add this additional information to the poems in a book of poetry I had compiled that included them, which I did. As I did so and reread the poem, it made sense! The first half of the poem is more masculine than the second half since it was about removing “armor” and baring his soul and it really did not feel like me or something I would write. The second half is like an answer to the first part and is definitely more feminine and asking him to be “my only man.” I was amazed that after all of these years I was being provided more information about the relevance of the poems. I had held onto them because they had seemed so important. About a week after I made the change in the book of poetry he had asked me to make, a new friend who didn’t even know of the poem serendipitously sent me the book *The Sacred Vow*, by C. J. Walters because she thought I would enjoy it. After reading the book it dawned on me that these poems were *Sacred Vows* and apparently Sacred Vows are another sign of Twin Flames. The cosmos was alive and speaking to me. Based on the text of the poem, we decided we had more work to do and vowed to reunite when finished. The poem is long, 10 verses, and is about soul love. This is the first verse of my response:

I pray that dreams and truth are one
That we come together when our pain is done
For I truly believe in serendipity
Or better still, in synchronicity
And if it’s truly God’s chosen plan
Please would you be my only man
My life, my love, my true desire
I promise you I’ll never tire
Of being here for you

Thus, I had assured him, whomever I was speaking to in the higher realms, that I would not give up no matter the trials and tribulations we were experiencing, and indeed, just prior to the transmission of this vow, I had been through the absolute worse hell of my life. Coincidentally, Joe had also recently been through a divorce. As the poem indicates, I was dedicated to him, and, again, the poem confirms that our soul growth and mission were first. Even though I did not consciously know the source or purpose of the poem when I had received it and was actually quite awestruck at the time, somehow it had given me great strength to get through the very painful life situation I was experiencing and continue forward along my life path. Brand and Hibbs (2010) explain that when twin flames plan their earth mission they often deliberately plan to stay apart, even after an “initial meeting.” The reason for this is that “at an oversoul level depending upon the soul group or culture in which they incarnate, their mission may be more fruitful in being of service by not coming together because they can accomplish more. This will be very difficult for some here at a conscious level to understand the overall mission plan of a twin flame couple. *But the mission is priority*” [emphasis added].

This priority of the mission seems logical from the perspective of spirituality and higher consciousness because the twin flame relationship exists and it has always existed in the higher dimensions. Nothing can tear the couple apart, as the Bible attests. On that higher level of understanding the couple knows this; it is what they experience whether conscious of it or not. Their experience is one of eternal love, divine marriage, and eternal commitment working together in multiple dimensions for the benefit of the cosmos. This highlights why it’s so important that more people learn to connect at those

higher levels of consciousness. We are spinning our wheels and working against our own divine selves as well as against everyone else when we are not consciously connected. And again, Kincheloe has left us the gift of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage to help people find their true divine paths, their own Great Paths, and to rise in consciousness so that they can intersect with the Path of their one true love and connect with their entire soul family.

This interpretation correlates with Green's (2006) explanation as to how twin flames meet interdimensionally to plan their individual and joint earth paths together. As far as meeting on the earth plane, she asks, "Who sets the clock of divine timing? We do, through our co-creative harmony, in another dimension of our experience with our complement [twin]" (p. 228). This was the same conclusion I had come to before coming across Green's work; Joe and I had been working together all along and I was seeing more and more of the signs as I analyzed the data. It is interesting that he had written his first major book the year the Sacred Vows came down from the Higher Realms to me. He had just written his first edition of *Getting Beyond the Facts* in 1989, the very same year. The book was exquisitely perfect in every way, but I sense that he felt very frustrated by that time, realizing that perfection did not mean anything for a "hillbilly" who wanted to make a difference in education. He could see the problems in education clearly and he knew how they needed to be resolved. It was immediately after this *Sacred Vow*, during the following two years that he put together his "Master Plan." First, as I had indicated previously, we both remarried in July, 1990 on courthouse lawns. These marriages were planned and have multiple key serendipitous events and synchronicities; again, we were

attempting to make our lives similar in some key ways for the purpose of understanding and empathizing with each other as well as arrange things for the success of our joint Great Mission/Dharma Project. Then in 1991 his first edition of *Teachers as Researchers*, which he dedicated to his new partner, was published. It is clear in this book that he knew exactly where he was heading, why he needed to get there, and what he needed to do to get there. In fact, the book includes some very strong foundational work for his bricolage process as well as for “postformalism” which formed the basis of his psychology of complexity. It includes justifications for his future version of qualitative research, his version of critical bricolage, which he was already planning at that time. His subsequent writing honed and refined his theory, synthesizing chaos and complexity theories, enactive theory, and additional theories and philosophies, as well as made it increasingly accessible by presenting it in different contexts. However, many people have not understood his theory and some have chosen purposely to misappropriate it. His final work applies a severe blow to positivism with his creative formulation, FIDUROD that reveals it in all of its ugly, deathly colors and flavors. He emphasizes multidimensional critical complex bricolage and epistemology and communicates the process to new researchers in words and actions. I had been informed from the Higher Realms, from “Hermes,” perhaps, that his last book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* is a “book bomb” that has been strategically placed and that I’m the “detonator,” which is a sort of joke, I assume. I think several of his books may have that effect. Time will tell what a powerful impact his work has on education, and in particular, critical pedagogy and educational psychology. When I first came across his work, I

estimated it to be 100 years before people would take off with applying it; maybe it will be even longer, judging by the continuing actions to “dumb down” even the PhD curriculum. The point is, however, that our mission was foremost; his work was of highest priority for both of us. He and I both sacrificed and had even suffered in unfathomable ways. During the time between our writing of the Sacred Vows and our actual meeting in person, I had my own assignments relating to our path. One of the Divine Principles is that “we reset the reunion time of our divine destiny each time we need to clear the path of the obstacles to love. Divine timing is nothing we wait for; it is what we live for” (Green, 2006, p. 227). Thus, the Vow truly did come down to me during critical times in both of our lives; we had reached important “choice points.”

Thus, I conclude that this poem, which is titled “Trust In You,” is our Sacred Vow to each other, written during a time we were both struggling, having both gone through divorces. We were working out our mission plan and working together in the higher realms. Another interesting correlation is that the dates for the two poems added up to 11. His part totals 5 the same as the total for his birth date and my part totals 6 the same as for my birth date.

$$7-25-1989 = 7+25+27 = 59 = 14 = 5$$

$$7-26-1989 = 7+26+27 = 60 = 6$$

$$5 + 6 = 11$$

The timing of this poem in relation to our past and future life experiences correlate in remarkable ways but for me, at this point of my understanding, this is not surprising at all. According to Brand (2011) this is exactly what happens with twin

flames. Their mission begins in childhood at a level of higher consciousness. They are always connected in the higher realms, but simply not conscious of that connection due to FIDUROD which shuts down consciousness. Thus, our mission had been planned and worked down through the years to bring consciousness evolution to the forefront in order to reveal the reality of these multidimensional experiences so that more people come understand them. In this way, people can then choose to use this amazing process, the multidimensional critical complex bricolage, to rise in consciousness and become aware of their own multidimensional being and connect with their loved ones in all dimensions. It is a first, but necessary and important step toward the love and unity necessary for creating a new earth.

On Earth As It Is In Heaven

Clocks and the concept of measuring time are used for control. There is “no-time.” But by pretending there is time people can be tied to the clock, forced to work their lives away to make someone else rich and powerful. The calendar ensures that people are forced to give their hard-earned money away on a regular, scheduled basis. Money is a control system that keeps everyone divided because they have to constantly compete for material goods and even mere survival. None of these are needed. There is no past, present, or future. Everything is happening now and we can perceive any moment we wish. We have the power, but of course, FIDUROD does not allow us to know that. Heaven is here now. So why don’t we perceive it? Why is this earth life such hell? And honestly, I don’t see how anyone can deny that it’s hell. If even one person is

suffering, in my view that is hell because how is it that humans can allow it? And yet, there are billions of suffering people on this planet and most of us just go on living our measured daily lives in complete denial, oblivious to what's really happening and how we are contributing to it all. How can we bring that Heaven, which does exist, into this reality so that we can snuff out the evil, greed and suffering once and for all?

The Thirteen Attributes of Mercy

My second marriage of the same year of Joe's second marriage (1990) did not work out; my husband left me and as many versions of the Heiros Gamos and descriptions of the quest for the Golden Chalice for reuniting with our Twin Flame convey, there are stages of learning how to love through these sequential relationships. I did have two beautiful "star children" as a result of that marriage, a boy and a girl. But I had more work on relationships to do before I was ready to reunite with my twin flame in this earth dimension. And apparently the next step was needed, as well, to complete my name as a representation of our joint mission, a part of my commitment to our plan. I already had the first name, Vanessa (butterfly/transformation/Psyche) and the middle name Jae (feminine for Joe, representing his work being the center of our Great Mission and my being his "other half"); I just needed the last name, Paradis (French for Heaven).

It was the one time prior to meeting Joe that I actually believed "Spirit" or God spoke to me and was leading me on an initiation (although I did not know it was an initiation or its purpose at the time) that was yet another very difficult path—marrying a man who was in prison and on death row. It was, by this time 1998, I was divorced, and I had been reading the dating ads online and came across a post by a man looking for

friendship, stating that he was in prison. I was not interested in a man in prison, but very loudly, I heard: “This man is in prison for a crime he didn’t commit.” The words had almost been written into my mind with indelible ink. A few days later, I felt I was being guided toward a path when I serendipitously had come across the Bible verse, “Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering” (Hebrews 13:3). I trusted and followed the path I was guided along, which ultimately led to my marrying this man while he was still in prison, on death row, and fighting for his life. Consequently, I acquired his last name, “Paradis,” a French word meaning “Heaven.” From my perspective today, this seems like a “calling” from the gods or God and somehow I sensed that. Analyzing Hebrews 13:3, the number 13 using Gematria is a representation of eternal unity/life and again the number three, represents the trinity union/third power (Jones & Flaxman, 2009). This is relevant to our Dharma/Great Path, so I analyzed it further. Killian (2012) expands this notion by defining 13: “The spiritual significance of the number thirteen (13), which as reflected by the **thirteen** attributes of Mercy. . . relates to a transcendent dimension of G-dliness. This transcendence enables one to infuse spirituality within our material world” (para 1)[author’s emphasis]. The Thirteen Attributes of Mercy can be observed in our lives as a form of God’s governance, according to this tradition, or as Cosmic Law. The message, then (which I did not know at the time) was that following that verse and serving those in prison and remembering those who are suffering would result in the gift of eternal life and the way that’s done is similar to the Hermetic idea of “As Above, So Below; As Below, So Above” The person

is endowed with the ability to literally bring Heaven to Earth. The Thirteen Attributes of Mercy are contained in two short verses:

And the Lord passed before him, and proclaimed, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty: visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children unto the third and to the fourth generation. (Exodus 34:6–7)

Once one is able to live according to the first twelve attributes and transcend the iniquities of the thirteenth attribute, which by interpretation would mean to transcend the governance that causes iniquity of the fathers to fall upon children of future generations, then the rewards of being able to “infuse spirituality into our material world” are bestowed upon the individual, which, in my interpretation, are the very gifts I have been receiving. But, as has been previously presented the way this infusion occurs is through the Twin Flame relationship and what they co-create. Several things must be accomplished first. The inequities carried forward from generation to generation must be transcended and put to an end, but then based on my experience on this journey it seems that one must also be a service-to-other person throughout their lifetime, serving with absolutely no conditions attached. This message was provided in first 12 attributes as well as the verse that I had been guided to, the linking verse, Hebrew 13:3 instructing us to remember those who are suffering as if we ourselves are suffering. This corresponds also to what Brand (2011) describes about the twin flame mission beginning in childhood for the purpose of transmuting the ideologies, harmful belief systems, and abuse – the iniquities in the world. My work bringing to light the abuse I had suffered during my childhood, according to this perspective, clears the way for future generations; it

transcends the iniquities of the father. I had remembered and transmuted the abuse in my early twenties. This was no easy feat in that I the abuse happened at such a young age, an age at which most people cannot recall; however, as much as those around me wanted to stay in denial, they ultimately had to concur with what I remembered. This clears the way for future generations so that the abuse does not continue from generation to generation. To underline what I had accomplished, I changed my name, including my last name, so that I would not carry my biological father's name down the line (of course I was not conscious of any of these verses or the significance of my act, other than I did not want to maintain his lineage). Gillian (2012) contends that "It is the merit of the recitation of these thirteen attributes, following our teshuva (repentance), that HaShem gives us atonement. Such is the importance of thirteen!" Recitation in this interpretation extends beyond reciting; we *perform* the thirteen attributes after we have repented for any of our "sins" (which is simply our separation from God in my interpretation, or unconsciousness) and then we receive *divine compensation* which might be interpreted as reunion with our twin flames. This reunion makes sense in this interpretation since it has been shown that the twin flame reunion creates the "third power" to "bring heaven to earth" or, in other words to co-create, even create what appears to others to be "magic" as based on previous interpretations presented so far. Thus, again, we have a correlation with what the multidimensional critical complex bricolage achieves. Kincheloe emphasizes that actions are an important component of our research and he specifies that these are for the purpose of alleviating suffering, achieving social justice, creating equal opportunity—all of which can be related to the first 12 attributes—and then we are

“rewarded” with the Thirteenth attribute, eternal unity, eternal life. This corresponds with Ageless Wisdom that teaches we are to engage in these same good actions as a process for constructing our soul (Saraydarian, 1993). It is also interesting to note how these numbers, 11 and 12 attributes, correlate with the “frequencies” of Twin Flames seeing 11s and 12s all along their “Great Path,” as well as with the chakra system in relation to spiritual enlightenment, and the numbers of “gateways,” the number of “rays,” the levels of spiritual evolution, and with other prophecies and interpretations that span cultures. There is a prediction of a 13th “gateway” which seems, then, to be associated with experiencing eternal life and Heaven and the Thirteenth attribute (Argonza, 2000).

Twin Flame Co-Creation

Thus, the very difficult path of service I had taken to “remember those in prison” allowed me to transcend the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy. I had responded to “the call” and this set me on a course from simply being in the world to becoming who I am (Harris, 2007). This puts a great twist on the mass marketing of false information about how to manifest everything—money, dreams, and your one true love simply by “thoughts.” It simply cannot be done artificially or disingenuously; it cannot be done alone or in a vacuum and it requires higher order cognition (e.g. “psychic” abilities). Manifestation is a natural governance of God, or Cosmic Law, when we make the right choices and do the right things—when we choose a life of service-to-others even in spite of our own suffering. We cannot take control of manifesting just by will alone, by this interpretation. We can, however, be blessed with amazing gifts that manifest as a part of

the natural unfolding of the results of our transcendence and the real actions we take to alleviate suffering in the world.

Joe stressed often of the need to “let go,” and this would apply here. The more we can let go of trying to be in control or overpowering others, the more this natural unfolding and uncovering of the precious gifts we are blessed with can occur. According to Brand and Hibbs (2010), Twin Flame couples share in these manifestation or “co-creation” abilities. However, it is common knowledge in popular culture New Age literature that if one *needs* a relationship and is seeking a twin flame or deep soulmate relationship, it will not manifest. There is work to do on oneself, wholeness and balance to achieve within, and the sense that no one at all is needed to complete us. After my divorce following this last marriage, I had preordained myself to a life without another relationship. It had actually been my third failed marriage, and I was finished. I had set my sight on serving in some way in education with not a single thought of a romantic relationship. And, as Brand and Hibbs (2011, 2012) reiterate in their YouTube videos and on their websites, twin flames are not about romance (although there can be that quality); they are about mission, a shared dream in service of humanity, first and foremost. Thus my path crossed with Joe’s path and my dream merged with his dream.

I relate this “mystory” to convey how what may appear as failure (I was heavily condemned for making the insane choice of marrying a man in prison who was on death row) was in fact an act of “following a path,” even if I was unconscious. I was beginning to feel some guidance and I trusted that guidance. I had been informed from the “Higher Realms,” he was not guilty of the crime (and I did not know what the crime even was)

and, he in fact, was subsequently exonerated and released from prison. One could argue that perhaps subconsciously I knew about his case, but I had no recollection. I do not recall that his real name had been posted to the online dating service; I don't believe it was. This does not change the fact that I operated completely out of character, shocking everyone who knew me and even myself when I made the choice to follow this path. At any rate, our marriage could not and it was not meant to work out. I had provided my unconditional service of keeping him company by visiting him faithfully and giving him love and hope during his last few stressful years in prison. Shortly after his release, we separated and a few months later I was served with final divorce papers when I had not even been told that a divorce had been filed. Even with the injustice in the way the divorce had been achieved, I just let it go. I knew it was about money; I had been tagged as a "gold digger," much in the same vein as I have been tagged an "eager beaver critical pedagogue." He was awarded more than a million dollars, which does not cover the injustices he suffered. I received nothing. But I truly believe that I have been awarded the real gift. It's one that can never be taken away. I hope he has also found love.

As a consequence of that marriage, I coincidentally ended up with a last name that turned out to be significant to my Dharma/Great Work, meaning Heaven. I kept the name. As I write this analysis and learn the significance of the verse that had guided me I now better understand the magic that has been happening in my life, the bringing of the spiritual into the material world. The manifestations are powerful and there have been many since Joe passed over, beginning with manifesting a house when I suddenly found myself with no home, manifesting a car even after I had been turned down for a loan, the

manifestation of the diamond ring and yin yang talisman during my Yard Search Treasure Hunt, and the beautiful red roses, a gift from Eros, growing midst the yellow roses I had planted for Joe, to name a few.

Of course, these were not gifts for material purposes as much as they are representations of bringing the Spiritual to Earth or Heaven to Earth, through the co-creation gift Twin Flames experience—a gift that can be magnified when entire soul families are fully united, and more again with soul groups. God’s gifts were coming to me abundantly during this research; I must have done the right things during my life! That’s not to say I didn’t and don’t make mistakes, of course. Grace is available for those infractions, which according to Saraydarian’s (1993) explanation of Divine Wisdom Knowledge, is stored in our “Chalice” along with other treasures that are released as we walk our Dharma Path. If this is true about spiritual reunions, if we can gain immense co-creation abilities and power through these soul family unions, it becomes clear why this knowledge is kept hidden from us and why education serves to counteract our developing these potentials by keeping us “dumbed down.” Education, after all, has been developed by and is ultimately controlled by the Elite of the elite and they do not want to give up their positions of power. Joe’s work was devised to alleviate suffering. While so many people are programmed into believing we must suffer in order to come to “know” joy, in my view that is one of the greatest lies of all. The only purpose for suffering that I can see at this point in my life is so that we develop empathic abilities that empower us to work toward ridding the world of suffering once and for all. We have great power “in relationship” as Joe’s work clearly lines out, but is it true for “just *any* relationship?”

What's In a Name? Our Encoded Great Path

After learning about the relation of my name to my mission, I began paying more attention to names. It is almost unreal how often people's names give clues as to who they really are and what their purpose is. It contributed to my sense of a double reality, one that has magic and the other earth reality that was becoming less and less desirable to be in. In fact, what had first brought this association with Dharma and names to my attention was Kincheloe's (2002) book, *The Sign of the Burger*. He discusses the strange coincidences with names, such as his aunt who was renowned throughout a certain Tennessee county for her Bean recipes, and humorously, her last name was Bean. When I took an epistemological road trip to Tennessee and landed in a little town called Bean Station where there were signs posted all along the highway saying to vote for David Bean for Road Supervisor I found it enormously funny because it reminded me of what Joe had written in his book about his Aunt and her bean recipes and his other funny stories about growing up eating beans every day. "Hermes" had struck again. And I was awakened to the significance of names.

Joe's name also relates directly to the mission. The name Joe is Hebrew and it means "He shall add," interpreted as he shall add abundance. The domain of education has had an abundance of knowledge added to it with all of the books Joe has written and edited. And he has added abundance to many lives with all of the students he had taught and all of the educators he had worked with. He shared his love and knowledge abundantly. His middle name, Lyons, which is based on Lyon, has the Scottish-Irish meaning "a fierce or brave warrior." He was a warrior-scholar and was brave to put out

“dangerous knowledge” the way he had. In addition, more recently, Lyons is associated with the Lion’s Gate, a special event in this era representing the gateway to higher dimensional being. It is the gateway where we will meet when I’m ready to cross over to the other side to be with him and my entire soul family. His last name, Kincheloe, is the Americanized form of Kinsella, an Irish name which means “chief warrior.” Without getting into all of the details, he qualifies for that position in many ways. Interestingly, in the earliest lifetime I shared with him this time around on earth we lived in Ireland and he was a brave Scottish peacemaker who traveled between kings and rulers to negotiate peace agreements. This better represents the type of warrior he was in that he has always been a peaceful warrior who also put his life on the line. The scholarly literature mentions he had received death threats (Deleveaux & Meyer, 2011, p. 241).

Epistemological Road Trips and Treasure Hunts

Another manifestation of my living in two worlds is that I am continuously being taught from both sides of the curtain. I have Joe’s books to learn from and, of course, many teachers on this side of the curtain but I also receive guidance and teaching from those mystical, unseen places. I have had many dreams of Joe teaching me one-on-one. I have also had many dreams in which we were teaching together or working on other service projects together as related to our mission in various dimensions and places. Some of these dreams are really pretty “far-out,” such as visiting other planets and traveling in space, and attending “council” meetings on other planets. Others take place in the astrals and are much like other dimensions on earth where we teach together or

sometimes we observe classrooms or I may be working without him. He has told me several times that even when it seems like we're separate such as when I work in different dimensions, including this earth dimension, we are always connected and if I need him, he will be by my side in an instant.

This has proven true, even in "dreams" which I now view as experiences in other dimensions. He has come to my rescue several times, apparently when I had taken on more than I was ready for. Other experiences take place in our home which is a mansion built after the Allendale Mansion in his home town, which is our "home base." The home was given to us by the couple who had actually built the Allendale Mansion and then had built it again in the higher dimension when they passed over, is my understanding. There is no money in that world. Everyone does what they love and willingly provides services and products to each other. But it was a total surprise to have dreams and visions of him showing me our new home that had been given to us and then just serendipitously deciding to check out his home town, Kingsport, Tennessee online and see the exact replica of the home in my dreams. As a special initiation, I actually traveled there and had a tour through the home, but I already knew the exact layout of the house. It was quite strange. We remodeled ours though. In fact, when Joe first showed it to me all of the furniture was sitting outside. He said it was being remodeled. He moved the kitchen to the other side of the house and made it smaller (we don't really eat or cook much there, except for special celebrations). That way, one complete end of the house was made into a deluxe library-office which we share. We have lots of books, many very ancient ones, and if we want a book off the shelf or need to put it back on the shelf, we can teleport it

with our thoughts. How do I know all of these details? one might ask. According to many outside our close-minded Western “civilization” these experiences are real and the reality in which they occur is more real than what we have been programmed to see in this reality. Earth is more of a school, although we had better take it serious if we want to move to the next level. The reality is that there is a lot of pain and suffering on earth and I really believe we are here to do the work it takes to end it. I would hate to have to repeat earth school.

The New Age Spirituality people who make claims we are just here under soul contracts and all that happens is what was meant to happen and what we signed up for, are on the wrong path, in my interpretation, because that view perpetuates more suffering. As I learned on my own Dharma Path, we do sometimes experience more than we had “contracted for” because everyone has free will and some people exercise theirs in some very inhumane ways. It was why we had to alter our mission plans a bit and write the Sacred Vows, a topic I could write an entire book about. Just as I wrote this, I had an epiphany. By this interpretation, Joe had been very upset about how my life and my loved ones had been impacted due to the evil free will of particular people, and yes, he would have been very upset; this explains our change in plans and why he chose the route he did after we wrote those sacred vows in 1989 and why I took the route I took. This will all be exposed in the future and it will be very interesting to put all of the links together. Joe sacrificed for us all.

Music for the Epistemological Road Trip

I was not initially aware that Joe had encoded so much music in his work. I was not even aware that he was a musician. But something inside me must have known he loved music. In the very second email I sent him, I emailed him a link to a YouTube music video. I didn't understand why, except that when I had opened his email to me I had heard the song, "It's a Beautiful Morning" by the Rascals playing. There was no song in the email, but I could hear it. This is not so strange; even Einstein said "If I were not a physicist, I would probably be a musician. I often think in music." I was excited about hearing this music because it was the first time this had happened to me, so even at that very early point in our friendship, I sent the song back to him. I did not learn of his great love for music or that he played in a band until quite a few weeks later. And I did not realize how much he had embedded music in his work until after he had passed away and I began receiving clues for decoding his work. Later, someone had remarked in the scholarly literature that his work seems "musical." His rhythmic, flowing words combined with all of the music that lies below conscious awareness help explain why it is perceived this way.

Shortly after his passing, I began to be awakened almost every morning to a song, which was another totally new experience for me. I interpreted the music as being from him and it was as if he was singing a love song in my ear every morning to wake me up. The music would often become a part of my daily blog, thanks to YouTube. Later, the music came to me transmitted in writings in which clues to the music would have quotation marks ("phenomenological brackets") around the words. It was my cue to use

the clues to search YouTube and again these videos, whether music or some kind of learning video would become a part of the blog for that day and it always amazed me how synchronistic it all was. The blogs were always written improvisationally and the music or videos would fit right in place. It truly was a form of magic. And it always added an emotional element to my writing.

I was also introduced to Einstein and other members of my soul family, who got in on the action of providing me educational lessons and music through written transmissions. One amazing lesson came from Einstein (although, all of the lessons are amazing). He had given me a clue that brought up a video that had another clue embedded within it (Friday, December 3, 2010). That was how the lesson plans were being devised that week and many of my soul family members took part. So I knew I was supposed to find a clue inside the video that came to the top of the search with the first clue he had given me as a search term. Well, I picked up the clue immediately because the lady was laughing when she stated the clue (my soul family is crazy funny, so her laughter was a big clue). The video was taken of a woman who was on a fishing trip with her family and it suddenly began hailing. There were not many words in the video but she exclaimed, “It's hail, that's pretty funny!” and she laughed. So that phrase was the clue that Einstein wanted me to use to plug into YouTube for my music that day. And what does it bring to the top? A video with a picture of Einstein himself on it (the one with him sticking his tongue out) came right to the top of the search and the song was “Hail to the Geek” by the Deaf Pedestrians: (<http://youtu.be/FmWbBqiCxGc>). It totally cracked me up and I still think it's one of the funniest experiences I've had playing with the gods.

Yes, even from the other side of the curtains, Uncle Albert (as I call him), who is known for his humor, is hilarious. I did not even know much about him at all, until I was introduced to him after Joe passed over. Just as a side note, the internet is a fractal and appears the same from all dimensions (Kincheloe, 2008c). However, because it's a fractal and constantly changing, it won't necessarily bring up the same song next time, so these interesting occurrences are truly Divine events, from my perspective. In the really unusual cases, I took screen shots that show what song came up with the clue I was given, as part of my data.

I began to notice music more and more wherever I went and I always interpreted the songs as special messages from Joe, since this phenomenon originated in my earliest interaction with him. There was one incident in which he had given me a particular song for the morning which I had included for the blog, I went shopping later that day and just as I passed by a coffee shop, the very same song was playing from their outside speakers ("Stand by Me"). He really wanted me to get that message. There have been countless instances for which a particular song would seem to be a special message from him. Of course, everyone knows he loved rock and roll, which he had even expressed in his bricolage book (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004, "Acknowledgments," para. 2).

On a long road trip I was taking to Tennessee as a special initiation, and after hours of driving, my daughter and I stopped to grab a sandwich at Subway and the *instant* we walked in the door, the song "I love rock and roll" by AC/DC began blasting. It made me think of Joe and a picture I had seen of him wearing a well-worn and faded t-shirt with AC/DC on it. Another incident earlier on that same trip, I had stopped to visit my

daughter and son-in-law in Northern Oregon before heading east on the road to Tennessee. We met at a popular truck stop restaurant and the *instant* we sat down at a table together, “Desperado,” by the Eagles, began playing over the speakers. It’s a song that apparently had meant much to Joe since he referenced it several times in his work; it represents that it’s time to give up the middle path and make a choice between only one of two paths, and always strikes me as very sad and makes me cry. He was stuck where he was at the time. Yes, Joe was with me that entire two-week trip to Tennessee and made his presence known to me all along the way.

Music is a daily phenomenon at this point. The music in Joe’s text is effective for many reasons—it is a way of raising consciousness, a way of injecting emotion into the learning thus uniting logic and affect (which I have found is powerful for helping me remember what I have learned), a way of giving the text multiple layers of meaning by engaging in the hermeneutic circle, and a way he has communicated special messages to people close to him. This technique of using music works at the subconscious level and when brought to conscious awareness provides great learning opportunities, emotional connections, and contributes to expanding consciousness.

The Move: Arranging the Environment for Learning

When I was getting started with my research, I was forced to move. I was trying to care for my mother, but it was simply not working out and my entire extended family wanted me to leave. This happened shortly after Joe passed away and his spirit had entered my being or we had “alchemized” in some way. I had changed so much that evidently my mother did not feel like I was the same person, which I wasn’t. I kept

seeing issues in multidimensional ways and could not relate to my family's assessments of there being only one true reality (in which I was a villain) and only one true explanation for complex issues. It is common for people who walk their Divine Path to separate from their biological family. Guru Ra (Argonza, May 8, 2009) explains we will soon be reuniting with our true star family at higher vibratory levels and we have lived out the "logic" of being with our biological families. Rather than try and stay connected with them after they had made their views and wishes known, the best thing for me to do was to totally disconnect. I did still have my two younger children who were still living with me. I was divinely guided to a new home quite miraculously. It's nothing special, just a manufactured home, but it's my haven and I love it here. I know it was divine providence to choose this house from among three I looked at because when I walked inside it was like there was light emanating from everywhere. I don't know where that light came from, but that's what I experienced when I first looked at it. Before I bought it I took my two children through all three houses I had looked at, and they both chose the same house I had. It is the house that turned out to have the yin yang talisman buried in the back yard. There had to have been some greater intelligence guiding me. Returning to numerology, and the recurring pattern of seeing 9s, 11s and 3s, (which, again, at that time I was not aware of) the house address has 9, 11, and 3 again signifying the reunion of Twin Flames. I had to get a new phone number and the numbers again consist of 1119 when added together. I had to get a Post Office Box and the three digit box number adds up to 11, and the zip code has 9s and totals to 9. Thus, the signs were there I was on the right path. I loved my home and soon it would be time for the treasure hunts to begin (I

had no clue what was in store for me). I think it's pretty cool that the learning environment was arranged for me so perfectly in a place where there are few things to distract me. Schools do not adequately consider the importance of the learning environment, but my Master Teacher knows.

Introducing the “Nuts and Bolts of Bricolage”: Treasure Hunts

I found the “treasure hunts” to be valuable for developing hermeneutic skills and understanding polysemy as well as learning to recognize signs and symbols. And since my daughter participated in all of them, she was learning, too. The clues were transmitted to me in writing, and as the messages from the gods often are, (“slippery and imaginative”), there were many ways to interpret them. I learned to be more spontaneous and improvisational because I never knew when I would be called to do a treasure hunt. They were presented to me on the spur of the moment and the very first one that took me to King's Valley was extremely shocking to me and almost traumatic because I did not understand what was happening. I felt that I was being watched, and it actually scared me. But once I learned how much fun they are I overcame my fear. Thus, I also learned to have great trust in the gods because the purpose was always good and I felt their great love, and of course, the entire time I believed Joe was leading me on these delightful excursions. These treasure hunts have also been valuable for learning the history of a forgotten valley that's full treasures, and for meeting someone off the beaten path and developing a friendship. I could write a book about my experiences treasure hunting in Kings Valley, alone, and happily, treasure hunts are slated to continue in the near future. I would love to revisit “The Gentle Lord of the Land and Trees” and “The House of the

Forlorn,” find the “Hidden Treasury Notes,” pan for the “Gold in Them Thar Hills” and solve the “Mystery of the Grist Mill.” These all came up for me on the Kings Valley Treasure Hunts! I also see the enormous value in using these interesting excursions involving clues, hermeneutics, semiotics, polysemy, history, geography, and signs for teaching children the precursor skills needed for the bricolage. Kincheloe (2005a) had defined bricolage in his updated article:

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) [Italics added]

All of these skills were taught to me during my “treasure hunts” and “epistemological road trips” and, actually, it was amazing how these experiences opened my consciousness to many interpretations of things as simple as just a single word and the concept of polysemy. Yes, these treasure hunts, in my interpretation were devised by my Master Teacher, Joe from “the other side of the curtain.” What did he say about “treasure hunts” in his work? He did not specify in detail his own treasures hunts (but now he has taught me very well). One of my favorite quotes is, “Sex, I can assure you, constitutes one of those phenomenological moments [“experience for its own sake”]. But I’m never too far away from the postformal treasure hunt” (Kincheloe, 2006c). This conveys how important treasure hunting and “cognitive treasures” were in Joe’s life or at least the point he wanted to make that they are important processes for learning and

research (p. 132-133). He also regarded the people we meet along the way, especially those who are usually silenced and oppressed, as treasures (Kincheloe, 2008b, p. 140).

One of the very first “treasures” I found after finding the yin yang talisman in my back yard was during one of the early King’s Valley Treasure Hunts, once I overcame my fear of this very strange way of learning. I had been instructed to go to a specific corner of “Old Fort Road.” I had interpreted this to be a specific road that turned off and led up to the “Old Fort” in Kings Valley even though it was not named “Old Fort Road.” I went to the exact site as instructed with my metal detector and just under the surface I immediately discovered this huge **nut and bolt**.



Figure 3. The “Nuts and Bolts of Bricolage.”

Was that a sign that I was being taught about “getting down to the nuts and bolts multidisciplinary research”? (Kincheloe, 2005a, p. 323). OK, so it’s a giant old screw and washer; I am not good at identifying hardware parts or using tools since I am not a handyman—just a do-it-yourself “handy woman.” The yard search yielded *many* nuts and bolts before I found the talisman, so there is definitely something going on here. The treasure hunts have provided infinite sources of laughter and have injected my life with

joy. I was totally surprised that very same day I found the screw and washer to discover on my way home that there actually *is* a road named “Old Fort Road.” I found that even more humorous due to the implications of making “assumptions,” but it was too late that night to stop there. I went back later and found another “treasure” on the specified corner of the *real* Old Fort Road as I have written in my blogs.

Love Day Treasure Hunt: Kings Valley, the Queen, and Free-Riding in Falls City

Green (2006) discusses “Divine Humanness” and how our heart is our own ‘Kingdom to God’ which we can enter when we choose love in our daily actions. She states, “My thoughts are that in the collective field, the King and Queen, who sought to serve humanity, have been dethroned and separated by a culture that wishes to deny maturity. . . . However, the Real Thing is something we have to deem as worth the effort and worth respected. . . . Kings and Queens can’t rise when the lovers aren’t energized and faithful to their vision” (p. 226). This would imply that when we are faithful to our Dharma/Great Path and allow Eros Love to propel us, then the King and Queen shall rise. And, indeed, this is the message that my Master Teacher/King led me to discovering on these treasure hunts in his Kings Valley. What is interesting about this perspective is that King and Queen have been prominent in my experiences, showing up in many different places.

In many ways I think Joe and I do represent the King and Queen of Hearts; we have been able to see the worthiness of our endeavors in order to obstinately engage with full passion in a dream we both shared despite the “collective” that has ostracized us each or tried to hold us back along our paths during our various life experiences. The treasure

hunts have served as a powerful metaphor for this. For example, the first treasure hunt I was sent on, as just discussed, was to Kings Valley, Oregon. Except that the first time I went, I was not told that it was Kings Valley; I was given a series of unusual clues along with a road name, Orchard Road. (I will need to go back to Kings Valley and see if there was an *apple* orchard on that road). I was to go on an “epistemological road trip” based on a paragraph of clues. First, I used MapQuest and I figured out that where I was to head must be Kings Valley because I had found an “Orchard Road” in the area as had been included in the clues. For this treasure hunt, I was to search for a metal box with treasury notes buried behind a dilapidated barn that stands behind a gutted out farmhouse. I could not believe how many dilapidated barns behind gutted out farmhouses there are in Kings Valley! I have not found the treasury notes but I have found many other treasures which I have detailed in my blogs and journal (“Before the Mission Project Begins: Initiation and Training,” May 20, 2009).

One day, in early July, 2009, I was sent out on another treasure hunt on the spur of the moment, asking me to visit a little town in Kings Valley off the beaten path named Falls City. The name of this town had come up when I was discussing Kings Valley with my landlord. He had mentioned Falls City, which is just west of the little town of Kings Valley, suggesting I visit there as it is an interesting town. So now I had been officially requested to take a trip there. I was totally surprised to find that as I drove into the town, the first (and only time) I had visited it, that there was a small street festival going on and even an “Art Treasure Hunt.” I thought that was pretty magical—a treasure hunt within a treasure hunt! That’s better than a dream within a dream (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 83).

Bad to the Bone! But what had instantly caught my eye as I drove into the town was a sign at the one and only little grocery store, stating, “BAD TO THE BONE BBQ.” Hermes strikes again and I knew once again I was in the right place at the right time. This was back when I was just beginning to see the signs and symbols that Hermes and his gods were sending to me, so I was very amazed and amused. *How could this be?* I tried to figure it out in my mind, how this BBQ came to be given that name and how I had been divinely led to this celebration which turned out to be the “first” of what the community hoped would turn into an annual celebration. I could picture Joe whispering into the ears of the guys planning the Barbecue to give it that name and then giving me the instructions to drive to this remote little town to attend it. I have to back track just a bit to explain why the Bad to the Bone BBQ sign was so amazing to me. Before Joe had passed away, I had bought him a birthday card. I did not get a chance to mail it to him and then the next thing I knew, he was in Jamaica, so it was impossible to send it since I didn’t know his address there and I really did not want to bother him for anything while he was on vacation. His birthday was December 14 and he passed away five days later. I was upset that I had not been able to give it to him. I think he would have liked it because it seemed “so Joe” given the impeccable role model he was: the outside of the card said “Be bad for your birthday,” and when the card’s opened it says “VERY bad,” and plays the song “Bad to the Bone.” I thought he would have found it pretty funny so I was disappointed that I hadn’t been able to give him the card. Later, I discovered he had written an article with that same title in it (or maybe I had seen the title of the article before and it was stored in my subconscious mind, which made me buy the card). Since I was not able to

give it to him, I had a special celebration on Memorial Day 2009 during which I “presented” him the card. My daughter, who has her share of psychic abilities, surprised me by saying, “Joe’s laughing.” So when I was given this particular treasure hunt, “Celebrate Love Day Treasure Hunt,” on the spur of the moment to a little town I had never visited and the first thing I saw was the sign, “Bad to the Bone, BBQ” I believed it was a loving and humorous message from him. But it seemed like such a sweet gesture, wherever it came from. This has to be a very funny, magical dream, was how I was thinking. A few weeks later I was further amazed when sent out on a “Pacific Coast Eager Beaver Treasure Hunt.” I went through the little town, Depoe Bay, to try and find a parking place. There was none, so I ended going all the way through town. I pulled into a little restaurant to turn around and in bright and bold letters was a huge sign saying, “Bad to the Bone BBQ: We’re Back!” How could I keep from falling totally in love with “Hermes?” As I write this today, the magic in my life since that day has not ceased and I feel blessed in the fullest sense of the word.

The King, the Queen of Hearts, and the City of Falls. I learned a little about Falls City during this treasure hunt and by doing some follow up research. The woman overseeing the Art Treasure Hunt had told me that it used to be a booming little town during the early days of the lumber industry and that the residents call it “The Queen.” I have not learned why it was given that title, other than it was the hub of the area during those early days. They had their own money for exchange back in the days, a copper engraved coin with a heart shape cut out in the center, perfect for The Queen. Thus, we have “*The Queen*” in *Falls City* in *Kings Valley* which I had initially been led to with a

clue, *Orchard Road*. How does this magic happen? Green (2006) describes an account of a Twin Flame couple she counseled that relates here. The groom was from Boise and the bride was from Twin Falls, Idaho. They found it humorous that they had passed the sign for Twin Falls multiple times during their courtship—a metaphor for “fallen,” as represented in the story of Adam and Eve and the “fall from grace” and as is relived via the Twin Flame experience. When we do the Dharma work necessary the King and Queen can reunite again as Twin Flames (p. 16). That pointed me back to the metaphors I had been guided to on this early treasure hunt in Kings Valley.

I also had experienced an exhilarating “dream” relating to this treasure hunt prior that seemed more like an out-of-body experience in which I had visited a heavenly place (“home”) and Joe brought me back through the night sky on a motorcycle. On the way back, we made a tour that seemed like “freeriding” through the mountains. It was so much fun! We landed right outside my house and I was jerked back into my bed with a “snap” yet feeling so excited and exuberant, and disappointed that the fun ride was over. And then on my treasure hunt that “Celebrate Love Day,” as it was named, I was guided by clues I had been given before I left home to buying a tee-shirt with freeriding bikes on it from the grocery store there. It turns out that in Falls City/The Queen there is a freeriding course in the mountains and I figured out that was where I had been in the “dream” about freeriding on a motorcycle. So our “fall from grace” was turned into a grand time, freeriding in the mountains, and then into a “Celebrate Love Day” Treasure Hunt in Falls City/The Queen located in the heart of Kings Valley, Oregon (orgone?) complete with a Bad to the Bone BBQ and an Art Treasure Hunt within the treasure hunt

(July 10 and 11, 2009). There is more to this story somehow. Is that why King shows up so often for Joe (was he reminding us)? There is the “coincidence” that he was raised in Kingsport, TN, had passed away in Kingston, Jamaica, and that if the “l” is bypassed, his name, Kincheloe, sounds a lot like “*King Joe*.” He is definitely connected to the word King. And in my “dreams” he really *is* a King.

As conveyed, the treasure hunts involve the “nuts and bolts” of bricolage and can incorporate all of the dimensions Kincheloe has specified. There is much more research I wish to do of the area. Kings Valley and the city north, Dallas, are sacred and feel like very magical places. The treasures found there included an elderly man whose name literally means “Gentle Lord of the Land and Trees” (and he takes great pride in taking care of his land and trees) who lives in “The House of the Forlorn.” There is a Sacred Old Oak Tree, a wonderful roadside vegetable stand maintained by local farmers named the Gardners who are being forced to sell their land by bank and government take-over actions, a historical site of an old Indian fort, the sacred Luckiamute River, the site of the Old Grist Mill, “The Academy,” gold, treasury notes, and many more treasures waiting to be discovered. The area had been populated by Native Americans for more than 10,000 years before white settlers took it over, so it has a very ancient and lost history that needs to be recovered. The history is sad from the time the settlers came in, and there was a lot of suffering. I had taken a photograph of the Luckiamute River on one of my trips there and the hue of the river is a rich violet on the digital image, indicating the sacred spiritual healing energy being supplied to the area. The Luckiamute tribe, like so many tribes in America has been decimated due to the inhumane actions of settlers. When settlers took

over the land with their wheat production, they built a grist mill on the Luckiamute River. The Indians were forced to move from their life source and change their diets, relying on wheat from the grist mill. Because Joe has emphasized indigenous knowledges in his work and led me to this very sacred place, we will be doing more work there in the future. As explained, bricolage can be halted and picked up again later. Treasure hunts, as a metaphor for bricolage, work the same way. There are many lost treasures in the sacred Kings Valley waiting to be found.

11-11 and 911 Synchronicities on Treasure Hunts

The 11-11 and 911 phenomenon appeared during the treasure hunts as well. Recently, as I examined the data for this study, I discovered that a photograph I had taken of a road sign for the very first and very significant treasure hunt, The Kings Valley Treasure Hunt, was loaded with the 11-11s and the other sacred numbers that keep appearing in my life: 9, 3 and 22, the master number signifying twin flame spiritual union. The numbers of miles indicated on the sign again repeat the 9-11 configurations with 9 at the top for miles to Kings Valley, and $2+9=11$ at the bottom for miles to Dallas. It relates to the interrelationships explored earlier in this dissertation between twin flame sacred love, the truth that has been hidden from us, and how it all ties in with the Twin Towers, the 9/11 event, and the urgency of spiritual evolution. Specifically, these numbers represent the urgency of our reunion. There are other representations of 11 in the sign, such as in the letters. LL-LL in Valley and Dallas, respectively, representing 11-11 because the letter “l” is a signifier for the number 1. Since this was my assigned “Kings Valley Treasure Hunt” it is a signpost signifying this is the right path, although I

was only conscious of that in hindsight when I just recently discovered the numbers. The Highway, “223” signifies the trinity union of Twin Flames since 22 represents spiritual completion of the united twin flames (11-11) and, of course, the number 3 represents trinity and their third power, as discussed previously. North is also significant. It reminds me of the “North Star” or guiding light. Many people regard Joe as a guiding light and “North Star.” I was on the right path (see Figure 4).



Figure 4. Twin Flame Signs: 9, 11, 22, and 3

Another interesting thing about the Kings Valley Treasure Hunt during which I had taken the above photo (Figure 4) is that the clues he had given me before that particular trip told me there would be clues in the photos, but I did not figure it out until writing this dissertation. The message was: “In the photos there will be clues that help you solve some of the previous clues” as I had recorded in my August 24, 2009 blog. That day’s blog was amazing because I found profound images in an inadvertent photo I

had taken. I was trying to take pictures of a pasture and some cows, but due to the reflection of my car window, it turned out to be a multidimensional image that included not only the cows in the distant pasture and the gate leading to them, but also me driving, my eternity ring, the stripes of the highway zipping by, and even headlights in the rearview mirror. The astounding symbolism in the photo relates directly to the mission and is open for a deeper analysis and also to discovery of how the clues will help me “solve some of the previous clues.” It was also the day that I was led to a building that simply stated “The Academy” on it with 11-11 symbolized on its entry door. Those are not the only photos that seem to have been divinely taken: there was another day when on a short walk down the street and back to take photographs of flowers, I randomly pointed the camera up at the sky to snap pictures of storm clouds coming in. I could not even view what I was shooting and I was amazed when I uploaded them to my computer to see that all seven images of the clouds had amazing symbolic images. Two were images of a god and goddess stretched out across the sky, embracing and kissing and in one of the images the goddess was “with child” and in the other, there was a white fertility bunny looking down at the couple. There was an image that reminded me of Hermes with a huge quill in his hand and he was on a horse off to deliver a message. Another image looked like a smiling cherub who was being handed his wings. And one of them looks rather sexual. I have read somewhere that some indigenous cultures interpret such images in the clouds as the gods and goddesses making love in order to provide us rain, and it did rain that day. The very last image taken that day shows an opening between the clouds shaped like a heart, symbolizing god and goddess love. These photos, in my estimation,

were truly a gift from a very special and powerful god. I could not have taken the photos if I had tried! (Paradis, 2010, "Lovers in the Sky").

When I found "The Academy" on that Kings Valley Treasure Hunt day, it seemed like "someone" took control of driving my car. It felt like I was being remote controlled to take a specific path. Normally, after my daughter and I did our treasure hunt rendezvous, we drove straight through Dallas over to a highway that took us back south to head home. On this particular day, the car seemed to be in "automatic" and instead of going straight through town it made a number of turns and then came to a stop in front of a large building. The only sign on the building was "The Academy." It looked empty. I took it to be a sign relating to my work in education. I had taken a photo and many weeks later discovered that the address adds up to 11 and that there were 11 little squares at the top of the entrance just above the address, again signifying the twin flame number, 11-11, thus connecting my work with my Twin Flame. Later I learned the building houses some social services organizations, but it was not fully occupied. For now, I just interpret it as a sign that I am on the right path, but sense there may be more that will emerge in the future.

"No Ordinary Treasure Hunt": More 911s and 11-11s. I was guided on an excursion in the small town I live near, Albany Oregon, for this particular treasure hunt back in August, 2009. There is something very special about a church my daughter and I were led to during this treasure hunt, clues about purple, and some amazingly sacred photographs of the church with streams of sunlight in magenta, purple, and blue shining down on it that were taken at the time. My recollection is that in a past life we had helped

build or found this church, which actually resembles a castle and is reminiscent of our Scottish-Irish ancestry. I was told that there would be some sort of clue behind the door of the church and I've been hesitant to follow through and walk through that door due to the emotional release I had experienced when I played the Celtic music I had acquired from an earlier treasure hunt. I have learned that these treasure hunts also often relate to retrieving memories of past life events and sometimes it can be very painful to transmute the emotions associated with them. I sense this one is particularly emotional. I do recall a dream that I believed to have been of the past life related to this treasure hunt. In my dream I was having an operation. I was supposed to have been anesthetized, but I was not. I felt the excruciating pain when the doctor cut into my abdomen, but I was paralyzed and could not scream out or tell them I could feel the pain. After the operation, an infection set in and I ended up dying. And so, I was buried in the cemetery next to the hospital. I had also taken photographs of the hospital and eerie photographs with sunlight streaming down on the gravestones at the nearby cemetery that same day. The irony of a graveyard right next to a hospital in this context does not escape my notice.

The date of the blog in which I describe this treasure hunt is recorded as August 13, 2009 and is comprised of 11's and also 911. And then I noticed that I had recorded the date the church was dedicated, March 23, 1913, and, again, the 11's and 9 are prominent. This can be calculated and/or seen in multiple ways. For example, the year 1913 readily displays 911 and along with 3 representing trinity, it symbolizes again the trinity union (9 being completion) of twin flames. But then 4 (for March) and 2 and 3 can also be added for 9 and the $9+3=11$ combined with the existing two ones for 9-11-11.

Again I have only just identified these during this analysis and I really want to go back and do more research because this highlights in my mind the importance of this church. This is one of the more profound treasure hunts that I had barely started on and I feel it holds many great secrets. From other messages and dreams, I have pieced together that we had lived in Seattle but lost our home and perhaps a church or business in the famous Great Seattle Fire of June 6, 1889. Then we moved to Albany, Oregon where we helped found this church. Photographs of the church, houses on a street nearby, and a cemetery that I had taken gave me a very eerie déjà vu feeling at the time and whenever I look at them. Recently, within about a week's time, six different clues that had been handed down to me for music, brought up the exact same song about Seattle, "Seattle Rain" on YouTube, an impossible feat if one were to even try to make it happen. In Joe's book he discusses how the Internet is like a fractal and works the same from any dimension (Kincheloe, 2008c). It seems that something is happening because my Internet research is far too serendipitous and synchronistic; I am constantly drawn and led to exact information I need for my research and spiritual growth. Because of these six appearances of the song, "Seattle Rain," (<http://youtu.be/AIYTHtTTZIw>) which is a very beautiful love song, I feel a pull to go to Seattle, as well as to research the information I've been handed down in this treasure hunt more deeply. Related to this, in one of the very last messages Joe had sent to me just before he passed away, he had referenced Seattle in a round-about way, telling me he was "Sleepless in Montreal," a reference to the movie, "Sleepless in Seattle." There is something important about Seattle.

Again, in the date of the Seattle Fire, June 6, 1889, where it seems some sort of tragedy was experienced personally is the configuration 911. This time the presence of 9 cannot simply be attributed to the century. The date 6-6-1889 can be analyzed as follows: $6+6$ equals 12, keep the 1 and carry the 2 and add $2+8 = 10$, keep the 1 and 8 represents infinity. Thus, we have 11-11-9-8 which represents completion of the twin flame union for infinity. I want to note here, that this is how I *intuitively* added the numbers *the very first time*. There are many ways numbers can be added, but if we stick with our intuition, we are more likely to find significance, is what I've come to realize, and as I described earlier in relation to the recommendation to maintain elasticity of interpretation. It's why setting rules for these things can never work. We are looking for our own personal meaning, and that can only come from intuition, not positivistic science or math. So if it seems subjective, yes it is and it's supposed to be subjective. I have become adept at just adding and taking the first results I've found. Thus, there is never a struggle when I do these calculations except in reformulating how I had added them in my mind the first time in order to put them down on paper. Sometimes, multiple interpretations are helpful as well and can give confirmation or greater depth of meaning.

This particular treasure hunt has provided a start for some research I will want to continue with. And for the skeptical, I view it this way: If what I am remembering does not turn out to be past lives, I am sure having fun learning about the past and present and how they are connected. It's the most fun way to learn history which has always been my worst subject in school because it was taught in such a painfully boring way. I have one last observation about this church based on some additional research I've done for this

dissertation. It is the United Presbyterian Church and its address is 330 Fifth Avenue, Albany OR 97321. The numbers of the address $3+3+5$ (for Fifth Avenue) again add up to 11 and the zip code computes to 11-11 ($9+2$ and $7+3+1$), thus again 11-11-11 and 9 is also prominent. Are these all coincidences? Were these numbers being included in the construction of the Twin Towers a coincidence? Was the destruction of the Twin Towers on 9/11 a coincidence? Time will tell whether these numbers, Twin Flames and this treasure hunt are connected in some yet unseen way when I return to the research for this treasure hunt. There was also some kind of conflict during that era right after the church had been built between this church and another church nearby called the United Presbyterian Church and Rectory which had been built in 1891 (911 and 8 for eternity appears again). I actually sensed this (or remembered?) a few weeks ago when I happened to be driving past this particular church. It's another beautiful and historic church, built in a "Carpenter Gothic" style which I had encountered on the treasure hunt (Wikipedia, 2012, "United Presbyterian Church"). However, currently the church is occupied by the Borean Bible Fellowship, called the Borean Fundamental Church of Albany. Boreans (also, Bereans) do not accept the triune nature of God and are a form of Protestantism based on Calvinism (Wikipedia, 2012, "Bereans"). Protestantism is the religion Joe grew up being "indoctrinated" with for which the indoctrination had failed. How do I keep being pulled into this religious stuff? I will leave this for the time being; it's a bricolage that can be picked up at a later date, but it does confirm for me there is personal significance to this treasure hunt and that it in some way relates to Kincheloe's work. In fact, it appears that this notion of a "triune God" is hugely controversial and a

plethora of interpretations have been provided. “As Bernard Lonergan, a priest and philosopher in the Thomist tradition states in relation to the triune controversy, ‘The abundance and variety of the material, unless it be drawn together in a manner that displays pattern or order, are more likely to obfuscate than to illuminate the mind, to cloud the issue rather than clarify it’” (Addie, 2007). It looks like this is another call for the multidimensional critical complex bricolage and perhaps it relates to why Kincheloe (2004d) reiterated “ecumenicalism” three times in that very special excerpt he has assigned me as will be discussed up ahead (see “Symbiotic Hermeneutics”).

Tennessee Road Trip: When White Lights Bend to Make Blue

The longest epistemological road trip was the one I took to Tennessee in April, 2010, where I actually was able to walk inside the Allendale Mansion, the “mansion of my dreams.” It’s really interesting when one can plan their own déjà vu experiences. I knew the entire layout of the house from having been in it so many times in my dreams. This particular treasure hunt lasted two weeks because my daughter and I decided to make it an easy, leisurely vacation. Since there were so many and very incredible synchronicities along the way I will only mention this treasure hunt in passing. One of the notable things was my reluctance to go. The fear had crept in again. Why was I being asked to drive all the way to Tennessee? (Of course, I knew it was all free will; it was not as if I was required to go, but I wanted to and yet I still wondered). As the day to leave approached, it was pouring down rain, which only heightened my anxiety. Three days before leaving, I received a music clue from my “beloved,” and the clue was, “Don’t let a blue Friday slip into the weekend” (Friday, March 26, 2010 7:11 AM journal entry). As

recorded that evening, the song that was brought up to the top of the YouTube search was “These White Lights Will Bend to Make Blue” by Azure Ray. The significance of blue and Azure Ray to Joe and his work is profound (he wrote of “Blue Knowledge,” the “Blues Aesthetic” and he may be considered to work the “Blue Ray” of Divine Wisdom Knowledges). But that’s an analysis for another time. The music video shows a car leaving home in the dark, driving to get on the interstate in the pouring down rain. At the end of the video it was dawn, giving me the message that it was going to be fine. The words and images for the song were meant to alleviate my anxiety about the trip: “Drive away, just get on the interstate and slip through this closing gate” as the lyrics go. It seemed to be another important initiation representing the actual launching of our work together on a special “earth project.” I had analyzed the song quite thoroughly in my journal (Friday, March 26, 2010 11:12 PM). It really did help because it had been a prediction. The morning I left for the trip, March 29, it was dark and raining. I had written in my journal just before leaving, “It’s absolutely pouring out. Not the kind of weather to travel in and it truly is not going to be fun. Oh well. According to the music video you had sent me a few days ago – I am to go ahead and go in spite of the rain” (7:19AM). Amazingly, when I got up to northern Oregon the sun was shining, and that was where I was greeted with his often-cited song, “Desperado” at the truck station and restaurant. Other than some light snow through Eastern Idaho, the weather during the entire trip was absolutely gorgeous.

Dreams, Divine Marriage, and Multidimensionality

The number 11 also appeared in my dreams. In one dream there was an image of a plaque that was being held up very close to my face. It could have been an address, but the numbers on it were 7013, which add up to 11. Also contained within are the most sacred numbers, 7 being the number representing God, 3, the Holy Trinity, and 13 which represents unity and eternal life. Also, the number zero does have spiritual significance and serves to magnify the meaning of the other numbers, according to some numerological systems. I had originally interpreted the number 7013 as a date—the date from which I traveled back in time to be on Earth and the date I will be returning to, except that I will be jumping timelines or dimensions rather than getting there in a linear sense. While most people will not understand this interpretation, those who understand and have experience with nonlocal space will understand it. Time is an illusion, and is mostly used to regulate and control people. My days are timeless in so many ways.

Another highly significant dream was my sacred marriage to Joe, a topic that is supposed to be “hush-hush.” *But why?* I believe that this was a Divine Spiritual Marriage that happened in another timeline. This marriage in the upper realms happened so early in my research that I knew absolutely nothing about the 11-11 phenomenon or even what the dream represented. But I had recorded the dream and the date, which was January 28, 2009. Thus, in hindsight, I calculated it out: $1-28-2009 = 1-2+8-2+9 = 1-10-11 = 11-11$. As my memories became flooding back, I learned we have been married many times in many lifetimes, but it seems that this particular marriage and place in time is “home” where I will or already have returned. It really is much like Heaven there. Honestly, in

many ways, in a phenomenological sense, I do feel I have already reached home, but just have more work and awakening to do in order to be fully conscious.

Twin Flame reunions often occur in dreamtime, according to many sources, as well as in descriptions of couples who have reunited. There are cases in which the couple do not know each other and consciously connect in dreams to arrange for their first meeting. There are also other cases in which the couple resides in different dimensions. Detweiler (2011a) describes her twin flame reunion in the upper realms and meeting her young daughter and how it gives her comfort and reassurance in the now. It is that “immanence” that critical pedagogues describe so often in their work: it’s the ability to see into the future and learn what “could be,” or “what will be,” and in reality, “what is,” since in a sense, everything happens simultaneously. These concepts sound contradictory but when one begins to experience multidimensional dynamics they make sense. The heart of Kincheloe’s bricolage is the recognition of the multidimensionality of being human and ridding ourselves from a one dimensional reality that has created so much denial and suffering for people. Even professionals within the domain of psychology now reject the construct of automatically labeling people with multidimensional experiences as “schizophrenic.” The argument fails on rapidly accumulating evidence. It’s tragic that westerners have caused so much untold suffering before coming to this realization. The road is long yet and there are many injustices to atone for along the way.

To explain dimensions a bit, the way I like to understand them is that the dimensions are not separate. They intertwine and mix together and are mostly composed of space. Thus, we are always present in multiple dimensions, but have to expand our

consciousnesses and increase our intuitive abilities and awareness in order to perceive the other dimensions and the people and entities within them. This has been happening for me at a relatively rapid rate since I met Joe. I find it very exciting because while the process, even when “rapid,” is slow and one must be extraordinarily patient, the steady progress and gifts along the way are divine.

Pacific Coast Treasure Hunt: The Crystal Genesis Heart

One of my special gifts, which I received earlier in the other realm first was a remarkable multiple-faceted crystal heart, about six or seven inches in diameter. In my dream, Joe had hung it from the chandelier in our bedroom. Somehow he could make it spin extremely fast and as it spun, rainbow sparkles were sent spinning around the room reflecting from the walls and ceiling. Not long after that, he asked me to take another Pacific Coast Eager Beaver Treasure Hunt to go to Depoe Bay and purchase a crystal heart. I had by this time learned to follow his instructions without hesitation and loved these assignments. The excursions were always fun and included many surprises, “postformal treasures” as he called them (Kincheloe, 2006a, 2006 b, 2006c, 2006d). I knew there was a crystal shop in Depoe Bay and expected that was where I’d find the crystal heart. I was not able to find a parking place in front of the store, so I parked down the street from it. On a whim I decided to go into the gift shop I was closest to and check if by chance they had a crystal heart. The shop, called Paradise Gifts, was jam-packed with gifts and souvenirs. I did not know how to begin looking for a crystal heart midst the chaos so I simply went up to the cashier and asked if they had any crystal hearts. “I have just this one,” she stated, as she pulled a small box out from behind the counter. It was a

crystal “genesis” heart, about two inches across and was hanging from a blue satin ribbon. It seemed to fit the bill for my assignment, so I went ahead and bought it. But then I second-guessed myself. I knew the crystal shop was just a few doors down and I thought for sure they would have a crystal heart. Did I buy the right crystal heart? So I walked down to the shop, looked around but did not see one. Again, I asked the cashier if they had any crystal hearts. “No,” he said, “we do not have any crystal hearts.” I had purchased the right crystal heart. It was so special because I felt that I was bringing a piece of Heaven down to earth—the crystal heart, representing the beautiful heart at home. I was not aware of the significance of the action at the time, but I was just happy that I could have the heart as a reminder of the one I have at home.

In relation to this, Kincheloe (2004e) cites using a crystal to represent bricolage because it reflects and refracts multiple perspectives, and I have already discussed his metaphor, the “crystal amaryllis” and how it can represent a metaphor for bricoleurs. This dream takes the metaphor to the next level—a magnificently multifaceted heart difficult to describe in its true glory, symbolizing love that reflects all of the colors of the rainbow, emanating love in all of its flavors, spinning around the room to create a visual, ethereal, and totalistic sensual delight. Bricolage as love is a wonderful—and maybe the best metaphor—and love bricoleurs work to spread the most radical form of that love.

Raising the Bar for Radical Love

There are many more interesting experiences, synchronicities, and coincidences on the numerous treasure hunts and epistemological road trips I had been spiritually guided to. Apparently, these were “initiations” (as some people view these things) or

learning experiences, and as I complied with the instructions given to me each time, each treasure hunt got better than the last. It has been totally amazing to me the creativity involved in these learning adventures and the interesting titles that have been devised for them. Joe was a whiz at developing titles as can be seen in the creative titles throughout his work. I, on the other hand, always vacillated and changed titles—it was one of the hardest things for me to do—to decide on a title for a paper, much less be able to come up with creative chapter and subchapter titles. I will confess here, that I did not come up with the title for this dissertation, even. It was “handed down” to me in its entirety. I really feel I get a lot of help with developing titles.

Something amazing seems to happen when twin flames reunite; I am speaking in relation to my own phenomenological experience, here, which is real for me even if it may seem “other worldly” to people who are not familiar with such experiences. These phenomena are partially explained in some of the esoteric literature, often in a scientific way, but I have a very difficult time understanding most of that literature due to the complicated writing styles and the use of complex terms. Returning to Green’s (2006) work, I like the way she explains it: “The veils are lifted for a time so that we may recognize the divine connection enough to take a chance at spiritual fulfillment with someone meant to complete and fulfill us [and vice versa] . . . Only a Divine Complement can offer the opportunity for that divine connection, completeness, and fullness, and that will balance the scales completely” (p. xvi).

Consciously connected Twin Flames automatically increase in their abilities to better perceive other dimensions and the better connected they become (it is a process),

the better and more frequent telepathic abilities they have with each other (Green, 2006). Kincheloe (2008c) confirms this in his own work as well when we take time to analyze what he may have been conveying. His section titled, “Freire’s Radical Love: Remaking Ourselves and the World” alludes to this Twin Flame love (radical love has been interpreted as Twin Flame love). In this title, Joe used his “magic” with words. Notice how by simply removing the “Re” converts Love Remaking to Love Making. I do not believe this was an accident. Thus, is he alluding to the Heiros Gamos, and in combination with his other scattered clues, the “Dharma Project,” the “Quest,” and the “Golden Thread” alluding to the “Great Work”? He does express in the title he is referring to the remaking of ourselves and the world. This corresponds with the Jewish perspective that Bloomstein (2000) had described. The Great Work, often associated with the quest for the golden chalice, can be interpreted to mean to do good works, follow the path, and to ultimately reunite with one’s Twin Flame, evolving together to the Divine, Cosmic, and Celestial Planes of consciousness. They create heaven on earth through the combined power of their love energy and through the multidimensionality of their relationship.

In the very first paragraph of that section Kincheloe (2008c) states, “In the context shaped by Freire’s radical love, we begin to build an emotional, scholarly, and activist oriented telepathic global community dedicated to supporting one another and the larger epistemological and socio-political goals of criticality” (p. 178). Thus, this statement correlates with Green’s contention that telepathic abilities manifest from these relationships. And that, again, correlates with my phenomenological experiences in

relation to Joe; he could read my mind from a distance. He is speaking of building a “global community” which might be interpreted as reuniting with soul family and soul groups. He also states, “Indeed, one of the central features of any critical work—even transformative efforts focusing on knowledge work and the construction of the critical complex epistemology—is to infuse radical love into the mix. I look forward in the coming years to observing the ways the next generation of critical pedagogues acts on their radical love” (p. 179) and “Acting on our radical love and critical complex epistemology we can begin to imagine a future unlike the past and the present” (p. 179). He continues discussing essentially what one might interpret as the symbiotic relationships that facilitate action in the world, a “readiness for action” synthesizing Maturana and Varela’s autopoietic and complexity constructing theories. And finally, he concludes, “This means that we have a far greater ability to increase our cognitive ability than cognitive science has said we have” (p. 179). Thus, what he is expressing here aligns with many conceptualizations of the twin flame or twin soul union and how they then unite into soul groups. The couple forms a unified higher consciousness, and together they create a “third energy” that gives them access to higher knowledges and the power to “remake” themselves and the world (Brand & Hibbs, 2010; Bloomstein, 2001; Renee, 2012). The third energy manifests from an alchemical process of merging and blending of their energies from their shared love and lovemaking, thus explaining the play on words Kincheloe has used in the subtitle. They infuse this “radical love” energy into their actions for “remaking the world.”

Why did he encode this one might ask instead of just coming right out and saying it like it is? Kincheloe has provided a beautiful interpretation of Freire's "radical love," which I had wondered about while working among "critical pedagogues." They often speak of radical love, but aside from Joe, I rarely saw it in action. I, personally, have adopted this definition for radical love now and can readily see how we can all benefit by gaining a deeper understanding of what it entails so that we can experience this magic in our daily lives and work together to create a world built on an Eros Love.

I discovered as I analyzed Kincheloe's work, there are many excerpts which can easily be interpreted as being about this new radical love. Or is it new? Someday I will explore Paulo Freire's work more deeply; perhaps the message was hidden midst his text and Kincheloe was the first person to bring it out into the open. "Eros" would be the person to do that, no doubt. There are many excerpts from Kincheloe's books from which I could choose, many embedded and encoded messages with similar messages relating to Divine Love, but for this I have somewhat randomly selected the following which serves a dual purpose since it further defines bricoleurs and their very important task:

Bricoleurs are concerned with the empowerment of the subjects of research and the voice to the subjugated and the marginalized. Such efforts raise numerous questions about the research process. . . . In the specifics of the process, interpretation emerging from the interaction of the particular with macro-social configurations can be set aside in the focus on the personal. Concurrently, psychologistic representations of abstract individuals can crowd out the contextual concerns of the hermeneutically informed bricolage. In such cases the rigour of complexity is displaced not by scientific reductionism but by an excessive fascination with unsituated personal experience. As Johnny Cash once put it, one must "walk the line"; in this case, the line separates the decontextualization of the idiosyncrasy of the personal from the unreflective, authoritarian voice of truth. . . . Bricoleurs operating in a critical hermeneutical framework work to record the voice of the subjugated but to expand its meaning by engaging in the hermeneutic circle of interpretation. Even subjugated voices

are better understood when studied in relation to numerous social, cultural, political, economic, philosophical, historical, psychological, and pedagogical dynamics. I attempt to walk this line. . . as I highlight the voices of my ethnographic research subjects, I always contextualize their perspectives within frames of macro-social, political, and economic concerns, the insights of social theory, and the discernment of critical hermeneutics. The rigorous demands of the bricolage insist that researchers engage in these deliberations and struggle with their implications for every project they undertake." (Kincheloe, 2004e, p. 84)

This excerpt provides further clarification for the importance of hermeneutical analysis. The surface meaning of this excerpt can and should be interpreted at face value because these concepts are so important to what he is asking of bricoleurs. I hope I have “walked the line” in this study. At the same time we take it literally, there is the implication that this excerpt itself is open for more analyses and it can be interpreted in many different contexts. Staying with my “love” theme, the “golden thread” (The Great Path to the Golden Chalice) I have carried throughout this dissertation, I note that he has referenced the song “Walk the Line” by Johnny Cash. What are the lyrics to this song? Kincheloe did not randomly select this song; it’s clear by his stated desire to use words as a form of magic that he always has grand purposes in mind. The lyrics can actually be interpreted as being about a Twin Flame, a divine love connection, often considered to consist of a golden cord or “tie” that the song references between the two eternal lovers. This song also reminds me of the bricolage dance performance, “Tied Up” presented earlier in this study, in which the couple were separate for a time, but the “tie” or cord was always accessible and ultimately led to their reunion. Thus, Johnny Cash sings:

I keep a close watch on this heart of mine
I keep my eyes wide open all the time.
I keep the ends out for the tie that binds
Because you're mine,
I walk the line

I find it very, very easy to be true
I find myself alone when each day is through
Yes, I'll admit I'm a fool for you
Because you're mine,
I walk the line

As sure as night is dark and day is light
I keep you on my mind both day and night
And happiness I've known proves that it's right
Because you're mine,
I walk the line

Walking “the line” can represent that “middle space,” “Nepantla,” “liminal space,” or the many other references for the zone that connects us to other dimensions. This is where we can connect to higher realms and our Divine Complement (Green, 2006). The last stanza of the song speaks to the infatuating, all-encompassing nature of these relationships as has been described by Bloomstein’s (2000) study as well as by many other researchers (e.g., Brand & Higgs, 2011) and the happiness that is proof of being the right relationship. Here, the singer is conveying he is always thinking of his one true love and in the excerpt, Kincheloe has stated, “I attempt to walk this line.” He has not, at that point in his life totally succeeded, but he was conscious and “attempting.” If I were to follow his great advice in this excerpt I would take this much further, including exploration of additional intertextual analyses and all of the aspects he has delineated that are important to understanding the many interrelationships. This would illuminate additional understanding as to why he chose the song and what he meant by attempting to walk the line. For now, my interpretation relevant to this study is that it again represents his version of “radical love,” and it was a way to slip this important dimension into his

work—that “golden thread” of love that he has carried throughout his work. It is also a cross-cultural theme and he has raised the bar for radical love.

Special Assignment: Analysis of Symbiotic Hermeneutics

In this section, I have employed the bricolage to analyze the excerpt of text Kincheloe had personally assigned me during one of our online conversations about the bricolage (see Appendix). The text is in a chapter he wrote in *Rigour and Complexity in Educational Research* (Kincheloe, 2004d, pp. 62–67). Because the excerpt is long, I have not analyzed it in its entirety or to the depth possible. Passages have been selected as the research and interpretation naturally unfolded. I sensed when Joe gave me this there was *something* very important about it. I truly felt there was a special message for me from him, a rather strange emotional reaction I experience when reading his work, in general—that there is a specific message for me, personally. There are many ways this text can be interpreted and applied, but I maintain the themes I have established throughout this dissertation: consciousness evolution, twin flame “radical love,” and the bricolage.

This analysis is presented a little differently than what one ordinarily might expect. It is often synthesized within narrative text, highlighting my phenomenological experiences, thus, it is not presented in a linear or sequential order. Taking this nonlinear, multidimensional approach to analysis can yield new contexts and relationships that provide for some new insights. Each time I wove through this analysis, I made new discoveries. I do not consider this analysis complete, but it demonstrates a process for

pedagogical purposes, highlighting the importance of symbiotic hermeneutics in the bricolage.

Background: Devastated Over Losing Joe

The loss of Joe felt like the loss of hope and the loss of any possibility of the kind of world I dreamed of, one of love, joy, justice, abundance, and freedom. He held the key and the understanding. I felt alone and lost. In my journal, in the first letter I wrote to him after he passed over, I wrote:

I don't like the thought of going on in the world without you. But because I love you, I know I must get past this and continue with the work you want me to do. And that is the question, Joe. There is so much work to do that I feel totally overwhelmed. I don't know where to begin. What was that you said in your book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction?* The end is just the beginning, right? (Journal, December, 22, 2008)

Before he passed over I had felt his consciousness and his spirit no matter where he was, even while he was vacationing in Jamaica. I cannot explain the feeling, just the sensation of his existence, a knowing he was present, feeling his love, his essence, and a connection. Then suddenly, on December 19, 2008, I couldn't feel his presence. There had been Facebook messages about him being in the hospital. I became terrified and obsessed with finding out if he was ok. I sent out multiple emails to people who knew him and received back the devastating report. He had passed away from a heart attack at 11:05 Jamaican time, just a short time before I had sent out the emails. After learning the confirmation of what I was already feeling, I was devastated. Based on my FIDURODian understanding about death, he was gone.

Three days later my beliefs changed instantaneously and radically and my life inalterably changed forever. A surge of energy swooped inside me and swirled around

me, surrounding me, hugging me, and loving me; it was the same energy that I recognized and loved, but magnified in power many times over. I had immediately interpreted this as Joe's return to me, although it did not in any way diminish the grief of "losing" him because the outside world of thanatos still had me in its grips. I knew I had not, in one sense "lost" him yet felt the enormous loss. While I have since learned some people who have had this experience interpret it as the Holy Spirit, I did not have the knowledge at the time and I instantly had interpreted it as Joe's spirit returning to me. I knew how he felt; it felt like him. And as the earlier quotations I've provided indicated, the Bible describes the Holy Spirit as both God and man. Thus, living in a new world of Eros Love that counterpoises the old world of thanatos, just as Joe has asked of us in his work, had begun.

So much magic transpired after this. Remembering a comment in one of his works: "Some folks see dead people; I write to them" (Kincheloe, 2007b, p. 11), I began writing to him. My first journal entry is December 22, 2008 and begins, "Dear Joe: You have been gone now for two days, three days at 11:05 PM Jamaican time. I miss you. I will miss you until I can see you again someday." It was soothing to me and cathartic to try and keep lines of communication open. This is something I had never done before. When people die, they're gone is what I believed. The idea of Heaven, while I believed it to a degree, just seemed far away.

Dream Walking In Two Worlds

On Christmas Day, 2009, just six days after Joe's passing, I had to take a trip to California for a university colloquium. My heart was not in it, but I had to go. It was part

of the mission to take Joe's work forward, is how I saw it. A strange thing happened on the way to California that was totally outside my range of "normal" experiences, and now I view it as my first experience of bringing a bit of Heaven to Earth. Upon receiving the gift of the "Holy Spirit," it was my very first sample of the magic that happens when living in two worlds. I attributed it to Joe during the time due to the unwavering connection I felt with him. The experience was so out of the ordinary, I wrote in my journal about it in detail. It had felt as if I had stepped outside the ordinary earth realm for a few minutes, a phenomenological experience that now is repeated with such frequency it is my new "normal." But that particular day, I was in awe over what had happened. Was I seeing a world that few other people could see?

It was the first day of the trip, December 25, 2008, Christmas day, and it had started to snow as I was reaching Interstate 5 Siskiyou Pass. A warning sign stretched across the freeway with yellow flashing lights advising, "Chains Required." But, being who I am, I have learned to "Question Everything." It is almost my motto. The snow was not sticking to the road and I knew the distance over the pass was not that great. I could not imagine it being impassable judging by what I was seeing. Further, I absolutely detest putting tire chains on and had not needed to do so in many years, and even when I did need to in the past, I always had help. I had no desire to learn how to put chains on my car on Christmas Day. Besides, my model of car required a strange set of chains that I had never used and never wanted to. The auto service attendant had patiently shown me how to put them on when I had bought them, but I knew I would not remember and

would struggle with them. I am not mechanically inclined when it comes to that sort of “Do It Yourself.”

And so here I was, traveling up the mountain just about to traverse the highest pass, and more and more snow was falling, although most of it seemed to be blowing off the highway. There was an exit so I decided to pull off and fill the car with gas before confronting what I feared was up ahead, thinking in my mind the whole time: there could not possibly be a reason for chains. When I got out of the car at the service station the sun was peeking at me from between clouds, and it was warm, 40 degrees according to an electronic flashing sign on the nearby bank. As I had written in my journal, the warm sunshine literally reminded me of the warm hugs I received from Joe when I had met him in Canada the past July. I felt his energy. I felt like the sun was my indication, a special sign: “Surely, Joe and God had a hand in this sunshine and I would not have to try and put chains on the tires” I had written in my journal (December 25, 2008). After filling the car, I went back to continue the journey, hoping for the best. All along the highway, literally for miles were what appeared to be hundreds of cars, trucks, huge tractor semis, and campers lined up with their drivers all struggling with putting chains on their tires. But the road was still relatively clear! Why were hundreds of people chaining up their vehicles? At one point, I stopped, pulling over to the side of the road and conversed with a woman who told me that four wheel drives were getting through. I curiously observed her husband for a moment putting chains on the tires of their camper and pondered the inconvenience of chaining up, driving with chains on a clear road, and then stopping on the other side to take the chains off. It was simply not to be a part of my agenda.

I got back in my car and continued down the highway, seeing more vehicles lined up along the shoulder, with people out putting chains on, and I'm praying, "Please, God, don't make me stop and put on chains." I knew it was not like the good old days when there was always a nice gentleman who came along to assist a young, attractive "damsel in distress." At my age, I was no longer a young, attractive female; I was totally on my own. The snow got a little deeper, but much of it was still blowing off the road, and there was almost no one driving on the road, except for a stray vehicle with a daring driver like myself. Up ahead, loomed another big, ominous yellow flashing warning sign that stretched across the freeway stating "Chains Required Beyond this Point." But still, I wondered if it could truly be much worse going over the rest of the pass than what I was observing, scarcely an inch of snow. I noticed that a highway service truck had pulled over to the side of the road immediately in front the flashing sign and I figured that would be my chance. Maybe he would help me with the chains if they were really needed. When he saw me starting to pull over, he waved me on. I guess he didn't care to help me, but it was a relief nevertheless.

I continued over the pass with the highway nearly to myself, never needing chains at all. When I had gotten over the pass, I observed once again, what seemed like hundreds of vehicles pulled off to the shoulder, this time everyone was removing their chains. What was so strange is that none of those kinds of vehicles had traveled with me over the pass. I had had the highway almost completely to myself, aside one or two other vehicles, and yet here were what seemed again like hundreds of assorted vehicles alongside the road, this time taking off chains. Had I driven through a vortex? I wonder now. As I

drove past all of the vehicles with their owners removing tire chains, I pondered the rationality of it all. I felt that the experience was some kind of special and divine message reassuring me that I would never be alone and no matter how high or treacherous the mountain a way would be made for me. There would be divine intervention. Mountains can be moved. And that's exactly how my life has been since. Given all of the mountains I've had to climb since that day, always having Joe's love and support by my side, along with a powerful Almighty God—even being “rescued” on occasion at the drop of a dime—it is an interpretation that works for me. What a beautiful gift.

The “walking in two worlds” or as Summer Rain (1988) describes it, “dreamwalking,” experience of that day is one that I now experience so regularly it has become normal. I reject the Christian and other religious fundamentalist beliefs that there is only one true way to worship God or Great Spirit. I have learned to have great gratitude and joy for the gifts that come my way and I have found that because I get such pleasure from them they seem to increase in number, magnitude and profundity. As Winona LaDuke (2005) expresses, “the notion that non-Christian spiritual practices could have validity was entirely ignored or actively suppressed for centuries” (p. 12). The deficient Christian and other fundamentalist views are exactly what Joe has us, as Westerners with our incomplete understanding of the world challenging with his multidimensional critical complex bricolage and why a bricolage study would be considered incomplete if it does not incorporate indigenous perspectives as a way to seek greater insight. It is why in this particular excerpt he had assigned me he has included on page 67 a discussion of indigenous knowledges. I wonder whether I had been experiencing the amazing two

worlds as on that Christmas Day crossing the mountain pass all along but my consciousness was merely asleep. My awe and gratitude were immeasurable and continue to be today as I continue to receive magical gifts and blessings that are indescribable.

Winona LaDuke (2005) expands on the notion of expressing gratitude:

Our gratitude for our part in Creation and for the gifts given to us by the Creator is continuously reinforced in Midewiwin lodges, Sundance ceremonies, world renewal ceremonies, and many others. Understanding the complexity of these belief systems is central to understanding the societies built on those spiritual foundations—the relationship of peoples to their sacred lands, to relatives with fins and hooves, to the plant and animal foods that anchor a way of life. (p. 12)

The gratitude for my experiences is something I work to keep alive every day. Sometimes I slip back into my old ways, but keeping thankfulness in the forefront and staying open to the spiritual world, no matter what's going on in my life, has multiplied the sacred experiences I've been gifted with. I have only recently learned that the word powwow, celebrations which I have enjoyed attending on occasion, means "let us dream together." When I've attended them, the ambience has always felt so loving and magical or dreamlike. The Algonquins and Powhatans lived spirit-centered lives and took pride in being able to go about their daily tasks while staying connected with the spirit world. Powhatan means "People of the Dream" in English (Allen, 2004). It is amazing to me how much I identify with these perspectives in relation to the experiences I've had since Joe passed away and while I've been working on this research. There really is something very special going on and it's like the most loving and beautiful kind of magic. It saddens me when during my research I encounter Christian fundamentalists who preach that these things are the work of satan and demons, and that there is only one true connection to God through Jesus Christ. This seems to me to be a gross misrepresentation even of what

Jesus was all about, at least according to his words in the Bible. With both Christian fundamentalists and satanic worshippers twisting divinity into something evil, it can be very confusing at times and challenging to sort what I know is my own truth from the lies and deception. The irony of having this experience on Christmas Day has not escaped my notice. It makes the message all that more powerful, in my interpretation. Great Spirit is talking. I'm listening. Joe's use of "ecumenical" a total of three times on pages 63-67, my special assigned reading, is relevant in relation to our being open to multiple ways of viewing, practicing and celebrating spirituality. Repetition emphasizes his point.

I had stopped driving early that Christmas day and took a nap during which I had a lucid dream about Joe. We were at a theater to watch a play. There were three plays and they were taking place on three different levels of the theater. We sat down on the second level but an announcement informed us we were on the wrong level because the play we wanted to watch was on the third level. So, we got up and walked up the broad, red-carpeted steps together, holding hands. There was this intense feeling of humiliation for having sat down on the wrong level and at the same time a feeling of love and security having his hand to hold as we walked up the stairs together. I had interpreted it to mean taking Joe's theory to the next level but it could also represent the two of us experiencing the process referred to as "ascension" or spiritual advancement, having first mistakenly sat down at the lower level, which was humiliating, again an interpretation relating to having "fallen," as conveyed on the Kings Valley/The Queen/Falls City Treasure Hunt described earlier. Another interpretation could be that we had momentarily sat down in the "Second Heaven" by mistake and walked together to the "Third Heaven." There was

a sense of being in the wrong place and we needed to move up to the next level. Related to that, in our personal conversations before he passed over, we had actually discussed taking his work “to the next level,” which in my mind meant to apply his theoretical work in ways that more people would come to understand it since he had expressed he wanted the book I was writing for him to be “introductory.” There is much more to this.

Returning to his use of “ecumenical,” it is clear that his work is to open doors for everyone, something he has voiced literally throughout. Ever since that dream, he has been holding my hand and actively guiding me up the ascension ladder to greater spirituality, greater consciousness and in very fast motion. My spiritual advisor described it as his having to take me from kindergarten to graduate school and he only had two years to do it; that was the message that came down to her and it has been very accurate. I also had this feeling of being the cause of our being at the wrong level because I was so far behind him in the process. Often since his passing, I have felt that he has had to literally pull me up the “ladder.” I was so “asleep” when I encountered him in life. Even after seven months of working with him, I was barely beginning to stir. And then he passed over. Was it my fault? Did I do something wrong? I have often felt guilty and sad about it, although I have had many, many transmitted messages that it was in no way my fault. I had written in my journal the next day after this dream of walking up the stairs together: “And so I will begin the work, Joe, knowing that I am not really doing this totally alone. You are beside me, inside me, guiding me . . . through your spiritual presence” (Journal, December 26, 2008). Relevant to this strong feeling of being so

responsible to take his work forward was an email he had sent me just a few days before he passed away and my response to him that I never wanted to disappoint him.

As mentioned, the dream also could be interpreted in terms of Heavens. We first sat down in the second Heaven and then walked upstairs to the Third Heaven, which is the eternal Heaven of “no time.” Christian Apologetics (2012) defines these Heavens:

At the time of ancient Israel they did not have as complete an understanding of the universe as we do today. So they wrote in terms with which they were familiar. The Jews spoke of three heavens. The first heaven consisted of the earth atmosphere where the clouds and birds were. The second heaven was where the sun, stars, and moon was. The third heaven was the dwelling place of God. When Paul said he was caught up to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2), he was referring to the very dwelling place of God.

As a note, the Mormons erringly teach that the three heavens consist of telestial, terrestrial, and celestial. They divide them into compartments dwelt by people after they die. (para. 1–2)

There are many interpretations of these Heavens. I like interpreting it as Joe being my Twin Flame and Master Teacher and we are holding hands as we walk together up the spiral stairs of consciousness evolution and soul development, perhaps eventually to the celestial Third Heavens. He had to drop down to level two to pick me up because, just like Psyche in the story of Eros and Psyche, I was fast asleep. However the dream is interpreted, it’s interesting that it reaffirms my experience earlier that day of feeling that he is with me, guiding me and that he has great spiritual power. It was a powerful lucid dream.

Symbiotic Hermeneutics

The previous narrative of my sense of being outside the observed reality of people who were parked alongside the road putting on snow chains and, instead, being enmeshed

in a more holistic, interacting, and spiritual reality touches on the experience of symbiosis, although I realize I am barely grasping the concept due to my still-operating Western blinders. I feel an intense desire to understand it better so that I can experience it more wholly, but I know raising one's consciousness takes time, work, and patience. Helpful for starting this process and to gain a better understanding of the assigned text I'm analyzing, might be a better understanding of the definition of symbiosis. I often research definitions and etymology to get started, even for very simple words. I've found that what we are taught words mean is very constraining. Often we are taught there is just one "right" meaning to a word. This is so limiting and it keeps us in mind prisons. I've learned investigating even what seems like one word with an "obvious" meaning opens up whole new worlds. Thus, phenomenologically bracketing what we think we know and staying open for multiple interpretations is both a hermeneutical and a phenomenological act.

With a background in environmental and natural sciences, I have a basic understanding of symbiosis from a science perspective as taught in textbooks. Intuitively, I know the meaning of symbiosis is complex, given the infinite numbers of relationships that can take place. The Wikipedia entry for symbiosis alone gives much material for discussion and debate. There are various types of symbiosis in the sciences such as mutualism and endosymbiosis, commensalism, parasitism, amensalism, and co-evolution. Scientists, as so often is the case with Western science, have broken these complex relationships down into their parts, fragmenting understanding. The term, symbiosis itself, derives from Greek and according to the *Online Etymology Dictionary*, symbiosis

is represented by “*symbios* "(one) living together (with another), partner.” This is interesting because it certainly applies to the concept of Twin Flames, the topic that’s been threading through my dissertation. The word symbiosis did not become associated with biology until 1877, according to this source, at which time it came to be defined as a "mutually beneficial association of two different organisms.” Further, the dictionary states, it was “given a wider (non-biological) sense by 1921. An earlier sense of "communal or social life" is found in 1620s.” Thus, it appears the word symbiosis has been transformed from meaning living with another that seems to highlight a sense of “unity” to being primarily considered a relationship between organisms that emphasizes benefits. This represents an important philosophical shift in meaning.

From this brief examination it can be readily seen that symbiosis is a complex topic with many interpretations. It will need to be reinterpreted by bricoleurs for their specific application. For example, it could easily be applied to relationships between places, “things” and ideas as well as people, animals, and processes; there should be no limitations since everything is connected. My goal here is to include it in this current text in a coherent way that helps maintain my focus on *bricolage as love* and loving relationships. I am satisfied that my interpretation of Twin Flames and, of course, other love relationships, for this assigned text is a valid interpretation of the overall text. Symbiosis as “one living together with another partner” clearly fits this metaphor. It’s also clear that symbiosis as a construct for unity versus viewing relationships for what we can gain from them is important for co-evolution. This aligns with the “third power” co-creation energy experienced between twin flames as discussed in depth earlier in this

dissertation for their primary mission of working together to serve humanity. It also applies in the broadest of sense. Whenever people work together symbiotically, the whole is greater than the sum of the parts as they “co-create.” Kincheloe confirms these ideas on page 64 of this text: “Such relationality forces the emergence of a new paradigm, a new focus for research. Indeed, the relationships are symbiotic, as they mutually enhance their parts. To use the cliché, the relationship is greater than the sum of the parts.” However, as my research has uncovered, it has been often interpreted that the most powerful of these relationships are those of twin flames and their ability to co-create.

Given Kincheloe has specified a fourth dimension to research and multidimensionality, the meaning of symbiosis expands greatly. As I have already discussed, experience can take place in any number of different dimensions, comprised of the past, present, future and even parallel realities. The reunion of twin flames creates this new paradigmatic focus for it is their increased awareness, first, that brings them together, and their continued work toward greater consciousness that continues to open up interdimensional experiences. As above, so below and as below so above constitutes their work in these *multiple* dimensions, thus we have symbiosis occurring between dimensions that may lie below the perceptual awareness of most people. My choice to interpret this text using the framework of the Twin Flame/Divine Love phenomenon is further supported within this text. Kincheloe reiterates that bricoleurs “seek a more rigorous path” (p. 66). Thus, they “develop principles of selection not only of research-orientations but also of what interconnections they attend” (p. 66). As a result, even though my research was extensive, covering a wide range of topics and often covering

them in depth, I ultimately became selective for the purpose of gaining an understanding of the phenomena I was personally experiencing as I've engaged in this research. During the research process itself, this focus may not be maintained and inquiry can head in many directions at once. What happened in my case, the process converged to seeking explanations for my experiences. The task became to understand the phenomena of this powerful connection with Kincheloe from multiple perspectives. Hence, as Kincheloe maintains, "the central task of bricoleurs is to search for new relationships that provide new insights into new dimensions of the lived world" (p. 66). While this can be interpreted in a literal sense, of course, my tendency is to also interpret it in terms of expanding relationships through fourth dimension research as well, through soul family/group members, and through exploring other cultural perspectives. The process of research, however, also highlights an important point made by Mohanty (2006) when she observed that cultural pluralism—for example, presenting perspectives for the sake of presenting multiple views or for exposure to multiple cultures—is not enough whether for daily living or in the academy. Thus, simply providing students multicultural reading material or activities is not adequate nor is simply presenting multiple views enough in the bricolage. This underlines the importance of cultural immersion for deeper understandings, which Kincheloe and I had both engaged with during our early years, and which, as discussed earlier appeared to be a part of our "soul plans" by one interpretation. And again, it is important to remember *these are only interpretations* and each interpretation provides just one view of the phenomenon. The purpose is never the

cooption or appropriation of culture, but rather one of greater understanding of reality, and this can result in symbiotic understanding when it occurs “in relationship.”

As Mohanty (2006) states, “Creating counterhegemonic pedagogies and combating attitudinal, pluralistic appropriations of race and difference thus involves a delicate ever-shifting balance between the analysis of experience as lived culture and as textual and historical representations of experience” (p. 204). Important to this process is critically analyzing, understanding, and transformation. Due to symbiosis, interactions cannot help but be transformative. This process also requires understanding the power relations and that academic culture often represents a space that requires struggle. In alignment with Kincheloe’s critical complex epistemology, Mohanty points out that it is necessary to “develop a critical analysis of how experience itself is named, constructed, and legitimated in the academy. . . . After all, critical education concerns the production of subjectivities in relation to discourses of knowledge and power” (p. 204). Perhaps an example is warranted.

“Getting Beyond the Facts” of Page 666: Is it Love?

Before I continue the interpretation of the special text Kincheloe had assigned me, it was brought to my attention that the analysis of page 666 in his social studies book, *Getting Beyond the Facts*, some of which I have presented elsewhere, is important in terms of intertextual analysis. When I had first noted that Kincheloe (2001b) had incorporated a complex encoded message on page 666, I found it pretty funny. He had made up a story about people in a bookstore buying books for his critical review of Milton Friedman’s free market economics and it appeared that he had purposely devised

it to land on page 666. Popular culture has perpetuated the idea that 666 is “the mark of the beast” and represents satan or the antichrist and some claim that the number supposedly summons Lucifer. Aleister Crowley (“Secret Agent 666”), who has influenced popular culture with his black magic, went by the name, “Great Beast 666.” Many of us have been well-indoctrinated to view 666 in a negative light. As I analyzed the text, I discovered that embedded within, in addition to a commentary on economics, was a commentary on the Twin Tower 9/11 tragedy. How did Kincheloe manage to get this text to appear on page 666? The book was published October 1, 2001, which means he would have had to have slipped this text in at the very last minute in order to get it published right after the Twin Tower disaster of September 11, 2001. How did he do it? As Revelations 13:18 puts it, “This calls for wisdom. If anyone has insight let him calculate the number of the beast, for it is man’s number. His number is 666.” I don’t think this has been solved yet.

I had planned on leaving this discussion of 666 out of my dissertation, and in fact I had deleted it to reduce the number of pages, thinking I would expand on my original analysis of this page another time. But at the last moment, I felt compelled to bring it back. It is apparently critical to the analysis because when I went back to an older version of my dissertation that had included the discussion, I found this note I had written to myself:

Interestingly, today (November 17, 2011) I was handed a reminder of the fact that for some reason page 666 of Joe’s book, *Getting Beyond the Facts* is critically important for intertextual analysis of the piece of text he had given me to analyze. In fact, I also believe that page 67 of *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*, which I have extensively analyzed previously is also important to this specific analysis. Thus, I have saved a document relating to 666 and Sophia. I

will save this analysis for later since it is my intuitional understanding that it goes with the textual analysis of the special excerpt he asked me to read.

I have discussed how 11 and 911 are spiritually significant numbers for me as well as other twin flame couples because they represent the twin flame reunion. These numbers have come up frequently upon analyzing conversations with Joe and in relationship to many events and synchronicities since he passed away. Part of the reason they repeatedly come up in our conversations was because I was still asleep and it was an emergency; it really was critical that I wake up quickly, in my interpretation. I also sensed he was in an emergency situation with his work. Because of the symbolism of the Trinity, the Twin Flame Union, and the Universal Spiritual Number Seven, encapsulated in the Trade Tower attacks and the fact that there are many questions about who was really responsible, along with Joe's emphasis on Eros Love, in my interpretation the 9/11 Twin Tower attack had Joe very angry. Thus, one interpretation might be that he added this contrived discussion about buying books and encoded a message relating to 9/11 at the last minute and purposely had it land on page 666. Given that his works were developed primarily as textbooks, then one of our purposes as bricoleurs-as-learners is to perform deep analyses on his text to uncover various interpretations. This is yet another dimension to the gift of his work he has left behind for us. He was making many points on that page, being the multidimensional person and writer that he was; our job is to decode them.

Additionally, the analysis of page 666 blends into another analysis I had initiated previously of page 97 of *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*. I had actually been confused by the note to myself, thinking I was referring to page 97, but

after looking at page 67 there are critical interrelationships between both of these pages, 67 and 97 in relation to page 666. For example, page 97 discusses the concept of how power is enhanced when power blocs can define what's "universally valid." Kincheloe (2008c) adopts John Fiske's idea that "power blocs are more like a constantly changing series of both strategic and tactical partnerships" (p. 97) serving to maintain social order. Kincheloe has discussed the unusual power blocs between politics, science and religion, even though they may be in opposition with each other on certain issues. This strange alliance is relevant to this discussion and "the politics of knowledge."

Returning to page 67, the topic covered is "the politics of knowledge." Kincheloe advises understanding these alignments requires "Praxis, Praxis, Praxis" or in other words, iterations of theory, practice, and actions, but of course that means critical bricolage. I have always been intrigued by how he began this section with a reformulated common idiom, "If wishes were pigs, it would be harder to keep kosher" (p. 67). It relates to this discussion in some deep, but esoteric way that I have not deciphered. However, in relation to the number 666, "In Kabbalistic Judaism, 666 is the number that represents the creation and perfection of the world," according to the Wikipedia entry on 666. This is important in relation to food (e.g., "kosher") as well as to the analysis of the Trade Tower incident in a twisted diabolical way. For example, we might ask if 666 represents creation and world perfection, then why have the masses been taught the exact opposite? And why is 666 on the bar codes of the food we buy? Kincheloe is making a compelling point by placing the discussion of the Twin Towers on this page and we are not to take the first interpretation that rises. Kincheloe (2008c) continues, "Such a phrase [as the politics of

knowledge] helps us realize that what might seem to some arcane philosophical issues are far more relevant to everyday life” (p. 67). He is advocating more actions, “a hyper-praxis” based on what we learn, not less. “Our critical complex epistemology maintains the diametric opposite reading of this situation,” he maintains (p. 67). As indicated, arcane knowledge provides the diametric opposite reading of 666 and there is much more to explore here. Our research becomes more rigorous and this process moves us into new dimensions. We become aware of suffering in both the “micro-dimensions of everyday life” as well as the “larger social realms” and by using a critical complex epistemology we can better address this issue. A sample is provided by these opposing definitions of 666, but it is not even the tip of the iceberg. In fact, Kincheloe’s contention is that “Validity in this context comes to involve the effectiveness of the knowledge we produce in addressing diverse issues and solving different problems” (p. 67). How does this play out in the analysis of page 666 of Kincheloe’s (2001) social studies book?

The Mark of the Beast? When I first discovered that Kincheloe (2001b) had discussed Milton Friedman, the mastermind behind the destructive “free market” economy and the economics of book buying on page 666, I found it funny but I was not aware of the deeper context of this excerpt. I just “knew” Joe, being the mathematician he was (which many people did not realize), had constructed this very funny story describing shopping for a book about economics and had planned for it to fall on page 666. Either when he proofed the work, he had inserted the story or he calculated it mathematically. Having had a background in graphic design, myself, I am knowledgeable in performing these calculations. We had to learn it back when everything was typeset

from typed script. In those days, Joe had been editor of a high school newspaper. He undoubtedly had some typesetting experience. Graphic designers during those years had to know exactly what page text landed on and where to insert photographs and images as well as be able to determine the number of pages the copy would take.

The other scenario, which I mentioned earlier, is that he had to have slipped it in at the last minute since the book was published in October, 2001. Due to the content, it had to have been published after the Twin Tower Disaster of 9/11/2001 but since it is such a long book, Kincheloe had been clearly working on it for quite some time prior, so the book had probably already been typeset and it was just a matter of slipping this in at the last minute for publishing during the year 2001. Thus, he had multiple reasons for planning the discussion of economics on page 666, far beyond the simple explanation that the number 666 supposedly represents “the mark of the beast.” What are some alternative interpretations? He had interwoven his entire body of works with Divine Love (“radical love”) and one interpretation might be that he was probably infuriated over the Twin Tower disaster and the power the universal symbolism had over global collective consciousness.

I have already discussed the Twin Tower disaster in relation to the Tarot cards and how the towers represented Twin Flame Love, and here on page 666, we have more interpretations that can be yielded. First, note the numerical symbolism of the date, itself, 9-11-2001. As indicated previously 911 represents completion of the twin flame reunion, with the 11 representing the twin flames. Using numerology, 2001 becomes 3, symbolizing the holy trinity, a sacred and universal aspect of the twin flame reunion

representing their spiritual power. The buildings themselves represent the twin flames and their reunion (11 and 11-11 as shown previously), thus their destruction represents more than the destruction of the “ego self” as Semetsky (2011) interpreted for Tarot card readings; it also represents the destruction of these divine and powerful relationships. Again, this form of mind control is exceptionally powerful. Terror becomes attached to the symbolism embedded in the tragedy connected to the positive emotion, love. If one is not aware of what this symbolism means, it enters the subconscious mind by which we can be manipulated (Saraydarian, 1993). This is no small matter. As already shown the concept twin souls and the divine alchemical twin flame union spans across cultures, so here we have the universal symbolism that Kincheloe has mentioned that provides the power bloc (science/political/religious) enormous opportunity for global manipulation of people. I have already covered the many ways these divine relationships have been symbolized in this tragic event. The destruction suddenly becomes an act that affects every man, woman, and child on the planet beyond what the media constructs about terrorists from Afghanistan. It becomes important to take back our power through a thorough analysis of this event using a multidimensional analysis and critical complex epistemology.

How is it that I interpret that Kincheloe is surreptitiously speaking about the 9/11 event? First, since the event had just happened and he had quickly slipped this into his text, he may have felt he needed to encode his discussion to a degree and/or he may have simply created it for a learning opportunity for new bricoleurs. What exactly is on this page? First of all, at the end of the discussion of the bookstore scene, he admits he has

made it up to make a point: “This facetious example illustrated the larger point: Critical democratic social studies educators [bricoleurs] cannot ignore the social and moral context of economic affairs” (p.666.) His choice of the word “affairs” is no accident as he is implying throughout this text which continues on to page 667 that marriages and relationships are too often based on economics. “The folly of reductionistic economic explanations of daily affairs is obvious,” he states (p. 666). And “What matters about human beings in the free market is not their sacred spirit, but their capacity to do work” (p. 667). Thus, he has made a commentary about how economics in relation to power alignments often defines relationships and choices we make, and he is stating his positioning as viewing this state of affairs as “folly.” To facilitate this discussion, he made up a story about a man going into a bookstore to buy a book about economics and education. The man picked up Richard Brosio’s book, *The Radical Democratic Critique of Capitalist Education* for \$39.95. The salesman suggested he buy a less expensive book by Milton Friedman, *Free to Choose*, for only \$9.99 stating that it was their “Red, White, and Blue Light special” and that he would save \$30. Another customer comes into the store and wants a book “on postmodern architecture in the \$11 range” (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 666).

There is much going on in Kincheloe’s (2001) “facetious example” and I will not cover it all here. But notice the focus on numbers 9 and 11. One book was \$9.99, “a hot value,” and the book on “postmodern architecture,” a reference to buildings built during the era of the Twin Towers construction as well as to nihilistic, anything goes postmodernism in this context was \$11. The 11 provides another reference to the Twin

Towers and Twin Flames. In between \$9.99 and \$11 is a representation of trinity embedded in the \$30 savings (and note how “save” and “trinity” are juxtaposed with the words, “save \$30”). The number 999 serves to remind us of 911 (as combined with the \$11 and it’s an emphatic reminder). But because 999 is inverse to 666, it also cues us to invert the meaning of the page number 666, or in other words to do what he had expressed on page 67 of *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy*, to take a “diametric reading.” Thus, 666 might be interpreted as stated previously, as representing the creation and perfection of the world. 999 also adds up to 27 and then to 9, the spiritual completion number, which supports the positive interpretation of “creation” for 666. The 6s in the number 666 add to 18 (another sacred number) and then to 9, and in some religions 666 symbolizes the goddess.

The word “range” in relation to buying a book “on postmodern architecture in the \$11 range” serendipitously links to New York. I discovered that by typing the word into google “New York Rangers” appears in the drop down menu. His use of the word “range” is interesting because it has so many different definitions leaving the interpretation wide open. It even relates to music which may have cued me to look for music in this excerpt. The number 999, can also represent the gateway to the divine (remembering that Kincheloe had included “divine knowledge” as one of type of knowledges we are interested in) in our diametrical reading. There are multiple components to the Twin/Trade Tower disaster that relate to economics (e.g., oil, stocks, war, the controversy of Building 7 collapse). Kincheloe emphasizes that bricoleurs need to also pay attention to the social and moral issues given that “neoclassicists view labor

markets just like any other commodity market. The fact that the labor market is occupied by living beings with feelings and emotional concerns is irrelevant” (pp. 666–667). This opens the interpretation and potential avenues to research into many dimensions.

The phrase “Red White and Blue Light Special,” alludes to Kmart’s bizarre way they have used in the past for getting rid of junk they knew no one would buy otherwise, thus they concocted their “Blue Light Specials.” These specials could happen at any moment for shoppers at Kmart. It created a false sense that they were getting a great deal, but in reality, the items were usually overstocks that were not selling. Kincheloe, being a master of hermeneutics, had transformed and expanded on the Blue Light Special by juxtaposing “Red” and “White” in front of it. Were the Trade Towers considered patriotic junk to get rid of in the same vein Kmart got rid of their junk? The phrase can also be split into two pieces: “Red White and Blue” and “Blue Light Special.” Right after the Twin Tower disaster, the American public was manipulated by the Bush Administration pulling out the patriotism card, which this phrase, in my view alludes to. Here, we have had a disaster, which with each passing day began to look more and more like the Machiavellian principal of creating chaos and then providing solutions that are not in our best interest, and out comes the U.S. flag. Juxtaposing the “red, white, and blue” with the K-Mart Blue Light special reveals the cheap trick it was. Looking back on it, it was a despicable act that had culminated in stealing pennies from school children, needless wars and killing, and the Patriot Act that stripped Americans not only of constitutional rights, but the right to seek compensation from pharmaceutical companies for injuring children with mercury-containing vaccinations (I was involved in a class action law suit

in behalf of my daughter that had the rug pulled out from under it and still today there is no recourse and no help). Because I have discovered the multiple ways Kincheloe has embedded music in his work (and he uses all genres of music, not just rock and roll), I searched YouTube for what song “Red White and Blue” might pull up. It brought up the song with that title by Lynyrd Skynard about ordinary everyday people with soul and “If you got Soul, we hang out with people just like you.” This, I believe was intentional as it aligns with what I refer to as “Level 2” music encodings I’ve discovered in his work previously and it provides that “diametric opposite reading” he asks bricoleurs to seek (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 67). It’s ok to love your country, but don’t sacrifice your soul.

Kincheloe (2001) was alluding to Twin Flame Soul Love—and I am sure, as important as love was to him, he had to have been very upset about what the destruction the trade tower really represented (by this interpretation) just as he was finishing up this very ambitious book (it is more than 800 pages). Thus, he could see “the folly of” of the Twin Tower disaster in light of the “sacred spirit” (p. 667). A diametric reading of his reference to the \$9.99 book as being “a hot value” in context with 999 representing the gateway to divine, higher consciousness alludes to “higher order thinking” often abbreviated as “HOT.” He has used this reference in other books in relation to postformal thinking/critical psychology of complexity (e.g., Kincheloe, 2006a).

It is probable that Kincheloe suspected immediately that 9/11 was a contrived event, thus he may have quickly contrived the bookstore example on page 666 to express this. He does not typically make up “facetious examples”; in fact, I don’t recall any other such examples in his work. He draws on his personal experiences but he did not want this

book to be published without commenting on this dastardly deed, is what I am assuming here. Thus, 666 as an act of “the Beast” is appropriate by many interpretations, and very curiously, there are photographs and videos on the Internet of the black smoke emanating from the towers that have been interpreted to look like the devil. But also appropriate is the diametric opposite interpretation I’ve provided here so that we can clear subconscious programming, whether that programming was intentional or not and view this event in perhaps a new light, thus offsetting thanatos with Eros Love and maybe even creating something new out of how we perceive the event.

Genesis: “Dancing with the Moonlit Knight” in another Dimension. An earlier analysis I had performed on this text on page 666 that had taken me into those “implicate orders” or deeper structures of reality (Kincheloe, 2004c, p. 45) was recorded in a blog dated October 5, 2011. I had received a message telepathically that there were messages for “S & H” on page 666 which took me on a path marked by multiple signposts. What was highlighted in my searches were S & H Green Shield Stamps which I remember using back when I was a child and into my early adulthood. They were given away in stores and at service stations with purchases and then they could be exchanged for products or money. In my research, I found that Stephen King, an author Kincheloe happens to mention in his last book, had written his first story about S & H Green Stamps, naming it *Happy Stamps*. They were “happy stamps” in the sense that the perception was that we got more for our money and stores and gas stations often competed with each other by offering “double” and occasionally “triple” Green Stamps. My epistemological trail ended with a meaningful song by Genesis, “Dancing with the

Moonlit Knight,” because there is a reference to “Green Shield Stamps” in the lyrics. The song is interesting and gives added depth to the interpretation just made of page 666. I was fortunate to find that it has already undergone a fairly good analysis by George Starostin (d.u.), but the analysis could go much deeper by using the hermeneutic circle. The following presents a decoding of portions of the song. This first part is significant because it portrays a similar “lament” as Kincheloe was making about our country with his “facetious example” of Milton Friedman economics, the Twin Tower disaster, and Divine Love:

“Said the unifaun to his true love's eyes...” Here Peter gets especially sad and tragic (and it's only the beginning of the song!). 'Unifaun' is supposed to be a pun, a cross between 'uniform' and 'faun' - the 'faun' brings in the mythological element, while the 'uniform' brings in certain military associations. Patriotic lament over the fate of one's country? Whatever it might be, the subject of the song is evident from the beginning line: a tragic statement of Britain's current state, a lamentation over the enormous, unbridgeable gap between the romantic past and the corrupt present.

“It lies with me, cried the Queen of Maybe...” Peter changes to near-falsetto (right, to impersonate the Queen), while Mike (or Steve?) enters with gentle folksy guitar chords. Of course! The "country" is now with the 'Queen of Maybe' - the 'Queen of Possibilities', an allegory for commercial success; note that this is, of course, a pun on 'Queen of May', another mythological figure that is vastly commercialized at the present time. (Starostin, d.u., para. 3–4)

Perhaps the message from this deeper structure is that the United States will suffer a similar fate as Great Britain. The United States, by many accounts is still owned by the Queen (of Maybe?) and managed by a small but powerful group of transnational capitalists. The masses continue to be controlled and manipulated by “possibilities” (that “American Dream”) and mass consumption. The falsetto voice in the song represents the

facetiousness of the bookstore example, in turn representing how we are given so many empty promises.

“Join the dance! Follow on! Till the Grail sun sets in the mould...” The Grail reference by no means hints at our being transferred into a Christian-dominated world - remember, if it's Arthurian times we're speaking about, pagan practices and Christianity elements were joined in an odd synthesis back then. On the other hand, the Grail certainly *is* a direct Arthurian reference, as if we yet had any doubts about the particular epoch Gabriel was drawing comparisons with. Another important thing happens here - after Gabriel shouts 'follow on!', Tony joins in with a few major key cheerful synth notes, which somehow change the atmosphere from 'pure mystics' to 'ritual joy'. You're *really* supposed to enjoy your spiritual wholeness and nature's wonders in the dance. (Starostin, d.u., para. 20)

In this verse, the reference to the Grail is interesting in context with the metaphor I've been threading through this dissertation about Eros, Hermes Trismegistus, and the Quest for the Golden Chalice, which is the quest for Wisdom and Divine Love. There is a sort of “trickery” going on as previously described in Kincheloe’s definition of bricolage as we analyze his page 666 text, but it relates to the “chicanery” of Hermes, the bringing forth of something new and better. Thus, in spite of the tragedy, we celebrate in love and joy as we dance our way with music down the Great Path. And as analyzed, Kincheloe did include celebratory music in the excerpt with “Red, White and Blue” by Lynyrd Skynyrd and its reference to ordinary people with soul. The song is controversial among some folks and YouTube has posted the message, “The following content has been identified by the YouTube community as being potentially offensive or inappropriate. Viewer discretion is advised.” I do not find anything offensive about it; it depicts “rednecks” as coming to terms with the label forced on them by virtue of their skin color and where and how they live—and I know the feeling being a country hick. At least some

of us have soul and we will celebrate that fact, transcending the label. Kincheloe often cites the “Blues Aesthetic” in which we talk about how bad things are, but we celebrate life with love, dancing, and music. I have discussed his reference to dancing and music as we dance down the Great Path previously, and he also states, “Hell, ‘when the music’s over, turn out the lights.’ There’s no reason to go on without that pounding aesthetic to push us on down the road” (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 20). Thus, Kincheloe wants us to identify the reality of the corruption such as the Twin Tower disaster and expose it for what it is through the multidimensional critical complex bricolage, not allow it to divide us as is the intention behind manipulating our emotions with the event, but rather celebrate in Joy over our understandings of Soul and Divine Love as depicted in the song. In the archetypal story of Psyche (Soul) and Eros (Divine Love), the strand carried through this discourse, Eros turned Psyche into a Goddess, they married, and had a child they named Joy. Thus, again, Kincheloe is clearly presenting that archetypal love story to us as Eros would do.

“Follow on till the gold is cold...” Not quite clear. Is the 'gold' another sun reference here? In this case, 'the gold is cold' means 'till sunset'; consequently, this would mean that our ritual dance lasts all through the day and into the night... on the other hand, it was clearly said that 'the Captain leads his dance through the night', not '*towards* the night'. Maybe Pete got a little messed up with his times of day here, or maybe I'm just wrong in my analysis.

“Dancing out with the Moonlit Knight, Knights of the Green Shield stamp and shout...” Again, the exact decyphering of 'Moonlit Knight' escapes me, but surely we must be speaking of an obscure, or invented, pagan deity, a symbolic one, of course. The last line is very confusing; on one hand, 'Knights of the Green Shield' again evoke Arthurian connotations, on the other hand, *Genesis discography* mentions 'Green Shield Stamps' - some kind of modern-day trickstery related to commercial prize winning. This could be a coincidence, but you can never tell with Peter; on the other hand, here we should suppose that even if it is *not* a coincidence, it is just a funny pun that Peter couldn't resist, because otherwise the

connection isn't clear. A nicely placed red herring, that is. (Starostin, d.u., para. 21–22) (<http://starling.rinet.ru/music/song1.htm>).

The correlations in the above interpretations should be fairly clear. Gold, in the context of Kincheloe's text on page 666 could represent the economics ("cold gold") discussion and the Divine Love interpretation, the "Golden Age," the Golden Chalice on the Great Path. For me, the "Moonlit Knight" could represent Kincheloe, himself, a "symbolic deity" (as Eros) and his hermeneutic "trickery" (as influenced by teachings from his father, Hermes) dancing out with a "shout," and having the last laugh. I am not sure what his "last laugh" might be, but his bricolage is extremely powerful and during my research I've learned that it truly does expose the deepest, darkest secrets when employed to its full extent. Also, he has referenced in his bricolage discourse that it's not a knight on a white horse and my being contrary, would interpret that to mean that he *is* the knight on the white horse or he would not have even mentioned it (Kincheloe, 2005a). Thus, his bricolage can "save the day," and indeed, he does admit that it can contribute to saving the world from the Apocalypse, making the world a better place, and alleviate suffering (the white horse is also an important symbol in Revelations with multiple interpretations) (Kincheloe, 2005a, 2008c). With the power of Divine Love produced as represented by the story of Eros and Psyche, how would it not save the day? Divine Love, Sacred Love, Sacred Sexuality truly is the missing ingredient on this planet. Dancing out with the S & H Green Shield stamp could represent the end of a monetary system in relation to the "cold gold" and Kincheloe's discussion of economics on pages 666–667. There is nowhere for our monetary system to go, but to become "cold" if it keeps on the same path as it's been. The Green Shield stamps remind us that we don't need money to

make exchanges and in a society based on Divine Love, there is no need for a monetary system at all.

Starostin (d.u.) concludes that the song presents, “two juxtaposed pictures, one of the depressing and decaying life of today, and the other of the joyful and spiritual pagan ritual of days long gone by” (para. 23) which correlates with the diametrically opposed analysis of page 666 and Kincheloe’s often expressed “blues aesthetic” philosophy of life. There is much more to this analysis but I primarily wanted to show how following the “fourth dimension” clues handed down (in this case a simple clue, “S & H”) can lead to great insight. I have not figured out why this happens. Is it that the gods have access to all knowledge or is it that if one looks hard enough, connections can be found between everything? The latter would not explain why such great correspondences are found or the synchronicities by which they’re provided.

This Just In. Kincheloe uses that expression often in his work and I know what it means for me. It means that I have just received an important and very synchronistic message from the cosmos that relates to what I’ve just written. I love it when that happens, which is often when I just allow things to flow. It was probably similar for him. Here is that message, which came right after I wrote the above analysis. This message corresponds with Detweiler’s (2011a) contention that most twin flame relationships are multidimensional and based in the high spiritual realms:

Most of you innately knew from the beginning that you would not be finding that Other down on Earth. This is the more common dynamic of the two-for one Twin to stay behind while the other goes. It’s an efficient, albeit uncomfortable, arrangement. However, the type of connection enjoyed by Twin Flames is so profound and unbreakable that it defies the undermining of the ego and resists the effects of the veil of separation, in matters of communication and subtle guidance.

The two of you still operate as one, defying the vibrational differences, and resistant to the many interferences from the toxic Earth environment which the incarnated Twin is subjected to. Whatever the arrangement, Twins of all types share an invisible etheric cord which binds them together. It runs from high-heart to high-heart, and is eternal and thereby cannot be severed.

Many of your sudden flashes of inspiration come from us, your Twins, cheering you on from afar. How often have you thought to yourself, “Wait a minute-how did I ever think of that?” You’re stymied, and then aha- a lightbulb moment! Or, what of the warmth and ecstasy that overtakes you unawares, for no reason that’s logically apparent to you? Credit us with that, if you would. A cosmic hug, of sorts. You labor hard and need to feel loved. Set your expectations for experiences like this higher and higher, as the days wear on. The coming-together of the Twin Flames is not a fairy story but a bona-fide upcoming encounter based in truth. Blessed indeed are the folks who came into human incarnation together, and have subsequently found each other. Despite the inevitable rocky beginnings most of these couples have had to work through, it’s been a blissful time for them. Post-disclosure, the same reward awaits those now in Human/Galactic Twin Flame unions, also. (Declan of the Pleiades, 2012, paras. 4–5)

The above description corresponds to my experiences. I was so blessed to get to meet Joe, but it was just not in the plans for us to be together on this Earth planet for many very complex reasons. The main message I received from that excerpt is that I am to give credit where credit is due. He was the one who sent me the messages to add this analysis about Page 666 back into the dissertation as well as add the clues that led to the S & H Green Stamps. He has been a great Master Teacher/Guide all the way through this project both when he was here when we worked together and now from the other side as we still work together. (This is “mystory” and I’ll tell it how I want to). It is also what I have come to believe after “fighting with myself” and spinning in hermeneutic circles until I had cast out the FIDURODian demons. The “cosmic hugs” are far superior (Declan, 2012).

Flipping Tables. Returning to some of the more positive meanings of the number 666, again, in Kabbalistic Judaism it represents the creation and perfection of the world, exactly what the Twin Flame reunion empowers divine couples for doing, as described previously in relation to the Hieros Gamos and other interpretations. The number 6 is also represented by the Sign of Solomon or the Star of David, and 666 is said to represent Solomon's gold. The two triangles of the Sign of Solomon and the Star of David with one inverted represent the divine couple reunited and their divine sexual power for creation. Trinity is also represented by the triangles, which shows up in Kincheloe's text on page 666 as "You'll save \$30" thus, you'll save [prevent] trinity union or Divine Twin Flame Love if you buy Friedman's cheaper economics book. Solomon is known for his famous "Song of Solomon," believed by many to be the divine sacred vow between him and the Queen of Sheba. The deeper one goes with interpretations, the more it can be seen that the *Twin Towers* going up in smoke and *flames* and then collapsing is linked with the sacred Twin Flame relationship. Thus, using a critical complex epistemology, it is possible to redefine what we have been instructed is universally valid. This opens up new interpretations of events such as the Twin Tower disaster and we can revise the "fiction formula."

Exposing the Eros Love side of this symbolism releases the initial power it may have had in programming us for terror because it's no longer stored in our subconscious minds. I found it empowering to study Eros Love and the way things "should be" based on my glimpses of a future more heavenly life and then analyze in order to discover ways to work between the cracks in the thanatos-dominated systems (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 57).

As Cronshaw (2012b) states in relation to the act of bringing any paradoxes or “differences” together: “The secret, therefore, is never in the two, but in the magical third force that merges the two into One. It is here—in the very center of where the two meet, that you will find the answers which will guide you in your quest for knowledge and understanding” (para. 18). And this is exactly what bricolage research accomplishes when one engages in gaining many views on the topic and it does so in multidimensional ways. It forces the mind to work to assimilate the information, releasing a creative power to ask the right questions and devise solutions. Working with one’s Twin Flame magnifies that power many times over; I have seen it in action.

Another interpretation as to the reasons this text appeared as it did on page 666 might be that it was simply synchronistic. This can happen if we are unconscious of certain information—our knowledge becomes incorporated into our writing or other creations without our conscious awareness, as I discovered when working with Kincheloe on his website. It can be embarrassing when you inadvertently disclose other people’s secrets and then get “called on the carpet” for it. All the more reason to clear our subconscious minds (read *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* for that). However, given Kincheloe had to have been experiencing a much higher level of consciousness (he wrote the books about consciousness evolution!) then it’s highly unlikely that page 666 was an unconscious act, and especially so given he admitted the story was contrived.

One last possibility is that he was able to visit nonlocal space, the future, and picked up information of the 9/11 event before it actually happened (I have decoded some

predictions in his work). But I think he managed to slip this into his book at the very last moment for the reasons discussed. *Only his book publisher knows for sure.* Regardless, Kincheloe always has multiple reasons for hermeneutically encoding his work. Page 666 has many more interpretations, including some personal messages, which gives new bricoleurs ample opportunity to practice decoding and using hermeneutics, semiotics, and his fourth dimension research. Much of his work provides similar opportunities. We need to become adept as critical complex epistemologists to stay a step ahead of the encoders of “universal” meanings and those who don’t incorporate Kincheloe’s Eros Love, but rather have ulterior purposes to manipulate and control people. By taking an analytic approach that incorporates love to counter thanatos, new learning takes place; we can see into those other spaces. We can construct our own consciousness and at the same time become aware of possible “hyper-actions” that Kincheloe has advised we need to take (2008c, p. 67). We can love, sing, dance, and use Green Shield stamps instead of money.

What’s on Your Bar Codes? 666, 11-11, and 911. During my studies of the number 666, I discovered from watching a YouTube video that the number 666 is encoded on product bar codes and that it also represents 11-11-11 the twin flame reunion number. This means we look at the number 666, which many of us have been molded to believing represents “the beast,” with every product we buy, including all of our food. The numbers themselves are not printed on the bar code but our subconscious minds can read them. The number 6 is represented by two long thin lines, forming the very first number of the barcode, the middle number, and the last number, thus, appearing as 11-11-11 (binary for the number 6 is 0110, translated to 11 because zeroes are omitted).

There is frequently a 9 printed before the first two lines, again representing 911 and the completion of the twin flame spiritual reunion but of course, our conscious minds typically associate 911 with terror and emergency. Thus, subliminally we are given the message there is something to fear when we see this configuration. This is an interpretation based on the video I watched and related information; the truth or reality of it will vary according to the perspective one maintains. (“11-11-11 means 666,” <http://youtu.be/hp6a3F7IOP4>).

Thus, taking this approach to interpretation of seeing both sides of the picture represents the yin and yang as symbolized in the talisman I found as my initiation gift. In my interpretation it forces an alchemizing process in the mind to take place as one works to overcome the confusion and conflicts between the different meanings. Using an iterative process by going back and forth to study one meaning and then the other, results in a feedback loop of each interpretation informing the other. We are forced, by this form of analysis to think in two ways, both axiomatically and relationally. Both are valuable and together establish validity in the sciences according to Williams (2003). This provides more power to Kincheloe’s “science of complexity” using the multidimensional critical complex bricolage. With enough iterations we gain new understandings and we can create something new out of the exchange.

New Paradigms. This takes the discussion back to symbiotic hermeneutics in which Kincheloe is asking bricoleurs to pay attention to relationships. “Such relationality forces the emergence of a new paradigm, a new focus for research. Indeed, the relationships are symbiotic, as they mutually enhance their parts. To use the cliché, the

relationship is greater than the sum of the parts” (p. 67). This process applies in the detailed example of the analysis of page 666 and its opposing interpretations, but it also clearly describes the alchemizing process that occurs as a result of the Twin Flame reunion, the melding of their opposite energies and the paradoxical nature of these relationships as has been discussed previously. What is the “new paradigm” and “a new focus for research”? Kincheloe may be referring to the fourth dimension of research, a direct outcome of the multidimensionality that develops out of taking the path, the quest for Twin Flame reunion. As a result, consciousness evolves; higher states are reached. The sentence also speaks of the complementary aspects of Twin Flames and how they balance each other; one’s strengths are the other’s weaknesses and vice versa as depicted in the yin yang symbolism. And it speaks to the third power they create together out of their radical love. His statement, that bricoleurs “develop principles of selection not only of research-orientations but also of what interconnections they attend” (p. 66) applies in the most literal sense, but again, as applied to Twin Flames, it implies that if we want to maintain the rigor of the bricolage, we are mindful of which connections we attend (e.g., which love relationships we pursue). We avoid those relationships based on economics that he has deemed “folly” and pursue the spiritually sublime. This aligns with Weiss’s observation in his psychoanalytic work that while there may indeed be infinite possibilities for directions we take along our path, in reality and in practical terms, we are afforded limited but divine opportunities. We need to be selective and this form of rigor ultimately prevents future suffering as we choose the best path—the “Great Path.” Unfortunately, of course, FIDUROD intervenes in every conceivable way to prevent this,

to prevent even our knowing about this opportunity we all have, and many of us travel off our paths and end up in relationships that are destined not to work and become ruled by economics (even if they did not start out that way). In fact, education is devised to take us off our paths and it is not by accident.

Kincheloe (2004d) contends that bricoleurs also “choose particular interconnections because of their relevance to the alleviation of human suffering and the cultivation of the intellect. Thus, they seek both social and personal change” (p. 66). Again, this has been demonstrated throughout the dissertation in that I have selected love as my focus because it is love that must form the foundation of the actions we take. It’s difficult to conceive of alleviating suffering or cultivating intellect in socially just ways unless love, along with compassion, form the very foundation of everything we do. The concept of Twin Flames as the epitome of Spiritual Love, as has been shown, provides a “model” or as Brand (2011) refers to it, a “template” to serve humanity from that strong foundation of love. And while the construct of Twin Flames can contribute to the sense of “unity” among humanity, it avoids “the comfort of unexamined warm and interconnected mystical feelings about their oneness with the world” that Kincheloe (2004d) warns us against (p. 66). The Twin Flame relationship is a symbiotic one, both in the sense of a couple and in the sense of their relationship with others with a focus on service. As Kincheloe describes, “In no way are bricoleurs looking for ‘a correct relationship’. There are always multiple relationships, and as time passes new relationships will be discerned that were occluded in a different episteme or Zeitgeist” (p. 62). Again, many interpretations can be applied to this statement, but what immediately comes to mind is

the way Twin Flames come to realize they have shared many previous and future lifetimes together, thus there is no ‘correct relationship.’ Their relationship is expressed as multidimensional, flowing, and changing in a timeless manner. They are all that they have been, are, and will be. From an eternal perspective, they are one with all that is, and yet they never truly reach that point due to eternal creation and evolution. Likewise, interrelationships to other people, systems, and objects as studied by the bricolage experience the same tendency toward change and appearing differently in different historical times and places. This is just as true for power and how it manifests and shifts. The goal of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage in this flexible perspective is of course to reveal different interpretations that emerge from the interactions of relationships, times, and the changes that take place, remembering that “knowledge is contingent, always in process, and not universally true for all time. It must always be updated and re-energized in light of new times” (p. 62). Thus, it becomes important to realize as we create a bricolage that what we discover during the process, any new understandings we may garner, present but a snapshot. The purpose is not to identify what it is, but rather to reveal what it is “becoming.” Kincheloe’s framing of this “in light of new times,” also implies what so many prophecies and predictions have highlighted—that we are truly entering a new age in which all knowledge will rapidly undergo reconstruction and reconceptualization due to rapidly changing paradigms. Many refer to it as a Golden Age. There are multiple events, however, happening at once in the literature and experientially: A Golden Age, A New Age, and A New World Order. And

more of us are seeing that the past, present and future are paradoxically simultaneous. We cannot escape the need for multidimensional critical complex analyses.

New Age perspectives often put out the notion the Twin Flame relationship is all about romantic love. It suddenly becomes a quest in itself, the parts separated from the whole, as Westerners tend to do. However, as Brand and Hibbs (2012) consistently emphasize, and as I have come to learn in my own experience of this phenomenon, the Twin Flame union is about mission first and foremost, at least in this place and time. In the previous section of this dissertation, the trials and tribulations of that mission which involved making “right” choices that are pleasing to God/Great Spirit/the Cosmos (in lieu of pleasing society or the status quo) illustrate the true commitment and sacrifice required before a divine relationship is typically revealed. The ultimate goal is the creation of a world in which there is no pain and suffering, thus no need to transmute it. We should not have to suffer to experience the ultimate relationship and we will not suffer if we can experience it as it was omnisciently designed. God did not create suffering; we as “humanity” created it, in my interpretation as based on my experiences in higher realms of existence.

I agree with Brand and Hibbs (2011) that the focus for Twin Flames is the mission but the relationship can be about romantic love just as much as it is about mission. Everything about Twin Flames, as I’ve conveyed, is a paradox, and the most divine love and the most difficult and painful missions imaginable seem to go hand-in-hand at times. There are philosophical and spiritual dimensions that explain this paradox—and science explanations that can be better understood with more research. It is

as Kincheloe expresses, bricoleurs always seek deeper dimensions and interpretations because “there is too much injustice, too many people in pain, and much cultural work needed to address these dark realities” [e.g., caused by FIDUROD, nebulous intuitionism, and corrupt relativism] (p. 66). And in relation to this, my question is, did I have to experience so much pain on the path? Did my children? Did Joe have to suffer in the ways he did? Do any of us? Is it really necessary to experience the “dark night of the soul” and the destruction of the “ego” that so many “spiritual” people insist is part of the process of becoming enlightened? Or are these human and social constructs that can be changed? This reveals another important paradox, but one Twin Flame Spiritual Love, once it spreads according to Kincheloe’s “perpetual revolution,” can eliminate, in my view. A friend who understands these concepts stated to me, “Earthly economic marriages won't work in the coming times and on New Earth. The time has arrived for spiritual marriages with a common mission. And yes, totally agree there actually is no need for a dark night of the soul, if we realign ourselves to the higher good” (personal conversation, July 20, 2012). Thus, it can be done with work and Kincheloe’s bricolage process can serve as a guiding light for those who are willing to do that work. It helps us sort through the underbrush of “majority rules” beliefs that perpetuate thanatos tendencies. This is the purpose of his work—to alleviate suffering using a critical complex epistemology to rename things, redefine things, and take actions for recreating our world.

Kincheloe explains how we can work toward changing socially-constructed systems that perpetuate suffering: “As bricoleurs explore these dynamics they connect the

ecological and the ecumenical to the critical” (p. 64). This is an important concept and describes the actions I have attempted in this dissertation by revealing my phenomenological experiences, as idiosyncratic as they may be, by critically pulling in perspectives from the ecological and the ecumenical. He is describing here how we are all part of “greater unities” and we “become fully human by revealing these processes in our own lives” (p. 64). This relates back to the discussion about sharing ourselves in relationship being an act of radical love. The narrative of my experience traveling through the mountains on Christmas day in which I described my sense of “oneness” or unity with the cosmos and the oneness I experience with Joe is expressed in his assertion, “Relationships by their nature position objects in the same space. We are together in this relationship – we occupy it together” (p. 64). While this can be considered in a more abstract sense which is the way most people would interpret it, with the Twin Flame paradigm, it is experienced in a more literal sense on multiple levels and in multiple dimensions. And it is the *experience* of the Twin Flame relationship that provides understanding of the greater unity between all relationships as well as understanding of the paradox between individuality and unity. While I can describe the Twin Flame experience to the best of my ability and explain how the experience of the paradoxes involved *change everything* in order to help people understand and come to realize the profound significance these relationships hold for the future of the world and people may relate on an intellectual level, a more complete understanding will only be achieved through the experience for oneself. The experience also brought me closer to a God, an omniscient source of knowledge and power, I had not known before, a form of “religion”

which Einstein has referred to as “cosmic religion” that does not adhere to dogma or fundamentalism. The best I can do is provide enough information to create within readers of this text the phenomenon of “undeniability” that rises in qualitative research if one takes it far enough and deep enough.

Kincheloe (2004d) uses this word “ecumenical” or “ecumenicalism” three times in the text undergoing analysis. Why he includes this is complicated and a complete analysis would take many pages because as is always the case with his work, he advocates pulling in as many perspectives as possible. In fact, I believe one thing he’s calling for, since he has used the word three times, is a multidimensional critical complex analysis of the concept of the Triune God, a heated controversy that has extended centuries and may exert great influence in world views (refer to previous discussion, “No Ordinary Treasure Hunt”). The fact that he mentioned it three times links it to trinity and provides a spiritual dimension to his text. Ecumenical has a religious connotation as well as a nonreligious connotation. It can represent the whole of Christianity, the idea of being open to all religions, or in other words a sense of universality. In a nonreligious sense it can mean being open to all ideas, similar to maintaining eclectic paradigms. Ecumenicalism is primarily concerned with promoting unity. During my phenomenological experiences in noting patterns, if something is repeated three times, it is an indication to pay special attention. The mind programmers use this technique to install beliefs below our conscious awareness; President George Bush used repetition to convince the population of his version of truth that garnered him support for a war in Iraq. Kincheloe’s prompt is to get us to think and do more research.

Thus, I interpret that the number three as tied to the religious/spiritual connotations of ecumenicalism is important, particularly as ecumenicalism seeks unity, and is a reference to the universally used trinity symbol. As I have covered earlier, trinity is a universal symbol for twin soul union with God, again giving credence to the Twin Flame interpretation I've been using throughout this study. This spiritual interpretation is supported by his statement on the next page, "In the *spirit* of criticality they [he is referring to physical scientists who work as "critical cultural workers"] view them [their disciplines] in their immanence [a term from liberation theology meaning what 'could be' in relation to Heaven]: they construct the world [create] and their disciplines in the dialectic relationship between being [Earth] and becoming [Heaven]. The critical vision of the bricolage moves them to make themselves, their disciplines, and the world anew" (p. 65). Is he referring to the creation of Heaven on Earth?

The terminology used here, such as "spirit," "immanence" and "being" and "becoming" are associated with liberation theology and it is no accident that Kincheloe has selected them. The idea is to be able to envision the future (ideally, visit those nonlocal places so we can see and experience what's possible for ourselves) for knowledge and help in order to apply what we learn in the present for change. These are "co-creative" processes that must be accomplished "in relationship" and again, it is unity that helps people achieve access to ever higher planes of consciousness and to the greater knowledge needed to make the "world anew" (or for creating Heaven on Earth). Many traditions present this as a sort of overlapping, entwining, yet three-step (trinity) process. This has already been described earlier in numerous contexts. As an example, I was

provided excursions to the Heavens to experience my home there and meet my Spirit Guide who resides in an even higher dimension. These experiences serve as a form of “immanence,” or a “critical vision” that guides creation. I not only know what is possible, I have fully experienced what is possible. This provides an amazing source of knowledge, strength, and passion to actively create what’s possible, to make everything “anew.” Thus, in this particular statement, Kincheloe is applying these ideas from liberation theology to the physical sciences. It is essentially what many of these scientists are already doing, particularly in theoretical physics, which may be why they are ahead of other sciences in many ways. The scientists are simply not conveying their process; they may be afraid of losing credibility. From what is conveyed about Einstein in this excerpt, he may have been too open about his processes, which may have contributed to some of the media ploys against him and his work. Perhaps Kincheloe is asking that physical scientists open up more about how they research and derive their theoretical ideas. It would exert great influence to wider acceptance of fourth dimension research and move society past attaching “stigma” to “genius” (Kincheloe, et al., 1999).

Kincheloe goes on to explain in this excerpt, since he is speaking of the physical sciences here, that Albert Einstein offered an “initiation of a paradigmatic explosion in physics” (p. 65). What a play on words, given so many people mistakenly believe that Einstein was responsible for developing the nuclear bomb, but it implies that there is more to Einstein’s work than popular culture or education has presented and it is so explosive as to initiate the development of the nuclear test weapon named “Trinity.” Do we believe Einstein was not aware? It was actually another scientist, Leó Szilárd, a

Hungarian physicist and friend of Einstein's who had realized that the fission process using uranium could result in an explosive chain reaction. Einstein had attempted to get politicians and scientists together to discuss this issue sensibly and at the same time had expressed the possibility of such bomb being developed by Germany. The U.S. proceeded forward with the Manhattan Project and development of the nuclear bomb. However, Einstein learned that Germany was not making a bomb and wrote a letter in attempt to get U.S. policymakers to see that there was no need to push forward with it. President Roosevelt died before reading the letter which was then passed on to Truman (where "the buck stops"). The concerns were ignored and the bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, to Einstein's utter dismay. (Isaacson, 2007).

Einstein's Paradigmatic Explosion: Did He Solve the Theory of Unity?

Kincheloe continues with his discussion of Einstein and his Theory of Relativity on pages 65–66. "The general theory of relativity is all about the power of relationship" he states (p. 66). From a phenomenological perspective, based on my personal interrelationships into unseen dimensions, I have continuously been given the message (from the gods?) that Einstein had, in fact, solved the theory of unity. It is contained within an article under everyone's noses and it has not been properly interpreted, so the message goes. The way this came about is that one of the first people I was introduced to after Joe passed over was Albert Einstein. He is purportedly my uncle from a future time and place. And even though I have never researched or read much about Einstein until this current research, when I learned of this, I realized that from somewhere I have a great love for him and even a sort of uncanny understanding about his personality. He is

definitely much more than the persona the media has often caricatured him with. It seems that the cabal or the “powers-that-be” became irate with Einstein because he was a peacemaker and was vocal against nuclear war. He was even considered a security risk by the government (Isaacson, 2007). As discussed previously, his name was purposely connected to the nuclear bomb by the media. The first test bomb was named “Trinity,” thus the powerful universal symbolism of destroying the sacred bond between Twin Flames and God that hit hard across cultures. Even though Einstein has received wide acclaim his name has been drug through the mud and this continues even today. There is much misinformation published on the Internet about him and his theory, and a search on his name seems to have been manipulated so that it brings a disinformation campaign to the top of the hit list. There is a reason for this. Does the theory of unity connect to the Twin Flame paradigm—the power of love—in some way? The theory of relativity, as Kincheloe proclaims here is about the power of relationship. Did Einstein discover something so powerful about love that it would have threatened the goal of establishing the Illuminati’s New World Order? Is that why they went on to name the first test weapon the Trinity—to give a deep psychological blow to all of humanity? These are just speculations, of course, but there is much data that when pulled together create an eerie picture. And today, as the new Illuminati super rock star, Doda, sings, we “ain’t talking about love.” And her “Bad Girl” music video featuring “The Blood Runs Hot Restaurant” complete with blood, of course, and the best body parts for your next meal—and even sex with corpses—reeks of blatant demonic ritualistic acts. The video is loaded with sick thanatos depictions and dehumanizing portrayals of women hanging like meat in cloning

tanks in the background as Doda sings, “I know my way of my Babylon all demons know. . .” Only satanic illuminates of a dark thanateros might offer up something better than Doda.

Kincheloe continues his discussion about Einstein, presenting that he had initiated a “revolution” in 1905 that “takes researchers into new domains” (p. 65). And then he describes these domains: “Indeed, symbiotic hermeneutics unabashedly focuses on relationships that typically cannot be heard, smelled, viewed, felt, or tasted. Einstein employed what we are calling symbiotic hermeneutics in his work in physics, often focusing on the ‘no-thing’ of physical reality rather than things-in-themselves” (p. 64). In other words, he focused on relationships, but the additional implication here is that he focused on the intuitive dimensions of experience. This is “fourth dimension research.” Those intuitive dimensions are greatly enhanced when people form a union with their Twin Flames and it is this union that is the forerunner of the unity of all of humankind (Saraydarian, 1992). As shown in the Wisdom knowledges, once Twin Flames unite, they also unite with members of their soul family, then their soul groups, all working together for a mission which might involve earth, but very well can involve work throughout the cosmos. Dimensions do not separate these relationships that “typically cannot be heard, smelled, viewed, felt, or tasted.” Note that he qualifies this with “typically,” because as was discussed previously, when people become more adept at interdimensional relationships or the “Hermesian” state of mind, the senses can be experienced in those other dimensions (Lachman, 2011). Is this a natural, ecological process that occurs—IF it is not hampered with through education, indoctrination and social control? Or IF we can

learn to transcend these forced constraints? And IF we can connect to our Twin Flame and soul families to combine forces? This could be a tremendous threat to power, the status quo, and the wishes to build an all-powerful one world fascist government, the New World Order.

Kincheloe actually spells this out on page 64 of the text with his statement, “Emphasizing the numerous common bonds connecting human beings, bricoleurs work toward egalitarianism and justice.” When these bonds are forged on powerful spiritual bonds that transcend space and time, a “New World” Government would have something to reckon with. I have seen this in action simply based on my own experiences during this research. It is a process, however, and one for which backsliding can occur, which is why continuous rigorous bricolage work is required. Complacency is not welcome in this picture. Thus, what did Einstein know? That he had solved the theory of unity, even though it’s not a part of the historical record is hinted at by Kincheloe’s statement, “The general theory of relativity is all about the power of relationship. . . . Still, in the first decade of the twenty-first century the epistemological and ontological dimensions and implications of Einstein’s work are not generally understood, even in academia” (p. 66). Is there something right under our noses in Einstein’s work that has been misinterpreted or hidden? And the date again signifies 11-2-11, which Kincheloe has used multiple times, representing the increased numbers of twin flame reunions that were predicted beginning the year 2000. Most people don’t know this. Why?

Using an intertextual approach and referring to Kincheloe’s book about Einstein, there are clues there as well. While I have not identified all of them, I was drawn to one

clue in particular; in fact, it was one of those instances of opening right to the page and having my eyes drawn to this particular statement (this phenomenon happens to me *frequently*). In this book, he states in relation to Einstein's search for the theory of unity: "Throughout his life he had faith that even if he did not make it (which he didn't) that someday it would be done" (Kincheloe, et al. 1999, p. 260). The very first time I had read that statement, which I had been serendipitously led to (I have not read this entire book by any means) my intuition led me to believe that it does not mean what most people would interpret it to mean. That is, most people would interpret the phrase "(which he didn't)" literally and as meaning he really had not solved the theory of unity. I see the phrase entirely differently. Based on the concept of phenomenological bracketing, the parentheses tell me to set aside my immediate thoughts, which would typically lead to interpreting the statement literally. Thus, it is calling for a hermeneutic approach. What else could it mean if not interpreted literally? It means it is simply stating what most people believe to be true, but as I learned very well when George Bush was in office "saying it is so does not make it so." Thus, it is implying the possibility of the alternative view that Einstein did, in fact, solve the theory when taking the diametric reading Kincheloe advises. Taken along with my fourth dimension research which includes multiple instances of reaffirming this and even instructions for how to go about showing that Einstein had solved this theory, I tend to believe that Einstein did solve it and there has been a cover-up or people just have not figured it out. This also makes sense because if his theory relates to the "changing world" that Kincheloe is speaking of in his bricolage book, then Einstein could very well have discovered some powerful truths about Twin

Flame relationships and spiritual love (p. 62). It's all about relationship. It is also about "energy" which, as known, Einstein made the profound discovery with his $E = MC^2$ equation. But there is more here than meets the eye.

Am I crazy because I "listen" to the voices from the "other side?" Is this totally "off the wall"? I don't think so: "An 'inner voice' told him [Einstein] that it [quantum mechanics] was 'not the real thing.' The theory of quantum mechanics says a lot, he admitted, but it 'does not really bring us any closer to the secret of the Old one'" (Kincheloe, et. al. 1999 , p. 146). Einstein's motivation was to discover how God thinks and the only way we can even get close to that is through the experience of love, as Kincheloe expresses over and again in his work. And it cannot be just "any" love; it must be a continuous flow of Eros Love and life force energy flowing through us naturally as we let go and live our lives spiritually guided. Perhaps it means as Osohon (2009) contends—we must learn to work with the highest level gods, the celestial gods, those gods who reside with or have closest contact to God.

I had wished to take up an analysis of Einstein's work but there is no way to cover all that I have learned in one dissertation. Perhaps this will open the door for other "believers" to do so. I am sure Einstein will just be happy when the lies about him are corrected and truths revealed no matter who takes on these tasks. I have noticed there is a deep connection between Kincheloe's theoretical work and Einstein's work. Kincheloe's theory directly pulls from the work Einstein was doing. Therefore, by using the multidimensional critical complex bricolage one should be able to show that Einstein had the theory solved. For example, Kincheloe cites Clark who quotes Einstein as saying: "I

want to know how God created this world,” he exclaimed. “I want to know his thoughts” (Kincheloe, et. al. 1999, p. 143). How do we get closest to God? Universally it is believed that we are made in God’s image, but what does that mean? In the book, *Science of Soulmates*, Henderson (2002) shows us that God must be a Spiritually United Divine Couple—the Divine Feminine and the Divine Masculine—and it is the energy they create together that provides the life force of the universe. Due to the fractal nature of creation we can be none other than the same in our “completeness.” He concluded that there indeed must be a divine “energy match,” one special soul mate, for every one of us. As he has discussed, in support of this contention, scientists have discovered and photographed two forms of energy which they distinguish as being the “feminine” energy and the “masculine” energy. Thus, Einstein was searching for a “unified basis for all science” (p. 144) and it seems he may have had all of the pieces. Einstein’s theory of relativity provided a new metaphor that launched the revolution Kincheloe speaks of on page 65 of the text which shifted worldviews. But for Einstein this world view was one focused on unity and his belief that these laws would apply anywhere in the universe (p. 143).

Squelching Knowledge about Love

One other topic Kincheloe touches on in this special excerpt is his often mentioned anti-colonial rebellions of the 1940s–1960s and the backlash against them as the New Right Wing emerged in the United States. He covers this topic in many of his works and there is more analysis needed than a surface analysis that most people have taken in citing him. Of course, again, we can interpret these literally for what they were and focus on the complex interacting factors that led to these revolutions, but there are

other reasons Kincheloe has highlighted them so often. These “global liberation movements” as he states, had originally “emerged in Africa, Latin America and many parts of Asia in the 1940s and 1950s” (p. 63). In the United States these manifested as the civil rights, women’s, indigenous, and anti-Vietnam movements during the 1960s and 1970s. These movements became squelched by a tremendous backlash, with the Church and the cabal, even science, forming very unusual alliances (Kincheloe, 2008c).

Examining the music of that era and how it has transmogrified to that of some of the artists today who focus on the dark arts, satanic ritualistic acts, and death, provides much insight. The music transformed from being about highly spiritual concepts and love (“The Age of Aquarius,” “Strawberry Fields Forever,” “Ferry Cross the Mersey,” the “Mersey Beat,” “Cupid”) to today’s focus on thanatos. Since this dissertation is framed nearly entirely within the context of Kincheloe’s “Eros Love,” what picture does this paint in relation to these movements? It seems that the biggest threat to domination over the people is a growing spiritual love and Einstein’s concept of unity, both of which bring people back to a relationship or understanding of an omniscient God and working toward peace and harmony. This would restore power back to the people with little need to be dependent on government in hegemonic ways that make a few people rich and powerful. Education, religion, politics, and the media, controlled by a few at the top, became tools to constrain our knowledge as well as to keep us divided. People have been shaped to focus on money, greed, competition, and materialism. Even U.S. currency and the Pledge of Allegiance have had the word “God” added during this backlash so that our consciousnesses could be reconstructed as to where we focus in relation to God. The

various “movements,” including New Age spirituality and music were also appropriated to present us misinformation and have become framed in ways to make us more narcissistic as a means to divide us and to keep people from being of service to each other. We have also been bombarded from every direction with symbols that have had their divine meanings reversed. I spent a great amount of time during my research studying these symbols, how they have been reversed in meaning, and incorporated into almost everything we look at from Disney programming and other media to advertising, logos, and signs.

We are being programmed to move away from Divine Love and a relationship with God/Great Spirit/Higher Power toward one that is dominated by thanatos, serving self, and selling our souls to the “money god.” This is not new, but it has become implemented in unprecedented global forms. Answering basic epistemological questions about these movements using Kincheloe’s critical complex epistemology quickly reveals how this has been accomplished. More often divine symbols have been reversed to their satanic meanings, as previously discussed. The cabal was actively working to construct our consciousnesses to turn away from sacred love and instill within us fear, competition, greed, lust, violence, and narcissism through any and every means at hand and primarily by constructing our consciousnesses to be consumers through the media and education. Of course, we as a collective sat back and allowed it, and we still do today, which exemplifies Kincheloe’s contention that power is often “unseen” and hard to pinpoint; it is us. Hegemony is an apt word to describe how we all are part of the problem. It can be

hard to lift up those rugs and see what's under them and so the beat goes on. But it's not the Mersey Beat.

What were the movements about, essentially? They were about the “Dawning of the Age of Aquarius,” peace, and they were about love. They were about exposing truth as to what colonialism was stripping away and why. There is much one can learn about the knowledge people had acquired, their consciousness, by listening to the music of that era. Of course, the Beatles music is well-known, but according to Barry Hill (2012), writer of the original “Mersey Beat” newspaper, their worldwide promotion had actually served as a tool to squelch the amazing music movement that was taking place on the Merseyside of Liverpool. A very interesting history, the music had taken on a magical quality. People were figuring things out. They were getting too close to truth about love. And brilliant U.S. entrepreneurs and musicians like Sam Cooke who established his own record label were dangerous (his death occurred under highly suspicious circumstances) (Greene, 2005). The recording moguls began taking over to stifle many artists. The music was revealing spirituality and consciousness; the industry in the U.S. adopted the Christian fundamentalists’ view that rock music was satanic, began pushing “sanitized” music (Hill, 2012), and now they have actually flipped it and have made it satanic. Today, you must be a “chosen one” to play in their game and some artists speak of actually having to sign their contracts in blood. Some may choose to believe this is all conspiracy, but today the music moguls throw satanism right in our faces. Unless one is totally blind, it's undeniable although consumers are conditioned to find it humorous in many cases. I could present many artists from hip hop to metal but I have covered these

topics elsewhere. Anyone can do their own research. Jamaican citizens are actively calling for serious change in their country due to the negative influence of certain hip hop artists and how their young people have been led astray and away from spirituality and God. The 2012 Summer Olympics also has exceeded everything that's been done before it in terms of satanic symbols and representations of rituals. Can people not see what's wrong with this picture? As *Vigilant Citizen* (2012) reveals in an article on their website:

The Illuminati Agenda in popular culture has become a worldwide phenomenon and it hasn't spared Eastern Europe. Doda's "Bad Girls" and Vintage's "Trees" are two examples of very symbolic music videos that are extremely popular in Russia and Poland. . . .Some might say: "The Illuminati Agenda exists in the U.S., but not in Poland" and so forth. Well, Doda is signed with Universal Music, one of the five media conglomerates that distribute mass media across the world. It owns labels like Interscope, Geffen, A&M, Defjam, Island and Motown. She is therefore part of the elite's system and was apparently chosen to be the Illuminati's representative in Poland. (para. 1, 7)

The multidimensional critical complex bricolage changes the equation and the dirt begins to be swept out from under the rugs to reveal power alignments and their "symbiotic" purposes. For example, it has us asking questions related to historicity such as: When were the Twin Towers built in relation to the backlash against the movements of the 1960s? When did the design of U.S. currency change to depict the Twin Towers and the Pentagon disasters when folded in particular and exact geometric configurations? What is the significance of the geometry in the folded bills representing the towers going up in smoke? Why would this change in the design of the currency have occurred before the Twin Tower disaster? Was it coincidence? When was the statement "In God We Trust" added to U.S. currency? When was "under God" added to the Pledge of Allegiance? What is the significance of Building Seven collapsing (Sides, 2012a, 2012,

b; Tower Web Productions, 2003)? What effects might these have on consciousness? What god is being served here? There are many more questions that can be asked. But the point is that there's always so much more than meets the eye, and these are still only the surface level questions for new bricoleurs. The multidimensional critical complex bricolage would have us asking deeper questions that would take us into the fourth dimensional realms of research. As *Vigilant Citizen* concluded (and as my research revealed), "Popular culture promotes corrupt and debasing values, degrades human life and pushes transhumanism because this is where the elite want to take the world. Will you be swallowing the pill?"

Imagine the powerful possibilities when consciously accessing and acting in multiple dimensions of reality. What we see through our FIDURODian-constructed blinders is a mere small fraction of the reality that is happening all around us. And correspondingly, Kincheloe explains in this text undergoing analysis that knowledge must continuously be updated: "Again, knowledge work and research are seen as more complex than scholars originally posited" (p. 62). He is hinting in this text that perhaps we are approaching a new era, perhaps one that affords us a special opportunity as predicted in indigenous prophecies, a potential for consciousness evolution beyond anything we can even imagine—and this corresponds intertextually with his other work (e.g., *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*). But we must work for it.

First Impressions of the Text

It was during my trip to California in 2009 when I was in my motel room at the Colloquium that I had gone through the first very inept analysis of this special passage

Joe had assigned me from his and Berry's book, *Rigour and Complexity in Educational Research: Conceptualizing the Bricolage* (2004). I knew these pages were extremely important, but I did not comprehend why at the time. I had read the text before, of course, back in October 2008 right after he assigned it to me, and it was interesting that I found the first part of this excerpt extremely personal; when I read it I nearly felt like it should be a special message for me somehow. Maybe it was because he had given the assignment especially for me. Maybe it was on account of the title, "Expanding the Concept of Relationship in the Bricolage: Symbiotic Hermeneutics in the Disciplines." It just seemed so intimate somehow. I did not understand the feelings I had or why the intensity. When I read the second and third paragraphs I felt what I might refer to as a "pregnant pause" in one of the sentences. Something went "click" in my mind and I did not initially understand why. The second paragraph begins with, "In symbiotic hermeneutics the process of interpretation and meaning-making is directly tied to exposure of relationships." This sentence is so highly loaded right off the bat. While most people would be thinking in terms of education and the relationships between variables, people, and processes, what my mind immediately focused on was *personal, intimate relationships*. The rest of the paragraph continues in the same vein as referring to personal relationships but then switches later to being more specific to research and disciplinary knowledge. The first sentence of the third paragraph, in relation to my first impression of the sentence above is where I felt a "pregnant pause." He states, "In the first decade of the twenty-first century the capacity to establish relationships with difference is enhanced by a couple [the pause—the sentence was complete] of factors."

The pause was reinforced by the fact that the rest of the dialogue does not clearly distinguish the first and second factors. Normally for clarity, a writer would delineate the first and second factors, while, instead, he discusses many factors and was not clear to me exactly which are the “couple of factors” he was referring to. Thus, this was the first impression and interpretation that I was confronted with in reading this excerpt Kincheloe had assigned me early in my research. It had a major impact, I believe, in framing my research, acting almost as a POET.

My interpretation leads me back to what I’ve been discussing all along and it seems that I had picked up on it intuitively before this research. By incorporating that “pregnant pause,” the sentence becomes: “During the first decade of the twenty-first century the capacity to establish relationships with difference is enhanced by a couple.” I had no idea what it meant, but I wanted it to mean me and Joe, as romantic and ridiculous as it sounds, especially given he had passed over. And before that we were platonic friends. It just did not work. If he had used the phrase “is enhanced by two factors” it would not have struck me as being personal. I would not have made the association between relationship and couple. Call me weird, but that’s was the interpretation that struck me during this first analysis. Joe was an expert writer and a master of hermeneutics, a word magician, and so I always assume he pretty much knew what he was doing with his writing. His later writing is very creative and he is obviously trying new strategies to get people to pay attention, think, backtrack and reinterpret in order to help us develop the “epistemic consciousness” that he felt was critical to take us to new levels of cognition. In light of that, there are always multiple interpretations when text

stands out as this particular sentence does. And in terms of multiple interpretations, returning again to the first sentence in that paragraph, “the exposure of relationships” becomes especially significant. During these past few years of research, it has been exposure of past and future relationships that provided interpretations, meaning, and context for who I am today. When Twin Flames unite, it sets up a process of remembering the past and the future. That there is a “quest” for establishing these divine relationships (thus, another allusion to the quest for the Golden Chalice) is hinted at in his statement, “bricoleurs maintain that the quest for relationships results in the revelation of new contexts in which to view a phenomenon” (p. 62). When we begin to remember these other lifetimes, we come to understand our current experiences within new contexts, and importantly, we come to understand relationships at deeper, multidimensional levels. This is helpful from a psychological standpoint and aids in transmuting emotions that have become magnified due to layers of experiences. As discussed earlier in this dissertation, Dr. Weiss had confirmed the value of using past and future life regression therapy in his practice. When Twin Flames unite, part of their reunification process is helping each other work through memories and emotions. Thus, viewing current emotions (phenomena) in new contexts, helps release those emotions.

After all of the phenomenological experiences I’ve had in relation to Joe and after all of the research I’ve done, the sentence, “During the first decade of the twenty-first century the capacity to establish relationships with difference is enhanced by a couple” thus takes on a different meaning than most people would get out of it. The date in the sentence translates to 11-2-11, signifying the union of twin flames. [first=1;

decade=10=1; 21=2, 1; and century = 100 = 1]. What could he be referring to by “relationships with difference”? In this interpretation difference would be masculine and feminine energies, but also all differences—the yin and the yang. Why else was I gifted with the yin yang talisman as my initiation into the Higher Wisdom Knowledges? Twin flames are representative of difference in that their energy signatures are opposite from each other which acts as a powerful magnet of sorts that brings them together and is represented by the yin yang symbol. Some people may get upset over the twin flame metaphor due to the focus that’s often placed on gender. Gender is and is not important. It’s not important because what is relevant is the energy signature; it is important because the majority of us are traditional in our biological makeup and relationship preferences. It should be common sense that energy signatures exist in an infinite array—everyone has a different energy signature, thus conveying another interpretation of “relationships with difference.” Thus, it is one more reason for people to open their minds about different forms of relationships. Twin flames in their “oneness” become gender neutral—in a sense. Yet, paradoxically they are more individualized and are freer to be themselves and express their individuality. This is a great gift from the Creator from my perspective. I don’t know very much about liberation theology, which Joe was influenced by, but what could be more liberating than to be free to fully express who we are?

There is far more analysis that can be done in relation to the philosophy and science that’s symbolized in the yin yang symbol, a most profound symbol of “difference.” Thus *all* relationships are enhanced by a couple, at least by couples united in this very special spiritual trinity bond. The power of the third power had been

discussed already in multiple contexts. $1+1=3$ and as a result, dualistic concepts are powerfully and alchemically brought together through love and something new and greater is created. Twin Flames are to set the precedent for making divine relationships more possible, by many accounts. This is enhanced by Kincheloe's (2004d) statement that "a brief hermeneutic detour is in order in this discussion of disciplinarity in a changing world" in the first paragraph (p. 42). Here, he is highlighting his focus in this section on the "changing world," which by many accounts relates to increasing consciousness, union of Twin Flames and the move toward a more loving and peaceful planet. The union of Twin flames and changing consciousness are inextricably linked in ways that facilitate a radically new paradigm or worldview. The paradigmatic shift results in the bringing together of all disciplines, and again, creating something much bigger and more powerful than any of the separate disciplines can provide in isolation. As has been repeatedly shown, bricolage as Kincheloe has envisioned it helps us develop higher order thinking. It is when we transcend the FIDURODian mindset that we can form powerful love-based relationships. How does this relate to the various disciplines? He tells us on page 65: "The bricolage pressures the guardians of the disciplines to join a cognitive and intellectual revolution taking place in the detritus of disciplinarity." This inevitably leads to transcendence and abilities of fourth dimension research as he conveys:

Drawing upon symbiotic hermeneutics, this revolution confronts some of the basic assumptions of the physical sciences. The meaning of empiricism, with its concept of sensory knowledge forming the epistemological basis of science, for example, is brought into question. Indeed, symbiotic hermeneutics unabashedly focuses on relationships that typically cannot be heard, smelled, viewed, felt, or tasted. (p. 65)

These, of course, involve intuitive abilities which are correlated with the higher consciousness experienced and shared by Twin Flames. In my own experiences as documented during my research, there is a wide range of these abilities. They seem to manifest in almost infinite varieties. Hamilton (2012) has delineated three “intuitive pathways” which help to reduce chaos and a sense of overwhelm when trying to relate them all: (1) visual and auditory cues (such as signs, symbols, images, telepathic communications, visions, sounds, music; (2) mirror neurons by which our bodies physically mimic someone we are observing, which helps us read between the lines, often ascertaining whether someone is being truthful, for example. It also gives us the ability to pick up on their emotions; and (3) entangled minds, which I’ve already covered previously. For more information, I will defer readers to his article, “The 3 Paths of Intuition,” and perhaps some of his other writings. It should be understood, however, they can and do overlap and there may be additional paths, but this model is useful for gaining a beginning understanding as to how these abilities interrelate. We also pick up much more data with our senses than we can consciously register, thus there is an enormous amount of unconsciously acquired data that feeds into our intuitive abilities. The amount of research needed into intuition is simply incalculable. Much time has been wasted in misdirected attempts to understand intuition from positivistic perspectives. Even mixed methodologies have proven ineffective for gaining significant knowledge about intuition. Again, this illustrates the need for the multidimensional, multiperspectival approach offered by Kincheloe’s critical complex bricolage.

A New Heiros Gamos for a “Changing World”

From the very beginning, the focus of my research has invariably returned to the topic of soul mates and “Twin Flames,” that “golden strand of love” I promised at the beginning. I could not understand how it always wound its way back to this topic even when I worked to avoid it. And when I first began this research, due to outside pressure and the personal nature of my experiences, I was trying every which way to stay away from this topic. In fact, at the beginning, I would never have dreamed I would reveal this much about my experiences, but at the same time I feel it’s exactly what Kincheloe (2004d) wants—for us to “expose” these relationships. For, again, in his very first statement, he states that symbiotic hermeneutics is “directly tied to exposure of relationships.” While one would normally interpret that to mean in an educational context and I did, indeed, expose many relationships relating to politics, money, elitism, and many other relationships relating to education in my research, I kept being drawn to divine relationships. Was this the message he wanted me to get from this passage? I am to “expose” multidimensional, past, present, and future relationships? I am forced to interpret his text two ways—one for the research that needs to be done to provide multiple perspectives as I attempt to analyze this text—and the other one in relation to the strand about love that I’ve carried throughout. As already conveyed, when Twin Flames unite a part of that process involves learning about past and future lifetimes together and to transmute any emotions that are impacting the present. They transmute not only for themselves, but for society as a whole, even as children, as was detailed earlier. But it also is true that they use this historical and prescient knowledge they recover in their

journeys to other dimensions to create positive changes: to correct historical accounts, to make changes in the present, to change the outcome in the future, to look to the future to improve the present. It's very complex and what Kincheloe is stressing in this text is the complexity, the symbiotic nature. How do we put that complexity in writing when the easiest way to get a handle on understanding it is to experience it? This explains why it must be in context, in relationship. Like Einstein's theory of relativity, it "is all about the power of [and exposure to] relationship" (p. 66). And as he makes clear, there are "multiple relationships. There is no "correct relationship" because they all exist simultaneously and they all have an impact in some way. The past, present, future, people, cannot be separated; everything is connected, everything is in relationship and our work as bricoleurs is to attend to understanding those relationships pertinent to our topic at hand and which will reveal the "large-scale interconnections in the political, aesthetic, social, cultural, economic, moral, psychological, philosophical, cognitive, and educational domains" (pp. 66-67). Thus, to describe something or someone in relation to something or someone else does not negate the other relationships, it's just a different context. Similarly, to express particular perspectives does not negate other perspectives. These are concepts that I've discovered during various interactions that are very difficult for people to transcend and can cause a lot of disagreement and discord. Changing times require new ways of looking at things and hopefully with time, more people will transcend these issues. One last thing to point out relative to his "exposure of relationships," is that it is often the duty of Twin Flame couples to educate the public

about these relationships as part of their service to humanity. This could be another interpretation and perhaps explain why it has become the topic of this research.

In the article, “The Hieros Gamos” Lisa Renee (2012), who is well known in New Age spiritual circles, describes an updated model for Twin Flame relationships. Brand (2011), as we can recall, also mentioned the need to update both how these relationships form and what the signs may be for them. Renee defines “Ascension” as being a reuniting of multidimensional starseeds and their families through a new paradigm for Higher Consciousness. According to her account, she receives communications interdimensionally. Her article revises The Hieros Gamos to encompass multiple forms of new types of relationships that are expected to emerge as people move forward in consciousness evolution. The model is an elastic one, much as Kincheloe recommends, thus it is not written in stone, but rather, like this entire dissertation, it is a presentation of a perspective. I will just note here that this, again, is evidence for updating Tarot Cards, which seem to be based on old models, as I had discussed earlier in this dissertation, if Renee’s account should prove true.

According to Renee (2012), “the term heiros gamos refers to the sacred marriage between two divinities, or between a human being and Mother/Father God, or between two human beings (under certain conditions); the ultimate alchemy of forces which harmonize polar opposites” (“The New Relationship Paradigm,” para 1). The heiros gamos was first described 5,000 years ago in Sumerian text. These divine relationships will be increasing, according to her report, and more “sacred marriages” will occur. Renee asserts that “it is also possible that ‘non-physical Spiritual Spouses will also be

involved in some of the Hieros Gamos templating for those who choose to stay on within physical incarnation to accomplish biological ascension” (“Clarification of Union,” para 1). She discusses the idea of the “Chemical Wedding” and how “this union creates something bigger and more powerful than the individual parts—the perfect integration of male and female energies—the entire creation of a new intelligent force” (“Alchemy of Transformation,” para 1). She differentiates between the Alchemical Union and the Hieros Gamos. The Alchemical Union is a “test run” for the Hieros Gamos, which is a “monadic twin merging and then ‘Avatar Christ’ embodiment into the monad” (“Clarification of Union,” para 2). She contends that the alchemical union partner will be assigned and the purpose of the relationship is for mutual benefit in evolution and to learn to be loving and forgiving. In my own life, this would have been represented by my marriage to the prisoner I discussed earlier. Interestingly, I had actually perceived it as an assignment from some Divine Higher Source, a sort of “calling” based on the Biblical passages I had been led to at the time about remembering those in prison, as I have detailed earlier in this study.

According to Renee, casual relationships will end and “all relationships will be first and foremost about personal transformation and spiritual development” (“Breaking Away from Destructive Archetypes,” para 1). If this proves true, then this is a very good thing for human evolution. She explains what I had already determined in my research—we have been lied to about these sacred marriages. They have been kept hidden from us and our consciousnesses constructed in ways that prevent us from knowing “our sovereign right to experience a balanced, loving and glorious sacred marriage.”

According to Renee, “We will have access to create the most loving spiritual marriage you could ever imagine” (“Breaking Away from Destructive Archetypes,” para 2). These models will continue to be updated and refined as more information is obtained, based on the actual experiences of couples and as these relationships continue to evolve, pointing to the need for more research.

The Biggest Secret

And so I wonder . . . is this the real secret that’s been hidden from us, perhaps one of the greatest secrets of all? Is this why the elite in power go to such extremes to keep love and sex debased and connected to fear? This knowledge about Divine Love would fall under Kincheloe’s (2001b) category of “Divine Knowledge.” It is certainly a divine secret and it’s very sad how successful the cabal has been at creating thanatos on Earth in ways that keep the majority of us diverted from truth. My sense is that the elite class has been privileged to know this secret, although if that’s true, most of them have not succeeded in establishing these relationships for themselves. Are these new relationships the Eros Love, the “radical love” Kincheloe suggests as a counterpoise to thanatos? Of course, they are not going to just be handed to us.

Returning back to the statement in the excerpt under analysis, “In the first decade of the twenty-first century the capacity to establish relationships is enhanced by a couple. . .” These relationships have already been happening, so this satisfies as an interpretation of his statement. According to Brand and Hibbs (2010) Twin Flames are “graduates” who have come back to Earth, but that the newly evolving Twin Flames began activation in 2000. This corresponds with his date, the “first decade of the twenty-first century.”

Further, on page 64, his words mirror what Renee (2012) states about “The New Relationship Paradigm.” His words are “Such relationality forces the emergence of a new paradigm, a new focus for research. Indeed, the relationships are symbiotic, as they mutually enhance their parts. To use the cliché, the relationship is greater than the sum of the parts.” Here, he is calling for more research into these relationships. They will be evolving; this is something new for the human species.

Renee (2012) provides another confirmation of his use of “ecumenical” three times as representing the Holy Trinity Union. She explains, “What we have come to learn through the Guardian principle of Hieros Gamos is that the Christos Intelligence is the child/offspring of the Holy Mother (Arc) and Holy Father (Arc) and cannot be birthed into the physical world without both principle polarities equally unified to zero point. . . . As the twin monads unite, the Christed Avatar Intelligence acts as the Higher self which then can inhabit the Monad directly” (“The Christos is the Offspring of Hieros Gamos,” paras 1, 2). These relationships in all three of their manifestations involve trinity unions. Will there be resurrections? According to this account, couples who have been working with this unity template will transition “to experience the ultimate sacred marriage and return to the earth plane as Risen Christos, birthed through the Spiritual marriage of The Hieros Gamos. Hieros Gamos is a part of the destined sequence of which is to return the Glory of God’s image to the human form in Christdom” (“Vesica Pisces Override,” para 2). According to Renee (2012), what the “Ascension” is really about is science of the spirit.

Skipping forward a bit in the excerpt of the assigned text, Kincheloe (2004d) explains,

This relational ontology causes us to focus not on things-in-themselves or simply on abstract individuals. In such a contest symbiotic hermeneutics helps bricoleurs understand that the way human beings develop their identity is not by isolating themselves, but through their relationships with others. The ontological principle at work here involves not only the cultivation of human subjectivity but also the production of all living beings and inanimate objects.” (p. 63)

This seems like a powerful statement, but perhaps it could be interpreted as another representation of the union for the purpose of reconstructing the world, co-creation. He continues, “The internal features of all patterns in both the physical and the social worlds are not simply intrinsic but emerge in relationship to other patterns and processes” and he discusses this in relation to historical research, an important dimension of his bricolage process. This statement is fascinating because it’s as if the patterns don’t exist until interrelationships form. As an example, I cannot claim just anyone as my Twin Flame just because I want to even if they are someone I might be interacting with. *The specific patterns relating to a twin flame connection only appear when there is a symbiotic interrelationship formed between a couple*, is how I interpret this. The two create these patterns together and the patterns emerge out of that third creation power from their union. The treasure hunts, various magical gifts, and other examples in this dissertation, and even this dissertation itself, in my view, illustrate this clearly. He goes on to explain that unless researchers study the interrelationships of social, cultural, economic and political processes, the findings will be trivial. In other words, they will not be able to identify the emerging patterns unless they study the connections between the relationships which is when patterns emerge, and it is the patterns that give us depth of

understanding of the interrelationships and the processes that take place. “The historian,” he states, “finds deeper and more revealing meanings for an event, as she uncovers more and more previously unexplored relationships” (pp. 63–64). I had made notes on this entry in the book: “past lives.” This process, as I learned during my four year journey applied to understanding unexplored relationships of past lives, an observation which might shed light on an analysis and particularistic application of his bricolage. It could be quite revealing to understand how our current relationships with people are affected by our relationships with them in past lifetimes. I still have many unexplored past life relationships that I am looking forward to learning more about and finding connections between my present and future. There are also ramifications for revising historical accounts.

In relation to this, a particular statement he had made in *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* comes to mind. My recollection was an interpretation I had made that implied “past lives.” He was discussing reciprocity and holism as contrasted to FIDURODian linearity which “crumbles” in quantum reality, a concept that directly ties into the discussion in this chapter about symbiotic relationships. He writes:

Reciprocity refers to the reciprocal (give-and-take) relationship between the knower and known. The known is always shaped by the knower; the knower always shapes the known. Holism, of course, alerts us to the notion that a dynamic cannot be understood by simply reducing it to smaller units. A phenomenon, a thing-in-relationship can only be appreciated by understanding it as a connected and integrated whole. Such an epistemological insight strikes at the heart of FIDURODian reductionism—it cannot survive in such a textured zone of complexity. Thus, we make one small epistemological step that can turn into a giant leap for humanity. In this domain rests a profundity that stretches back into the far distant past and forward into the infinity of the future. Indeed, both domains may be less far-off than Western ways of knowing ever imagined. (p. 211)

The statements in both texts are extremely complex. It seems he is saying it takes the interaction of the consciousness of two entities to create each other, the idea that consciousness is co-created. First they have to be aware of each other, and once aware, there is perhaps a quantum entanglement that occurs in which there is no way for one not to affect the other. I am also reminded of several additional statements in other works he has written. For example, also in *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*, in relation to critical complex epistemology, critical ontology, and critical pedagogy being “pattern-constructing dynamics that ultimately change who we are,” he writes, “Unless you are committed to resisting any authentic connection with the new experiences such criticality produces, you will return from the encounter with new patterns, processes and contexts as a different being. Engagement with subjugated knowledge and its production, and the notion that we are things-in-relationship not simply things-in-themselves jettisons us into new domains, new mindspaces, new modes of seeing, being, and acting” (p. 252). Thus, what he may be conveying in all of this is that linear time as we typically conceive it is a Western construction that will be transcended by critically studying these relationships. In doing so, by my interpretation as well as my phenomenological experiences during the course of this study is that we can come to see the ideas of past, present, and future in a totally different light. And the more we interface with what we interpret as our past lives and future lives, the more it changes who we are as a person. Ultimately, we become the multidimensional beings we really are, versus a narrowly defined individual living in a “one true reality” and at the same time, we are changing and evolving. He mentions patterns again, which are important in coming to recognize

connections across time and space. Indeed, my documentation has shown over and over again that paying attention to repeating “signs, signals, and images” are important for revealing those patterns, as is hermeneutical analysis for clarifying the connections and meanings. Thus, we come out of this process as a new being, perhaps even an “alien.” We also come out of the process understanding that we are eternal beings who have existed in many different contexts, eras, manifestations and these are all more accessible to us than we realize.

He continues on this same page:

Our historical research in this epistemological space becomes more important than ever before, as we discover a past that lives in multidimensional ways in the present. Concurrently, we understand that our imaginations operating in what we perceive as the present hold dramatic implications for the future. Here past present and future collide in an epistemological and ontological space that sabotages our limited FIDURODian notion of selfhood and reality. In such a context we might turn to aesthetic domains of cognition that help us conceptually develop and articulate/communicate the ideas that begin to churn in our expanding mind. (p. 211)

Again, the effect is the development of an epistemic mind, taking our cognitive abilities to higher levels, thus transcending Western ways of thinking about how we view time, space, and even the way we define ourselves as human beings. In fact, he’s indicating here that we may be able to alter the past, present or future because they’re interrelated, even if we cannot perceive those interrelationships. As we come to deeper, more expansive ways of knowing and being, it may be difficult to communicate them in writing, for example, thus this knowledge provides a passionate source that fuels inspiration and creativity. We become impassioned and thus, creative arts and other aesthetic means of communication are critical. I have learned that this, in turn, expands

my consciousness even further and helps keep me connect in to those perceptions that cannot be described by FIDURODian sciences—those experiences that “typically cannot be heard, smelled, viewed, felt, or tasted” (2004d, p. 65). In other words, our levels of perception move beyond the five senses and we develop other abilities such as a shared consciousness enabling us to communicate telepathically, engage in remote viewing, remember experiences from past lives, and the many other forms of “special abilities.” In fact, we may develop entirely new senses, such as smelling colors and tasting music. This winds me right back around to the contention that the reunion of Twin Flames and the work they do *in relationship* catapults them to ever higher levels of cognition and consciousness.

Fourth Dimension Research

That engaging in the fourth dimension multidimensional critical complex bricolage opened my own consciousness to these experiences is heavily documented at this point and they combine to constitute that “undeniability.” However, the point is not to prove one true reality because as I well know now, there are multiple dimensions and multiple realities. Which reality are we in? Just like the trek across the snowy mountain on my way to California described earlier, nearly everyone traveling the pass was in a totally different reality than I was experiencing. Everyone’s experiences are different and this must be taken into consideration, as hard as that can be sometimes. I struggle with remembering this on a daily basis and at the same time I sometimes suffer due to the insensitivity and closed-mindedness of those who are not able to see my reality. As Kincheloe (2008c) states, bringing in his conceptualization of critical constructivism:

In a more constructivist epistemological orientation knowledge is not a substance that can be transferred from locale to locale but is constructed in a complex process in a larger socio-cultural context inseparable from the minds of individuals operating therein. Thus, in a critical complex epistemology—or as I have referred to this epistemological phenomenon elsewhere as critical constructivism (Kincheloe, 2005)—the individual as part of a larger social context constructs the reality she encounters. Unlike in an epistemology of FIDUROD, her cognitive processes are not simply efforts to properly reflect ‘true reality.’ (p. 213)

Returning to the snowy pass example, the narrative clearly explicates how this was true for me. I had literally constructed my reality beyond the socially constructed “true reality” that had been dictated by the flashing signs advising snow chains were required and all of the people on the side of the road putting on chains, but I did not attempt to force my reality on them. I was puzzled, but at the same time, respected that perhaps they were truly experiencing a different reality than I was. This is also an important observation in relation to my unusual experiences during the process of this entire research project. The phenomena have been so out-of-the-ordinary, I have literally been compelled to construct the reality I encountered. This led me to seeking social settings where I could freely discuss the experiences with people who shared similar experiences. This does not mean I accepted their versions of reality, but at the same time, as we meet “like-minded” people we do begin that social construction process. This is important in this era of rapid transformation because as the theory indicates, we cannot create our own reality in a vacuum. It requires relationships, and this was one of the major points in the excerpt Kincheloe had assigned me.

Thus, while the New Age Movement has been appropriated by dominant power, more spiritually minded people hold some of the concepts that began to explain my new

experiences. Kincheloe (2008c) refers to these forms of activities as “metaphorical spaces,” and that “to gain entry into these metaphorical but undoubtedly real spaces we must do the best we can to develop a socio-historical perspective on what we’re doing—that is, how our social historical situatedness, our placement in larger cultural patterns helps construct everything we are and all that we do” (p. 212). This is wonderful advice and it is the application of Kincheloe’s critical complex epistemology that aids me while participating in these complex social spaces. Without them, it would be so easy to be pulled into the chaos and complexity and become psychologically lost or pulled along with groupthink, either of which can happen when one attempts to gain understanding of the new paradigm they’re experiencing. It is not possible to understand all of the dynamics operating in these spaces or within any complex of social environments, but one must understand and stay as proactive as possible so that the landmines can be navigated, entry in such communities comes to be accepted, and thus, progress can be made in gaining a better understanding on how we might define ourselves collectively as “new beings.” So far, I have not been successful with this. Kincheloe (2008c) admits:

“We’ll never appreciate all of these dynamics, there’s just too many of them to comprehend – but the more we know, the better start we can make as knowledge workers in changing the pollen to honey and the barley to scotch. This is why it’s so important to view the social, psychological, and pedagogical worlds from different scales – both the phenomenology of everyday life and a macro-historical understanding are central to our efforts to produce a more compelling understanding of the way the world operates, its significance for its inhabitants, and its implications for crafting more workable strategies for changing the world in the critical ways described in this book. (p. 212)

During one of my initial readings of the above passage, I again related it to past lives, which is why it’s important to this current interpretation. I had written in the

margin of the book, “Important concept. He is saying change the world to one of love by understanding our past lives (history) together. We are all tied together.” As he has conveyed elsewhere in this book, we are all connected in the Great Cosmic Spider Web. He reminds us that we are all influenced by our social environments and that our consciousnesses have been socially constructed, “colored by diverse assumptions and worldviews” and he cautions us against reductionism in qualitative research (p. 212).

Joe Kincheloe’s “Perpetual Revolution”

I had intuited before beginning this project it would mean *freedom*, even stating as such to Joe when we were discussing bricolage in the early stages of my research. I have come to the realization that I do not want to participate in the educational system if it means contributing to maintaining the current deficient processes that have deteriorated even more since I first began this journey. As an example, I am now supporting the military and unjustifiable wars in a hegemonic manner by paying tuition which has recently nearly quadrupled in order to finance the university-military alliance. I find it grotesque and unfair. Can I say this here? is the question that pops into my mind. If I cannot, then universities, as centers of research and knowledge production are in very deep trouble they will have a difficult time remedying.

As a note on Kincheloe’s often cited “revolution” that emanated from the 1940s and had spread to the United States during the 1960s, often people interpret it as meaning some sort of violent revolution is necessary or impending or that it applies in some way to anarchy, which he did not support in any of his writings. But in my analysis, he is speaking of an entirely different revolution (see Appendix). He has described the

revolution he was hoping for: “Yes, I admit it—I want to see not only a social and pedagogical revolution, but an epistemological and ontological revolution as well (2008c, p. 252). And in a personal conversation he had informed me it would be a “perpetual revolution.” Perhaps it’s a “radical love” revolution he was speaking of which I have redefined in this dissertation, with his assistance. I will leave it to readers to research “perpetual” and “revolution” to determine the possibilities and probability as to what Kincheloe, the promoter of Eros Love, may have been envisioning with this global perpetual revolution.

This dissertation has been, for me, a breaking free from some of the hegemonic processes I have engaged in throughout my life, as well as, I hope being an example for other people so that they might also break free. How else are we going to make the changes needed for the future? We must clearly and critically identify “what is” and “what could and should be,” never forgetting that, as Foucault (1980) has shown, constructions of knowledge are shaped by power (p. 214). This is why a critical complex epistemology is such an important component of the research. As Kincheloe (2008c) describes:

A critical complex epistemology understands the diverse and ambiguous nature of these colonizing dimensions and works to cut a swath throughout the Everglades of the power/knowledge swamp. The decolonizing practices of the critical complex epistemology involve exposing the dominant cultural and ideological assumptions that tacitly shape knowledge. (p. 214)

Returning to the assigned text, “Bricoleurs emphasize the human responsibility to work toward egalitarianism and justice” Kincheloe (2004d) continues, and in the process, the disciplines become “liberated from their cloisters” (p. 64). Here, cloister has two

meanings and both are relevant. It refers to a covered walkway alongside of a building in a quad and pictured in my mind are walkways on campuses that maintain division between, the chemistry building, for example, and the biology building, art building, and English building, and at the same time, connections. Thus, the idea of the unity of all things, the walkways and the buildings, thus the disciplines, are all viewed as a whole. The other definition of cloister is a place that's secluded and devoted to religion. This, of course relates to ecumenicalism again, which was used in the same paragraph. Everything is related to everything and this example shows Kincheloe was consciously illustrating how ecumenicalism applies not only to religion and spiritual concepts, but also to the disciplines, which in a sense have their own brand of religion, dogmatism, and exclusivity. These concepts have been synthesized through his use of Varela's theory of enactivism in which "human consciousness emerges from the social and biological interactions of its various parts. This understanding," Kincheloe posits, "may over the next couple of decades revolutionize the fields of cognitive science, psychology, and even pedagogy. When scholars grasp the multilogical, interrelated nature of the bricolage, possibilities emerge for dramatic changes in the ways disciplines operate" (pp. 67–68). This is yet another perspective on Kincheloe's "perpetual revolution." I can see his vision. The disciplines cannot possibly remain the same as this revolution gains impetus.

What Kincheloe has humbly left out is that he has *already* revolutionized cognitive science, psychology, and pedagogy. His work simply needs to be applied and taken forward. His pedagogy has already influenced many students over his 40 years of teaching. He has now provided us with the processes that help us discover our own

pathways during this perpetual revolution. We can all contribute according to our passionate interests and in our own idiosyncratic ways to restructure education, the disciplines, our historical accounts, religion, psychology, the sciences, the cognitive sciences, our relationships—everything will be changing from now on into the future—and most notably it will be changing radically and quickly. Can you keep up?

Conclusion of the Analysis

There is one last important issue to address which relates to how Kincheloe has clearly differentiated his work from New Age spirituality and pseudo sciences. Many of the concepts he covers are similar to concepts among the New Agers and I noticed that throughout his work he has very carefully made a distinction so that his work would not become subsumed under New Age popular culture ideas or misappropriated. This is important since I have cited some perspectives from the New Age Spirituality literature. In spite of what one might think, even among spiritual literature and groups, FIDUROD raises its head. “The reality that Westerners have depicted via their knowledge production over the last 350 years is a certified reflection of the way the world really is. Anyone that would suggest differently has been labeled as crazy, deranged, anti-American, and enemy of Western civilization, or at least a bad scholar” he states (Kincheloe 2008c, p. 23). This is as observable and damaging in the spiritual communities where people are convinced that they are “ascending” as it is anywhere else. One of my biggest objections over some of the spiritual groups are the very issues Kincheloe describes in an excerpt from this assigned text relating to “oneness,” along with the groupthink tendency to accept all perspectives without a critical analysis. There is the notion in many of the groups that the

“warm interconnections” are more important than dealing with the reality of the suffering in the world, just another example of Aleister Crowley’s “do what thou wilt” philosophy that has filtered down through popular culture and has become acceptable via complacency. Within this text Kincheloe had assigned for me to read, he again makes a very clear distinction, stating:

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. (p. 66)

Thus, I have chosen some of the New Age perspectives simply because they provide additional insight, another perspective. As Kincheloe (2004d) explains in this excerpt, “As alternatives to the shortcomings of Cartesianism, bricoleurs seek a more rigorous path. In this context bricoleurs develop principles of selection not only of research-orientations but also of what interconnections they attend” (p. 66). He explains that bricoleurs seek to alleviate human suffering, cultivate the intellect, and create personal and social change, and that these actions are synergistic. Again, the Quest for the Golden Chalice can serve as a metaphor here, with the “more rigorous path” he refers to representing the Great Path.

This analysis can be taken much further given the assigned text was six pages. I have not covered everything, and there are additional interpretations possible. In addition, I have much to learn yet about hermeneutical analysis and as I have indicated, Kincheloe has used some very advanced and creative techniques. For some reason I feel there is much more in that excerpt he gave me that relates to me personally (that strange

phenomenon I have when reading his work). I have also learned through this amazing research process that when “the time is right” I will be guided toward greater understanding. As Kincheloe (2008c) has explained, every context merely “is one of the multiple pathways to restructuring the world.” Language has a critical role in that restructuring process because it alchemically (or “magically,” according to Kincheloe) “brings forth the world” and our power lies in the recognition that as “knowledge workers . . . [we] are creators of the universe” (p. 216). We do have the power and it’s time to claim that power. I have found my own power *in relationship*.

The Golden Chalice for Knowledge Production

When I began this paper I was “handed down” the title, *Did Joe Lyons Kincheloe Discover the Golden Chalice for Knowledge Production?: Critical Complex Epistemology and the Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage*, but I was not fully cognizant of what it represented. I considered changing the title since at the time I did not know what the Golden Chalice really was, other than mass media hype to sell books. I was encouraged to keep the title, however, given that it fully expresses the complexity of the topic. I’m glad I did. I had never read popular culture mass media such as “Brownian” novels, but as part of the research I had to find out what they were about. I knew there were many interpretations for the Golden Chalice put out by popular culture, but assumed that most of them led people astray or skirted around anything meaningful. Thus, *Did Joe Lyons Kincheloe Discover the Golden Chalice for Knowledge Production?* or have I just written another version of a Brownian Novel?

The Golden Chalice: A Crossroads to Divine Love

Throughout my research, I kept a watchful eye for the meaning of golden chalice. One of the first books I was drawn to, as it was serendipitously mentioned by a friend one day is *The Chalice and the Blade: Our History, Our Future* by Riane Eisler (1987). This book represents an example of bricolage, having synthesized “art, archaeology, religion, social science, history and many other fields of inquiry into new patterns that more accurately fit the best available data,” according to Eisler (p. xv). She tells a different story of our history, one of ancient Crete where women were equal members of society until the “dominators” began to take over the world with their weapons, their swords, thus, the reference to the word “blade” in the title. As she states, “The ancient Greek poet wrote of a ‘golden race’ who tilled the soil in ‘peaceful ease’ before a ‘lesser race’ brought in their god of war” (p. xv). She developed the “Cultural Transformation Theory” consisting of two models of society: the dominator model, which predominates today and the partnership model that existed early in human history (p. xvii). The chalice, according to the author, represents the time when “our cultural evolution was quite literally turned around. At this pivotal branching the cultural evolution of societies that worshiped life-generating and nurturing powers of the universe—in our time still symbolized by the ancient chalice or grail—was interrupted” and replaced with the “power of the blade” (p. xvii). Thus, for Eisler (1987), the chalice represents a null point in history, the point at which there were two paths humanity could take and the wrong path was clearly chosen.

The Mayan calendar describes a dawn of consciousness evolution, with 2012 being a pivotal year, by some interpretations, thus we have again reached that null point in history represented by Eisler's (1987) chalice metaphor. Of course, popular culture has run away with these ideas and depictions of an Armageddon and the end of the world. Other interpretations associate this turning point as occurring further out, to the year 2060, describing it as moving from the Age of Pisces to the Age of Aquarius, thus there is a longer transition period. Kincheloe (2008c) recognizes that we are at a crossroads, stating, "The Western world at this historical point in time is like a man leaning back in his chair as it slips out from under him, Please, give the man another Prozac to help dull that panicky feeling in his guts. The old order is now at the beginning of its end" (p. 21). Change does seem to be on the horizon. It's difficult to envision how things can continue as they have been, particularly the past 12 years, without the system self-destructing. There is much insight that can be gained by looking into different perspectives about these changes.

The Ojibwe tell us the "burnt path" has been realized and it's time to choose the "green path." The Prophecy of the Seven Fires, a prophecy of the Anishinabe as told by Edward Benton-Banai (2010), references what might also be compared to Eisler's (1987) representation of the chalice as a null point. He expounds, "Many people will be out of balance and the *cup of life* will become the *cup of grief*." According to Benton-Banai, all of the prophecies contained within this Prophecy of the Seven Fires have been fulfilled except for the final, Seventh Fire:

Wisdom will be once again be found in dreams of the night and of the day. The sacred fire will once again be lit. The Light-skinned People will be given a choice

between two paths. If they choose the right path the Seventh Fire will light the Eighth Fire and final fire of brotherhood and sisterhood. If they choose the wrong path, remaining on the path of the mind, then the destruction they brought with them will come back to destroy them. The people of the earth will experience much suffering and death. (Benton-Banai, 2010, cited by Heart/White Eagle Soaring, 2012, “The People of the Seventh Fire,” para. 11)

Thus, there are two sacred fires to be lit. Could this represent that we must first light a fire within ourselves and then in union with another as specified in the accounts for Twin Flame reunions or Hieros Gamos? Again, this also represents the Ancient Wisdom Knowledge’s explanation for attaining higher consciousness. When Alan Aslan Heart/White Eagle Soaring’s (2012) speaks of the path of the mind, he is referring to the way Westerners have used knowledge as power with little or no consideration to the moral use that knowledge. This would be represented by FIDROD that Kincheloe (2008c) has defined as an especially destructive form of positivism. Alan Aslan Heart/White Eagle Soaring (2012) has prophesied that he will soon find a new female companion. He refers to this companion as “my spiritual and earthly mate, with whom I would bring the teachings of the Seventh Fire” and that this marks the division of the path (“Fulfilling of the Seventh Fire,” para. 3). Again, this represents a null point, a choice point or “zero point,” similar to the other depictions of the chalice or the quest, only in this case, a spiritual mate shares specifically in the mission of the teachings of the Seventh Fire. The two of them together will have the greater power of this Seventh Fire as they share the mission and teach it to others. This once again depicts the twin flame reunion and their Great mission. Interestingly, Kincheloe’s (2008c) delineation of the elements of bricolage (love?) can be compared metaphorically. Thus, we have: 1) an integrative dimension (the couple come together spiritually); 2) and applicative

dimension (they teach together); and 3) a hermeneutic (interpretive) dimension by which knowledge is socially interpreted and constructed. This social construction of knowledge then becomes perpetual through the formation of “critical knowledge networks,” perhaps the equivalent to soul families and soul groups who unite or groups of people who unite in “brotherhood and sisterhood” and like-mindedness.

And what do these teachings and interpretations consist of? Heart/White Eagle Soaring (2012) explains that people “must rediscover their connection to all things—the path of the spirit. . . . sissagwaad, the soft wind of Spirit. Our project is to teach the way to peace, the wisdom and the power of the spiral, the way of the circle, how to walk in balance between the mind and heart, how to find inner strength and serenity, and how to use power and wisdom according to Original instructions. . . . Bit by bit the pieces have come together. I saw that I must teach people how to be guided by spirit and how to receive energy from the universe” (“Fulfilling the Seventh Fire Prophecy,” para. 4-6). The rediscovering of our connections to all things is what we accomplish as “Bit by bit the pieces come together”? Is this not bricolage? Given that people will again “trust their inner voice” and “wisdom will be once again found in dreams of the night and day” according to the Seventh Prophecy, represents the interpretive, hermeneutic elements of fourth dimension bricolage. Further, “The sacred fire will once again be lit. The Light-skinned people will be given a choice between two paths” (“The People of the Seventh Fire Prophecy, para. 11). This represents the zero point, the “chalice” as Eisler (1987) had defined it and the need to “get off our fences.” The prophecy continues, “If they choose the right path the Seventh Fire will light the Eighth Fire and final fire of brotherhood and

sisterhood.” Thus, wisdom leads to the lighting of the sacred fire, the Seventh Fire.

Choosing sacred love, the “right path” lights the Eighth Fire. And it is this eighth fire that leads to unity, or “brotherhood and sisterhood.”

Now is the time of the Seventh Fire. By the light of the Seventh Fire come the Ogichidaag’, those who would use their power and strength with wisdom and gentleness to bring harmony and balance. They will soar with wabishkie ginu, the White Eagle, bringing the wisdom of the Spirit with the first light of day. They will learn of their power and strength like the gidzhii makwa’ the Great Bear who holds ice and snow in the North so the Earth would not be covered with water. And they will open their mind and heart like makinaak’ the turtle who offered his back upon which to build a new earth” (Benton-Banai, 2010, cited by Heart/White Eagle Flying, 2012, “Fulfilling the Seventh Fire Prophecy,” para. 1).

This corresponds with Kincheloe’s (2008c) admonition of the need to balance knowledge acquisition with affect, intuition, and logic, and his focus on the power of love—the power of bricolage. Eisler’s (1987) Transformation Theory synthesizes chaos theory rendering a predicted bifurcation point in which entire systems change rapidly. Again, a bifurcation point represents, as she presented, the chalice, a decision point. Will the feminine principle return to its once high status as she has described in her work? New Age Spirituality emphasizes the return of the Divine Feminine, but there is a simultaneous return of the Divine Masculine, the male principle which has also been lost and hidden but not forgotten. Eisler (1987, 1995) covers these topics in depth. She explains, “The fusion of these two principles through myths and rituals of the Sacred Marriage was in fact still celebrated in the ancient world well into patriarchal times. For example, in Hittite Anatolia, the great shrine of Yazilkaya was dedicated to this purpose. And even later, in Greece and Rome, the ceremony survived as *hieros gamos*” (Eisler, 1987, p. 26). More recently, according to Coppens (2012):

In the 20th century, Carl Gustav Jung studied the hieros gamos through the Rosarium Philosophorum, a series of twenty woodcuts, printed in Frankfurt in 1550. The images have a clear sexual and royal nature: a king and queen are depicted with the sun and the moon, sharing a bed, performing sexual acts, as a result of which they become one, and are transformed. And it is with these woodcuts that we come to the core of the hieros gamos: indeed, the primary purpose of the sacred marriage is that two equals, twin souls, a husband and wife, reunite through the hieros gamos. In short: the hieros gamos, or sacred marriage, was not a marriage of just any human beings, but of twin souls. (para. 4)

Because it is “restricted” to twin souls, the hieros gamos might not hold the sexual and ritual appeal that many would like to give it. But it is nevertheless the most important sacrament of all, as it was the completion of the quest of the soul in life: to find his twin soul and reunite, and within this love, continue their life, combined. (para. 19)

In this interpretation, the quest is to return to the other half of our soul or twin soul, individuated yet one. Thus, interpretation of Mary Magdalene as the Holy Grail (Golden Chalice) for Jesus may not be far off the mark, but represents only one such reunion. The way to accomplish this, to achieve this “golden chalice” is to choose the “right” path, perhaps try to live the life Jesus had lived that led him to Mary, or we may possibly suffer midst the rapid collapse of the systems that the many indigenous prophecies predict and is represented by Eisler’s (1987) bifurcation point.

Examining yet another perspective for chalice from the Ancient Wisdom Knowledges, Saraydarian (1993) describes teachings that had originated in Atlantis and that Adepts had taken to India. According to these teachings the chalice “is a mechanism in the higher mental plane which registers all that happens. . . related to Beauty, Goodness, Righteousness, Joy, Freedom, Striving, and Sacrificial Service. In addition, all real wisdom and knowledge are accumulated in the Chalice” (p. 223). This wisdom is used for creative work and discoveries, and it becomes more accessible as one walks a

spiritual path, which involves clearing the subconscious mind and doing good works (sacrifice). “All threads which issue from the Chalice lead to action which is linked with the Spatial Fire. . . .When the Chalice is filled with fire, the aura attracts the force of the Magnet. . . .Only when the spirit can build the step of cumulation of that Chalice can he become a co-worker of the Cosmic Magnet” (p. 221). Similar to the Ojibwe prophecy, there is reference to fire, and in this case, the reference is to the three-fold kundalini flame. What does the force of the Magnet attract? What does it mean to become a co-worker of the Cosmic Magnet? In analyzing this perspective, referred to the author as “Ageless Wisdom” (p. 13), again two fires are represented. The first fire occurs at the fifth and sixth planes of awareness (represented as levels 3 and 2, as the planes decrease numerically moving upward). The second fire occurs at the seventh level and the “Spiritual Triad” forms, increasing awareness and intuition. The Spiritual Triad is “the field of awareness of the human soul. This field comes into existence when the magnetic fields of the Mental Permanent Atom, The Buddhic Permanent Atom, and the Atmic Permanent Atom fuse and blend” (p. 406) and this occurs within Nirvana or the Atmic Plane. Thus, the lower levels of the mental plane form the subconscious (levels 1-3), the conscious (level 4) which houses the “mental unit,” the superconsciousness (levels 5-7), or Antahkarana. As Antahkarana is built higher beyond Nirvana, awareness of the “Monadic” plane and the “Divine Plane” grows. Monadic simply refers to “Self,” thus, in theory this is where one would come to know who they are as an individual (individual archetype, perhaps), which then leads to the Divine Plane, the first level of the Cosmic Etheric Plane. As consciousness evolves, the level of awareness continues to move

upward beyond the Cosmic Plane toward the Celestial planes. Once again, the concept of a double trinity appears and the number seven is significant as the plane of the second spiritual fire. Also noteworthy, much like African Spiritual beliefs stress, one must do good works of the gods (or teachers) in order to receive treasures in the chalice that ultimately are used to construct the pathway (the consciousness) to the soul. It is at the higher levels, accordingly, that telepathic and other psychic gifts become active and more connections can be established. Moving up these dimensions results in the return of our memory of self, what our purpose is, and where we are heading spiritually, our spiritual, divine or Great Path. It also leads to consciousness and connection to our Twin Flame and ultimately reconnection to our soul family. This interpretation accurately portrays my personal experiences during this research, but it was late during my research that I came across this information, so it did not affect my experience, but explained it for me.

Kincheloe's multidimensional critical complex bricolage enacts this process. Engaging in higher order learning and seeking connections by examining many different perspectives kicks this process into gear, perhaps. Kincheloe's warning that putting his theory into practice would change who we are may explain these changes I've experienced since beginning this research. The process helps us realize the multidimensional beings that we are and we can become even more conscious of the work we do in various dimensions. This may be the reason the Hieros Gamos has also gained the title "The Great Work." Ultimately, we are here to find our Dharma, our mission, and reunite with our Twin Soul, so the theory goes. It is important to remember that this is only a perspective, and honestly, I am not entirely satisfied with this

perspective. There is more; there are more ways of viewing “human being” but nevertheless, it does provide a powerful way of creating change in the world. Some of the accounts about Twin Flames do not perpetuate the notion that we are comprised of souls that have divided, but are two separate souls which is important. Other accounts contend that not everyone has a twin soul and that this relationship is rare. It is all metaphoric and the incompleteness of the theories simply indicates more research is needed. My thoughts are that Kincheloe’s view is we can create this reality of a one true and divine love, a “radical love” for everyone. As he states, “To me, one of the most exciting dimensions of being a critical theorist and engaging in a critical pedagogy entails opening ourselves up to a passionate imagination, where we constantly remake ourselves in light of new insights and understandings” (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 250). He approves of this message.

Kincheloe’s theory stresses higher order thinking can be applied on multiple levels and is a powerful path for rigorous education and learning. It seems that presenting the reality of how our minds are shaped and how we can take back our power helps clear out the muck of our subconscious minds as it opens up our consciousness. Is it possible that it can light the lower plane fire of passion that connect us to higher consciousness which can then guide us on a path that returns us back the higher plane fires—back to our soul so that we can complete our soul journey, potentially reuniting us with our Twin Flames and soul families? As Saraydarian (1993) describes, “The Path of the human soul is slowly to dissipate these subconscious elements and to clean out the barns of the subconscious mind. The Path of the human soul is to act, think, feel, and speak in the light of his Chalice. It is only when the subconscious elements are dissipated that a

person is deemed free” (p. viii). The Chalice contains our “treasures,” and “all the true knowledge, the real love, the pure sacrifices the person has accumulated through his many lifetimes” as well as “*Grace*, which floods a person in times of need. It is the contents of the Chalice that add the beauty and depth to our life and offer the most direct link to the inner creative Source and to Higher Worlds” (p. viii). This perspective aligns with the theme carried throughout this dissertation. Kincheloe’s work aids us with attaining the kind of knowledge to clear our subconscious programming and rise in consciousness through rigorous research. As we reach those higher levels, we link directly with creative “Source,” the “Higher Realms,” and to “Radical Love.”

What is the Golden Chalice Kincheloe discovered? If I shake, rattle, and roll all of the perspectives together, it is the point at which we decide to “get off our fences” as his cited *Desperado* song by the Eagles puts it, and travel the right path *in relationship* with our God-ordained Divine Twin Flame. Thus, not only did he discover the Golden Chalice for himself and for me, it is now presented it in a way that I hope many more can benefit and discover their own Divine Path and Golden Chalice to experience a Spiritual Reunion with their Divine Love. It is through this powerful love that a new earth can be created and the problems of social justice that critical pedagogues speak of can be corrected once and for all. Thus, my bricolage journey, in spite of covering innumerable topics, always winds right back to the most important of Kincheloe’s messages: **the power of love**. I am and I will be eternally grateful to Joe, to my cosmic and celestial family, and to God.

Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction: Was It Joe's Goodbye?

Did Joe somehow know that *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction* was to be his last book? I sensed that it was a goodbye; in fact so much so that I developed an intense fear of losing him, much as the terror Bloomstein (2001) had described in her dissertation over the thought of something happening to her twin soul. Perhaps I had knowledge at a higher level of consciousness that was not being released to my conscious mind but intuitively I had picked up on signs such as seem to be contained in this passage on the last page of the book:

Honestly, I'm not particularly happy with the "Way 'we' are" in Western societies at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century: the hierarchies, the ways men treat women, the heterosexism, racism, class bias, the competition, the fear of 'taking a hit,' the neo-bourgeois low affect 'cool,' the humorlessness about particular topics, etc. Yes, I admit it—I want to see not only a social and pedagogical revolution but an epistemological and ontological revolution as well. (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 252)

The entire phrase, the "way we are" is bracketed. This is a reference to the song, "The Way We Were" by Barbara Streisand, thus, he is conveying that he's not happy with the way so many relationships are during this century and has added an emotional component through music. Again, as he had done in the previous analyzed excerpt, he states the era in the form of "the first decade of the twenty-first century" which I have shown previously to indicate 11-2-11, symbolizing the Twin Flame reunion. He wanted to see change. He wanted us to raise the bar for "Radical Love." I felt that the Barbara Streisand song could allude to his relationship to his website research project, as well as to his personal and professional relationships. Was he leaving? Was he leaving everyone behind? I had sensed quite ominously before he went on vacation to Jamaica that he was

finished somehow and there was that email message from him analyzed earlier which he had titled “hello” and I questioned whether it was an encoded message that he was experiencing some kind of hellish situation. I honestly believe he was suffering from immense stress. I had responded to the email in a way that at the time I felt was very strange and yet very sincere: “I trust your judgment completely.” Was it another encoded message? It has since been confirmed in the academic literature, that he was, indeed, leaving McGill University where he was researching and teaching, upon returning from his holiday vacation in Jamaica, so it has been confirmed that things were not working out the way he had anticipated. According to Steinberg (2011a), he was leaving to search for another job due to “the lack of collegial support” and “a passive aggressive environment” (p. xii). I am not surprised. I had sensed it, along with darkness about that entire situation, but I had no specific details, only my intuition. I suspect there was much more to it than “lack of collegial support.” I was aware from some deep research I had done that McGill University was increasingly working to align its research department to meet transnational capitalists’ profit endeavors with the goal of increasing corporate funds for research. If the plans changed for the critical pedagogy online project in an unethical way, Joe would never have tolerated it. Yes, he would have walked out; I relate to that completely at a very personal level. Bizarrely, from my perspective given my phenomenological experiences and that Joe and I had personally communicated in an email about taking his work to the “next level,” Steinberg stated that he had mentioned that was looking forward to “the next level and elevated cognitive and spiritual states” and just five days before he passed away he had given a short sermon at a small church in

Jamaica about “faith, humility, and the human body as the vessel for great minds” (p. xii). It was his last public speech. I hope and feel that he is, indeed, experiencing those higher states. I know I’m experiencing them even in FIDUROD Land.

In addition to bracketing the words “the way we are” in the above excerpt, he also bracketed ‘we’ within the brackets and in my interpretation this means he was *not* including himself in that “we.” This was a true and fair assessment of himself on several accounts. For one, I don’t think he felt he had ever been fully accepted among some of the elite academics and, as just mentioned, he was leaving a project that he had truly put his heart and soul into because of the lack collegiality. There are numerous accounts in his work that support this interpretation, including his very scant index in this book that includes a listing for “hillbilly,” of course, referring to his having been raised in the Appalachian Mountains of Tennessee. He had made his heart-wrenching point. Beyond that, based on what I had observed and what I have read his close colleagues have written about him in the academic literature, he gave all of his relationships his best and was well known and admired for his commitment, even when people did not hold up their end. He gave and he loved enormously without expectations. That doesn’t mean he didn’t have hope. I can completely empathize with the frustrations he must have felt at times; I experience some of those same frustrations. He had stayed in regular contact with me and I often wondered how he was able to keep up with it all considering the number of people he worked with, from teaching to editing and publishing so many books, to accomplishing his own rigorous research, and to actively engaging in friendly discussions on his website where he generously shared his knowledge. I consciously tried not to

bother him for anything trivial, but the weird thing about that was, as I discussed in the early part of this study, he could read my mind and sense my emotions and would reach out to me when he sensed I needed it. As I have learned during my research, Twin Flames are so connected that if one is upset the other feels the emotions. I believe this was happening due to the times and circumstances for which he had contacted me. He did write the book about this form of radical love and consciousness evolution.

That he had made the ultimate forms of unconditional sacrifice and service to others along his path to high spiritual achievement is also documented in the dedication of his bricolage book that includes lyrics from the song, “Accidentally Like A Martyr” by Warren Zevon. Joe had suffered. I had looked at that dedication several times and knew there was something about it but could not figure it out. Finally, one day I had opened up the book to that page and it was as if someone leaned over my shoulder and whispered in my ear, “Those are lyrics; google them.” That was when I finally decoded the song. I literally felt his pain and cried for several days over the discovery. Being a Twin Flame can be so extremely painful sometimes. Martyrdom is nothing new for people who attain high levels of consciousness; it seems to go with the territory, but to leave a permanent record of his pain which he had kept hidden behind his perpetual smiles and love tore at my heart. The song may have been a representation of the pain he had suffered throughout his life for being “different,” for being brilliant, and which also had motivated him to write the book about Albert Einstein and *The Stigma of Genius*. Perhaps the reference to this song was also a signification of his belief that if people would simply have more love in their hearts, if they would seek and live that “radical love,” then no

suffering would be necessary. That makes his placing it in the front of his book which provides a guide to his “love bricolage,” the cure for our thanatos-driven world, the map for our quest for our own Golden Chalice, even more significant. Nevertheless, even though he clearly did suffer at times, he had stayed strong and maintained his commitment to providing publishing opportunities for scholars who otherwise might not have the opportunity and he left behind a monumental legacy that will take us all far into the future. Even near the end of his life, he had secured yet another book series agreement, this time with Springer Publishing, which he had spent many years negotiating so that affordable (“less than \$30 paperback”) versions of the books would be published for students after selling the library editions for a few months. He was an impeccable role model. An email he had sent me about not having to choose to play roles anymore and signing off at various times with “Evolvingly Yours, Joe” and “Strawberry Fields Forever, Joe” compounded my fears of not having much time left with him. He was preparing me for the inevitable but I shoved the fear out of my conscious awareness.

Thus, upon analysis of the last page of *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*, it seems to be a goodbye on many different levels, and at the same time, it was a new beginning. He had even titled the last chapter, “The Conclusion is Just the Beginning,” the significance of which I had picked up on and have come to learn has special meaning for us on a multidimensional level in previous lifetimes we have shared together. In my interpretation, his final work was a goodbye and his turning point for taking not only critical theory, but education in an entirely in new direction, escaping FIDUROD with his evolving criticality, complex critical psychology, critical complex

epistemology, critical complex hermeneutics, critical complex ontology, and his multidimensional critical complex bricolage. His ultimate goal, in my interpretation, is for those of us who have been “left behind” to take these conceptualizations forward in multiple applications and multiple disciplines and ultimately “come together.” We are to use his bricolage for teaching, learning, researching, and for developing a science of complexity that can take us all forward, working together passionately and compassionately to create a better future.

Love That Can Never Grow Cold

In spite of my seemingly irrational fears of only having a short time to work with Joe, I continued to try to stay upbeat and pushed the fears away from my conscious mind. However, as time passed, I was feeling an increasing sense of impending doom on an intuitive level that was hard to ignore. A few days after I had read his book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*, I had posted a comment to the discussion on his website praising him for the book and asking him, “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 don’t mind.” I really wanted reassurance that he was, indeed, working on some exciting new projects for far into the future. I was also conscious of the fact that perhaps writers might not want to be asked what they’re working on, which is why I had added the statement, “I hope you don’t mind.”

Using his creative magic with words and music, he answered me with a song title in the subject line of his reply: “As James Brown put it, I don’t mind” and then he proceeded to summarize the books he was working on. Of course, his deeper message did

not register at all at the time, because I was still fast asleep and had not figured out how he had embedded music in his work. That was November 12, 2008; he passed away December 19, 2008. It was many months later before I returned to the conversation and discovered that there was a special message for me in this melancholy but very romantic song, “I Don’t Mind” performed by James Brown and THE FAMOUS FLAMES (1961/1963). Was this an accident by the Master of Hermeneutics and confessed word magician?

James Brown sings:

*I don't mind . . . your love,
I don't mind the one you're thinkin' of
But I know, I know: You gonna miss me
I don't mind your lonesome soul
I don't mind, it can't go cold
I know, I know: You gonna miss me
yeah, yeah, yeah . . . somewhere down the line
I don't mind, this is all of my song
I don't mind, goodbye, so long
But I know, I know: You gonna miss me
Goodbye so long, no, no, no I don't mind
Goodbye so long.*

He could absolutely see right through me, to the depths of my soul—my fears, my anxieties, and even my confusion over why he meant so much to me beyond the admiration of him for his work and service. He knew without question that we were spiritually connected; I simply cannot doubt this after engaging in this research. And for whatever reasons, whether it was our agreement, his decision which I had completely honored (“I trust your judgment completely,” I had told him), or some other reason and all of those reasons, it seems that we both knew he was leaving this earth plane soon for another one of those dimensions he discusses in his work.

Just as I was finishing up the last touches on this dissertation I was led to an interesting perspective about research from a renowned guru, Mooji. His observation is much the same message as this quote from Joe, which began this chapter: “Process-sensitive scholars watch the world flow by like a river, where the exact contents of the water are never the same” (Kincheloe 2005a, p. 333). The paradox, however, is the results are always the same, so do the contents matter so much, apart from being the treasured dimension of an expression of Self? Kincheloe (2008c) maintains, “The ability to cultivate and make meaning from our emotional ‘gut’ feelings, our intuition, and our imagination is central to the next stages of human evolution” (p. 225). It’s about liberation, the freedom to express and be who we really are and to follow our dreams. And as Mooji (2011) states, “Let all the rivers flow like they do; all of them will come to this ocean . . . you cannot escape this recognition.” He elucidates:

In any sincere or authentic inquiry the result is the same: “I am *that*.” Not verbally, not mentally, not academically, not intellectually—but experientially. It’s clear. I cannot be anything but that. Not even the words—I am ‘that’ beyond the concept. *I am that*. Such is the revelation which is the outcome of inquiry.

Thus, I am One with Joe. I am One with the Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage. I am still in the process of determining what this means but I do understand the implications in relation to what we choose to research deeply.

Epilogue: The Next Zeitgeist

The conclusion is just the beginning (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 227)

The interpretations included within this dissertation represent perspectives but they are not just any perspectives; they are supported empirically by the

phenomenological and narrative data collected and interpreted. Dialogical comparative analyses/synthesis, combined with many perspectives incorporating diverse cosmologies, ontologies, and epistemologies have been used throughout. Understanding, which is based on interpretation as Kincheloe has illuminated, is socially constructed. Thus, they are not just “made up” nor created out of my own “imagination.” The experiences are real. Interpretations were selected for their contribution toward liberation, social justice, and making manifest *love* in the world. There are additional interpretations and deeper analyses that can enrich and extend the findings, thus, this research can be picked up and analyzed in future “Zeitgeists.”

The Next Zeitgeist?

One night, a friend who had been calling me every night after Joe passed away commented out of the blue, apparently hoping it would console me, “Maybe he isn’t dead.”

“What do you mean?” I asked

“Maybe he didn’t die. Maybe he’s a Pleiadian and went back to his planet.”

“What’s a Pleiadian?” I asked him. He wasn’t very clear except to describe they are like humans but more advanced and they’re from the Pleiades star system. He explained that he had known a Pleiadian at one time (Journal entry, January 4, 2009, 11:30 PM). That comment sent me on a long epistemological road trip until I was satisfied I had sorted out what I believed to be accurate depictions. Multidimensional beings from the star system of the Pleiades, I call them the “Love People,” because their eclectic philosophy is based on a strong foundation of a very pure and powerful form of

unconditional love. They are concerned about all of the problems on earth and they assist with consciousness evolution. Important in many indigenous oral histories, the Pleiadians are recognized as being visitors from the stars who have come to earth during various periods in history and are believed to be here now.

Science has been constructed to prevent us from learning truth about our extraterrestrial heritage and true potential, according to exo-scientists Jiang and Li (2007). Pleiadians have shared some of the same trials as earthlings and throughout the ages have tried to share their experiences so that we don't experience the same setbacks that could lead to the destruction of the planet. "But at present, not enough people on Earth are listening" attest Jiang and Li. According to Michael Salla, a leading exo-scientist, there are more than 20 types of extraterrestrial genes locked up in the DNA of humans, knowledge which reportedly has been shared through transmissions from Pleiadians. Within this DNA "lies psycho-kinetic abilities associated with the genetic memories of ancient extraterrestrial races" (Jiang & Li, 2007, para. 6) and genes also serve as "devices for extracting information from the environment" (Ridley, 2003, p. 148). This provides a scientific explanation for Kincheloe's fourth dimension research. It may explain why my memories and psychic abilities have "unlocked" as I have engaged in this research. According to Ridley, genes must be activated (e.g., create a protein) during the learning process and they are at the mercy of us—our behavior. Thus, our act of remembering switches genes on; we do not simply inherit memory (pp. 180–181). It seems Kincheloe's words and research process could be the magic he had vowed he

wanted to create. Words, numbers, and symbols can trigger memory which in turn activates genes for various psychic abilities.

Thus, Pleiadians are thought to be ancestors of the human race (and are we ancestors to them?). Their messages are meant to help people through the transformative and evolutionary process to higher consciousness. I came to identify with the Pleiadians and the philosophy that's presented by some of the authors who allege to channel them (e.g., Clow, 1995; Marciniak, 2004; Quan Yin, 1996). These works helped provide understanding and comfort as I moved forward with my research. I have recovered memories through visions, dreams, and telepathic communication and guidance from my soul family of a "future" life. I have experienced a joyous life on a beautiful, Heaven-like planet where consciousness is elevated and people live in complete harmony. Thus, with bricolage we are liberated, free to enter a new "Zeitgeist."

Conversations with Joe: Moving toward the New Zeitgeist?

The following are excerpts from a discussion with Joe about the bricolage right after I had read the special assignment he had given me (as analyzed in this study). These conversations took place from October 19–23, 2008. ***Bold italics*** highlight the implicate order of reality (conversation within a conversation).

Joe Kincheloe: you know me

Sun, 10/19/2008 - 16:22 — Vanessa Paradis

Joe, you do know me.

*It is obviously a very complex process, but **given where it can take us, it is definitely worth the time and effort** . . . This particular reading assignment (Kincheloe & Berry, 2004, pp. 63-67) is great, Joe! And you **provided it at the exact right moment**. It helps me define and justify my research problem and questions. **I think you know me very well.** Thank you, Joe.*

Bricolage. Cool! I am ready for it (I think).
Thanks, with radical love,
Vanessa

I thought you'd like the bricolage
Wed, 10/22/2008 - 13:48 — Joe Kincheloe

Vanessa,
I knew you'd feel comfortable with the bricolage. . . . I am obviously from a different planet. While undoubtedly, all research projects have to be delimited and made manageable, ***that process comes somewhat naturally,*** I've observed, ***after one gets a multidimensional view of the object of study.*** Again, glad it was helpful.

Again, Vanessa, you are on target—lol.

In solidarity,
Joe

Joe: I have an important question (I need help)
Thu, 10/23/2008 - 08:26 — Vanessa Paradis

I need your help to get off the ground with writing up my research pre-proposal and then I think I will be fine - for a while, anyway. I have no idea how to do the write up and I'm hoping I will figure that part out as I go, but I do need some help with the POET. . . . ***What causes people to go from “attraction,” continued “engagement” to “passion” and “compassion”*** (Kincheloe & Berry, p. 118) that fuels knowledge production in an online learning environment? How can more people experience it? What does it take?

PS I relate to the feeling of being on the wrong planet! I have actually researched this....

Great question, Vanessa, it goes to the heart of the bricolage
Thu, 10/23/2008 - 08:36 — Joe Kincheloe

. . . the beginning . . .

CHAPTER 5. EVALUATION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

"Thus, a critical complex epistemology infused by radical love, enactivism, critical ontology and subjugated knowledges contributes to the emergence of a new world" (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 180).

Introduction

Bricolage is being used for research in many disciplines but none of the applications encountered in the literature and examined for this study meet the rigor Kincheloe calls for with his critical complex epistemology and multidimensional critical complex bricolage. One of the most common approaches for bricolage, particularly in education, is to present multiple perspectives in a “quilt-like” manner but failing to adequately interpret, analyze, or synthesize these perspectives for various contexts. If any analysis is done at all, it tends to address only surface level features and produces very little in the way of in-depth understandings and it typically fails to address the deeper, hidden structures. Thus, processes that lead to thick descriptions of the greater reality surrounding objects of study which can lead to knowledge production, contextual application, and productive actions are being short-changed. This, perhaps, is the symptom of the over-simplified, “technicist forms of education” we’ve been subjected to—the very issue Kincheloe’s work has been devised to counteract (Kincheloe, 2006a, p. 3). In my research, I have learned that this presents as a nearly immutable “catch 22” in that people must first of all realize they don’t really know. In other words, we have to come to realize how ignorant we are so that we put forth a sincere effort to overcome that ignorance (and as is often framed, we are all ignorant of *something*). It is the sustained

effort for greater understanding that can lead to higher order cognition and a shift to higher consciousness. However, the entire system or matrix is rigged so that most people cannot accomplish that to any great degree. And while bricolage as Kincheloe conceptualizes it can lead us out of this quagmire, with each passing day, more blocks are put in place to see that we remain ignorant and fenced in, whether it's how Internet searches are controlled to keep us from accessing knowledge, how we are forced to take slave jobs in exchange for our souls, how we are prevented from establishing our own gainful work, how children are streamed into being service provider slaves, fodder for the military, indentured servants for corporations, or prisoners in a highly profitable prison system—or how we are obliged to live destitute if we fail to fall into place within our predetermined roles (unless one is of the “elite” class) (Giroux, 2007). The belief in scarcity and fear of doing without, which is kept very much alive globally, keeps people maintaining this hegemonic system. Fear is the most powerful controlling mechanism there is and it is fear that keeps people from true love.

Kincheloe's advanced conceptualization specifies a more rigorous research process for bricolage that requires critically examining wider and more diverse perspectives of reality and maintaining love in the equation. When researchers actively seek difference and consider new ways of viewing the world, it inevitably leads to inner transformation, greater understanding, and creative change in the world. With enough people taking this approach to learning and researching, more options can be found to navigate the matrix and make changes that will make a difference. It does take people working together, because as Kincheloe maintains, reality is socially constructed. A few people working alone cannot stop the Apocalypse. “With hard work and a cultivation of

the imagination epistemological history is much closer to the beginning of the birth of knowledge than to the *last days of knowledge*” (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 210) [author’s italics]. Thus, this study has examined Kincheloe’s bricolage research process, explicating its potential contribution to changing education and research. It has demonstrated the process in several different contexts so that researchers who are interested in rigorous knowledge production and creating positive change can go forward with this process.

The Research Questions: How Did I Do?

The original research questions that initiated this study, *Did Joe Lyons Kincheloe discover the golden chalice for knowledge production?: The application of critical complex epistemology and the multidimensional critical complex bricolage* include: How is bricolage research currently being used in education and other domains? How are these applications different from and similar to Kincheloe’s critical complex bricolage and to what extent? How do the research outcomes and knowledge production in these examined studies, including this current study, reflect the degree of rigor with which the bricolage or the critical complex bricolage has been applied? What is the nature of the new knowledge produced by this study? How might it be useful? What are the implications of the findings for future educational research? What additional insight is provided by performing an analysis of Berry’s (2004a) Point of Entry Text as a way of launching an inquiry? How might the knowledge produced be evaluated? These questions and many more have been thoroughly addressed within the discourse presented in Chapter 4 and will not be reiterated here as that would simply be redundant. This current discussion summarizes and presents an evaluation of the study using several frames of

reference and highlights the profound contribution this form of research has for empirically studying phenomenological experiences.

In this dissertation I have focused on the essential aspects of the late Joe Kincheloe's multidimensional critical complex bricolage in order to clearly differentiate it from "bricolage" research that is now being done across nearly all domains. I have identified where the approach has been incompletely applied and found that to date, while researchers are using various components of bricolage, such as different methodologies, there is no example of this form of bricolage in its entirety other than Kincheloe's own work until this study. I have provided an in-depth analysis of Semetsky's (2011) Tarot card reading study which utilized some aspects of bricolage, have discussed specifically where it falls short of meeting the requisites of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage, and have provided ideas for taking it to the next level. I have discussed existing metaphors for bricolage and their influence toward reductionistic and mechanistic research that hinder knowledge production, and I have presented several new metaphors for bricolage that provide representations for expanded conceptualizations that better represent the rigorous research Kincheloe recommends. I have also demonstrated Kincheloe's bricolage with this research and have proposed how the multidimensional critical complex bricolage can be applied in other domains, including teaching.

In addition, I have provided a map that delineates flexible and multidirectional research and writing approaches, and I have provided tips throughout the dissertation as guidance for future bricoleurs. This by no means constrains researchers, but can assist new bricoleurs with the exploration of multiple pathways this form of research supports and for blazing their own new trails. I have also described, in context, how and why I

have used various research methodologies, theoretical frameworks, perspectives, and interpretive approaches in the process of engaging in bricolage. Finally, this study itself holistically represents an example of the rigorous form of bricolage for which Kincheloe was asking us to strive, as I will verify in the discussion that follows.

Evaluation of the Study: Knowledge Production and Rigor

There are several critical elements to this form of research. To ensure adequate exploration is completed in an improvisational manner, a fair amount of time is required up front for research, which I utilized to a very high degree. I found that staying open, flexible, and willing to explore the topic from many angles allowed for a natural emergence of consistent, repeating prompts (or “signs”) for further exploration. In this case, the concept of Divine Love/Twin Flames kept appearing in relation to maintaining the important love strand throughout as Kincheloe has highlighted in his own work is so critical to the project. As I had mentioned, I found myself spinning in hermeneutic circles until such time I had confirmed by virtue of overwhelming repetition in many different contexts that the Twin Flame concept was a satisfactory interpretation that met Kincheloe’s criteria for getting out of the circle. Thus, for me, the research process was like an exploratory journey and spinning around in the circle gave me time to learn and assimilate a lot of new information that would never be taught in school in this era. It also confirmed in my mind that what emerged from the research was what was meant to emerge. As Kincheloe and Einstein both have contended, with research, we just never know what we will find. I had no preconceived notion of much of what is contained in

this study. Taking an improvisational approach had allowed the research to “unfold” in some amazing and interesting ways. This is predicted by Kincheloe’s bricolage theory.

It is useful to view the bricolage process as a journey. In fact, many students find it useful to view dissertation research and writing in general as a journey. Thus, bricolage as Kincheloe has conceived it seems like a perfect fit as a process and map for this journey. He often refers to bricolage as a quest, and, indeed, it has been compared to a Dharma project or mission, or the quest for the golden chalice as discussed in this study. As I discovered during my research, the term golden chalice has many interpretations, but the meanings tended to converge toward divine love and knowledge. Thus, this validated the serendipitously-selected title for this dissertation since “love and knowledge” sum up the thrust of Kincheloe’s work and what he is recommending for bricoleurs. The creative epistemological road trips and treasure hunts as alluded to by Kincheloe in his work and as had naturally emerged as a part of my reality during my own research are suitable metaphors and activities for this exploratory phase, whether the research takes one on the road or merely searching the Internet. Once this initial research phase has been adequately engaged and the same road markers or, in a semiotic sense, the same signs, symbols, information, or universal knowledges, keep appearing in the forefront, then researchers can become more focused. While Kincheloe expresses that we do not “universalize” knowledge; that is, we do not intend to make what we learn become true for everyone in all places and times, on the other hand, existing “universal” knowledge or wisdom becomes highly significant to bricoleurs when it comes from many different corners of the globe in different contexts. It serves as a higher level “triangulation” process which has been noted is important for this type of research that is constructivist

and qualitative in nature. However, understanding that consciousnesses are evolving, chaos and complexity are the rule, and new research is always bringing in new understandings, keeps bricoleurs on the alert for new interpretations.

In this particular study, I attempted to walk a middle line between taking the analysis deep in relation to the focus on bricolage, divine love, and wisdom, yet staying broad in scope in order to demonstrate the wide range of applications for bricolage. This was done so that the study would be relevant to as many researchers as possible. During my research, a number of other topics emerged and the journey is far from over. Thus, there are many interesting things to follow up on with a deeper analysis, additional research, and further applications. It is hoped that new bricoleurs find enough here to help get them started with their own passionate research interests using this process.

The Data and Implications for Future Analyses

This dissertation does not adequately convey the massive amounts of data, analyses, and writing I have completed in the preparation for the write-up of the research for the reasons explained previously relating to university expectations and my goals with this particular project. I was “driven” to research and write absolutely every day. This means I was selective in what I chose to write about for this final discourse which is an important skill Kincheloe wanted bricoleurs to develop. The analyses and discernment contribute to increased cognitive abilities, which he contends are abilities we can all develop to higher levels (Kincheloe, 2006a). But on the other hand, this also means that the phenomena I have presented in this dissertation as representative of my experiences, no matter how unreal they may seem from a FIDURODian perspective, are backed up by immense amounts of supporting data. This data will no doubt be highly useful for future

empirical phenomenological analyses and explications. The entire time I engaged in my research, my sense, my personal interpretation, was that Joe wanted evidence that people really can connect in other dimensions; it is not imagination, but rather it takes serious, rigorous mind work to reach the higher order cognitive functioning to develop the ability to become conscious of multidimensional experiences and telepathic communication. I do not claim to have perfected that ability by any means (we all operate with blinders), but what has happened is that the effort has enhanced my abilities to write and create. I want to stress here once again (because to my dismay I keep seeing misconceptions published in the academic literature by people who should know better): Kincheloe did not throw out empirical or positivistic sciences or rational thinking! He is simply after a more sane way of approaching science and knowledge production, as he has made abundantly clear in his work.

As Kincheloe (2004a) states, and this perhaps can be more literally interpreted than most people would presuppose,

Thus, in the complex hermeneutics, epistemology, and ontology of the bricolage entities are not simply things-in-themselves. They are embedded in the world, existing in multiple horizons, in multiple, parallel, and intersecting universes. They cannot be reduced to smaller and smaller monads but must be seen in the same way Einstein saw gravity—a part of the process and structure of the universe. (p. xi)

I have learned that by engaging deeply in this form of research, one begins to get a profound experiential glimpse of what this entails. I will point out as well, the final written bricolage of this form of research, such as represented by this dissertation, also cannot be taken apart and analyzed in pieces because the writing is embedded and intertwined exactly as Kincheloe describes in the above passage. To take it apart and

analyze it in pieces is an egregious error and would demonstrate a lack of knowledge on the part of reviewers who take this approach.

We are severely constrained, however, (including reviewers) from perceiving these other realities and dimensions by FIDUROD, as Kincheloe (2008c) describes in his last book. Many people cannot even perceive other people's realities in *this* dimension. Education policies, for example, are developed that completely discount some students' realities and those students then literally become nonexistent and cannot be listened to. They fall outside the highly structured sound-proof matrix built in stone and steel. Even where people put forth effort, communication and language hamper the understanding of multiple dimensional experiences. As Kincheloe (2004e) states, "Language as it now exists is also a limiting factor in our efforts to explore the multidimensionality of the cosmos, as we have no way of expressing the complexities that emerge when our conceptual lenses are readjusted" (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 231). This issue still confronts me as I try to describe my experiences in writing to the best of my ability. I have come to realize how elementary and inadequate English is and how we will need to develop new epistemologies as Kincheloe recommends for describing the complex experiences and visions. His critical complex epistemology is imperative here. Kincheloe (2008c) observes:

There is no limit to the types of languages we can develop as we break away from the socio-linguistic blinders of Western culture. Indeed, in this context we can develop new telepathies of now invisible modes of expression. The quickest way to get to these new modes of communicating, thinking, and producing knowledge is to explore the previously dismissed, to take seriously subjugated experiences, and to dedicate ourselves to learning from difference (p. 231).

This, I have accomplished to a degree and, as a consequence, I have learned in an experiential sense, what he is conveying here. Kincheloe believed we are all capable of

developing these higher order processes but there is serious work and effort involved, as well as a sense of “letting go” and allowing the process to unfold. Thus, my experiences of “telepathies” provided me with insight, guidance, and prompts throughout my research. These came in various forms as described in the study, often viewed by most people as merely coincidences, intuition, or “just dreams” when they experience them.

From an empirical standpoint, the quality and quantity of “coincidences” and “synchronicities” are astonishing, even to me. When I read back over the data and discover how much I have forgotten of my own experiences or the messages I have received (forgotten, due to still being fully immersed in a FIDURODian world subsequent to the experiences), it amazes me as to their frequency and relevance. As cited in Bloomstein (2000), Jung had concluded, “What I have found were ‘coincidences’ which were connected so meaningfully that their ‘chance’ concurrence would represent a degree of improbability that would have to be expressed by an astronomical figure (1960/1973, p. 21)” (p. 158). Astronomical, indeed. I am at a loss as to how to unite this vast data encompassing my experiences with the sciences, but that is the next level. I realize that many people are not in the “place” yet to validate that level of significance to these experiences. I often experience FIDURODian doubts, myself, so I can relate to that position. But all I have to do when doubts set in is go back and remember a few of these amazing experiences. In fact, being instructed to search my back yard for a diamond ring and finding the yin yang talisman is one of the more profound experiences because at the time I did not have any clue at all as to what it represented nor was I accustomed to following telepathic instructions from someone I cannot see. I tended to put the incident behind me until during my research I came across information that described the object as

a talisman and a gift of initiation into the Divine Wisdom knowledges. And I had not remembered that I was serendipitously gifted with the talisman on Mother's Day until I went back and read through the documentation as I completed the write up for this study upon which I discovered multiple synchronicities had occurred that day. Nor did I realize the significance of a diamond ring being delivered to my door by a *handyman* and how it relates to Kincheloe's "handyman bricoleur" until I wrote this dissertation. I know much more awaits discovery.

There is truly magic in the universe, otherwise described by Kincheloe's hermeneutic symbiosis that seems to be fueled by love. I have no alternative definitive explanation of these extraordinary experiences, only various interpretations, some of which I have covered in this study. There are other explanations and much depends also on the nature of the experience. String theory is perhaps closest to explaining multiple dimensions, the higher consciousness that permits the perception of those dimensions, quantum effects and how dimensions may overlap and intertwine at specific points, and the thin, layer-like quality of dimensions. What I have experienced is that it is the love and passion of seeking that can lead to higher states of consciousness; it is that metaphoric "quest for the golden chalice." Love and passion become a feedback loop that grows compassion, gratitude, change, actions, and joy. Having gone through this process of learning bricolage, I completely relate to how impassioned Kincheloe was about researching what he loved as I also have become impassioned in the same way and I live each day for the purpose of learning, writing, and creating. It is the feeling of making a positive difference in the world even if it is known that the difference probably won't occur until off in the distant future that keeps joy and consciousness at higher levels. It

seems to be the very thing that the status quo, hidden power, and the complicit way we go about our hegemonic lives prevent most people from achieving. What are we afraid of?

Cosmology, Ontology, and Epistemology

Kincheloe asks bricoleurs to incorporate multiple perspectives from all parts of the world and across many disciplines, listening to a diversity of voices, including those not typically cited in academic literature. In conjunction with this, he asks that bricoleurs incorporate cosmological, ontological, and epistemological features of those perspectives. I believe, without reiterating what is stated within, it is obvious throughout this study I have accomplished this to a high degree. This, of course, corresponds with engaging in broad research to gain as many perspectives as possible before narrowing down and synthesizing them. What are the benefits of this approach? According to Kincheloe (2004c), bricoleurs are not looking for “*truth* about reality,” but rather wish to avoid monological knowledge that fails to address assumptions or recognize how knowledge is connected through relationships (p. 24). The assumption here is that reality is constructed by “a wide variety of entities,” and, of course, reality is continuously changing (p. 24). Instead of presenting a one truth reality, “bricoleurs propose compelling insights into their engagement with reality and the unresolved contradictions that characterize such interactions” (p. 24). Incorporating the diversity exposes our existing assumptions and provides us with more ways of making sense of our experiences (Kincheloe 2004d, p. 60). We are capable, for example, of perceiving multiple truths simultaneously, despite our education that presents one truth realities so often. Going through this process also helps us see how intricately and multidimensionally knowledge is connected. Literally, everything and everyone are connected. This awareness, combined with recognizing the

importance of intuitive, creative, and emotional aspects contribute greatly to the learning process and the ability to recall information. It will be essential for teachers of the future to develop these skills and be able to “think on their feet” drawing from a large reservoir of general knowledge with great research skills to know how to seek information and construct knowledge. In this way teachers (and students as they also learn this process) will be empowered to meet the curricular requirements of highly diverse needs and interests, which as Kincheloe well notes requires holistic and transdisciplinary approaches such as we have never seen previously. Thus, this research process is ideal for the education domain for embracing diversity, and this form of knowledge production is necessary if we are to solve the very complex problems facing us today.

Diversity and drawing from multiple domains was accomplished throughout this study in various ways. For example, the primary metaphor, golden chalice, was explored from many different perspectives, cultures, and world views and it was shown how each perspective helps provide another facet of understanding of bricolage. It was interesting how this concept tying love, knowledge, and higher consciousness together is quite universal and reinforces the “Divine Love” metaphor for bricolage. Many other metaphors for bricolage were mentioned, each providing more insight to the research process. On a more personal level, I explored multiple interpretations and views of my unusual and seemingly magical phenomenological experiences, emphasizing that these are merely interpretations that help me explain and better understand the reality I experience and that these interpretations are subject to change as I learn more. The implications of the results of analyzing these phenomena accentuate the need to study consciousness, as Kincheloe has articulated throughout his work. What is consciousness?

Is my consciousness so expansive that I have x-ray vision and can see seven inches beneath the grass to notice that there is a yin yang talisman hiding there? Somehow, I don't believe that to be true. Did I access "all knowledge" and simply know that someone had lost that talisman in that exact spot many years ago? How did all my experiences come together to form a "story" that coincides so precisely with Kincheloe's theoretical work, including a hidden "love" dimension which most people have not noticed? I guarantee that had I tried, I could not have concocted such amazing results that have occurred for me throughout this journey nor thought up stories as amazing as my experiences. Kincheloe's theory has us looking at relationships for answers with his symbiotic hermeneutics and its focus on relationships but I do not yet begin to understand how it manifests in life. When we consider that consciousness exists in multiple dimensions it begins to make sense. I hold to Kincheloe's theory as based on Einstein's theory that *relationships* are what hold the key. In my mind, he and I were working together on this project, along with many other people who seemed to have had the ability to share consciousness/communicate telepathically. This appeared in many contexts both for me and for people I came in contact with during this research. Most often people were not aware that this was even happening such as when the handyman delivered me the diamond ring and told me he had "argued with himself" about bringing it over when he figured I wouldn't be interested in it, he was going to be working, and it would just be in his way in his pocket. When we "argue with ourselves" who is it we are arguing with? As Kincheloe and, of course, many other researchers and scientists are calling for, much more research into consciousness is needed to better understand and explain these occurrences (e.g., Stephens & Graham, 2000/2003).

In terms of limitations in incorporating diverse views into this study, while I have consciously incorporated many different perspectives and have tried to keep an open mind, I still have educational, cultural, social, and personal blinders that prevent me from seeing all there is and which have me holding particular assumptions. Also, there are so many different views encountered in this form of research that researchers must make selections, which will inherently be subjective. A plethora of criteria are implicated when deciding what to include and what not to include. In addition, my emotions have influenced my interpretations; in fact, this entire project has been an extremely emotional endeavor for me. It was very difficult losing Joe and then suddenly having life-altering experiences that FIDUROD can't explain. Fortunately, his multidimensional critical complex bricolage moved my understanding forward profoundly.

“Complexity Demands the Rigour of the Bricolage”

A complete evaluation of rigorous bricolage should run through all of the attributes Kincheloe (2004c) provides in his section titled, “Complexity Demands the Rigour of the Bricolage” (p. 24). This evaluation includes ensuring that the following items have been explored in the research: explicate and implicate orders of reality; questioning universalism; polysemy (interpretation); the living process in which cultural entities are situated; the ontology of relationships and connections; intersecting contexts; the existence and utility of feedback loops; multiple epistemologies; intertextuality; discursive construction; the interpretative aspect of all knowledge; the fictive dimension of research findings; the cultural assumptions within all research methods; and the relationship between power and knowledge (pp. 25–29). Please refer to the book for detailed explanations of these constructs. Without reiterating the specifics since readers

can reflect on how this has been accomplished in Chapter 4, all of these aspects have been incorporated in multiple ways within this current study. Thus, the study passes the test for rigor. As a reminder to reviewers who may question this approach to evaluation, one of the primary purposes of this study was to demonstrate Kincheloe's bricolage process, thus, it makes logical sense to use the criteria he had developed for his conceptualization.

As Kincheloe has maintained, the research is process-oriented and different researchers will capture different descriptions depending on their positioning. As he states, "researchers will produce different descriptions of an object of inquiry depending on what part of the . . . river they have seen" (Kincheloe 2004d, p. 74). Bricolage, as accomplished in this study, surpasses traditional triangulation methods by describing multiple interrelationships "in as thick a way possible" (p. 73). When similar phenomena appear in different contexts and have been interpreted similarly by different people and when illogical interpretations fall out, then validity, verifiability, and applicative dimensions have been met. But there is always more to know, which is why bricoleurs maintain the tentativeness and elasticity of their interpretations. Seeking a greater understanding of the multidimensionality of experiences contributes to consciousness expansion and knowledge production. While this is urgently needed in the present, I have come to view this as an eternal process as well.

"The Centrality of Critical Hermeneutics"

In relation to the object of study, Kincheloe (2004e) stresses "The Centrality of Critical Hermeneutics" (p. 82). As a reminder to reviewers who may question this approach to evaluation, one of the primary purposes of this study was to demonstrate

Kincheloe's bricolage process, thus, it makes logical sense to use the criteria he had developed for his conceptualization. Thus, an evaluation of rigor entails determining whether the object of inquiry was connected to many different contexts. In this study, the process of interpreting bricolage in many different contexts was so successful that bricolage came to mean almost everything and I had become "one" with both Kincheloe and the bricolage. This strange phenomenon in relation to research was brought out by Guru Mooji (2011) when he explained that if serious inquiry has been successful, we become one with the object of inquiry, whatever that object of inquiry might be. Perhaps this might be another evaluation point for Kincheloe's advanced conceptualization of bricolage. If we literally feel "one" with the subject or object of inquiry, perhaps we have taken the research to the appropriate depth and breadth. The paradox is that while we "become one" we also have come to understand both ourselves and the object of the research better as separate entities, much as Jung describes the "individuation" process.

Another aspect of this process of becoming one with the object/subject of the research relates to what Kincheloe (2004) describes as "appreciating the relationship between researcher and that being researched" (p. 83). This was accomplished in this research with the analysis of rich qualitative data. As research is conducted, appreciation continues to build and just as the object of research shapes the researcher, the researcher shapes the object of the research. As Kincheloe has expressed it, they bring each other into being. This was accomplished experientially in profound ways which are beyond most people's current levels of perception for which there is no FIDURODian scientific basis for understanding (at least not a complete or final explanation). This brings up the next critical hermeneutic attribute Kincheloe describes: "connecting the making of

meaning to human experience.” In this study I used my own experiences to accomplish this, as supplemented by outside experiences and explanations from other people. The feedback looping or interaction that develops between researchers and the object or subject of their research can be very powerful and illustrates why it’s important to choose a topic we are passionate about.

The next attribute Kincheloe describes is “making use of textual forms of analysis while not forgetting that living and breathing human beings are the entities around which and with which meaning is being made” (p. 83). The study is replete with examples. The process of writing and rereading through with additional information, a different perspective or taking the analysis deeper makes the study more rigorous.

And finally, Kincheloe’s (2004) last attribute in relation to critical hermeneutics is to “build a bridge between these forms of understanding and informed action” (p. 83). Throughout this study, I have also raised many additional questions that need to be researched for subsequent actions, such as to compel changes in policy and the way we “do education.” More people are suffering every day due to the inhumane educational process with embedded policies that are too often soulless and heartless and maintain division, discrimination, and oppression. In the section, “Choosing Interpretations: Considering the Principles of Selection,” Kincheloe (2004e) provides detailed criteria to guide bricoleurs with delimiting and focusing their research (p. 100), which is helpful when considering the Level 3 questions and actions that are revealed that often require immediate attention. Throughout this study, I have provided the rationale for my choices for interpretation, as based on Kincheloe’s criteria. Thus, any particular chosen interpretation:

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 perspectives of multiple individuals coming from diverse social locations; and catalyzes just, intelligent, and worthwhile action. (pp. 100–102)

The Multidimensionality of the Research Process

Engaging in this research has clarified the multiple meanings of Kincheloe’s term “multidimensionality.” Of course, all social research is multidimensional and researchers should consider as many dimensions as possible when trying to understand the complexity of the topic being researched. Thus, as Kincheloe (2001b) recommends, that means including not only understanding the political, but also the psychological, historical, social, economical, and educational perspectives, and more. It means, as presented earlier, to include an interpretative, integrative, and an applicative dimension to the bricolage (2001b, p. 280). These have been accomplished with this research, and the research went to the next level by incorporating Kincheloe’s fourth dimension bricolage. Fourth dimension research may extend infinitely since no one yet knows how many dimensions there are or the many ways to access and research within those dimensions. More research on “intuition,” which describes some of these means of access is needed and to date, education researchers of intuition have been somewhat constrained due to conflicting research paradigms. None of them are yielding adequate information in and of themselves. Thus, multidimensional critical complex bricolage explorations of intuition could prove fruitful and provide more information about how people perceive, access, and learn from other dimensions.

While I have demonstrated the fourth dimension bricolage to a far greater extent than I had planned, it is merely the tip of the iceberg. Fourth dimension research is useful for accessing the possibilities for the future as well as for excavating historical information that is closer to truth than what is taught and taken for granted, particularly when combined with the multiple processes of bricolage. I have not discussed this aspect in depth, but remembering past lives (whether we actually experienced them or are somehow tapping into this knowledge), along with accessing other higher order knowledges will supplement existing knowledge and help clarify many things about history. I informally refer to the process of exposing new truths as “table flipping,” because we will be seeing many things that we take for granted today completely flipped from the way we currently understand them. Most of us have already witnessed these flips in small ways, but in the near future, it will be prevalent, changing almost everything we thought we knew about everything. The power of the bricolage is that it provides a process by which we can reveal these new truths and for going to the next level to produce new knowledge and take actions to create a more equitable world.

The multidimensional critical complex bricolage, in concert with critical complex epistemology, provides a powerful process for learning, researching, and teaching in all domains. Anyone can use it and it is promising for improving the quality of life for us all. The key strand as Kincheloe has demonstrated in his work and his actions is the maintaining of love and compassion as a solid foundation during the process. I felt that love, passion, and compassion throughout this research and learned that due to the quantity and significance of the patterns that emerged as a result that there must be a rationale to the universe, even if we can't explain it. I am aware that disseminating what

I've learned crosses borders. Some people will object, some will become angry, some will call me crazy, and some people may be thankful that finally someone is discussing these experiences in great detail in the scholarly literature. No matter what other people's perspectives are, for me, this is merely the beginning of another leg of this journey that I now know began with Joe Kincheloe before he passed away—an eternal quest for knowledge in higher dimensions where new and better worlds are being created.

Unrealized by most (including myself before completing this research), the Apocalypse is already well in progress for many. The best anyone can do at this point is to avoid contributing to it as much as is humanly possible and plant a few mustard seeds that can take root and grow sometime in the future. With enough people doing this, we will fulfill Kincheloe's (2008c) wishes for a social, pedagogical, epistemological and ontological revolution (p. 252).

Conclusion:
**The Power of the Multidimensional Critical Complex Bricolage for
Consciousness Research and Constructing a “Critical Science of Complexity”**

Thus, the bricolage is offered as a practical way to construct a critical science of complexity. (Kincheloe, 2004a, p. x)

What constitutes empirical research is a complex topic and one that should be studied and redefined using the bricolage and multiple epistemologies. The application of empiricism has shifted over the years and as stated previously, many people have misunderstood Kincheloe’s views of empirical science. Of course there is much to learn from using scientific approaches, but what constitutes a scientific approach and for what purposes needs to be reconsidered, particularly by Westerners. What Kincheloe (2008c) was railing against is the FIDURODian version of positivistic approaches, a very complex topic that needs to be contextualized, which he did superbly in his last book, *Knowledge and Critical Pedagogy: An Introduction*. That said, there are many forms of empiricism, and this brief excerpt from Wikipedia’s (2012) “Empirical Research” entry perhaps clarifies some of the tasks ahead and why empiricism is not thrown out of the multidimensional critical complex bricolage:

The term empirical was originally used to refer to certain ancient Greek practitioners of medicine who rejected adherence to the dogmatic doctrines of the day, preferring instead to rely on the observation of phenomena as perceived in experience. Later empiricism referred to a theory of knowledge in philosophy which adheres to the principle that knowledge arises from experience and evidence gathered specifically using the senses. In scientific use the term empirical refers to the gathering of data using only evidence that is observable by the senses or in some cases using calibrated scientific instruments. What early philosophers described as empiricist and empirical research have in common is the dependence on observable data to formulate and test theories and come to conclusions. (“Terminology”)

In relation to empiricism, and assessing in hindsight since I just came across this information, this study has gone beyond using the sound empirical phenomenological process proposed by Patrik Aspers (2009). Aspers' approach is based on a synthesis of the works of Edmund Husserl, Martin Heidegger, and sociologist, Alfred Schütz, and other leaders in phenomenological research. It is a first-order research process that is grounded in the meanings the participants attach to their experiences, just as Kincheloe calls for with his theory, and then it relates their meanings to second-order constructions of scientists, an objective that was accomplished throughout this study. This study went beyond by also relating the meanings to different perspectives from many different domains and worldviews as Kincheloe has specified throughout his work. The study has incorporated more dimensions of analyses than Amadeo Giorgi's method Bloomstein (2000) had used for understanding lived experiences of twin souls/flames. And instead of collecting data from other people using interview techniques, I collected my own personal phenomenological data, thus, this research is grounded in my own, often tentative interpretations. They were tentative due to my lack of knowledge about such experiences going into this research. This process is deemed more accurate than collecting data from participants using interviews because the data was captured immediately during and after the experiences, thus, I was also able to capture my personal immediate reflections and meanings of the experiences; whereas, interviews gather the data after the experiences making it more difficult to capture the participants' original meanings.

Claire Petitmengin (2006), who specializes in consciousness and intuition research, has developed an interview method that can aid researchers in jumping this

hurdle of memory loss of the experiences over time. Described as “retrospectively accessing the lived experience,” this process can help interviewees re-experience phenomenological events in a manner that reconnects them to the initial experience, thus giving them access to their original impressions (p. 244). This provides a process for researchers interested in collecting this data in interviews that can strengthen their research. According to Lachman (2011) it has been shown that people can reconnect to these past experiences and remember progressively more details each time. Asking participants to keep journals of their experiences can provide additional data such as descriptions, personal reflections, and the meanings they assign to their experiences.

Upon analysis, the sound empirical phenomenological approach Aspers (2009) provides, as well as Giorgi’s techniques are all captured within Kincheloe’s critical complex epistemology and multidimensional critical complex bricolage due to his specification of so many layers of interpretation, analysis, and synthesis. Thus, his process provides for even greater strength to the results. Aspers’ empirical phenomenological research process, for comparison purposes, has seven steps, which he emphasizes are presented as steps only for pedagogical purposes. He explains that researchers do not go through these steps in a linear manner, but “zigzags” through them. The seven steps include: (1) Define the research question; (2) Conduct a preliminary study; (3) Choose a theory and use it as a scheme of reference; (4) Study first-order constructs (and bracket the theories); (5) Construct second-order constructs; (6) Check for unintended effects; and (7) Relate the evidence to the scientific literature and the empirical field of study (“The Seven Steps of Empirical Phenomenology,” para.1).

Aspers (2009) advises that steps one and two often involve “‘hanging out’ with members of the field” for a month or longer for larger research projects, along with the extensive reading of texts in order to become deeply familiar with the field. It is interesting that my own research began in that very fashion when my initial research led serendipitously to working with Kincheloe on his research website for approximately seven months. During that time, I did, indeed read everything about critical pedagogy that I could get my hands on and had engaged in many discussions with active researchers in the field. I was at first primarily interested in Peter McLaren’s work and I also had read some of Henry Giroux’s (2007, 2008) most recent work, but after a few weeks, I gravitated in a powerful way toward Kincheloe’s work. His work was consistently being pushed to the side in that community, and being much like Kincheloe, himself, I always gravitate toward that which seems mysterious, hidden, and alienated. I quickly came to understand the power of his work in a very intuitive sense, even though I had a difficult time with the reading of his texts. I am grateful for that experience during the first steps of my research.

The seven steps Aspers (2009) has provided are self-explanatory in relation to this current study in that all steps have been incorporated and are easily identified by reviewing this study. Step six involves checking for unintended consequences, which may be harder to identify. Aspers explains that actions, including the act of connecting the interviewees’ experiences to various constructs, have both intended and unintended consequences. A deep consideration of these issues is interwoven into Kincheloe’s criteria as was evaluated in the previous section, “The Centrality of Critical Hermeneutics,” and these criteria formed the basis for my choices during this study.

It is interesting that Aspers (2009) describes the process for phenomenological empirical research as “zigzagging.” In the literature review it was presented that the French word *bricoler* is related to the idea of zigzagging (Beth, 2010). This metaphor provides another level of understanding to what is involved when engaging in multidimensional critical complex bricolage. Not only are there processes that bricoleurs use to thread through the POET(s), as presented by Kathleen Berry (2004a), I found that it also requires zigzagging through the document in a very literal sense. Because this involved employing various methods and processes, it correlates with the zigzagging through the steps of research that Aspers has delineated, although, of course, Kincheloe has added many more dimensions to the research process. The word *bricolage* is a perfect word for describing this research process on many levels as was demonstrated throughout this study which has explored many possible interpretations and metaphors, and I have been wondering how “zigzag” might apply. The additional terms, *multidimensional critical complex*, specify the depth, nature, and multidimensionality of Kincheloe’s conceptualization of bricolage research and, combined with *critical complex epistemology* has taken this study to the very rigorous level he had aimed for. Thus, researchers are provided with what I believe to be the most powerful process explicated for phenomenological empirical research.

This has sufficiently been demonstrated by this current study, both in terms of the content of the study, the depth, and the process by which the study was constructed. The multiple interwoven tasks I completed for this study resulted in a longer dissertation than one might expect using this process. I mention this because I don’t want the length of this dissertation to deter people from taking this approach; there are multiple things

happening at once in this study specifically for the purpose of getting this form of research off the ground. Thus, the length of this study does not represent the norm for all such studies providing the topic is narrowed down sufficiently but it was necessary for this particular study.

During this study, I was fascinated daily by Kincheloe's additional dimension for his research, the fourth dimension research process, which I seemed to have intuitively picked up on. Just before Kincheloe had passed away, he presented a little sermon in a small community church in Jamaica where he was vacationing, which was captured on video. He had discussed allowing our body and mind to be the "vessel for great minds" (Steinberg, 2011a, p. xii). Throughout this research process, I consciously chose to allow him to work through me, which I interpret to be a fourth dimension approach to research. There is no Western-based scientific evidence that I am aware of that supports this approach as being effective during research or proof that this is what is happening, although Eastern and Ageless Wisdom Knowledges which derive from a variety of cultures lend credence to this idea and perhaps is also one reason Kincheloe has emphasized indigenous knowledges.

Whatever one believes, throughout my entire research process, the spiritual guidance in the form of intuitive, serendipitous, and synchronous events, combined with many dreams of being in the higher realms receiving instruction from Kincheloe and other teachers, and receiving written communications from Kincheloe became normal daily experiences rather than an occasional "aha" type of moment many people experience. I have also lost track of the number of times I was able to pick up the exact right book or article at the exact right moment and open it to the exact right place for

what was needed in the document which was also often serendipitously opened at the exact right place, and how many times I was given a page number out of “thin air” or in a dream that turned out to be a critical piece of the multidimensional puzzle I was assembling. I have experienced a multitude of incidents of even my gaze being directed to something very specific and the sensation of specific words nearly popping off the page that turned out to be critical pieces to this bricolage.

What causes the phenomenological events as described in this study? There seem to be a series of interrelating, complex processes all going on at once that inform and re-inform each other, perhaps Kincheloe and Berry’s (2004) “feedback looping” experientially presented and Maturana and Varela’s (1987) “structural coupling” (Kincheloe, 2005b, p. 94; Semetsky, 2003, p. 6). Semetsky ties it all together in her discussion about Eros as the Magician, Hermes Trismegistus, and autopoieses. She explains theoretically why Eros and his father, Hermes, make their “presence” known to me. She reports that according to Maturana and Varela’s (1987) theory, “structural couplings” result in “communicative interactions” and *shared dialogue* between an individual and “Eros-the-Magician,” (who wears red, by the way—is that why Joe’s last book, his *Great Work*, has a passionate red cover?) (p. 6) [emphasis added]. According to Semetsky, the appearance of the Magician in Tarot card readings signifies the presence of a wise teacher. What does the appearance of “magic” from an unseen Eros-the-Magician signify? Does it represent the presence of a wise but invisible teacher? Semetsky contends that one learns to act freely and independently precisely because of being interconnected and mutually interdependent; a wise teacher is typically implicated in that interconnectedness. The process of this symbiotic union, which Jung referred to as

“individuation,” again, relates back to Divine Love and the Twin Flame concept that has been interwoven throughout this study and as symbolized by the metaphor examined, the Golden Chalice. Bricolage is implicated in this process in a multidimensional sense as individuals make use of available resources and “magic” to emerge from chaos, becoming “filled with immanence,” Semetsky describes (p. 14). There is much more, however, relating to past lives, multiple dimensions, soul reunification, memory assimilation, gaining wisdom, and piecing it all together. During this process of hermeneutic symbiosis is when the magic appears, or maybe it is when one becomes more *conscious* of what may have been happening all along.

Semetsky (2003) clarifies that “what is called magic, however, is a science of hidden relations, the latter capable of producing real effects when a cause in question is not at all obvious,” the phenomenon to which Jung had assigned the name “synchronicity” (p. 2). Thus, her article explains theoretically how “mystory” evolved naturally into a story about Eros and Psyche and why I have more questions than answers due to my lack of science-related understandings. Ironically, Kincheloe (2008c) adamantly insists bricolage is not about mythology or myth-making. He reports how advocates of FIDUROD argue that “theoretically-informed research . . . is merely an effort to find evidence for a preconceived position” and that scholars such as himself and other theorists “are unable to distinguish between empirical truths about the world and mythology” (p. 129). However, the fact that my name means “Psyche” and that Kincheloe has been referred to as Eros by scholars among his peer group and that he had referenced Eros Love in his work and had identified himself with Dionysus (the fallen Eros) along with the other related data, are not what might be considered “preconceived

positions” for this research. The “magic” such as the cosmic gift of the yin yang talisman buried in my back yard and the diamond ring delivered by a handyman, the treasure hunts and epistemological road trips, and the red roses in the yellow rose bush all emerged *during the research* as did the enactment of the fallen King and Queen in Kings Valley and the revelation of the correlation of my life history with the 13 Attributes of Mercy; how can this be explained? I did not consciously create these incidents nor did I consciously look for the explanations—they all emerged as part of the research process, just as Kincheloe’s theory predicts. While I have entertained the idea that this Eros and Psyche configuration is another joke, a sort of cosmic game of the gods or possibly something consciously co-created at higher levels of consciousness, I feel there is something more; this story is not over. There is more to learn about the science of symbiotic hermeneutics, the topic of that very special reading assignment Joe had provided me for this study.

I have many questions and have not resolved how the peculiar occurrences could have occurred, but this uncertainty is simply the nature of knowledge production according to Kincheloe. He answers the accusation of researchers confusing truths about the world and mythology by stating:

In response to this outrageous claim I would assert that such one-dimensional researchers simply fail to understand the socially constructed nature of their efforts to produce knowledge. They are uncomfortable with the implications one has to deal with when we study the impact of our historical and cultural situatedness and our ideological investments in our ability to find final truths. . . . they are afraid of complexity and the ambiguity that accompanies it.” (Kincheloe, 2008c, p. 129)

So once again, the complexity and uncertainty of the knowledge we produce and the role consciousness has in the production of that knowledge comes to the forefront.

Consciousness is much more complex and multidimensional than we have ever thought. Relative to this, Kincheloe (2008c) states, “The point is so obvious that it should not have to be made here—but this is unfortunately not the case: consciousness is central to what it means to be human” (p. 223). There is so incredibly much more research and “chasing chaos” to do.

In relation to this current study, staying aware of this complexity and keeping faith in an improvisational approach, allowing flow, along with unique and varying combinations of heart, soul, love, thought, analysis, emotions, and actions—and believing in my connections with the spiritual world—all worked together to aid me in pulling the pieces of Kincheloe’s theory from his numerous works he had written over the past forty years into a cohesive explanation and representation of his multidimensional critical complex bricolage. In other words, it is my interpretation that it was with his spiritual guidance that I was able to find all of the necessary pieces from his various works and bricolage them together in a way that demonstrates a viable process for other researchers to pick up on from here and in relation to wherever they are positioned in the web of reality. With Kincheloe’s guidance as a great Master Teacher (and Eros-the-Magician), I had to *do* his bricolage in order to put the pieces together so that I could *learn how to do it* so that I could simultaneously *show* other people how it can be done. And I am glad that I took his guidance across the planes of existence seriously.

In concluding, I hope Joe did not “see” or feel me crying that day, just a few weeks after I had serendipitously found him, his website and his work. In front of me, on my desk were three or four of his books of very thick, complicated discourse. It was a type of discourse I had not encountered in my education and I was just learning the

language of critical pedagogy, which felt like learning a whole new language. Even though he provides definitions in his work, I was struggling to comprehend it. The books were all opened up scattered across my desk and I was attempting to absorb his complex knowledge by zigzagging from one book to the other (this was before I felt our consciousnesses had merged giving me a better understanding of his work). I was surrounded by this dark, ominous sense that he was “leaving” too soon and that time was running out. For reasons I did not understand I felt learning his work and taking it forward was my responsibility, my duty, and yet, it was also my passionate desire. I had felt such a deep sense of grief combined with feeling overwhelmed by the enormity of the task I saw before me that I had laid my head down on my desk and began to cry. At that very moment the pleasant “chime” of an email on my laptop sitting next to me melodiously interrupted my tears. It was a cheerful, upbeat email from Joe which I was not expecting, letting me know he was doing great, “life is good” he had stated (personal communication, August 28, 2008).

This was nothing new; the serendipitous and synchronistic timing of his messages began with our first email exchanges and was a pattern throughout our relationship. A very similar thing had happened on the evening of November 8, 2008 with him again writing to me that “life is good,” thus sending me a message of reassurance just when I needed it. My fears always centered on his well being and my sense that my work with him was somehow predestined, but that there was very little time. I usually shoved my fears aside and pressed forward but there would be times when I couldn’t keep them from rising to the surface.

On the evening of October 30, 2008 I again was experiencing overwhelming fear and I think it was very confusing to me in many ways since I had no previous experiences to draw from or the knowledge that could explain it. This time, I had drafted an email to him expressing my feelings and my fears, and how even though I studied other people's work, my work was with him. I did not send the email. Just as I finished writing it, an email popped in from him filled with absolutely beautiful praise for which I did not begin to know how to respond. A couple of moments later, another email popped in from him that also touched my heart. There was no way I could tell him how I was really feeling and I had primarily written the email for cathartic purposes, as a way of releasing my anxieties. And so I had typed at the top of the draft, "not to mail . . . this is really strange. right after I wrote this I received an email from him," and I saved the draft in my "saved mail" along with all of the emails I've saved from him. Thus, now I realize that we have always been connected, in spite of my not being conscious of it. We are connected now. It is due to our continuing connection that this research has reached a level beyond even my own expectations. I do feel I owe so much to Joe and my hope is that other researchers will see the gift he has left and will take his bricolage research forward.

Thank you, Joe. I love you.

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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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