

## Part II

### Interlude Two: (Still) Mourning Joe

When I was hired as a professor of educational foundations at Louisiana State University-Shreveport I was twenty-nine years old and thought I knew something about social justice and a living democracy. I had a lot to learn. I arrived on campus and the first thing I did was to invite my friends from the Socialist Workers Party to set up an information booth and book display. While at the University of Pittsburgh Mark Ginsburg introduced me to the party, I immediately knew it was an organization I wanted to work with. We would go to any and every picket line in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and West Virginia and walk with the striking workers in solidarity, hold weekly meetings to discuss theory, and I even made my own presentation on Eckardt Kehr, a German historian, and his idea of social imperialism from the 1920s. I housed striking steelworkers from Alabama, helped them raise money for their strike fund, and participated in numerous other activities with the party. I thought it was a natural thing to invite the closest local SWP group to come to Shreveport. They stayed with me while they were in town and after the day on campus they told me the students were very receptive to their ideas and ideals. The SWP is a Trotskyite party and I too believe in perpetual revolution. The next day when the SWP members left to go back to Houston, I was called into my chair's office. She said I reminded her of Joe Kincheloe when he was on campus in the 1980s, and I did not want to have the label of campus radical. I said, I don't? That first semester colleagues would approach me and proclaim that I reminded them of Joe Kincheloe. Soon, I could tell by the tone of their voice whether they liked Joe or not. Shreveport is a conservative city so most of the professors did not like him. Joe wore this as a badge of honor since most of the people in the college of education in Shreveport were anti-intellectuals. It is a strange thing how universities are labeled liberal or radical but most faculty are instinctively conservative. When people would make these remarks I would say to myself who is Joe Kincheloe. I thought if I am going to be Joe Kincheloe I better read his work. My life has not been the same. I am honored that I reminded people of Joe.

It has been nine years since Joe died of a heart attack and there is hardly a day that passes that I do not think of him and thank him for all Shirley and he have done for me and so many other scholars. Imagine how sparse curriculum studies and

educational foundations would be without their book series with numerous publishers including this one! After I started reading Joe's work like *Getting Beyond the Facts* (the book that took many years for Joe to find a publisher and transformed Peter Lang into a major education publisher) and other early works. I had to meet this guy and discuss an idea I had for an edited book which became Toby Daspit's and my work *Popular Culture and Critical Pedagogy*. I went to the American Educational Studies Association in Chapel Hill in 1995. I waited outside the conference room where he was pitching Shirley's and his idea that became *Kinderculture*. When the session was over I introduced myself and we bonded over our stories about LSU-Shreveport. What was clear to me then and is still clear today, Joe loved life, books, and democracy. All were connected.

This next chapter is the linchpin to the whole book. I discuss the importance of challenging neoliberalism while creating an active democracy in which people are involved in science matters. I focus much of my attention on becoming an "expert" in the sciences without becoming a scientist. I obviously am convinced that if curriculum scholars are to be a part of a movement to save our dying USA democracy, it will require us to become more involved in scientific matters. It certainly is not the only way we need to become involved, but we have to make sure science and democracy remain connected in a vibrant and meaningful manner. While previous generations just assumed the two were naturally connected. It is clear with the rise of neoliberalism nothing can be taken for granted or assumed; everything must be fought for including the idea of a living democracy. Joe was a fighter and he was interested in anything that was a matter of social justice, equality, freedom, and a living democracy. The best way we can honor Joe is to continue his struggle and fight to create a strong democratic society not just in the USA but the whole world. I know Shirley continues to raise her voice in the name of radical love and democracy. Her voice demonstrates that she still shares an indivisible bond with Joe. My contribution to Joe's memory is this chapter and it is another way I say thanks Joe! Power to the people and Semper Fidelis my friend.