

**IF PARIS IS BURNING, WHO HAS
THE RIGHT TO SAY SO?**

Jaewon Choe

AIM

- (1) Let's talk JL and Documentaries.
- (2) The *Mosaic Account*. What might it “look” like?
- (3) Outsiders vs. Insiders – What’s “Real”?
- (4) Can we learn from “bad” accounts? How?
- (5) Asking the right questions.



DOCUMENTARIES

(1) What we often do with documentary films:

- We offer a true account of a subject x.
- We capture the “heart” or “essence” of x.



(2) How documentaries are produced:

- We take real footage.
- We edit, chop, add, overdub...we produce.



DOCUMENTARIES

(3) So, how do “produced” docs capture the essence of x?

- Perhaps they just offer an account of x.

(4) More likely, we are viewing an account of x, filtered through the creator’s judgement of what’s “essential” to x.

(5) This is what Bell-Hooks is critiquing in her work.





LET'S TALK JL

So, I stitched together some quotes of JL. Have I captured her essence in doing this?...No.

I've given you an account of JL that helps answer the question, "Who is JL?"



LET'S TALK JL

Her words also become an account of other questions:

“What is identity?”

“What is Trans identity?”

“What is art?” ...etc.

THE MOSAIC ACCOUNT

- (1) Stitching together of material = x is a mosaic
- (2) The mosaic stands as a thesis: “Who is x?” “What is x?”
- (3) Thesis becomes critiqued and analyzed = Achieves “public character”
- (4) We now have a “living portrait” of x.

THE MOSAIC ACCOUNT

(5) This is but one portrait on the Mosaic of “Trans ID” or “JL” or “NYC”.

(6) We can critique this portrait in relation to others.

(7) This lets us put x in its “place” in relation to the whole mosaic.

(8) The whole mosaic is a “living mosaic” that is always shaping itself.



WHAT'S IT "LOOK" LIKE?

Mosaics of x

WHAT'S IT "LOOK" LIKE?

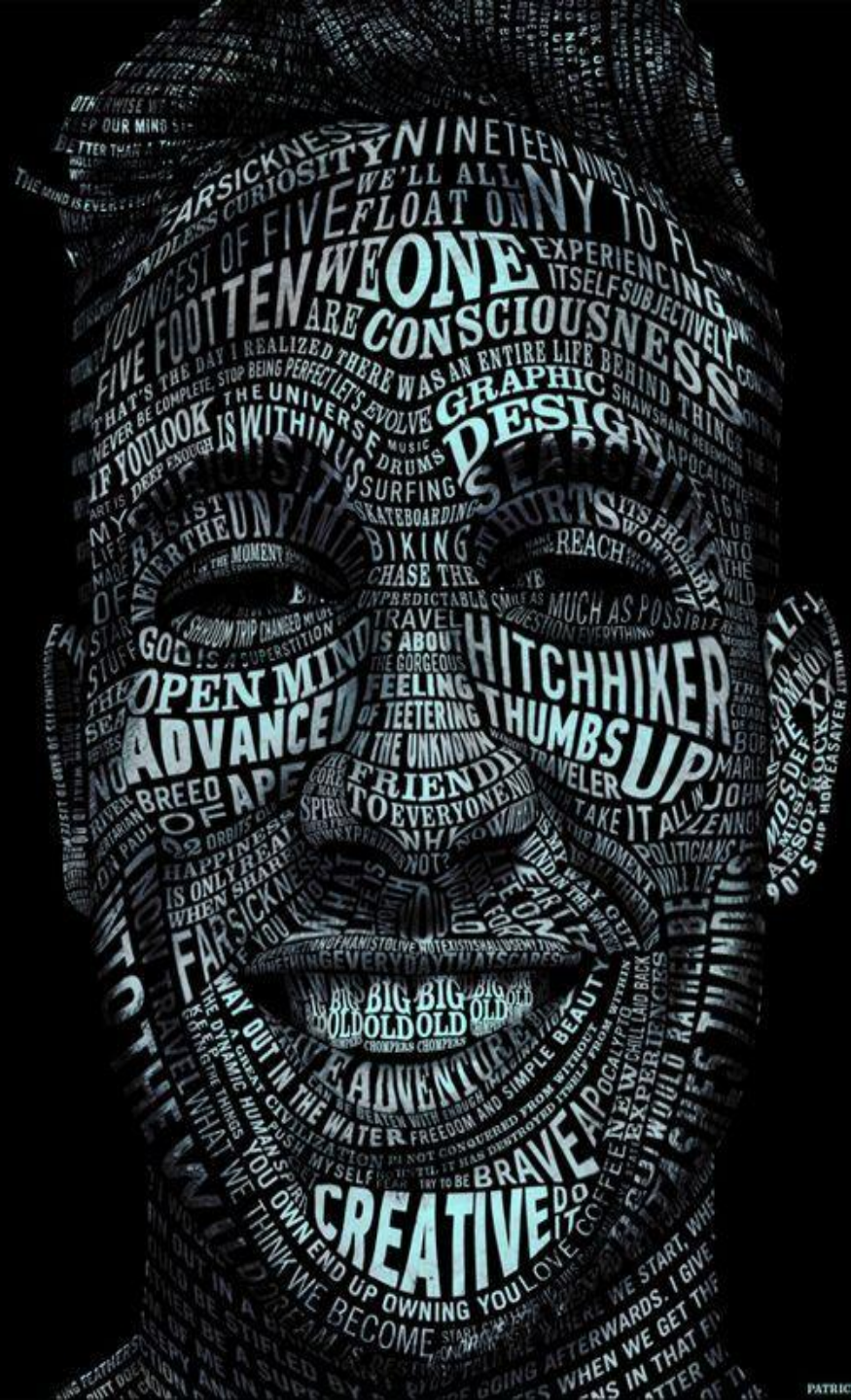
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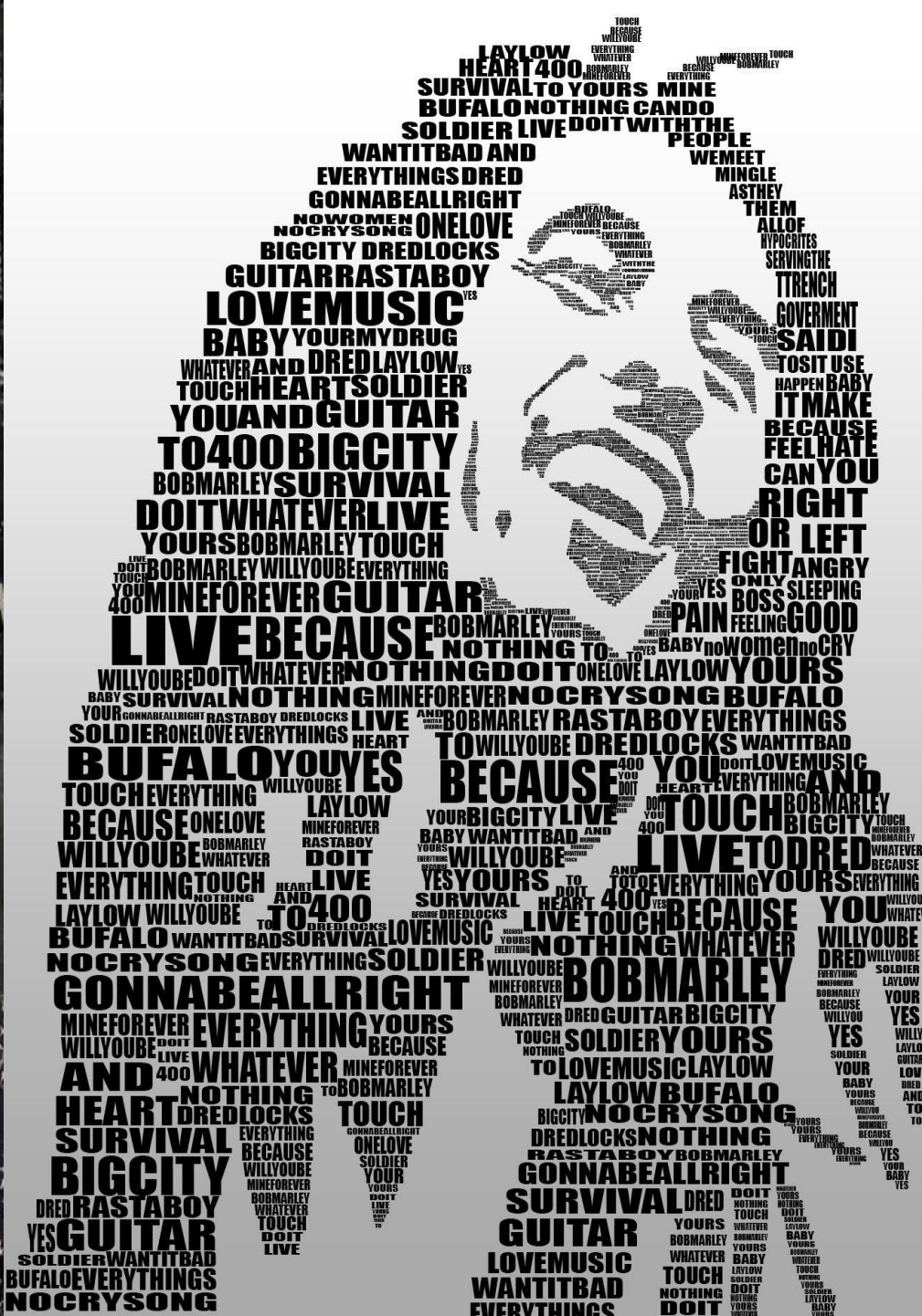
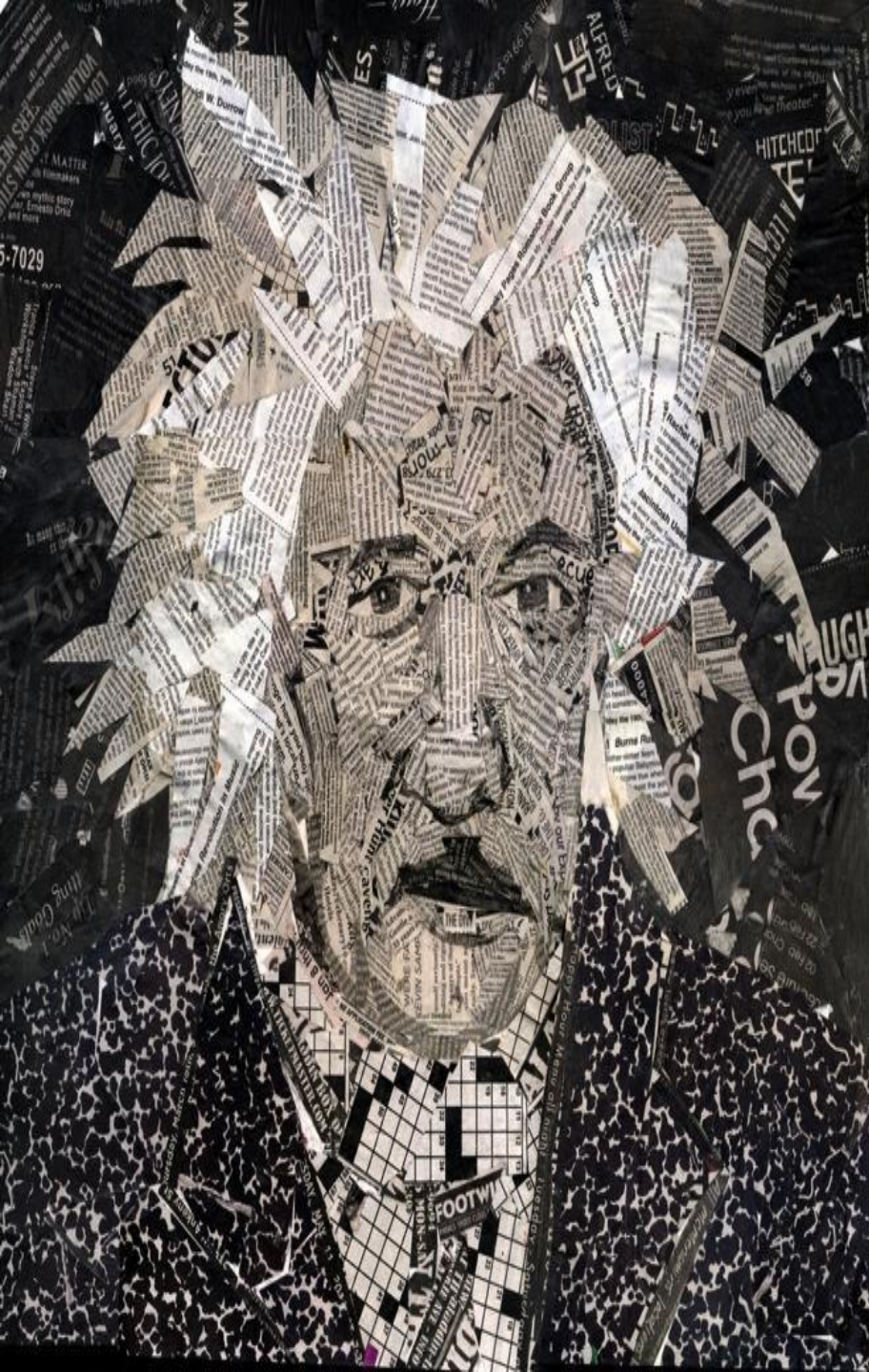
Placing of one portrait over another...





I am Harry Truman today in what will go down in history as the greatest story of the greats
I am Martin Luther King Jr. in the history of our nation. Five years ago, a
I am the people whose symbolic shadow we stand today, and I am the
I am the future of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of
I am the joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity. It
I am the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the Negro
I am the Negro still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the
I am the Negro lives on a lonely island of discrimination in the
I am the Negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and
I am the Negro in his own land, so we have come here today to dramatize a
I am the condition. In a sense we have come to our nation's capital to cast a
I am the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promise
I am the men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights
I am the pursuit of happiness. It is obvious today that America has
I am the honor this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people
I am the check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." But we
I am the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that the
I am the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. So we
I am the check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom
I am the security of justice. We have also come to this hallowed spot to
I am the America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the
I am the cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time
I am the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and
I am the Valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time
I am the quick sands of racial injustice to the solid rock of opportunity.
I am the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.
I am the King, Jr., delivering his 'I Have a Dream' speech from the steps of the
I am the Memorial. (photo: National Park Service) It would be fatal for the nation
I am the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro's
I am the discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of
I am the equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. There
I am the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will be
I am the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither
I am the revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the
I am the justice emerges. But there is something that I must say to my people
I am the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the
I am the our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let
I am the our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness
I am the and hatred, we must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and
I am the discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical
I am the violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical
I am the force with soul force. The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro
I am the community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white
I am the brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that
I am the their destiny is tied up with our destiny. They have come to realize that their





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YES

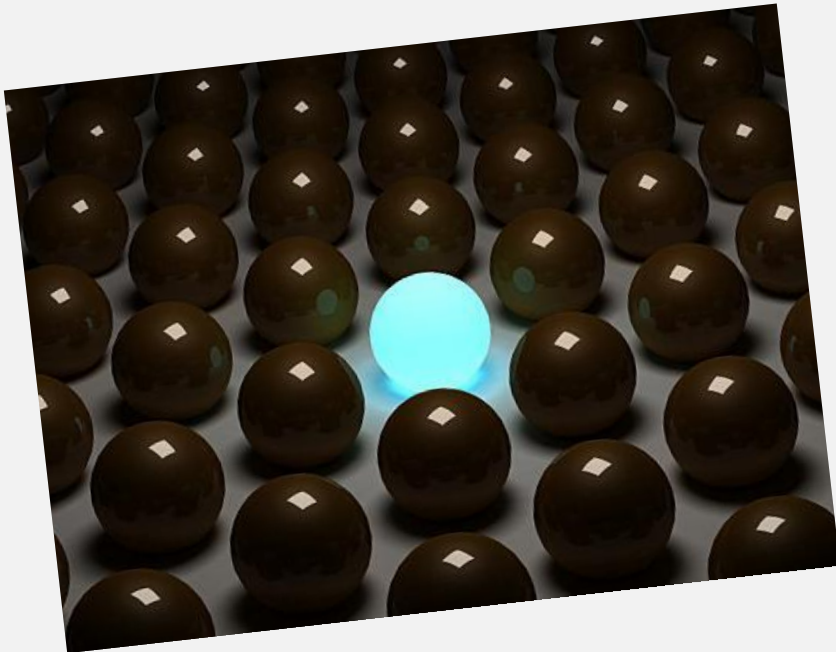
INSIDERS VS. OUTSIDERS



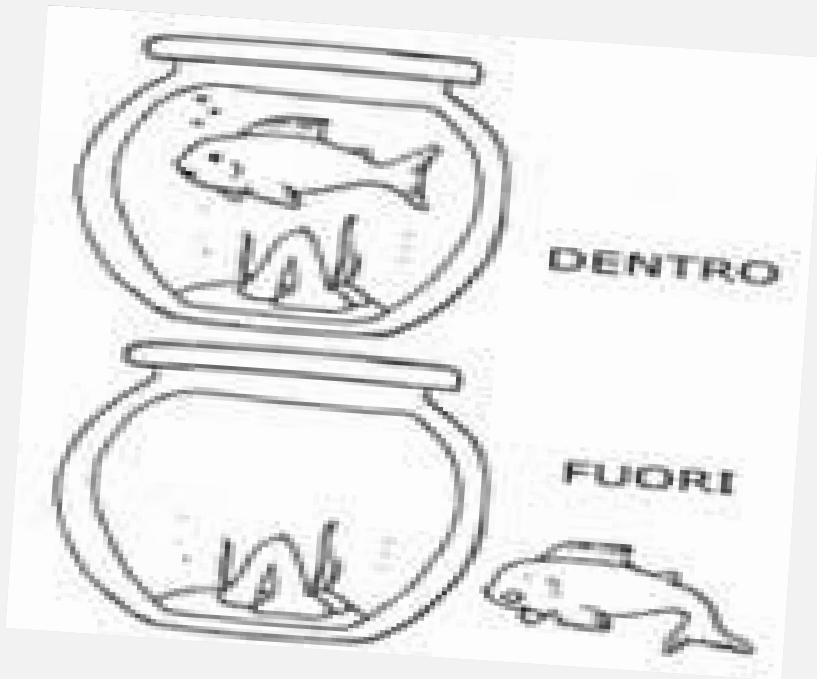
(1) Do insiders have “essential knowledge” that outsiders cannot have?

(2) If so, then insiders can explain this essential knowledge in ways that outsiders can understand.

(3) If not, then how do you understand it? What justifies your account as “essential”?



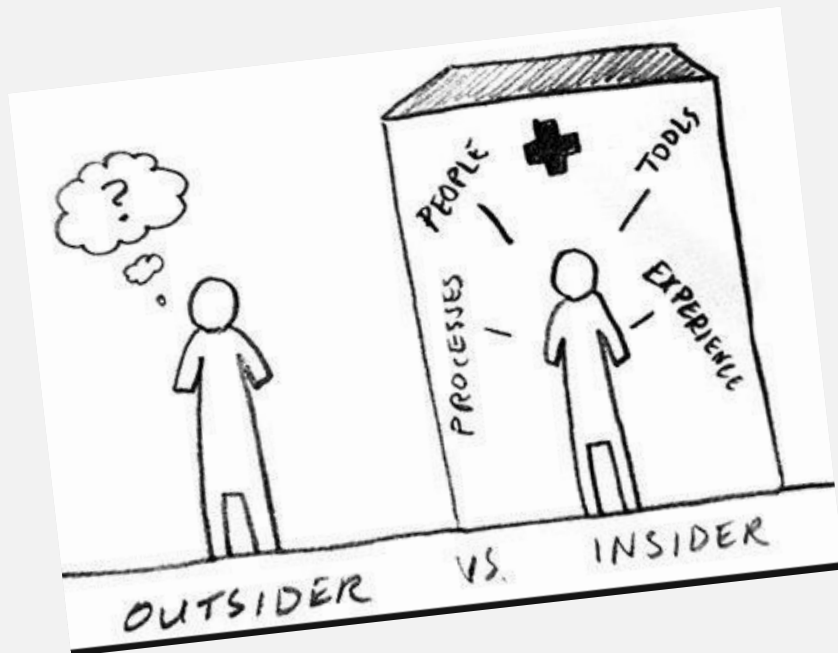
INSIDERS VS. OUTSIDERS

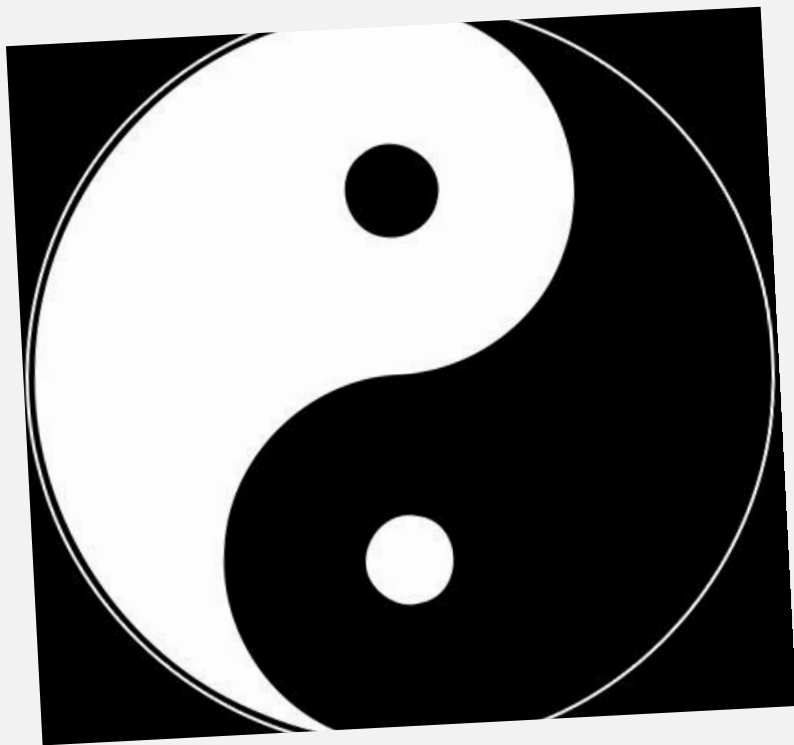


(4) Maybe insiders have something more valuable to share.

(5) If (4), then it's a question of usefulness, not "essentiality" or "truth".

(6) If (5), then we have the responsibility of critiquing x properly: We must ask the right questions and compare x in relation to other accounts of x .





**WHAT'S BAD
FOR YOUR
HEART IS
GOOD FOR
YOUR ART**

**CAN WE LEARN FROM “BAD”
ACCOUNTS?**

Yes.

SO IT'S ALL GOOD?

No, it's not all
good.
Sorry.

We need to ask the
right questions.



KEEP
CALM
AND

REMEMBER
It's all good

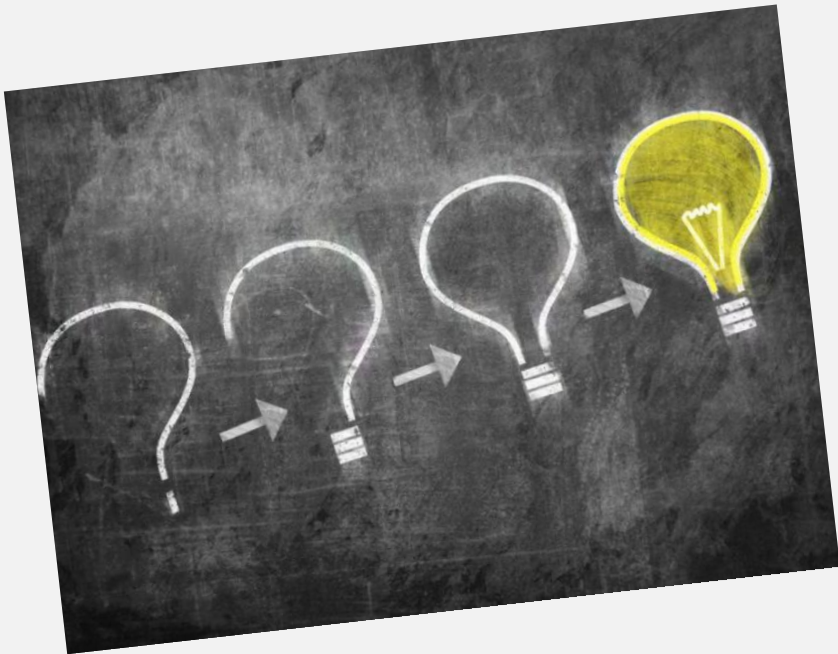


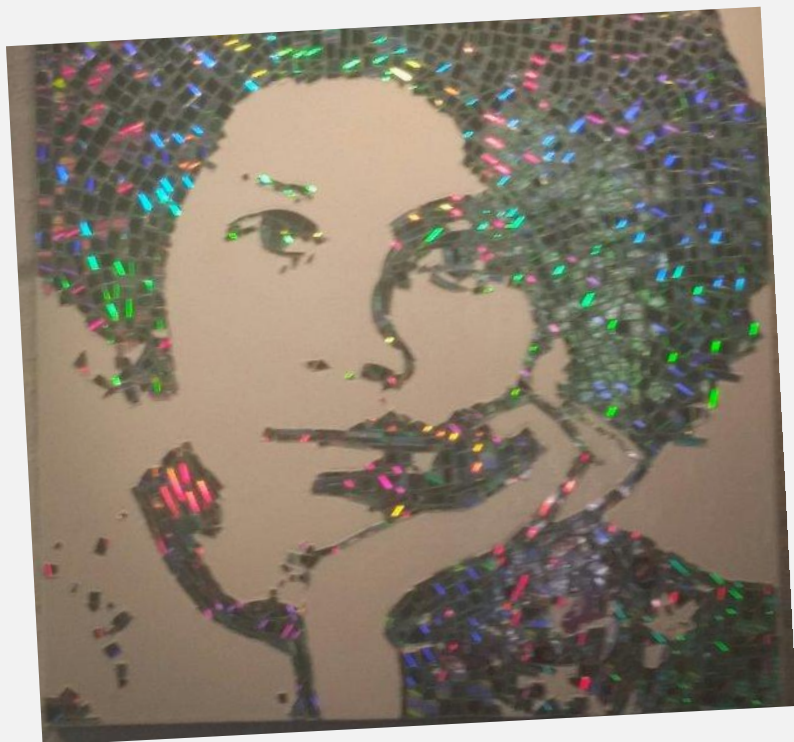
QUESTIONS...

(1) What does x show us?

(2) How does x compare to other accounts of x ?

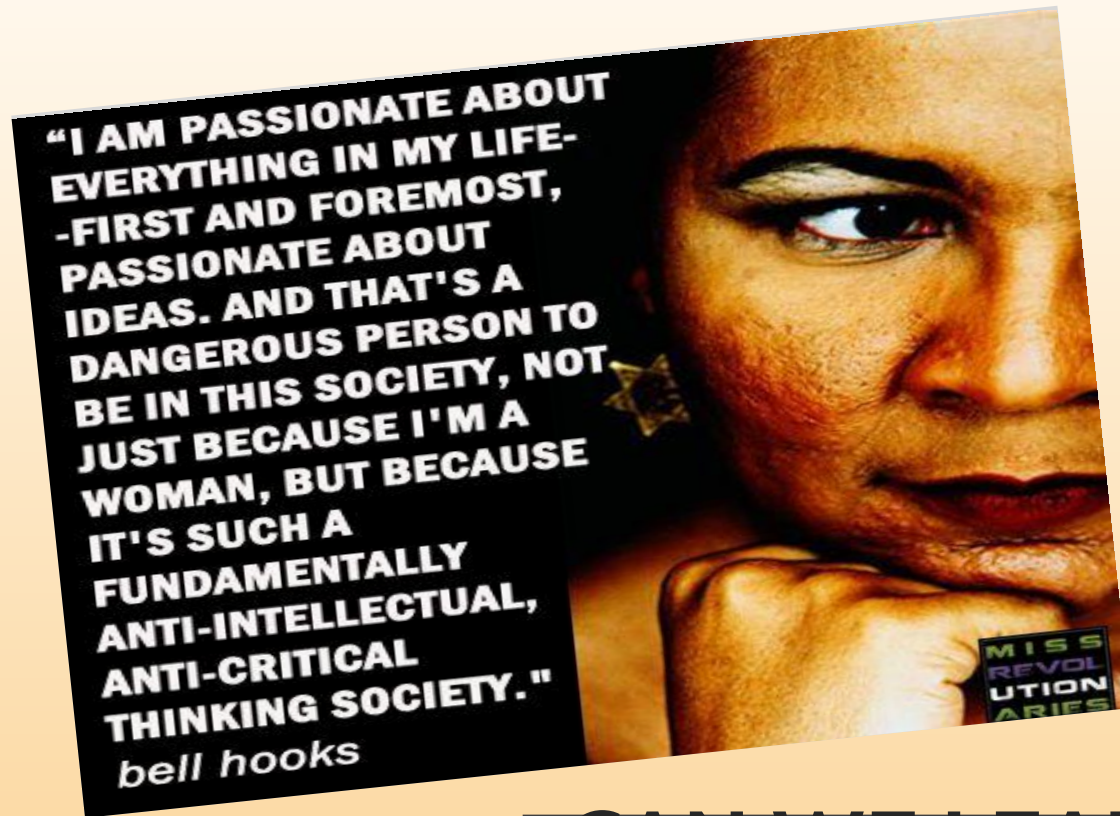
(3) Is there truth?





CAN WE LEARN FROM BELL-HOOKS?

Yes.



**"I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT EVERYTHING IN MY LIFE-
-FIRST AND FOREMOST, PASSIONATE ABOUT IDEAS. AND THAT'S A DANGEROUS PERSON TO BE IN THIS SOCIETY, NOT JUST BECAUSE I'M A WOMAN, BUT BECAUSE IT'S SUCH A FUNDAMENTALLY ANTI-INTELLECTUAL, ANTI-CRITICAL THINKING SOCIETY."**

bell hooks

CAN WE LEARN FROM BELL-HOOKS?

Yes.

FIN

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