

*ABSTRACT*

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EDUCATION FOR CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

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The central role of any educational process is for a reflective thinking process which presupposes the ability of educators and students to think for themselves, to be able to think from other people's perspectives, and to think rigorously. Within the past number of years, cultural studies have become something of a boom industry in the United States. Higher education has become a site in which a battle is being waged over how culture gets defined, and whose culture gets represented as legitimate and canonical. Cultural diversity has especially become a household phrase in education. Yet, controversy arises from the different ways scholars understand and apply the concept of culture.

In this research article the author examines the problem of definition, the problem of cultural understanding, and the problem of hegemonic and exclusionary cultural education. The significance of Orientalism, the Rationalistic Tradition, and Paradigms are presented. In conclusion, the author presents an argument for a pedagogy that fosters cultural understanding.