The Power of Film to Educate and Miseducate Pre-Service Teachers

A Phenomenological Analysis of Hidalgo and Cultural Representation of Muslims Post 9/11

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Introduction

While undertaking the analysis reported in this article, I experienced several feelings—perhaps chief among them was resentment. This resentment found its objects not in the students engaged in this project, but rather in the opinions and attitudes expressed by these students that suggested, if not actually stated, that those who emigrate to the United States, or who come in contact with its representatives abroad, should abandon their traditions and practices and assimilate into mainstream supposedly superior American culture and values.

As a working-class, Afro-Cuban heterosexual immigrant, what I have found is what Sherman Alexie dramatized in his novel The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven (1993), viz., though I may have assimilated American virtues, I have also imbibed sundry American vices—i.e., biases, prejudices, and bigotries, and in many sizes, shapes, and colors.

How are we as instructors to reflect on these issues, and most importantly, how are we to prepare teachers who are also aware of and critically reflective about these issues? In this article I consider three of today’s pre-service teachers who have each watched the World Trade Center towers collapse on broadcast television, viewed the film Hidalgo, and participated in subsequent interviews regarding the movie. It is through these events that I have examined the pre-service teachers’ views about the proper role that Muslims should play in the American ‘nation’—what Benedict Anderson (1991) defined as an “imagined community.”

Popular Films

Popular films can offer narratives that shape the way audiences imagine the ‘nation.’ Pre-service teachers are obviously part of these audiences. Joe Johnston’s Hidalgo (2004) was a popular film, and I submit that it represented an attempt to rally American public opinion in favor of U.S. intervention in the Middle East.

Though I consider myself a capable cultural critic who has written about and lectured on this film, the focus of the present qualitative case study is not intended to illustrate my critical acumen, but rather to gauge that of the three pre-service teachers being studied. My goal is to develop in them a critically reflective teaching practice as described by Zeichner (1990):

[To help them] see relationships between [their] daily practices in the classroom and issues of schooling and society … (to help them develop relational thinking in their pre-service training) by deliberately focusing [their] attention on particular kinds of issues connected to their everyday teaching activities that raise questions of equity and social justice. (p. 58)

Specifically, I want to examine the extent to which the pre-service teachers in this study interpreted Hidalgo as a proposal for how the post-9/11 American ‘nation’ and the Muslims within and without it should be imagined, and whether and the extent to which the pre-service teachers agreed with that proposal.

In 2001, the federal government estimated that approximately one million adult Muslims lived in the United States, and I think it is reasonable to assume that biological reproduction and immigration has increased and will continue to increase that number. Their children attend our schools and share our classrooms, and the teachers we prepare need to be sensitive to their culture and their educational needs.

Thus, this analysis is important for teacher educators who are looking for unique ways to identify their students’ biases and prejudices against cultural and ethnic minorities, and who want to dissolve those prejudices so as to ensure that their students-as-teachers-in-the-making will provide equal educational opportunity to all students, including Muslim children.

I preface this report with what I see as a correction of a seemingly common mistake found in what I presume are popular qualitative methods textbooks (c.f., Creswell, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994). These volumes each include a section on the various types of qualitative research, and phenomenology is often one of them. Their mistake is that the phenomenology they cite is Edmund Husserl’s version, and they further assume that it is a reliable tool for understanding the ‘essence’ of what is studied. To set the stage for my analysis, I will first offer a brief exposition of what I view as a needed correction concerning phenomenology in popular qualitative methods textbooks and then follow it with an explicated literature review that justifies the need for a study of this nature.

Martin Heidegger’s Existentialism: A Theoretical Framework for Studying Three Pre-Service Teachers’ Engagement with Hidalgo

Heidegger’s Teacher

Edmund Husserl argued that it is possible for researchers to investigate the thing itself, i.e., the concrete phenomena of conscious experience. Their investigation begins with understanding the intentionality of consciousness, whereby consciousness is aware of something, and hence it is directed towards that something. Husserl thought that if researchers could exclude their subjectivity from their investigations, i.e., through bracketing it, they could overcome the Cartesian subject/object dichotomy and arrive at knowledge of the thing itself.

Basically, the dichotomy holds that while the experienced, represented, or re-
membered object is inside one’s consciousness (e.g., a dog), the real object itself lies outside of it. Bracketing one’s subjectivity reduces the intentionality of consciousness to a fundamental relation: consciousness and its immediately given object. Once the researcher brackets his/her subjectivity, s/he may begin with gaining a knowledge of the ‘front side’ of the dog, then adding that knowledge to that of the ‘lateral side,’ then adding both units of knowledge to that of the ‘back side,’ etc., finally gaining a full knowledge of the whole dog! In sum, Husserl resolved the subject/object dichotomy by bracketing off researchers’ subjectivity and aggregating units of knowledge about an object in order to gain full knowledge about that object.

To express the foregoing in visual terms, imagine Picasso’s The Guitar Player (1910). As in Cubist painting in general, this work presents the object from multiple perspectives simultaneously. Each contour refers to the object as a whole, though it does not emerge as such, for perception of the whole requires many viewings. It is only after the viewer brackets off previous experiences of having seen various guitar players that s/he can combine various acts of perceiving this painting to finally perceive it entirely. Inductively, each perception anticipates other perceptions whose fulfillment is the object in its entirety. In short, this is how the viewer may perceive the totality of Picasso’s guitar player (McCudden, 2004).

The Student Becomes the Teacher

Husserl’s phenomenology, especially its belief that knowledge of the intentionality of consciousness leads a researcher to ‘objective’ truth, fails when his notion of bracketing is rejected. This is precisely what his student, Martin Heidegger, did in his first major work Being and Time, and it is the theoretical position I will take throughout this study. In short, Heidegger’s existential work amounts to an analysis of Dasein, i.e., any being (including humans) that manifests the structures he describes as existentialia:

Because Dasein’s characters of Being are defined in terms of existentiality, we call them “existentialia.” These are to be sharply distinguished from what we call “categories”—characteristics of Being for entities whose character is not that of Dasein (Heidegger, 1962, p. 70). Existentialia and categories are the two basic possibilities for characters of Being. The entities which correspond to them require different kinds of primary interrogation respectively: any entity is either a “who” (existence) or a “what” (presence-at-hand in the broadest sense). (Heidegger, 1962, p. 71)

Consider the proposition that consciousness corresponds to a who, and in turn a who corresponds to a “state-of-mind”—i.e., a mood, a particular attunement to something, which includes having emotions. The result is a fundamental existential (singular of existentialia). In other words, “... in every case Dasein always has some mood” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 173). Moods, not cognition (or at least not mere cognition), disclose the nature of Dasein’s consciousness, which is always constrained by Dasein’s historicity, i.e., by space and time—what Heidegger refers to as its ‘there.’

For a researcher to evade such moods, as in the attempt to bracket them, does not prove their absence, but rather is proof of a mood whose chief mark is evasion. Of course, evasion does not inhere in all moods, only in those that seek to evade. Fundamentally, to bracket consciousness presupposes a knowledge of how Tradition has shaped and constrained it. When teachers hide (actively or passively) the fundamental basis of Tradition, for instance, by requiring students to memorize and regurgitate what Tradition has defined as a ‘fact,’ individuals remain ignorant of the extent of its influence upon their consciousness and are thus rendered incapable of bracketing it.

The foregoing considerations should make it clear that I do not pretend to achieve objectivity in this study, for I am myself engaged in the daily struggle of identifying Tradition’s influence upon my consciousness. Rather than avoid my subjectivity as a researcher, I embrace my consciousness. Rather than avoid my consciousness, but also one’s eye. According to Tyler’s article “Film as a Force in Visual Education” (1968), his investigations of modern art yielded the following findings:

We must not forget that what the film gives us is the illusion of an organic object in motion, only its image, not its actual existence; and this has been obtained literally by a succession of still images, so closely spaced that when the film is rerun in a projector the movement of an object is reproduced. Organic movement has been shown in time and it has been shown in space—while film can knit together
unlimited time and unlimited space with a perfect illusion of fluency: the fluency that we especially term cinematic; that is, change of form takes place simultaneously with a change of geographic environment. All this happens objectively and is transmitted to us optically. That is the point. Film tends to expand our psychic image of the world, not only as we see it in our daily lives, but as a formal visual notation, a spectacle, like an extra arm of our memory. (Tyler, p. 17)

For Tyler, the cinematic sensibility is best expressed as a “...spatial conquest ... the illusion of instantaneous passage, and in the case of image and sound, the fact of instantaneous communication” (p. 17). It educates the eye by controlling this change through a “rhythmic manipulation of movement ... (ranging from) utter rest to extreme activity” (pp. 18, 19). The major contribution of film-as-art-form is its emphasis on “temporal data as the subject matter” (p. 18), while fundamentally altering its contextual dimensions. In short, Hidalgo’s annihilation of the dimensions of American and Middle Eastern social contexts, as well as its substitution of illusion for it may tempt pre-service teachers like the subjects of this study to accept its narrative as an accurate representation of Muslims. The possibility of said substitution is the reason that compels the present study.

**Using Film to Educate Pre-Service Teachers: A New Idea?**

This is not a new idea. In their article entitled “Learning about Teachers through Film” (2002), Raimo and colleagues listed several films they studied to learn how they may be used to educate pre-service teachers about their future roles as professionals. The authors categorized dominant teacher themes in films (e.g., “Teacher as Guardian of Culture and Liberator”) that are explicitly about education as practiced in schools, they discussed their implications for teacher education, and they identified realistic and beneficial roles for teachers to play in future films. They concluded that popular films6 (e.g., Stand and Deliver [1988], Mr. Holland’s Opus [1995], and Dangerous Minds [1995]) could provide a starting point for reflection, discussion, and learning more about why people choose to be teachers, and how they contribute to students’ development. They recommended the following:

We need films that show how successful education is connected to necessary societal reforms outside the school, that government and communities can work collaboratively to address the many difficult problems facing society that affect education. (Raimo et al, 2002)

While I agree with the authors that such films are important and should be used in the ways they suggest, we need others as well, including those like Hidalgo, which make claims on the ideal nature of the post-9/11 American ‘nation’ and construct Muslim identities in particular ways. Teacher educators could rely on such films to have their pre-service teachers re-hear the possible social consequences of assuming their representation of Muslims is true, of acting accordingly, and of encouraging their students to do likewise.

Let’s consider an example in which we could easily imagine a pre-service teacher taking a course that would count toward her major in English education. We may ask: what role, if any, should Hijab-wearing Muslim women play in the American ‘nation’? Diva Abdo’s analytical essay Uncovering the Harem in the Classroom (2002) suggests a small and oppressive one, unless teachers use films to correct their students’ misconceptions regarding the socio-cultural complexity of this garment.

From within the interdisciplinary perspective of post-colonial Arab feminisms and the context of an “Arab Women Writers in English” course, Abdo concludes a film such as Covered: The Hijab in Cairo, Egypt provides a point of entry into discussions of the hijab’s significance. The film is such a point because it provides a cultural context in which, or in response to which, other written texts about the topic may be discussed and analyzed, thus minimizing the risks identified above by Schlüpmann and Levin and Tyler. While the hijab issue is an important one in Hidalgo, it is secondary to the film’s primary concern with the post-9/11 American ‘nation,’ viz., imagining the social function of an American victory in the Middle East.

As the foregoing examples suggest (and here I also refer to the notes), popular film has been used to promote cultural understanding among diverse groups found in American classrooms. According to Nadaner’s Art and Cultural Understanding: The Role of Film in Education (1981), a view from the perspective of Gramsci’s notion of popular art reveals that, though some films denigrate and distort, ...film art at its best might contribute more adequate images to our understanding of other people’s cares and outlooks. It makes available a base of imagery upon which values can be formed and further efforts to gain knowledge can be initiated. (Nadaner, 1981)

In sum, Nadaner, like the other authors cited in this section, understands film’s power to both educate and miseducate. In light of these considerations, it is not a question of whether film should be used to educate pre-service teachers, but rather how and to what end. Fundamentally, the evidence supports the need for pre-service teachers to study a film like Hidalgo. Thus, this study will hopefully serve as an original contribution, not only to the literature, but also to the practice of educating our schools’ future teachers.

**Methods**

This analysis involves a phenomenological case study based on a screening of Hidalgo.10 I relied on semi-structured interviews, video-recorded events in the field, observations, field notes, and memoranda to generate and analyze data. Through typical purposeful sampling, I found three pre-service teachers to interview from an “Introduction to Education” class at the College of Education in a large southeastern U.S. university. Two were female and the other was male; all three were in their late teens. Mary and John were self-identified secular Jewish-Americans, and Katie was a self-identified Protestant Caucasian-American.11 Mary, John, and Katie were not friends outside of their class.

The themes that emerged during our interviews in the form of an overlapping consensus became my codes. The interview questions became the categories where I subsumed the codes and the comments that corresponded with them. My findings came from this organization.

**Findings**

Eight themes emerged from my interviews with John, Katie, and Mary. For the purposes of this study, I will focus on what I consider were the three main ones, especially with respect to my interest in Hidalgo’s representation of the American ‘nation’ and the policies it should follow regarding Muslims here and abroad: victory, torture, and tolerance. I cite other themes to further illustrate my findings.

**VICTORY**

From the first class discussion immediately following the film, victory emerged as a major theme, and Trent—a classmate of John, Mary, and Katie—introduced it. He initiated class discussion by raising
the issue of Frank’s Caucasian-American/Sioux hybrid and fractured identity. I say ‘fractured’ because, as Trent put it, in keeping with the first half of his identity—ethnically, organizationally, and historically associated with the American Army of the 19th century, he delivered the orders that resulted in the attack of the innocent Sioux victims of Wounded Knee—those to whom the other half of his identity was attached. The moniker “Far Rider,” given to him by Chief Eagle Horn, meant “one who rides far from himself, and never looks home.” It symbolized Frank’s psychic split.

Moreover, Trent noted that Frank kept this moniker until the climactic moment in the sizzling desert when, within a drop of sweat of his death (and Hidalgo’s), Frank summoned his Sioux ancestors with a dolorously wavery chant, which was answered by an apparition of his mother whispering words whose mystical and soughing echo cooled the sands with “…Bluuuuuuue Ch (ahhhhhhh... iild).” Only then, having reconciled his ethnically (and nationally) coded psychic halves, though always in cowboy costume, could Frank ride to victory over his Muslim competitors.

In short, Trent seemed to understand that Hidalgo, while it acknowledged that Frank was torn between the demands of his All-American Cowboy and Native American selves, also proposed that they must be (and can be) reconciled, and that his All-American Cowboy-coded victory in the “Ocean of Fire” depended on such reconciliation. Though I think his reasoning would have soon led him to realize that the cowboy/Sioux tension represented a domestic dispute upon whose resolution victory in the Middle East depended—in short, that he could have viewed the race as a metaphor22 for pro-American Middle Eastern policy (e.g., the race ends in Iraq when Frank rides Hidalgo surrounded by Muslims who raised his flag with cheers on the shores of the Persian Gulf), it did not on this occasion. That his reasoning could have led him to such a conclusion, however, is what hinted at the potential significance of this study.

I was intrigued when victory reappeared as a theme in the context of the interviews. At that time, John and Katie were both active in university team sports, and we know that the end result of all athletic competition is fundamentally understood in terms of victory and defeat. When I asked whether Frank Hopkins is a hero, Mary said that according to the traditional definition thereof, he is because he won. John said that he was for several reasons, including that he won the race. Katie said, “He proves everybody wrong,” apparently by winning, for no one expected him to do so.

By contrast, when I asked whether Lady Anne Davenport (one of his many nemeses) is a hero, John said “no” for three reasons, the first of which was because “she lost, she didn’t win.” He did, however, consider Muslims to be heroes because they have stood the test of time for “thousands of years.” John apparently considered standing the test of time to be a victory. Yet every Muslim competitor lost the race against Frank, and John clearly understood heroism in terms of winning. Hence, his own premises should have led him to the conclusion that Muslims are not heroes, at least not insofar as the race in this film is concerned. However, he did not note this inconsistency.

I then proceeded to ask John another question. When I inquired about whether will or blood (i.e., tradition) counted more toward ensuring victory, he answered, … will is more important, because Frank ... expressed more will (than the Muslims) ... him and Hidalgo, had more endurance, they ... had a lot inside themselves, to get through the race, to win the race…. it’s Frank’s will that decides to rescue (the fallen racer who had declared his fate to have been sealed by Allah), and rescuing him is a good thing, it was ... a good quality of his. So, it was okay ... to bend the traditions a little bit....

Before I asked this question, John was convinced that Frank was a hero, and winning made him so. As his answer above declares, ‘will’ underwrites winning. Thus, it appears that heroism, winning, and will are inextricably interrelated in John’s view of Frank. Moreover, John considered Frank’s violation of the Muslim racer’s moral convictions to be a “good thing ... a good quality of his.” Therefore, Frank is justifiably in violating a Muslim’s moral convictions, at least within the context of a ‘race,’ precisely because he possesses the hero-winner-will nexus.

In considering Frank’s victory as a proposal for actual U.S./Muslim relations (and here we transitioned from notions of film-as-entertainment to film-as-a-plan for social action), Katie said, … by the end, he won the race, but he also gained the respect of the Muslim people. And the Sheikh (said), “Be a guest in my house.” Even though he was (formerly considered) an infidel, (the Sheikh now considered him) ... a respectable person, and a friend... So, it kind of suggested that, even though people don’t agree on stuff, no one agrees on everything, it doesn’t mean we can’t live at peace with each other.

Yet Katie was silent about what the victory-as-proposal made clear: living at peace with each other depends on an American victory over Muslims in the ‘race,’ which ended in Iraq. When I asked the more pointed question about considering Hidalgo as a proposal for how pre-service teachers should treat multiculturalism, Mary said:

Something to be defeated ... the ultimate end is that the White man wins and everyone else bows down to him... (Multiculturalism is) a threat ... the whole of the movie considers everything that’s not Frank as a threat.

Yet the scene in the desert described above proves to be an exception to Mary’s pronunciation. Specifically, Mary neglected the issues Trent had raised in class, viz., that the film renders Frank’s reconciling of his Caucasian-American/Sioux identities as a necessary condition upon which his victory depends. The step that Trent did not take, but to which his reasoning would likely have led him had we had more time, is that Hidalgo symbolically presents victory in the Middle East as contingent upon a reconciliation of a domestic dispute between Caucasian-Americans, on the one hand, and Native Americans on the other; in general terms, between differences of domestic opinion.

Consider the reconciliation in question as symbolizing the social context in which Hidalgo was first screened—e.g., the current war in Iraq began in 2003; American domestic opinion was divided between invading Iraq and seeking diplomatic solutions; France, Germany, Russia, and around 36 million people worldwide took part in almost 3,000 protests against the Iraq war,13 including 3 million in Rome, whose protest made it the largest ever anti-war rally.14 This suggests that embracing domestic “multiculturalism” was necessary for the Bush administration to wage war abroad unilaterally.15 In short, and in light of the line of discussion that Trent began in class, Mary’s comments suggest that multiculturalism may be a “threat,” but only when extended to accommodate Muslims in the Middle East and in the United States.16

Torture

In considering Frank’s victory as a proposal for U.S./Muslim relations, John said,
... the film suggests that an American comes into their territory, things happen along the way, but in the end, their presence was justified ... the film suggested it was a good thing for an outsider to come in and change things up a little bit, yeah, that's it. ... tweak the values, do different things, and then the people responded to that in a positive way, and, in the end, it was Frank being there ... (which) made (them) better off ... than if he didn't show up ... it suggests that ... they should switch over to Western ideas ... because ... they're better ... they were ... exposed to his ... Western justice (emphasis mine), and, he became a hero to them ...

Earlier in our interview, John had considered the justness of Islamic justice. He said,

It seems extreme, because of what ours is ... (it is) less efficient (because beheading Aziz for his treachery against the Sheikh would have left unknown the whereabouts of his daughter and her kidnappers). (Frank's) torture (of Aziz) ... it's immoral, but, it's more effective. Right, when you put someone against the wall, they're more willing to spill the beans, as opposed to ... not torturing them (which he said with hesitation).

John was referring to a scene sequence in which the Sheikh sentenced Aziz (his servant) to beheading for disloyalty—loyalty being the standard against which his fate was measured. John considered beheading—a quick and painless endeavor (assuming a sharp blade and an expert swing), as “extreme.” However, in the same sequence, Frank pushed the sword-wielding Sheikh aside, kicked Aziz, and progressively pressed the spur of his boot against the latter's throat until he confessed what he had done with Jazira (the Sheikh's daughter). The confession led Frank to rescue Jazira, which allowed him to continue the “race” that he won. In short, Frank inflicted severe pain on Aziz and magnified its effects by enlisting Time as an ally.

As John himself stated, Frank subjected Aziz to “torture,” and he approved of it. Katie echoed these sympathies when she questioned the Sheikh's justice, “are you gonna get Jazira back, is it gonna help you get any closer to getting your daughter hack?” What they did not consider is that torture often leads to useless information because its victim’s chief interest is stopping the pain. Though I did not pursue the line of questioning at the time, it would have been interesting to consider Frank’s “Western justice” within the social context.
of Islamic law to shade his opinion about tolerance, suggest that tolerance should work in only one direction. In other words, Muslims should learn to tolerate Americans, and not the other way around.

**Conclusion**

I consider *Hidalgo* a piece of privately funded pro-American propaganda, and I was disheartened to see pre-service teachers reflect its largely anti-Muslim opinions and attitudes. In the Sheikh and Jazira I see my own experience through the eyes of the American mainstream: exotic, but fundamentally inferior. I cannot bracket my immigrant experience because I too early learned to measure my soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity, and I still struggle to understand the basis of a tradition that relegates me to a low rung on the American great chain of being.

I am disheartened to have found evidence that some of tomorrow’s teachers may look at their Muslim and minority students with fear, suspicion, contempt, and pity. I am dejected because there may be other students with similar experiences (in New York and elsewhere), who are now pre-service teachers and who will soon have Muslim and minority students in their own classes.

John is from New York City, and I expect for him to return there to teach physical education in its public schools, where one in ten students (or 10%) is a Muslim. The average size of a New York City high school class is approximately 30 students. Ten percent of 30 is three. If we assume that Muslim students will be evenly distributed among his classes, and that he will teach five classes per day, then we can expect for him to have 15 Muslim students per semester, and 30 per year.

What would happen if he were to coach a team like the Lady Caliphs of Warith Deen Mohammed High School in Atlanta, Georgia, who insist on wearing *hijabs* and long pants to play competitive basketball? The effects of his “tolerance” could be exponential.

I stated earlier that there are approximately one million adult Muslims in the United States, and Islam is progressively attracting a larger percentage of the world’s population. Hence, pre-service teachers should not be surprised to find a Muslim child in their classrooms. Although none of my interviewees directly expressed specific prejudices, from their comments we can infer potentially difficult educational consequences for their future students should those students, for example, wear a veil to class and argue in its favor; support the existence of harems; write papers about the glory of Allah or of Islamic philosophy, the injustices perpetrated under the banner of the Christian God, of free market capitalism, or the ethnocentrism of American feminisms; require sensitivity, understanding, and support should they need to pray or fast; or otherwise insist that U.S. intervention in the Middle East is illegitimate. In light of my current analysis, I am not optimistic.

In closing, I want to stress the apparent support of these pre-service teachers for torture as a means to enforce assimilation into Western culture. Although I doubt they will actually torture the first Muslim student who expresses views contrary to their own, they may choose to deny, to suppress, or to ridicule them, or perhaps worse, to flunk the student and thus deplete the social capital that comes with institutional certification.

This would amount to intellectual coercion and emotional anguish—hallmarks of what I would call psychological torture. If professors and instructors in teacher education adopt films like *Hidalgo* into curricula for pre-service teachers, and use them in the ways suggested by the authors cited above, they could mitigate, if not prevent, such consequences as have here been imagined from occurring.

**Notes**

1. See *Narrating the Nation: Representations in History, Media, and the Arts (Making Sense of History)* [Berger, Eriksonas, & Mycock, eds.]
2. See the section entitled “Film Study and Accountability” in Haroldo Fontaine’s *An Interdisciplinary Proposal for Employing Film to Release the Imagination of Pre-Service Teachers*, published in the Proceedings of the 2007 Society for the Philosophical Study of Education. Though the cited statistics deal with high school age students, they are relevant because pre-service teachers are not much older than high school students. Thus, I suppose the numbers, which are substantial, are similar.
3. According to the website www.rottentomatoes.com, *Hidalgo* spent four weeks in the Box Office Top 10, ranked as high as number 3, and earned a total of over $67 million.
4. Though I am familiar with (and respect) the staggering diversity within Islam and among Muslims, I use ‘Middle East’, ‘Islam’, and ‘Muslim’ interchangeably throughout this study, unless otherwise stated.
5. See http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/tables/08s0074.pdf
7. Film has been used to teach pre-service teachers and other professionals in the following fields: educational administration (see English & Steffy, 1997), counseling (see Higgins & Dermer, 2000; Koch & Dolarhide, 2000), business (see Tarnopolsky, 2007), religion (see Lindvall, 2005), organizational leadership (see Barbour, 2006), health and nutrition (see Cotton & Byrd-Bredbenner, 2007), and nursing (see Parker & Faulk, 2004).
8. Trier’s *School Film and Videocompilations as Pedagogical Texts in Preservice Education* (2003) provides evidence for how teacher educators can profitably teach pre-service teachers to rely on popular films to learn about strategies and tactics that promote equity and social justice in their daily practice. While Trier’s study did not include films about the role of Muslims in the post-9/11 American nation, his goal of promoting the development of pre-service teachers’ critical consciousness regarding issues of equity and social justice is consistent with mine.
9. Walker and Rasaminanan’s cross-site case study Tarzan in the Classroom: How “Educational” Films Mythologize Africa and Musecuate Americans (1993) deals with similar issues of misrepresentations of African Americans. While I agree with the need to offer a fair and balanced view of individuals and the ways they are said to represent a particular ethnicity, I disagree with the authors’ methods, for they did not ask students what they learned from the films their study considered. This is important because some students may have disagreed with their opinions. This is precisely why the present study focuses on how pre-service teachers themselves interpret *Hidalgo* and learn from it, not on how my theorizing predicts that they will.
10. The film is based on the life of Frank T. Hopkins (played by Viggo Mortensen), an American, late 19th century Pony Express Mustang rider invited to participate in the “Ocean of Fire”—an impossible race through the Middle East against the best Bedouin riders astride the finest Arabian horses from the choicest breeds.
11. All three pre-service student names are pseudonyms.
12. According to Maxine Greene’s *Releasing the Imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts, and Social Change* (1995), one of the major social functions of film is to provide audiences with metaphors with which to name and understand their own worlds.
13. See Alex Callinicos’ 2005 article “Anti-war protests do make a difference” in the *Socialist Worker* (http://www.socialistworker.co.uk).
15. I.e., without the support of the U.N. Security Council.
16. For an illustration of domestic intolerance of Muslims, see Pepi Sappal’s 2008 article “Workplace Intolerance Rises For Muslims After Sept. 11” at www.vault.com
17. To read more about how fiction influ-
ences torture policy today, see Dahlia Lithwick’s Newsweek article “The Fiction Behind Torture Policy” (July 26, 2008; http://www.newsweek.com/id/149009/).

18 See http://www.religioustolerance.org/isl_numb.htm
19 See http://www.tc.columbia.edu
21 See www.mohammedschools.org
22 See http://www.religioustolerance.org/isl_numb.htm

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