

## **Readers' Theater as Public Pedagogy: Putting Culture into Motion to Foster Dialogue, Democracy and Understanding about Somali Immigrants in Maine**

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This paper focuses on a research project with Somali immigrants in Maine and examines how one aspect of the project—a readers' theater performance—bridges theory and action to foster dialogue, democracy, and understanding about the complex issues of immigration, race, and religion. This paper proceeds in four sections. The first section provides some background about Somali immigration to Maine. This is followed by a discussion about how the readers' theater project is situated within three intersecting theoretical paradigms—those on participatory action research, performance ethnography, and critical pedagogy. The next section details the processes that led to the development and implementation of the script. The paper concludes by discussing how the readers' theater project is a form of transformative, public pedagogy that bridges theory and action to promote social justice. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Transformative Studies Institute. E-mail address: journal@transformativestudies.org Website: http://www.transformativestudies.org ©2009 by The Transformative Studies Institute. All rights reserved.]*

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