

Biermann, Soenke, Southern Cross University, Australia

Southern Pedagogy: Challenging Eurocentric Teaching in Cultural Studies

Within an increasingly standardised higher education landscape, cultural studies practitioners face some difficult pedagogical challenges. How do we negotiate the various institutional demands around pre-determined learning outcomes, constructive curricular alignment and assessable graduate attributes? How do we reconcile these demands with our concerns for challenging dominant norms, fostering intellectual risk-taking, and creating democratic and open-ended learning spaces? And how do we theorise, articulate and justify our pedagogies to institutional bureaucracies without reifying the very discourses we seek to critique? In other words, where do we draw our pedagogical concepts, tools and theoretical language from? While cultural studies has vigorously deconstructed Eurocentric discourses and critiqued asymmetric power relations, our pedagogical theories and practices are still most likely informed by European traditions, however critical they may be. Are there 'other horizons' (Watson, 2007) worth knowing and exploring? Following recent calls for scholars and practitioners to engage more deeply with indigenous and majority-world theories and practices (Battiste, 2002; Connell, 2007; Dasen & Akkari, 2009), this paper considers how reflective engagement with other pedagogical traditions might be facilitated and theorised in the cultural studies classroom. Just what are the parameters for developing ethical processes of engagement that facilitate what Dei (2008) calls 'epistemological equity'? How can pedagogical practice be both responsive to and informed by diverse ways of being, knowing and doing? How can this be facilitated in a respectful, critical and rigorous manner? These are all critical questions for developing challenging alternative pedagogical narratives in the 21st century.