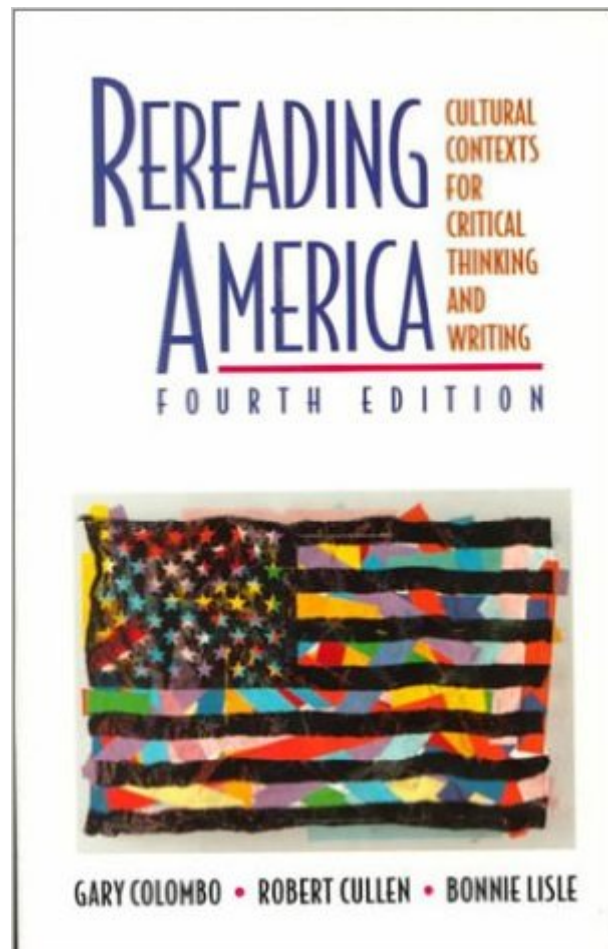


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Rereading America: Cultural Contexts For Critical Thinking And Writing



Synopsis

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Book Information

Paperback: 802 pages

Publisher: Bedford Books; 4th edition (January 1999)

Language: English

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Average Customer Review: 3.5 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (14 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

I'm confused by the reviewers who label this book as leftist propaganda. Sure, it has essays by Michael Moore, Susan Faludi and others who have raised a few hackles, but these articles can be placed in context with other articles both in the textbook itself and on the online guide. I am using this book in a comp course, and I have to say that from my years of teaching, many students *do* need to have a few hackles raised, to be challenged in their beliefs, at least at my predominantly white middle class college....Even if you disagree with some of the viewpoints presented in this textbook (and if you didn't disagree with ANY of them, then it really would be a politicalthink primer, wouldn't it?), isn't one of the goals of teaching composition to teach *critical thinking and reading*? My students seem to have no problem either with being 'brainwashed' into the alleged left wing ideology of the book, or with picking apart the obvious snowjobs. They are excited to read articles that are somewhat relevant to their lives, and from people who are currently big (Moore, Medved, Kilbourne, Tannen) in their fields. Most of my students have had 18 years of experience being brainwashed by the media, and this book offers plenty of choices of opinions, and plenty of *different ones* that the students really have to think for themselves. Oh, and for the record, I'm a Republican. Extra weird how *I* don't see the vast liberal conspiracy in this book.

I have used this book several times now, and while I have had a few neo-conservative students (like those writing the more scathing comments here) who have initially bristled at the more left-leaning readings, those same students are happy to find that voices from their world (i.e. Michael Medved, Danielle Crittenden) are also represented. In fact, these students have left my class stating that the book surprised them, got them to think about these issues from different perspectives. While it certainly didn't turn them into activists for the left, it did get them to think more critically about the propaganda they are fed from ALL sides of the political spectrum, and it also helped them to decipher solid argument from fallacy-driven writing. The reason I chose to use this book was that I wanted a text that gracefully integrated voices from a multitude of class, race, gender, and political standpoints. This text does just that. We don't just hear from dead white guys and a few token voices of color and gender. Rather, we hear from people of all different lived experiences--everyone from Dan Rather to June Jordan. The editors also include some helpful tips for using this book in a composition classroom, which many instructors who are wary of using such controversial material will find useful. Most composition instructors want to help their students think for themselves, to avoid simply parroting what their favorite pundits and talk radio hosts say, and this book, by challenging what we consider norms in our culture, helps to accomplish that by challenging American cultural myths from all sides of the political and social spectrum. However, if you don't like your class discussions to become heated, and if you are scared of ruffling students' feathers, I would recommend a different book. Actually, The Arlington Reader provides a number of similar readings with a much less politically-charged context. Overall, however, I find this book to be a gem amidst the many cultural readers out there.

I have read this book and have used it in a class for advanced EFL students studying the US. While I would agree that there is clearly an editorial bias in the book, the selection of most of the pieces published is *excellent*. The organizational idea is perfect for courses which examine/explore main social values in US society, and is useful in discussing the whole topic of 'diversity' as it is thrown around in the US and elsewhere. I do think the editors could have been less heavy handed with their interpretation of what is 'critical thinking'. There is an introduction for each piece which, in my view, tries to force a particular viewpoint rather than simply challenge an existing one or open a topic for broader examination. The editors don't leave much room for those with more conservative views, and I think that this detracts from the credibility of the book as a whole. I found this book extremely useful with my students, most of whom (unlike US college students) have very little experience with academic material that challenges mainstream or traditional thinking. Students should be made to

understand that they needn't accept the perspective of the editor or author outright...Critical Thinking includes challenging the challengers!

I needed this book for a class (bought from readmore_21) and I got it as expected in good condition. This book includes thought provoking stories from known American authors, it was an interesting book and some of the stories, which vary in length, were quite interesting. I enjoyed it. I gave it 4 stars because without this class I probably wouldn't have read it but it made for enjoyable forced reading :-)

I like the book because it has so many stories that make you think about how we can be a better America if we can get past generalizations.

Every essay in this fabulous book is enjoyable, readable, and enlightening. We learn the experiences of women, African-Americans, Latinos, Asians, working people and many other groups through the voices of people in those groups. The selections are both autobiographical and fictional. I assign this book to classes from high school through graduate school, and I also give it to my friends. It's good!!!

Too much texted!

I had to read this for my college Freshman English class, and I have to say that I looked forward to reading assignments from it. It is a great book with fascinating, in-depth, eloquent essays about the "myths" of our American culture. Highly recommended.

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