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## A Socratic Café for Critical Inquiry


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# A Socrates Café for Critical Inquiry

**Jody Piro & Gina Anderson**

Texas Woman's University

The logo for Texas Woman's University (TWU) is a dark red square with the letters "TWU" in white, bold, sans-serif font. A thin white horizontal line is positioned below the letters.

# Two Goals

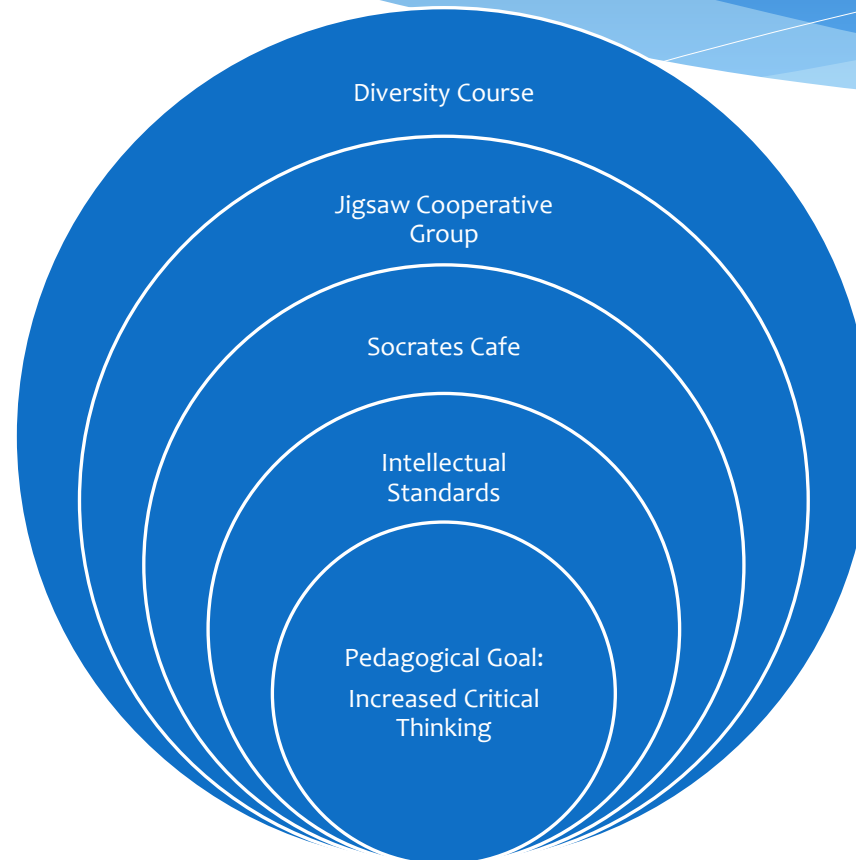
- \* Share research
- \* Conduct a Socrates Café and use Intellectual Standards

# Background

## Global Awareness/Diversity

- \* Calls for emphasis on global awareness, diversity, and multicultural education have increased (Bennett, 2011).
- \* One of the common strategies among these initiatives is the development of critical thinking skills among teachers and students (Banks, 2008; Gay & Howard, 2000)

# Pedagogical Frameworks for Critical Thinking



# Purpose/Objective of Research

- \* The research objective was to understand the development of critical thinking by way of Socratic questioning through the duration of a course in diversity in education.

# Research Design

- \* Grounded in a constructivist approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) and was conducted in three phases.
- \* Each phase of the research utilized an ex post facto design (Cohen & Manion (1989) employing convenient sampling (Patton, 2002).
- \* A teacher/researcher stance (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993) situated our inquiry into critical thinking within a Socratic Café.

# Research

- \* **RQ:** To what degree was critical thinking occurring by way of Socratic questioning? When Socratic questioning occurred, which intellectual standards were most often applied?
- \* **DC:** Archival online Socratic Café postings
- \* **DA:** Deductive Directed Content Analysis: Taxonomic using the Intellectual Standards
- \* **Data Set:** Two sections of two semesters of initial certification MAT/MA/MEd students in Diversity



# Intellectual Standards

- \* Handout: Use in research; use in class.

# Sample Analysis

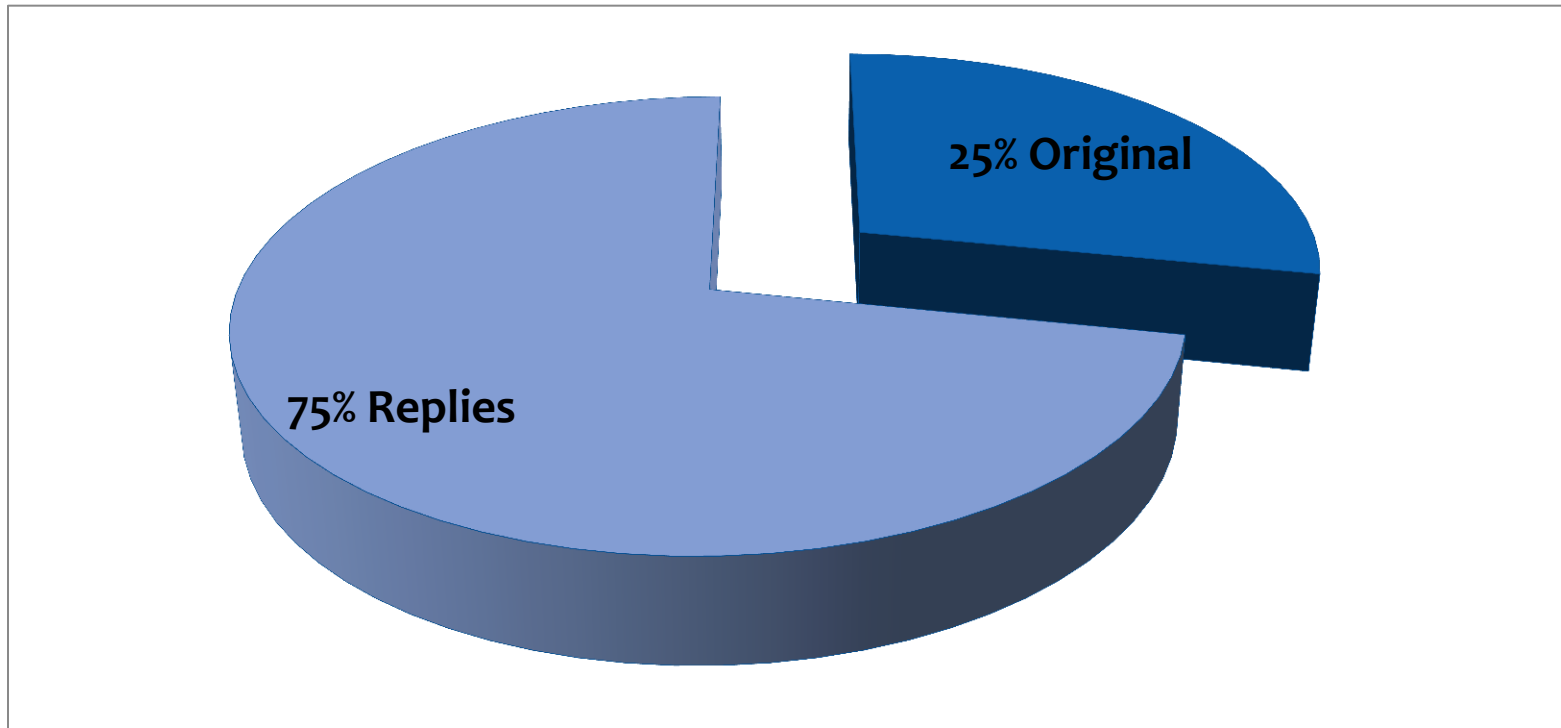
## **Standard 5 Depth:** (Topic: Patriotism)

SQ-R: What do you do with a student who thinks the country of their origin is more worthy of their love than the one they live in?

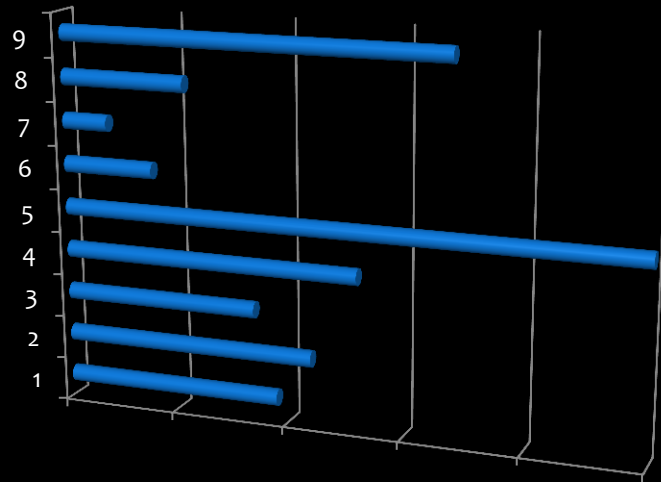
## **Standard 6 Breadth:** (Topic: Pride & Shame)

SQ-R: People tend to feel better about themselves because of their illustrious ancestors. Should they? If not, should they feel shame at their racist ancestors?

# Findings: Original or Reply Postings



# Findings



# IMPLEMENTATION

- Conduct a Socrates Café
- Attempt to identify the level of Intellectual Standards you are using when you ask a question.
  
- Audio Clip:
- <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1688260>



# Guiding Question

- \* What is the purpose of education?

# Ongoing Pedagogical Issues

- \* The imposition of any structure in data analysis also limits the uses of the data to that construct.
- \* Enjoy the structure for our ongoing online discussion forums while simultaneously recognizing the inherent limitations of that scaffolding.
- \* Helping students to construct their own meanings and values in their contextual and situated lives.
- \* Other qualities we found important: intellectual humility, courage, perseverance, and empathy

# Questions or Comments?

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