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A Socratic Café for Critical Inquiry

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A Socrates Café for Critical Inquiry

Jody Piro & Gina Anderson
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Two Goals

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

Pedagogical Goal: Increased Critical Thinking

Intellectual Standards

Socrates Café

Jigsaw Cooperative Group

Diversity Course
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.
* 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.
**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
* Handout: Use in research; use in class.
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

25% Original
75% Replies

Piro & Anderson, 2013
Conduct a Socrates Café

Attempt to identify the level of Intellectual Standards you are using when you ask a question.

Audio Clip:

Guiding Question

* What is the purpose of education?
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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