



What does it feel like to be a problem?

Toward Unpacking Mathematics-Learning Experiences in Developmental Mathematics Courses

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- * DuBois' classic question regarding the nature of identity, "the color line," and Black life in the US
- * What does it mean to be a Black learner in non-credit-bearing remedial/developmental mathematics courses?
- * Who are our students becoming as mathematics learners in these courses?
- * What psychosocial phenomena are emerging amid their learning experiences?

My research program

- * Multi-pronged: (1) Mathematics identity and socialization, (2) **Math-learning experience in non-credit-bearing mathematics courses**, (3) Urban mathematics education
- * Drawing from multiple studies and institutional contexts toward unpacking math-learning experiences in NCBR mathematics courses at four-year universities

Overview of the research studies

- * Drawing from three studies (2008, 2011, present), involving approx. 150 undergraduates
- * Largely qualitative studies of learners' experiences in the classroom and in the broader institutional environment
- * Methods: Ethnographic observations and video analysis of classroom episodes; series of semi-structured interviews; interviews and artifact collection from key institutional stakeholders

Two central themes

- * Identity (Stereotype) Threat: Are students' racial, gendered, and mathematics-specific identities being primed in ways that may cause them to question themselves and their trajectories? (Larnell, accepted; Larnell, Boston, & Bragelman, 2014)
- * Cooling-out Phenomenon: Are students in non-credit-bearing mathematics courses subjected to socialization messages that may inadvertently lead them to dis-identify with the domain? (Larnell, in preparation)

Next Steps

- * As per Vilma Mesa's (et al, 2014) call to the mathematics education research community to consider the community college context
- * Chicago: Mayor's initiative to provide full scholarships to Chicago's City Colleges for Chicago Public School graduates who meet eligibility requirements
- * How do psychosocial learning issues differ across these contexts (two- and four-year institutions)?

Thank you

- * Larnell, G.V. (accepted). More than just skill: Examining Mathematics Identities, Racialized Narratives, and Remediation among African American Undergraduates. To appear in *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*.
- * Larnell, G.V., Boston, D., & Bragelman, J. (2014). The stuff of stereotypes: Toward unpacking identity threats amid African American students' learning experiences. *Journal of Education*, 149(1), 49-57.
- * Larnell, G.V. (in preparation). We real cool: Reconsidering the “cooling-out” phenomenon among Black learners in remedial mathematics courses.