

Black Women Academics: Artistic Expression through Teaching, Research, and Activism



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Abstract Based on interviews with nineteen black women junior faculty (BWJF), this study places academia within an artistic landscape and addresses how BWJF create artistry and artistic expression, handle perceived obstacles, and use their voices to enact change. We use W.E.B. DuBois (1926) and Alain Locke (1928) to understand artistic expression and create a framework to examine mentorship and networking for BWJF. Through debate, W.E.B. DuBois and Alain Locke responded to European “art for art’s sake”—the idea that the aim of art is purely for the self-expression and gain of its creator. Locke agreed with this stance, arguing such expression can have social, cultural, and potentially political impact. DuBois, on the other hand, argued art is cultural propaganda—the oppressed represent lived experiences—and must be considered within the context of how useful it can be for the greater good and the message of the people. BWJF are marginalized in the academy, but have become increasingly established as scholars, teachers, researchers, and social activists—all of which we identify as artistic outlets. Mentorship is central to the development of artistic expression, and through such academic artistic expression, BWJF are primed to find their voices and influence academic institutions and areas of expertise. We found that by introducing a framework that considers central elements of both DuBois and Locke, which we call DuBois-Locke, we better capture the experiences of BWJF. We also demonstrate how BWJF find outlets for authentic expression, achieve professional and personal gains, and engage in community involvement despite many challenges resulting from marginalization.

KEYWORDS: BLACK WOMEN • FACULTY • MENTOR • DUBOIS • LOCKE

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INTRODUCTION

The difficulties and coping strategies of black women in academia are central issues that shape the history, status, and future of faculty members who are women and racial and ethnic minorities (Gregory 2002; Patton 2009; Pierce 2003; Stanley 2006; Thomas and Hollenshead 2001). Not only must black women faculty members address marginalization due to racial and gender bias in the classroom (Johnson-Bailey and Cervero 2008; Johnson-Bailey and Lee 2005; Ladson-Billings 1996; Miller and Chamberlin 2000; Pittman 2010a; Reid 2010), but as academicians, they must also manage negotiating tenure, promotion, and workload in institutions with longstanding policies and practices that do not reflect social progress or respond to demographic shifts in faculty, staff, and students (Gutierrez y Muhs et al. 2012). On a grander scale, many black women faculty want to shape pedagogy, research, and society; this desire, however, is often contested as they often lack individual—and institutional—level support in the academy.

Further, gendered and racial issues can contribute to feelings of isolation and being undervalued (Singh, Robinson, and Williams-Green 1995) for junior-ranking black women. First, blacks are underrepresented in academia and in higher-ranking positions. In 2015, black women and men were 6% of full-time faculty at colleges and universities. Blacks comprised 4% of full professors, 6% of associate professors, 6% of assistant professors, 7% of instructors, and 5% of lecturers (National Center for Education Statistics 2015). Academia is overwhelmingly composed of men, and more men than women have tenure and senior faculty positions (Anderson and Smith 2005; Gregory 2001; National Center for Education Statistics 2015). Moreover, white women have higher rankings and salaries than black women (National Center for Education Statistics 2015). In comparison to black men, black women are underrepresented as tenured, tenure-track, full-time, or other positions above the ranks of instructor and lecturer (National Center for Education Statistics 2015; Wilder, Jones, and Osborne-Lampkin 2013), despite the fact that more black women than black men have college and graduate degrees and more black women than black men are in the academy (National Center for Education Statistics 2015; Schiele 1992; Singh et al. 1995). Black women academicians tend to hold lower ranking positions with lower salaries and have minimal opportunities for promotion and advancement. This leads to less professional development and lower academic standing (Thompson and Dey 1998).

In this analysis, we attempt to capture and explain some of the nuances of racial and gender inequality by transforming the way we understand the professional lives of a highly underrepresented group—black women who are junior faculty members (BWJF) in higher education. Our study places academia within an artistic landscape where teaching, research, and social activism are scientific forms of artistic expression, and academicians are artists with various forms of artistic development and expression. We then turn to the work of Alain Locke and W.E.B. Du Bois to illustrate how racial and gender disparities are (re)produced through the creation or suppression of art by BWJF. We begin by explaining how art is central to teaching and research and why calling academicians “artists” is appropriate.

As art can have different styles and forms of expression (McNiff 1998), the same can be said about teaching, learning, and research. Many colleges and universities have learning and teaching centers (LTC) that develop and advance faculty and student teaching and learning. The Center for Teaching Excellence at the University of Kansas has links to over 240 LTC websites at major colleges and universities in the United States (U.S.) and more for LTCs in community centers and abroad (see Singer 2002 for a review). The development and advancement of teaching, learning, and research encourage creativity and expression, all of which are forms of art and artistic expression. According to educational progressives and reformers Francis W. Parker (1894, 1896) and John Dewey (Dewey 1934; Kong 2011; Simpson, Jackson, and Aycock 2005), “good teachers” are artists who are creative and must increase the interest and involvement of students by challenging them (Bunting 2006; Kaplan 2013; Neumann 2006). Although the writings of Parker and Dewey were aimed at K-12 teachers and the learning and development of children as they grow into adulthood, the science and artistry behind teaching K-12 can also apply to college. This also pertains to the art and creativity of research and community involvement.

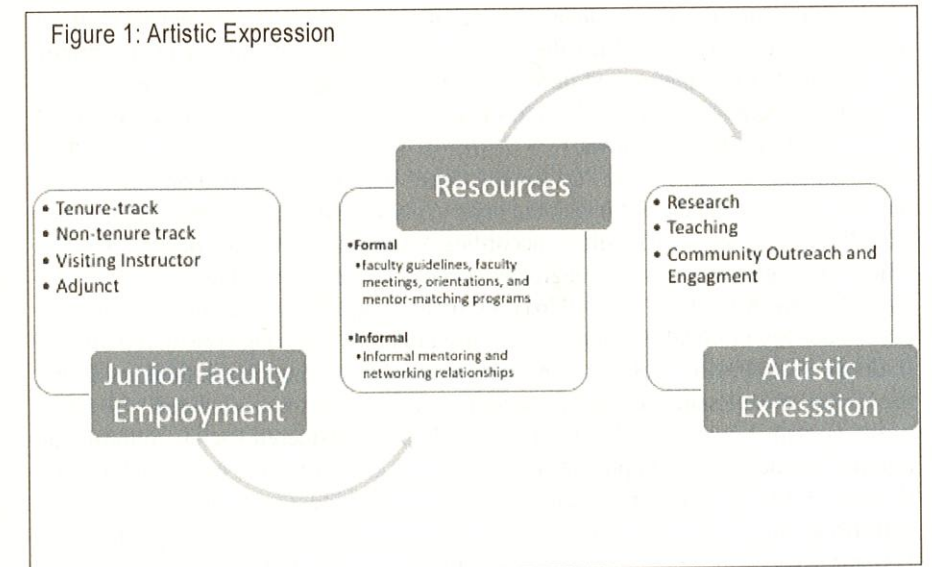
As is the case with academicians who are “good teachers,” those who conduct research and are involved with communities must find ways to reach different audiences and diverse populations. This includes bringing voice to issues that are often ignored or frowned upon because they do not fit the contemporary heterosexual, white, male paradigm (i.e., white heteronormativity), which is reflected in the theorists and researchers used in most academic fields and college classrooms (Hong 2008; Smit 2002). These experiences are of particular relevance to minority faculty, who tend to challenge or re-conceptualize white heteronormative expectations at academic institutions. They frequently challenge white heteronormativity when determining their career paths and goals, when deciding on learning outcomes for their courses, when crafting their research and areas of expertise, and when considering their involvement on- and off-campus.

Because academic art development and expression (through teaching, research, and community involvement) can vary by gender, race/ethnicity, and other social factors, our study has three components. First, we will discuss unique challenges many black women junior faculty experience as new faculty. Next, we introduce W.E.B. DuBois’s and Alain Locke’s perspectives on art and culture. Then we develop a symbiotic framework, called DuBois-Locke, which connects art and artistic expression to the exercise of knowledge and skill development. We then analyze the data and better explain how race and gender biases often influence resource access and professional development for BWJF. Lastly, we argue that developing art and practicing artistic expression can grant BWJF direction, confidence, and purpose. With these tools BWJF are better equipped to advance their professional agendas, meet the needs of their students and the academy, and avoid institutional and systematic barriers related to their marginalized status.

BLACK WOMEN JUNIOR FACULTY

While all academicians can be artists with artistic expression, this process can be more difficult for those in power-minority groups such as BWJF whose race and gender combination in the academy often go sight unseen. This study examines interlocking consequences of gender, race/ethnicity, and age for BWJF’s “art” and “artistic expression.” Research finds BWJF broaden and diversify knowledge and intellectualism by exposing students to the historical relevance of artists, authors, theorists, researchers, and practitioners across gender identities and of various racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds (Hong 2008; Swartz 2009). BWJF also often consider it outdated to ground courses and disciplines in centuries-old readings with men— mostly of European descent— as “fathers of the field” (Swartz 2009). The traditional curriculum tends not to question these “fathers” and neglects to address the ways in which the exclusion of non-white and non-male scholars shapes knowledge and intellectualism (Allison 2008; Hong 2008; Swartz 2009).

Men faculty, particularly white men, tend to be considered qualified, rational, and objective (Pittman 2010a, 2010b, 2012). In contrast, women faculty and racial and ethnic minority faculty are often considered underqualified, emotional, and biased (Bellas 1999; Tuit, Hanna, Martinez, Salazar, and Griffin 2009; Wei and Hendrix 2016). We posit that faculty, specifically BWJF, are intellectuals who use art to advance knowledge and social change in the face of white heteronormativity. This process can shift students, departments, academic institutions, and society’s notion that knowledge is value-free and objective. Some BWJF struggle to navigate their personal and group identity while seeking to determine their purpose and contribution as academicians. BWJF should not overextend themselves to represent diversity in demographics and perspectives (Allison 2008; Griffin and Reddick



2011; Turner 2002). There are, however, BWJF who appreciate diversity and choose to use their voices in this fashion. This appreciation allows BWJF to express racialized and gendered viewpoints more freely (Allison 2008; Patton 2009).

The artistic expression of BWJF can redefine gendered and racial/ethnic expectations. They often encourage students *not* to make presumptions of professors based on surface observations, including physical appearance, gender identity, or race and ethnicity (Ford 2011). Students are encouraged to use wider, diverse lenses through which to view faculty intellect, helpfulness, instruction, and authority (Ford 2011; Hong 2008; Patton 2009; Pittman 2010b; Pittman 2012; Reid 2010). Such artistic expression benefits BWJF, other minority faculty, and academia in general (Allison 2008).

Our findings indicate art and artistic expression are valued by BWJF, and mentorship and networking are critical components to their professional lives. Participants in our study explain the complexity and difficulty of mentoring and networking and the importance of attaining resources, whether their mentors and networks contributed to accessing resources or they felt as though they themselves pursued and accessed their own resources. This is especially important at the beginning of their employment. Once hired, the ability to gather resources and be creative can enable junior faculty to create their own “art” with suitable ways to express it. See Figure 1 for an illustration.

W.E.B. DUBOIS AND ALAIN LOCKE: ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

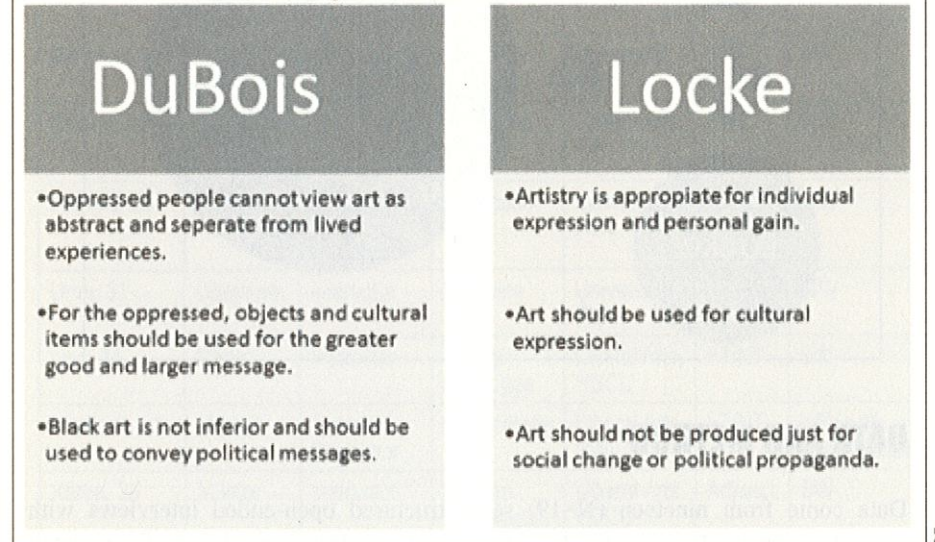
The processes of artistic development and expression for BWJF can be captured in W.E.B. DuBois’s (1926) and Alain Locke’s (1928) response to European aestheticism’s “art for art’s sake.” European artists and art critics in the 19th and early 20th centuries were critical of calls for art to have a larger meaning and purpose (Singer 1954). They considered art relevant in and of itself and coined the phrase, “art for art’s sake.” Art was created for the self-expression and self-interest of its creator. The premise of this theoretical debate lays the groundwork for our analysis of the lived experiences of the reproduction of inequality for this marginalized group. A summary of this debate follows.

DuBois disagreed with “art for art’s sake” because he felt that oppressed people (i.e., black arts and artists) lack the luxury of viewing art as abstract and separate from lived experiences. Therefore, according to DuBois, oppressed people must use objects and cultural items for the greater good and a larger message. DuBois’s “Criteria of Negro Art” (*The Crisis* 1926) presented black artistry as expressions of freedom to convey political messages, as opposed to black art being considered inferior (DuBois 1926, 1997). DuBois’s viewpoint differed from many black thinkers during the Harlem Renaissance, including Alain Locke who is often considered “the father of the Harlem Renaissance” (Grandt 2003). Locke considered social, cultural, and political impacts to be components of “art’s sake” and individual expression or gain (Locke 1928). He considered art appropriate for individual and cultural expression and disagreed with producing art *just* for social change or political propaganda. Perhaps Locke was more moderate than DuBois because DuBois preferred an overt

and intentional political impact. Figure 2 provides an overview of DuBois’s and Locke’s core points.

We consider DuBois’s and Locke’s perspectives relevant to BWJF in terms of growth as intellectuals, academicians, and contributors to social change. We argue that one cannot understand the lives of BWJF by using *either* DuBois *or* Locke

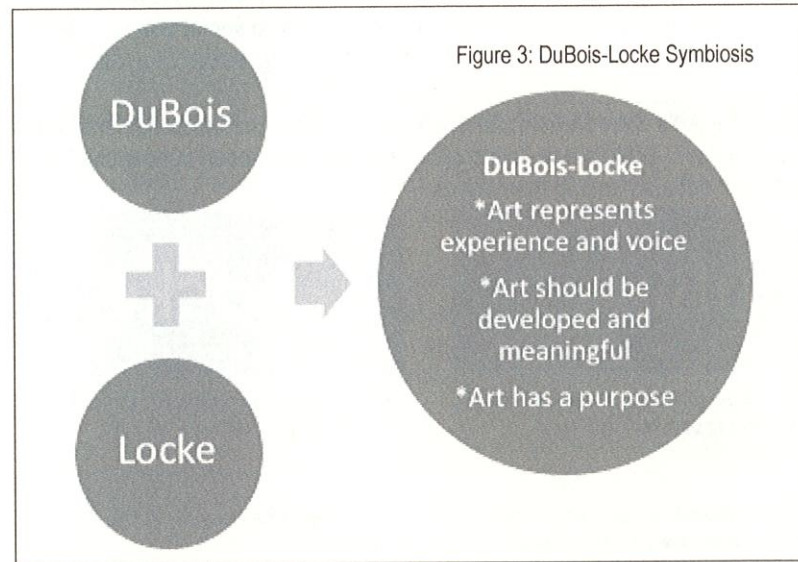
Figure 2: Art for Art’s Sake Debate: European artists and art critics considered art relevant in and of itself. DuBois and Locke disagreed with this notion concerning black art and artists, but debated among themselves.



but, rather, by combining the seemingly polar ideas of DuBois and Locke into a DuBois-Locke symbiosis (See Figure 3). DuBois-Locke is more comprehensive and contemporary. DuBois-Locke captures how BWJF shape academia and disciplines through teaching, research, and involvement both on- and off- campus. This brings greater understanding to artistry and artistic expression, capturing the ways race/ethnicity and gender influence the experiences of BWJF.

We do not purport that faculty should use teaching and research as a political platform in the partisan sense; nor do we encourage Talented Tenth elitism as DuBois proposed, or intellectual elitism—the idea that a college education leads to refinement and cultural advancement (Lemons 2001). Instead, we contend that the development of artistic expression and having more access to resources, which include faculty development and mentoring, can increase intellectualism and freedom of expression for BWJF (Allison 2008; Ford 2011). This process can be difficult for BWJF who often have tense relationships with students and colleagues (Pittman 2012). There is also an expectation, perhaps tokenistic, for BWJF merely to represent diversity and inclusiveness (Allison 2008; Ford 2011; Griffin and Reddick 2011; Turner 2002). Such difficulties and expectations are confining to the professional development and advancement of BWJF. Considering the combination of

the groundwork presented here, DuBois-Locke provides an original and appropriate framework for the experiences of BWJF.



DATA AND METHOD

Data come from nineteen (N=19) semi-structured open-ended interviews with current or recent BWJF in the U.S. Participants were recruited through snowball sampling and asked to participate in a study about their mentoring relationships as junior faculty members. Participant recruitment and consent followed IRB approved protocol. Data were collected and transcribed in 2012-2013 based on phone or in-person interviews. To ensure confidentiality, participants were assigned a respondent number and pseudonyms are used. Interviews focused on pre-appointment and graduate experience, current job(s), perception of progress at work, and mentorship experience.

Table 1 displays our sample's demographic characteristics. This sample has an age range of 30-40 years with an average age of 34 years. Participants represent 12 disciplines at 13 educational institutions: eight predominately white institutions (PWI), five historically black colleges or universities (HBCU). One institution is an historic women's college. Six institutions are research-oriented universities, and seven are liberal arts colleges. Nine participants have doctoral degrees, and ten participants have master's degrees. Seven respondents hold positions as assistant professors, ten are instructors, and one has a post-doctorate with teaching responsibilities. Six respondents are full-time tenure-track, eight are full-time non-tenure-track, one is employed part-time and three are adjuncts. One respondent was unemployed and did not provide her current employment status. Participants identified their primary faculty mentor(s). This list included nine white women (WW), eight black women

Table 1: Sample Demographics

Respondent Name, Age	Degree	Position	Discipline	Institution Type	Status	Mentor race and gender
Veronica, 33	Master	Instructor	Public Health	University, PWI	Adjunct	WW
Sharrise, 38	Doctorate	Assistant Professor	Education	University, PWI	FT/T	WW
Janet, 36	Master	Instructor/Coordinator	English	Liberal Arts, HBCU	FT/T	BW
Margaret, 31	Master	Former instructor	Education	University, PWI	N/A	BM
Selena, 34	Doctorate	Assistant Professor	Education	Liberal Arts, PWI	FT/T	WM
Pamela, 31	Doctorate	Instructor/Director	Education	Liberal Arts, PWI	FT/NT	WW
Uma, 31	Doctorate	Instructor	Medicine	University, PWI	FT/NT	WW
Lisa, 34	Master	Instructor	Foreign Language	Liberal Arts, HBCU	FT/NT	BW
Kimberly, 31	Master	Assistant Professor	Criminology	Liberal Arts, PWI	FT/NT	WW with Asian descent
Karen, 36	Master	Instructor	Modern Languages	Liberal Arts, HBCU	Adjunct	BW
Zandra, 31	Doctorate	Post Doc	Nursing	University, PWI	FT/NT	WW
Qadira, 33	Master	Instructor	Social Work	University, PWI	Adjunct	WW
Marcelle, 38	Doctorate	Assistant Professor	Communication	University, PWI	FT/NT	BW
Tina, 32	Master	Instructor	Social Work	University, PWI	FT/NT	BW
Melanie, 32	Master	Instructor	Psychology	University, PWI	Part-Time	BW
Abigail, 34	Master	Instructor	Foreign Language	Liberal Arts, PWI	FT/NT	WW
Whitney, 37	Doctorate	Assistant Professor	Business	University, PWI	FT/T	BW
Ronda, 34	Doctorate	Assistant Professor	English	Liberal Arts, HBCU	FT/T	BM&BW
Trudy, 40	Doctorate	Assistant Professor	Health	University, PWI	FT/T	WW

Key: F/T=full-time, tenure-track; FT/NT=full-time, non-tenure-track; BW=black woman; WW=white woman; BM=black man; WM=white man.

(BW), two black men (BM) and one white man (WM). Open-ended interview items allowed participants to explain how they established a faculty mentoring relationship. Participants shared their experiences in graduate school and as faculty.

The analysis was developed by using interpretive grounded theory methods (Charmaz 2006). We began by performing focused line-by-line coding (open coding) to create conceptual codes (axial coding) that involved analytic interpretations of the data inspired by participant responses. Participants described their successes, challenges, and establishment of mentor relationships. Themes then emerged from each data category after they were analyzed separately using open and focused coding, notes-on-notes, and analytic memos. After data analysis was complete, the data were analyzed to look for connections between positive and negative participant perceptions of their junior faculty experiences. In the following section, we interpret our findings using the DuBois-Locke framework. We show how art is created (or suppressed) and how resources, networking, mentorship, and institutional support determine the visibility and voice of this rare group of women. The analysis is illustrated later in this article in Figure 5.

FINDINGS

Art Needs Development and Meaning

Participants acknowledged that academia can be difficult for women, for black women, and especially for black women with minimal resources needed to formulate interests, develop skills, and foster expertise. We resolve that underrepresentation of black women in academia can contribute to feelings of self-doubt and real and perceived separation from colleagues. Black women faculty were often presumed incompetent when instead they faced unequal access to information and resources and environments in which power-majority groups feel more confident and more supported (Gutierrez and Muhs 2012). Feeling silenced and having fewer resources can be so omnipresent and encompassing that, in many instances, participants had difficulty pinpointing the source of their challenges. Selena, a part-time education instructor, commented:

I'm being challenged [about] being more vocal about what I need, why I need it, and how fast it needs to get done. In the past, I've pretty much requested certain things and if they happened, they happened. And if I was told it couldn't happen right now, I would just smile and go back to my desk. And now I'm at a point where I realize if I really want to build a program, or build a department, or even if I want to just build myself as a professional, there are some things that have to be done; and I have to be willing to just be bold about it and make it known. So that's my challenge for this year. It's really getting some things executed.

Qadira, social work adjunct, explained her experience:

I was just telling someone yesterday that [it's] just this *culture of academia* [emphasis added]. It's something that's hard to even articulate

to people who haven't been in it. And you don't even really know how to say, "Well, gosh I was challenged today." And then they're like, "well, what?" And you don't even know how to put it into words because it's just like that something that you can't really articulate... just whether it's the pressures ... [smacks lips, takes deep breath] ... Are you producing? What's your contribution? And even just some of the hard decisions that you have to make. Yeah, I'm feeling challenged. I feel challenged all the time. See? Even now it's hard for me to tell you specifically what those challenges are. But I can tell you the nature of those challenges. Just the pressure [to feel] like I'm producing and moving forward... moving ahead. That's always kind of that underlying challenge.

Tina, another social work adjunct, added:

I am challenged to advocate for change within the department whether it's in committees or in small group meetings regarding curriculum and the way that courses are taught. I'm challenged in those areas to be vocal and to advocate. And that's a challenge for me because that comes with a degree of experience and also you know you're talking... you're advocating and discussing with people... teaching these courses or are working in the school for many years and so that for me has been challenging. And then also, just creating a change... I think that leadership part... seeing what's missing and being very vocal and advocating or introducing a new method or a way of doing things. I'm always challenging myself about ways to deliver the information to the students and to create activities that promote critical thinking and discussion and really getting a sense of the information to be better students or better social workers trying the best that I can to make the information come to life through connecting it to the practice.

Although Selena, Qadira, and Tina had difficulty identifying the source of their challenges, other participants seemed to be very clear on the cause of their problems. They identified the interlocking dynamics of race, gender, age, junior-ranking, and even marital status, as contributing to the systematic reinforcement of racial stereotypes, the presumption of incompetence, or the question of commitment. As Ronda, an English assistant professor, explained:

I don't know what it is with black, female PhDs. But I feel like we have to work so hard. So much harder to prove ourselves in the classroom. Not only with students but with faculty. To stop stereotypes of the ABF- angry, black female [and] to get mentors. We've got to get them. For those who are married, and/or have children to prove that, "Hey! I'm still a good academic." I feel like [black men and women PhDs] have the same story.

The minority landscape and embedded gendered racism is crucial to the narrative of the black woman academic. There is a desire to find an academic environ-

ment where professional development is supported and faculty growth is positively received. These challenges illustrate the basic tenet of the DuBois-Locke perspective of art and artistic expression—the struggle and determination to use one’s voice and art for self or for the greater good, even as they cannot identify the source of their oppression. Finding an environment that is responsive to different teaching and research styles and interests can prove difficult. This difficulty is particularly the case for BWJF as they often combat negative assumptions, stereotypes, and criticisms. Consider how the following BWJF, Uma, instructor of medicine, and Veronica, an adjunct in public health, and Ronda responded to the question: “In what areas are you experiencing the most challenges?”

Uma: The racial dynamic—the constant fearing that I have to prove something. But I don’t need to prove anything. I’m being questioned, constantly, feeling like other people who aren’t as qualified or skilled don’t get the same kind of questioning or treatment that I get.

Veronica: On one hand I am proud of what I have done and accomplished thus far, but on the other hand, because we (meaning faculty of color) have to always do more than others, or just outshine in order to be recognized, I have done more than my share of supervision, university service, and teaching, while writing at the same time. I am satisfied in the work I do, but I hate that I have to consistently prove and do more. Basically, other folks can be selfish and say no, but we have to be good citizens of the community.

Veronica demonstrated a key point in our analysis and explained why DuBois-Locke explains artistic expression of marginalized lives—BWJF do not choose to be self-interested *or* community-minded. Instead, BWJF seek to build themselves up while considering the greater good (in this case, students, academia, and/or the community at large). The problem occurs when these goals lose balance. Typically, respondents build their self-efficacy as researchers, especially in research-intensive universities, but also in liberal arts institutions. Teaching and service are often described as altruistic in nature. Although they see that teaching and service contribute to the well-being of others, they occur at the respondents’ expense since they are not rewarded for it. Respondents expressed their frustration when university obligations related to service and teaching outweighed their ability to see themselves as researchers—their rewarded identity. When asked, “In what areas do you feel most successful?” Whitney answered, “unfortunately, in service.” She further explained:

I feel like I’m getting used a lot... to the detriment of me really being able to do more with the classroom, and definitely to the detriment of me being able to do some research.

Whitney’s response was similar to Ronda’s reflection on her success in teaching versus research:

I love teaching but the research [I am not doing well]. And it’s disappointing because I feel like I’m very much a researcher. That’s

how I’ve always looked at myself, but I haven’t been able to do my own stuff. I thank God for my mentors. I’m on their research projects because that helps me. But my own personal research? No.

These narratives demonstrate how some BWJF are passionate about their areas of expertise. Artistic expressions of BWJF are best demonstrated when BWJF are treated fairly and can contribute to academia and society. Black women junior faculty want access to and confidence in their “art” and “artistic expression.” When BWJF lack access to opportunities and resources, BWJF must put forth additional effort. Using the DuBois-Locke interpretation, art should be developed and have meaning. The above-mentioned respondents are having trouble actualizing their true selves because their art is being suppressed by other responsibilities and because of a lack of opportunities - both of which are not completely controlled by the respondent. This is perhaps how DuBois and Locke would explain the relevance and complexity of “art” and “artistic expression” for even the most knowledgeable and most assertive BWJF, who are described in the following section.

Cultivate Art through Information and Experience

Black women junior faculty are concerned with defining, developing, and expressing their skills and expertise including whether they should produce art for themselves or for the greater good. Again, we found that participants did not easily fit into one category or another. Participants had different motivations for sharing their art. As Qadira succinctly stated, “I love being a good citizen of the community. It’s why I got my degree in the first place.” Other respondents express a similar sense of motivation and personal vision. Qadira explained that her passion and focus on her research goals alleviate some of the challenges her peers face when trying to develop as scholars:

I didn’t have to go through a lot of challenges that I’ve seen students go through where they’re trying to find where they want to be... what they want to contribute. I knew. And when I speak about my [research] it’s very, very obvious that I have a passion because I’ve worked in the setting for so long I knew what the needs were and it was more of an interest in outcomes and interventions that brought me back [to pursue my PhD].

Qadira was also at an advantage because she did not have mentorship challenges. She described her mentorship experience as “very strategic”:

Each [mentor] serves a very specific purpose in my life. I have someone serving all of my needs or helping me meet all of my needs whether it’s personal or specific content area that relates to my dissertation. Maybe someone has a specific expertise in my methods. So each person has a contribution somewhere.

It is suggested that previous experience and access to information through mentors contributed to the participant’s ability to be successful in her research by

removing stress, uncertainty, and providing direction. The ability to focus on self, rather than institutional challenges allowed Qadira to focus on her passion and research agenda. Tina, another instructor of social work had a similar experience:

I originally came into the teaching profession just as an opportunity to provide a resource to students of practitioners who were in the field now. And so it originally turned out as just a part time thing that I wanted to do just as a way of giving back to fellow social workers and the up and coming fellow social workers but my love for teaching grew and so, for me, I feel comfortable where I am. My current position allows me opportunities to not only teach, but to also be connected with the students and have some areas for practice and I think that the design of my role; it's what I want professionally. And so, that's why I'm very content and very happy with where I am.

BWJF motivations vary. In these instances, participants identified a vulnerability in the community and used it as a research focus. In many, but not all cases, their research is race-based. They tackled issues of general health and global perspectives on language, education, and community well-being, for example. In each case, it was apparent that the participants did get a sense of efficacy out of the work they performed, which was often framed by cultural parameters. Their research agendas were meaningful to them because they often had life experiences that influenced their research interests. Here again, we apply DuBois-Locke framing to suggest that marginalized people need experience and information to develop their passions and actualize their purposes. Once they recognize how their art is meaningful to their lives, they can translate it for the greater good.

Racialized and Gendered Contexts Shape Ability to Produce (Have a Voice)

Some BWJF feel that their worth as faculty members and as academics is constantly challenged and that the tone of the environment is critical in terms of their teaching, research, and overall institutional presence (Patton 2009; Singh et al. 1995). These challenges are often centered on the presence or absence of the minority voice. One participant described it as “feeling like you’re present but not present” because of the frequency and conditions under which she has been ignored by her colleagues in faculty meetings. Another BWJF expressed the frustration of using her voice to advocate for change in her department. She felt her contributions have been dismissed because she is assumed to lack experience and seniority. The presence, voice, and value of minorities, especially women, have been historically challenged—except in diversity work or initiatives. Karen, a modern language instructor, explained the paradox:

I think as long as I'm staying in my place—to use Carter G. Woodson's term—and I'm speaking about things that relate to black folk or minority folk then my voice is extremely valued. Probably overly valued. Maybe [my colleagues] should listen to other people more than

they listen to me. But in terms of anything where we're dealing with other matters that have to do with academics, that have to do with administration, that have to do with different types of concerns... I don't feel I'm nearly as valued. And I have to fight to be recognized and be heard.

On the other hand, Karen prided herself on “offering that voice so that [black] students can take a course where they feel like they can identify with the content.” She suggested offering more black studies courses at her institution:

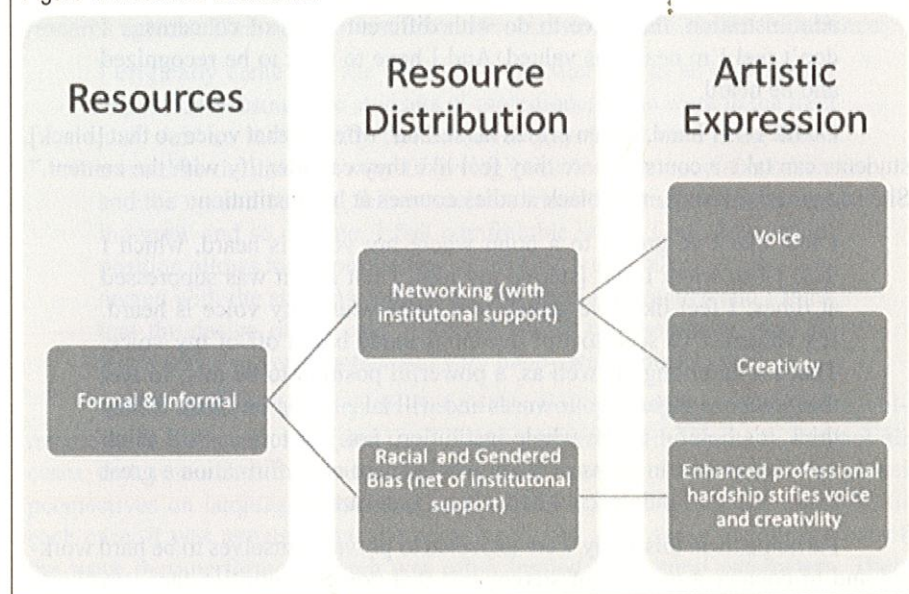
I feel like I've grown to a point where my voice is heard, which I didn't feel when I first [started my job]. I felt like it was suppressed at times. I feel like I've grown to a point where my voice is heard. It's valued. I've seen lots of decisions made based off of my voice. That's a humbling, as well as, a powerful position to be in... to feel that someone regards your words and will take action on them, if they think it's helpful to the whole institution, not just to me. So I think that I've grown in terms of acknowledgement and affirmation a great deal... which I didn't feel I had when I first came.

Participants in this study were expected to prove themselves to be hard workers and to counter a number of stereotypes that power-minorities face, revolving around age, gender, and race/ethnicity. The need to prove themselves made it difficult for BWJF to balance having a voice and artistic expression against being cautious not to say or do anything that would be considered evidence of a stereotype. Participants felt their voices were often unheard until gender or race was the topic—and sometimes not even then. Feeling silenced is an example of how BWJF often work harder than their non-black counterparts to be considered knowledgeable, hardworking, and worthy of a voice. Participants stated that once they were taken seriously and their voices were heard, they contributed greatly to academia and the larger community. As an illustration of the DuBois-Locke symbiosis, some BWJF consider their work as “artistic expression” and a voice to intentionally challenge and change academia, fields of expertise, and society. Other BWJF might consider their work “art for art's sake.” But this “art” is still relevant even if it does not intentionally challenge and change racial and gender dynamics in academia, areas of expertise, or society.

Social Relationships Matter

The data presented thus far highlight the importance of the establishment of networks and resources for professional advancement. These include finding mentors, collaborators, and other resources that can increase opportunities for BWJF. This assistance increases BWJF interests, knowledge, skills, and expertise and can make them less apprehensive about being involved at academic institutions and in areas of expertise. Acquiring formal and informal networks is important to develop and illustrate art and artistic expression. Without such guidance and resources, BWJF can have difficulty formulating art and their voices, and they can be less capable of reaching out and fully communicating with students, academic institutions, and

Figure 4: Resource Distribution



society. See Figure 4 for an illustration.

As indicated in the above findings, mentoring and networking are necessary for BWJF to develop and express their knowledge and skills. It is also important that BWJF find their voices as well as overcome insecurities and fear of criticism, which is the process of artistic development and expression. For participants in this study, most of these tasks were accomplished through relationships with mentors, especially while in graduate school. Good mentoring established professional outlets and networks for BWJF and improved their overall experiences. Mentorship also increased BWJF longevity at their institutions. An issue that arises is that the role of mentoring is often assumed or anticipated rather than studied empirically to determine outcomes; and there are few models with which institutions and departments can formally develop mentoring relationships (Patton 2009). Therefore, BWJF often are left to find their own resources and mentors. To explore the establishment of mentoring expectations, we asked respondents about their mentors in graduate school. We found that participants were quicker and more equipped to understand themselves as scholars and professionals when they had a supportive graduate mentor. In these cases, participants were better able to focus on themselves and their careers. When asked, "What did you like best about your relationship with your mentor?" Selena responded:

What I really liked best about it was [my (white woman) mentor] focused on what I wanted to do in terms of research and even a career. So, she never pushed me into a particular area. And that was something I heard from other classmates... that their mentors were trying

to get them into specific areas. She was always interested in what I wanted to do. So, I really had to think about, "Okay, what is it that I really want to do?"

Selena described focusing on her career and what she wanted to achieve as a junior scholar. She credits her mentor for guidance and assistance. Two other participants, Uma and Ronda, also described favorable treatment from their mentors. Their mentors, however, were very purposeful about shaping the experiences of minority students. Uma told of her mentor, a dean of the college, who was in charge of diversity:

[The dean] took all [the minority graduate students] under her wing and made sure that we [were going in the] right direction and made sure that we were taken care of. [Interviewer: *Why do you think she was able to do that?*] I spoke to her about this. What she went through was very different. She grew up in a time that was very different... very segregated... and she knew exactly what it was being an African American woman in medicine and in academia and she was a dean. And to even get to where she was, was practically impossible. She knew that there were only a few of us and she wasn't going to let anything or anyone put a damper on our experience in school or stop us from achieving our goals...make us feel less than... and she did a really good job of making sure we were protected in so many ways... because of what she went through. She didn't have all that, you know.

As Uma detailed, senior-level mentors can be instrumental in helping BWJF manage their experiences. They also protect minority graduate students from personal and institutional threats. The motivation behind this intimate mentorship stemmed from the mentor's own experiences. When Uma said, "she didn't have all that," she is referring to protection and guidance. Seemingly, as this dean fought to overcome challenges in her career, she strived to make the next generation of minority scholars experience less traumatic. Like Uma's experience, Ronda spoke of help she received from other graduate students and the Black Graduate Student Association. Ronda's primary help, however, was a mentor from an unlikely source:

The Black Graduate Student Association—my other friends of the department, who were white and black and whatever—they really did help me. They did a whole lot. They introduced me to some of their professors who ended up being on my dissertation committee. One professor was my chair (a black woman) but she moved to Michigan. She was in my department, but she really helped me a lot too...by that time I was in my third year. I had already finished [comprehensive exams] and was working on my dissertation. I almost gave it up because the chair I had was only using me for [his] research. And I realized that. Once I was finished with his research, he wouldn't call me back. So this other woman, who was on her way to Michigan, really took me under her wings. I moved to Michigan my last year to

finish. So, it was just like a God-send.

Ronda's experience could have been disastrous to her career, but she had a social support system in place. Not only did she have a mentor willing to work with her from afar, she had graduate school friends and the Black Graduate Student Association.

Support on these levels allowed participants to explore their passions, develop their research agenda, understand how they fit into their institutions, and begin to recognize their purpose. These are luxuries not afforded to many graduate students, who lacked mentoring and/or a social support network in graduate school. Whitney, a tenure-track business assistant professor at a PWI, explained what it was like not to have anyone to talk to in the department or about her graduate school experience. When asked, "how did it make you feel not to have a mentor?" Whitney stated:

That was a little tough. I was bounced around from advisor to advisor for no reason that I could clearly understand. My first year I was put with someone who wasn't in my field, and they told me it was just temporary and that they would put me with someone in my field the next year. The second year they put me with the department chair—which you can imagine you don't get a lot of mentoring and help from. And it didn't really help that he wasn't an interpersonal kind of guy anyway. My third year, I just said, "I'm sick of this. I can choose" and I picked a junior faculty member, but unfortunately he chose to leave the school [because he did not get tenure].

Without an advisor, mentor, or just someone to talk to, Whitney floated from person to person, year to year. She was able to complete her degree, but without the establishment of a professional relationship, she was unable to develop social relationships. She stated, "Unlike my counterparts, and my counterparts before me, and after me, where they were getting invited over to their advisors' homes and knew their families, I didn't have that experience at all." It is difficult to measure objectively the real disadvantage that she may have experienced, but the feeling of being the only graduate student, past, present, and future with this neglected experience definitely shaped her self-perception and potential career success.

Although some BWJF have a strong support system, including a good mentor and even multiple mentors who serve different purposes, and have always had a clear foundation for their teaching, research, and outreach interests, many BWJF have had difficulties. Such difficulties have led some participants in this study to feel disappointment, anger, and dissatisfaction about academia. While some participants respond to this by pursuing alternative resources and opportunities, other participants have accepted this reality, have concluded they have to fend for themselves and are not interested in a mentor or any form of assistance. This is an example of how BWJF are not monolithic and "artistic expression" has multiple meanings. Perhaps some BWJF consider "artistic expression" to mean being instruments of change in academia whereas other BWJF consider focusing on changing academia to be a distraction from, perceivably more important goals, such as research, teaching, and social activism.

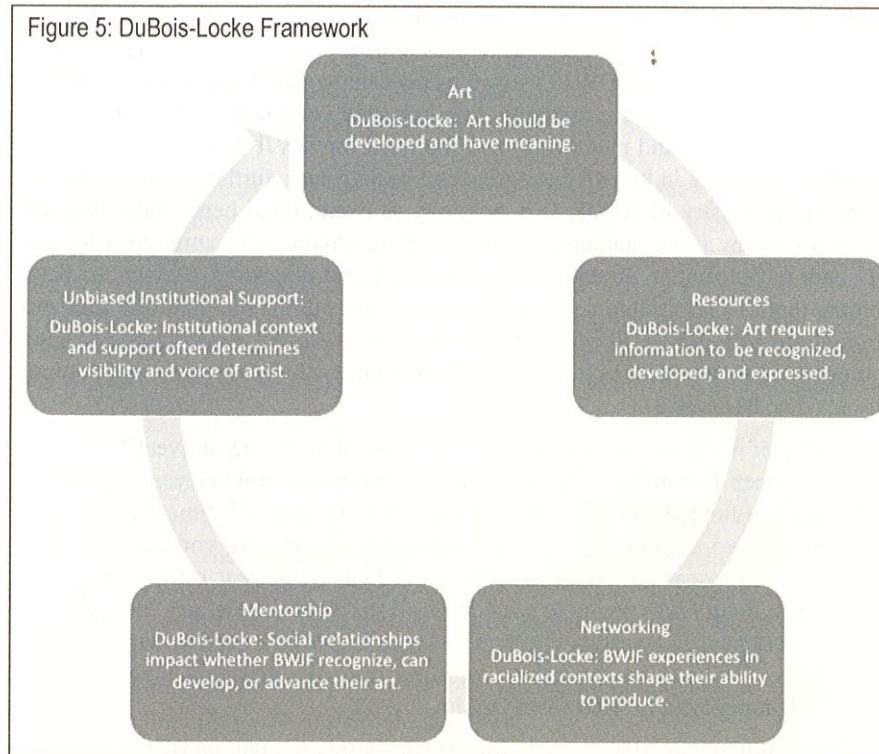
Our findings show that BWJF across institutions appreciate and are passionate about teaching, research, and reaching other people. Although such appreciation and passion are important, BWJF know they need networks and resources to develop and expand interests, skills, teaching, research, and community involvement. The roles of networking and mentoring, and the need for BWJF to have mentors who exemplify diversity in knowledge and social background, further demonstrates the need for the artistry of BWJF. It is possible, as exemplified here, that BWJF can be successful by living authentic lives managing artistic self-expressions for professional advancement, strengthening pedagogy, and educating students to better prepare them to contribute socially, culturally, and politically. With the guidance of good mentors, BWJF like Melanie, a part-time psychology instructor, are better equipped to be successful as junior scholars in their teaching, research, and community service. She noted:

One of my research mentors—a black woman at another university—has been extremely influential. We wrote a grant together years ago and got funded and did some work, but she told me, "it's time for you to stop working on other people's research. It's time for you to focus on your research." And that was like a light bulb went off because for so long I was trying to work with all the right people, get enough experience, do research, et cetera and then I realized I need to start my own...I'll be thirty-three this year and I'm finally getting it together. I'm doing exactly what I want to do.

Developing an art and practicing artistic expression enable BWJF to re-conceptualize certain expectations placed upon them at academic institutions when determining their career paths and goals, determining learning outcomes for their courses, crafting their research and areas of expertise, and considering their involvement both on- and off-campus. BWJF want the freedom of self-expression, professional development, and to contribute without any hint of perceived tokenism or quota systems and without presumed affirmative action hiring (Hong 2008). These findings illustrate that it is absurd to assume BWJF have identical experiences finding their voices and accessing resources. There is also no need for BWJF to feel conflicted when acknowledging differences *and* similarities in perspectives and experiences with faculty who are not black women or men (Smit 2002). Artists should appreciate contrasts *and* comparisons across demographics because artistic expression is difficult, and perhaps impossible, without peripheral vision that captures diverse perspectives and diverse audiences. Capturing diversity is an honest way BWJF can shape teaching, research, and social outreach. The findings of this study, as interpreted through the lens of DuBois-Locke, are illustrated in Figure 5.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Black women junior faculty are among professionals seeking freedom to express themselves and freedom from negative experiences. These freedoms can manifest themselves through the development and expression of different forms of intellect and knowledge; and they can reduce negative experiences and negative emotions



(Neumann 2006). Whereas some BWJF are comfortable being independent and seeking their own resources, there is a general need for and benefit from mentorship, networking, and resources to shape and encourage freedom of artistic development and artistic expression.

BWJF are conscious of the implications of their work for their professional advancement. The difficulty for BWJF lies along the lines of what DuBois and Locke expressed regarding art being significant for a purpose. And this is substantial because BWJF can have fewer outlets of expression and fewer support mechanisms. DuBois (1926) proposed that we cannot allow the mere existence of black art (in the present study: teaching, research, and community involvement) to result in complacency and inaccurate claims of diversity, nondiscrimination, and equal opportunity. Black art must exist *and* have a voice and a purpose. As is the case with all faculty, BWJF in the present study take part in various components of their jobs, academic routines, and practices. The importance of completing such tasks, routines, and practices is arguably more substantial for BWJF (and minority faculty, in general) who need acknowledgement for hard work, diligence, and their voices (Patton 2009). This acknowledgement is especially necessary if tasks, routines, and practices would go otherwise unfinished if not completed by BWJF. Investment of time and interest is crucial for career development and advancement. Without this investment on the part of BWJF, some tasks, routines, and practices will be completed by another faculty member. This can further silence BWJF and perceivably

reduce their necessity and place in academia. For BWJF who feel overworked and underappreciated there might not always have time or access to information (Griffin and Reddick 2011). Tasks, routines, and practices might need to be reevaluated and reorganized in importance and necessity, or given to another faculty member.

Further research should address how BWJF are shaped by self- and cultural-identity, and how identities shape BWJF networks and resources. Jones, Wilder, and Osborne-Lampkin (2013) offer a black feminist approach to how skills are recognized, captured, and developed for black women doctoral students. Graduate advisors who provide supportive and effective advising are a type of mentor. This type of mentoring helps black women doctoral students grasp the curriculum and develop as researchers and professionals. With effective advising and mentoring, black women doctoral students can feel validated based on knowledge and the ability to apply their knowledge. Validation contributes to self- and professional identity. This can be experienced by black women graduate students *and* black women junior faculty.

Research should also connect W.E.B. DuBois's "double consciousness" (1903)—the idea that black people perceive themselves from a unique black perspective and a perception of how outsiders view them—to the underrepresentation, perspectives, and experiences of black women faculty. This appreciation of double consciousness can capture the extent to which black women faculty balance "true self" with a "more accommodating self," and it can balance self-identity and self-expression with institutional expectations and institutional policies. Theoretically, with such a balance, black women faculty will be all-encompassing and more integrated in academia and professional areas of expertise. The practicality of BWJF's "double consciousness" should be studied considering the difficulty they can have in balancing intragroup and intergroup identities (Callan 2005). It might be the case that many BWJF find "true self" conflicts with a "more accommodating self." DuBois proposed greater emphasis on the "true self" and black consciousness rather than "other" and double consciousness (DuBois 1903). Research should assess if this is the case for BWJF in the 21st century.

Moreover, black women academicians should not be required to reduce or erase gender, race, ethnicity, or any other identity in order to be considered knowledgeable and qualified. The passions, inquisitiveness, and curiosities of black women are a component of the intellectualism, knowledge, and processes that shape teaching, research, and community involvement. This does not make black women irrational, illogical, or any more emotional than academicians of other races, ethnicities and gender identities. Black women junior faculty can shape higher learning by increasing diversity at institutions, in the classroom, and in departments and by adding marginalized, overlooked, or under-appreciated perspectives to pedagogy and research across disciplines and areas of expertise. Colleges and universities benefit from recruiting, hiring, and investing resources in BWJF. In turn, BWJF invest in their academic institutions and invest in their students (Moore and Toliver 2010; Pittman 2010a). Through various forms of self-expression, BWJF can influence academia and challenge inflexibility in learning, research, and communities. This investment and impact provide ways to handle stressors and allow BWJF to

envision their overall roles and contributions (Ford 2011).

As posited by DuBois and Locke, artistry and artistic expression can display identity and freedom—for Locke, such an expression does not require being a voice of social activism. It can be difficult for BWJF, however, to apply the artistic perspectives of DuBois and Locke practically. In addition to mentoring, networking, and gaining access to resources, BWJF need to feel comfortable and protected in academic institutions. There needs to be access to information, resources, and employment security (hiring, salary, stability). Black women junior faculty also need to feel able to shape their artistry and engage in artistic expression without being subject to biased complaints from colleagues and students. This is key for BWJF who are developing and utilizing their voices in various ways. Black women junior faculty also want security in creativity and “art speech” being protected in “freedom of speech,” regardless of whether BWJF are speaking about sociopolitical issues (Eberle 2007). With this protection, BWJF will increasingly encourage students to be knowledgeable of current events and social issues; and BWJF will not relegate students to the textbook and will, instead, challenge students to get involved in on- and off-campus programs. Some BWJF believe it is not enough to speak about issues in the classroom, it is more worthwhile to show students how to enact programs and enact social change (Fox 2012).

This study provides a nuanced and innovative framework for understanding the experiences of an underrepresented professional group—black women in the academy. Like all studies, it has its limitations. A methodical criticism could stem from our sampling design. We engaged in purposeful sampling using a snowball method to strategically acquire key informants. Black women PhDs comprise less than 1% of the population. For instance, of the 4,006 people who earned a PhD in 2016, only 122 were black women (U.S. Census Bureau 2016) making them a difficult population to identify and with which to execute a random selection study. Snowball sampling can lend itself to “network” sampling (Biernacki and Waldorf 1981) where respondents are likely to recommend others who share experiences. We address this concern in two ways. First, Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) show that this method may be more beneficial when constructing new theory since the researcher reaches saturation much more quickly than with other methods. We identified a range of experiences, however, from our respondents, leading us to contend that the range of experiences does not lend itself to “networking” concerns. Theoretically, we posit that our framework reduces the complex perspectives of DuBois and Locke into easily manageable and broad categories. In our opinion, this is what a framework is designed to do. We cannot capture the unique and complex experiences without broad framing. With these considerations in mind, we contend that we have added an innovative perspective and understanding of inequality to the academic and applied discourse to better capture and promote the lives of BWJF.

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