

1116-97-2588 **Rachel Cywinski*** (worldvisitor@rocketmail.com), worldvisitor@rocketmail.com, San Antonio, TX. *Can't make it to the bottom rung: Adults afraid of mathematics.*

A two-phase, sequential mixed methods study with a primary 16-week quasi-experimental quantitative study, was conducted among students attending below-college-level courses at a Historically Black College that now has a majority of Hispanic students. Half of the students were in classes in which the instructor discussed mathematics anxiety, and half in classes without this supplemental discussion. Supplemental instruction was derived, with permission of publisher Brooks/Cole, from Richard Smith's "Mastering Mathematics" (1998) and Cynthia Arem's "Conquering Math Anxiety, 2E" (2003). The Revised Mathematics Anxiety Rating Scale (Plake & Parker, 1982) was used with permission of Barbara Plake, for pre-semester and post-semester comparisons for 732 students. Findings indicated that changes in level of mathematics anxiety during the semester may be a confounding variable in studies designed to seek correlations between mathematics anxiety and student achievement in mathematics. Results of the study raise larger questions for public policy regarding the availability of below-college-level courses in mathematics for adult students, and implications of such policies on potential lifetime earnings for those students. (Received September 22, 2015)