

# The souls of black folk by w.e. b du bois

[History](#)



The Souls of Black Folk essays by W. E. B. Du Bois were composed during a crucial time in United States history concerning race relations. In 1868 and 1870 the fourteenth and fifteenth amendments passed. Even with these amendments, segregation was still in effect, particularly in the South. Even though the Southern states had received assistance during the Reconstruction period, the region was still feeling the result of the Civil War by the end of the nineteenth century.

Race relations echoed antagonism on the part of whites for blacks: " The Nation has not yet found peace from its sins; the freedman has not yet found in freedom his promised land. Whatever of good may have come in these years of change, the shadow of a deep disappointment rests upon the negro people- a disappointment all the more bitter because the unattained ideal was unbounded by the simple ignorance of a lowly people. " W. E. B. DuBois believed that though African Americans were free men, they did not experience the full experience of what it means to be free.

The Souls of Black Folk expands the minds of the readers allowing for a deeper acceptance into the lives of the people of African heritage. W. E. B. Du Bois articulates the true meaning of the problem of the color line through history as well as descriptive personal scenarios. In his essay, Du Bois explains the handling of both a rational and an emotional appeal by underlining the facts of racial discrimination through Jim Crow Laws and lynching as well as his personal pain through of childhood memories to demonstrate his viewpoint of the problems of African Americans.

Du Bois successfully reaches his audience by sincerely convincing the people of the North and the South. The Souls of Black Folk famously declares, " The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line. " DuBois believed that education was a dangerous virtue in the hands of some people. Education among all kinds of men always has had, and always will have an element of danger and revolution, of frustration and displeasure.

Though DuBois wants education for everyone, he believes that it can lead to danger amongst some people who exercise it too freely or possess too much knowledge. According to DuBois, self-discovery brings upon respect amongst every human being. " There must come a loftier respect for the sovereign human soul that seeks to know itself and the world about it. " DuBois urges the African Americans to use their freedom and education to learn more about the world and themselves, which ultimately leads to self-discovery.

W. E. B. DuBois and many other Enlightenment s shared several of the same beliefs about freedom, education and self-discovery. Though DuBois might be referring to African Americans with these ideas, they are still quite comparable with the ideas of using freedom and education for personal advancement. With freedom, one has the right to accomplish anything they desire, which leads them to education that then gives them new ideas and philosophies in life.