

# The soul of black folks essay

[Sociology](#), [Racism](#)



This collection of short essays was written in 1903 and basically changed the way people thought and talked about race in America. WEB Dubos broke down the notion of a scientific explanation for racism and racial bias.

He essentially went to the University of Atlanta to do just the opposite, to accomplish by scientific means some understanding of race relations and what was called at the time “ the Negro problem. After only a few years, he realized that you can’t solve a social problem with hard science, it’s like trying o write a poem with a Rubric’s cube, or determine the square root of a prime number by reading the collected works of Marx. The answer will fail to satisfy the original question – may lead to interesting further inquiry, though. Anyway, though his prose can be a little list-heavy, he’s got some incredibly strong blunt-edged phrases. “ How does it feel to be a problem? ” is essentially how he translates most questions about race by white people. Which is the ruses version of the question of race as put to the person on whom racism is perpetrated. W. E.

B. Dubos was a heavy thinker, and his reading of the dualism of racism – that is, being able to see oneself dually, as seen by oneself, like oneself, and as seen by the rest of society, as unlike the collective Self – is essentially what some of the more progressive thinkers (Edward Said comes to mind) of the twentieth century have come to. And Dubos was onto this in 1903.