

Beyond The Souls of Black Folk Leading Journal Redefines Legacy of Du Bois

More than forty years after the death of W.E.B. Du Bois and more than a hundred years after the publication of his seminal *Souls of Black Folk*, his life and radical vision are widely misinterpreted, according to leading scholars in Black history. A special issue of *Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture, and Society* (Volume 7, Numbers 3-4) redefines his legacy for Black America today.

Widely recognized as one of the most eloquent proponents for a color-blind, integrated American society and as a founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, DuBois (1868-1963) also had a consistent vision of radical democracy that is neglected in most biographies and scholarship, says **Manning Marable**, Professor of Public Affairs, Political Science, History and African-American Studies at Columbia University.

“The last thirty-odd years of his political and intellectual life were obscured, ignored, or relegated to history’s footnotes,” says Marable in his article, “Reconstructing the Radical Du Bois,” in this issue. “Occasionally, press coverage of the centennial celebrations of *The Souls of Black Folk* mentioned that DuBois had also been a prime architect of Pan-Africanism; rarely mentioned were his credentials as an advocate of women’s suffrage, socialism, and peace.”

DuBois died as an expatriate in Ghana in 1963 after being targeted as a subversive by the U.S. government. This special issue of *Souls* brings together an interdisciplinary group of scholars in history, politics, sociology, and African-American studies to ask how the works of Du Bois speaks to the study of race politics today. Contributions include:

- An analysis of the dialectic between the Black **Diaspora and the African Homeland** through the lens of Du Bois’s experience and social theory.
- An appreciation of how Du Bois negotiated his roles as both a serious scholar and as a **public intellectual**.
- A history of the contentious relationship of Du Bois with the rebellious young sociologist **E. Franklin Frazier**

In addition, the special issue brings together papers presented at a symposium on Du Bois held at Yale University in March 2005.

“With each passing year mainstream work in political science, sociology, and philosophy increasingly acknowledges the contributions of W.E.B Du Bois to our thinking about the role of race,” says Ange-Marie Hancock of Yale University in her introduction to the symposium. “The conference brought scholars from various institutions together to provide intensive engagement with Du Bois beyond the limitations of each discipline’s approach to studying race.”

Symposium articles span literary theory, social science, and politics, including:

- A **psychoanalytic** study that examines *The Souls of Black Folk* as an expression of “Du Bois’s personality writ large.”
- A review of “**civilizationist**” logic in Du Bois’s *Souls* period, a logic that mandates differential treatment based on peoples’ presumed level of “civilizability.”
- An exploration of Du Bois’s concept of **double consciousness** as it applies to contemporary Latin America.
- A portrait of Du Bois as a propagandist who presaged the contemporary notion of **race as a social construction**.

“Let us return Du Bois, or at least our understanding of him, to the realm of revolutionary and radical politics – where he truly belongs,” says Marable. “The final chapter of the Du Boisian legacy, the quest to achieve radical democracy, remains to be written.”

Published by Taylor and Francis, *Souls* is a quarterly interdisciplinary journal that maps the intellectual contours of the contemporary Black experience. Each issue contains articles, symposia, interviews, and book reviews by scholars, writers, and political leaders in the Black community. Visit the journal’s web site at: www.soulsjournal.net.

Subscription information for *Souls* or a sample copy of the special issue “W.E.B. Dubois” (Volume 7, Numbers 3-4) can be obtained from the address below. A copy of the journal can be viewed online at <http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/10999949.asp>.

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Souls: A Critical Journal of Black Politics, Culture, and Society

Volume 7, Numbers 3-4

W.E.B. Du Bois

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