

EDUCATION IN FOCUS

"Education is that whole system of human training, within and without the school house walls, which molds and develops men."

--W.E.B. DuBois

W.E.B. DuBois



Dr.. William Edward Burghardt DuBois was a scholar and leader of many social justice and political action movements of the early 20th century. His [photo exhibit](#) documenting the life of the American Negro for the 1900 World Fair is now part of the public domain.

Speech given at Johnson C. Smith University

APRIL 2, 1960

WHITHER WHY AND NOW

Difficult Problems of Race and Culture

"What will be our aims and ideals" if we assume that we are equal in America? If we treat being integrated into America's traditional schools as progress, what will that mean for our schools and community? What will we lose? "Are we to assume that we will simply adopt the ideals of Americans and become what they are or want to be and that we will have in this process no ideals of our own?"

Maintaining the Memory of Negro History

We lose much for the cause of integration: "We would cease to acknowledge any greater tie with Africa than with England or Germany. We would not try to develop Negro music and Art and Literature as distinctive and different, but allow them to be further degraded as is the case today." Our aesthetic is more than our style and our swag; it is our gateway to the world. Our art, our culture, our dress, and our ways of being provide us with a pathway to survival, flow, and joy. Knowing our history, reclaiming our likeness, our language, and our institutions is our way of reducing further loss and preserving that which will sustain us...for generations to come.

Education for Black Joy

With admission to public schools, at every level, "certain things will inevitably follow. Negro teachers will become rarer and in many cases will disappear. Negro children will be instructed in the public schools and taught under unpleasant if not discouraging circumstances." Where is their joy? Where is our joy? Where are their mirrors? Must they always look out on the world through doors that remain closed to them?

African-American: Eternally Connected



Shame and being "ashamed of themselves and their folk...tends to be the point of view of those of our children who are educated in white schools." These (shame and being ashamed) are the products of fear in the face of measurement against others' truths: judgment that evaluates in paucity of understanding, ignorance, stereotypes, and out of ill-intent. We are both African and American. We are Black. We are borne by the traditions and strength of the Negro. Black Lives Have Always Mattered. We Celebrate Black History 365.

Also see The Education of Blacks (1920 - 2020) Online Youth Exhibition project ([Education of Blacks in Charlotte: Quarter 2](#) "We are equal") for historical photos and textual insight supporting DuBois' comments

Johnson C. Smith University

Philadelphia Alumni Chapter

JSCU Philly Alumni Association Black Joy Project 2021
#TellThemWeAreRising