Chapter 14

The Era of Self-Help (1880–1916)

AP Topics

After reading this chapter you should understand the learning objectives and concepts associated with the following AP Topics:

- Disenfranchisement and Jim Crow Laws
- White Supremacist Violence and the Red Summer
- The Color Line and Double Consciousness in American Society
- Lifting As We Climb: Uplift Ideologies and Black Women's Rights and Leadership
- Black Organizations and Institutions
- HBCUs, Black Greek Letter Organizations, and Black Education

Chapter Overview

As the nineteenth century came to a close and the twentieth century dawned, African Americans had the harsh realization that the "separate but equal" rule established by the *Plessy* v. *Ferguson* ruling was an illusion. Driven by the ferocious racism of many White Southerners, there was an accepted view of African Americans as inferior in every possible way: legally, politically, religiously, and socially. African Americans felt betrayed by their own country, but they focused on working to improve their situation by helping themselves. Empowered by hope, determination, and a positive outlook, they achieved significant progress in education, economics, and community activism. The Black population was not a monolith and those with more advantages sought to help those who were less fortunate. Black Americans established iconic institutions and embraced a self-view that transcended racist caricatures and stereotypes, and this became the foundation of a collective Black identity. Despite the Jim Crow laws that made racial segregation a national policy, Black Americans never lost sight of the American dream of equality and opportunity. Even so, the diversity within the Black community led to disagreements about the path to equality and whether women would have a role in guiding the movement forward.

Maggie Lena Walker and the Independent Order of St. Luke Bank Staff

Courtesy National Park Service, Maggie L. Walker National Historic Site

Terms to Know

nadir the lowest point of something

uplift the act of improving the conditions or status of a person or group of people

status quo the existing state of affairs

shun to avoid or reject

eke to just barely obtain or do something

succinctly clearly and briefly

denomination a religious sect unified by shared practices and beliefs within a broader faith

philanthropy an act taken or a gift, as of money, made for a humanitarian purpose

heathen a derogatory term for a person who does not belong to a major religion

titan one of great size or power

noblesse oblige honorable, responsible, and generous behavior expected of people of nominally high or noble birth

dole a person's lot or destiny; also, a benefit payment from the government

progressive supporting or promoting policies and other government actions to advance the public good

exemplify to be a typical example or illustration of something

admonition a reprimand or rebuke

subversive seeking to undermine the power or authority of the existing leadership or power structure

galvanizing provoking to action or effort

exodus a mass departure

The White South led the way toward imposing Jim Crow, but the larger nation stood complicit in reinforcing the indisputable fact of racial discrimination in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Despite the Supreme Court's "separate but equal" formula in the 1896 *Plessy* decision, Black citizens' separate and unequal status eluded no one in the United States. A deep sense of betrayal by the federal government befell African Americans, leading them to look primarily to themselves for racial advancement. Rather than capitulate to feelings of despair and powerlessness in the face of mounting oppression, they clung tenaciously to a race-conscious ideology that reaffirmed their personal dignity and hope for a better future for themselves and their children. From the end of Reconstruction through World War I, years that historian Rayford W. Logan called the "**nadir** in race relations," African Americans nonetheless conveyed messages of progress through the use of such words as *rising, climbing,* ***uplift***, and *lasting service* in their

speeches and writings on education, economic development, moral instruction, civil rights, and religious and secular organizational life. Their choice of words reflected the effort to redefine themselves beyond that of victims of the violent and oppressive times in which they lived. And their words called forth a new self-image that negated the pervasive demeaning stereotypes. Scholar Henry Louis Gates, Jr., notes the magnitude and diversity of racist imagery at the time, stating: "The difference between the circulation of racist images of black people before and after the war, especially after Reconstruction, is the jaw-dropping extent of its sheer numbers, its remarkable *reproducibility*. . . . The privileging of white culture and white people was directly tied to the denigration of black culture and black people, in a mutually reinforcing relationship."

Historian David Blight identifies the rise of the Jim Crow years as accompanied by the visual memorialization of White supremacy through the monument-building movement led by Confederate veterans' groups and particularly by the wealthy women of the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Founded in 1894 and with chapters throughout the South, the border states, and in the North, this women's organization played a leading role in the fundraising and congressional lobbying that resulted in the prominent placement of numerous monuments to military officers and other heroes of the Confederacy. Their efforts, which lasted well into the second decade of the twentieth century, served to reinforce and reinvigorate feelings of racial superiority on the part of the many thousands of White onlookers at statue-unveiling ceremonies. The United Daughters of the Confederacy explicitly linked the monuments with their goal of teaching White youths about the Lost Cause, a mythologized revisionist interpretation of the Civil War. Lost Cause narratives glorified the Confederacy and its leaders as heroic, romanticized and downplayed the trauma of slavery, portrayed the South as victimized by the North, and emphasized states' rights as the cause of the Civil War. Some of the monuments even honored the enslaved Black "mammy" as a symbol of devotion to the enslaver's family. Thus, self-help required a refashioning and reinterpretation of and by Black people themselves, when reminders of White supremacy appeared everywhere and in multiple forms.

Self-help took on two intertwined meanings in these years of segregation and disfranchisement and of lynching and race riots. It developed as a practical philosophy, informed by the painful realization that a certain amount of accommodation to the **status quo** would be necessary for survival, but self-help also developed as an idealistic philosophy born of faith in the future due to pride and appreciation of Black Americans' unique heritage of religious and cultural traditions, institutions, and creative expression. At the core of self-help lay a relentless commitment to change one's own station in life and to change what Black people called their collective "second-class" citizenship in the United States. In their homes, schools, churches, businesses, and other contexts, individuals were taught to "pull yourself up by your bootstraps" and to "be of service to the race." Understood in this way, self-help served as a postemancipation, forward-looking worldview for each upcoming generation. Reverdy C. Ransom, a young African Methodist Episcopal (AME) minister and rising voice of racial equality in the 1890s, brilliantly captured this forward-looking spirt, when he stated: "We have resolved that this country shall neither be our prison nor our tomb. . . . We are not pointing backward to monuments of achievement in the past, but forward to the heights we would attain. We are carrying a weight of ignorance and poverty, we confess; we ask not that others bear our burden, but do not obstruct our pathway, and we will throw off our burdens as we run."

Self-Help and Philanthropy

By the mid-1880s and into the twentieth century, a new generation of Black leaders and organizations increasingly **shunned** messages that dwelled too heavily on past enslavement. This was true even of some of the older Black leaders, such as the sixty-six-year-old Episcopal priest Reverend Alexander Crummell, of whom W. E. B. Du Bois lovingly devoted an entire chapter in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903). Crummell's commencement address to the graduating class of Storer College in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, in May 1885 was titled "The Need of New Ideas and New Aims for a New Era." Crummell would later admit that his peer and friend Frederick Douglass rather disliked his speech to the Storer graduates, in particular Crummell's advice to refrain from a preoccupation with the subject of slavery. Douglass, ever faithful to memory's guiding role, feared such thinking would lead to "social amnesia." As the end of the nineteenth century approached, however, the word "new" appeared to be ubiquitous. The postwar South itself had assumed this identity after the Civil War, led by Henry Grady, the editor of the *Atlanta Constitution*, who became the exponent and promoter of the New South of urban growth and industrial capitalism.

For African Americans, looking forward, not backward seemed to capture the hearts and minds of a generation that explicitly and implicitly measured racial progress since Emancipation. Doubtless, holding fast to the idea of the "new" also helped to maintain a positive outlook at a time of worsening race relations. While asserting the value of history, James M. Gregory, the outspoken dean of the college at Howard University declared in the 1880s: "New leaders for the Negro race are needed. Not the time-serving lick-spittle, not the self-seeking parasite, not the obsequious, cringing go-between, not swaggering insolence or skulking cowardice in leadership, nor any man who is either ashamed of being, or mean enough to deny that he is a Negro." In 1897 the clubwoman Fannie Barrier Williams of Chicago published the essay "The New Colored Woman," in which she praised women's educational and moral uplift work, along with the recent merger of Black women's clubs into the newly formed National Association of Colored Women (NACW) in 1896. Her article appeared in the little book *Sparkling Gems of Race Knowledge Worth Reading*, which was edited by the Black entrepreneur James T. Haley of Nashville, Tennessee, and produced by his publishing company. Haley described the book as a "valuable compendium" for its compilation of the names and locations of banks, business associations, school presidents, club women's activities, a state-by-state breakdown "as to the diversified wealth of the New Negro in the Union," and its various short essays (many having been excerpted from newspapers) of facts and advice related to improving the moral, political, and financial condition of African Americans. The book's title page noted that the contents "will inspire noble effort at the hands of every race-loving man, woman, and child."

The New Negro

The extensive scholarship of Henry Louis Gates, Jr., on the "New Negro" as a widely used literary, artistic, and political expression reveals its role as "full-force weaponry during the imposition of Jim Crow segregation." The great majority of African Americans lived in the South at the turn of the twentieth century, but the college-trained, as well as a more affluent professional class and stable middle-class, grew more visible with each passing decade. Collectively they represented the New Negro type, namely, the Black men and women who established or participated in a

variety of businesses, including banks, publishing companies, newspapers, schools, local and national clubs, churches and larger religious conventions, literary societies, and civil rights leagues and councils. Their success derived largely from providing needed economic and social services to African Americans of all incomes. Although W. E. B. Du Bois, then a professor at Atlanta University, referred to this leadership group in 1903 as the "Talented Tenth," his terminology at the time represented an idealized percentage. Reality told a different story of its being barely 1 percent. The overwhelming population of Black men and women daily **eked** out a living as sharecroppers or menial, low-wage laborers.

Countering the abundance of negative racial images, Black-owned magazines presented men and women in ways that captured middle-class refinement in dress, taste, manners, morals, education, and culture. Stories about New Negro exemplars of uplift filled the pages of such books and articles as William J. Simmons' *Men of Mark: Eminent, Progressive, and Rising* (1887), H. F. Kletzing and H. Crogman's *Progress of a Race; or, The Remarkable Advancement of the Afro-American* (1897), G. F. Richings's *Evidences of Progress among Colored People* (1900), and Booker T. Washington's co-edited volume *A New Negro for a New Century* (1900), which included articles by scholar W. E. B. Du Bois and clubwoman Fannie Barrier Williams. And what better time for this literary genre to appear? Literacy among African Americans had grown dramatically—from a mere 5 percent in 1865 to about 50 percent in 1900 and 70 percent in 1910. The changing literacy rate alone gave evidence of Black progress and refuted racist claims of innate Black intellectual inferiority. The race literature containing biographical sketches of prominent civic-minded men and women who overcame obstacles appealed to the growing Black readership. Books and pamphlets often included statistics as to the growing number of Black-owned homes, land schools, businesses, and women's clubs and activities.

The forward-looking emphasis afforded an alternative way to interpret the era of Jim Crow, since, for African Americans, the years would also come to be called the era of racial self-help and for some, even the woman's era. The goal was to inspire emulation by Black individuals while encouraging sympathy and financial support from White individuals. As a group endeavor, self-help articulated the collective duty to reform, educate, and uplift those of lower status. The speeches and writings of this era are replete with highly critical language of lifestyles and values at odds with the moral and class decorum of church and school, meaning at odds with the progress of the entire race. Thus, the motto of the National Association of Colored Women—"Lifting as We Climb"—**succinctly** captures the interconnected relation of Black progress to both racial duty and class distinctions. In their many and varied self-help endeavors, Black leaders refused to abandon the eventual goal of racial equality, although they disagreed, often bitterly, over the primacy and merit of specific strategies and the timetable for reaching this goal. The era of self-help, with its explicit and implicit meanings of racial solidarity, was invariably fraught with division.

Supporting Education

Education was deemed to be the most important driver of the improved status of Black Americans. Given the racial inequity in funding public education and the denial of Black students by southern state universities, African Americans—as individuals, as families, and as members of community organizations—gave of their own financial resources to support primary and secondary schools in urban and

The Jubilee Singers
This student group traveled throughout the North and Europe to raise funds for Fisk University.

rural areas, and also private colleges and institutes founded by Black religious **denominations** in the North and South. The dollars of Black Americans played an important role in the continued flourishing of colleges and universities founded after the Civil War by White northern Protestant denominations. It was not uncommon for Black students to play an active role in relieving the financial burdens of their schools through their labor and physical maintenance of buildings. This type of self-help was not limited to the industrial schools.

The Jubilee Singers of Fisk University set a unique example that would later be followed by other schools. George L. White, the college's treasurer, conceived the idea of reaching the hearts (and hence the pockets) of northern White citizens through the singing of a group of young African Americans. With money borrowed from the teachers and the citizens of Nashville, in 1875 White took a group of students to Oberlin, Ohio, where the National Council of Congregational Churches was meeting. The council was captivated by the way in which the young Black men and women sang spirituals and work songs of their people, and the fame of the group spread rapidly. In the East, they sang in many halls under the sponsorship of Brooklyn's famous preacher Henry Ward Beecher (the brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe). Numerous engagements followed, and the money flowed in. Later the Jubilee Singers went to England, Germany, and other European countries and appeared before several royal audiences. Within seven years, they had raised $150,000, part of which was used in the construction of school buildings. Student quartets, speakers, and other groups went out from other schools. In some communities, money was raised at fairs and demonstrations.

White and Black donations supported the educational agenda of such White denominational bodies as the American Missionary Association, the American

Baptist Home Mission Society, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, whose academies and colleges trained African Americans throughout the South. Some White denominations broadened the scope of their educational efforts to include medical and theological schools, and some continued to establish additional secondary schools and colleges in the years following Reconstruction. Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Catholics increased their activities in Black education, making important contributions to primary and secondary education.

Each of the major Black denominations also maintained secondary schools and colleges, relying heavily on Black women's missionary organizations at the state and local levels to galvanize Black communities in fundraising drives. As Black southerners' political gains rapidly disappeared before vigorous state efforts, the pursuit of knowledge came to be one of the greatest preoccupations of African Americans, and education was viewed by many as the panacea for escaping the worst effects of the South's racial proscriptions and indignities. Numerous Black fathers and mothers made untold sacrifices to secure for their children the learning that they had been denied.

Adherence to racial self-help never precluded accepting religious- and secular-based White donations. Some Black schools, especially the Tuskegee Institute, developed notable educational programs owing to their leaders' enviable ability to attract sizeable amounts of White **philanthropy**. However, there was a caveat, namely, the issue of Black self-determination, which surfaced first in the schools of Black higher education run by White northerners in the 1880s and 1890s. Such universities as Howard, Fisk, Claflin, and Virginia Union had played an important role in achieving the educational goals of racial self-help, but they also became hotbeds of inter- and intraracial contention.

Black Self-Determination

Integral to self-help ideology is the belief in racial self-determination—the idea that Black Americans should speak for themselves and should control their own institutions. This particular emphasis sought to encourage Black people to establish and support their own organizations, or at least be represented in Black institutions, so that they might articulate their own interests in a collective voice, portray their own racial images, and perceive a common heritage and destiny. Thus, when educated and accomplished Black Americans demanded a greater presence in the administration and faculties of the White-run schools, tensions flared, along with accusations of White paternalism.

These schools' White missionary teachers and White boards determined school policies, controlled school finances, and periodically spoke disparagingly of their students as "childlike" and "**heathen**." The northern religious denominations were slower to hire Black professionals in their colleges and universities. Ironically, Black Americans held faculty and administrative positions, even as high as president, in the segregated southern state agricultural and mechanical colleges that had been established through the federal Morrill Land Grant Act—for example, Alcorn College in Mississippi and the Colored Normal, Industrial, Agricultural, and Mechanical College of South Carolina. As Booker T. Washington liked to remind his opponents, a private school such as his Tuskegee Institute was Black controlled and had a Black faculty and president—the epitome of racial self-help.

Although Howard University hired Black teachers, conflict arose each time the school chose a new president. This was true as early as the 1870s, when the White AMA members of the board passed over future Black legislator John Mercer Langston, who at the time was the dean of the Howard Law School. Black anger over Howard's failure to hire a Black president resurfaced at the university in 1889. In the 1890s, the greatest disaffection arose in the schools under White Baptists and Methodists—denominations with large Black memberships.

Historian James McPherson notes that the younger generation, which represented the more militant advocates of Black school control in the 1880s and 1890s, marshaled its supporters with the slogan "Home rule for our colored schools." They demanded a greater voice in the administration of these schools. Edward Brawley, a leading Black Baptist minister in South Carolina, was one of many to capture this spirit of revolt when he asserted in 1883 that Black Americans would no longer allow themselves to be treated like children. "We are willing to return thanks to the many friends who have assisted us in educating ourselves thus far," he declared, "but we have now reached the point where we desire to endeavor to educate ourselves, to build school houses, churches, colleges, and universities, by our own efforts." Such proud and fiery words were not accepted by everyone in the Black community. The divisions among Black Baptists grew to such an extent that the labels *separatists* and *cooperationists* came to define opposing positions on this issue.

Those of a more moderate persuasion denounced the headstrong militancy as "greed for office," refusing to sever ties with the White religious bodies that had come to the South to aid freedpeople. The Black press, the proceedings of Black denominational meetings, and the correspondence at the time reveal that the Black community was divided over the practical implications of self-help in relation to White-controlled colleges for Black students. The moderates did not reject the idea of self-help, but as one minister argued, "it is possible to separate self-help from self-foolishness; it is possible to practice self-help and yet receive the generous aid of able friends." The schools themselves, however, had been jolted by the protest and at varying speeds began to hire more Black faculty. The protest also spurred the call for Black denominational autonomy on the part of Baptists and efforts among the Black denominations to establish their own separate schools.

White Philanthropy

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, southern Black schools began to receive funds from large educational foundations, established by wealthy entrepreneurs, called by their admirers "**titans** of industry" and by their detractors "robber barons." Having built corporate monopolies by pursuing unbridled, often ruthless, tactics against their business competitors, this new breed of industrialists and financiers—men such as Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, Cornelius Vanderbilt, and George Peabody—ushered in the Gilded Age of heightened economic disparity and the conspicuous extravagance of wealth. A sense of **noblesse oblige** had also led them into philanthropy.

Newly rich philanthropists gave substantial sums to U.S. educational and cultural institutions. White institutions were the primary beneficiaries of their largesse, but between the end of the Civil War and the beginning of World War I, several large educational foundations advanced Black education in the South: the George

Peabody Education Fund, the John F. Slater Fund, the General Education Board (founded by John D. Rockefeller), the Anna T. Jeanes Fund, the Julius Rosenwald Fund, and the Phelps-Stokes Fund. In 1882, for example, John F. Slater, a textile industrialist from Norwich, Connecticut, started the foundation that bears his name. Slater gave $1 million "for uplifting the lately emancipated population of the Southern states and their posterity, by conferring on them the blessings of Christian education." The board of trustees, headed by former President Rutherford B. Hayes, undertook immediately to assist twelve schools that were training Black teachers. Between 1882 and 1911, the fund assisted both private and church schools in their teacher-training programs and made donations to public schools.

White philanthropy, in general, increased after the arrival on the national stage of Booker T. Washington, preaching industrial and agricultural education, teacher training at the common school level, and accommodation to the racial status quo. In 1911 the Slater Fund began its support of country training schools, and within a decade it assisted more than a hundred such institutions. In 1905 Anna T. Jeanes, the daughter of a wealthy Philadelphia merchant, provided money specifically for Black rural schools in the South. Under the guidance of James H. Dillard, the fund sought the appointment of teachers to do industrial work in rural schools, of special teachers to do extension work, and of county agents to improve rural homes and schools and create public sentiment for better Black schools.

The fund paid the salaries of these special teachers, and county officials gradually assumed part of the responsibility. The work of the fund attracted additional contributions from several other philanthropic agencies. In 1911 Julius Rosenwald visited Tuskegee Institute and the following year accepted a place on its board of trustees. His interest in and active assistance to rural Black schools dates from this time. Beginning as a small donor of amounts of $5,000, Rosenwald soon became a major contributor to the improvement of educational facilities for Black southerners.

Various philanthropic boards supplemented teachers' salaries, bought equipment, and built schools. Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there was persistent southern White opposition to outside philanthropy, which one prominent White Methodist bishop described as "dangerous donations and degrading **doles**." General approval came only when the White citizens of the South judged that White funders showed little or no interest in establishing racial equality or upsetting White supremacy.

Booker T. Washington

This picture includes some of his friends and benefactors. Left to right: Robert C. Ogden, William H. Taft, Washington, and Andrew Carnegie.

Frances Be njamin Johnston Collection, Library of Congress [Digital ID# ds 01107]

Educational Inequality in the South

The South did little to encourage the equitable distribution of public funds for the education of all southern children. In 1898 Florida's per capita spending to educate White children was more than

double the amount allocated for educating Black children. Mississippi, the poorest of all states, ranked last among the states in regard to financing its schools, and its tiny educational appropriations went overwhelmingly to White schools, despite a school-age population that was more than 60 percent Black. Historian Neil McMillen noted that in Mississippi the greater a given county's concentration of Black residents relative to White residents, the more glaringly unfair was the racial disparity. For example, in 1900 in the majority Black Adams County, the breakdown of education funding resulted in $22 per White child and $2 per Black child.

No effort was made to mask blatant inequality in the state. In 1899 A. A. Kincannon, Mississippi's superintendent of education, declared that "our public school system is designed primarily for the welfare of the white children of the state, and incidentally for the negro children." With the right of suffrage no longer a possibility, the Black community found it impossible to challenge the use of their tax dollars or to remove from office members of the state's educational board.

Throughout the southern states, the unequal distribution of school funds made clear that the "educational revival," spurred by **progressive** movement reformers in the region, was intended for White students. If Black Americans were to be educated, they would have to bear the burden of the costs themselves. On occasion, White southerners contributed to Black fundraising initiatives, and northern foundations gave money toward the support of rural schools. However, these donations were never sufficient, and some northern foundations stipulated local matching funds. In the case of the Rosenwald Fund, according to McMillen, Black Mississippians were forced to draw from their own personal resources in order to provide the matching funds.

It was common for southern Black communities to refer to a "double tax" in regard to their monetary support of Black education—first, because of the racist reallocation of their tax dollars and second, because of their own sense of racial self-help, which required that they sacrifice, if need be, to maintain Black schools. At the Sixth Atlanta Conference for the Study of Negro Problems in 1901, it was reported, that between 1870 and 1899, Black Americans paid a total of $25 million in direct school taxes, while also contributing indirect taxes amounting to more than $45 million. Much of the tax money that Black people paid was diverted to White schools. It was also reported that they had paid more than $15 million in tuition and fees to private institutions. With a strong assertion that they had done much to help themselves in the generation following Reconstruction, the report concluded: "It is a conservative statement to say . . . that American Negroes have in a generation paid directly forty millions of dollars in hard earned cash for educating their children."

Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division [LC-USZ62-2248]

Tuskegee laboratory, 1902

Higher Education

In 1900 thirty-four institutions for African Americans offered collegiate training, and Black students had begun to enter

several universities and colleges in the North. Virginia, Arkansas, Georgia, and Delaware each had a state college for Black students. The only racially integrated college in a southern state was Berea College in Kentucky. In 1904 the state passed a law requiring that schools be segregated, and Berea's status as a private institution led its administration to challenge the law. In 1908, however, the Supreme Court declared illegal the school's policy of racial integration, since the school was incorporated in Kentucky. Berea would serve White students exclusively until the mid-twentieth century, when the Kentucky segregation law was finally struck down.

Focus On: Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)

African Americans have long understood education to be an instrument of power and a pathway to freedom. The first colleges for African Americans were established largely through the efforts of Black churches with the support of missionary societies, White abolitionists, and the Freedmen's Bureau. Early Black institutions of higher education included Cheyney and Lincoln Universities in Pennsylvania and Wilberforce University in Ohio, each founded before the Civil War. After the Civil War, both Black and White northern missionary organizations along with the Freedmen's Bureau established colleges to educate African Americans. In 1865, Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina, became the first HBCU established after the Civil War. More schools followed—Talladega College, Howard University, Morehouse College in 1867, and Hampton University in 1868.

Although White missionary organizations played a key role in the early development of HBCUs, their involvement was oftentimes motivated by racism and self-interests. According to education scholar James D. Anderson, White missionary organizations focused on proselytizing Christianity with the goals of eliminating the "immoralities" of slavery that they believed Black people embodied and of saving the country from the "menace" of uneducated African Americans. Conversely, Black missionary groups, especially those affiliated with the AME and AME Zion churches, focused specifically on uplifting African Americans. Black churches established colleges like Paul Quinn in Dallas, Texas; Allen University in Columbia, South Carolina; and Morris Brown in Atlanta, Georgia. Because Black churches had less funding, these colleges tended to operate on a smaller budget than the Black colleges supported by White missionary organizations. Despite this financial reality, Black colleges organized by Black churches were able to craft their own curricula and have a level of control that schools supported by White missionary societies struggled to achieve.

On August 30, 1890, Congress passed the Second Morrill Act. This law provided annual federal appropriations for each state to support land-grant colleges. Although the policy used explicit non-discriminatory language and was specific in its call for equal distribution of federal monies, its results proved inequitable. The Black colleges established under the act received fewer dollars than their White counterparts. The resultant unequal funding cemented a long history of substandard facilities that these institutions struggle to improve today. The Second Morrill Act led to the establishment of HBCUs like North Carolina A&T University in

The number of graduates from institutions of higher learning steadily rose. In the decades leading up to 1900, more than 2,000 Black Americans received college degrees. In that year alone, more than 700 Black students were enrolled in college. The educational awakening that pervaded the United States in the approaching twentieth century was as clearly manifested among Black Americans as it was among other Americans. For African Americans, however, the topic of education caused a debate as to the most appropriate type of education. In the South, most White people felt that the "Negro's place" required only rudimentary training in basic skills and that anything more than that created problems. Others held that Black

Greensboro, North Carolina; Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Kentucky State University in Frankfort, Kentucky; and Delaware State University in Dover, Delaware. These HBCUs served as the primary providers of postsecondary education for Black students for decades.

Many colleges and universities did not admit Black students until the Black campus movement, which took place from roughly 1965 to 1972, expanded postsecondary opportunities for Black students. Beginning in 1909, Black Greek-letter organizations—fraternities and sororities—also emerged on HBCU campuses and at select majority White schools. These academic and social organizations provided spaces for collaboration; fostered intellectual discourse and educational excellence; developed leadership skills; and encouraged community service among Black student members. A 2023 White House Report under the Biden Administration estimates that land-grant HBCUs have been underfunded by $13 billion over the past thirty years.

Connect to Today How does underfunding of land-grant HBCUs still impact those institutions and the communities they serve today?

Map of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)

people should not be regarded as a group earmarked for a specific kind of education (for example, industrial training), but that individuals should be able to choose freely between a liberal arts curriculum and industrial curriculum, depending on their interest and ability. Still others contended that, at their present stage of development, Black Americans could best serve themselves and their country with a specific type of education they believed would most rapidly help them to secure a place in the American social order.

From the early years of freedom after the Civil War, Black higher education in the South **exemplified** two educational types—industrial training and classical liberal arts learning. Founded in the late 1860s, Hampton Institute exemplified industrial education, while Howard University and Fisk University exemplified the liberal arts. Samuel Armstrong, the founder and head of Hampton, taught his students that labor was a "spiritual force, that physical work not only increased wage-earning capacity but promoted fidelity, accuracy, honesty, persistence, and intelligence." He emphasized the value of acquiring land and homes, vocations and skills. Armstrong's teaching deeply influenced Booker T. Washington, who became the most eloquent and influential proponent of industrial education by the mid-1890s.

The Talented Tenth

The concept of the "Talented Tenth," which began to be used in the 1890s, preceded the clash over Black education between Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois. It was not Du Bois who coined the concept but rather the northern White Baptist leader Henry Morehouse. As early as 1896, perhaps in response to Booker T. Washington's speech at the Atlanta Exposition, Morehouse referred to the Talented Tenth, partly to marshal continued White Baptist commitment to Atlanta Baptist College (later renamed Morehouse), Spelman College, and other White Baptist-controlled schools for Black Americans in the South.

In founding these schools, northern Baptist leaders argued for a quality of Black education that approximated the finest White schools in the North. Henry Morehouse wrote in the *Independent* in April 1896 that it would be a mistake to fail "to make proper provision for the high education of the talented tenth man of the colored colleges. . . . Industrial education is good for the nine; the common English branches are good for the nine; that tenth man ought to have the best opportunities for making the most of himself for humanity and God." The debate with Booker T. Washington had begun.

Reflections How did Black Americans engage in self-help and philanthropy to protect themselves against racial discrimination?

Divergent Paths to Racial Equality

Writing in 1903, W. E. B. Du Bois stated that "easily the most striking thing in the history of the American Negro since 1876 is the ascendancy of Mr. Booker T. Washington." The ascendancy of this man is one of the most dramatic and significant episodes in the history of U.S. education and of race relations. When in 1881 Washington went to Tuskegee, Alabama, he found none of the equipment with which to develop an educational institution. He found White townspeople hostile to the idea of a school for Black Americans. Operating initially in a local Black church,

Washington set about securing the necessary resources for the establishment of a school and conciliating the neighboring White community.

Olivia Davidson, a teacher and, like Washington, a Hampton graduate (she would marry Washington in 1885), played a crucial role as a fundraiser in the school's formative years. Davidson canvassed the surrounding community and traveled to New England, where she had also gone to school, winning friends and dollars for Tuskegee Institute. In addition, students cooperated by doing all the work of constructing the buildings, producing and cooking the food, and performing innumerable other tasks. The White community was given assurances in many ways that the students were there to serve and not to antagonize. Washington believed that White southerners had to be convinced that the education of Black people was in the true interest of the South. The students provided many of the services and much of the produce that the White community needed, and hostility to the new school began to diminish.

Booker T. Washington

As the proponent of a form of industrial education that would not antagonize the White South, Washington hoped to encourage Black employment and economic self-sufficiency. Washington believed, as he put it in 1895, that "one farm bought, one house built, one home neatly kept, one man the largest tax-payer and depositor in the local bank, one school or church maintained . . . one patient cured by a Negro doctor, one sermon well preached . . . these will tell more in our favor than all the abstract eloquence that can be summoned to plead our cause."

His was a practical program of training Black Americans to live as comfortably and independently as possible, given southern racial realities. And his plan to produce farmers, mechanics, domestic servants, and teachers in rural schools throughout the state appeared far less threatening to White people who believed that a liberal arts university education encouraged Black people to seek "social equality." Washington made no public demand for equality, although he secretly funded court cases that challenged Jim Crow rules in transportation. His public persona was far more conciliatory, and thus he counseled his people to obey the South's segregation laws and cooperate with White authorities in maintaining the peace.

Washington's speech at the opening ceremonies of the Atlanta Exposition in 1895 catapulted him to national acclaim. He comforted White audience members with the words: "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the five fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress." He also admonished his own people: "To those of my race who depend upon bettering their condition in a foreign land or who underestimate the importance of cultivating friendly relations with the Southern white man . . . I would say 'Cast down your bucket where you are'—cast it down in making friends in every manly way of the people of all races by whom we are surrounded. Cast it down in agriculture, in mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service, and in the professions." The speech won praise from both White and Black Americans. Indeed, Washington had won the goodwill of powerful and influential White citizens.

Washington envisioned Black workers as becoming an indispensable part of the New South economy. In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the South began to feel the impact of the economic revolution that had already enveloped

Booker T. Washington at his desk

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division: LC-USZ62-119898

the North. The iron industry was growing in Tennessee and Alabama, cloth was being manufactured in the Carolinas, and the business of transporting manufactured goods to northern and southern consumers was becoming a major economic activity. Black people as well as White people sought to take advantage of the new opportunities. For the most part, however, Black workers in southern towns experienced great difficulty in securing some of the benefits of the new economic growth. While their numbers increased between 1891 and 1910 in southern cottonseed-oil mills, sawmills, and furniture factories, as well as in foundries, machine shops, boiler works, and similar workplaces, they generally held the least attractive jobs.

In his widely read autobiography *Up from Slavery* (1900), Washington presented a meditation on his life that fleshed out his philosophy in fuller detail. The autobiography broadened the goodwill of powerful and influential White citizens because of its accommodating tone, but it also won many Black supporters who recognized in its pages the familiar message of racial self-help. Washington never tired of urging Black Americans to develop useful economic skills rather than spend their efforts protesting racial discrimination. He preached intelligent management of farms; ownership of land; habits of thrift, patience, perseverance, and cleanliness; and the cultivation of high morals and good manners. Thereby Washington successfully positioned himself as the dominant Black leader at the dawn of the new century.

Although Tuskegee produced a large number of male and female teachers for rural elementary schools, many of which were founded by its graduates, the institute also prepared students for specific trades and unskilled labor. Women's education, for example, offered training for such vocations as teachers, nurses, seamstresses, and domestic servants. Tuskegee's agricultural department opened in 1896 under the brilliant botanist and scientist George Washington Carver, who taught students to be more effective farmers—to rotate their crops, to fertilize the soil, and to grow peanuts and also to eat them as a protein supplement to their diet. Carver had been

born into slavery and was largely self-educated until high school. In an 1896 letter to Washington, Carver wrote that he considered education "the key to unlock the golden door of freedom to our people." He believed that new uses for farm crops and improved farming methods, such as crop rotation to prevent soil depletion, would help uplift Black farmers and the Black community. Carver invented 300 products just from peanuts! While at Tuskegee, Carver met President Theodore Roosevelt, and went on to become the president's agricultural advisor. Tuskegee offered outreach programs to Black farmers—its mule-drawn "Moveable School" traveled through the countryside dispensing information. Tuskegee's farmers' institutes, farmers' conferences, and agricultural bulletins were designed by Carver to offer a broad-ranging program. The school's agricultural department sought to help Black farmers reduce their dependency on cotton production, transcend the cycle of debt, and live healthier lives. In the agricultural experiment station (the only all-Black station in the United States), Carver conducted research to develop new technologies and practices—targeted to small farmers—that would replenish nutrient-depleted soil while also enhancing agricultural production. Environmental historian Mark Hersey has declared that Carver, who was an avid follower of the nature study movement and took a deeply religious view of the natural environment, was "the most important and influential African American conservationist of his day."

"For years to come the education of the people of my race should be so directed," Washington asserted, "that the greatest proportion of the mental strength of the masses will be brought to bear upon the everyday practical things of life, upon something that is needed to be done, and something which they will be permitted to do in the community in which they reside." His doctrine of industrial education for the great mass of Black people did not contradict the dominant scientific and popular ideas at the time, which doubted the capacity of Black Americans to become completely assimilated in a highly complex civilization. Washington's mix of practical education and political conciliation to the rule of Jim Crow was attractive to southerners, as well as to northerners weary of racial and sectional conflict. Washington's White supporters praised him as a voice of reason, a leader who did not destabilize what they believed to be a satisfactory economic and social equilibrium between the races.

White southerners particularly admired the tact and diplomacy with which he conciliated all groups, North and South. Twice, however, Washington threatened his position among White southerners. Speaking in Chicago, he lashed out at race prejudice and asserted that it was eating away the vitals of the South. On another occasion, he dined at the White House at the invitation of President Theodore Roosevelt—an incident that most southerners regarded as a serious breach of racial etiquette. Arch-segregationists did not miss the implication or contradiction between Washington's **admonitions** against social equality and his own experiences and friendships with White people. The dinner with Roosevelt led southern newspapers to speak of a "damnable outrage." Exclaimed hyper-racist Ben Tillman, then a member of the U.S. Senate: "Now that Roosevelt has eaten with that nigger Washington, we shall have to kill a thousand niggers to get them back to their places."

Although White Americans tended to support Washington's immediate goals, few realized that he looked forward to the complete acceptance and integration of Black citizens into American life. Indeed, Washington quietly financed some of the earliest court cases against segregation. As Washington's biographer Louis R. Harlan has made clear, "by private action [he] fought lynching, disfranchisement, peonage,

educational discrimination, and segregation." **Subversive** acts such as these were kept in the strictest secrecy. Washington viewed the demand for equality as a matter of timing and he perceived the odds of overcoming the mountain of racial prejudice too great. Progress could be made on other fronts—through education, through economic development, and through the forward-looking march of a new century.

On one occasion, Washington said: "I would set no limits to the attainments of the Negro in arts, in letters or statesmanship, but I believe the surest way to reach those ends is by laying the foundation in the little things of life that lie immediately about one's door. I plead for industrial education and development for the Negro not because I want to cramp him, but because I want to free him. I want to see him enter the all-powerful business and commercial world." He advocated the entrance of African Americans into the professions and other fields, and he played an instrumental role in the founding of Black professional organizations for physicians and those with businesses. He is credited as playing a founding role in the National Medical Association in 1895 and the National Business League in 1900.

Washington was not the first or only Black spokesman for accommodation to the New South's racial policies. African Americans criticized Isaiah T. Montgomery of Mound Bayou when in 1890, as a Mississippi legislator, he voted for his state's disenfranchisement plan. William H. Councill, the president of the Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical Institute (a Black industrial school in Huntsville, Alabama) was regarded by many Black Americans as having a conciliatory attitude toward White conservative political policies—so much so that Booker T. Washington sought to distance himself from Councill. In a letter dated September 23, 1899, Washington described Councill as having a "reputation of simply toadying to the Southern white people."

By far the most conservative and vilified Black figure at the turn of the century was William Hannibal Thomas. Self-identified as an Ohio-born mulatto, Thomas publicly demonized black culture and intellect. In his book *The American Negro: What He Was, What He Is, and What He May Become,* which was published by the well-respected Macmillan Press in 1901, Thomas argued that Black people were innately inferior to White people. He blamed them for their subordinate status in southern society and admonished them to rid themselves of "negro idiosyncrasies." His racist denunciation of his own people was as inflammatory as that of the vilest White supremacists. Black Americans, including Booker T. Washington, reacted to Thomas with thorough disgust. In the press, in women's club meetings, and in correspondence, Black Americans exposed Thomas's financial malfeasance and personal improprieties and used such epithets as "race traitor" and "Judas of the race."

Opposition: T. Thomas Fortune

As Washington's prestige and influence grew, opposition among his own people increased as well, culminating in the dueling perspectives epitomized by Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois. Although Du Bois would become Washington's most noted opponent, he was not the first person to speak openly against Jim Crow or the first to establish a protest organization. The Black journalist T. Thomas Fortune wrote extensively against the loss of Black citizens' civil and political rights in his position as the editor of the widely circulated *New York Age*.

At the time of Washington's "Atlanta Compromise" speech (Du Bois's phrase), Fortune was no newcomer to protest politics. In his book *Black and White: Land, Labor and*

Politics in the South (1884), he denounced what he called the "great social wrong" of race discrimination in the South and urged Black laborers to organize. In *The Negro in Politics* (1885), Fortune attacked the idea that Black Americans should blindly support the Republican Party and questioned the current wisdom of continuing to follow Frederick Douglass's 1872 dictum that "the Republican Party is the ship and all else is the sea."

In the 1880s and 1890s, Fortune figured significantly as a voice of racial self-help. In forceful language, he admonished his people, especially those in the South, to agitate for their rights, to sue in the courts, and to vote where possible. In 1887, during his editorship of the New York *Freeman*, he proclaimed that "white papers of this country have determined to leave the colored man to fight his own battles. . . . There is no dodging the issue; we have got to take hold of this problem ourselves, and make so much noise that all the world shall know the wrongs we suffer and our determination to right these wrongs."

Fortune's biographer, Emma Lou Thornborough, notes that Washington, at the time a relative unknown on the national scene, supported Fortune's call for an Afro-American League. Two months later, in an open letter to Fortune in the *Freeman*,

Window in Time

Booker T. Washington's Speech at the Meeting of the National Afro-American Council, 1903

We have a right in a conservative and sensible manner to enter our complaints, but we shall make a fatal error if we yield to the temptation of believing that mere opposition to our wrongs, and the simple utterance of complaint, will take the place of progressive, constructive action, which must constitute the bedrock of all true civilization. The weakest race or individual can condemn a policy: it is the work of a statesman to construct one. A race is not measured by its ability to condemn, but to create. Let us hold up our heads, and with firm and steady tread, go manfully forward. No one likes to feel that he is continually following a funeral procession.

Let us not neglect to lay the greatest stress upon the opportunities open to us, especially here in the South, for constructive growth in labor, business and education. Back of all complaint, all denunciation, must be evidences of solid, indisputable accomplishment in the way of high moral character and economic foundation. An inch of progress is worth more than a yard of complaint.

Source: Booker T. Washington. The Rights and Duties of the Negro, an address, delivered by Booker T. Washington before the National Afro-American Council in McCauley's Theatre, Louisville, Ky., Thursday Evening, July 2, 1903.

AP SOURCE ANALYSIS

Describe the context and purpose of Booker T. Washington's speech.

Washington urged: “Push the battle to the gate. Let there be no hold-up until a League shall be found in every village.” Leagues organized at the state level initially, and 141 delegates from 23 states met in Chicago in January 1890 to establish an all-Black national organization.

Fortune’s rousing speech to the group stands in marked contrast to the speech that his friend Washington would deliver five years later at the Atlanta Exposition. In 1890 Fortune warned against a temporizing attitude, proclaiming: “We have been patient so long that many believe that we are incapable of resenting insult, outrage and wrong; we have so long accepted uncomplainingly all the injustice and cowardice and insolence heaped upon us, that many imagine that we are compelled to submit and have not the manhood necessary to resent such conduct.”

Yet by 1893, the Afro-American League lacked the funds to mount a test case against railroad discrimination. Facing an avalanche of White supremacist ideas in the South and nation, the league languished from insufficient support. Efforts to revive and transform it resulted in a meeting in Rochester, New York, in September 1898, at which time Fortune organized the National Afro-American Council. According to historian Shawn Leigh Alexander, the two civil rights organizations represented harbingers of both the Niagara Movement and the NAACP. Under the leadership of Alexander Walters, who was also a bishop in the American Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion Church, the National Afro-American Council sponsored court litigation against racial discrimination, congressional lobbying, investigative research and publications on lynching, and the centennial celebration of the abolitionist John Brown’s birthday. (The Niagara Movement would meet in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, in 1906 in remembrance of Brown.) Booker T. Washington supported the legal challenges of the Council with secretive financial donations. George H. White of North Carolina, a leading figure in the Council, sought, albeit unsuccessfully, to get anti-lynching legislation passed in 1900 while he still sat in the Congress of the United States. Ida B. Wells-Barnett and Mary Church Terrell headed the Council’s Anti-lynching Bureau at different moments. Eventually, however, Washington was perceived as exerting his conservative influence over the Council, Fortune, and Fortune’s newspaper, the *New York Age*. Fortune himself, unable or unwilling to defy Washington, fell deeper and deeper into alcoholism. Under Washington’s watchful eye, the Council no longer subscribed to the protest politics of its past.

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Ida B. Wells, 1862–1931

Wells was run out of Memphis, Tennessee, where she edited a paper, for condemning violence, especially lynching. She continued her crusade in Chicago, where she also criticized the Columbian Exposition in 1893 for not including Black Americans in its exhibits.

Ida B. Wells

An outspoken voice of protest, Ida B. Wells (later Wells-Barnett), launched a fearless crusade against lynching in 1892 after her friend Thomas Moss and his fellow business associates were lynched for defending their store and themselves from attack. Moss and his

Focus On: Ida B. Wells and Black Women's Fight for Suffrage

Though best remembered as a fearless journalist and anti-lynching crusader, Ida B. Wells was also a passionate advocate for women's suffrage. For Wells and many other Black women, suffrage was not an end in itself but a powerful tool to improve the lives of Black Americans.

In the early twentieth century, many Black women leaders, including Wells, were members of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), the nation's largest suffrage organization. However, despite their dedication to the cause, Black women often faced exclusion and discrimination within NAWSA. NAWSA's White-leadership refused to address issues central to Black women's lives, such as lynching, segregation, and poverty. It also allowed state and local NAWSA chapters to deny Black women membership. Frustrated, Black women began to form their own suffrage organizations.

In 1913, Wells founded the Alpha Suffrage Club, Chicago's first Black suffrage organization, with White suffragists Belle Squire and Virginia Brooks. As president, one of Wells' first actions was to represent the club in Washington, D.C., for the Woman Suffrage Procession that March. On the day of the parade, the event's White organizers asked Black suffragists to march in a segregated section at the back of the procession, instead of with their state delegations. Wells defied the request by hiding in a crowd of spectators. When the Illinois delegation passed, Wells joined in, marching with them. Her bold stance made headlines, including a front-page story in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*.

A few months later, in June 1913, Illinois granted women the right to vote for local offices and in U.S. presidential elections. Wells strongly believed the Black community needed to work together to elect Black politicians. The Alpha Suffrage Club busied itself with canvassing, educating, and registering Black voters. By 1914, the club had registered more than 7,200 women and 16,200 men. These voters were key to electing Chicago's first Black Alderman, Oscar DePriest in 1915.

After the Nineteenth Amendment granted women the right to vote in 1920, the Alpha Suffrage Club merged into the Illinois League of Women Voters. However, the fight for universal voting access was far from over. Many Black Americans faced voter suppression until the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Alpha Suffrage Club's efforts played a pivotal role in the long struggle for equal voting rights.

Connect to Today
How do voting rights advocates today carry forward Wells' legacy?

Ida B. Wells-Barnett with her children Charles, Herman, Ida, and Alfreda, 1909

The History Collection/Alamy Stock Photo

colleagues had established a business, the People's Store, which sold its products to Black consumers in Memphis at a fair price, thus undercutting the White-owned store that exploited its Black customers. Unfortunately, the Black storeowners' success proved to be their undoing.

The lynching profoundly hurt and angered Wells. Armed with statistics and contemporary testimony, her column in the *Memphis Free Speech* detailed the lurid events of her friend's death. Wells attacked lynching in general, refuting its various justifications, especially those that excused lynching as the punishment for alleged Black rapists of White women. Wells dared to call into question the honor of White women, positing that rape victims were far more often Black women and their assailants White men. Finally, she urged her people to boycott White businesses and to migrate to Oklahoma, then still a territory.

Wells's brash talk caused such uproar that White people burned down the press and ran her out of Tennessee, with threats to her life if she returned. Moving to New York, she continued her journalistic assault on lynching in Fortune's *New York Age*. In 1892, Black women's organizations in the Northeast raised the funds necessary for her to publish the pamphlet *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases*. In 1893 and 1894, she toured England, meeting British reformers and speaking to audiences about the savagery of lynching in the American South. Her speeches and writings prompted the British press to denounce lynching as barbaric. Her statements on the uncivilized nature of lynching, when juxtaposed alongside late-nineteenth-century racial science, had the effect of shaming the White South and the American people in the eyes of many of her European readers. The brutish nature of the southern lynch mob appeared wildly incompatible with social scientific "findings" of Anglo-Saxon civilization and the superiority of its culture. After Wells's move to Chicago and her marriage to newspaper publisher Ferdinand Barnett in 1895, she continued to turn out protest pamphlets in the 1890s and the new century. Her defiant tone differed radically from Booker T. Washington's cautious and circumspect one.

William Monroe Trotter

Before W. E. B Du Bois's opposition to Washington, William Monroe Trotter and George Forbes challenged the legitimacy of Washington's leadership in their co-edited newspaper, the *Boston Guardian*. Trotter had been an undergraduate at Harvard at the time of Du Bois's matriculation there. As the first Black member of Phi Beta Kappa, Trotter had lived a privileged life and was part of Boston's Black elite. In 1901 Trotter began to write excoriating articles about Washington in the pages of his newspaper, questioning his emphasis on industrial education, his accommodation to Jim Crow, and his tactics of silencing his opponents. In July 1903, he and his supporters disrupted Washington's speech to the National Negro Business League in Boston. Trotter's outbursts and insulting questions highlighted what appeared to be an unbridgeable chasm between Bookerites and Anti-Bookerites, as the two camps began to be called.

Despite the warring factions, most Black Americans did not fit neatly into either camp. Du Bois had not questioned Washington's Atlanta Exposition speech at the time it was delivered. On the contrary, Du Bois expressed his esteem in a letter to Washington dated six days after the event, congratulating Washington for "a word fitly spoken."

W. E. B. Du Bois spoke out frequently against Booker T. Washington and his views on education and politics.

Science History Images/Alamy Stock Photo

Born in Massachusetts, Du Bois went to liberal-arts oriented Fisk University, from which he graduated in 1888, and afterward to Harvard where he received a second B.A. degree in 1890 and a doctorate in history in 1895. Between 1892 and 1894, Du Bois also studied in Berlin under the famous sociologist Max Weber. It was only after the publication of his book of essays *Souls of Black Folk* in April 1903 that Du Bois came to be recognized as the overarching symbol of opposition to Washington. Although some of the book's ideas had previously appeared as articles in the *Atlantic Monthly, The Dial,* and the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* the book offered an explicitly critical analysis of Washington's philosophy, drawing the lines of difference more boldly than ever before. Du Bois accused Washington of preaching a "gospel of Work and Money to such an extent as apparently almost completely to overshadow the higher aims of life."

In his essay "The Talented Tenth," Du Bois wrote: "If we make money the object of man-training, we shall develop money-makers but not necessarily men; if we make technical skill the object of education, we may possess artisans but not, in nature, men. Men we shall have only as we make manhood the object of the work of the schools—intelligence, broad sympathy, knowledge of the world that was and is, and of the relation of men to it—this is the curriculum of that Higher Education which must underlie true life." In short, he viewed Washington's educational program as too narrow, and he found especially problematic the manner in which Washington deprecated institutions of higher learning. According to Du Bois, neither the Black common schools nor Tuskegee could remain open were it not for the teachers trained in Black colleges.

Thematic Connections: Intersections of Identity

The Souls of Black Folk: One's Twoness

At the turn of the twentieth century, W. E. B. Du Bois introduced groundbreaking concepts to understand African American identity in his book *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903). He opens his book by declaring "the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color line." For Du Bois, the "color line" refers to the racial discrimination and legal segregation that divided the United States into two worlds—one Black and one White—since the abolition of slavery.

Du Bois uses *double consciousness* to describe the inner conflict that Black Americans experience as they navigate dual identities, as both Black and American. This sense of "two-ness" forces individuals to see themselves through the eyes of a society steeped in racism while striving to maintain a sense of dignity and self-worth. Du Bois poetically described it as "two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings" existing within one person, reflecting the psychological toll imposed by the color line.

"The Veil" is a metaphor for the separation and lack of understanding between Black and White Americans. For White society, the Veil renders Black experiences, challenges, and achievements invisible. For African Americans, it causes social alienation and reinforces double consciousness.

Despite being born from racism and discrimination, double consciousness and the Veil can provide powerful insights. Living within and outside of mainstream society gives African Americans what Du Bois called a "second sight"—a heightened awareness of race and injustice. This perspective fosters resilience and equips individuals to resist oppression and advocate for social change.

Connect to Today How do concepts like "double consciousness" and "the Veil" help explain the emotional toll of racism today?

W. E. B. Du Bois (1868–1963)

Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division [LC-DIG-ppmsca-38818]

Du Bois rejected Washington's conciliatory demeanor toward the White South's virtual destruction of the political and civil status of African Americans, and he reasoned that it was not possible, under modern competitive methods, for Black artisans, businesspeople, and property owners to defend their rights and lives without suffrage. For Du Bois, the counsel of silent submission to racial inequality promised no good consequences for Black people. Du Bois contended that it was White Americans, not Black Americans, who deemed Washington the leader of his people. Now the source for advice on all matters pertaining to African Americans, Washington had become "a compromiser between the South, the North, and the Negro." As the most eloquent spokesman for a growing number of Black people, Du Bois expressed the considerable alarm of those who disdained Washington's growing influence in regard to the funding of Black educational institutions and his power over the appointment of Black citizens to federal and state positions.

Du Bois questioned the type of industrial education that Washington emphasized, since some of the artisan trades Tuskegee sought to produce—that of blacksmiths, for example—were fast becoming obsolete. Black barbers lost their monopoly in what had previously been a "black" service to foreign-born competitors, while cooks and caterers were similarly displaced by palatial hotels that frequently refused to hire Black workers. Neither Tuskegee nor other Black industrial schools took cognizance of the problems peculiar to wage earners in modern industry. For example, Washington admonished Black workers not to join labor unions, since they represented, according to him, a form of "organization which seems to be founded on a sort of impersonal enmity" to their employers. Washington also counseled Black farmers to remain in agriculture in the rural South, thus failing to understand changing times and irreversible demographic trends. There were, on the surface at least, innumerably more economic opportunities in the city, as well as more schools and opportunities for cultural and intellectual growth in the urban compared to the rural South. In the late nineteenth century, both White Americans and Black Americans had begun what would be a several decades-long migration from countryside to city.

Washington's Revenge

Booker T. Washington's various detractors were quick to argue that his refusal to condemn lynching, segregation, and disfranchisement had won his school the financial backing of rich and powerful White Americans. Washington had the ear of industrial giants such as Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller, department store magnate Robert Ogden, and men in political offices as high as the presidency of the United States. His connections to these men brought millions of dollars to Tuskegee and made possible gifts to other schools that he endorsed.

Andrew Carnegie, for example, admired Washington and in April 1903 gave $600,000 to Tuskegee's capital campaign—then the largest donation to the school. Carnegie's great esteem for Washington is evident in a letter to William H. Baldwin, Jr., a railroad executive and a trustee of Tuskegee Institute. Writing to Baldwin soon after his generous gift, Carnegie described Washington as a "modern Moses," continuing: "History is to know two Washingtons, one white, the other black, both Fathers of their People. I am satisfied that the serious race question of the South is to be solved wisely, only by following Booker Washington's policy. . . ."

Washington's network of powerful friends had allowed him to reward those loyal to him and punish his enemies. Donations to Atlanta University, where Du Bois taught, declined significantly, and the university's trustees began to urge the incorporation of more industrial arts courses into the university's traditional liberal arts focus. Washington's loyal "lieutenants" often acted as spies (with his approval). They discredited those vocal against Washington, attempted to get them fired from their posts, and ruined their chances for political or other appointed positions. One of Washington's supporters attempted in vain to have George Forbes, co-editor with Trotter of the *Boston Guardian*, removed from his position at the Boston Public Library. While he retained his job, the unfortunate situation caused Forbes to mute his attacks and cease to co-edit the newspaper. J. Max Barber, editor of the magazine *Voice of the Negro*, lost Washington's support after he began to travel in Du Bois's circles. Pressured by Washington, Barber eventually sold his magazine and left journalism altogether. Moving from Atlanta to Chicago and finally to Philadelphia, Barber freed himself from Washington's revenge only after becoming a dentist with no involvement in race politics.

The Niagara Movement

It was the realization of Washington's pervasive influence that convinced former Afro-American Council members Monroe Trotter, W. E. B. Du Bois, and others to establish a protest organization. The new organization was formed in 1905, when Du Bois sent out a call to meet in secret at Niagara Falls, a historic terminus for escaping enslaved persons on the Underground Railroad. Unable to find a hotel on the New York side that would lodge the Black attendees, the group convened on Niagara Falls, Canadian side, incorporating their organization as the Niagara Movement. Fifty-five men signed the call, although only twenty-nine were present. As Du Bois reminisced several decades later: "If sufficient men had not come to pay for the hotel, I should certainly have been in bankruptcy and perhaps in jail."

Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division/The New York Public Library

The Niagara Conference, 1905

Black leaders met at Niagara in 1905 to discuss their grievances and draw up a list of demands.

They drew up a platform, demanding freedom of speech and criticism, male suffrage, the abolition of all distinctions based on race, the recognition of the basic principles of human fellowship, and respect for the working person. The Niagara Movement's Declaration of Principles

asserted that "the voice of protest of ten million Americans must never cease to assail the ears of their fellows, so long as America is unjust." Theirs was an unpopular, even dangerous stand against influential and highly respected persons in both the Black and White communities. The periodicals edited by the movement's leaders—Du Bois's *The Moon* and later *The Horizon*, Barber's *Voice of the Negro*, and Trotter's *Boston Guardian*—constitute a bold and eloquent body of protest writings against the ideas and practices of White supremacy.

Du Bois admitted that many Black Americans would not perceive the need for another organization, referring probably to such predecessors as the Constitution League, the Afro-American Council, and the National Negro Business League. He did not doubt the possibility of skepticism, writing: "The first exclamation of anyone hearing of this movement will naturally be: 'Another!' . . . Why, should men attempt another organization after the failures of the past?" It is curious that Du Bois and the other men (no women were invited to be members) who signed the call envisioned their efforts as a movement—as if already a powerful change agent, laden with the resources and the popular backing needed to be a force for change. It was hardly so, at least not in the sense that social scientists today understand movements as expressing the collective consciousness of a relatively large grouping of persons and issue-oriented activism on a mass scale. Indeed, the fifty-five founders—primarily ministers, lawyers, editors, businessmen, and teachers—solicited what Du Bois called the "seldom sort," meaning the few, not the many.

"The country is too large," Du Bois wrote, "the race too scattered and the rank and file too unused to organized effort to attempt to impose a vast machine-like organization upon a wavering, uncertain constituency." Du Bois showed little confidence in the masses but rather confidence in like-mindedness. The organization sought to build its ranks from the men and women of the Talented Tenth. Du Bois waxed eloquent in his many articles, arguing and pleading for a Black intelligentsia that would not be gagged by fear of Washington's influence. In 1905 he wrote in *The Moon:* "We need faith. The temptation today is for Negro-Americans to lose faith. Particularly is this true among the thinking classes."

In the twenty-first century, with the Booker T. Washington Papers accessible in digital format, there is irrefutable and easily accessible evidence of Washington's reaction to the Niagara Movement. Washington clearly felt threatened, believing that nothing good could come from an organization of such men as Du Bois and Trotter. He enlisted his assistant Emmett J. Scott to persuade the press not to give the Niagarites any coverage. Writing to an influential White newspaper owner on July 18, 1905, Scott warned: "Our friends think it wisest to in every way ignore absolutely the Niagara Movement. The best of the white newspapers in the North have absolutely ignored it and have taken no account of its meetings or its protestations. I think . . . if we shall consistently refuse to take the slightest notice of them that the whole thing will die aborning."

Bookerites and Niagarites

The division between the two camps, by then called Bookerites and Niagarites, had reached a crisis point, leading Du Bois to resort to the Bible for words against Washington. The use of biblical references was a common rhetorical strategy in the

nineteenth century. Just as antebellum enslaved persons and freed people had invoked Exodus, Du Bois also drew on Old Testament imagery to embolden his readers. Most of them would have known the story of the prophet Elijah, who refused to serve the false god Baal, and thus Du Bois sermonized, using Baal as a metaphor for Booker T. Washington: "However many the traitors and rascals and weaklings, behold all around the thousands that have not bowed the knee to Baal that are standing staunchly for right and justice and good." Look at them, Du Bois continued, "and have faith."

There were hardly "thousands," but when the Niagara Movement held its meeting in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, in August 1906, 150 like-minded people, men and women, met openly in the haunting spirit of John Brown's fearless struggle for Black freedom. The Niagara movement had not died aborning. And more than this, it had begun to mobilize its supporters for a strategic, open assault on Jim Crow.

At the second meeting of the Niagara Movement at Harpers Ferry in 1906, it was announced that forty local chapters had been formed, twenty-four of them in the North. In the preceding months, the men of Niagara had debated the merits of women joining their ranks, and women were added as members. However, the addition of women did not pass without some opposition. Monroe Trotter, Washington's inveterate opponent had to be persuaded that women should be allowed to join. The infrastructure of the Niagara Movement showed signs of development. The Legal Department had already begun to challenge segregation. One of the women present at the Harpers Ferry meeting in 1906 was Barbara Pope, who at that very time was fighting Jim Crow railroad policies in the court. The Niagara Movement had provided a lawyer and financial support to Pope's lawsuit. The Harpers Ferry meeting also reported a Pan-African Department, Women's Department, Youth Department, Art Department, and Department of Ethics and Religion.

Niagarites such as Trotter, Du Bois, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, and others presented a powerful countervoice to the Bookerites. Theirs was a **galvanizing**, admittedly divisive strategy, presented as the alternative and principled position in the fight for racial equality. Building mass support entailed exploiting every opportunity—thus the proliferation of writings on both sides—to establish clearly and definitively the two different viewpoints. Each camp demanded that the Black community take sides; each camp linked its agenda to the fate of all Black Americans. In the years that some historians call the "age of Booker T. Washington," it was a bold and courageous move on the part of the Niagarites to plot the role of controversy in such a public way that African Americans would find the debate increasingly inescapable. Such leaders as Du Bois, Trotter, Barber, the Baptist minister John Milton Waldron of Florida and the District of Columbia, and lawyer J. R. Clifford of West Virginia manipulated every occasion that they could—in lectures, in the press, in the church, and in the courts—to reshape public opinion in explicit defiance of Washington and his many respected supporters.

Many took a stand on this debate, but most Black people did not think in this dualistic way; rather, they chose and validated specific ideas from both sides. Doubtless many African Americans took pride in Washington's growing renown, while others directly benefitted from his influence. Highly educated Black leaders and noted champions of Black civil rights held Washington in high esteem. Robert H. Terrell, the first Black federal judge and also husband of women's club leader

Mary Church Terrell, supported Washington, as did the lawyer and equal rights advocate Archibald Grimké. Richard T. Greener, who was a Black Harvard graduate, a lawyer, and a U.S. consul in Russia between 1898 and 1905, attended the Harpers Ferry meeting, but as his letters before and after the meeting reveal he also supported Washington. The young educator and songwriter James Weldon Johnson, who would later become a leader in the NAACP, admired Du Bois and the Niagarites but remained in the Bookerite camp. In 1906 Washington's influence with President Theodore Roosevelt landed Johnson appointments as consul in Puerto Cabello, Venezuela, and in 1909 in Corinto, Nicaragua.

Howard University educator Kelly Miller straddled the fence between the Washington and Du Bois factions, while Baptist leader Nannie Helen Burroughs, a staunch advocate for equal rights for both Black Americans and women, followed Washington's emphasis on industrial training. Her many speeches and writings, which championed the working class as opposed to the Talented Tenth, led her to be dubbed the "Female Booker T. Washington." Similar views were held by Victoria Earle Matthews, a race-conscious journalist and founder of the White Rose settlement house for Black girls and women in New York City.

"Two Classes of Negroes"

The competing strategies were effectively delineated and conveyed by the Social Gospel AME minister Reverend Reverdy Ransom in his rousing address to the men and women gathered at Harpers Ferry in 1906. Ransom carried his listeners back and forth across the African American ideological divide, as he described two classes of Black people and subsequently divergent paths to equality:

> Today two classes of Negroes, confronted by a united opposition, are standing at the parting of the ways. The one counsels patient submission to our present humiliations and degradations; it deprecates political action; ignores or condones the usurpation and denial of our political and Constitutional rights, and preaches the doctrine of industrial development and the acquisition of property. . . . The other class believes that it should not submit to being humiliated, degraded and remanded to an inferior place. It believes in money and property but it does not believe in bartering its manhood for the sake of gain. It believes in the gospel of work and industrial efficiency, but it does not believe in artisans being treated as industrial serfs, and in laborers occupying the position of a peasant class. It does not believe that those who toil and accumulate will be free to enjoy the fruits of their industry and frugality if they permit themselves to be short of political power.

The meeting places of the Niagara Movement were carefully selected to revive the same spirit of courage and uncompromising fervor reminiscent of the abolitionist movement of the antebellum era. Thus in 1907, the group met in Boston and in the following year, in Oberlin, Ohio—old abolitionist hubs in the East and Midwest. Yet there were to be no more meetings after 1908. The Niagara Movement would be absorbed by the new, racially integrated organization—the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

Reflections Explain the differing paths to racial equality that African Americans advocated during the era of self-help.

Economic and Social Striving

While controversy continued over the most practical and effective type of education, the vast majority of African Americans faced the difficult task of making a living. With more than 75 percent of African Americans in the United States still living in the former Confederate states in 1880 and engaged primarily in agricultural work, it appeared that most of them would have to make some sort of economic adjustment on the farms. Without the capital to purchase land, they continued to be locked in the various forms of tenancy and sharecropping that had evolved during Reconstruction. Indeed, large numbers were impoverished farm laborers with no greater stake in agricultural production than their own scantily paid labor.

Booker T. Washington sought to improve this situation in 1892 when he issued the first call for a conference of farmers at Tuskegee. In this and succeeding years, African Americans from the surrounding countryside listened to discussions on "the evils of the mortgage system, the one-room cabin, buying on credit, the importance of owning a home and of putting money in the bank, how to build schoolhouses and prolong the school term, and to improve moral and religious conditions." Small tracts and circulars containing some essentials of farm improvement were distributed to the farmers at the conference, and from time to time Tuskegee Institute mailed them other information. After 1907 White philanthropists, in cooperation with southern boards of education, also funded Black farm demonstration agents who helped to improve conditions.

The Black Exodus

Despite the efforts of Black farmers to adjust to the rural economy, the farm ceased to be attractive to many. Racial violence, intermittent agricultural depressions, unfair and often cruel treatment by landlords and merchants, and rumors of opportunities in the cities and in other parts of the country all stimulated an **exodus** of Black Americans from the rural South that began as early as 1879. Thousands left Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, and Georgia and went to the North and West. There was a minor stampede to Kansas, with Henry Adams of Louisiana and "Pap" Singleton of Tennessee assuming the leadership. Adams claimed to have organized 98,000 African Americans to go West. Perhaps he at least collected the names of that many who expressed a willingness to go. Singleton distributed a circular entitled "The Advantage of Living in a Free State" and actually caused several thousands to leave. Charles Banks and Isaiah Montgomery in Mississippi, Edward P. McCabe in Kansas and Oklahoma, Allen Allensworth in California, and Oklahomans David Turner, Thomas Haynes, and James E. Thompson were leaders in efforts to establish and promote economically viable and politically independent Black towns and agricultural settlements as the solution to the Black dilemma. Most of these ventures failed, however.

Historic Collection/Alamy Stock Photo

Benjamin "Pap" Singleton, 1809–1900

During 1879, more than 6,000 African Americans migrated from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas to St. Louis, and then on to Kansas and Oklahoma.

Some Black Americans considered the idea of emigration to Africa and sought help from the American Colonization Society, which continued to operate into the 1890s, although much weaker than in the antebellum era. Large numbers of letters from Black people to the ACS sought information about emigration in the two decades following the end of Reconstruction. Emigration fever was especially strong in rural Arkansas, although the lack of financial resources made leaving for Africa impossible. Historian Mary Rolinson notes that the interest in emigration spiked in the rural South after cotton harvests, when sharecroppers and tenant farmers felt more sharply the sting of unfair economic settlements with their White landlords.

In the pages of the various journals of his denomination, American Methodist Episcopal (AME) Bishop Henry McNeal Turner, a passionate voice for emigration in the late nineteenth century, described Africa as Black Americans' true homeland.

Focus On: Black Medical Schools

Before the Civil War, African Americans had no access to medical schools in the South and limited access to medical schools in the North. In fact, the first Black physicians received their medical training abroad. Between 1868 and 1904, seven Black medical schools were established, including Howard University Medical School, Meharry Medical College, Leonard Medical School, New Orleans University Medical College, Knoxville College Medical Department, Chattanooga National Medical College, and University of West Tennessee College of Physicians and Surgeons. By 1923, only Howard and Meharry remained in operation. Much of this can be attributed to a lack of funding and resources but the *Flexner Report on Medical Education* was an accelerant for the closing of many Black medical schools and the decline in the number of Black physicians. The *Flexner Report on Medical Education*, published in 1910, helped reform standards in the medical profession but ascribed little value to Black doctors and Black medical schools.

Today, there are four historically Black medical schools in the United States: Howard and Meharry along with Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, Georgia, and Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science in Los Angeles, California. There are plans to establish two additional Black medical schools—Maryland College of Osteopathic Medicine at Morgan State University (MDCOM) in Baltimore and Xavier Ochsner College of Medicine at Xavier University of Louisiana (XULA) in New Orleans. MDCOM will be the first HBCU to offer a degree in osteopathic medicine. During the pandemic and the George Floyd uprisings, Morgan State University made the decision to expand their focus to reduce health disparities and train a more diverse body of medical providers. In 2024, XULA and Ochsner announced an agreement to launch a new medical college with plans to be in operation by 2030.

Connect to Today What impact do you think new Black medical schools will have on their communities?

Turner's stridently Black-nationalist statement that "God is a Negro" and the coverage of his missionary journeys on the African continent led to a heated debate between Turner and AME bishops who opposed his African focus.

Black leaders found themselves far more often in debates over whether Black Americans should leave the South, and specifically the rural areas, instead of whether Black Americans should leave the United States for Africa. Staying in the South may have been the only perspective that Frederick Douglass, who died in 1895, shared with Booker T. Washington, although Douglass's reasons differed. Douglass believed that the government should protect citizens wherever they lived. He also feared that, if Black people migrated out of the region, they would lose what strength they had as laborers. In the North, unlike in the South, they would be forced to compete for jobs with the large numbers of immigrant groups. Richard T. Greener, however, insisted that Black Americans should migrate in order to put an end to the bad treatment they received at the hands of White southerners. He declared that a Black exodus would lead to better economic and educational opportunities and would also benefit those who remained in the South. Perhaps none of these arguments had any telling effect. Forces rather than words decided the fate of African Americans. Most of them had neither the resources nor the initiative to go to new areas. Those who did go were lured just as other rural Americans of the period by the hope of a better livelihood.

Innovation and Enterprise

At a time of unprecedented industrial innovation, African Americans made some important contributions. Jan E. Matzeliger, who had been an apprenticed cobbler in Philadelphia and in Lynn, Massachusetts, invented the shoe-lasting machine. It was purchased by the United Shoe Machinery Company of Boston and effectively reduced the cost of manufacturing shoes by more than 50 percent. In 1884 John P. Parker invented a "screw for tobacco presses." He established the Ripley Foundry and Machine Company and made presses for many businesses. Elijah McCoy patented fifty inventions relating principally to automatic lubricators for machines. It was the claim for the genuineness of one of his products that led to the expression "the real McCoy." Granville T. Woods, who began inventing in 1885, made significant contributions in the fields of electricity, steam boilers, and automatic air brakes. Several of his inventions were assigned to the General Electric Company, the Westinghouse Air Brake Company, and the American Bell Telephone Company. These inventions and others had a global impact by changing the ways in which people produced goods, improving efficiency and lowering costs.

African Americans embarked on their own program of business enterprise within a segregated market. Taking their cue from the almost hopeless plight of millions of their race in the South, Black leaders, including W. E. B. Du Bois, urged adoption of an entrepreneurial spirit: Black Americans were urged to enter business and manufacturing in order to escape poverty and achieve economic independence. Speaking before the Fourth Atlanta University Conference in 1898, John Hope, then a professor at the university, noted that the plight of African Americans was not due altogether to the lack of education and skills but at least in part to competition between the races for employment in new fields. He therefore called on Black workers to escape the wage-earning class and become their own employers. The conference adopted resolutions declaring that "Negroes ought to

enter into business life in increasing numbers" and that "the mass of Negroes must learn to patronize business enterprises conducted by their own race, even at some slight disadvantage. We must cooperate or we are lost." The conference also called for the distribution of information concerning the need for Black businesses and the organization of local, state, and national Negro Business Men's Leagues.

Booker T. Washington adopted this idea and in 1901 convened in Boston a group of Black businesspeople, thereby establishing the National Negro Business League. More than 400 delegates came from 34 states and elected Washington as their first president. In his autobiography, he reserved his highest praise for what he called the "business Negro"—convinced that the "only sure basis of progress is economic." He associated this group with the insistence upon spelling the word Negro with a capital N—a practice Washington heartily endorsed, since, as he argued, "we capitalize the Indian, the Chinaman, the Filipino; shame to withhold so small an honor from the Negro!" In *The Negro in Business* (1907) Washington stated that he was gratified by the large number of new business enterprises that had sprung up during the first year of the league's existence. Many local organizations were formed, and by 1907 the national league had 320 branches.

Black professionals and innovators also made important contributions to the medical field at this time. Black men and women had worked as physicians since the 1700s. In 1891, Daniel Hale Williams opened Provident Hospital in Chicago, the first Black-founded and non-segregated hospital in the United States. He performed the world's first successful heart surgery, to correct a heart defect, there in 1893. Throughout the Jim Crow era of largely segregated services, they also provided many forms of parallel and community-based health care services through private practices and clinics, including at Black settlement houses. These proved critical in helping combat disease.

Combating Old South Images

Black entrepreneurs serviced a segregated clientele hungry for consumer products that might not otherwise have been available, such as community news, life insurance, bank loans, and beauty products. Additionally, Black-owned products represented the self-help antidote to the sale and advertisement of countless commodities associated with Old South images of mammy, Uncle Moses, and other plantation stock characters that propelled the fast-growing American consumer economy in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Soap wrappers, postcards, boxes of breakfast cereal and pancake mix, tobacco tins,

Officers of the National Negro Business League

children's games, and fly swatters are but a few examples of the many items displaying smiling, often caricatured Black faces. These inexpensive products of daily use were widely advertised and sold to Black and White consumers in stores across the United States.

By presenting Black images in insulting and demeaning ways, such products reinforced ideas of Black inferiority and servility. Much like minstrel humor, which remained a tremendously popular form of American entertainment into the twentieth century, the new racialized commodities were intended, indeed literally designed, to elicit happy and jovial responses from their White consumers despite their underlying violent meanings and insensitivity to Black life. A drawing on a popular postcard, for example, depicted Black children being chased and eaten by an alligator.

African Americans attempted to combat such images by producing their own products, publishing their own literature, and portraying positive visual images. The artist Henry O. Tanner (1859–1937), son of the noted African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Bishop Benjamin Tanner, painted few works with explicitly Black subject matter, but his renderings of Black life serve as a powerful refutation of racist, stereotypical caricatures. For example, the ubiquitous image of foolishly grinning Black men with banjos—an iconic symbol in the American popular imagination—is countered by Tanner's *The Banjo Lesson* (1893). In the depths of the nadir in race relations, Tanner painted an intimate, dignified glimpse of Black family life in a humble home, where one generation teaches another.

Tanner, however, would leave the United States, not for Africa but for Europe. He received his artistic training at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1879 and worked under the celebrated American painter Thomas Eakins. After completing his formal training, Tanner initially set up shop in Atlanta, hoping to find patronage among the city's relatively affluent Black residents. In 1891, however, he left the United States to study abroad and remained in France for most of his professional career, cultivating a celebrated international reputation as a painter of religious subjects, landscapes, and portraits.

Henry Ossawa Tanner, *The Banjo Lesson*, 1893

Historic Collection/Alamy Stock Photo

At the end of the century, African Americans engaged in businesses of various types and sizes. They operated grocery stores, general merchandise stores, and drugstores, and they were restaurant keepers, caterers, confectioners, bakers, tailors, builders, and contractors. Some operated shirt factories, cotton mills, rubber

goods shops, lumber mills, and carpet factories. There were many cooperative businesses, such as the Bay Shore Hotel Company of Hampton, Virginia; the Capital Trust Company of Jacksonville, Florida; the South View Cemetery Association of Atlanta, Georgia; and the Southern Stove Hollow-Ware and Foundry Company of Chattanooga, Tennessee.

Black Women Entrepreneurs

Beauty culture proved to be one of the most lucrative sources of economic enterprise, appealing to a gender niche—Black women consumers. The demand for beauty products began to grow rapidly in the late nineteenth century among all American women. The demand for hair and skin preparations created opportunities for inventive and resourceful Black women to address the unique concerns of Black women, while also offering Black women employment beyond the limited options available to them. Annie Turbo Malone, the founder of the Poro System, and Madame C. J. Walker, the founder of the Walker System, became wealthy by perceiving beauty culture as a vehicle for promoting racial self-help. The advertisements for Walker products conveyed this. On the individual level, advertisements sent the message that a Black woman's appearance was directly related to her self-esteem and social mobility. A Black woman could pull herself up by the appearance of her hair and skin, not merely by her bootstraps. On a collective level, Walker's beauty culture business provided employment, and it linked as well to uplift ideology's attention to hygiene and physical appearance, which was no less important than educational and economic accomplishment.

The products of Black beauty culturalists would not go unchallenged by race-proud Black Americans who decried the hair-lengthening and skin-lightening advertisements, or by those who reduced the promises of such products to sheer falsehoods and dishonest advertising. However, race leader Madame C. J. Walker eventually garnered tremendous respect for her business, not least of all because of her ability to articulate self-help ideology through a beauty system that ultimately promised to transform the collective face of the race, or what Henry Louis Gates has described as the facelift or racial makeover representative of the New Negro in the first decade of the twentieth century. Walker expressed this sentiment to the National Negro Business League in 1912, stating: "I am in a business that is a credit to the womanhood of our race."

Madam C. J. Walker was born Sarah Breedlove in 1867 to a family of impoverished sharecroppers in the Deep South. Widowed at the age of 20, she resettled in St. Louis and worked as a washerwoman. In the quest to improve the quality of her own hair, she developed what became known as the "Walker System," a treatment that promised healthier and longer hair. After moving to Denver, she began to sell her products from door to door. She became successful enough to hire agent-operators in different states. She would later move to Indianapolis and finally to the banks of the Hudson River in New York. Her business skyrocketed, its success made possible by the hundreds, if not thousands of Black women employees and millions of Black women consumers of her product. Walker's speeches about her rise from a plantation to a mansion were eloquent testimonies to the philosophy of self-help. She fought for recognition, however, within the male-dominated National Negro Business League. She did not initially have the endorsement of Booker T. Washington, as did other (male) entrepreneurs. Washington and other men in the

Black business league scoffed at the “business of growing hair,” but she gained his respect as her profits grew. She also committed herself financially to racial advancement and gave generous donations to Black organizations. She died on May 25, 1919.

Establishment of Black Banks

African Americans made a special effort to establish themselves firmly in the field of banking, a difficult task after the failure of the Freedman’s Bank in 1874. In 1888 in Richmond, Rev. W. W. Browne organized the first bank to be administered solely by Black people, the Savings Bank of the Grand Fountain United Order of True Reformers. Later in the same year, the Capital Savings Bank of Washington was organized. In 1889 the Mutual Bank and Trust Company of Chattanooga was founded, followed by the establishment of the Alabama Penny Savings Bank of Birmingham. By 1914 approximately fifty-five Black banks had been organized. Most of them were closely connected with fraternal insurance organizations or churches or both.

The work of historian Shennette Garrett-Scott brings to light the overlooked role of gender in the context of banking and other financial activities in Black communities. She focused on Black women’s practices of saving, borrowing, lending, and spending money in regard to the Independent Order of St. Luke (IOSL) and its formation of the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank in Richmond, Virginia in the early twentieth century. Her work reveals the goals of leader Maggie Lena Walker who promoted Black women’s economic literacy and their empowerment as investors,

Woman of wealth and influence
Madam C. J. Walker and daughter go on a sightseeing tour.

Gado Images/Alamy Stock Photo

depositors, and executives. Walker was one of the most successful and celebrated bankers. She grew to fame initially as a member and leader of the IOSL, a Black mutual aid society. A civic activist and Black women's club leader, Walker's outreach efforts targeted working-class Black women. In 1903 she opened the St. Luke Penny Savings Bank and became the nation's first female bank president. The bank encouraged depositors with little money to "turn pennies into dollars." Many of her early patrons were IOSL members but also washerwomen, and even children. Explaining the dual financial and political implications of the bank's work, Garrett-Scott asserts that it provided Black women with white-collar jobs and made possible loans for home ownership and community development, thus empowering Black citizens to pay poll taxes and to strategize for the achievement of economic and social justice in the era of Jim Crow.

Racial discrimination in the northern states also required Black Americans to develop their own strategies for economic progress. In the 1880s, in Philadelphia, Rev. Matthew Anderson, pastor of the Berean Presbyterian Church, championed the need for his church to build a savings and loan association, in order to expand the availability of affordable housing to African Americans. Black people were confined to specific areas and had difficulty getting loans to purchase houses. The idea that Black Americans could find no other recourse other than self-help led the Berean Church to establish a building and loan association in 1888 that served as a needed lending agency for the larger Black community, not just for the Berean Presbyterian congregation. By 1908 the savings and loan association made possible the purchase of 150 homes, which Anderson described as "inviting, on good streets, in different parts of the city." The oldest operating Black bank in the country, Berean closed its doors permanently in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

The Role of the Churches

Black churches became an important source of business enterprise in the urban North and South. Because of segregation and the lack of Black Americans' access to resources available to White Americans, churches assumed a broader role than simply religious worship. They became, according to Chicago Black clubwoman Fannie Barrier Williams, "multi-service institutions." Individual Black churches often serviced a population larger than their members. In the late nineteenth-century South, many Black newspapers were published in churches, or at least began in churches. This was true of Ida Wells's *Memphis Free Speech*. Many, if not most of the Black schools and colleges in the South opened first in Black churches before acquiring a school building. In the era of self-help, every Black denomination developed publishing companies and religious presses. For example, in 1896, at the meeting of the newly formed National Baptist Convention, Rev. E. K. Love, pastor of the First African Baptist Church in Savannah, reveled in the formation of the denomination's own publishing board. Love proclaimed: "There is not as bright and glorious a future before a Negro in a white institution as there is for him in his own. . . . We can more thoroughly fill our people with race pride, denominational enthusiasm and activity, by presenting to them, for their support, enterprises wholly that are ours." The religious press, such as the American Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church *Christian Recorder*, not only published on religious topics but also offered opportunities for Black writers of fiction and nonfiction to present their work. For example, women writers Pauline Hopkins, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, and Victoria Earle Matthews found a venue for their writings in the periodicals of the AME Church.

Black women sewing by hand and with sewing machine in classroom, c. 1911–1918
Nannie Helen Burroughs founded the National Training School for Women and Girls, in Washington, D.C., to train Black women for skilled domestic work.

Everett Collection Inc/Alamy Stock Photo

Black women were primarily responsible for the fundraising and community mobilization that made it possible for individual churches and Black denominational organizations at the local, state, and national levels to establish and maintain schools, newspapers, publishing companies, libraries, old people's homes, orphanages, insurance companies and mutual aid societies, and a host of social welfare services. Black church women of all denominations worked within their own separate missionary societies, in secular women's clubs, and in alliance with White (more often northern) church women to develop and administer visionary programs of service to their people. They played a critical role in supporting and even initiating the progressive ministries in urban churches in the North and South. Such was the case of churches led by a variety of Social Gospel Black ministers: Reverdy Ransom who enjoyed a long life of activism in various parts of the nation; Richard R. Wright, Jr. in Chicago; William DeBerry in Springfield, Massachusetts; John Milton Waldron in Jacksonville, Florida and later in Washington, D.C.; Matthew Anderson in Philadelphia; Henry Hugh Proctor in Atlanta; Francis J. Grimké and Walter Henderson Brooks in Washington, D.C.; and Hutchens Bishop and Adam Clayton Powell in New York. In Harlem alone, numerous churches professed Social Christianity: Abyssinian Baptist, Bethel AME, Mount Tabor Presbyterian, St. Cyprian Episcopal Mission, and St. Marks Methodist Episcopal. Black churches in Detroit, Chicago, St. Louis, Cincinnati, and other cities engaged as well in Christian social service.

The Social Gospel, associated with the progressive reform movement of the late nineteenth century, linked the traditional Christian theology of individual salvation to wider ethical concerns for reforming poverty, immigrant adjustment, slums,

racism, alcoholism, and other perceived problems. The Social Gospel's individual and collective meaning, as well as its call for "practical Christianity," intertwined almost imperceptibly with the ideology of racial self-help voiced by Black religious progressives. Some, like Ransom and Waldron, called their churches "institutional" in keeping with many of the White Social Gospel churches at the turn of the century. In a like manner, Black Baptist leader, educator, and suffragist Nannie Helen Burroughs united her calls for "practical Christianity" and "practical education." Reminiscent of Booker T. Washington, Burroughs referred to her District of Columbia-based National Training School for Women and Girls as the "School of the 3 Bs: the Bible, Bath, and Broom."

Mutual Benefit Societies

Another manifestation of the struggle of African Americans to become socially self-sufficient was the remarkable growth of fraternal orders and benefit associations. Masons and Odd Fellows maintained large Black memberships; in addition, organizations such as the Knights of Pythias and the Knights of Tabor competed for membership among Black men. Organizations for Black women included the Order of the Eastern Star and Sisters of Calanthe. Other secret orders—the International Order of Good Samaritans, the Ancient Sons of Israel, the Grand United Order of True Reformers, and the Independent Order of St. Luke—offered insurance against sickness and death, aided widows and orphans of deceased members, and gave opportunities for social intercourse. Some were strong only in certain localities; others had memberships that extended over several states and owned the buildings housing their main offices as well as other property that they rented to Black businesses.

A variation of the fraternal organization, without the feature of secret rituals, was the beneficial and insurance society. Such organizations grew in number during this era. They usually collected weekly dues from their members, ranging from 25 cents to 50 cents. The Young Mutual Society of Augusta, Georgia, organized in 1886, and the Beneficial Association of Petersburg, Virginia, organized in 1893, were typical of local benefit societies. Larger in scope and membership was the Workers Mutual Aid Association of Virginia. By 1898, four years after its founding, it had more than four thousand members. Although these societies imposed relatively exorbitant dues on their members, they served as important training grounds where African Americans could secure business experience and develop habits of self-help that seemed to be more imperative as the new century opened.

A logical outcome of the mutual benefit societies was the Black insurance company. In Washington, D.C., S. W. Rutherford severed his connections with the True Reformers and organized a society that finally became the National Benefit Life Insurance Company, which remained the largest Black organization of its kind for more than a generation. In Durham, North Carolina, John Merrick, who had been an extension worker for the True Reformers, was able to interest several influential citizens in organizing an insurance company. He, together with several associates, in 1898 became charter members of the organization that later became known as the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company. Its period of substantial growth dates from 1899, when C. C. Spaulding was added to the board and the company was reorganized. In Atlanta, Georgia, A. F. Herndon's control of the Atlanta Mutual Aid Association led to its reorganization into the powerful Atlanta Life Insurance

Company. These and similar businesses grew as some White companies became more and more reluctant to insure African Americans, who were learning the value of purchasing various types of insurance.

Among the other organizations that assisted in the adjustment of African Americans to city life were the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). The first Black YMCA had been organized as early as 1853 in Washington, D.C., but not until after the Civil War was it connected with the White YMCA movement. In 1888 William Alphaeus Hunton was placed on the national staff as its first salaried Black officer, and in 1898 Jesse E. Moorland joined him to give special attention to the problems of African Americans in urban areas. Early in the new century, several city association branches were organized. Buildings that could be used as headquarters and recreational centers were constructed. With gifts from philanthropists George F. Peabody and Julius Rosenwald, Black YMCAs were established in several cities in the North and the South. Despite operating segregated facilities, the YMCA provided needed services to the communities in which it existed.

By 1906 there were small YWCAs for African Americans in Washington, Philadelphia, New York, and Baltimore. Gradually, with an awakened social consciousness, city and student work developed. A strong movement of YWCA work among Black women did not emerge until the outbreak of World War I. With the cooperation of such philanthropists as Rosenwald and Rockefeller, the YWCA acquired buildings in which programs of social improvement and education for young Black women were carried out. These programs, led by Black women, did much to assist women who had recently migrated in their adjustment to urban life.

Reflections What were the economic and social successes and challenges of African Americans during this period?

The Woman's Era

Perhaps no movement in the late nineteenth-early twentieth century captures so vividly the complexity of hope and frustration than the struggle of Black women for racial and gender equality. Black women writers and Black women's organizations blossomed during the decades, which are variously called the era of racial self-help, the progressive era, and the woman's era. Black women writers—Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Anna Julia Cooper, Fannie Barrier Williams, Hallie Q. Brown, Victoria Earle Matthews, Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, Mary Church Terrell, and others—contributed to an outpouring of literature (fiction and nonfiction) that captured the three-pronged spirit of Black uplift, societal reform, and women's rights. They were also actively involved in the club movement among Black women.

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper continued to be a voice of reform in the later years of her life. A noted author and antislavery lecturer in the 1850s, she advocated for women's suffrage and temperance in 1893, when she delivered the speech "Woman's Political Future" for the interracial gathering of the World's Congress of Representative Women, which convened at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Harper unmistakably championed the need for racial equality, Black

education, and the end to lynching, as she also proclaimed boldly: “Through weary, wasting years men have destroyed, dashed in pieces, and overthrown, but today we stand on the threshold of woman’s era, and woman’s work is grandly constructive.”

Gender-Specific Discrimination

At the time of Harper’s speech, Black women’s organizations and their reform agendas clearly reflected a conflated racial and gender consciousness. Black women confronted a gender-specific form of racial discrimination that began with slavery and continued afterward. For the most part, locked into the identity of servant and menial worker, Black women did not enjoy the social status of White women. The larger society did not place any Black woman, regardless of her education and accomplishment, on womanhood’s pedestal to be supported, protected, or identified by the term “lady.” Nor did society value Black motherhood.

In the courts, in their household employment, in scientific studies, and in the popular media, the prevailing opinion held Black women to be the very opposite of White women—the latter being perceived as delicate and chaste. Appearing periodically in the White press was the presumption of the inherent immorality of the Black female, even as an adolescent. In 1895, for example, James Jacks, the president of the Missouri Press Association, had demeaned the efforts of Black clubwomen to assist Ida B. Wells-Barnett in her anti-lynching crusade. Writing in a Missouri newspaper, he described Black women as “wholly devoid of morality . . . prostitutes and all natural thieves and liars.” In 1904 a White woman repeated this type of negative stereotyping in a newspaper article that stated: “Negro women evidence more nearly the popular idea of total depravity than the men do. . . . I cannot imagine such a creation as a virtuous black woman.”

Despite the racist limitations that African Americans sought to transcend, the thinking of most Black men did not transcend the many patriarchal ideas of their day. Thus Black women faced sexism within the Black community itself. For example, in the 1880s, Black Baptist church women, particularly in the southern states, faced male opposition as they endeavored to establish and control their own local missionary societies, in order to raise the necessary economic resources for projects that benefitted Black women and girls, as well as for projects that benefitted Black institutions generally. Fisk graduate Virginia Broughton of Tennessee; the Louisville, Kentucky, educator Mary Cooke Parrish; and the Washington, D.C., educator Nannie Helen Burroughs often drew on female examples from the Bible as they argued that women were called to work as equals with their men for the uplift of their communities.

In so doing, they adopted an explicitly women’s rights rhetoric, a feminist theology of racial uplift, while establishing denomination-based women’s organizations at the state and national levels. Also, as historian Tera Hunter reveals, Black working women banded together for economic uplift, conscious of the unique conditions they faced. Washerwomen in Atlanta in 1881 and in 1891 organized to better their economic situation, calling strikes for higher wages. Other Georgia-based women’s associations—for example, the Cooks’ Union and the Working Women’s Society—served as mutual aid and lending societies for their members during illness and financial crisis.

However, it was the rise of the club movement in the 1890s that gave voice to the gender-conscious civic activism of many middle-class and upper-class Black women. By the beginning of 1896, two distinct Black women's federations existed. One began with the formation of the Colored Women's League in 1892 in Washington, D.C. Black educators Mary Church Terrell and Anna Julia Cooper of the District helped to found the Colored Women's League, which quickly developed affiliated leagues in the South and West. Their work focused on establishing kindergartens, holding mother's meetings, and offering a variety of educational programs. The second federation emerged in 1894, when Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, her daughter Florida Ridley, and Maria Louise Baldwin (who was also the first Black principal of a school in Cambridge, Massachusetts) founded the Woman's Era Club.

Married to the Black judge George Lewis Ruffin of Boston, Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin had been involved in civil rights work and the women's suffrage movement since the 1870s. She served as the editor and publisher of the *Woman's Era*, a monthly magazine devoted to issues concerning Black women. When Ruffin extended an invitation to representatives of Black clubs in different parts of the country to meet in Boston on July 29–31, 1895, about one hundred Black women from twenty-five clubs answered her call. This meeting led to a subsequent meeting—the Congress of Colored Women—in Atlanta in December 1895, which launched the National Federation of Afro-American Women under the leadership of Margaret Murray Washington, the wife of Booker T. Washington.

The NACW

The merger of two Black women's federations, namely the Colored Women's League and the National Federation of Afro-American Women, created the National Association of Colored Women (NACW). Adopting the motto "Lifting as We Climb,"

The Colored Women's League of Washington, dedicated to "Moral Uplift"

Everett Collection Historical/Alamy Stock Photo

Window in Time

Mary Church Terrell Speaks on the Work of the National Association of Colored Women, 1898

Through the National Association of Colored Women, which was formed by the union of two large organizations in July 1896 and which is now the only national body among colored women, much good has been done in the past, and more will be accomplished in the future, we hope. Believing that it is only through the home that a people can become really good and truly great, the National Association of Colored Women has entered that sacred domain. Homes, more homes, better homes, purer homes is the text upon which our sermons have been and will be preached . . . Questions affecting our legal status as a race are also constantly agitated by our women. In Louisiana and Tennessee, colored women have several times petitioned the legislatures of their respective States to repeal the obnoxious "Jim Crow Car" laws, nor will any stone be left unturned until this iniquitous and unjust enactment against respectable American citizens be forever wiped from the statutes of the South. Against the barbarous Convict Lease System of Georgia, of which negroes, especially the female prisoners, are the principal victims, colored women are waging a ceaseless war. . . .

And so, lifting as we climb, onward and upward we go, struggling and striving, and hoping that the buds and blossoms of our desires will burst into glorious fruition ere long. With courage, born of success achieved in the past, with a keen sense of the responsibility which we shall continue to assume, we look forward to a future large with promise and hope. Seeking no favors because of our color, nor patronage because of our needs, we knock at the bar of justice, asking an equal chance.

Source: Mary Church Terrell, *The Progress of Colored Women: An address delivered before the National American Women's Suffrage Association at the Columbia Theater, Washington, D.C., February 18, 1898, on the occasion of its Fiftieth Anniversary* (Washington, D.C.: Smith Brothers Printers, 1898), Daniel A.P. Murray Collection, Library of Congress.

AP SOURCE ANALYSIS

Explain the significance of Mary Church Terrell's speech. What purpose and perspective does she express?

the NACW brought together 200 clubs, thus functioning as a federation of diverse state and local efforts for racial and gender self-help. The regional breadth of the NACW is reflected in the locations of its subsequent biennial meetings: in 1897 in Nashville, Tennessee; in 1899 in Chicago, Illinois; and in 1901 in Buffalo, New York. Historian Deborah Gray White has noted that this powerful association was "unprecedentedly 'feminist' in that NACW leaders insisted that only Black women could save the black race." It rapidly rose to become one of the leading organizations for Black social and political activism in the first three decades of the twentieth century. NACW members elected Mary Church Terrell as their first president and Margaret Murray Washington as vice president.

As the NACW's first president, a post she held until 1901, Mary Church Terrell noted: "We have become National, because from the Atlantic to the Pacific, from Maine to the Gulf, we wish to set in motion influences that shall stop the ravages made by practices that sap our strength, and preclude the possibility of advancement. . . . We refer to the fact that this is an association of colored women, because our peculiar status in this country seems to demand that we stand by ourselves." Terrell believed that by elevating Black women's social status, discrimination against the entire race would ebb—hence, all would be lifted by the act of Black women's greater acceptance and visibility within the general culture. Toward that end, Terrell focused on building a solid network of Black women across the country. The NACW established a monthly newsletter, *National Notes*, to provide information about the group's goals and programs and held conventions every other year in cities with large Black populations to help build membership and offer seminars for women.

Emblem of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs

Mary Church Terrell (1863–1954)

Terrell's racial uplift strategy adopted W. E. B. Du Bois's notion of a Talented Tenth when it came to her organization's leadership. Born into the Black elite in Tennessee, Terrell relied on similarly educated Black women, female business owners, and professionals to serve as leaders of local NACW chapters. She also tapped into the strong legacy of Black women's church-related organizing efforts, drawing many members from these groups. But while she sought racial advancement, Terrell and many other female reformers believed that the domestic sphere was the source of woman's unique power and her ability to enhance the race's social status. Terrell argued that "one reaches both the source of many race problems and an intelligent solution of the same, through the home, the family life, and the child." Black clubwomen's sense of uplift was often articulated in words that conveyed their elitism. They referred to themselves as "women of culture," "social standing," and the "best women" in their communities. Yet uplift's moral connotation also conveyed the clubwomen's anxiety at being lumped together with their "less fortunate" sisters, thus confirming the need for all Black women to gain respectability in White America.

NACW chapters implemented kindergartens and nurseries in their local areas. Through mothers' clubs, middle-class Black women hoped to educate and thereby uplift their "less favored and more ignorant sisters" with information on hygiene and homemaking techniques. Black clubwomen believed that virtuous mothers could serve, by their very existence, as a refutation of White racist notions of Black women as immoral and promiscuous. Mothers' clubs were later broadened to address economic concerns of working Black women as well as men.

Urban Settlement Houses

The clubwomen also focused on the problems of youth and women in cities, leading to the establishment of Black settlement houses that provided job training. For example, in 1897 the prolific writer, lecturer, and social reformer Victoria Earle Matthews, who led the Woman's Loyal Union of New York City and Brooklyn, established the White Rose Mission for Black women migrants to New York. Matthews endeavored to provide housing, industrial training, and moral teaching to Black women, who arrived in the city homeless, impoverished, and vulnerable to exploitation. Indeed, numerous Black women's clubs engaged in settlement-house work, and in this regard they were inspired by and considered themselves to be part of the reform-minded progressive movement in U.S. cities.

Black clubwomen established kindergartens, playgrounds, settlement houses, employment training programs, mothers' meetings, health clinics, and a host of other services. They sought laws against lynching, voting rights for both Black men and women, and municipal reform in regard to the lack of services in Black communities. Like other urban reformers, they brought both a moral and social scientific perspective to their understanding of the solutions to urban problems, and they looked to models, such as White reformer Jane Addams's Hull House, which served southern and eastern European immigrants in Chicago.

In the Jim Crow South, Black clubwomen in Alabama, led by Margaret Murray Washington, promoted Black history through statewide essay contests among Black children, beginning in 1899. The Alabama Federation of Colored Women's Clubs celebrated Frederick Douglass's birthday in February. And according to historian Jacqueline Rouse, these early activities were significant forerunners of "Negro History Week," which would be the brainchild of Black historian Carter G. Woodson in the 1920s. Membership in the Tuskegee Women's Club was restricted to the women faculty of Tuskegee Institute and the wives and other female relatives of the school's male faculty. The club focused on a variety of activities, visiting incarcerated Black men and boys in the town, as well as founding and maintaining a settlement house.

Lugenia Burns Hope, wife of Morehouse College president John Hope, was the primary force behind Black women's social work and reform efforts in Atlanta, Georgia. In 1908 she founded and led the Neighborhood Union (NU), a network of clubs that provided numerous services to the city's Black community. In its formative years, the Neighborhood Union included both middle-class and working-class women. Like White Progressive reformers, the members of the Neighborhood Union conducted studies of urban conditions in their efforts to persuade White city officials to provide adequate public schools, playgrounds, housing, and health care. When the city refused, the women set about the task of delivering needed services. For example, the Neighborhood Union made possible a children's playground on the Morehouse campus, a community health clinic, and a tuberculosis-prevention campaign.

Reflections Explain the role of key individuals and organizations in the struggle of Black women for racial and gender equality.

Thematic Connections: Resistance and Resilience

The Struggles of Black Women Leaders

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, during an era marked by escalating anti-Black racism and violence, Black women emerged as powerful leaders in the fight for racial and gender equity. Excluded from suffrage organizations led by White women and often marginalized within male-dominated racial uplift movements, Black women carved out a distinct space for themselves. Through advocacy, labor activism, and the Black women's club movement, they challenged stereotypes, addressed pressing political issues, and redefined Black womanhood on their own terms.

The Black women's club movement was a cornerstone of this activism. Rooted in churches and mutual aid societies, local clubs initially focused on community-based initiatives, including education, poverty relief, and public health. In the 1890s, the movement gained momentum. Journalist Ida B. Wells played a pivotal role, helping establish women's clubs while campaigning nationwide against lynching.

In 1895, James W. Jacks, a prominent White journalist, wrote a letter attacking the anti-lynching movement and insulting Black women with racist stereotypes, calling them "prostitutes" and "natural liars and thieves." Outraged, Black clubwomen from across the nation, including Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, Mary Church Terrell, Nannie Helen Burroughs, and Ida B. Wells-Barnett, gathered in Boston to defend Black womanhood and unify their efforts. Their meeting led to the founding of the National Association of Colored Women (NACW) in Washington, D.C., in 1896. The NACW would become the largest federation of local Black women's clubs. The NACW adopted the motto "Lifting as We Climb," underscoring its mission to promote racial uplift, community service, and the dignity, capacity, beauty, and strength of Black women.

By the early 1900s, the club movement was largely led by middle-class Black women, who often collaborated with White suffragists to advocate for women's voting rights. Despite their shared goals, Black women often faced racism within the broader suffrage movement. Within their own clubs, however, they were able to lead, champion women's suffrage, and tackle issues ignored by White suffragists such as lynching, the rape of Black women, and the disenfranchisement of Black men.

Intellectual and Cultural Endeavors

In 1897 Black intellectuals, including Alexander Crummell, W. E. B. Du Bois, John W. Cromwell, and Kelly Miller, established the American Negro Academy—a national organization whose members included some of the best educated and most prominent thinkers of their time. Their self-perceptions were shaped by their elite status and by their understanding of the role of the intellectual in the work of racial help. This role was best explained by the Black Episcopal priest and proudly race-conscious Alexander Crummell, who believed it the duty of the "trained and scholarly" to uplift the unlettered and uncultured of their race, thus reforming the "opinions and habits of the crude masses." The Black intellectual, according to this viewpoint, should use his knowledge as weaponry in defense of his race.

Beyond club work, Black women also organized to address the economic inequities faced by many African Americans. In the decades after slavery, the majority of Black women entered the work-force to support their families, often working in low-wage, exploitive jobs. Leaders like Nannie Helen Burroughs pushed for vocational training through institutions like the National Trade and Professional School for Women and Girls, advocating for fair pay and dignity in work. Meanwhile, Black women workers organized strikes and unions to demand better conditions. The Washerwoman's Strike of 1881 in Atlanta was an early example of this activism.

Through their leadership in clubs, suffrage, and labor, Black women played a key role in building Black communities and institutions in the decades after emancipation. Their efforts laid the groundwork for future struggles for equality, proving that Black women's leadership was—and continues to be—indispensable in the fight for equality and justice.

Connect to Today What similarities can we see between the activism of Black women in the early 1900s and today?

The Phyllis Wheatley Club, in Buffalo, New York, an affiliate of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs

Everett Collection Historical/Alamy Stock Photo

The academy captured, just as Crummell's words had done, the self-help ideology as articulated by advocates of the Talented Tenth. Many of the most accomplished women in the Black community supported the establishment of the academy, and at its inaugural meeting the admission to membership of several women was proposed. The suggestion was rejected, however, with the indefensible argument that to include women would make the group a social rather than a learned society.

Pan-Negroism

For thirty-one years, the academy promoted the exchange of ideas among Black intellectuals and helped perpetuate the Black protest tradition in an age of accommodation and proscription. It pursued its goals through annual meetings,

AP Skills Practice

Skill 2A: Identify and explain a source's claim(s), evidence, and reasoning.

As practiced in the AP Skills Feature in Chapter 7, Skill 2A asks you to identify the main position or claim expressed in a source. To do this, you can use clues, such as the source attribution line, to consider the creator and the context in which the source was produced. However, successfully answering the question will also require you to use your reading or visual analysis skills as well as any existing knowledge you may have on the topic.

On the AP Exam

For example, use what you've learned about the NACW and the Window in Time excerpt on page 539 to answer the question below.

Which of the following best describes Mary Church Terrell's claim about the role of the National Association of Colored Women (NACW)?

A. The NACW acts primarily as a legislative body that drafts, proposes, and advocates for new laws addressing racial inequality.

B. The NACW focuses exclusively on improving domestic life through local education programs and refrains from engaging in broader political or social issues.

C. The NACW plays a pivotal role in advocating for justice, challenging systemic oppression, and promoting moral and social uplift of Black communities.

D. The NACW relies on philanthropy to provide direct financial assistance to African Americans as its primary strategy for achieving equality.

The correct answer is C. In the passage, Mary Church Terrell highlights the pivotal role women play within the organization by fostering strong, positive influences in the home to raise good citizens. This underscores the belief that racial uplift, or social advancement, could be achieved more effectively through respectability and good moral character, countering racist stereotypes of Black people. Additionally, the organization is committed to challenging unjust laws, such as Jim Crow segregation and the convict lease system, while striving for equality and justice. This reflects a strong dedication to racial uplift and combating systemic oppression, aligning with the ideas presented in choice C.

special conferences, the publication of occasional papers, the collection of printed materials about Black people, and lobbying for the creation of research centers devoted to the study of Africa and the Black community. It was at the inaugural meeting of this group in 1897 that Du Bois delivered his now classic essay "The Conservation of Races," in which he introduced the double-consciousness, indeed the "dilemma" of being an American and a Negro. Calling attention to "spiritual" and "psychical" differences between the two races, Du Bois advocated a "Pan-Negroism." His strong race pride and consciousness are typical of Black leaders

during the era of self-help. Central to the essay is Du Bois's emphasis on the need for "race organizations: Negro colleges, Negro newspapers, Negro business organizations, a Negro school of literature and art, and an intellectual clearing house, for all these products of the Negro mind, which we may call a Negro Academy."

Another intellectual contribution was the Conference on Negro Problems, held annually at Atlanta University between 1896 and 1914 under the general direction of Du Bois. Not only did African Americans come together to discuss their problems, but each year a study of some phase of Black life was made. Du Bois indicated that the 2,172 pages of the published reports formed a "current encyclopedia on the American Negro problems." Among the publications of the conference were *Some Efforts of Negroes for Social Betterment* (1898), *The Negro in Business* (1899), *The College-bred Negro* (1900), and *The Negro Common School* (1901). Several of the conference's reports were enlarged and updated at later meetings.

Scholarly and Literary Works

A substantial number of scholarly and literary works by Black authors appeared during the period. Autobiographical writings were particularly popular in the United States. Such writings generally portrayed heroic deeds and dramatic successes, and Black authors often wrote within this genre. In *The Colored Cadet at West Point* (1889) Henry Ossian Flipper told of his experiences in becoming the first African American to receive a commission from the United States Military Academy. In 1881 Frederick Douglass brought his colorful career up to date in *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass,* which he enlarged in 1892. The outstanding autobiography of the period was Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery* (1900), which became a classic in American literature. Other Black leaders, such as Bishop Daniel A. Payne and John Mercer Langston, wrote their autobiographies during the period. Two popular biographical studies were Sarah Bradford's work on the life of Harriet Tubman, *Harriet, the Moses of Her People* (1886), and Charles W. Chesnutt's *Frederick Douglass* (1899).

Although numerous "race history" books were written in the era of self-help, the most able historian was George Washington Williams, a Pennsylvanian who had served as a soldier in the Civil War and had been educated in Massachusetts. In 1883 the well-known White publishing company G. P. Putnam's Sons published Williams's *History of the Negro Race in America from 1619 to 1880*. The two volumes resulted from years of painstaking and laborious research. It was the first historical study by an African American to be taken seriously by American scholars, and one newspaper hailed him as the "Negro Bancroft," referencing the historian George Bancroft (1800–1891), who published the most comprehensive book on the history of the nation from its founding to 1789. Five years later another major firm, Harper and Brothers, brought out Williams's *History of the Negro Troops in the Rebellion*.

In 1896 W. E. B. Du Bois's doctoral dissertation was published as *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade, 1638–1870,* the first book in the scholarly series, Harvard Historical Studies. This was a landmark achievement in the history of scholarship

by African Americans. While serving as an assistant instructor at the University of Pennsylvania, Du Bois gathered the material on the Black community of Philadelphia that appeared in his book *The Philadelphia Negro* (1899), a work considered to be one of the nation's pioneering sociological studies. Gertrude Bustill Mossell published *The Work of the Afro-American Woman* (1894), a historical account from the American Revolution through the nineteenth century.

Ida B. Wells-Barnett continued to publish protest pamphlets. One was the anti-lynching pamphlet *A Red Record, Tabulated Statistics and Alleged Causes of Lynching in the United States* (1895). In another, *The Reason Why the Colored American Is Not in the World's Columbian Exposition* (1893), she criticized the organizers of the Chicago exposition for not paying tribute to the accomplishments of African Americans.

In a volume of essays titled *A Voice from the South: By a Black Woman of the South* (1892), Anna Julia Cooper wrote with great insight about the challenges and opportunities that Black women faced as they tried to make their way in a world of racial and gender hierarchy, noting: "The colored woman of to-day occupies, one may say, a unique position in this country. . . . She is confronted by both a woman question and a race problem, and is as yet an unknown or an unacknowledged factor in both." Booker T. Washington wrote numerous books in the fields of education, race relations, economics, and sociology, among them *The Future of the American Negro* (1899), *The Education of the Negro* (1900), *Tuskegee and Its People* (1905), and *The Negro in Business* (1907), all of which largely restated his position regarding the place of Black Americans in American life.

In fiction, the Black writer who made the greatest impression during the period was Charles W. Chesnutt, whose novels and short stories were widely read and generously praised. Between 1899 and 1905, four of his books were favorably received because of their vivid portrayal of character and their quality as lively narratives: *The Conjure Woman* (1899), *The House behind the Cedars* (1900), *The Marrow of Tradition* (1901), and *The Colonel's Dream* (1905). Of *The Conjure Woman* Vernon Loggins has said that such a sincere work of art was "positive evidence that Negro literature was coming of age." Later in his career, Chesnutt became the recipient of the NAACP's highest award—the Spingarn Medal—in 1928 for "pioneer work as a literary artist depicting the life and struggle of Americans of Negro descent." Women also made important contributions to fiction, most notably Frances Ellen Watkins Harper's *Iola Leroy, or, Shadows Uplifted* (1892) and Pauline Hopkins's *Contending Forces* (1900).

Anna Julia Cooper (1858–1964)

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division [LC-DIG-ggbain-15413]

Although during his short life Paul Laurence Dunbar wrote several novels, including *The Uncalled* (1898), *The Love of Landry* (1900), and *Sport of the Gods* (1904), he is best known for his poems. His volumes of poetry *Oak and Ivy* (1893), *Majors and Minors* (1896), and *Lyrics of Lowly Life* (1896) celebrated elements of his African heritage while also bringing to life the unique experiences and challenges of Black Americans. Dunbar's poem "We Wear the Mask" uses the metaphor of a mask to allude to a color line of racial discrimination that separates Black Americans from White Americans. The poem begins, "We wear the mask that grins and lies, / It hides our cheeks and shades our eyes," referring to the idea that many Black Americans are compelled to hide their suffering amid a society imbued with racism. In 1898, Dunbar married Alice Moore, an accomplished author and settlement house worker at the White Rose Mission in New York. Though Dunbar died at the age of 33, Alice Dunbar Nelson continue writing and publishing. Her collection *The Goodness of St. Rocque, and Other Stories* reflected her own Creole cultural roots.

Sports Heroes

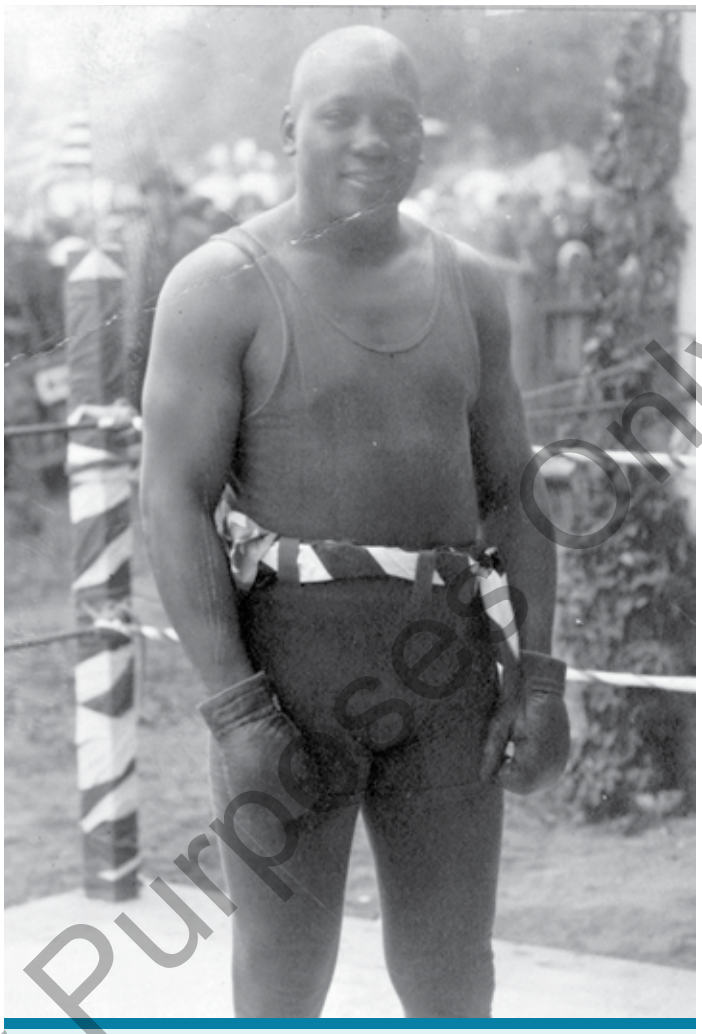
African Americans of all classes and in every part of the country thrilled to the triumphs and mourned the defeats of Black sports heroes, especially those in the highly visible sports of horse racing, boxing, and baseball. For many Black people, these athletes were racial champions whose physical achievements struck a literal and symbolic blow against the "enemies of the race."

Black Americans were participants in horse racing as early as the colonial period, especially in the South where the "sport of kings" was popular. A number of southern White enthusiasts had trained enslaved men to become some of the sport's leading jockeys. These early Black jockeys served in a variety of capacities, since they were also responsible for feeding, grooming, and the overall care of the horses. On occasion, they also assumed the role of a trainer or stable manager. Throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, enslaved jockeys continued to be a significant presence, their prowess and skill often making them winners. Oliver Lewis, an African American and the winner of the inaugural Kentucky Derby in 1875, was one of several Black jockeys in that race. Another Black jockey William "Billy" Walker, born into slavery in Kentucky, rode in the Churchill Downs from 1875 to 1878, and won the Kentucky Derby in 1877 atop Baden-Baden. He rode in the Derby a total of four times. Isaac Murphy then won the Derby in 1884, 1890, and 1891, and Willie Simms won in 1896 and 1898. Of the first twenty-eight Kentucky Derbies that were run, eleven Black jockeys rode fifteen of the winning horses. Abe Hawkins, a Black man, is often ranked as the greatest jockey of the late nineteenth century, winning 44 percent of his races, including three Kentucky Derbies and four American Derbies. As the nineteenth century drew to a close, however, changes in the organization of the sport and the era's intensified racism combined to eliminate Black jockeys.

The first hockey league, the U.S. Amateur Hockey League, did not form in the United States until 1896. The National Hockey Association started in 1909 and became the National Hockey League in 1917, but it did not admit its first Black player, Willie O'Ree of the Boston Bruins, until 1958. However, just over the northern border, in Canada, Black hockey players founded the Colored Hockey League of the Maritimes (CHL) in Halifax, Nova Scotia. All-Black CHL teams

competed across the maritime provinces until 1930, and their athletes introduced the "slap-shot," when goalies dive down on the ice to block a puck.

Black boxers were leading contenders from the time the sport became popular in the United States in the late eighteenth century. Boxing among enslaved persons served as both entertainment and a gambling sport for White audiences. Among the earliest boxers of distinction were Richmond and Tom Molineaux (or Molyneux). Brought to England in 1777 by a British officer, Richmond, a formerly enslaved person, was styled "the Black Terror." Richmond was the first American to be recognized as a major prizefighter. Molineaux, born into slavery in 1784, enriched his enslaver and gained his own freedom through victorious bouts with enslaved men of neighboring plantations. Once free, Molineaux moved to England, where under the nickname "the Moor," he became a major contender. By the time of his death in 1818, he had competed twice, both times unsuccessfully, for the British heavyweight championship. Following the Civil War, several Black men in the United States emerged as prominent professional boxers. In 1890 George Dixon, known as "Little Chocolate," was declared bantamweight (weight between 115 and 118 pounds) champion after an eighteen-round fight. In 1891 Dixon, securing next the featherweight title, became the first person to win a double title in boxing history. Dixon held the featherweight title until 1900. From 1901 to 1903, Baltimore-born Joe Gans held the lightweight title.



Jack Johnson (1878–1946)

Johnson was the first African American to win the world heavyweight boxing championship.

Library of Congress [Digital ID# cph.3d01823]

Jack Johnson, often described as "one of the greatest fighters of all time," was heavyweight champion from 1910 to 1915. In 1910 the return to the ring of White former heavyweight champion Jim Jeffries was hailed as the "Hope of the White Race," and Jeffries himself was reported at the time to have remarked that he had come out of retirement "for the sole purpose of proving that a white man is better than a negro." For African Americans, Johnson's victory over Jeffries vindicated at the very least racial equality. The Black newspaper, the *Chicago Defender*, declared Johnson "the first negro to be admitted the best man in the world."

Whites' alarm over the defeat of their "white hope" grew to such an extent that race riots broke out in several cities, and the U.S. Congress passed a bill outlawing fight films in movie theaters. Johnson's victories in the ring and his disregard of segregation in his private life—epitomized by his dating of and marriages to White women—so incensed White supremacists that they persuaded Representative

Seaborne Roddenbery of Georgia to propose a constitutional amendment in 1912 banning interracial marriage. (The bill failed to pass.) White boxing fans and sports writers continued to search for a "white hope" to defeat him. Johnson's enemies were pleased and his supporters crushed when he lost his title to Jess Willard, a White boxer, on April 5, 1915. It is likely that Johnson allowed Willard to knock him out in the twenty-sixth round; indeed, Johnson himself claimed that he threw the fight in return for help in reducing his legal problems.

John W. "Bud" Fowler (John W. Jackson) is thought to have been the first Black professional baseball player. From 1872 to 1900, he played on teams throughout the United States and in Canada, often as the only Black man among White teammates. Eventually Fowler and Frank Grant, an African American who got onto White teams by passing as an Italian, formed a team of Black players. Theirs was not the first "all-Negro" team; several had been formed as early as 1885. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the number of these teams grew, and several leagues were formed. By 1900 the color line had become so rigid in baseball that Black ball players, with the exception of those passing as White or Hispanic, had no options except the all-Black teams.

The election of a Democratic president, Woodrow Wilson, in 1912 ushered in a southern style of progressive reform that included imposing new forms of segregation on the nation's capital and a new policy of racial discrimination in the awarding of civil service jobs. The Wilson administration showed little desire to seek Booker T. Washington's or any other Black leader's counsel and advice. Gone was the political power of Washington's Tuskegee Machine along with the patronage that Black Americans enjoyed under Republican presidents. Nor had Washington's tact and moderation halted the racist mobs in the cities of the North and South. The bright star of Tuskegee grew dimmer as his influence waned. He was still the great man, but he had little time to live. As the year 1916 dawned, Washington would be dead. In the face of a retrenchment of racial discrimination and a hardening of the color line, Black Americans mobilized to seek community-based solutions and to press for public policy reform. Urbanization, industrialization, and progressivism all contributing to the fomenting of an oppositional consciousness that directed them to challenge mounting segregation, disenfranchisement, institutionalized racism, and persecution. Then, came the cataclysm of world war.

Past to Present

This chapter focused on Black community-building and the use of self-help ideology to fight against the post-Reconstruction assault on Black citizenship and humanity. In his book *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (1996), historian Kevin Gaines examines the ways in which African Americans responded to and challenged White supremacy at the turn of the twentieth century. One strategy that African Americans, especially formally educated African Americans, used was the self-help ideology of racial uplift. That ideology was rooted in a collective sense of social advancement and an ethos of service to the masses. What are some contemporary examples of self-help and what is its importance today? Are there limitations to self-help?

Reflections What were important intellectual and cultural works by African Americans during this period? How did their collective work support and connect to the concepts of self-help and uplift?

Chapter 14 Summary

Key AP Takeaways

In the late nineteenth century, African Americans were faced with a difficult reality. Segregation was the law of the land and the nation was committed to a hierarchy that defined White Americans as superior and Black Americans as inferior. In the face of the widespread, entrenched racism they faced, African Americans focused on improving their collective situation. This led to the development of schools that educated Black students, new businesses that served Black customers, and Black-owned banks that permitted African Americans to accrue wealth and return it to their communities. African Americans also excelled in intellectual, creative, and athletic arenas. Black women continued to be an integral part of the Black community's growth, progress, and stability, even as they battled dual oppression because of their race and their gender. Overall, Black Americans' progress was possible largely because they maintained a different view of themselves than the derogatory one projected by much of White America. By the start of the twentieth century, however, Black communities were more divided than ever over how to approach self-determination—by appeasing White America in the hope of winning the faith of White Americans or by protesting and resisting the racism that had a stranglehold on Black America.

Revisiting AP Themes

Migration and the African Diaspora

- Black migration to urban centers, particularly in the North and the Midwest, continued.
- A critical mass of African Americans moved west.

Intersections of Identity

- In *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois states that Black Americans have a double consciousness. They must navigate dual identities as Black people and as Americans, a state that causes them inner conflict.
- In his poem, "We Wear the Mask," Paul Laurence Dunbar suggests that Black Americans wear a mask to conceal their true thoughts, feelings, and struggles in a discriminatory and repressive society.

Creativity, Expression, and the Arts

- Black inventors such as John P. Parker, Jan E. Matzelinger, Elijah McCoy, and Granville T. Woods flourished at the turn of the century.
- The Jubilee Singers of Fisk University performed throughout the northern United States and across Europe to raise funds for the school.

Resistance and Resilience

- Through the Black Women's Club Movement, Black women collaborated to provide services and relief in the community and to pursue policy reforms.
- The rise of Booker T. Washington established a network of industrial and vocational education institutions that advanced notions of racial accommodation and self-help.
- Important Supreme Court decisions inspired more civil rights efforts.

Chapter AP Exam Practice

Multiple Choice Questions

Use the excerpt from *The Souls of Black Folk*, "Of Alexander Crummell," by W. E. B. Du Bois, 1903, from Topic 3.7 in the Course Framework to answer questions 1–3.

So he grew, and brought within his wide influence all that was best of those who walk within the Veil. They who live without knew not nor dreamed of that full power within, that mighty inspiration which the dull gauze of caste decreed that most men should not know. And now that he is gone, I sweep the Veil away and cry, Lo! the soul to whose dear memory I bring this little tribute. I can see his face still, dark and heavy-lined beneath his snowy hair; lighting and shading, now with inspiration for the future, now in innocent pain at some human wickedness, now with sorrow at some hard memory from the past. The more I met Alexander Crummell, the more I felt how much that world was losing which knew so little of him. In another age he might have sat among the elders of the land in purple-bordered toga; in another country mothers might have sung him to the cradles.

He did his work,—he did it nobly and well; and yet I sorrow that here he worked alone, with so little human sympathy. His name today, in this broad land, means little, and comes to fifty million ears laden with no incense of memory or emulation. And herein lies the tragedy of the age: not that men are poor,—all men know something of poverty; not that men are wicked,—who is good? not that men are ignorant,—what is Truth? Nay, but that men know so little of men.

Source: W. E. B. Du Bois, XII. "Of Alexander Crummell," in *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), available at Project Gutenberg.

1. The excerpt provides evidence to support which of the following statements?

- **a.** Crummell modeled the New Negro ideals of resilience, dignity, and agency.
- **b.** Crummell failed to understand the debilitating effects of racial discrimination.
- **c.** Crummell found it difficult to overcome the social barriers of a racial caste system.
- **d.** Crummell and the Talented Tenth deflected funds from more practical efforts.

2. Which of the following best describes the metaphor of the Veil?

- **a.** The Veil demonstrates economic inequities that prevent Black Americans from obtaining equal status in society.
- **b.** The Veil represents social barriers between Black and White America that prevent Black Americans from achieving full equality.
- **c.** The Veil signifies the dual personas that many Black Americans adopt in navigating Black and White social spheres.
- **d.** The Veil symbolizes disunity within Black communities resulting from the loss of African cultural traditions during enslavement.

3. Which of the following best describes Du Bois' concept of "double consciousness"?

   a. the inner discord experienced by Black Americans living in an oppressive society

   b. an ongoing effort to blend traditional Black African practices with European-derived ideals

   c. the often-conflicting economic interests of Black Americans in rural vs. urban areas

   d. a two-pronged approach to uplift taken by middle-class and working-class Black Americans

4. Which of the following best describe the significance of the Niagara Movement?

   a. It refocused efforts on economic uplift by emphasizing vocational training and self-reliance for African Americans.

   b. It marked a turning point by advocating for immediate Black civil rights and an end to segregation policies.

   c. It distracted from Black social justice campaigns by promoting industrial and agricultural education programs.

   d. It depended on alliances with White leaders to fund business opportunities and charitable works for African Americans.

Use the excerpt from "The Atlanta Exposition Address" by Booker T. Washington, 1895, from Topic 3.8 in the Course Framework to answer questions 5–8.

Cast it down in agriculture, mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service, and in the professions. And in this connection it is well to bear in mind that whatever other sins the South may be called to bear, when it comes to business, pure and simple, it is in the South that the Negro is given a man's chance in the commercial world, and in nothing is this exposition more eloquent than in emphasizing this chance. Our greatest danger is that in the great leap from slavery to freedom we may overlook the fact that the masses of us are to live by the productions of our hands, and fail to keep in mind that we shall prosper in proportions we learn to dignify and glorify common labor and put brains and skill into the common occupations of life; shall prosper in proportion as we learn to draw the line between the superficial and the substantial, the ornamental gewgaws of life and the useful. No race can prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem. It is at the bottom of life we must begin, and not at the top. Nor should we permit our grievances to overshadow our opportunities.

Source: Booker T. Washington, "The Atlanta Exposition Address," September 18, 1895, from the National Park Service.

5. Based on the excerpt above, Booker T. Washington

   a. advocates immediate desegregation of southern schools and workplaces.

   b. believes Black southerners should migrate north and west for better economic opportunities.

   c. wants Black Americans to focus on artistic and cultural achievements to gain equality.

   d. means to achieve racial harmony by fostering Black economic growth and practical progress.

6. Which of the following best describes how White audiences received Washington's message?

   a. White audiences generally received Washington's message in a positive light, earning him the goodwill of several influential White citizens.

   b. White audiences largely rejected Washington's message as they felt it threatened the existing racial hierarchy.

   c. White audiences largely disregarded Washington's message as irrelevant to more pressing political issues unrelated to race relations.

   d. White audiences generally supported Washington's call for immediate desegregation and political equality as essential for economic growth.

7. Which of the following best describes the relationship between Washington and industrial giants such as Rockefeller and Carnegie?

   a. Washington rejected the influence of industrialists, believing their support would compromise his educational mission.

   b. Industrial giants were critical of Washington's conciliatory approach as they preferred more direct activism to promote racial equality.

   c. Washington's relationship with industrialists was characterized by mutual respect as they refrained from directly funding his initiatives.

   d. Washington cultivated relationships with industrial giants, who then provided financial assistance to Tuskegee Institute and other projects.

8. Which of the following best compares the philosophies of Washington and Du Bois?

   a. Washington and Du Bois prioritized economic self-reliance as the key to achieving racial equality.

   b. Washington supported full political participation for African Americans, while Du Bois believed in maintaining segregation to avoid conflict.

   c. Washington emphasized vocational training and gradual progress, while Du Bois advocated for higher education and immediate civil rights.

   d. Washington focused on political reform, while Du Bois supported a cultural renaissance as the primary means to equality.

Short-Answer Question

Use your knowledge of Black women's roles and contributions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to complete parts A, B, C, and D.

A. Explain ONE way Black women challenged racial and gender stereotypes in the late 19th century.

B. Describe ONE important cultural or political function of Black women and their role in the church.

C. Using a specific example, explain ONE social or cultural contribution of Madame C. J. Walker.

D. Using a specific example, describe Ida B. Wells' efforts to speak out against racial violence.