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A Strong Man to Run a Race: W. E. B. DuBois and the Politics of Black Masculinity at the Turn of the Century

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> I rejoice as a strong man to run a race, and I am strong—is it egotism—is it assurance—or is [it] the silent call of the world spirit that makes me feel that I am royal and that beneath my sceptre a world of kings shall bow.
>
> —William Edward Burghardt DuBois, Berlin, 1893[1]

INTRODUCTION: HISTORICIZING THE MONOLITHIC CONCEPT OF RACE

Scholars of African-American history have paid much attention to the turn of the twentieth century, for it was both the "nadir" of political and civil rights for black people and the age of rising African-American struggle against racism. Recent historical studies focus not only on famous stories of the Niagara Movement and NAACP, but also on black intellectuals' search for positive black representation and on African-American female activists' developing feminist ideologies and organized struggles against racism and sexism.[2]

Most of these studies are based on an assumption that the black community is monolithic. They tend to reduce historical experiences of African-American men and women at the turn of the century to an ahistorical notion of blackness, ignoring the diverse and complicated nature of inter- and intraracial relations. Consequently, race has been analyzed in separation from its socio-historical contexts such as class or gender

relations. Here I shall take up the case of W. E. B. DuBois. Most biographies emphasize that DuBois was a representative of the black race, or a race man. Even if biographers criticize his elitist inclinations, they assume that his racial ideology was authentic and its essential importance could be immune from the elitism.[3]

Race and racism are, however, not fixed or unchangeable factors of history but historically situated discursive concepts which (re)construct social relations, interests, and institutions. As Michael Omi and Howard Winant point out, "race is a concept which signifies and symbolizes social conflicts and interests by referring to different types of human bodies."[4] Indeed, recent works on turn-of-the-century black history focus on relations between black elites' construction of racial discourse and its socio-historical contexts such as black middle-class formations and gender issues. Willard Gatewood, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, Kevin Gaines and others insist that the emphasis on class differentiation among the black community was a compelling strategy for black elite men and women at that time in their struggle against racism. This emphasis, called "politics of respectability" or "racial uplift ideology," was a discursive strategy which constructs a representation of black lower-class people as the uncivilized Other and the black elites as respectable and civilized as the white middle-class, thereby justifying black claims to citizenship and bourgeois privileges regardless of race. Moreover, according to Higginbotham and Gaines, the black elites' concept of respectability was signified by notions of proper gender roles in Victorian culture.[5] Thus race was inseparably entwined with class and gender matters at the turn of the century. Therefore, we should pay attention to the problem of how and why turn-of-the-century racial discourses were used to construct particular kinds of social relations in terms of class and gender.

Hereafter I shall analyze DuBois's racial discourse and its relations to class and gender formations. This essay focuses on masculinity, for it is indispensable to understand the meaning of gender for DuBois, a prominent black male leader. Most studies on DuBois's attitude toward gender and feminism simply argue that he was a champion of women's rights, especially black women's dignity. However, because they assume existence of essential unity and cooperation between DuBois and black feminists on the ground of shared blackness, they never address the question of what racial and class relations DuBois's apparently pro-feminist discourse constructed.[6] To answer to the question requires us to regard masculinity as not fixed but fluid and constructed in relation to repre-

sentations of woman, and to analyze how DuBois positioned his own elite black male agency through pro-feminist discursive practices.

I CLASS DISTINCTION AS MANLY ANTI-RACISM: DUBOIS IN THE NORTH, 1890S

The Philadelphia Negro, DuBois's first major sociological study published in 1899, is a typical text which emphasizes class distinctions within the black community to counter negative racial representations produced by and circulated in the white society. American culture in the late nineteenth century was inundated with racist stereotypes which recognized neither the existence of diversity among black people nor the possibility of African-Americans' upward social mobility. The stereotypical characters of the happy-go-lucky "sambo" and "coon," suited only for lower-class jobs, were disseminated through popular entertainments such as vaudeville shows and novels.[7] For example, Thomas Nelson Page, famous at that time as writer of plantation-praising novels, argued that black people were fit only for occupations such as "barbers, white-washers, shoe-blacks and chimney sweeps," and that they would not climb to middle-class positions such as lawyer or doctor.[8] The anti-black racial discourse was often constituted by this kind of class-biased discourse which assumed that whites were superior to blacks because only whites could be truly middle-class.

DuBois's discursive strategy in The *Philadelphia Negro* is not to refute the class-based racial discourse itself but to dislocate the relations between race and class by arguing that racism was wrong because not race but class qualifies a person for citizenship. Given this maneuver, it appears that his intention in this text was to undermine the monolithic concept of race. DuBois argues, "there is always a strong tendency on the part of the community to consider the Negroes as composing one practically homogeneous mass. [. . .] Nothing more exasperates the better class of Negroes than this tendency to ignore utterly their existence."[9] Then he represents the black residents in Philadelphia as not homogeneous but consisting of four classes, divided according to the standards of the Victorian concept of respectable gender relations. He insists that the highest of the classes are

> families of undoubted respectability earning sufficient income to live well; not engaged in menial service of any kind; the wife engaged in no occupation save that of house-wife, except in a few cases where she had special

> employment at home. The children not compelled to be bread-winners, but found in school; the family living in a well-kept home.[10]

The bottom of the class hierarchy is characterized by a degraded lifestyle. They were "the able-bodied, well-dressed loafers and criminals who [. . .] are supported partly by crime and gambling, partly by the prostitution of their female paramours, but mainly from the vast corruption fund gathered from office-holders and others, and distributed according to the will of the party Boss."[11] These assertions indicate that the black elite were defined by their Victorian manliness which meant keeping the wife ensconced in domesticity and the failure of which meant depending on the female partner's income.

DuBois frequently points out that environmental factors, especially racial prejudice, had maintained the circumstances of the degraded blacks. His discourse, however, emphasizes that the lower-class black's licentious and degraded behavior reproduces immorality. Consequently, his representation of lower-class African-Americans is a sort of "underclass," or an essentially different people from the middle-class blacks. For example, he argues that black men's low wages compelled poor black wives to work outside the home, and it resulted in "[leaving] the children without guidance or restraint for the better part of the day—a thing disastrous to manners and morals."[12]

By emphasizing class differentiation within the black race, DuBois tries to conserve or regain black middle-class men's rights and privileges. Hence he severely criticizes racism for undermining class differentiation. He decries, "young men and women from some of the best Negro families of the city [. . .] have actually had to go to the South to get work, if they wished to be aught but chambermaids and bootblacks."[13] DuBois uses the class difference as an argument condemning racism in 1899, when he petitioned against a Georgia disfranchisement bill because it intended to disfranchise not the ignorant masses of both races but the black race as a whole.[14]

DuBois's strategy in the 1890s was to overcome racial labeling and discrimination by insisting that the American citizenship should be limited not by race but by class. What motivated him to choose such a strategy was a destabilization of relations between racial categorization and class caused by massive immigration of Eastern and Southern Europeans, most of whom dwelled as the lower class in Northern cities and whose whiteness was therefore suspected by nativists.[15] It gave black elites many opportunities to undermine white supremacy by using the

class-biased discourse of nativism. DuBois deplored "the policy of the city to-day [that] simply drives out the best classes of young people whom its schools have educated and social opportunities trained, and fills their places with idle and vicious immigrants."[16]

Such a discursive strategy aimed at appealing to white liberal elites. In *The Philadelphia Negro* DuBois appeals to the city's white elites for cooperation with black elite citizens by reminding readers of the municipal history of disorder caused by Irish immigrants. He writes of how, before the Civil War, the city's Democratic rulers had retained power "by manipulation of a mass of ignorant and turbulent *foreign* voters, chiefly Irish." On the other hand he emphasizes that black elite citizens would contribute to the common good of the city: "Any worthy cause of municipal reform can secure a respectable Negro vote in the city, showing that there is the germ of an intelligent independent vote."[17] Contrasting the ignorant foreigners with the respectable blacks, DuBois demands in the last chapter:

> Social sympathy must exist between what is best in both races and there must no longer be the feeling that the Negro who makes the best of himself is of least account to the city of Philadelphia, while the vagabond is to be helped and pitied.[18]

DuBois's wish was to encourage the cooperation between the black and white elites against racial prejudice on the ground of difference between them and the lower class, black and nonblack.

Such a strategy might have been effectual to some extent because in the Northern cities many white elites had recognized class differentiation among African-Americans and they had sometimes suspected lower-class immigrants' whiteness by treating with some sorts of black people better. In the 1890s, the American Protective Association, famous for its nativist activities, welcomed African-American supporters in order to confront "the menace of the Irish."[19] Ray Stannard Baker, a famous Northern progressive journalist, points out later in 1906 that "the vast majority of Negroes (and many *foreigners*, and '*poor whites*') [were] still densely ignorant," and criticizes the Southern suffrage laws as "keep[ing] many *capable Negroes* from the exercise of their rights," and "executed unjustly as between white men and coloured."[20] Therefore it was a practical strategy at that time for black elites like DuBois to emphasize differences between themselves and the lower class, black or white, in gendered terms.

II CLASS DIFFERENTIATION AND RACIAL IDENTIFICATION: MANLINESS IN *THE SOULS OF BLACK FOLK* AND THE NIAGARA MOVEMENT

In the 1890s, DuBois emphasized class differentiation among the African-American community. He would never abandon the class distinction. However, we can find the emergence of a new discourse on race in DuBois's later texts. The new discourse stressed racial identification rather than class distinction. It was an outcome of two historical factors at the turn of the century: polarization of race relations and Booker T. Washington's attack on higher education for blacks.

The turn of the century was an age of strengthening of black-white racial polarizing in the United States, especially in the South. The number of lynchings drastically increased, race riots frequently occurred, and the amount of Jim Crow legislation increased. According to C. Vann Woodward, these laws "applied to *all* Negroes—not merely to the rowdy, or drunken, or surly, or ignorant ones." Moreover, imperialistic policies such as the Spanish- and Philippine-American wars provided an excellent opportunity for redrawing the color line. African-Americans were identified with the natives of the colonies in the imperialists' discourse, while many Eastern- and Southern-European immigrants and white workingmen identified themselves with the "white man's burden" and strengthened their white identity. In addition, the Spanish-American War was utilized by white supremacists to symbolize the firm reunion of the nation, namely, Northern and Southern whites. Differences among the white people were submerged under the alleged unity of the white race.[21]

DuBois perceived the aggravation of racism as targeting the middle-class blacks. He articulated his sense of a black middle-class crisis using the holistic language of race. His most influential book, *The Souls of Black Folk*, is famous for its use of racial metaphors such as double-consciousness and the color line.[22] But these binary metaphors specifically describe the turn-of-the-century crisis of the black middle class. The tragedy of double-consciousness is articulated as "the contradiction of double aims" of black ministers, doctors, scholars, artisans, and artists posited between the whites and the black masses.[23] Moreover, DuBois insists that the color line was experienced differently by blacks according to class difference. For him the line is drawn most stringently between "the better classes" of both races: "The best of the whites and the best of the Negroes almost never live in anything like close proximity." He sees no intellectual exchange between "ministers, teachers, physi-

cians, merchants, mechanics, and independent farmers, who by nature and training are the aristocracy and leader of the blacks" and "the best element of whites." Consequently, "the color-line comes to separate natural friends and co-workers." On the contrary, "at the bottom of the social group, in the saloon, the gambling-hell, and the brothels, that same line wavers and disappears."[24] Therefore DuBois perceived that the worsening of racial antagonism damaged middle-class blacks most severely and frustrated his efforts to seek the interracial anti-racist cooperation of elites that he had expected in the 1890s.

Booker T. Washington's attack on higher education also encouraged DuBois to change his discursive strategy. Before Washington, one of the most influential African-American men at that time, published his autobiography, DuBois and Washington had maintained friendly relations. What divided them was Washington's attack on higher education for blacks in his autobiography, *Up from Slavery*, published in 1901.[25] His opposition to higher education irritated DuBois because it undermined the legitimacy of college-educated black elites. Washington's bashing of higher education divides the black middle class into the college-bred and the non-college-educated. DuBois decries in his review of Washington's autobiography, "he learned so thoroughly the speech and thought of triumphant commercialism and the ideals of material prosperity that he pictures as the height of absurdity a black boy studying a French grammar in the midst of weeds and dirt."[26] DuBois perceives that Washington discourages black higher education: "one of the effects of Mr. Washington's propaganda has been to throw doubt upon the expediency of such training for Negroes."[27] He concludes that in Washington's narrative industrial and higher educations were mutually exclusive.

DuBois's response was to publicize the usefulness of college-trained blacks for the African-American community. In his sociological research reports DuBois argued that they would contribute to the race less by their economic activities than by cultural influence: "Work alone will not do [uplift a people . . .] The Talented Tenth of the Negro race must be made leaders of thought and missionaries of culture among their people."[28] But how to prove that African-American college graduates are truly representative of the entire black community? DuBois intended to prove it by criticizing Washington in dichotomous gendered terms in *The Souls*, which describes college-bred blacks as anti-materialistic, assertive and manly by representing Washington as a materialistic, submissive and therefore effeminate man.

DuBois equates Washington's emphasis on industrial education with

materialism. Washington "came, with a simple programme, at the psychological moment when the nation was a little ashamed of having bestowed so much sentiment on Negroes, and was concentrating its energies on Dollars." His "gospel of Work and Money" was "to such an extent as apparently almost completely to overshadow the higher aims of life." DuBois defines Washington's materialism as a compromising attitude to whites: "Mr. Washington represents in Negro thought the old attitude of adjustment and submission." It was a "sign of compromise which surrendered [blacks'] civil and political rights, even though this was to be exchanged for larger chances of economic development."[29]

For DuBois the college-trained black elites were the representatives of African-American manliness because they were conceptualized as antithetical to materialism. He writes that the function of "the Negro college" is to "maintain the standards of popular education," to "seek the social regeneration of the Negro," and ultimately to "develop men." The college-bred souls "aforetime have inspired and guided worlds, and if we be not wholly bewitched by our Rhine-gold, they shall again."[30]

Similarly he marks the difference between himself and Washington in gendered terms. DuBois writes, "manly self-respect is worth more than lands and houses." Washington, however, recommended "a silent submission to civic inferiority such as is bound to sap the manhood of any race in the long run." On the contrary, DuBois's hero, Frederick Douglass, "in his old age, still bravely stood for the ideals of his early manhood—ultimate assimilation through self-assertion, and on no other terms."[31] He means that the pursuit of material success would undermine racial manhood. On the other hand, it was the college-bred black elites who could counter this emasculating materialism. In chapter five of *The Souls*, submission to racism for small material success is compared to Atalanta (a girl of the Greek myth) yielding to a golden apple. What will rescue African Americans from materialism are "the coming universities of the South." Only black colleges could "bear the maiden past the temptation of golden fruit."[32]

The aggravation of white-black antagonism and confrontation with Washington's criticism of college education encouraged DuBois to perceive the crisis of college-trained black elites, and to articulate it as racism and materialism endangering black manhood. He never abandoned the discourse of class differentiation. Nevertheless by using the language of race as a whole he later transformed his own stance to identify with the entire black race because he could not ally with non-

college-trained middle-class blacks symbolically represented by Washington. Consequently, his racial discourse became more holistic and inclusive than ever. We can see this discursive turn in the Niagara Movement.

The Niagara Movement was a black civil rights organization established in 1905 by several black male professional elites who opposed the leadership of Booker Washington. DuBois was a co-founder and secretary-general of the Movement. The most notable characteristic of this organization was its exclusiveness in membership by gender and class,[33] and inclusiveness in program. The Declaration of Principles claimed for universal male suffrage and other various rights such as improvement of public schools for blacks, equal justice, and abolition of the convict-lease system. In 1906 DuBois argues more definitely:

> In detail our demands are clear and unequivocal. First, we would vote; with the right to vote goes everything: Freedom, manhood, the honor of your wives, the chastity of your daughters, the right to work, and the chance to rise, and let no man listen to those who deny this.[34]

It is important to note that this manifesto was addressed solely to men. The term "you" in this text does not mean black women, as the term "*your* wives" implies.

Claiming rights not only for middle-class blacks but for the entire race is justified in terms of an assertive manhood. DuBois insists on the significance of "persistent manly agitation" as "the way to liberty." He also avows, "we refuse to surrender the leadership of this race to cowards and trucklers. We are men; we will be treated as men. On this rock we have planted our banners." In these texts, materialism is posited in opposition to manliness again. He argues, "no bribe of money or notoriety, no promise of wealth or fame, is worth the surrender of a people's manhood or the loss of a man's self-respect."[35] In these texts DuBois transforms his definition of black manliness from an adaptation of Victorian gender norms to an anti-materialist struggle against racism.

In fact DuBois's program for racial justice was still class-biased. He assailed the Jim Crow car since it "make[s] us pay first-class fare for third-class accommodations, render[s] us open to insults and discomfort and to crucify wantonly our manhood, womanhood and self-respect."[36] DuBois did not seem aware of the contradiction in his advocating the rights and dignity of the black masses on the one hand and the privilege of middle-class blacks to keep themselves from mixing with these same masses on the other. Such a contradictory tendency can be seen in the

writings of many black elites at that time. For instance, J. Max Barber, editor of *The Voice of the Negro*, decried Jim Crow practices in 1904: "mere separation does not hurt the colored people [. . .] it is a part of a gigantic system now in practice in one part of our common country to cow and humiliate *cultured* Negroes." A Yale-trained journalist, William H. Ferris, also deplored segregation on explicitly class-based grounds:

> As I travel through the South and am penned and cooped and packed like a sardine in the sweat-box known as the Jim Crow car; as I am herded, *with other Negroes*, as if we were all cattle, [. . .] I ask, "Why is it?" I am educated and have over a century of free and respectable ancestry behind me.[37]

But even if DuBois and other black elites' protest was motivated by their class interests, the discourse which they used to articulate their interests was the language of race, therefore it enabled them to extend their protest agenda to include claims for the rights of black masses. It is likely that DuBois and other elites realized that the racial destiny of college-trained blacks was inseparable from that of the black masses. In other words, the anti-materialistic assertive manhood identified black elites with black masses through the binary discourse of black-white racial struggle.

Many college-educated black men and women welcomed DuBois's discourse in *The Souls* and the Niagara Movement. For example, Ferris praises DuBois's "dignity and manliness of character and polish of manner," and his opposition to Washington as one of the forces which had "roused the dormant manhood of the Negro," though Ferris criticizes DuBois's personality as cold and arrogant. He accuses Washington of "the crass and sordid materialism" and declares, "I do not retreat one inch from the manly demands of DuBois and the Niagara Movement." Ida B. Wells, college-trained black female journalist and activist, read *The Souls* and argues in her writing against the Tuskegee sympathizers that "all the industrial education in the world could not take the place of manhood."[38]

The aggravation of white-black antagonism made the discursive strategy of class distinction ineffectual, and the confrontation with Booker T. Washington necessitated establishing the legitimacy of college-educated blacks as a meaningful social group and the leadership of the entire black community. The result was DuBois's emphasis on racial identification with the masses rather than on class differentiation. But the discourse of racial identification was accomplished by the language of manliness. What then was the consequence of this discursive turn for black women?

III MASCULINITY, CLASS AND FEMINISM IN DUBOIS'S RACIAL POLITICS: THE 1910S

The National Association for Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was established in 1909 in order to promote the civil rights of African-Americans. DuBois assumed the editorship of its organ, *The Crisis*, in which he enthusiastically advocated women's rights, especially black women's dignity and suffrage.

DuBois justified his support for black women's rights by linking it to the discourse of racial identification. He argues in 1912, "the enfranchisement of women means the doubling of the black vote at point where that vote is needed. [. . .] As Negroes have a larger proportion of women than the whites our relative voting importance in the North will be increased."[39] His pro-feminism enabled him to seek an alliance with black women activists in the struggle for civil and political rights. In fact, DuBois applauded black women's club activity. He writes, "one has only to remember the recent biennial convention of colored women's clubs with its 400 delegates to realize how the [black] women are moving quietly but forcibly toward the intellectual leadership of the race."[40] Symposia for woman's suffrage held by the NAACP and covered by *The Crisis* symbolized the alliance between black male leaders and female activists. In September 1912, *The Crisis* carried essays on women's voting rights by Fannie Garrison Villard, Adela Hunt Logan and Mary Church Terrell. Also in August 1915, it printed reports by 26 notable African-American male and female advocates of woman suffrage.[41]

These efforts urged the readers to imagine the monolithic community of race. Indeed, white supremacists perceived that the black community was in unity. According to Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, white anti-suffragists in the South disseminated copies of articles supporting woman's suffrage from *The Crisis*, and insisted that woman's suffrage would result in black supremacy by enabling black women to vote for regaining of disfranchised black male suffrage in the South.[42]

DuBois's discourse of racial identification, however, is intrinsically combined with manliness and anti-materialism. As a result, the discourse that includes black women into the racial leadership also functions as an exclusive discourse elsewhere. The dichotomous discourse constructed by DuBois leaves no room for a third way. DuBois writes,

> Even southern "gentlemen," as used as they are to the mistreatment of colored women, cannot in the blaze of present publicity physically beat them

> away from the polls. Their economic power over them will be smaller than their power over the men and while you can still bribe some pauperized Negro laborers with a few dollars at election time, you cannot bribe Negro women.[43]

In this article DuBois describes the black community as beleaguered by enemies of the race—white racists from without and race traitors from within the community. He represents the race traitors as lower-class black men whom he assumes would be bribed with a little material gain and submit to the white supremacists. He also writes in 1914, "if the North enfranchises women, the proportion of unselfish intelligent votes among Negroes will be increased, and the proportion of Negro voters whom white politicians have trained to venality will be decreased."[44] In these discourses it appears that every elite black voter, man and woman, will vote for the same direction. DuBois sees that elite black men represent the common interest of the entire race because he supposes that differences of interest would mean betrayal by materialistic lower-class black men.

By assuming that the race traitors would be lower-class men, DuBois's texts suppose that the true racial interests should be represented by educated middle-class men. His distinction between those men who would embody the race and those men who would betray the black community was clearly class-biased. However, he succeeds in maintaining the discourse of racial identification because he articulates class difference by appropriating the pro-feminist discourse of black female activists. Indeed, many middle-class black women, such as Anna Julia Cooper and Nannie Helen Burroughs, had long insisted that black women would serve their race better than men. For example, Burroughs argues,

> Because the black man does not know the value of the ballot, and has bartered and sold his most valuable possession, it is no evidence that the Negro woman will do the same. The Negro woman, therefore, needs the ballot to get back, by the wise *use* of it, what the Negro man has lost by the *misuse* of it.[45]

DuBois used these arguments not as criticisms against every black man but as against lower-class men of the race. Later, in 1920, he used the same rhetoric. In his book *The Darkwater*, DuBois advocates for black women's liberation. But liberation from what or whom? He writes that "the breaking up" of black families is the result of discriminatory labor markets in which "the wage of the male breadwinner [is] below the standard," while opportunities for black working women are many. DuBois continues that it will be no longer possible for "a great laboring class"

to confine black women in domesticity.[46] Its implication is that lower-class black men cannot take manly responsibility as sole breadwinner and protector of the family (unlike middle-class men), so their wives must be emancipated from them. The working black woman is used as a symbol that contrasts with the manly middle-class black men and the effeminate lower-class men, without using the language of class difference of the 1890s.

As Evelyn Higginbotham suggests, black female activists at the turn of the twentieth century tended to emphasize their respectability and distinguish themselves from lower-class men and women in seeking recognition from and alliance with white elites.[47] It may appear as if there were cooperative and harmonious relations between DuBois and other black elite men and black female activists based on shared racial identity. But in fact the alliance of educated black men and women was uncertain because of DuBois's discourse of manhood.

DuBois equated justice for the black race with reclaiming of manliness. In his New Year's editorial for *The Crisis* in 1913, he declares a renewed determination to fight for racial justice and concludes, "*I will be a man and know myself to be one, even among those who secretly and openly deny my manhood.*"[48] Since the late nineteenth century the criticism against whiteness in many black male writers' texts was no less than proof of manliness, for racism had negated the manhood of African-American men.[49]

DuBois often argued that black women's victimization by racism was part and parcel of black manhood. For him black women had been oppressed by white men and should be protected from them by black men. In other words, black men would contend with white men over black women's rights. For example, he writes in 1907 a poem entitled "The Burden of Black Women," in which he deplored:

> The White World's vermin and filth:
> All the dirt of London,
> All the scum of New York;
> Valiant spoilers of women
> And conquerors of unarmed men;
> Shameless breeders of bastards
> Drunk with the greed of gold.
> Baiting their blood-stained hooks
> With cant for the souls of the simple,
> Bearing the White Man's Burden
> Of Liquor and Lust and Lie![50]

These lines posit black women's oppression in the black-white racial dichotomy: DuBois supposes that the white racism which undermined black manhood also oppresses black women, therefore black men and women are natural allies and racist white men are the common enemy. Moreover, he writes in 1912 that "the most guarded right of white men in this land and others" has been "the right to seduce black women without legal, social or moral penalty." However, he continues, "the black husbands and brothers" are "beginning to revolt. [. . .] Let black men especially kill lecherous white invaders of their homes and then take their lynching gladly like men. It's worth it!"[51] In 1922 he writes,

> [To white men] the race question is at bottom simply a matter of the ownership of women; white men want the right to own and use all women, colored and white, and they resent any intrusion of colored men into this domain.[52]

In DuBois's dichotomous discourse of white-black antagonism, black men can represent women's rights by protecting them from racist white men. Hence he assumes that struggling against white men is for the benefit of black women, therefore of the race as a whole.

Although it is true that white men had oppressed black women, some black female activists pointed out, if euphemistically, there was also a potential tension between men and women of the same race. Nannie Helen Burroughs writes that the black woman has "been left a prey for the men of every race," but that she had "held the enemies of Negro female chastity at bay. [. . .] The ballot, wisely used, [would] bring to her the respect and protection that she [needed]."[53] Her statement hints at the possibility that black men might also oppress black women.

However, DuBois's discourse takes it for granted that black men are natural protectors of black women. Despite his opposition to *sexualized racism*, he does not necessarily problematize *sexism* itself, for his concept of the progress of race is masculinized and leaves no room for black women if they might undermine the manhood of the black men.

CONCLUSION: RACE MEN RISING

Any act of identification depends on the construction of its Other. In his early activist days, DuBois tried to construct interracial cooperation and promote civil rights for African-American people by representing lower-class blacks and white immigrants as the Other. At that time the emphasis on class differentiation by the standard of Victorian gender

ideals among blacks was a common strategy in the practice of anti-racism. Thus he sought class identification with white middle-class elites.

Later in the 1900s and the 1910s he transformed his own stance to construct racial solidarity by representing whites and black race traitors as the Other. The language of race enabled DuBois to articulate the interests of college-educated African-American men as that of the entire race. Two historical factors at the turn of the century, the polarization of white-black relations caused by the politics of whiteness and the division among the black middle class triggered by Booker T. Washington's attack on higher education, stimulated DuBois and other college-bred black elites to adopt the more universalist racial language. Nevertheless, the discourse of racial identification itself compelled the speaker to articulate rights and interests for others, black women and masses.

DuBois's language of racial identification, however, was intrinsically entwined with class and masculinity. By using such language, DuBois on the one hand represented uneducated black men as either followers of educated black men's leadership or materialistic race traitors, neither of which was deemed qualified to embody the manliness of the race. On the other hand, he conceived of black women as victims of white men's sexual racism who would be protected by manly black men. Nonetheless, DuBois succeeded in representing himself as a race man because he articulated his classed and gendered position not through the language of class differentiation but by employing the discourse of racial identification. The contradictory relations between class differentiation and racial identification and between manliness and feminism may be the characteristic of an emerging new African-American movement.

NOTES

[1] "Celebrating his Twenty-Fifth Birthday," *Against Racism: Unpublished Essays, Papers, Addresses, 1887–1961* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1986), 27–8.

[2] As for the black intellectuals' quest for positive racial identity, see Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "The Trope of a New Negro and the Reconstruction of the Image of the Black," *Representations* 24 (Fall 1988). On the turn-of-the-century black feminism and reform movements, see Paula Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America* (New York: William Morrow, 1984); Anne Firor Scott, "Most Invisible of All: Black Women's Voluntary Associations," *Journal of Southern History* 56 (February 1990), 3–22; and Stephanie J. Shaw, "Black Club Women and the Creation of the National Association of Colored Women," *Journal of Women's History* 3 (Fall 1991), 10–25.

[3] Francis Broderick, *W. E. B. DuBois: Negro Leader in a Time of Crisis* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1959) and Elliott M. Rudwick, *W. E. B. DuBois: A Study in Minority Group Leadership* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1960) assume that DuBois was essentially a representative racial leader, if an elitist. Manning Marable, *W. E. B. DuBois: Black Radical Democrat* (Boston: Twayne, 1986) argues that while DuBois was an elitist, he embodied the struggles of racial, class, and gender minority groups for justice and positive identity. David Levering Lewis's *W. E. B. DuBois: Biography of a Race, 1868–1919* (New York: Henry Holt, 1993) sharply points out that middle-class interests motivated DuBois to agitate for civil rights.

[4] *Racial Formation in the United States from the 1960s to the 1990s*, 2nd edition (London: Routledge, 1994), 55. See also Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, "African-American Women's History and the Metalanguage of Race," *Signs* 17 (Winter 1992), 251–74.

[5] Willard B. Gatewood, *Aristocrats of Color: The Black Elite, 1880–1920* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990); Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, *Righteous Discontent: The Women's Movement in the Black Baptist Church, 1880–1920* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), chapter 7; and Kevin Gaines, *Uplifting the Race: Black Leadership, Politics, and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

[6] Jean Fagan Yellin, "DuBois's Crisis and Women's Suffrage," *Massachusetts Review* 14 (Spring 1973), 365–75; Irene Diggs, "DuBois and Women: A Short Story of Black Women 1910–1934," *Current Bibliography on African Affairs* 7 (Summer 1974), 260–303; Cheryl Townsend Gilkes, "The Margin as the Center of a Theory of History: African-American Women, Social Change, and the Sociology of W. E. B. DuBois," Bernard W. Bell et al., eds., *W. E. B. DuBois on Race and Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1996); and Garth E. Pauley, "W. E. B. DuBois on Woman Suffrage: A Critical Analysis of His *Crisis* Writing," *Journal of Black Studies* 30 (January 2000), 383–410. David Lewis points out that DuBois was publicly a pro-feminist but personally a paternalistic patriarch. See his *DuBois*, 450–51. But Lewis does not explore what DuBois's pro-feminism meant as a discursive practice.

[7] J. Stanley Lemons, "Black Stereotypes as Reflected in Popular Culture, 1880–1920," *American Quarterly* 29 (Spring 1977), 102–116; and David Nasaw, *Going Out: The Rise and Fall of Public Amusements* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), especially chapter 5.

[8] "A Southerner on the Negro Question," *North American Review* 154 (April 1892), 409–10.

[9] W. E. Burghardt DuBois, *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1899), 309–10.

[10] Ibid., 310–11.

[11] Ibid., 375.

[12] Ibid., 193–94.

[13] Ibid., 395–96.

[14] "A Memorial to the Legislature of Georgia on the Hardwick Bill," 1899, Herbert Aptheker, ed., *Pamphlets and Leaflets by W. E. B. DuBois* (New York: KTO, 1986).

[15] Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998), 68–90; and idem, *Barbarian Virtues: The United States Encounters Foreign People at Home and Abroad, 1876–1917* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), 182–201. Some urban reformers had argued in vain for the exclusion of immigrants from municipal politics. See Michael E. McGerr, *The Decline of Popular Politics: The American North, 1865–1928*

(New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 42–52. On Philadelphian Irish immigrants' efforts to rebut nativism and claim their whiteness by distinguishing themselves from blacks, see Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

[16] DuBois, *The Philadelphia Negro*, 395.

[17] Ibid., 372, 383.

[18] Ibid., 396.

[19] John Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925* (1955; reprinted in New York: Atheneum, 1963), 86.

[20] Baker, *Following the Color Line* (New York: Doubleday, 1908), 302–3 (emphasis added).

[21] On the deterioration of race relations, see George M. Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817–1914* (New York: Harper, 1971), chapter 9; Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, 3rd edition (New York: Oxford University Press,1974), 107 (emphasis original); and Joel Williamson, *A Rage for Order: Black-White Relations in the American South since Emancipation* (New York: Oxford University Press,1986), chapter 3. For imperialism and racial representation, see Willard B. Gatewood, *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden, 1898–1903* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press,1975); Jacobson, *Whiteness*, chapter 6; Andrew Neather, "Labor Republicanism, Race, and Popular Patriotism in the Era of Empire, 1890–1914," John Bodner, ed., *Bonds of Affection: Americans Define Their Patriotism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), especially 87–9, 97–8; and Cecilia Elizabeth O'Leary, *To Die For: The Paradox of American Patriotism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), chapter 8.

[22] DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Chicago: McClurg, 1903; reprinted in New York: Norton, 1999).

[23] Ibid., 12.

[24] Ibid., 107, 117.

[25] Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery* (Boston: Houghton, 1901).

[26] W. E. Burghardt DuBois, "The Evolution of Negro Leadership," *The Dial* 31 (July 16, 1901), 54. The episode of Washington's autobiography which DuBois criticized here is in *Up from Slavery*, 58.

[27] DuBois, "The Talented Tenth," *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative Negroes of To-day* (New York: James Pott,1903), 74.

[28] Ibid., 75. Also see his *The College-Bred Negro* (Atlanta: Atlanta University Press, 1900); and *The College-Bred Negro American* (Atlanta: Atlanta University Press, 1910).

[29] DuBois, *The Souls*, 34–35, 40.

[30] Ibid., 73.

[31] Ibid., 39–41.

[32] The quotation is from ibid., 60.

[33] The Niagara Movement members were only elite men. See Lewis, *W. E. B. DuBois*, 316–9, 328.

[34] W. E. B. DuBois (with William Monroe Trotter), "The Niagara Movement: Declaration of Principles, 1905," *Pamphlets and Leaflets*; and idem, "The Niagara Movement: Address to the Country, 1906," ibid., 63.

[35] DuBois, "Declaration of Principles," 58; and "Address to the Country," 64.

[36] DuBois, "Declaration of Principles," ibid., 57.

[37] J. Max Barber, "The Aggressiveness of Jim-Crowism," *The Voice of the Negro* 1 (June 1904), 216; and William H. Ferris, *The Africans Abroad, or His Evolution in Western Civilization Tracing His Development under Caucasian Milieu* (New Haven: Tuttle, 1913), 403 (emphasis added).

[38] Ibid., passim, especially 372, 396, 409, 911; and Ida B. Wells, *Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells*, ed. Alfreda M. Duster (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 281.

[39] W. E. B. DuBois, "Ohio," *The Crisis* 4 (August 1912), 182.

[40] W. E. B. DuBois, "Votes for Women," *The Crisis* 4 (September 1912), 234.

[41] "A Woman's Suffrage Symposium," *The Crisis* 4 (September 1912), 240–7; and "Votes for Women: A Symposium by Leading Thinkers of Colored America," *The Crisis* 10 (August 1915), 178–92.

[42] Rosalyn Terborg-Penn, *African American Women in the Struggle for the Vote, 1850–1920* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 131–2.

[43] DuBois, "Votes for Women," *The Crisis* 15 (November 1917), 8.

[44] DuBois, "Votes for Women," *The Crisis* 8 (August 1914), 180.

[45] See, for example, Anna Julia Cooper, *A Voice from the South: By a Black Woman of the South* (Xenia, Ohio: Aldine, 1892), 139; and Nannie H. Burroughs, "Black Women and Reform," *The Crisis* 10 (August 1915), 187. See also Terborg-Penn, *African American Women*, chapter 4 (emphasis original).

[46] W. E. Burghardt DuBois, *Darkwater: Voices from within the Veil* (New York: Harcourt, 1920), 180–81.

[47] Higginbotham, *The Righteous Discontent*, chapter 7.

[48] "A Philosophy for 1913," *The Crisis* 5 (January 1913), 127 (emphasis original).

[49] Mia Bay, *The White Image in the Black Mind: African-American Ideas about White People, 1830–1925* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), especially 87–88, 109–11.

[50] W. E. Burghardt DuBois, "The Burden of Black Women," *The Horizon* 2 (November 1907), 4–5.

[51] DuBois, "Divine Right," *The Crisis* 3 (March 1912), 197.

[52] DuBois, "Black France," *The Crisis* 23 (March 1922), 199.

[53] Burroughs, "Black Women," 187 (emphasis added).