

# Du Bois's *Horizon*: Documenting Movements of the Color Line

Susanna Ashton

Clemson University

*"The problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line"*

In 1903 W. E. B. Du Bois's clarion call opened *The Souls of Black Folk*. But the color line of which he spoke was a line that had many different configurations throughout his career. In *The Horizon: a Journal of the Color Line*, a magazine he edited and published from 1907-1910, he interrogated the ways in which alternative perspectives might invest the trope of the color line with more nuanced cartographies.

The horizon represented a shifting line meriting neither the guileless optimism of a sunrise nor the resigned nature of sunset. For Du Bois and his two fellow editors, Freeman H. M. Murray and L.N. Hershaw, a horizon existed only as a phenomenon of witness. As the cover that ran on *The Horizon* throughout much of 1908 attests, *The Horizon* was best understood by a consciousness of perspective. On that cover we see the back of a young woman placing her hand to her forehead to block the rays of the sun as it sits on the horizon. How she sees the expanse, how she copes with the angle and the perspective, suggests an acute awareness of how the seemingly fixed horizon was relative always to movement, angle, and point of view.

Grappling with how to see or break through the color line formed the very rationale of *The Horizon*. Essentially a small journal specializing in issues of the American press as they pertained to people of color, *The Horizon* was about 25 pages or so in length during the first few years of its incarnation and when in later years money and time became more constrained, it was reduced to approximately 12 pages. Throughout 1907 it was published in Wash-

ington D.C., in 1908 the printing was moved to Alexandria, Virginia, and then, from 1909 until its end in 1910, it was again published in Washington.<sup>1</sup> Its peripatetic nature was well reflected in its contents for, despite a tight organizational structure in theory, it featured three sections that were broad-ranging in practice.

Section one, *The Over-Look*, was edited by Du Bois; section two, *The In-Look*, was edited by Murray; and section three, *The Out-Look*, was edited primarily by L. M. Hernshaw. While these three sections each had different organizing principles, their emphasis was always on the relentless shifting of perspective. *The In-Look* functioned as a “Digest of the Negro-American Press,” *The Out-Look* as a “Digest of the Daily and Periodical Press,” and *The Over-Look* served as a digest of opinions and general catch-all for books, political discussions, literary gossip, or anything else which fed Du Bois’s omnivorous appetite for ideas.<sup>2</sup>

Murray, Hernshaw, and Du Bois were relatively young men living in Atlanta when they conceived of *The Horizon* as a radical response to what they saw as the almost complete monopoly of the black press by people supportive of Booker T. Washington and his concomitant policies of pacifying and accommodating the conservative white status quo.<sup>3</sup> Herbert Apetheker, Du Bois’s biographer, aptly characterizes *The Horizon* as an “organ of the militant Niagara Movement” (vii). This is true, for it did function as a mouthpiece of the movement and regularly published updates, squibs, and manifestos of the Niagara movement.<sup>4</sup> Yet *The Horizon* is a telling artifact from the turn of the century that both raises questions about the interactions between the radical and the mainstream press in America and offers us further insight into Du Bois’s growing fascination with how the concept of “documentation” itself might be redefined for the twentieth century.

*The Horizon*, which appeared in 1907, needs to be understood as arising out of nineteenth-century figurations of documentation that were particular to the African American tradition. By challenging and analyzing the vicissitudes of the press, *The Horizon* was not seeking to invalidate the idea of documentation. Instead, *The Horizon* sought to destabilize documentation and seek authentication instead by the destabilizing process itself. Du Bois’s dedication to authenticating a wholly black voice by drawing upon literal and figurative evidence is worked out with great care in *The*

*Souls of Black Folk* (1903), but it is in *The Horizon* we can see how, even in curt periodical form, the artful weaving of arguments so well articulated in *The Souls of Black Folk* offers a new way to think about periodical documentation and the very concept of reading the color line.

*The Horizon*, coming as it did only three years after the publication of *The Souls of Black Folk*, similarly sought to reconfigure the color line by challenging what might constitute documentary evidence, structural norms, and angled perspectives. Indeed, the bond between *The Horizon* and *The Souls of Black Folk* was such that a copy of *The Souls of Black Folk* was sent as a premium for a *Horizon* subscription. Just as *The Souls of Black Folk* enacted a kind of authentication which was built upon the figurative and literal translation in a new narrative mode, so did *The Horizon*, by relentlessly foregrounding the problematic nature of journalistic documentation, raise in similar ways the question of how meaningful authentication might be achieved without the necessary transcendence of the metaphorical process.

### Seeking *The Horizon*

There is much that is remarkable about *The Horizon*. One of the most remarkable aspects about its history is just how difficult scholars have found it to categorize or analyze. Apetheker sees the primary importance of *The Horizon* as a precursor to *The Crisis*, the preeminent African American magazine of the twentieth century.<sup>5</sup> Other scholars have variously categorized *The Horizon* as a review of reviews and “a unique publication” which featured “virtually no full length articles” but instead gossip and commentary on the political leanings of various prominent members of the African American middle class” (Fultz 132). These assessments are fundamentally valid, but as a review of reviews it had no peer in either the African American or the white press. Although conceptually modeled on the highly successful projects pioneered by the *British Review of Reviews* and the *American Review of Reviews*, *The Horizon* never relied on the condensation of books that were the mainstay of the British version, nor on the independent essays which characterized the American version.<sup>6</sup>

*The Horizon* made no pretense of regularly covering or listing the contents of all important periodicals, even all African Ameri-

can ones. Rather, the editors of *The Horizon* would analyze the most horrific or most provocative articles they had come across that month. They would list the best and the worst of what they had seen, recommend books and journals and, just as often, warn people in no uncertain terms away from banal, ignorant, or racist works. *The Crucial Race Question* by the Rt. Rev. W. M. Brown, D. D., Bishop of Arkansas, Little Rock, for example, is reviewed in October 1907 as “illustrating how far professing Christians have departed from the teachings and practice of the founder of the religion” (18). In a typical paragraph encouraging people to subscribe to more journals, similar counsel is set out in no uncertain terms:

Every Negro should subscribe for the New York INDEPENDENT. It is the bravest and the fairest in its stand on the Negro problem. . . . On the other hand, there are certain weekly papers which the Negro ought to steer clear of; the OUTLOOK for instance, which represents militant hypocrisy in ethics and literature, is doubly unfair to the Negro because it pretends friendship. . . . Take HARPER’S if you want to hear nothing of the race problem—they are afraid of it—

(“Subscription” January 1907, 3)

Although in later issues the editors did find kind things to say about the occasional article that might appear in these journals, their energetic commitment to attacking the seemingly infallible organs of white intelligentsia was no different from their steady engagement with their other enemy, the black press as shaped by Booker T. Washington.

Attacking sorry excuses for black and white journalism was only part of *The Horizon*. The expansive interests of Du Bois, Murray, and Hernshaw were further manifest in their attempts to include poetry, jokes, anecdotes, and occasionally even obituaries in these pages. Seemingly random reflections are scattered throughout; “God rest St. Gaudens. I never pass the Shaw Memorial without feeling more of a man than before,” runs one such floating observation in reference to Augustus Saint-Gaudens, the sculptor who crafted a monument to Robert Gould Shaw and the Black 54th Massachusetts Infantry massacred in the Civil War (September 1907, 3). These sorts of reflections ground the often lofty political rhetoric in a quiet and unassuming manner and the

general effect of such textual diversity is of intellectual and emotional breadth. *The Horizon* was clearly intended to be a miscellany with a particular emphasis upon the foibles and strengths of the press. With wry humor, the editors would occasionally reword their slogan, "Seeking the Seldom Sought," to read "Seeking the Seldom Sort."

It seems that *The Horizon's* very miscellany relegates it to the realm of the arcane. With its often haphazard contents, it looks more like an eighteenth than a twentieth-century journal and perhaps this is off-putting to scholars. It featured more pithy screeds than analytical articles, and even the longest essays rarely went on for more than three or four paragraphs. This miscellany was distinctly a magazine intended for quick perusal. After all, there were lots of books and journals that *The Horizon* thought its readers should also be reading! Despite the proliferation of scholarly materials on Du Bois and the interest any of his work now generates, it is astonishing that *The Horizon* is almost unobtainable today.<sup>7</sup> It is not so surprising, therefore, that there has been virtually no analysis of *The Horizon*, apart from references to it as an early record of Du Bois's intellectual development. David Levering Lewis, for one, sees *The Horizon* primarily as Du Bois's "dress rehearsal for a career in propaganda journalism" (338).

This is undoubtedly true. Du Bois made no bones about the magazine's aims. He opened the November 1909 issue by stating boldly:

**THIS IS A RADICAL PAPER.** It stands for progress and advance. It advocates Negro equality and human equality; it stands for Universal suffrage, including votes for Women; it believes in the abolition of War, the taxation of monopoly values, the gradual socialization of capital and the overthrow of persecution and dogmatism in the name of religion. At the same time our policy is grounded in common-sense: it does not seek to force human brotherhood by act of legislature, it does not regard voting as a panacea for all ills; it honors marriage and motherhood, upholds the sometimes piteous necessity of righteous self-defense, believes and maintains that what a man earns is his and believes always in Good and God. ("Our Policy" 1)

It is perhaps appropriate that Du Bois, Hershaw, and Murray made should make such proud claims. Having eschewed Bookerite

politics, they had nothing to lose by differentiating themselves as clearly as they could from the Tuskegee Machine. As the de facto mouthpiece of the Niagara movement, it is not surprising the *The Horizon* sought to take bold positions. Nonetheless, as I shall discuss further on, the dangers of producing such a radical document in a city full of lynchings and riots were very real. Du Bois's reference to self-defense could only have been understood by conservative whites as a deliberate provocation. During the height of gilded-age industrialism, declaring a necessity for the taxation of monopolies would have been problematic, to say the least, but the claims about the socialization of capital were not part of the official Niagara platform and such claims in *The Horizon* are surely notable for the nascent commitment to socialism.

Despite its elevated and revolutionary claims, the journal, with its miscellaneous articles and eclectic style, was clearly the work of busy men, all of whom had other professions and businesses to attend to. Du Bois was at this time working as a professor at Atlanta University and juggling the various responsibilities of a young father as well as heading the Niagara movement. In addition to working as co-editor and business manager, the brothers F. Morris Murray and Freeman H.M. Murray ran their own printing shop. Freeman Murray also held a clerkship in the War Department throughout this time. Lafayette Hershaw was an Atlanta University graduate who had been principal of a segregated Atlanta high school. During his years with *The Horizon*, he worked in a clerical position in the Department of the Interior. As Lewis explains, Hershaw's superiors at the Department of the Interior nearly sacked him from his federal position because of suspicions that he harbored non-Tuskegee sympathies (319). These men took great risks and sacrifices in assembling such a paper at a time during which not only their jobs, but, thanks to the not infrequent lynchings of African American publishers during this time, their very lives were at stake.<sup>8</sup>

Assembling a magazine that would mostly rely upon assessing the contents of other journals must have seemed like the least intimidating manner to effectively confront what these men saw as ignorant and racist media, as well as a misguidedly acquiescent black-run press. As one essay put it, the editors were disturbed by "the fact that certain organs of public opinion willfully, deliber-

ately and maliciously lie about Negroes and the friends of Negroes" (May 1908, 9). *The Horizon* truly saw itself as facing up to a formidable enemy in the guise of the entire publishing establishment. As one editorial put it: "The most formidable enemy of truth in the world today is the linotype. It serves the course of truth—not knowledge mark you, for the most that we know ain't so—in about the same degree that gunpowder fosters liberty" (April 1908, 23).

Equally troubling, though, was the African American press which Murray, Du Bois, and Hershaw saw as dominated by Bookerite politics and the Tuskegee Machine. Washington's influence on the African American press of this period cannot be over-emphasized. He had several periodicals "in his pocket" and the most influential African American newspapers of the time promoted avowedly pro-Washington politics (*Cleveland Gazette*, *Indianapolis Freeman*, etc.). Other important outlets for Washington's views were in *The Colored American Magazine* (1900-1909) and *Alexander's Magazine* (1905-1909). *The Colored American Magazine* was the most well known and popular ethnic journal in America at this time, with a circulation of 15,000-17,000. It was secretly acquired by Washington and was run by his ally, Fred R. Moore. *Alexander's Magazine*, with a circulation of 5,000 at its height, was also run by a Tuskegee protégé, Charles Anderson. As Charles Chesnutt observed to Du Bois, the black press was dominated by a single and regrettable Bookerite philosophy. Chesnutt wrote: "There are already many 'colored' papers, how they support themselves may be guessed at from their contents—most of them are mediums for hair-straightening advertisements and the personal laudation of 'self-made man [sic], most of whom are not so well made that they really ought to brag much about it" (56).

One of the major culprits behind such publishing trends was T. Thomas Fortune, probably Washington's most important African American ally. Fortune, the publishing impresario who ran the *New York Age* among other prominent newspapers, was probably the best known editor in black America. Not surprisingly, Du Bois and his colleagues in *The Horizon* regularly attacked Fortune, who was often referred to as Washington's "Minister of Information in the North." A typical snipe observed: "He finds it absolutely impossible to grovel lower than he has, to further bait his race, to

dance attendance on the Golden Calf, to sing the praises of those he loathes and hates and fears.” (“Tom Fortune” October 1907, 25). To *The Horizon*, Fortune’s crimes were almost worse than those of Washington, for it was Fortune who truly betrayed his responsibilities to the printed truth.

### **The Atlanta Riot of 1906 and The Press**

*The Horizon* arose not only out of the anti-Washington Niagara movement, but also as a direct response to the Atlanta riots of 1906. That summer saw Atlanta explode into one of the country’s most ugly race riots, a riot which resulted in dozens of deaths and hundreds wounded. Thousands of young white men roamed the city, often plucking black passengers off of streetcars and beating them savagely. Rioters murdered men and then crucified their bodies on utility poles. Witnesses saw the body of a small black child used for target practice. Other black corpses were left at the base of an Atlanta monument to white reformer Henry W. Grady in order to demonstrate public contempt for the Grady’s “New South” theories of social and race policy.<sup>9</sup>

While Du Bois and his colleagues attributed much of the violence to the economic disenfranchisement felt by the poor white Georgians forced to confront the competitive labor of newly urban African Americans, they also saw the Atlanta riots as an inevitable result of Bookerite conciliation politics. Washington’s 1895 speech in Atlanta at the opening of the Cotton States International Exposition had been the most widely publicized pronouncement concerning race and the New South ever to have been given. In this speech, which was quickly dubbed the “Atlanta Compromise,” Washington outlined a vision in which blacks would accept a restricted franchise and social inequality in exchange for sufferance of gradual agricultural and business progress. “In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress,” he explained (Washington 221-22). This philosophy was accepted, and even hailed, by many in the African American community as the best that could be expected from the segregated South. The speech had, however, many disturbing consequences, not the least of that was the implicit sanctioning of general bigotry.



While the 1906 riots were supposedly a reaction to assaults upon white women by black men, Du Bois also saw them as a result of a promise by Hoke Smith, the Democratic nominee for Georgia governorship, to hold a constitutional referendum to disfranchise African Americans. To Du Bois and his circle, Washington's compromise had led to the newfound willingness white politicians now had to directly attack the civil rights of African Americans.<sup>10</sup> And despite the fact that Washington, too, proclaimed the horror of the Atlanta riots, the fury and frustration felt by Du Bois led to the founding that fall of *The Horizon*.

In his 1906 essay "From the Point of View of the Negroes," published in the widely circulating *World Today*, Du Bois does not publicly complain about Washington, choosing instead to keep his considerable differences with Washington in the background. He did, however, immediately point to the irresponsible behavior of local newspapers that published incendiary lies. He cited the *Georgian*, a mainstream city paper that published a report of four attempted (and two successful) rapes of white women by black men on the day of the riot. "What were the facts?" queried Du Bois (1173-75). The facts were, as he explained, that no such things had occurred. The press had directly contributed to the horrific attacks of 1906. Many Atlanta papers had, through deliberately irresponsible journalism (especially the *Evening News* which printed several special editions covering the supposed rapes) helped incite the frenzied white mobs into action (Capeci and Knight 745). As Max Barber, Du Bois's friend and editor of *The Voice of the Negro*, observed, the Atlanta Riot was caused by "Dishonest, unscrupulous, ambitious politicians and conscientiousless newspaper editors" ("The Atlanta Tragedy" 474). Faced with racist whites, Bookerite accommodationist politics and unconscionable behavior on the part of the media, there was clearly a need for a drastically new way of thinking about politics and about *documenting* the reality of race in America.

Founded as an alternative to Bookerite politics, *The Horizon* quickly developed broader goals, and in its attacks and analysis of the press, a new sort of criticism came to the fore. One of the most powerful services that *The Horizon* provided was articulating the interactions between not just the black and the white press, but between the sources of news and the interpretations of such sources.

In several *Horizon* articles over the years, Du Bois and his colleagues took to task what they saw as misleading or dishonest headlines. In typical Du Boisian fashion, however, they would do so by precisely walking *Horizon* readers through the various steps involved in creating headlines. In April 1908, for example, an article titled “The Color Line in the Press Dispatches” began by attacking the Associated Press, accusing it of relaying information that was “destructive” in its inaccuracy and malice (20). The article then went on to condemn the newspaper offices which further distorted press releases.

We are often the victims of actual falsification of the dispatches themselves after they reach the newspaper offices; sometimes by omissions, sometimes by additions and again by changes in the wording. (20)

Particularly offensive were the alterations often found in varying editions of newspapers “that fringe along the border, where the United States leaves off and the South begins” (21). These papers, the article explains, often issue an early edition for the South and a late edition for the North and then adjust their editorial biases accordingly. In *The Washington Post*, for example, the Southern edition (according to Du Bois) ran the following headline: “Heflin shoots Two. Alabaman Wounds Negro Who Insults Him, etc.” (22). The identical article ran in the Northern edition with the following headline, as quoted by Du Bois:

Two Men shot by a *Congressman*. Representative Heflin Uses Pistol on Street Car. Says Insult was Given. Seriously wounds Negro who Enraged Him. (22)

Du Bois closes by saying, “It is plain that one set of headlines were laudatory, the other set condemnatory” (22). What is significant here is not merely the censure of various editorial decisions or the invectives against the white press. What is telling in this is that the authority of all documentation is suspect. In other articles, news releases are printed as received and comparative interpretations are analyzed, similarly arguing that not only are various press outlets not to be trusted, but that the very idea of a press release as objective truth also deserved interrogation.

That is *not* to say that *The Horizon*, by highlighting the unreliable nature of print, was arguing that truth and reality were relative and slippery discursive constructs, evidenced by the invariably biased and tragically inadequate ability of Americans to accurately represent anything in print form, much less the vexed issues surrounding race relations. Du Bois was, after all, a sociologist. His life was devoted to establishing the materiality of truth and the documentation of sociological conditions so that they might be improved. Du Bois, and most likely Hernshaw and Murray too, would have been horrified by any sort of easy relativism.

### Documenting *The Souls of Black Folk*

What I propose is that we understand *The Horizon* as foregrounding the problems of relative perspectives, but never moving away from the very real fact that a horizon, or a color line, exists. As Robert Stepto argues in his seminal essay "The Quest of the Weary Traveler: W. E. B. Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk*," the narrative's symbolic geography was "a remarkable expression of how Afro-Americans have persistently constructed real and imagined dominions, responding to spatial expressions of oppressing social structures which are always configurations and manifestations of the color line" (172). Stepto analyzes how much of the structural imagination behind *The Souls of Black Folk* was constructed in response to both Washington's *Up From Slavery* and the authentication systems commonly found in nineteenth century slave narratives. In *Up From Slavery*, for example, Washington included newspaper accounts of his famous 1895 Atlanta Cotton Exposition Address. Much in the same manner that white guarantors traditionally framed slave narratives, so was Washington's autobiography infused with the authenticating assertions of the white press and the white power structure. It lacked the integration of documentation that would allow the narrative to perform a transformative and self-authenticating function. At the heart of *The Souls of Black Folk* is, therefore, a new way of thinking about documentary evidence. For Du Bois, the idea of including a mainstream white newspaper account as authenticating evidence was anathema to getting at the new articulation of the color line as he saw it. Instead, in *The Souls of Black Folk*, Du Bois "authenticated" himself with sorrow songs, with personal narrative of spiritual ascendancy, and with the explicit rejection of extrane-

tual ascendancy, and with the explicit rejection of extraneous documentation.

*The Souls of Black Folk* is, of course, an eclectic text, rich in multifaceted tone and voices. Part autobiography, part field-work narrative, part prose poem, and part spiritual account of a southern and inward personal journey, it defies easy categorization and is indeed remarkable for its inclusive, collecting nature. It incorporates dozens of different discursive traditions. While, in traditional narratives, documents such as speech texts or letters would be literally or figuratively tipped in, Du Bois tipped in varying formulations of writing (historiography, fiction, eulogy, prose poems, etc.), highlighting not only the idea of supplementary documentation, but also the modes by which it can be recognized. Such incorporation forces readers to shift and to assess their perspective relative to their interpretation and allows even the most autobiographical aspects of his text to be inextricably fused with the broader authentication of a people

As stanzas of sorrow songs are interspersed throughout the text, Du Bois's own life story is transformed from being a story of "I" to a story of "We." There are ancillary texts, but they are never written by editors, missionaries, or publishers to compete with the stories Du Bois himself tells. Crucial here is the idea of the text orchestrated, rather than assembled. Rather than providing the reader with competing voices, or even fused ones, the incorporation of ancillary documentation into *The Souls of Black Folk* makes apparent the process by which data could be used for triumphant and transcendent metaphor. The sorrow songs are ever present in the text, making apparent the ongoing process that is necessary to achieve both self and race consciousness. Stepto argues that Du Bois

not only assumes the responsibilities for authenticating his voice and tale, but also advances a new scientific standard for what constitutes authenticating evidence. He seeks nothing less than a new narrative mode and form in which empirical evidence, scientifically gathered in a literal and figurative field (e.g., the Black Belt), performs the authenticating chores previously composed by white opinion. (148)

For Du Bois, Washington's authorship of *Up From Slavery* was part of a broader authorship of himself as the spokesman for black

America. By challenging the idea of validation or authentication that could be found from outside sources, Du Bois was actually challenging Washington's role as spokesman for a race. Du Bois's attack on Washington's uncritical incorporation of external texts was not an attack on documentation or on reading. Rather, *The Souls of Black Folk* offered an alternative method of processing information, an alternative methodology of reading itself. Just as Washington and Du Bois differed on the role which liberal education could play in the future of race relations in America, so did they differ on the role in which liberal reading practices, ones which demand metaphorical processing of seemingly fixed data, could function in a text.

### Documentation as Metaphor in *The Horizon*

Documentation abounds in *The Horizon*. It offers a wealth of resources for anyone seeking information about the Niagara movement, the omnivorous reading habits of Du Bois himself, the role of periodicals in turn-of-the-century politics, and miscellaneous information about cultures of reading in general.

In November of 1909, for example, circulation figures for the Louisville, Kentucky, Colored Public Library are rather arbitrarily listed without any specific analysis.

The Colored Branch of the Louisville Public Library cost \$41,609.02. Its circulation:

1<sup>st</sup> year..... 17,838

2<sup>nd</sup> year.....30,259

3<sup>rd</sup> year.....35,910

4<sup>th</sup> (9 months) 39,754

It has 6882 volumes, and 65 periodicals. (2)

As reported by *The Horizon*, this unannotated report does not make mockery of numbers. Indeed, the numbers demand an imaginative interpretation: how else can one "see" the explosive meaning of such an intellectually hungry people? How else can these figures be translated into sense? And moreover, the numbers are themselves testimony to how numbers (of books) may be translated into the ineffable beauty of imaginative reading. Each individual book read points to an infinitely expansive intellectual world.

The statistics presented in *The Horizon* are always compelling. In January of 1908, for example, *The Horizon* indexed the major national American magazines of 1907, looking for articles pertaining to African American and race issues. They came up with 63 articles distributed as follows:

<i>The Outlook</i>	18
<i>Nation</i>	8
<i>Independent</i>	7
<i>World's Work</i>	5
<i>Annals of the American Academy</i>	4
<i>Survey</i>	3
<i>Harper's Weekly</i>	3
<i>Atlantic</i>	2
<i>Spirit of Missions</i>	2
<i>McClure's</i>	2
<i>Hampton's</i>	2
<i>Review of Reviews</i>	1
<i>Political Science Quarterly</i>	1
<i>American Magazine</i>	1
<i>Deliniator</i>	1
<i>Current Literature</i>	1
<i>American Journal of Sociology</i>	1
<i>Everybody's</i>	1
<i>Yale Review</i>	1
<i>Educational Review</i>	1
<i>Science</i>	1
<i>North American Review</i>	1

(11)

While these statistics aren't in themselves that useful since these kinds of figures can be found in places such as in the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, the mere tabulation and publication of them is telling. Part of *The Horizon's* project was to make sure that these other journals knew they were being watched. As *The Horizon* reported, complimentary copies of their journal would regularly be sent to the magazines they indexed. *The North American Review*, for example, would be "reminded" that, despite any platitudes they might espouse concerning their dedicated coverage of pressing social issues, their numbers wouldn't bear out such assertions. From the publication of such otherwise dry information, it

is evident that part of *The Horizon's* mission was to make visible the staggering degree to which the mainstream press simply refused to promote dialogue concerning race issues.

Critical interrogation was clearly necessary for a world in which if one seeks authentication from an outside and "documented" world, one will have to seek long and hard. Predictably, *The Horizon* was also interested in making it plain just how omnipresent Booker T. Washington's editorial voice was. Washington wrote ten out of the sixty-eight articles cited by *The Horizon*. But almost more important was the way in which such dry statistical information fueled the metaphorical, interpretative process. How could one ignore, for example, the irony of a magazine titled "*Everybody's*" publishing only one article all year concerning African Americans?

The ineffable relationship between the individual and the universal, so artfully explored in *The Souls of Black Folk*, transforms statistics in *The Horizon* in the same way that it redefines documentation. In May of 1910, for example, a reader's letter was published with no commentary or introduction. In reply to a request by Du Bois (obliquely referred to but not printed in any previous edition of *The Horizon*), a student, Thomas O. Johnson, wrote in with his school grades: a 97 in Department, a 99 in Greek History, a 96 in Roman History, a 94 in Zoology, a 90 in Physiology, a 94 in Plane Trigonometry, a 93.5 in Chemistry, etc. (3). While clearly not a student at Tuskegee or any technical school, his school and background are not otherwise identified. His grades are merely listed as testimony to potential and to presence. This otherwise humble testimonial to one student's stellar grades at an unnamed institution is rendered universal in its brave, sad stance against assumptions of incompetence or intellectual inferiority. This grade report sat as equal alongside articles about international brotherhood and paeans to global social change. For *The Horizon*, such a report was no greater and no lesser contribution to the goal of reconceiving the very ways in which social relations could be constructed.

Simply as a source for information that is scarce elsewhere, *The Horizon* is valuable. It is filled with details about the reading habits of African Americans as well as about the reading habits the editors wished to inculcate in their readers. In one powerful editorial, for example, Du Bois thundered:

Buy Books. Do not merely read them but buy them, own them, make them yours. Do not simply use libraries, but buy books. Magazines? Of course. In fact we are magazine-mad—a magazine-devouring nation and our mental digestion suffers thereby. Newspapers? Of cruel necessity; but of all festering abominations, away with the Sunday newspaper. It is an imp of Hell and child of the Devil, not because it is published on Sunday (for it isn't) but because it is hodge-podge of lie, gossip, twaddle and caricature. It ruins our Sundays, corrupts our morals, poisons our children and gives us headaches. Away with it and read books. A book is a serious thought-out theme written to live. Therefore buy books. The more books we buy the more books written to our liking will be published for others to buy and ponder. Buy books. (April 1907, 4-5)

In other editorials, Du Bois even laid out precisely how much one should budget for a year's worth of reading:

Now comes the season when we calculate how much we dare give to the year's feeding of our souls. We need a daily paper, of course—more's the pity—and then a race paper, a weekly digester, a monthly picture-gallery and an Encourager. As to the daily, the HORIZON will not presume to suggest, nor can we hope to convert you to our favorite race weekly, (which, some spell with an A); but we do suggest as a “digester” the Independent, as a monthly the American (wobbly, but trying hard) and as an Encourager—why—US. Then add, possibly, Charities (weekly) New York, \$2.00; African Mail (weekly) Liverpool, \$5.00. Finally, for books, ten dollars would be a modest sum for such as read and write—others, five.

(“Books and Papers” January 1908, 3)

There is a somewhat strained and frantic tone to these exhortations, which may arise from the frustration of running a financially failing magazine. And yet as stated in “For The Common Good,” an article which analyzed the financial collapse of a radical paper, *The Public*, “It costs something to attempt in earnest to realize an ideal; and the cost is especially great where the ideal is opposed to dominant systems” (January 1908, 12). The parallels with *The Horizon's* own struggles were clearly a subtext in the discussion. *The Horizon* quotes *The Public* as saying, “Those who regard its publication as in the nature of a business enterprise for profit, would say



that continued financial debility is adversely conclusive as to its usefulness" (14). Yet, *The Public* reasons, for those who understand the missionary nature of propaganda literature, one might better point to the experiences "of the Abolitionist periodicals of the last century, none of which were ever self-supporting, not even Garrison's '*Liberator*'" (14). In January 1910, when the editors revamped and expanded *The Horizon*, they nonetheless noted:

The enlarged edition of *The Horizon* is an experiment in many ways. First, it is a frank acknowledgement of the fact that a Negro Magazine of a certain grade and appealing to a comparative small class, does not pay, in the sense that its income in the open market will not probably meet its expenses. With many persons this is a conclusive argument that the periodical is not needed. ("The New Horizon" 1)

For the editors at *The Horizon*, any hope for financial sustenance or huge subsidies from eager readers faded rapidly. Their readership simply wasn't as broad a population as they had projected. If they were to justify their work at all, it was clearly going to be as a missionary endeavor.

The missionary impulse was, therefore, threefold. Certainly there was an implicit premise that encouraging reading might have the side effect of encouraging the survival of *The Horizon*. And more importantly, of course, such encouragement of reading was designed to forward intellectual inquiry in order to resist the push towards what the Niagara group saw as the dead end of industrial education. Most significant, however, was the premise that by encouraging wide-ranging reading and broad access to documents, the process by which those documents are given value could best be assessed. Immersing readers into conflicting opinions, miscellaneous approaches, and a broad range of clamoring voices might shape an expansive sense of the world itself, in the same way that *The Souls of Black Folk* was haunted by the evanescent voices of the sorrow songs, figuratively mapping out a collective identity, one not bound by geographic or linear constraints. So, too, could the miscellany of voices and opinions in *The Horizon* itself and in the kind of expansive reading *The Horizon* promoted in its suggestions be seen as part of a campaign to create a spiritual geography which would demonstrate the atemporal nature of justice, of identity, and of presence.

*The Horizon* was, without question, a magazine directed at the black middle class, but as a magazine it was active in a way that a printed book was not. Intended to be transmitted through the mails, *The Horizon* had potential to break down the divisions between the urban elite and the rural poor in the African American community. For Washington, the difference between these classes of people had created a boundary in which one population was utterly incapable of serving the other. And yet to Du Bois, the premise of such differentiation was wholly discredited, not only because he believed profoundly in the potential for liberal education and political activity to change the lives of all African Americans, rural and urban. Nor was it simply because he saw that the increasing migration of African American from rural to urban centers was about to change the face of American capitalism and social life. Instead, for Du Bois, the spatial boundaries were the least significant factor in the construction of black identity. As he said in December 1909, "After you draw the Color line where have you drawn it?" ("The Color Line" 1). For Du Bois, the line isn't to be drawn. A horizon line authenticates one's place in the world because from the horizon, a self can be oriented and grounded. Yet concomitant with that is the necessary understanding that the horizon is relative and shifting. No one shares the same one. Just as *The Souls of Black Folk* figured the travels of a hero down to the South from the North, thus reversing the narrative thrust of so many African American narrative geographies, so did *The Horizon* disrupt a pre-determined map. *The Horizon* figured a boundary permeable, and yet ever distant. It did so through a medium, by its very nature as a magazine, designed to travel across boundaries in order to seek, to reveal, and to storm the false truths of the color line. "We need a journal," implored one editorial in July 1908, "not as a matter of business but as a matter of spiritual life and death" (2).

What an analysis of *The Horizon* offers to understanding what was at stake in defining the characteristics and role of documentation is a consideration of genre and consciousness that establishes an essentially metacritical process—one which forces an awareness of narrative consciousness. That is to say that the double consciousness of racial vision theorized in *The Souls of Black Folk* requires an awareness of the sensation of always being caught up in a rift between subject and the object, always being conscious of the

dualism between the body and the soul. This gift or curse of acute self-consciousness is enacted in *The Horizon* in a manner I define as metacritical. For *The Horizon* is a magazine about magazines. Thus we can see in *The Horizon* a generic manifestation of double consciousness: the documentary methodologies of the social sciences are exposed not to deconstruct or invalidate them, but to situate them in a problematic. Just as double consciousness identifies the self as existing between being a self and an object, so does this document, *The Horizon*, manifest simultaneously its own subjectivity and objectivity.<sup>11</sup>

*The Horizon* was unable to gain enough subscribers or advertisers to survive and its final issue was published in July of 1910 and Du Bois went on to edit the NAACP's *Crisis* for many years to come. *The Horizon* leaves a legacy that renders it more than just a propaganda rag for the Niagara Movement or even a pithy list of miscellany. *The Horizon* was a magazine which embodied imaginative formulations of authentication. To simply rely upon a better or more responsible press would never be enough to achieve the fundamental changes Du Bois wanted to see in how the self and the world was constructed. Making visible the process through which the documented "real" could become a transcendent truth, however, was indeed a crucial tool towards achieving a more just world, . . . an achievement perhaps just beyond the horizon.

## Notes

1. In total, thirty-one issues of *The Horizon* were published. There were no issues between the November / December issue of 1908 and October 1909.
2. Although Du Bois, Murray, and Hershaw each had their own separate section of *The Horizon* to edit, articles only rarely had authors' names attached to them. The collective and compiled nature of this project suggests that all the authors tended to contribute material for one another's sections and so I have refrained from directly attributing authorship to any one individual, even if an article appeared in the section that person had edited. Herbert Apetheker confidently reprinted all of *The Over-Look* in his complete collection of Du Bois's work. While I don't question the expertise of Apetheker's attributions, it does seem highly likely that Du Bois had his hand in the other sections of this paper, and it also seems probable that Hershaw and Murray occasionally contributed to *The Over-Look* section as well. For the most precise collection of Du Bois's contribution to *The Horizon*, see Apetheker.

3. For information about the various responses to Washington, see Walden.
4. The Niagara movement (1905-1910), a forerunner to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), was founded in 1905 at Niagara, Ontario to demand the end of all discriminatory practices and to oppose the conciliatory politics of Booker T. Washington. While Du Bois used *The Horizon* to formally and informally disseminate the Niagara positions, another important periodical, *The Voice of the Negro* (January 1904-October 1907) similarly functioned as a sympathetic journal and occasionally as an unofficial mouthpiece of the Niagara movement.
5. Du Bois's previous attempt at founding a magazine, *The Moon Illustrated Weekly* (1905-1906), was also an important forerunner to *The Crisis* as well as leading directly into *The Horizon*. See Partington.
6. William Stead founded the *British Review of Reviews* in January 1890. Featuring book reviews and lists of recent and recommended readings, it had tremendous circulation. In April 1891 an *American Review of Reviews* was begun. The American magazine became especially known for reprinting international political cartoons and its emphasis on foreign affairs. By 1906 the newly titled *American Review of Reviews* reportedly had the "largest circulation in the world for any magazine not publishing fiction." For this impressive and questionable claim, see Mott.
7. The Sterling Memorial Library at Yale University is one of the few collections which possesses a complete set. While Apetheker extracted most of Du Bois's obvious contributions and edited them for reprint in his *Complete Published Works of W. E. B. Du Bois*, that reprinted volume is itself hard to find. Microfilm of *The Horizon* is both difficult to obtain and of viciously poor quality.
8. The public prominence of African American editors and publishers left them especially vulnerable to mob violence. J. Max Barber, for example, was the editor of *The Voice of the Negro* and had to flee Atlanta in fear for his life after the 1906 riots. Although *The Voice* was re-established in the North soon afterwards, its absence in the South left the *Horizon* as virtually the only radical black periodical paper coming out of the South during this time. See Barber.
9. Henry Woodfin Grady (1850-1889) was an editor, publisher, part-owner of the *Atlanta Constitution*, and a popular public speaker. His speeches on race and the New South were considered hallmarks of the progressive Southern movement. Although a white reformer who had little appeal to the more radical concerns of Du Bois, even Grady's moderate policies were considered by the rioters to be a threat to white supremacy. For the white mob, his statue was therefore a monument to intolerable tolerance.
10. For an overview of the riot and its origins, see Crowe.
11. For a discussion of the limitations of Stepto's interpretations as well as a persuasive analysis of how the process of double-consciousness is distinctly not a Derridian deconstructive move, see Adell (11-28).

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