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# THE BLACK FLAME TRILOGY, MULTIGENERATIONAL EDUCATIONAL TRAUMA, AND THE DEHUMANIZATION OF BLACK STUDENTS

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THE *BLACK FLAME* TRILOGY, MULTIGENERATIONAL EDUCATIONAL  
TRAUMA, AND THE DEHUMANIZATION OF BLACK STUDENTS

BY

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DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies  
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## ABSTRACT

This study identifies W.E.B. Du Bois' theory of education as put forth in his *Black Flame* trilogy (*BFT*). A longitudinal survey of culture and society—specifically educational disparities in the United States from 1863 through 1956, the *BFT* bears close textual analysis to reveal how the processes of racialization and colonization as well as the movement toward globalization influence education and its contribution to the dehumanization of students. Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome and critical race theory are theoretical tools of analysis that create a multi-generational dialectic that understands Du Bois' *BFT* as a socio-historical analysis of White supremacy that establishes a theory of dehumanization in education. African critical theory (ACT) provides the frame that privileges the words of the elders and people sharing a common response to the dominant narrative surrounding Black students, the achievement gap, and the myth of Black inferiority. Using Du Bois' voice throughout the analysis creates a dialectic counter-story to understand and identify existing symptoms of dehumanization, particularly in education so that we may finally seek remedy and redress.

## DEDICATION

To the most honorable person I know, my mother, Cleter Rogers Christian. You have instilled in me the want and will to do for others, selflessly, without recognition.

There are no words that can express my love and appreciation for you. The gift of your love and your example prove, for me, the purest existence of God's abiding and unconditional love.

To my father, Johnnie Christian, your life is the greatest testament of strength and perseverance of the human spirit.

To my sister, Jon Carita, our friendship inspires me to be a better, gentler person. Your perspective continues to help me grow as a person and an intellectual.

To my aunts and uncles, thank you for your support and examples of excellence.

And, to the memories of my grandparents, Zelma and Robbie Rogers.

“Get your learning—can't nobody can take that away from you.”

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## Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	v
LIST OF FIGURES.....	x
Chapter One: An Introduction Education, Dehumanization, Multigenerational Trauma and the <i>Black Flame</i> Trilogy.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Race, Schooling, and Education.....	3
Toward a Theory of Dehumanization in Education.....	9
The Myth of Black Inferiority.....	11
W. E. B. Du Bois and the <i>Black Flame</i> Trilogy.....	14
Critical Race Theory Counter-Storytelling and the <i>Black Flame</i> Trilogy.....	18
Definitions.....	21
Delimitations.....	25
Chapter Two: Africana Philosophy of Education and Lynching in the Classroom.....	26
Introduction.....	26
African American Philosophy of Education.....	26
Lynching in the Schoolroom—The Context of Black Education.....	30
Chapter Three: Method.....	35

Rationale .....	35
Critical Orientation .....	37
Africana Critical Theory .....	38
Identifying Trauma .....	41
Data Collection .....	42
Data Analysis .....	50
Analyzing the Origins of Trauma .....	51
Critical Race Theory Analysis of <i>The Black Flame</i> .....	55
Limitations .....	56
Conclusion .....	57
Chapter 4: Understanding <i>The Ordeal</i> .....	59
“At Home, 31 Grace Court, Brooklyn” .....	59
The World Inherited.....	62
The World Encountered.....	67
The World Impacted .....	70
Racialization .....	77
Racialization and Education .....	80
The Psychic Detriment of Racialization .....	84
The Material Detriment of Racialization .....	94
Conclusion .....	97
Chapter 5: Schooling as Colonization, Meanwhile, <i>Mansart Builds a School</i> .....	99

Introduction.....	99
Colonialism: A Theme of Domination .....	102
Colonization and Education.....	108
Becoming the <i>Black Flame</i> .....	111
“I Burn Slow” .....	115
Jean Du Bignon: The White Black Girl.....	119
The Mansart Family .....	121
The Psychic Detriment of Colonization.....	127
The Mansarts and Education.....	135
CRT: Interest Convergence, Whiteness as Property, and Gradualism .....	137
Conclusion: Colonialism, Colonization, and Decolonization.....	141
Chapter 6: The Color of the World.....	147
Introduction.....	147
Globalization and Education.....	150
Preparing for Sabbatical.....	153
The Sabbatical.....	157
The Color of Europe .....	157
The Color of Asia.....	163
The Color of the West Indies .....	166
The New Home Front .....	168



The Emerging Black Middle Class and the Role of Religion.....	170
World War Again.....	177
Clandestine Plans and the Toll of War on the World .....	177
The Black War Effort.....	180
Roosevelt’s Murder.....	185
Of the Fourth Generation .....	186
Dismissal, Marriage, and Death.....	189
Retirement.....	192
Post Traumatic Slave Disorder .....	192
Critical Race Theory Lens .....	195
Conclusion .....	198
Chapter 7: Understanding the <i>Black Flame</i> .....	201
The Novel.....	201
Themes Throughout the <i>Black Flame</i> .....	205
Racialization .....	205
Colonization.....	211
Globalization.....	216
Summary.....	220
References.....	224

## LIST OF FIGURES

	PAGE
Figure 1: Possible Responses to a Traumatic Racist Experience .....	8
Figure 2: <i>Research Design</i> .....	36
Figure 3: The Process of Racialization .....	206
Figure 4: Systemic Standardization .....	212
Figure 5: The Process of Globalization .....	218

## **Chapter One: An Introduction Education, Dehumanization, Multigenerational Trauma and the *Black Flame* Trilogy**

### **Introduction**

Race, lacking any biological or scientific validation, is a socio-culturally situated and mediated system of categorization that perpetuates white supremacy and domination, ultimately leading to dehumanization. Primarily determined by skin color, race is a pseudo-science that groups people according to the color of their skin to create and explain “genetically distinct geographic groups” (Jablonski, 2006) since the Age of Enlightenment (Painter, 2010). Pigmentation, or skin color, is a part of an individual’s genotype, or the genetic causes that explain external appearance (Jablonski, 2006). Phenotype defines the interaction between an organism’s environment and genotype. These definitions assist in understand the pervasive nature of race and the desire to discriminate and, ultimately, dehumanize on the basis of race.

Skin pigmentation determines little more than one’s ancestral exposure to the solar environment. Dark skin is the result of an evolutionary response to higher concentrations of melanin released to protect the body from consistent exposure to the sun. Lighter skin is the result of a genetic mutation, resulting from a lack of exposure to the sun, that created smaller melanosomes that produce reduced amounts of melanin in Europeans (Jablonski, 2006). Though science bears the incompatibility of genetic race and inferiority, much of the persistent social discrimination occurring is the result of the enduring belief in the inferiority and superiority of particular races as determined by skin

color. David Livingston Smith (2011), in *Less Than Human: Why We Demean, Enslave, and Exterminate Others*, argues that “dehumanization probably is, despite appearances to the contrary, *always* bound up with racism. In fact, the concept of race is the place where the psychological, cultural, and ultimately biological dimensions of dehumanization all converge” (emphasis in original, p. 163). Education, in theory, imparts the sum total of the psychological, cultural, and biological dimensions of society.

Education is a part of society and racism overwhelmingly orders social interaction. Race influences education (Cooper, 1892/1998a; Du Bois, 1896/2007, 1930/2007, 1944/1985, 1960/2001; Woodson, 1933/1990; Hilliard, 1978; Harvey, 1987; Anderson, 1988; Collins, 1991, Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Perry, Steele, & Hilliard, 2003; Bell, 2004; Cross, 2007). Education or the lack thereof, reciprocally influences racism. Education as a microcosm of the broader society, serves as a cultural vehicle for dehumanization. Schooling, as a function of education, models and sustains the dehumanization of all students—particularly Black students who are among the bottom caste of the United States’ racial hierarchy. As a tool of dehumanization, schooling bears scrutiny situated among historical events, societal behaviors, and social realities.

No other social identity has separated the social polity better or more than race. Racism, the legally and customarily protected actions, thoughts, and behaviors that socially benefit whites to the detriment of people of color, has plagued America since Whites justified their enslavement of Blacks through religion, science, intellectual/moral inferiority, and physical superiority. Though Blacks have changed the social context of American institutions and the significance of race in social interactions has diminished

(Wilson, 2002), race significantly obstructs material and social success more than class, sex, sexual orientation, ability, and other social identifiers (Oliver & Shapiro, 2006).

### **Race, Schooling, and Education**

The hallmark *Brown v. The Topeka Board of Education* (1954) decision made schooling the contemporary terrain for the intersection of social policy, civil rights, and the law (Bell, 1980, 2004). However, throughout time, education has served as an institution of domination or liberation. For Blacks just after the Civil War, education was a part of the newly freed slaves' social fabric (Du Bois, 1935/2007, 1961/2007). Slaves sought education as the teaching of the whole person (Cooper, 1998b). Anna Julia Cooper (1998b) in an essay entitled, "On Education" concluded that a sane education

...is that which conserves the very lowest stratum, the best and economical is that which gives to each individual, according to his capacity, that training of "head, hand, and heart," or, more literally, of mind, body and spirit which converts him into a beneficent force in the service of the world. This is the business of schools and this the true cause of the deep and vital interest of all the people in Educational Programs. (p. 250)

Upon their emancipation from slavery, most slaves were anxious for an education that acknowledged the deep connection between skills training and cultural and spiritual development. Cooper's definition of education was liberatory in its approach.

Newly freed slaves began to undertake schooling and education as a means for liberation. Black Reconstruction in the United States, occurring from 1860 – 1880, realized many slaves seeking to shed the shroud of inferiority slavery forced upon them (Du Bois, 1935/2007). Blacks' exponential educational growth coupled with training

Black teachers to teach Black men, women, and children, was perhaps the greatest achievement of Black Reconstruction (Du Bois, 1935/2007). W.E.B. Du Bois (1935/2007) once predicted that “If the Negro public school system had been sustained, guided and supported, the American Negro would equal Denmark in literacy” (p. 522). The literacy rate in Denmark, at that time, was near one hundred percent. Once the Reconstruction funds Blacks used to guide their own educational trajectory were surrendered to the state, education for Blacks’ liberation ceased to exist. Education for domination, predicated upon the dehumanization of Blacks, took its place.

The prevailing Southern attitude toward schooling Blacks meant Whites would lose labor, thereby, injuring, rather than presupposing benefit, to the white working class (Du Bois, 1935/2007). There was backlash associated with Black schooling. W.E.B. Du Bois (1935/2007) recorded,

The American Freedman’s Commission reports that the Negroes’ “attempts at education provoked the most intense and bitter hostilities, as evincing a desire to render themselves equal to the whites. Their churches and schoolhouses in many places were destroyed by mobs.” (p. 529)

Once the state gained control over Black schooling, education became yet another way to dehumanize and traumatize Blacks. The idea that Southerners were opposed to Black schooling is largely lost to history. Most Southern states denied Blacks any access to education or severely curtailed funds for Black schools (Anderson, 1988; Du Bois, 1935/2007; Woodson, 1933/1990). Those options were only viable if the schoolhouses and churches, where many Black communities often held school, as well as the teachers

escaped the mob violence Du Bois mentions. Few studies investigate the impact of racist traumas on the education and schooling of Blacks.

Joy DeGruy Leary (2005) took the criterion that the Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders IV (DSM-IV), Revised, used to identify and diagnose Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) asked if Africans newly denied of their every freedom, except the one freedom and skill to stay alive in the most unbelievable amalgam of circumstances that chattel slavery was, experienced these behaviors. They include:

- *A serious threat or harm to one's life or physical integrity.*
- *A threat or harm to one's children, spouse or close relative.*
- *Sudden destruction of one's home or community.*
- *Seeing another person injured or killed as a result of accident or physical violence.*
- *Learning about a serious threat to a relative or a close friend being kidnapped, tortured or killed.*
- *Stressor is experienced with intense fear, terror and helplessness.*
- *Stressor and disorder is considered to be more serious and will last longer when the stressor is of human design. (As quoted from the DSM-IV, 1994, in DeGruy Leary, 2005, p. 118)*

Many slaved endured these traumas and so many more during the 244 years of chattel slavery. The traumas did not stop with emancipation. Blacks' exposure to racial traumas did not stop once Black Reconstruction ended. Many of these stressors were present as the South assumed control over educating Blacks. Threats to their physical integrity were ever-present, schooling provided another justification to physically harm Southern

Blacks. Mob violence destroyed the community. Teachers were often run out of town by mobs to terminate all Black educational programs. Most Blacks lived in constant fear, terror, and helplessness. They were unable to demand anything from a social structure that offered no protection from the death, harm, or mutilation of self or loved ones.

DeGruy Leary (2005) argues that everyone may not experience traumatic events similarly. Some people may remain unaffected by racist stimuli. It is impossible to assume that all slaves were traumatized, but “anyone with limited astuteness could surmise that a considerable number of African slaves are likely to have suffered from PTSD” (DeGruy Leary, 2005, p. 118). Responses to trauma become normalized behaviors that subsequent generations copy as they observe their parents and other adults respond to social stimuli and life events. Symptoms for those suffering from PTSD include:



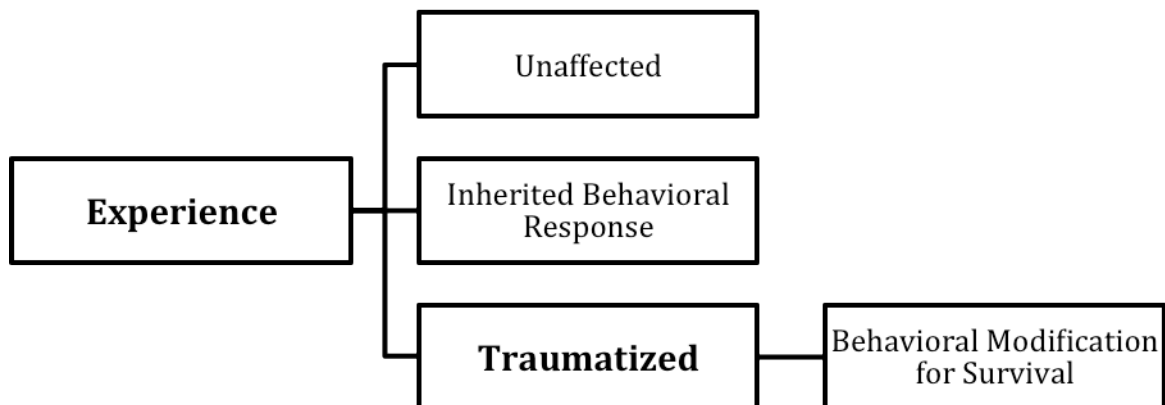
- *Intense psychological distress at exposure to internal or external cues that symbolize or resemble an aspect of the traumatic event.*
- *Physiological reactivity on exposure to internal or external cues.*
- *Marked diminished interest in participation in significant activities.*
- *Feeling of detachment or estrangement from others.*
- *Restricted range of affect.*
- *Sense of foreshadowed future (in other words, does not expect to have a career, marriage, children or a normal life span.)*
- *Difficulty falling or staying asleep.*
- *Irritability or outbursts of anger.*
- *Difficulty concentrating . . . (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, as quoted in DeGruy Leary, 2005, p. 119)*

Though many slaves may have suffered from PTSD, DeGruy Leary posits that the symptoms of PTSD become learned behavior responses to racist traumas. These behaviors, over time, without access to opportunity comprise Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome (PTSS). PTSS is “ a condition that exists when a population had experienced multigenerational trauma resulting from centuries of slavery and continues to experience oppression and institutionalized racism today. Added to this condition is a belief (real or imagined) that the benefits of the society in which they live are not accessible to them” (DeGruy Leary, 2005, p. 125).

PTSS is syndrome, or patterned behavior responses to specific stimuli. Figure One shows the first generation response to trauma. An individual encounters a stimulus or experience and is either affected or unaffected. Depending on the age of the individual

and the stimulus, the person learn to respond to various social cues as they observe the responses of their parents or other influential people around them—this is labeled as an inherited behavioral response. If the affected individual observes and internalizes these modeled behaviors, then their responses are likely going to be similar to those of a person traumatized, evincing a behavior modification to survive similar experiences in the future. The person is either traumatized or unaffected by their own experience or the experiences of those close to them. If unaffected, there is no lifestyle alteration behavior may remain the same. If traumatized, the individual modifies their behavior in order to survive the experience and any similar events to come.

**Figure 1: Possible Responses to a Traumatic Racist Experience**



With each subsequent generation of slaves, Blacks were experiencing cultural changes in the social milieu that were potentially traumatizing. They were also experiencing similar traumas that their parents encountered. Enslaved men and women were denied humanity and experienced few social benefits. Even after Emancipation,

Blacks were denied access and opportunity tangible and intangible social privileges and benefits. The denial of access to equal opportunity and outcomes has changed generationally, dynamically responding to the changing social conventions of race and racism. This is what DeGruy Leary (2005) defines as PTSS, or the “multigenerational trauma and continued oppression plus a real or imagined lack of access” (p. 125). Schooling, broadly and individually, traumatizes Black students.

### **Toward a Theory of Dehumanization in Education**

David Livingstone Smith (2011) in his treatise on the denial of humanity calls for a study of dehumanization, “to understand its mechanics” (p. 272). This study looked at how schooling, a socio-cultural institution, contributed to a cycle of traumatization spanning from Emancipation to 1956 using W.E. B. Du Bois’ *Black Flame* trilogy. An informed discussion around the way schooling, as an observable cultural and social model that encourages and discourages practice of social performance, dehumanizes as well as traumatizes students of color is necessary and thoroughly complicated (DeGruy Leary, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2009). For many Blacks, schooling holds innumerable emotionally disturbing racist experiences that were traumatic and continue to unsettle us well after the event.

Without any acknowledgement or remedy, Black students are forced to attend and excel in an institution that that demeans and dehumanizes them. Should they excel in their course, they have mastered the ability to acquiesce to their inhumanity or to dehumanize themselves and others, who, most often, are closest in proximity and/or experience to them. This is an act of genocide. Yet, many Blacks suffer the barrage of racist events in school, in addition to racial assault from the broader society, and survive.

These traumas continuously stab old festering wounds of the past while creating fresh gaping wounds that must be addressed immediately. Across generations, these wounds are unable to heal and manifest as PTSS. These manifestations are ever present anger, racist socialization, and vacant esteem.

Educational research, to this point, has not broadly assessed how schooling has dehumanized and traumatized students. A close textual analysis of W.E.B. Du Bois' *Black Flame* trilogy revealed racialization, colonization, and globalization as processes of domination and bastions of White supremacy that contribute to racism and dehumanization, more broadly. This study sought to better identify the structures of contemporary education that willfully and skillfully dehumanize Black students. The analysis in this study was guided by these overarching questions: What themes are present in W.E.B. Du Bois' *Black Flame* trilogy, as a classical critical race theory counterstory, that may illumine the ways that educational racism and domination traumatize and dehumanize Black students? What part has schooling played in subordinating and denying the humanity of Black students since Emancipation through its perpetuation of the myth of Black inferiority?

The answers to the above questions are vital to a common understanding that assists in pinpointing how the contemporary sensationalism of the achievement gap preserves the myth that Blacks' diminished intellectual capacity and academic lethargy are the result of the long-standing social and cultural belief in Blacks' intellectual inferiority. Black students bear the burden of myths of their inferiority from birth and belief in these myths are compounded as they begin school (Hilliard, III, 1978; Harvey, 1984; Crozier, 2005; Harper, 2007). Understanding the pervasive nature of racism in the

U.S. and how it may influence students and schooling processes has the potential to assist teachers and social systems in realizing the ways in which they may implicitly and/or explicitly dehumanize Black students. Unearthing such a deep-seated thread in the educational system has the potential to reconstruct the ways Black academic achievement has been viewed since Emancipation (Cross, 2007).

Long overdue is a shift in focus from Black student underachievement explained by pseudo-theories of normalized genetic inferiority to the racist traumas Black students experience daily in schools. Changing the views of Black academic achievement may shift the current dialogue to the varied harms Black students experience, potentially prompting a discussion around the inequality of academic outcomes for Black students.

### **The Myth of Black Inferiority**

Consistently, normalized ideology blames Black students for their academic underachievement. The “national ideology about Black intellectual inferiority” has circulated since slavery (Perry, Steele, & Hilliard, 2003, p. 8). Each generation of Black students has inherited a variety of socially assigned pathologies surrounding Black academic and intellectual inferiority—encompassing subpar intelligence and laziness (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994; Williams, 1973), inadequate culture (Kelley, 1997; Knowles & Prewitt; 1969), community (Williams, 1974), female dominated family structure (Kelley, 1997; Monyihan, 1965/1982; Roberts, 1995), and negative racial identity (Clark & Clark, 1939; Horowitz, 1939; Harper, 2007; Porter, 1971) including the fear of acting White (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Fordham, 1988, 1996; Ogbu, 2004). Beverly Cross (2007) identifies the achievement gap as the most current cultural pathology used to proliferate the myth of Black inferiority. The achievement gap is a

repackaged metaphor used to imply Blacks' innate intellectual ineptitude that explains their academic underperformance as compared to their White peers.

Contemporary depictions of an achievement gap “[do] not convey the long legacy of perversion that disguises educational inequity as deficit, innate abilities. It attempts to instead suggest something novel, a new social problem or reality” (Cross, 2007, p. 249). The achievement gap is not new, or novel. The achievement gap is repackaged White supremacist ideology that forces Black students to continue to bear the brunt of hundreds of years of racist education policies and practices that undermined and limited their academic successes and then blamed Black youth for their academic underachievement (Fine, 1991; Noguera, 2003; Peshkin, 1976). As the gap in basic skills among White and Black students widens, a chronological analysis of the educational beliefs and schooling practices and policies that have long denied Blacks' access to education is necessary to assess the magnitude of the harm that continued racial victimization in schools has had and continues to have on Black children generation after generation.

For many Blacks, there are simply no words to describe the very real pain and suffering of racism (Baldwin, 1965). For those who have directly and indirectly suffered the denial of self and humanity, only those who have similarly suffered may understand such pain. W. E. B. Du Bois' fictional *Black Flame* trilogy (*BFT*) offers a robust observation of Blacks' experiences with American schooling since Emancipation. While much of the normalized qualitative and quantitative educational research circulates the false notion of Blacks' subpar intellectual ability, these novels illustrate the initial denial of education for Blacks since their imposed immigration to the United States. A discussion of the ways education has been used to justify the inhumane treatment of

Blacks is incomplete without understanding the devastating trauma first slaves experienced during the Middle Passage.

The unimaginable Middle Passage, or Maafa, often forced healthy men and women to lie next to the sick, infirm, and the dead. The enslaved men and women who survived this unimaginable barbaric traumatization passed the experience of their inhumane exploitation to their children through their actions, thoughts, and/or beliefs (DeGruy Leary, 2005). The surviving children of the Maafa, as well as the first generation of American born slaves, directly experienced the harsh nature of slavery as well as vicariously experiencing their parents' traumatization. Instead of material wealth, these first slaves bequeathed their trauma to their children. That trauma has been compounded over generations through slavery, Reconstruction, and beyond. Connecting Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome to schooling assists in understanding the current manifestations of the achievement gap as another form of multigenerational trauma.

Joy DeGruy Leary (2005) described slavery's impact on the generations that survived enslavement. DeGruy Leary asserts that the dehumanization of slaves along with the use of pseudo-science to create, define, and identify race created the justification for the grotesque traumatization of enslaved women and men in the United States. The Middle Passage, bondage, rape, medical experimentation, exhaustive labor, and physical, emotional, and psychological torture were some of the traumas slaves daily experienced for nearly two and one-half centuries. Trauma, DeGruy Leary (2005) describes, "is an injury cause by an outside, usually violent, force, event or experience" (p. 14). Trauma may be experienced physically, emotionally, psychologically, and/or spiritually. It has the ability to disrupt equilibrium, the sense of wellbeing, attitudes, and beliefs.

When traumas are human-inflicted, such disruptions often result in dysfunctional behaviors. DeGruy Leary (2005) continues, “If one traumatic experience can result in distorted attitudes, dysfunctional behaviors and unwanted consequences, this pattern is magnified exponentially when a person repeatedly experiences severe trauma, and it is much worse” (p. 14). Slavery was the worst kind of trauma humans could inflict upon other human beings. Generations of slaves bore witness to their traumatizing experience of slavery as well as vicariously experiencing the trauma inflicted upon their forebears. In the near four hundred years since slaves were forced to settle the United States, there has been little redress for the ways in which the American institution of slavery, particularly the denial of education, proliferated Black inferiority.

The vast majority of enslaved men and women were kept servile with little education beyond necessary functioning on the plantation. Literacy, for many slaves, resulted in death. Death was casually threatened and often exacted upon literate slaves (Du Bois, 1935/2007). Since their kidnapping and forced breeding, the dominant discourse has purposely distressed and made American Blacks’ relationship with education particularly tenuous at best. Though contentious, W.E.B. Du Bois’ *BFT* reveals the ways education has persisted in the degradation of American Blacks. These novels counter the dominant discourse that has communicated Black inferiority since their capture and forced labor in the United States.

### **W. E. B. Du Bois and the *Black Flame* Trilogy**

W. E. B. Du Bois is among the greatest American researchers of the twentieth century. Trained at Fisk University, Harvard University, the University of Berlin, Du Bois researched and charted the American cultural terrain for nearly eighty years (Du



Bois, 1957/2007, 1968/1997; Du Bois, 1971; Rabaka, 2007; Aldridge, 2008; Lewis, 2009). Du Bois was born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts in 1868, three years after Abraham Lincoln delivered the Emancipation Proclamation. He was the first Black man awarded the Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1885. Many scholars have studied Du Bois and taken up portions of his research agenda, particularly the ways racism has impacted American Blacks over time.

W. E. B. Du Bois is seldom given the recognition he deserves as a writer, researcher, educator, scholar, sociologist, philosopher, thinker, artist, social reformer, and an Americanist (Rampersad, 1976; Aptheker, 2001; Rabaka, 2007; Aldridge, 2008; Lewis, 2009). Herbert Aptheker (2001), the editor to whom Du Bois left his letters, wrote that “In the lifetime of their author, no one in the United States was more expert in the area of the nature, theory, and purposes of education; and on the specific subject of the education of [B]lack people in the United States, Du Bois had no peer” (p. *xii*). David Levering Lewis (2009), preeminent Du Bois biographer, labeled Du Bois as “one of the twentieth century’s most prescient thinkers and an American social reformer who, irrespective of race, had few contemporary peers” (p. *xiii*). Du Bois’ scholarship, poetry, prose, and speeches have been described as both timely and timeless; yet, the *Black Flame* trilogy remains unmined as past glimpse into the present education of Black students. For the *BFT* is, as Aldridge (2008) described, “a retrospective and kaleidoscopic view of [B]lack history and the [B]lack experience through a number of characters that mirror Du Bois’ own life experiences and his contemplation of [B]lack education” (p. 133).

Though widely ignored and overlooked, the *Black Flame* trilogy is based upon decades of data and analysis and offers numerous views of education—specifically the struggle for publicly supported and socially accepted Black education. Dedicated to fighting the national bastion of racism, Du Bois authored these novels as a catalogue of his experience with and research conducted on Black education since Emancipation (Du Bois, 1957/2007).

Du Bois conceptualized the *Black Flame* as early as 1935. In his letter to the president of the Rosenwald Fund, Du Bois (1973 – 1978) shared his plan to write the history of Atlanta, a “post-war city in all its essential development and was given its political opportunity by Negro votes and its economic development by a combination of poor White and carpetbaggers” (p. 73). He alluded to the difficulty of the novels’ method, undertaking to write “a three-volume novel” detailing the experiences of White, Poor White, and Black Atlantans. Du Bois was conscious of the small likelihood of any publisher choosing to publish the novels, but endeavored to complete the arduous task.

In 1935, Du Bois wrote, “It presents, of course, enormous difficulties in technique and I may not be able to do it, but I am trying” (Du Bois, 1973 – 1978, p. 73). Though not named in the letter Du Bois sent, in the editorial note to this letter, Du Bois’ letters editor Aptheker wrote, “Du Bois’s reference to a trilogy anticipates by a generation the appearance of his *Black Flame*” (Du Bois, 1973 – 1978, p. 73). Given Du Bois’ extensive research training and educational background it is not unfounded to conjecture that his conceptualization of the trilogy began shortly after publishing his tome on Black Reconstruction. The *Black Flame* trilogy stands as a direct, yet creative, observation of the intersections of the American milieu and racism.

“You know, Shirley, that a *tree* would be just right for that corner [of the yard].

Never you mind that I’ll not live to sit under its shade. Those who come after me

will enjoy it, and I’ll have the pleasure of seeing it grow.” (Du Bois, 1971, p.196)

Shirley Graham Du Bois shared this bit of remembered conversation with her husband, W.E.B. Du Bois, during the time he wrote the *Black Flame*. Du Bois’ second wife, Shirley remembers their time at 31 Grace Court in Brooklyn, New York. In 1952, at age 84, Du Bois began working avidly on “a fictional trilogy, based on the experiences of a black family from the days immediately after the Civil War to the present day” (p. 195). Du Bois recalls planting a garden with Manuel Giovanni, a handyman excluded from local unions, as he was an Italian immigrant. Otherwise insignificant, Manuel died in 1955 from “hard work, hard living, low wages (because he was not a union man), cold, much loneliness and finally—leukemia” (Du Bois, 1971, p. 195). So the protagonist throughout the *Black Flame* trilogy shares his name with a skilled workman who “took pleasure in creating beauty” (Du Bois, 1971, p. 195), quite possibly as a tribute from a Black man “born by a golden river and in the shadow of two great hills, five years after the Emancipation Proclamation, which began the freeing of American Negro slaves” (Du Bois, 1968/1997, p. 61).

Though Du Bois did not live to see the fully matured tree he and his wife planted in the corner of their yard at 31 Grace Court, he still planted its seed and nurtured its growth. Metaphorically, he did much the same with the writing of the *Black Flame*.

Though Du Bois lived through and researched much of the history surrounding the education of American Blacks since Emancipation in the *BFT*, he would never know just

how fully his fictional trilogy would portend the future of education for Blacks in the United States—specifically the South.

The *Black Flame* trilogy is the amalgam of philosophy, economics, history, and sociology necessary to unseat the supremacy of the dominant narrative that surrounds Blacks' inferior educational interest, mental fortitude, and intellectual capacity. The inclusion of these novels in the broad historical record as well as in the field of education recognizes historicity as a rich tapestry of stories rather than a singular historical thread. The *BFT* potentially assists the field of education in assessing the ways in which dominant narratives surrounding Blacks' intellectual capabilities have been used to irrationally construe and traumatize Black people. These novels are a peerless example and confirmation of the transdisciplinary nature of critical race theory and its importance for education.

### **Critical Race Theory Counter-Storytelling and the *Black Flame* Trilogy**

W. E. B. Du Bois' *Black Flame Trilogy* described Black education at all levels, countering the dominant ideological rhetoric that maintains the myth of Black social, academic, and intellectual inferiority, from Emancipation through the 1954 *Brown* Supreme Court decision. Du Bois created composite characters from the historical and empirical data he gathered for nearly three decades including research for his unparalleled tome, *Black Reconstruction in America: An Essay Toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860-1880*. The *BFT* described the life of the protagonist, Manuel Mansart.

The first, *The Ordeal of Mansart* described the origins of Manuel's racialization and how the imperialistic social order he inherits at birth acts upon and through him (Du

Bois, 1957/2007). In the second novel, *Mansart Builds a School*, Du Bois describes quasi-colonialism and the process of colonization that birthed Jim Crow and standardized the exclusion of Blacks from southern labor market. Despite colonization, Blacks' evinced a determined effort for education after Emancipation that determined Manuel Mansart's life choices based upon his interpretation of his inherited world (Du Bois, 1959/2007). In the final novel, *Worlds of Color*, Du Bois discussed globalization, contextualizing American Blacks' experiences with world war, education, labor, the world economy, and domestic racial enmity among the world's shared historicity (Du Bois, 1961/2007). The *BFT* illumines the junction where the cycle of traumatization, Black education, dehumanization, and critical race theory intersect.

*Critical race theory* (CRT) observes the impacts of racism on U.S. jurisprudence over time (Bell, 1980, 1987, 1992; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Critical race theorists identify five CRT tenets beginning with: a critique of gradualism, or the deliberate approach to the dire situations of people of color suffering from social, material, ideological, and legal inequities (Matsuda, 1995); racism is socially endemic (Bell, 1980, 1992; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001); Whiteness often functions as property, human rights, and material gain protected by law and custom (Harris, 1995); people of color benefit if and when their interests converge with Whites where Whites reap the majority of legal redress (Bell, 1980, 2004); and, the ways in which the narrative styles of people of color have been legally undervalued and, often, suppressed (Delgado, 1989, 1990, 1993, 1996).

Although fictional, Du Bois' novels add to and counter the normalized history. Too often, the dominant group's story, as a function of White supremacy, is deemed as the only historical record. The out-group, or the subordinate group, must create their own

stories to “subvert that in-group reality” (Delgado, 1989, p. 2413). Gloria Ladson-Billings and William Tate, IV (1995), in their pioneering article intersecting critical race theory and education, call for the inclusion of the voices of people of color to complete the analysis of the educational system.

Du Bois’ counter-narrative describes the experiences of too-often silenced voices providing a fuller historicity of the U.S. and the world. Critical race theorists term this “naming one’s own reality,” communicating the experiences of those marginalized groups “on the bottom” (Delgado, 1989, 1991; Matsuda, 1995). The function of the *BFT* as a counterstory, instead of historical fiction, is to “invite the reader to suspend judgment, listen for their point or message, and then decide what measure of truth they contain” (Delgado, 1989, p. 2415). The counterstory effectively (1) piques and humbles the privileged group, (2) builds consensus and “deeper, more vital ethics,” and (3) blooms innovation to address alternative possibilities for the current reality (Delgado, 1989, p. 2414). The *Black Flame* offers an alternative analysis of the educational system Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) invite.

Counter-narratives as well as counter-storytelling assume a social justice agenda that seeks to eliminate oppression and empower subjugated groups predicated on multiple forms of resistance. The gravity of the shared lived experiences of people of color manifests in storytelling, family histories, biographies, scenarios, parable, *cuentos*, *testimonios*, chronicles, and narratives and challenges dominant ideological paradigms, texts, and theories used to exploit the experiences of people of color (Bell, 1987; Carasco, 1996; Delgado, 1989, 1993, 1996; Olivas, 1990; Solórzano & Yosso, 2009). Counter-narratives are transdisciplinary, using research from various fields to better explicate the

effects of racism and its intersections with other subjugated identities. An amalgam of personal stories and/or narratives, other people's stories and/or narratives, and composite stories and/or narratives, the *BFT* combined Du Bois' personal experiences, the experiences of others, and data he collected to place composite characters in "social, historical, and political situations to discuss racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of subordination" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2009, p. 139). The *BFT* establishes counter-storytelling in education and offers a clearer explication of the veracity of schooling as harmful to Black students.

Du Bois examined the underpinnings of race and racism made endemic through and by the law. CRT counter-narratives and counter-stories are used to offer alternative stories that disjoint the dominant narrative around racial oppression, history, and the law. Derrick Bell (2009) characterizes CRT writing and lectures by the "frequent use of the first person, storytelling, narrative, allegory, interdisciplinary treatment of law, and the unapologetic use of creativity" (p. 41). Unabashedly creative, yet rooted in the shared truth of historical events, Du Bois used counterstorytelling as praxis—a creative entry point into the dialectic and discursive analysis of imperialism, racialization, colonization, and globalization.

### **Definitions**

Within this study, several references will be made terminology, theories, and ideologies that require clarity for readers unfamiliar with the focus of this study. Those terms are defined as follows:

Africana Critical Theory - Africana critical theory is transdisciplinary theory of varied diasporan African perspectives that better assist in the interpretation and explication of

racism, sexism, colonialism, capitalism, and other forms of White supremacist phenomena that daily impact American Blacks' lived experiences (Rabaka, 2007).

Agency – employing a variety of mental and physical resources gained across multiple structures (Sewell, 1992).

Black Radical Thought – a transdisciplinary cadre of writers that use a variety of epistemologies to describe the continuum of Black experiences in the United States.

Colonization - the process of standardization of the processes of domination that force the colonized to become interlocutors in their own dehumanization.

Critical Race Theory – (CRT) developed by legal scholars, observes how racism has influenced U.S. jurisprudence, culture, and institutions understanding that racism is endemic, Whiteness has been established as a property right that Blacks benefit from when their interests converge with the benefits and interests of Whites. CRT also critiques the liberal and deliberate approach to social change.

Counter-Storytelling/Counter-Narrative – a tenet of CRT that assumes a social justice agenda that seeks to eliminate oppression and empower subjugated groups through storytelling, family histories, biographies, scenarios, parable, cuentos, testimonios, chronicles, and narratives that resist dominant ideological paradigms, texts, and theories that marginalize people of color (Bell, 1987; Carasco, 1996; Delgado, 1989, 1993, 1996; Olivas, 1990; Solórzano & Yosso, 2009).

Ever Present Anger – manifests as the “wellspring of anger that lies just below the surface of many African Americans, and it doesn't take much for it to emerge and be expressed” (Leary, 2005, p. 134).



Globalization – the use of formal and informal educational practices used to dominate and colonize other parts of the world through colonial, quasi-colonial, and neo-colonial practices. Formal education—curriculum and instruction—as well as the informal education people of color around the world receive through various social institutions create standardized norms that are imposed the world over.

Oppression – Oppression designates the disadvantage and injustice some people suffer due to the everyday practices of a well-intentioned liberal society. It is the systemic and structural phenomena that are not necessarily the result of the intentions of a tyrant.

Oppression in the structural sense is part of the basic fabric of a society, not a function of a few people’s choice or policies (Young, 1995).

Racist Socialization/Internalized Oppression – Oppressed people who have adopted and appropriated dominant standards of beauty, material success, violence, and brutality as their own usually imposed upon people with a similar liminal social identity (Leary, 2005).

Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome – DeGruy Leary (2005) defines Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome (PTSS) as:

**M**ultigenerational trauma together with continued oppression and

**A**bsence of opportunity to access socially available benefits leads to...

**P**ost Traumatic Slave Syndrome

**M + A = P** (p. 125)

Race – a socio-culturally situated and mediated system of categorization that perpetuates white supremacy and domination, ultimately leading to dehumanization. Primarily

determined by skin color, race is a pseudo-science that has grouped people according to the color of their skin since the Age of Enlightenment (Painter, 2010).

Racialization - a relational process that identifies the privileged and the targeted, the oppressed and the oppressor, the dehumanized and the dehumanizer. The process is dynamic, always adapting to the changes in structural and interpersonal relationships. The process of racialization is mutually reinforced by the systemic and structural ways that “racism” is played out in the institutions that shape our cultural practices; as well as, the ways in which individuals take up their personal agency to act upon other individuals in relationship to the overall structure.

Social Justice – the equitable distribution of resources that ensures both access to opportunities and equality of outcomes for all.

Trauma – is “an injury caused by an outside, usually violent, force, event, or experience [that is] experience[d] physically, emotionally, psychologically, and/or spiritually” (Leary, 2005, p. 112).

Vacant Esteem – the state of believing oneself to have or no worth, exacerbated by the group and societal pronouncement of inferiority and is the net result of three spheres of influence--society, community, and family (Leary, 2005).

White privilege – the unearned entitlements, benefits, and advantages given Whites based upon the existing system of racial caste in the United States.

White supremacy – normalized discourse that privileges the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of Whites for material and social gain disadvantaging and targeting people of color.

**Delimitations**

The setting of the study is *The Black Flame Trilogy* spanning from Emancipation through 1956. Textual analysis of *The Black Flame Trilogy* will analyze schooling's compounded traumatization of Black students. I contextualize *The Black Flame* among Black radical thought from Emancipation through the present.

## **Chapter Two: Africana Philosophy of Education and Lynching in the Classroom**

### **Introduction**

This study analyzed W.E.B. Du Bois's *Black Flame* trilogy for emerging themes from the documented racist traumas Blacks have endured in most social institutions, specifically education, since Emancipation. Using *Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome* (PTSS) (DeGruy Leary, 2005) and critical race theory (CRT) (Bell, 1980, 1992, 1995, 2007; Crenshaw, 1988; Harris, 1995; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) this study examined the *Black Flame* trilogy for insight into the compounded trauma Black students have experienced generationally in schools. Africana critical theory (Rabaka, 2007) scaffolds PTSS and CRT as a critical theoretical and methodological framework that purposefully engages Black radical thought to deconstruct the innumerable impacts of race and racism on American society.

This study focuses primarily on the voices, theories, research, and experiences of diasporan Africans as they describe societal and educational harms society—specifically schools—have imposed on Black students over time. These harms—direct and indirect, explicit and implicit, collective and individual—exacerbate Black students' experiences with racism and perpetuate the *myth of Black inferiority*. This myth has persisted over time through the dominant narratives that often circulate as history.

### **African American Philosophy of Education**

Black people come from a long line of radical thinking especially focused on race, racism, slavery, and education. As emancipation reached the far corners of the South, Blacks learned of their freedom and commenced a plan of action for their newly freed

communities to learn to read (Anderson, 1988). Overcoming domination and through emancipation, freed Black people began to engage the literate world.

James Anderson (1988), in his study of Black education in the South from 1860 through 1935, argued that former slaves, once emancipated, were the first southerners to lobby and pay for universal public education. Anxious to understand and fulfill their democratic purpose, Blacks took control of and responsibility for their own education. Researching Black Reconstruction, Du Bois (1935/2007) observed, “Public education for all at public expense, was, in the South, a Negro idea” (p. 523).

Financing all educational expenses with minuscule monetary assistance from the federal and state governments, Blacks were as eager to learn themselves as they were for their children to learn. Anderson (1988) explained, “The great efforts Blacks made to establish schools for their own children soon after the war and to establish state-supported systems of public education for all children reflected both their self-reliance and distinct educational and social philosophy” (p. 16). Many Blacks held an educational and social philosophy that turned on self-reliance and the belief in the founding democratic ideals of the country their labor built. This philosophy of education has persisted over time.

Blacks, over time, have cultivated a philosophy of education that emphasizes humanity, literacy, racial equality, citizenship, and influence (Cooper, 1998a, 1998b; Du Bois, 1903; Perry, Steele, & Hilliard, III, 2003; Rabaka, 2003, 2007; Aldridge, 2008). Anna Julia Cooper (1998b) described a Black philosophy of education that sought to satiate the want, quest, thirst, and desire of a neglected people to understand themselves and their cruel dehumanizing captors. Despite the arduous task of educating masses of

illiterates, Black folk remained committed and dedicated to schooling and learning. Yet, in an effort to purposely deny Black students education at every turn, the “Negro public school” was never fully operationalized (Du Bois, 1935/2007, 1957/2007, 1959/2007; Woodson, 1933/1990; Anderson, 1988).

The philosophy of education that Blacks began to create centered on what many Black radical thinkers and philosophers termed “real education.” A real education enabled every person to survive *and* thrive (Cooper, 1892/1998; Woodson, 1933; Du Bois, 1935/2007, 1973; Anderson, 1988; Rabaka, 2003, 2007; Aldridge, 2008; Ladson-Billings 2009). Cooper (1998b) wrote that

any scheme of education should have regard to the whole [person]—not a special class or race of men, but man as the paragon of creation, possessing in childhood and in youth almost infinite possibilities for physical, moral and mental development. (p. 258)

Carter G. Woodson (1933/1990) defined real education as instruction that aims “to inspire people to live more abundantly, to learn to begin with life as they find it and make it better” (p.29). Blacks’ philosophy of education for all was rooted in their first-hand observations and experiences with their former captors. Freed Blacks understood money as necessary for survival, but deemed it worthless without knowledge and wisdom (read: common sense) (Du Bois, 1935/2007; Collins, 1991). They sought to make something more of what little material possessions they struggled to obtain after slavery. Coupled with common sense, they viewed education as the avenue to accomplish those ends (Perry, Steele, & Hilliard, III, 2003).

According to Woodson (1933/1990), too many Blacks were miseducated—their history and culture erased. When Whites assumed control of the education of Blacks, it became nearly impossible for Blacks to realize their autonomy (Du Bois, 1935/2007, 1957/2007, 1959/2007, 1961/2007; Williams, 1973, 1974; Williams, 1987; Anderson, 1988). A people without a link to the history of the world, American Blacks were (and continue to be) instructed to reproduce White supremacy with the understanding that they will *never* be White (Woodson, 1933/1990; Williams, 1987). Superimposing the dominant model of academic achievement, Blacks will be found inadequate *always* (Cooper, 1892/1998, 1930/1998; Perry, Steele, & Hilliard, III, 2003). Some may seek to follow all White ideological social norms flawlessly (Fanon, 1952; Ogbu & Fordham, 1986; Fordham, 1988, 1996; Ogbu 2004; DeGruy Leary, 2005), while others may knowingly choose to categorically oppose the dominant social norms (Fanon, 1952; Freire, 1970/1997; Harvey, 1984; Kelley, 1997; DeGruy Leary, 2005). Either choice leads to the inevitable failure of Blacks to be White continuing to fail the social, cultural, educational, and material benchmarks for humanity (Woodson, 1933/1990).

Carter G. Woodson (1933/1990) wrote that “The education of any people should begin with the people themselves, but Negroes thus trained have been dreaming about the ancients of Europe and about those who have tried to imitate [Europeans]” (p. 32). African contributions to literature, science, art, language, agriculture, and husbandry have been overlooked, ignored, and, in some instances, completely erased from the historical record in an effort to continue Blacks’ social subordination and labor exploitation (Woodson, 1933/1990; Du Bois, 1935/2007; Williams, 1973, 1974; Williams, 1987). Through their continued toil, torture, and invisibility, many Blacks internalize the myth

of their inferiority (Kelley, 1997; Perry, Steele, & Hilliard, III, 2003; DeGruy Leary, 2005; Cross, 2007). Moreover, the dominant social narratives and histories perpetually reify Blacks' inferiority and their inhumanity through social exclusion while concurrently identifying Africans' (excluding Egypt) failure to produce any remarkable or lasting impact on the world's history (Williams, 1987). This is the lasting legacy of slavery that predominates the western world's historicity and the social syllabus from which schools teach (Williams, 1987; Bell, 1988; DeGruy Leary, 2005). Woodson's (1933/2007) searing critique of American education bears repeating, lest we ever forget:

*There would be no lynching if it did not start in the schoolroom.* (p. 3)

### **Lynching in the Schoolroom—The Context of Black Education**

The possibilities for equality of educational outcomes for Blacks and Whites were never fully operationalized or guaranteed (Moynihan, 1965). The systemic omission and opposition to dominant systems and regimes of learning, as sites of resistance, were omitted from the dominant narrative (Du Bois, 1935/2007; Moynihan, 1965; Hilliard, 1978; Perry, Steele, & Hilliard, III, 2003). Blacks have been observed as unwilling to learn, lazy, and disinterested (Kelley, 1997; Noguera, 2003; Cross, 2007). When, in reality, Black people's relationships with education have been contentious, at best.

Under the threat of death, many sought to learn during slavery (White, 1985; Du Bois, 1935/2007; DeGruy Leary, 2005). Once emancipated, freed men and women were often placed in perilous positions when endeavoring to learn (Du Bois, 1935/2007, 1940, 2007; Anderson, 1988). Still, many persisted. As the southern owning class and northern philanthropists took controlling interest in Black education, Black input was omitted and



silenced by the White supremacist narrative of Blacks' struggle toward freedom and liberation through education (Du Bois, 1935/2007; Anderson, 1988).

The social and material lynching of Blacks in the classroom began when newly freed men and women built schoolhouses and held Sunday schools aimed at increasing Black literacy that were willfully destroyed (Du Bois, 1935/2007). They were antagonized and threatened with mob violence, and many newly built buildings were destroyed (Du Bois, 1903/2003, 1935, 2007; Anderson, 1988). For an economically taxed people—given very little remuneration for the generations of free labor that built and continued the wealth and economy of the United States (Du Bois, 1935/ 2007)—it was nearly impossible to continue to rebuild school buildings that were initially financially taxing to build. Moreover, entire communities of newly freed Blacks financed entire education systems in their communities—the building materials and labor for the school, teachers' salaries, books, paper, pencils, and other necessary resources—in addition to trying to eke out a living so that they could survive (Du Bois, 1935/2007).

White planters exploited newly emancipated men and women's need for money to survive and paid them pennies, charged sharecroppers exorbitant rents, all aimed at denying Blacks any more than their basic needs and essentially forcing them back into slavery (Du Bois, 1935/2007; Anderson, 1988). Only now, Blacks were responsible for their clothing, food, and shelter. Yet, many persisted, getting by on the most pitiful of rations, building schoolhouses after working exhaustive bone-crushing days on White plantations, affording no desires and denying some necessities to pay for education in their communities (Du Bois, 1935/2007).

The lynching continued when many Black teachers in the South were threatened, some run out of town, beaten, and/or physically lynched (Du Bois, 1935/2007). White teachers, often hired by philanthropic organizations or missionaries, did not extol or comment on the many contributions of Black people to the United States and the world. The lynching persisted as White southern planters and northern philanthropists coerced and forced Black men, women, and adolescents into industrial training programs.

Industrial programs were created to perpetuate racism as well as decrease the number of Blacks competing with working class Whites for the same positions (Anderson, 1988). This particular form of lynching neglected more than two generations of Blacks as White adolescents received secondary education for nearly fifty years before any wide-scale measure to educate Black students was undertaken (Anderson, 1988). This is particularly appalling as Black adolescents—those among the first generations to finally see *and* raise children in freedom—were denied access to an education that may have prepared them to assist in bringing about the near complete realization of society's democratic ideals. Yet, most were consciously and purposefully denied secondary education throughout the country, including the North (Du Bois, 1935/2007, Anderson, 1988; Aldridge, 2008).

The lynching endured as White philanthropists widened their scope, setting their sights on Black colleges (Du Bois, 1935/2007, 1940/2007; Woodson, 1933/1990; Clark, 1987). Industrial education ruled the day (Cooper, 1892/1998, 1930/1998; Woodson, 1933/1990; Du Bois, 1935/2007). Black students were educated for mere survival, for the jobs that were nearly obsolete in both the North and South (Anderson, 1988). While Blacks retained a measure of efficacy and resiliency, Jim Crow laws and the threat of

death ensured that they had no social or legal recourse (Du Bois, 1940/2007). Most Southern Blacks were at the mercy of subversively-intentioned Whites for their survival and the survival of their children (Du Bois, 1935/2007; Anderson, 1988). Although many were happy for education, most did not have enough education to confirm the veracity of what they were being taught. In addition, Blacks were purposely denied any positive association with their race and/or Africa (Cooper, 1892/1997; Woodson, 1933/1990; Williams, 1987; Anderson, 1988). They were given the models of European beauty, history, education, and culture and then *denied the possibility of inclusion in any of those realms* (Woodson, 1933/1990). White was the way to succeed, yet Blacks were reminded that they weren't White and could never be White—beautiful, successful, historically situated, proud, and intelligent. The means for success were deemed biologically impossible unless one had the privilege of light/White skin.

The lynching has prevailed as Black underachievement is discussed without any mention of the subversive part dominant systems of White supremacy have played in perpetuating White superiority and formulating Black inferiority (Perry, Steele, Hilliard, III, 2003). Beverly Cross (2007) labels the achievement gap as the contemporary metaphor aimed at further cementing Black inferiority upon this generation as *The Bell Curve* (Herrnstein & Murray, 1994) did for its generation and IQ testing (Williams, 1973, 1974) did in a generation prior to that. Black academic underachievement is the result of a number of different policies and strategies aimed at providing more education for Whites than for Black students coupled with the tenacious denial of funds and resources to adequately educate Black students (Cooper, 1938/1998; Du Bois, 1903/2003, 1935/2007; Woodson, 1933/1990; Hilliard, III, 1974; Harvey, 1984; Kelley, 1997; Perry,

Steele, & Hilliard, 2003; DeGruy Leary, 2005; Cross, 2007). The *Black Flame* trilogy outlined these deficit strategies and policies while clearly describing the origins of the multigenerational denial of Blacks' educational access and traumatization.

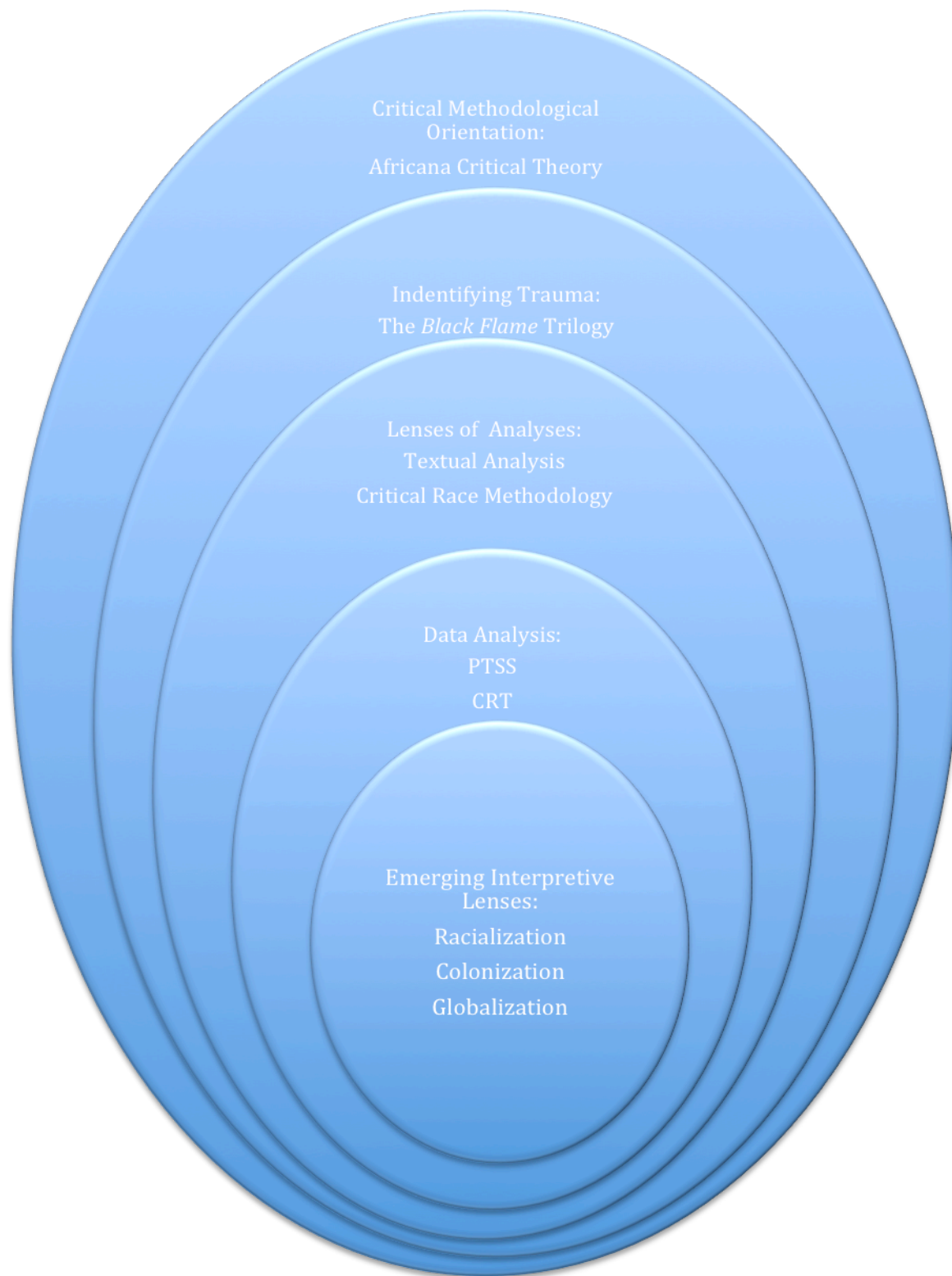
## Chapter Three: Method

### Rationale

How can one then be deaf to that voice rolling down the stages of history: ‘What matters is not to know the world but to change it.’ (Fanon, 1986, p. 3)

The research model chosen for this study offered a broad approach. As *Figure 2* illustrates, Africana critical theory established the critical theoretical orientation for the study. The theoretical orientation provided the frame for the data selection, interpretation/collection, and analysis. Racist trauma as evidenced in the *BFT* and Africana philosophies, theories, and research (as defined below) were filtered through several lenses of analysis: critical race methodology (Solórzano & Yosso, 2009); close textual analysis (Baker, 1984; Bakhtin, 1981; Gadamer, 1975; Gates, 1988); any of the four applicable tenets of critical race theory (a critique of gradualism/colorblind theories, endemic racism, whiteness as property, and interest convergence), excluding counterstorytelling, as well as ever present anger, vacant esteem, and racist socialization as the psychic manifestations of Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome. From the data collected, emerging themes were identified for each novel, including racialization, colonization, and globalization as processes of overarching social domination and dehumanization.

**Figure 2: *Research Design***



### **Critical Orientation**

The critical orientation of this study situated the theoretical framework as well as the interpretation of the data. Joe L. Kincheloe and Peter McLaren (2003) argue that situating the historical and social orientation of the interpreter and the text “is an extremely complex enterprise that demands a nuanced analysis of the impact of hegemonic and ideological forces that connect the microdynamics of everyday life with the macrodynamics of structures such as White supremacy, patriarchy, and class elitism” (p. 447). Understanding the social and historical background as well as the theoretical orientation of the researcher/interpreter will allow other researchers to better understand the acute interpretation of data this study offers. Through these lenses, the social frames of reference that the researcher accessed must shape the interpretation (Gadamer, 1988).

Afrocentric feminist epistemology orients the knowledge claims throughout this study. This epistemology overlaps and opposes the white masculinist epistemology that is superimposed upon academic processes and the ways in which knowledge claims are made and conferred in the academy. This was both a limitation and strength of this study. Through this alternative way of knowing, alternative knowledge claims that fall outside of the dominant narrative surrounding the traumatization, resiliency, and agency of Black people were made and validated. Further, the knowledge claims presented in this study unpacked the relationships that may exist between multigenerational schooling traumatization and the ways schools used Black inferiority to undergird a theory of dehumanization as a cultural pathology that stymie Blacks’ collective educational, social, political, material, and cultural advancement. To this end, this study assists the field of

education in envisioning new ways to educate Black students that fully acknowledges and validates their humanity.

Afrocentric feminist epistemology provided the experiential basis upon which knowledge claims were substantiated and validated throughout this study. As a Black woman researcher, the ways in which I understand the objective world around me regularly intersects *and* diverges from the dominant white masculinist epistemology of the academy. Using an Afrocentric feminist epistemological perspective in the study's organization and data analysis stands in direct opposition to the traditional white supremacist and patriarchal epistemology of the academy, race is the primary oppression highlighted in the *Black Flame* trilogy. As Black women, asserted truth claims are often invalidated because they fall outside of or are inconsistent with white patriarchal benchmarks for methodological adequacy. Though ACT is transdisciplinary and allows for multiple epistemologies including racial and feminist perspectives and epistemologies, Africana critical theory serves as a more applicable critical methodological orientation to situate race in the *BFT*.

### **Africana Critical Theory**

Africana critical theory is a multidimensional theory of varied perspectives that assists in the interpretation and explication of racism, sexism, colonialism, capitalism, and other forms of White supremacist phenomena that daily impact American Blacks' lived experiences and, more specifically, encounters with schooling. Reiland Rabaka (2007) explains an *Africana critical theory of contemporary society* as the “*theory of critical domination and discrimination in classical and contemporary, continental and diasporan African life-worlds and lived-experiences*” (emphasis in original, p. 9). ACT is “a style of critical theorizing” that is progressively political that emphasizes “Africana



radicals' and revolutionaries' answers to the key questions posed by the major forms and forces of domination and discrimination that have historically and continue currently to shape and mold our modern/postmodern and/or neo-colonial/postcolonial world” (Rabaka, 2007, p. 9).

Inherent in this study, is an evaluative analysis of the material and psychic impacts of racism that schools allow and inflict upon Black students (Du Bois, 1957/2007, 1959/2007, 1961/2007; Hilliard, III, 1974; Harvey, 1984; Anderson, 1988; DeGruy Leary, 2005; Cross, 2007; Aldridge, 2008). Africana critical theory (ACT) distinguishes between the research of those *of African origin and descent* and *Africana research*. Ignoring phenotype and a narrow conception of culture, ACT draws from the works of often ignored Africana philosophers, researchers, and theorists with “an epistemic openness toward the wide range of thinkers (and doers) from transethnic, multiracial and multicultural backgrounds, various academic disciplines, and assorted activist-traditions” (Rabaka, 2007, p. 9).

With this in mind, paradigmatically, this study:

1. emphasized the too often ignored and overlooked Africana contributions to critical theory;
2. situated multidimensional and multiperspectival research and theories aimed at interpreting the origins of trauma and other phenomena extrapolated from the *BFT*;
3. heavily utilized the thoughts, theories, experiences, and texts of diasporan Africans and those of African descent to better understand the significance

and detriment of racism's impacts on as well as the racialization of Black people;

4. sought to offer radical and revolutionary new ways of “*thinking and doing* revolution” rooted in the progressive revolutions past (Rabaka, 2007).

These guidelines helped rediscover an authenticity that has been denied Blacks since their colonization and enslavement. Toward this end, through this study intentionally rediscovers the past in an effort to begin healing the present. Franz Fanon (1986) describes as “becoming henceforth a constellation of values, becomes identified with the Truth [that] plunge[s] into the chasm of the past is the condition and the source of freedom” (p. 28 & 29).

Du Bois' *Black Flame* trilogy begged rediscovery. Du Bois, based the *BFT* on his own extensive data gathering process spanning more than thirty years, created three generations of Black and White composite characters (Du Bois, 1957/2007). The rich tapestry inherent in the trilogy is vital to our understanding of not only schooling, but literature, sociology, philosophy, education more broadly, and ideological concepts and processes of racism. Rabaka (2007) argued that Du Bois writings on race are necessary to current discourses surrounding and including race. The *BFT* is a part of that discourse on race and education as Du Bois critically shifted the biological determination of race to a fluid cultural conception through his own, sometimes, contradictory research and reflection on racism throughout his life. Too often, the academy has relied on Du Bois' early writings to conceptualize race and, in light of the recent emergence of Whiteness studies, Du Bois' oeuvre of scholarship contributes to the ways Whiteness may be interpreted and understood sociologically, culturally, historically, and experientially.

Lastly, Du Bois' *BFT* offers unattended contributions to critical race theory that influence and refresh contemporary discourses.

Employing *Africana critical theory* as the critical theoretical orientation of the study attempted to presuppose the veracity of the experience and analysis of racism in the American context and privilege African and Black philosophy, research, and analysis that organically understands racism dialectically--through the juxtaposition of dominant research paradigms with expertise developed through lived experience (Rabaka, 2007). ACT, more specifically, is defined by centering the often-ignored African contributions to critical theory derived from the critical analyses and philosophical traditions born of the realities of continental and diasporan African customs and experiences. "Which, in other words, is to say that Africana critical theory inherently employs a methodological orientation that highlights and accents Africana theories and philosophies 'born of struggle'" (Harris, 1983 as cited by Rabaka, 2007).

### **Identifying Trauma**

The *Black Flame* trilogy was contextualized among a temporal ordering of Africana philosophies, theories, and empirical research. Du Bois (1957/2007) described the *BFT* as the correction of his study of the slave trade and Reconstruction. His voluminous *Black Reconstruction in America*, originally published in 1935, served as the empirical data upon which Du Bois describes the schooling and education of Black students since Emancipation. Had he the time and money, Du Bois would have continued "this pure historical research" (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 229). The *Black Flame* trilogy counters the widely circulated, often ahistorical, White imperialist, colonialist, and supremacist history (Du Bois, 1957/2007). A messianic tale of the fictional character,

Manuel Mansart, these novels detailed the strivings and thirst of American Blacks for access to schooling and education.

In an effort to provide a fuller snapshot of Blacks' access to schooling, several Africana empirical studies, books, memoirs, experiences, writings, philosophies, and theories situate the *BFT* among the continuum of American Blacks' lived experiences. As mentioned above, the swell of Africana research used in this project was drawn from a wide range of thinkers (Cooper, 1892/1998; Du Bois, 1903/2003; Cooper, 1930/1998; Woodson, 1933/1990; Du Bois, 1935/2007; Du Bois, 1940/2007; Williams, 1973, 1974; Hilliard, III, 1978; Harvey, 1984; Anderson, 1986; Williams, 1987; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Bell, 2004; Cross, 2007; Ladson Billings, 2009), specifically those diasporan Africans and those of African descent, from an alternative epistemology that better understands, through connected knowing, the significance and detriment of racism's impacts on as well as the racialization of Black people (Collins, 1991). Drawing from these scholars (1) adds to the understanding of contemporary society, (2) criticizes society's contradictions and conflicts, and (3) creates egalitarian alternatives and innovation (Rabaka, 2007). These writings further contextualized and extrapolated the trustworthiness of the *Black Flame* trilogy as well as assisted in identifying the antecedents of the myth of Black inferiority, as a variety of tropes and metaphors that circulated since the beginning of American chattel slavery to systemically and individually justify White imperialism and supremacy (Cooper, 1892; Cross, 2007; Harvey, 1984; Hill-Collins, 1990; Hilliard, 1978; Rabaka, 2007; Woodson, 1933).

### **Data Collection**

### **Lenses of Analyses**

Data was collected through close textual analysis of each novel in the *Black Flame* trilogy. Since education does not and cannot exist in a vacuum, historical events and, subsequently, Du Bois reflections of the event are included. I endeavored to include data that told the novel's story. This story is told with "checked" interpretation. "Checked" interpretation denotes the ultimate goal to tell the story of the *Black Flame* trilogy with little analysis or interpretation from the researcher. "Minimal" interpretation would negate my own response to and (re)traumatization of historical events told from a historical point of view. It would also imply that I do not understand that the confluence of my racial affiliation, sex, gender, class, orientation, and other varying social identities explain the researcher's biases. In order to avoid narrow focus on stylistics, or the distinctive style of the literary genre or author, I contextualized the novels among a broad understanding of sociological and philosophical research drawing critical race methodology (Solórzano & Yosso, 2009) to create an empirical data analysis tool that allows a past counterstory to tell a modern counterstory through what Gates (1988) calls "the trope of the Talking Book."

A hermeneutical analysis (Baker, 1984; Bakhtin, 1981; Gadamer, 1975) of the personal and interpersonal sojourn of the novel's messianic figure is taken as it applied to his education as well as his self-development. However, the experience of oppression that transforms the lens through which Du Bois writes transforms the novel to include the thought at inception (Gates, 1988). Gates observed "signifying" as Black artists' appropriation of dominant culture's pattern of oppression. The oppressed observation of the oppressor and the experience of expression are a transformative tool. Matsuda (1995) uses John Coltrane's jazz adaptation of "My Favorite Things" to illustrate the

transformative power of oppression. Signifying is also used in the Black church, Black English, and Black writers' adaptive uses of standard literary forms (Gate, 1988; Matsuda, 1995). Gates (1988) explains,

Literacy, the very literacy of the printed book, stood as the ultimate parameter by which to measure the humanity of authors struggling to define an African self in Western letters. It was to establish a collective black voice through the sublime example of individual text, and thereby to register a black presence in letters, that most clearly motivated black writers, from the Augustan Age to the Harlem Renaissance. Voice and presence, silence and absence, then, have been the resonating terms of four-part homology in our literary tradition for well over two hundred years. (Gates, 1988, p. 131)

To support *The Black Flame*, as the primary source of data, text from each novel was used to highlight the ways racialization, colonization, and globalization, as broad social structures and schema, impacted education as well as the converse. A definition of each structure is identified, followed by close textual analysis of the text, character development, and the effect of Post Traumatic Slave disorder. Incidents from the text were drawn to highlight the social impacts of white supremacy using the tenets of critical race theory as lenses of analysis. Identifying the axioms of critical race theory that were applied was driven by the text. A hermeneutic textual analysis was used to identify portions of the story and language bits that seem to be common across the works Black writers.

Critical race methodology in education scaffolds the use of critical race theory *and* counterstorytelling as a method and mode in education. This study applied a critical race methodology to

- (a) foreground race and racism in all aspects of the research process while challenging separate discourses on race, gender, and class by showing how these three elements intersect and affect the experiences of students of color over time;
- (b) challenge the traditional research paradigms, texts, and theories used to explain the experiences of students of color;
- (c) offer a liberatory or transformative solution to racial, gender, and class subordination;
- (d) focus on the racialized, gender, and classed experiences of students of color, viewing many of these experiences as sources of strength, and
- (e) use the interdisciplinary knowledge base of ethnic studies, women's studies, sociology, history, humanities, and the law to better understand the experiences of students of color. (Solórzano & Yosso, 2009, p. 132)

Solórzano & Yosso (2009) assert that critical race theory should be used to interpret data while critical race methodology is used in the analysis. Using critical race methodology as an interpretive lens attempted to further anchor the use of the counterstorytelling in and from communities of color as a methodology, a tool for textual analysis, and dialectic writing style contributes the analysis of existing classical CRT counterstories.

The variation in writing style, interpretation, and analysis may, at times, oppose the White masculinist epistemological order of the academy (King, 1988; hooks, 1989; Collins, 1991, 2002). Critical race methodology also highlights an Africana

understanding of racism that allows history to speak. The present analysis used the voice and presence of the novels to speak with little interpretive intrusion from the researcher. The text is chronologically and historically situated in experience, understanding, and reflection. The counter-story has been re-authored in a way. Close textual analysis and strict adherence to the historical chronology and story line allows for the trope of the Talk Book which is, in essence, one of the major features of critical race counterstories. This analysis is a multigenerational counterstory across, between, and among generations of Blacks that is not only valid, but also common, appropriate, and necessary.

Counterstorytelling and counter-narratives, as a part of critical race theory and critical race methodology in education, have five basic elements: (1) the intercentricity of race and racism with other forms of subordination; (2) the challenge to dominant ideology; (3) the commitment to social justice; (4) the centrality of experiential knowledge; and (5) a transdisciplinary perspective. The intercentricity of race and racism assumes the endemic nature of race and racism in American society and its intersections with gender, class, immigration status, surname, phenotype, accent, and sexuality (Solórzano & Yosso, 2009). This assumption challenges the normalized contentions of objectivity, meritocracy, color-blindness, race neutrality, and equal opportunity that disguise White supremacist ideological notions of self-interest, power, and privilege in the U.S. (Calmore, 1992; Solórzano, 1997; Solórzano & Yosso, 2009).

Finally, this analysis is transdisciplinary—using the research from various fields to better explicate a theory of domination in and perpetuated by education. The *Black Flame* trilogy is an amalgam of personal stories and/or narratives, other people's stories and/or narratives, and composite stories and/or narratives. The novels draw from Du



Bois' personal experiences, the experiences of others, and data he collected to place composite characters in "social, historical, and political situations to discuss racism, sexism, classism, and other forms of subordination" (Solórzano & Yosso, 2009, 139). The *Black Flame* trilogy offers a clearer explication of the veracity of critical race theory storytelling as a framework to analyze the material reality of racism in the current context.

Close reading of the *BFT* and Africana research was coded for data analysis. Textual analysis determined racialization, colonization, and globalization as the overarching themes found in the novels and were analyzed as data. Data was coded and interpreted using philosophical hermeneutics (Gadamer, 1975, 1977, 1981, 1996; Taylor, 1985, 1995) in so far as it explained and/or conceptualized signifying (Gates, 1988; Baker, 1984; Morrison, 1992). Philosophical hermeneutics positions understanding as interpretation. Understanding is not objective, rule-governed or procedural. Thomas Schwandt (2004) argued, "understanding is participative, conversational, and dialogic" (302). It is only through engaging personal prejudices, beliefs, and biases with the unknown that the interpreter may understand. Meaning is socially and personally negotiated, not discovered. Interpretation is socially mediated and positioned in historicity and social identities embedded in the questions the interpreter asks (Bernstein, 1993).

Paying particular attention to the positioning of the texts and the interpreter, I used hermeneutics only as it would complement *signifying*. Gates (1988) asserts that signifying is the "discrete Black difference" in Africana literature when compared to European dominated literature. Too often, the readers of American literature have been

positioned as White (Morrison, 1992). With this in mind, the *signifying monkey*, as Gates (1988) describes, makes fun of the lion as the king of the jungle. Perpetually, hunting the monkey for sport as well as punishment for the monkey's irreverence, the lion--purveyor of the jungle--is continually thwarted as the monkey continues to escape time and time again. Signifying was both a rhetorical strategy as well as a system of interpretation.

The summary and analysis were means of signifying. Using language bits and privileging chunks of dialogue, plot development, and Du Bois' reflections was a conscious choice. As broader themes began to emerge, Du Bois began to interject more reflection on broad social issues like religion, labor markets, and commentary in the second and third novels. This increased the volume of the fifth and sixth chapters, as those chunks and language bits to increase—to get the flavor of the counterstory through Du Bois own words. I was careful to minimally incorporate analysis into each book summary. The book summaries serve as a broader analysis in the stories that each chapter tells, the storylines that are attended to, and the themes that emerge from plot analysis aimed at uncovering broader social process of domination across social institutions that use education and schooling to dehumanize groups of people. This particular writing style resembles what Gates (1988) labels “the trope of the Talking Book.” It is the counterstory that privilege the trope of the Talking Book. Gates (1988), explaining the basis of the Talking Book, wrote:

Texts written over two centuries ago address what we might think of as common subjects of condition that continue to be strangely resonant, and relevant, as we approach the twenty-first century. Just as there are remarkably few literary traditions whose first century's existence is determined by texts created by slaves,

so too are there few traditions that claim such an apparent unity from a fundamental political condition represented for over two hundred year in such strikingly similar patterns and details.

Has a common experience, or, more accurately, the shared sense of a common experience, been largely responsible for the sharing of this text of blackness? (p.128)

The text chosen from each novel attempted to answer this question. The choices of text included were guideposts; story bits that aided plot development as well as added an extra layer of meaning for the story. Each novel was read with attention to racialization, colonization, and globalization. Each thread remained in the storyline when encountered in other novels. For example, examples of racialization were found in chapter five's exploration of colonization and racialization combined with colonization, as were relevant, were included in the discussion of globalization in chapter 6.

The trope of the Talking Book resembles multigenerational trauma, in that both are passed down through generations, an onslaught of trauma is heaped upon existing trauma and the literature of slaves experiencing one of the vilest atrocities known to humankind written centuries ago having "such strikingly similar patterns and details" that always seem to resonate with the contemporary context. Gates (1988) continues:

Nevertheless, shared experience of black people vis-à-vis white racism is not sufficient evidence upon which to argue that black writers have shared patterns of representation of their common subject for two centuries—unless one wishes to argue for a genetic theory of literature, which the biological sciences do not support. Rather, shared modes of figuration result only when writers read each

other's texts and seize a process grounding and has served to create curious formal lines of continuity between the texts that together comprise the shared text of blackness. (p. 128-129)

Signifying is the assertion of the reversal of subversion of meaning. It is *double-speak*, rhetorical in nature as it harbors two meanings--one for the assumed White reader and another hidden meaning for those who understand the workings of White supremacist ideologies at play in the dominant literary tropes. Toward this end, the *Black Flame* was coded for in-group and out-group tropes as well as the absence of tropes that did not fully address other marginalized identities within the novels (read: women and children).

### **Data Analysis**

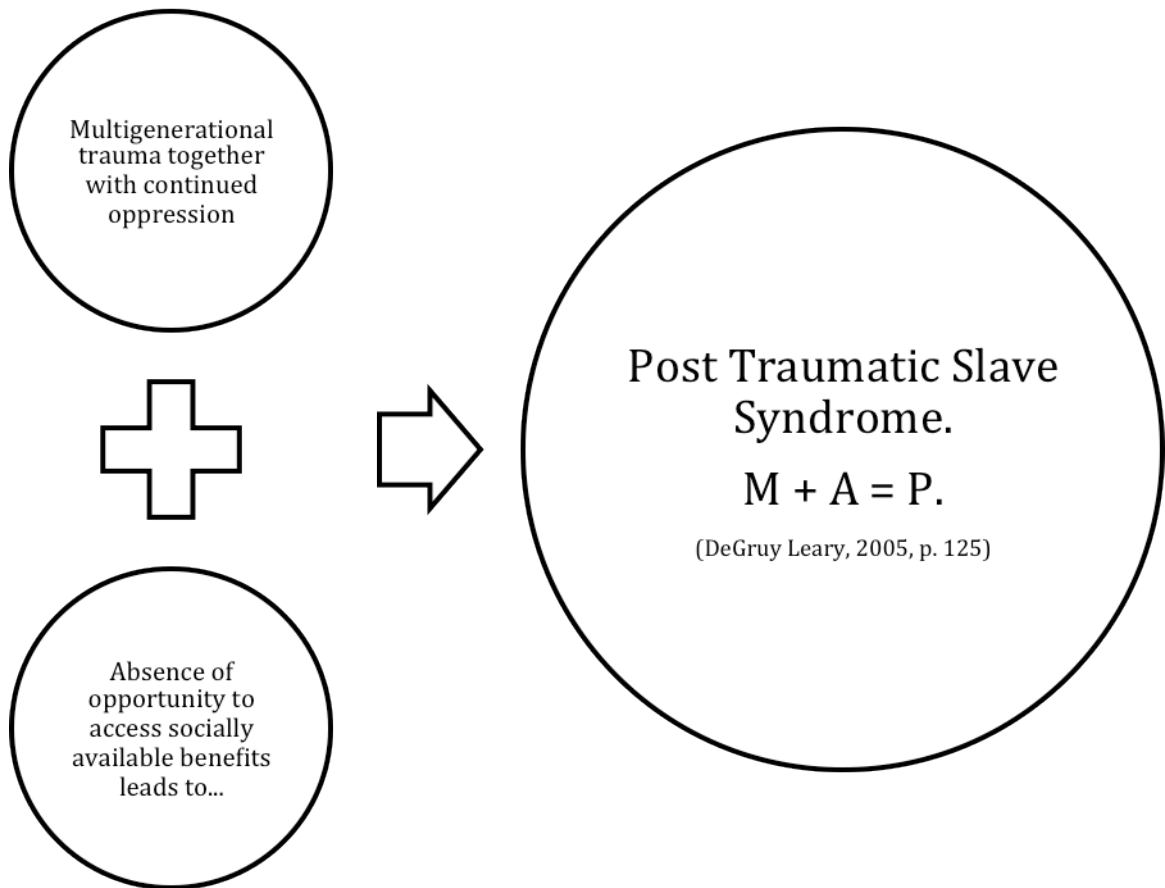
The data collected from the *BFT* were analyzed using the psychic manifestations of Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome (DeGruy Leary, 2005), identified as: vacant esteem, ever-present anger, and racist socialization; the material manifestations as identified by four of the five tenets of critical race theory: the permanence of racism (Bell, 1992, 1995; Lawrence, 1995), Whiteness as a property right (Harris, 1995), interest convergence (Bell, 1980, 2007), and a critique of liberalism (Crenshaw, 1988; Guinier & Torres, 2002). DeCuir and Dixson (2004) assert that educational researchers, focusing primarily on counter-storytelling and the permanence of racism, have yet to utilize all tenets of CRT in academic research. Investigating *The Black Flame* trilogy, as a *classical* CRT (Rabaka, 2007) counternarrative, serves as an example of the ways researchers may employ all facets of CRT in countering the dominant ideology in and around the education of Black students over time.

Du Bois penned an epic tale to counter the widely circulated colonial white supremacist history presupposed as authentic history, or historicity. As Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) write, an “attempt to theorize and use [critical race theory] as an analytic tool for understanding school inequity” (p. 51), Du Bois’ novels serve as an analytic tool to better understand the *origins* of school inequity for Black students. These origins are crucial to education, researchers and practitioners alike, in assessing the traumatic myth of racial inferiority imposed upon Black students since Blacks’ emancipation.

### **Analyzing the Origins of Trauma**

As critical race theory offers an alternative explanation of the compounded material impacts of racial trauma over time, Joy DeGruy Leary’s (2005) PTSS highlights just how the psychic and mental trauma of racism has manifested across multiple generations of Black students. Though no one reading this study has ever been enslaved, “246 years of protracted slavery guaranteed the prosperity and privilege of the South’s White progeny while correspondingly relegating its Black progeny to a legacy of debt and suffering” (DeGruy Leary, 2005). The promulgated history often completely shrouds this reality. DeGruy Leary (2005) defines Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome as:  $M + A = P$  (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome



Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome manifests these multigenerational traumas as ever-present anger, racist socialization, and vacant esteem. These manifestations are labeled as the psychic traumas, harming both soul *and* mind, to the characters in the novels as well as Blacks as a large cultural subgroup. Though schools are not the only social institutions designed to affect Black students, PTSS works in tandem with CRT, as CRT establishes the material detriment and trauma imposed upon Blacks.

Ever-present anger manifests as the “wellspring of anger that lies just below the surface of many African Americans, and it doesn’t take much for it to emerge and be expressed” (Leary, 2005, p. 134). Racist socialization, similar to internalized oppression,

manifests in Blacks who have “adopted White standards, including those of beauty and material success as well as violence and brutality” (Leary, 2005, p. 139). Vacant esteem is the state of believing oneself to have or no worth, exacerbated by the group and societal pronouncement of inferiority. Vacant esteem is the net result of three spheres of influence--society, our community, and our family (Leary, 2005). These psychic traumas currently manifest in schools and classrooms across the country where Black students internalize of the myth of Black inferiority as well as outward displays of multigenerational trauma. The *BFT* was analyzed to determine where some of the traumatic origins of racialization, colonization, and globalization trauma might be identified and dismantled in contemporary education.

Du Bois (1957/2007) underscores the need for such novels, for “in the great tragedy of Negro slavery in the United States and its aftermath, much of documented history is lacking because of the deep feeling involved and the fierce desire of men to defend their fathers and themselves” (p. 229). This counterstory exposed the early intentions and actions behind the education of Blacks and clarified how schools precipitated and continue to shore up racism’s material harms (racism’s permanence, Whiteness as property, how White imperialism benefits Blacks only in its own interest, and liberalism as an impediment to social justice) as well as the traumatic manifestations (ever-present anger, racist socialization, and vacant esteem) that deny Blacks’ humanity and full social participation.

Du Bois triangulated his data for the *Black Flame* trilogy. Du Bois collected data for *BFT* from field notes, primary and secondary sources, the reports of others, and, of

course, creative imagination. Du Bois (1957/2007) explained his data collection and analysis and it bears acknowledgement in full:

I have personally lived through the history of the American Negro from 1876 to 1956. Yet wide as my experience has been, by travel, seeing, hearing and knowing, I of course actually knew but an infinitesimal fraction of all that happened. The gaps in knowledge I can in part supply by the memory of others, but reading published and unpublished matter. Yet with all this I am far from being able to set down an accurate historical account of those fatal eighty years.

Therefore I have assayed first to gather such verifiable facts as I can. This body of knowledge I have compared with the reports of others. But even with all of this, much, indeed most, is missing: just what men thought, the actual words they used, the feelings and motives which impelled them--those I do not know and most of them none will ever know. These facts are gone forever. But it is possible for the creative artist to imagine something of such unknown truth. If he is lucky or inspired, he may write a story which may set down a fair version of the truth of an era, or a group of facts about human history. (p. 230)

Given the breadth of Du Bois' data collection and analysis for *Black Reconstruction in America*, the empirical research that the *BFT* rests upon, further triangulation of the data through multiple sources and methods serves as an alternative to validation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2004). In fact, as Denzin & Lincoln (2004) assert, "The combination multiple methodological practices, empirical materials, perspectives, and observers in a single study is best understood, then, as a strategy that adds rigor, breadth, complexity, richness, and depth to any inquiry" (p. 8).



### **Critical Race Theory Analysis of *The Black Flame***

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) discuss school inequity based on similar CRT propositions:

1. Race continues to be a significant factor in determining inequity in the United States.
2. U.S. society is based on property rights.
3. The intersection of race and property created an analytic tool through which we can understand social (and, consequently, school) inequity. (p. 48)

This becomes especially important when understanding school inequity as an issue of property and Whiteness as property. As Cheryl Harris (1995) clarifies,

The state's official recognition both of a racial identity that subordinated Blacks and of privileged rights in property based on race, elevated Whiteness from a passive attribute to an object of law and a resource deployable at the social, political, and institutional level to maintain control. Thus, a White person "used and enjoyed" Whiteness whenever she took advantage of the privileges accorded White people simply by virtue of their Whiteness—when she exercised any number of rights reserved for the holders of Whiteness. Whiteness as the embodiment of White privilege transcended mere belief or preference; it became usable property, the subject of the law's regard and protection. In this respect, Whiteness, as an active property, has been used and enjoyed. (p. 282)

Employing Whiteness has been sanctioned as a right and upheld by law. Understanding Whiteness as legally protected property sheds light on the ways in which generations of

Black students have been disenfranchised from education and schooling without any form of redress. Little attention has been paid to White' legal and social use and enjoyment of unexamined privilege as resources that have manifested as technologically advanced equipment, well-built and maintained schools, choice teaching talent, higher academic and standardized test scores, and, ultimately, greater material and social fulfillment. There is *no way* that a discussion of U.S. education can ensue without understanding the intersections of Whiteness, property rights, and Whiteness as property that has served to disadvantage Black student achievement and successful life outcomes.

Du Bois observed social responses to world events; schooling, then, serves as a vehicle for a group of disparaged people to make sense of the vile, cruel society insistent on Blacks' inhumanity. The *Black Flame* trilogy completed one of Du Bois' greatest research projects—Black Reconstruction in America. He established the *Black Flame* as the correction of the study of the slave trade and of Reconstruction (Du Bois, 1957/2007). From the research on Black Reconstruction Du Bois compiled, the *Black Flame* simultaneously recorded and reflected upon American social gains and setbacks after Reconstruction through 1956. Du Bois highlighted the ways in which Black people formed relationships with education and schooling since Emancipation, as education acted over, on, and through them. While it is not the sole purpose of counterstorytelling to offer relief to and for the oppressor, the oppressed bear the responsibility of naming and describing the ways power and domination functions in and over their lives. The novels better explain interest convergence as well as schooling's contribution to racism's social and cultural permanence and critiquing a liberalist approach toward ending racism.

### **Limitations**

One limitation of this study was a primary focus on the *BFT* to analyze trauma in

schooling. Despite contending that the novels are a CRT counterstory, they labeled as fiction and have been critiqued and described for decades as such. Existing criticism of the novels directly addresses the literary tropes and contributions of the novels. That criticism was offered at a very tumultuous time in U. S. history just following the Supreme Court's landmark *Brown v. The Topeka Board of Education* decision. Further, Du Bois was "blacklisted" for his socialist leanings. Not only was his personal life affected, so was his career. This anti-communist sentiment is less likely to be directly linked to the public's reception, or lack thereof, at the time the *BFT* was published. Even now, contemporary criticism omits the anti-communist wave that overtook the country at the time of publishing (Byerman, 1994).

### **Conclusion**

The *Black Flame* trilogy offers the field of education, educators, and researchers the opportunity to reflect on the ways in which, as an institution, it has harmed Black students. More importantly, upon realizing this harm, the novels also highlighted the beginnings of some of the traumas that Black students have been and continue to be exposed to over time. These particular harms are not only deleterious, but they are traumatic and have the grave potential for the ways in which Black students experience the schooling institution, and, more broadly, opportunities for success.

Ultimately, a fairly large number of conclusions, some surmising, and varied comparisons will be made using the *Black Flame* trilogy. The *BFT* is but one source of historical representation and, although it reports a research method, these novels are historical fiction and authored by a man of color. Like other qualitative studies, more specifically those employing critical epistemologies of people of color, this study, at

times, falls outside of a White masculinist epistemology that governs the academy and through which knowledge claims are validated. Alternative epistemologies decenter the dominant epistemology and, in this instance, have the potential to make this study and other studies using alternative ways of knowing appear far-fetched or unbelievable (Collins, 1989/2002; Delgado, 1989). As a result, alternative epistemologies may encounter issues with validity and trustworthiness as well as reliability, and objectivity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2004; Gergen & Gergen, 2004).

Finally, as this study analyzed novels written by a once discredited scholar of color, the field may still take issue with trustworthiness of the design, collection, and/or analysis. Over this, I have no control. The words, thoughts, experiences, and achievements of Blacks in the U.S. have too often been purposely disregarded. I can only hope that this study will add to the ever-growing chorus of voices challenging the dominant discourse so that we may end racial traumatization and envision redress.

## Chapter 4: Understanding *The Ordeal*

### “At Home, 31 Grace Court, Brooklyn”

This section shares the same title as the tenth chapter in Shirley Graham Du Bois’ (1971) memoir of her husband, W.E.B. Du Bois. Their Brooklyn Heights home overlooked lower Manhattan and “out past the Statue of Liberty to the sea” (Du Bois, 1971, p. 151). Once owned by playwright Arthur Miller, the Du Boises moved into the home the summer of 1951—the same year W.E.B. is acquitted of failing to register as an agent of a foreign principal, along with the other members of the Peace Information Center (Du Bois, 1968). This is also the home where, in the spring of 1952 after a trip to the Virgin Islands, Du Bois penned the *Black Flame* trilogy.

Du Bois (1971) described the *Black Flame* trilogy as “a distinctive three volume work, a fictional trilogy, based on the experiences of a black family from the days immediately after the Civil War to the present day” (p. 195). While her husband wrote, Du Bois hired gardener with Manuel Giovanni, an Italian immigrant gardener who died of leukemia in the winter of 1955. It is probably of little coincidence that Du Bois named the main character of the *Black Flame* Manuel as a tribute to the “artist who took pleasure in creating beauty” (p. 195). Manuel was so close to the Du Bois family, David Graham, Shirley Graham Du Bois’ son, repeatedly donated blood in an effort to save his life. The spring of 1952, though, Du Bois and her husband debated planting a tree in the back corner of the yard. Mrs. Du Bois objected strongly to planting the tree, suggesting, instead a flower bush. Du Bois, directly addressing his mortality, suggested a tree, “never you mind that I’ll not live to sit under its shade. Those who come after me will enjoy it, and I’ll have pleasure of seeing it grow” (Du Bois, 1968/1997, p. 196).

Planting the tree in the yard at 31 Grace Court is symbolic of the lifetime research on race Du Bois crafted in the *Black Flame* trilogy. Though he does not live to see the fruition of his predictions on education and the ramifications of *Brown v. The Board of Education*, his depiction of Black education in the *BFT* leaves a clear picture of how the field and social institution of education has participated in the dehumanization, vis-à-vis racialization, of Black students since Blacks were forced to relinquish school leadership shortly after Emancipation. Though not necessarily as enjoyable as the cool shade from a mature tree, we may understand how the roots of the educational system have contributed to the subjugation of many and false notions of privilege for some.

In 1903, W. E. B. Du Bois (1903/2003) observed the color line as the singular problem of the twentieth century. After his acquittal in 1951, he declared his own widening world as “a world with no color line” (Du Bois, 1968/1997, p. 395). Nearing the end of his life, in his last autobiography, Du Bois (1968/1997) admitted that racial preferment was more possible than ever. In 1960 he predicted,

If and when [Black children] are admitted to [public] schools certain things will inevitably follow. Negro teachers will become rarer and in many cases will disappear. Negro children will be instructed in the public schools and taught under unpleasant if not discouraging circumstances. Even more largely than today they will fall out of school, cease to enter high school, and fewer and fewer will go to college. (Du Bois, 1960/2001, p. 195)

He foretold of the disappearance of historically Black colleges and universities; teaching Black history would be curtailed if taught at all in some cases. Du Bois (1960/2001) anticipated Black students forgetting their ancestry, rather remembering their White

and/or Indian forbearers. The forgone predictions are conclusive, firmly rooted in Du Bois lifetime research and omitted from many of the current conversations regarding Black student achievement and the achievement gap. Further, the *Black Flame* trilogy establishes racism as a process of racialization that is comprised of various social systems, of which education is but one part working together to dehumanize and oppress Black people. Moreover, *The Ordeal of Mansart* illustrates the reification of education as a social system that undergirds the systemic and systematic racialization of Blacks as an ongoing cultural process rather than a finite historical event.

*The Ordeal of Mansart* details the life of protagonist Manuel Mansart. For the purposes of this chapter, I divide and describe the novel in three parts: the world Manuel inherits at birth, the world he encounters as he matures, and how he, as an adult, impacts the ever-changing world around him. This chapter seeks to understand how racialization, as a dynamic relational process of dehumanization, affected Blacks transition from enslaved chattel to free persons. More specifically, the chapter analyzes whether education, as a broad superstructure<sup>1</sup>, or the sum of the tasks and roles that broadly composes education as a set of cultural practices and beliefs for societal consumption similar to the political, economical, and legal ideological institutions, has mitigated or exacerbated the material and psychic detriment of the fresh vestiges at slavery's end through the emergence of Jim Crow and beyond.

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<sup>1</sup> Though a Marxist Theory analysis is necessary on the novels, its mention here is to simply inform the reading of the text as but a possible thought process that Du Bois may have considered. I am not imposing Marxist Theory reading of the text. I use *superstructure* here in the way that Raymond Williams (1991) does, to imply a cultural

## **The World Inherited**

Tom Mansart was determined to gain the support of the White planters in South Carolina. Gaining the support of the White owning class would ensure fair pay and equitable working conditions for Black laborers. Chosen by his constituents and the Black labor union he heads, Tom endeavored to convince Colonel John Breckinridge that Black laborers wanted nothing more from the White aristocracy than to protect their right to a fair wage without violent harm or murder. This was Tom Mansart's motivation for approaching Colonel Breckinridge one October day in 1876.

Tom Mansart began his life as a slave in Virginia. He thought himself "destined apparently to grow into a prime field-hand easily worth \$1500 at sale. He was good-tempered, hard-working, and dreamed of no destiny beyond possibly becoming an overseer" (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 15). It wasn't until he killed a White Southerner fighting on behalf of the Union Army that Tom began to regard his own freedom.

One year after leaving the Army, Tom settled in South Carolina. He built his own cabin and labored alone to raise cotton, corn, and other victuals. It wasn't long before the government evicted Tom from his land to return it to its former White owner. Though he tried renting his farm from the White owner, Tom soon found that sharecropping was slavery repackaged. Tom relinquished his farm, wandering to Charleston to work on the docks as a stevedore.

Tom earned a decent living working the dock and working diligently in the Black Stevedore's Union. It was through the union that Tom caught the eye of a woman simply named Aunt Betsy. Du Bois (1957/2007) described Aunt Betsy as an all-knowing "institution, a black sibyl" (p. 16). She was the powerful bridge of things known and



unknown, African and American, things seen and unseen. “She was nurse and midwife; fortune teller and prophet; confessor and scourge” (p. 17). Aunt Betsy chose Tom, guiding and advising his union and eventual political career. In 1871, Tom attended the Colored National Labor Union in Columbia. So inspired by the meeting, he worked to assume the presidency of his labor union. By 1874, Mansart ran for the legislature and won. With re-election looming in 1876, Tom appealed to the Black congressional leadership. Under the advisement of Aunt Betsy, Tom advocated to organize Black labor and join forces with the White planters, the “old quality” (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 23). The Black congressmen agreed and sent Mansart to persuade Colonel Breckinridge to support the Black labor movement.

Mansart arrived at the Breckinridge home before Scroggs, a poor White laborer who sought the Colonel’s commitment to ensuring systemic White supremacy. Debating whether to enter the side door, as customary for Black “visitors” and slaves, or approach the colonel on the front porch, Tom approached the porch. Before he was able to state the purpose of the call, Colonel Breckinridge sent Tom away. The colonel rebuked Tom for two reasons. First, he refused to receive a Black man through the front door although Tom was a free man and a member of the South Carolina legislature. Second, Breckinridge was concerned with the impression Tom’s unexpected arrival might have on his meeting with Scroggs, a poor White laborer representing other poor White laborers. Colonel Breckinridge sent Tom immediately from the front porch relegating him to the side entrance and refused to acknowledge the purpose of Mansart’s visit.

The colonel expected Scroggs and, though he does not care for Scroggs much more than Mansart, Breckinridge was more prone to align with poor Whites with the

voting privileges to support his bid for governor. Scroggs came to ensure that “the new state in making would treat the white worker right and that he, Colonel Breckinridge, would vouch for this” (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 5). Scroggs agreed to exchange the votes of his constituency to “help crush and kill the ‘niggers’” (p. 13) for the best jobs, good wages, schools, land, and “chances to be as big men as we can” (p. 13). Breckinridge gave his word as a gentleman to,

“see to it that white men in this state get employment according to ability at decent wages; that Negro workers are not preferred before them; that we who are the old aristocracy will strive to open every path of progress to all the white people of South Carolina; and that we look forward with confidence to the day when this state will be an entirely white and prosperous community. Meantime we will take from the Negro the vote he is not fit to use and put him in his place as laborer and servant pursuing such skills as he may have. We will protect him in his humble station and assure him a decent life and justice, so long as his is content with the sphere for which God created him” (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 13 – 14).

While Colonel Breckinridge pledged his support to Scroggs in the study, Mrs. Breckinridge entertained Tom Mansart on the side porch. Tom disarmed Mrs. Breckinridge, asking first if she remembered Aunt Betsy. Immediately, Mrs. Breckinridge lapsed into fond remembrances of Aunt Betsy. Fearing that Aunt Betsy died in the war, Mrs. Breckinridge saw Tom’s call as a message from the old slave woman. She listened to Tom plead for equal wages and access to economic opportunity as well as stemming the rampant murder and mob violence Whites continue to exact upon

Blacks throughout the city and state. Mrs. Breckinridge found Tom earnest and honest. Though she deeply believed that Blacks were better served under the “benevolent” guidance of Southern gentlemen, she *promised* Tom that if he could “induce the Negroes to work wholeheartedly along with us we will reform this section and lead it to a new civilization” (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 10). She, of course, planned to discuss this with the colonel. Tom was as adamant as he could be, careful not to offend Mrs. Breckinridge’s sensibilities as a southern White lady, about speaking with Colonel Breckinridge directly. Mrs. Breckinridge approached the colonel as Scroggs is leaving the plantation home.

Mrs. Breckinridge asked the colonel to simply speak to Tom, relaying that “he really is interesting” (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 25). The colonel has been pushed too far this day and is prepared to give Mansart a piece of his mind. Before he can say anything to him, Tom shared with Breckinridge that Blacks were in need of work and decent wages. They desired victuals over votes, and work more than elected offices. He pressed:

“Colonel, we’se in trouble and know it. We’se having a last rally tomorrow night in Emmanuel Church. It will be a closed union meeting but it will represent 50,000 votes in city and state. Will you come and tell us plain just what you stand for and what you think we should do? We ain’t promising to do everything you say. But we is promising to listen and trust the word of a Breckinridge” (p. 25).

Caught off guard by Mansart’s speech, the colonel promised to attend the meeting “on the word of a gentleman” (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 26).

Though conflicted about lying, John Breckinridge broke his promise to Tom Mansart. Breckinridge determined the morning of the stevedore's union meeting that he would not attend. As he discussed the situation with other White property owners at their elite dinner club, they determined Breckinridge should go to the meeting and promise whatever it took to win Black labor for the economic growth of the South. Breckinridge was still in deep discussion with other White owning class when he received word that "the Negroes [...] seized [his] wife and ridden out toward the Isles" (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 36).

Mrs. Breckinridge showed up to the union meeting thinking that she would meet her husband there. Colonel Breckinridge never showed. At the height of segregation, Mrs. Breckinridge found herself in the Black quarter after dark. Her presence placed the entire community in jeopardy of severe mob violence and retaliation for her mere presence—despite her choice to attend the meeting uninvited. To avoid unnecessary violence and mayhem, Mansart endeavored to take her safely to her husband.

Mrs. Breckinridge challenged Mansart to approach the mob that was gathering to kill, rape, and pillage on behalf of her virtue and honor. Knowing that he was in great danger, Tom concocted a plan to get Mrs. Breckinridge to the colonel. Tom thought that as soon as he united her with her husband, Mrs. Breckinridge would tell her husband of Tom's deed and let him go. However, as her husband and the masked mob neared, Mrs. Breckinridge called to her husband and promptly fainted—unable to relay to her husband how Mansart acted to keep her safe from harm. Her husband lifted her slack body and rode home as the mob followed Tom Mansart home. As his father was being murdered

outside the front door in a hail of gunfire, Manuel Mansart was born—baptized in the blood of his father who wanted nothing more than economic and social equality.

### **The World Encountered**

Despite his tumultuous beginnings, Manuel was a precocious child. His mother and grandmother, Aunt Betsy, were adamant he received a quality education. Quality education for them meant moving to Georgia from Charleston, South Carolina. The chance came when the family Manuel's mother worked for, moved to Augusta then Athens, Georgia. After toiling for Dr. Sophocles Thrasymachus Baldwin for more than ten years, Aunt Betsy, Manuel and his mother set off for Atlanta. Her determination for Manuel's education found the young boy enrolled in Mitchell Street School near Atlanta University.

At twelve, Aunt Betsy, Manuel's grandmother died. Two years later, his mother died. Manuel was unable to financially maintain the home that, appraised at ten times its value, his mother scrimped and saved to maintain as long as she was alive. So, he moved into the school's dormitory and "at the age of 14 Manuel entered the 'University,' as the High School and embryonic college of Negro school was called" (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 84). Here, Manuel encountered a new type of White folk—male and female Northern teachers.

They did not have the haughty and overbearing manners which he had always associated with 'quality white folks; not on the other hand the slovenliness, cruelty and dirt which he associated with 'poor whites'...He began to make a new category of whites. This made the racial problem less a matter of color and more a question of sort. (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 84)

Manuel excelled at his studies in effort to prove his intellectual prowess over Whites. In his course, he and his peers conversed freely about their dislike and distrust of Whites. Manuel received an unparalleled education at Atlanta University. Manuel endeavored to teach despite his grandmother's desire for him to preach and his mother's aspiration for him to become a lawyer. In a chance meeting with Dr. Baldwin, his mother's former employer/master, on Atlanta University's campus, Manuel told old Dr. Baldwin of his determination to teach because he wished to learn.

Upon graduation, Manuel married Susan Sanders and took a teaching position in Jerusalem, Georgia. In addition to the socially inequitable cesspool Jerusalem was, Manuel lacked the supplies he needed to in order to accomplish the type of teaching he wished to do. There were no desks, no maps, a chalkboard, and few textbooks. His students were often illiterate, untrained, and did not attend school regularly. Caught between a rock and a hard place, the White superintendent could not appropriate adequate funds to the Negro school unless, without Black voters who were disenfranchised and unable to vote under the threat of death, he sought to lose his superintendency come the next election.

In Jerusalem, Manuel was paid a pittance and served four masters: Black parents, his students, the White town, and the White school board and superintendent. Whites in Jerusalem begrudged the Black school—they saw no need to educate Black students. According to Whites in town, the dollars given to the Negro school could be used to further finance education for Whites.

Upon his arrival, Mansart had no choice but to leave his bride at the train depot to request an advance on his salary to secure housing. Seeking the salary advance, Manuel

went to the superintendent's home. Mansart stood and waited hours for the superintendent to acknowledge his presence. While waiting, Mansart observed White visitors complain of poverty, slow repair to the White high school building, and one woman's ire at the delay in finding her daughter a job. Passing Manuel on her departure, she vehemently spewed that the "'Niggers' seem to be getting most of the school funds anyway" (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 141). Though obviously untrue, Whites in Jerusalem held deep-seated racial antipathies toward Black education that showed up in Manuel's classroom on fall day in 1898.

Abe Scroggs, born and bred in Jerusalem, Georgia, held profound and passionate hatred for Blacks. His education ended at 14. He preferred to work to help support his poor family. He joined the Ku Klux Klan. His association with Klan provided entertainment as well as a great support to his family as he robbed and pillaged Black homes. In his first adventure, he hunted a Black man who was sleeping with a willing White woman. Caught in the act, the White woman alleged rape. Scroggs was of the first Klansmen to find the Black man. He split his head with an axe. Plagued with extreme guilt, Scroggs eventually overcomes his inhumanity "persuading himself that he was doing God's appointed work in helping restrain or exterminate black criminals" (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 150). Scroggs justified his behavior choosing to believe that Blacks were not human. This becomes evident when he descends on Manuel's classroom.

Scroggs, in a drunken rage, burst into Manuel's classroom to confront the schoolteacher. In a recent social studies lesson, Manuel taught his students that Black soldiers saved Theodore Roosevelt and his troops at the Battle of El Caney during the Spanish-American War. Scroggs took issue with Manuel's instruction and told a fear-

stricken Manuel and his mute students, “No ‘niggers’ ever rescued Roosevelt there, and you damn well better not say so. Do you hear” (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 153)? Mansart considered his options: he could hit Scroggs to the detriment of his community, his family, and his life; or, he could remain silent. In the midst of the standoff, the White superintendent of schools entered the schoolroom. Ignoring the tension, the superintendent welcomed Scroggs back from the Spanish-American War. Scroggs shook the superintendent’s hand and drunkenly staggered from the school. Upon dismissing his students, the superintendent informs Mansart that he is being released to a position in Atlanta.

He paused; then waited for no answer but turning, left quickly. He fumbled at his tobacco pouch, but his hands trembled and he could not light a match. He glimpsed Mansart as he turned. Mansart was standing very still and the tears were streaming down his cheeks. (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 154)

As for Scroggs, the schoolchildren chased him throwing stones until blood poured from his head.

### **The World Impacted**

Mansart fathered two children, Douglas in 1899 and Revels in 1901. Mansart actively contributed to his community for the longevity of his progeny. Mansart listened carefully to Booker T. Washington’s “Atlanta Compromise” with which both North and South agreed. Apparently, Washington held President Theodore Roosevelt’s ear. Southern Blacks were disenfranchised of the vote through extremist violence. Roosevelt did not want to affront White Southerners with policy that enfranchised Blacks; Washington did not intend for Blacks to disenfranchise themselves completely, preferring



other social and cultural acknowledgements prior to the attaining the vote (Du Bois, 1957/2007). Bill Tillman, Washington's bitterest White antagonist, advocated for the total disenfranchisement of Blacks forever. Thomas Dixon's play "The Klansman" gave rise to Griffith's "The Birth of a Nation." Both gained great popularity in the North and South, socially reifying Black's supposed inferiority and criminality. White supremacist extremists used such propaganda as the justification to lynch men, women, and children utilizing some of the most sadistic and grotesque forms of torture known to mankind.

Manuel Mansart planned to return to Atlanta to begin graduate work in history and social science, preparing for a promotion. He met James Burghardt, a Black professor at Atlanta University, who explained how the color caste solidified in the South. Burghardt, seemingly a loose character sketch of Du Bois himself using his mother's maiden name which comprised part of his name, was a born, bred, and educated Northerner who earned a Ph.D. in history from Yale. Du Bois' life trajectory is very similar to the fictional Burghardt, only Harvard awarded Du Bois the Ph.D.

Manuel met and took an instant liking to Professor Burghardt. Burghardt shared with Mansart that he met Booker Washington after the turn of the century. Burghardt said that Washington had to redeploy the ways Tuskegee was funded to maintain the school and uplift the Black students the school educated. But, Tuskegee philanthropists and benefactors sought to fund programs that continued to teach outmoded and outdated skills that new technologies continued to outpace and overshadow. Of his meeting with Washington, Burghardt recalled that Washington said:

"Nothing. Literally nothing. I talked my head off: about my plans and methods.

About my ideals [...] He just let me talk until I realized that he had made me no real

or definite offer. I saw that he did not trust me, that he was probing to learn just what my 'game' was. I had no game. But now I know what his white adviser's game is. They want to place me in a position where they can guide and curb my thought. Well, I don't like it. I am going to refuse his offer [of employment] at Tuskegee, which he never made definite. I am going to publish this year a criticism of Washington and his philosophy." (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 169)

When asked if Burghardt planned to attack Washington, he responded, "No, I'll advise him and show him where he is wrong" (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 169).

Du Bois mentioned the 1905 "Niagara Movement" as a response to the ever-hardening color caste. Disaster struck in September 1906. Just prior to the Atlanta riot, Manuel was promoted and made a good principal. Though his Atlanta principal's salary was nearly twice his Jerusalem teacher's salary, Mansart's family expenses tripled with the expense of another child in 1903.

As far as Georgia was concerned, "[t]he State was aroused as never before. Race bitterness seethed, and white labor took the bit into its teeth. It demanded economic disenfranchisement of the Negro to follow political. The Negro must be kept from buying land, his education must be curtailed, his occupations limited" (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 175). Newspapers were full of accounts of trumped up assaults of rape and murder; Black schools were denounced. This terrified Mansart. On September 22, 1906, four "rapes" were published as extra newspaper headlines. Then came the mob.

Atlanta saw three times as many arrests than cities three times its size in 1905. Though Blacks were less than forty-nine percent of the cities population, most of the prisoners were Black. Blacks were disenfranchised; white labor was drunk with liquor,

hatred, and privilege. That Saturday afternoon, the mob “chased black boys and beat old black men. Some they shot dead” (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 176). The mob avoided Darktown, “where crime and degradation festered among hardworking laborers, churches and saloons” (p. 177). In Darktown, Black folks had assembled their own mob, yelling, ““Come on down, Crackers, we’re waiting for you”” (p. 177). But the mob rested Sunday, content to beseech favor and forgiveness for their wrongdoings the day before.

Monday, however, was a different story. Sidestepping Darktown and its daring Black mob, the drunken whites moved south of Atlanta, just past the city limits. Four days the police searched for weapons and guns, allowing the White mob to loot, kill, and steal. “Here was a Negro college [...]; here were well-to-do colored homes of teachers, craftsmen and shopkeepers. Here were the Negroes who trusted white folk and followed Booker Washington” (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 177). The Saturday prior to the riot, Atlanta maintained its credit, able to borrow on Wall Street. By Monday, however, a captain of industry lamented, “we couldn’t borrow fifty cents” (p. 177). After the damage was surveyed, one hundred people were dead or wounded, most Black.

...[H]undreds had been scattered, without work; and widows and orphans were homeless, helpless and alone. And property—not of the white rich but the hard savings of the black poor—had been stolen or destroyed. But not a single known criminal nor vagrant, white or black, had been found or arrested. (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 177)

As for witnesses, scared seven-year-old Douglass Mansart—Manuel’s first-born son—was walking his five-year-old brother home from town. Manuel’s birthday was the annual reminder of the trauma his mother and grandmother experienced and passed to

him. This autumn day brought a similar kind of trauma for Manuel's children. With little opportunity to heal the wounds of his birth, Manuel had to place his own fear and sorrow aside to protect his family—to ensure the mental and emotional stability of his children in world that refused them any safety or security.

Days after the riot, interracial meetings of important city officials took place throughout the city of Atlanta. Gestures of goodwill and remedies for the race problem abounded. John Pierce, III, among the White elite of Atlanta's business and industry, was being primed to assume his social position among the white owning class in Atlanta through inheritance. Young Pierce identified the three-pronged problem surfacing in Atlanta that had manifested as the 1906 riot: disenfranchisement of Black voters, segregated churches, and the devaluation of Black labor. Leaving a meeting, Pierce encountered Manuel Mansart. Pierce told Mansart of the three issues he saw confronting Atlanta. Manuel said little and simply invited Pierce to his school.

Mansart simply showed Pierce the school he ran. Pierce found four hundred desks for one thousand pupils. The children were divided into morning and afternoon shifts with no additional pay for teachers and substandard equipment. As principal, Mansart received \$1000 per year in salary while the principal of the White school received \$1500 without a double session. Manuel entreated Pierce, "You must add Education to your demands" (p. 186). An astounded Pierce committed to add education to the underlying cause of racial friction in Atlanta during the general committee meeting the following morning. Before leaving, Pierce asked Manuel about segregated Jim Crow street cars, to which Manuel replied, smiling, "That can wait."

Pierce brought up his four contentions before the general assembly. He was quickly outmaneuvered and silenced. Committees chairs designated to address the areas Pierce identified rush off without time for conversation. At the Board of Education, young white Pierce found the Superintendent of Schools laughing at him while stating, “I haven’t the money to make the Negro schools equal to the white. And if I had it and used it for this purpose, I’d lose my job as soon as the Board of Education met” (p. 188). Young Pierce engaged his father in conversation only to have his father tell him that he wasn’t cut out for business. For his advocacy, young John Pierce was sent away to travel the world. Meanwhile, few, if any, changes found Mansart or his school as the result of John Pierce, III’s actions. In fact, Manuel was more troubled.

Manuel was hard pressed to support his family. His wife began to show the effects of poverty in addition to caring for three children and making a home. The conversations Manuel had with Susan were centered on the money that they did not have. Racialization became more insidious as he considered his children.

It was one thing to ward off insult and difficulty from yourself; you could ignore it, laugh it off, or forget it. But you couldn’t have your children slapped; you couldn’t see them disappointed and their dreams turned upside down. It was impossible to sit by and let them suffer, and it was terrible to anticipate the kind of suffering and discrimination that was bound to come upon them later. Manuel found himself almost beside himself at times, thinking of little incidents that had happened and anticipating what might happen. (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 199)

Manuel contemplated going north for a teaching position that offered better pay. Though broader strides toward equality were made in Chicago—a large number of better-

educated and some affluent Blacks, Mansart is repelled by the size, rush, and power of the city. He felt sorry for Black Chicagoans. “They were huddled and squeezed, in desperate need of guidance and not only had little but wanted none. They flaunted their freedom lest it disappear by lack of use; they hollered and laughed loud and long. They were crowded both in body and soul” (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 200).

After spending a month in Chicago, Manuel returned to Atlanta to discover that he was to become a father for the fourth time. Susan was distraught. She did not want to have another baby. She told Manuel that she was bone tired and threatened suicide. Manuel called in the doctor and Susan was sedated. The doctor says that her melancholy is not uncommon to women in Atlanta’s Black community.

Big Business raged throughout Atlanta, among both Blacks and Whites. James Burghardt excused himself from Atlanta University to head a new organization to progress Black rights—the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Things were changing throughout the South. Manuel had three sons and a daughter to support when he finds himself with an impossible decision to make. Manuel was told that the Black supervisor of the “Colored Schools” died and he was the likely candidate to fill the position. The same evening, Manuel received a telegram from a school in Gary, Indiana offering him the principalship at the Black high school and \$2000 in pay. Manuel discussed his dilemma with his family, telling them that he intended to apply for the newly open Supervisor of Colored Schools in Atlanta. His wife called him a fool. His children listened as he recounted his birth and baptism. Manuel Mansart decided to stay in Atlanta to be the “Black Flame.”

## Racialization

“...dehumanization probably is despite appearances to the contrary, *always* bound up with racism. In fact, the concept of race is the place where psychological, cultural, and ultimately biological dimensions of dehumanization all converge.”

(Smith, 2011, p. 163)

“It’s not a matter of locating everything on the level, that of the event, but of realizing that there are actually a whole order of levels of different types of events differing in amplitude, chronological breadth, and capacity to produce effects.”

(Foucault, 1997, p. 116)

Through *The Ordeal of Mansart*, Du Bois lays clear the ways that Blacks and Whites, relationally, are racialized through the collective of social institutions. Blacks were denied redress in any area impacting their lives—among them the law, government, economics, and education. *The Ordeal* highlights racialization as a relational process that identifies the privileged and the targeted, the oppressed and the oppressor, the dehumanized and the dehumanizer. Racism is institutionalized as an ideology and as a systemic course of action. The process is dynamic, always adapting to the changes in structural and interpersonal relationships. The process of racialization is mutually reinforced by the systemic and structural ways that “racism” is played out in the institutions that shape our cultural practices; as well as, the ways in which individuals take up their personal agency to act upon other individuals in relationship to the overall structure.

As Foucault (1997) states above, each structure varies in breadth and range, may be atemporal as well as vary in the magnitude of effect. As this is true of social

structures that reify cultural practice and/or ideology, it is true of education as one of those social structures. Ladson-Billings (2009) adds that “advanced” postulations of race “include the racialization of multiple cultural forms” (p. 18).

Long gone are the biological and purely ideological determinants that justified racial categories, replaced with a Black-white binary that conceptualizes a racial caste that normalizes Whiteness and “*everyone* ranked and categorized in relation to these points of opposition” (Ladson, Billings, 2009, p. 19). The process of racialization is present in the way we think, act, and feel—it is the individual thread that weaves the fabric of our society. It is no secret that the system of education in the United States is broken. That it was and remains vastly separate and unremarkably unequal.

Unremarkable? Absolutely!

The life outcomes of African American youth are dismal in comparison to their white peers. According to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2010), of the 8% of the 2008 total dropout rate<sup>2</sup>, 16.4% fell in the lowest family income quartile. Fewer than thirty-seven percent were “not in labor force” and 16.3% unemployed. Nearly half of the students not finishing high or obtaining a GED dropped out of school in their junior or senior year. Nearly ten percent of the dropout rate identified as Black compared with 4.4% identified as White. The 2010 Census reports Whites as just over 72% of the population and Black represented 13 percent of the total population. It is plausible that the percentages of Whites and Blacks did not starkly change from 2008 to 2010. That being said: Whites accounts for 64

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<sup>2</sup> The status dropout rate is the percentage of 16- through 24-year-olds who are not enrolled in high school and who lack a high school credential. A high school credential includes a high school diploma or equivalent credential such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.



percent of the total population and only 4.4 percent of dropouts were white. Blacks are 13 percent of the total population and 9.9 percent of dropouts. From these statistics, the typical dropout is of color, either Hispanic (16.4% of the 2008 dropout rate) or Black, poor, and in their junior or senior years of high school. Once they dropout, these people are either not in the labor force or unemployed. Though it is well documented and understood that there are social and racial educational disparities, little has been done with the exception of observing a problem and labeling it.

The achievement gap serves as the gravest breeding ground for racialization (Cross, 2007). We have not fulfilled the guarantee of *Brown v. The Board of Education* of the promise of equal educational opportunity. Despite the unearned educational advantages Whites have had in securing education, separate and unequal persists and, little has been done to redress the situation (Kozol, 2005). The *Black Flame* trilogy observes the racialization process since Black Reconstruction (Du Bois, 1957/2007). It is of little consequence which racial category one is assigned, unless an individual's complexion appears to be in contrast with their forced racial ascription, everyone is "thrown" into a racial category (Young, drawn from Heidegger, 1995).

Young (1995) argues that "thrownness" occurs when "one *finds oneself* as a member of a group, whose existence and relations one experiences as always already having been" (p. 178). Young argues that it is possible for individuals to leave one group and enter a new one (e.g.: a lesbian who once identified as heterosexual). This is rarely true of race. Skin color, facial features, and hair texture all combine to throw people into racialized categories without disclosure. The racialization process determines, based on an indeterminate number of characteristics with the primary being complexion, each

category. Those categories are not without positive and negative consequences and behaviors.

### **Racialization and Education**

Education seemed to be the proving ground upon which Blacks staked their ability to rise from slavery's physical, emotional, and pedagogical shackles. At its core, slavery was raw exploitation that dehumanized the enslaved as well as slave masters. With Emancipation, Whites surreptitiously masked exploitation with enticements that promised more freedom as more and more Whites became comfortable with the full realization of Blacks' freedom. Democracy, liberty, and justice for all that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution promised and the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth amendments seemed to guarantee were denied Blacks.

Unfortunately, the legacy of racial hatred that justified the dehumanization of Africans and their American born children continues to dominate and order our society. Moreover, the educational system models this process despite its lip service to the contrary. Once the schooling of American Blacks fell under state control, the educational system ceased to provide recourse or redress for past societal and interpersonal trauma.

Schools are not simply place where children learn discrete skills and objectives. Though a part of the system, it is not the entirety. DeGruy Leary (2005) argues, "while some of what we learn we learn through direct instruction, the bulk of our learning takes place vicariously, by watching others" (p. 123). Classrooms have always been places where students learn how to participate in society, the roles they will assume and the identities that result in-group affinity.

Manuel Mansart's father, mother, and maternal grandmother received no formal education. Tom Mansart, Manuel's father, learned to read and write while fighting for

the Union Army. It was the want and desire of Manuel's maternal grandmother, Aunt Betsy, and his mother, Mirandy, which determined Manuel's fate.

Upon his birth, Aunt Betsy anointed Manuel in his father's blood and carried him to Emmanuel Church. Naked from throat to thigh, Aunt Betsy embodied "[a] thousand years of the African Dance of Death gliding out of the past." (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 46). With shriek upon shriek, she cried, "Curse God! Ride, Devils of Hell, with the blood-bought baby! Burn! Kill! Burn! Crawl with the Snake! Creep and crawl! Behold the Black Flame" (p. 46). Aunt Betsy moved slowly, "almost whispering: 'His name is Manuel,' she cried. 'He is Called'" (p. 46)!

Manuel inherited a world rife with racism—the tangible and intangible effects of the racialization of a people. He is baptized in his father's blood seeming symbolizing the inheritance and burden of racialization and racism. The Hebrew translation of Manuel, an abbreviated version of Emmanuel, is "God is with us." The Bible named Emmanuel as the promised Messiah. At the end of the novel, Manuel explained to his three sons and only daughter:

"Granny christened me 'Black Flame.' I have never altogether forgotten it. Jerusalem blurred it in my memory. The flame within me nearly died. I stooped and crawled. The prison bars bent my soul and pressed it in. Then I was released. I was freed and yet I did not understand until this riot, this horror of hate and death which swept over us. Now I live. Now I stand up. I am that Black Flame in which my grandmother believed and on whose blood-stained body she swore. I am the Black Flame, but I burn for cleaning, not destroying. Therefore I burn slow." (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 228)

It would seem that Manuel's first reference to Jerusalem was biblical, but he referenced his first teaching job in Jerusalem, Georgia. The reference to Jerusalem as Manuel first job contributes to Manuel's character as the novel's messianic archetype. Seemingly, Aunt Betsy christens Manuel as the slow, cleaning fire that the world needs. Manuel lamented, "I envy the red flame that burns straight through, unwavering. A Black flame also burns but perhaps not so completely; perhaps more thoughtfully and with deeper sympathy—but it burns; it must burn, for the world needs burning" (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 228). The obvious symbolism Du Bois used as he described Aunt Betsy, the lasting bastion and connection to Africa, christening her grandson in the blood of his newly liberated murdered father, to be thoughtful and sympathetic in his making over the world anew.

Manuel signifies a new generation with a detached connection with slavery. In fact, Aunt Betsy never spoke of the past with Manuel. "Of the past she said not a word" (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 84). So, his birth and subsequent life symbolized a new awakening for the first generation of fully free Blacks born in the United States. Manuel heralds the cleaning not the destruction of American culture—but a child born to make new and to renew the faith of a dehumanized people.

Manuel and his new wife ride to Jerusalem, often touted as the "promised land" in what Du Bois (1957/2007) describes as a "dirty jim crow car" (p. 141). Similar to the dirty barn Mary and Joseph occupy in the story of the birth of Jesus. Described as a typical small Georgia town, Du Bois (1957/2007) reminds the reader that war upset and dislocated the town's population. "It was humanity in flux with all its old culture patterns curiously changing and yet clung to desperately" (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 142).

The Hebrew translation of Jerusalem is “abode of peace” and in Arabic, “the holy sanctuary.” This is rather interesting as Manuel, the Black Flame, settles in Jerusalem. Often considered a spiritual number, Du Bois (1957/2007) identifies seven institutions and structures of social interaction that constructed the town.

The onlooker might have described seven matters which engaged this little town: first and foremost was money, then race and social standing; third came sex, and then indulgence in liquor and gambling; fifth the courts and police, sixth murder, and seventh religion. (p. 142)

Education is not mentioned as one of the seven overlapping, intersecting, and divergent areas that occupied Jerusalem residents. According to Du Bois (1957/2007), education was demonstration of status. The Black school, a “half-ruined old church” was maintained through a number of avenues. The Negro school in Jerusalem lacked desks and chairs and operated for no more than three months out of the year, but as “the Negroes were fierce in their desire to learn to read and write” and support from Northern benefactors kept the school open (p. 144). While Black children spent two to three months in school and “learned little but reading by rote, sketchy writing and almost no arithmetic,” their white peers spent six months in school (p. 144). Though few went further than elementary school, most learned to read and write.

Of the seven threads that wove the town’s fabric, bureaucracy and graft were no more apparent than in the educational system. The White Superintendent wanted out of Jerusalem on the first thing moving. Unfortunately, he had to serve two dubious masters. He understood that he had to satisfy the white electorate that placed him in office while pleasing the state officials that held the keys to promotion and escape from the “dead

community” (p. 147). State officials were pressuring the state superintendent who, in turn, pressured the local superintendent to improve the Negro school system.

### **The Psychic Detriment of Racialization**

There are no words for the terror and horrific conditions in which a group of human beings would torture, rape, murder, and steal from other human beings. Manuel is forced to watch his mother dehumanize herself in order to save him. She pleads with a white police officer, “Please, Mr. Officer, don’t arrest him; he’s such a little boy. He don’t mean no harm. You just leave him to me and I’ll whale him so he won’t never touch no white child again. And I’ll pay his fine and work for you if you want me, or do anything—please, Mr. Officer, just let him go this time” (p. 81). Young Manuel cannot understand why his mother struck him so hard upon seeing him, only to get home, have her strip him, and “beat him until he was faint with pain” (p. 81). In the young boy’s mind, he was only defending himself from a young white bully named Scroggs.

Manuel could not understand why Scroggs could slap him and take the new geography book “recently purchased by his mother at great cost” (p. 81). He was assaulted and his personal property was stolen. Beating him until he could no longer cry and struggle, his mother “suddenly [...] stopped beating him and said brokenly: ‘Manuel, don’t you never dast strike a white boy. Take what they give, bow, run away. Don’t hit ‘em. Don’t fight. You can’t. They’s got the power. We got to wait.’ (p. 81) Manuel never forgot this incident. In fact, he dated his understanding of the race problem to this one event.

He concluded that white folks were dangerous and unreliable people; that they hated Negroes and were determined to injure them. There were, of course, exceptions. But the rule was avoid white folk and never trust them. Or course

they must be met and met pleasantly so as to avoid retaliation and keep their good-will. They had the power; they had the wealth; they owned the earth. From their wrath his mother was trying to save him at the sacrifice of her own love. (p. 81).

With this incident Du Bois (1957/2007) describes the stirrings of what DeGruy Leary (2005) labels *vacant esteem*. Vacant esteem, influenced by society, community and family, is “the state of believing oneself to have little or no worth, exacerbated by the group and societal pronouncement of inferiority” (DeGruy Leary, 2005, p. 129). This incident brings to the fore several lessons that Blacks needed in order to navigate the world after Reconstruction.

Often assaulted and robbed of education, like Manuel, many Blacks would fight to underscore their self-worth and their goals. Manuel’s mother and grandmother sacrificed nearly all they had to ensure that he received an education. This was similar to the want and will of former chattel—believing themselves to be fully free and actualized human beings accorded the same rights and privileges as those who once enslaved them without demanding anything more than their humanity, yet physically and educationally denied the right for social advancement. To Manuel, the geography meant everything—his mother put great effort, attention, and labor into getting the book for him. This was his ticket—the ultimate goal and purpose of his life. DeGruy Leary (2005) asserts that the development of healthy self-esteem begins at birth.

Symbolically, Du Bois shows just how powerless southern Blacks were. Assume this incident in Manuel’s life as a metaphor for Black people’s struggle for racial equality and education in United States. Manuel was born, baptized in the blood of his father.

Imagine a group of people baptized in the blood of slavery, the blood of their ancestors, fully believing that the dominant culture would honor the creed they set forth in the founding documents of this country. At every turn, their humanity is denied and/or stolen. When they try to demand their humanity, physically or educationally, Blacks are reminded that they have few rights whites are bound to respect.

Manuel understood that his mother beat him because, upon seeing the chain gang, she feared the end of his life. Physically demanding his self-worth meant death or prison—either an end to his life. “He knew that neither tender age nor innocence kept Negroes from its clutches; for this was a way of restoring the old slavery and stopping the education of Negroes” (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 82).

They were subjected to random violence at any turn and their access to education often misappropriated. From this incident, Du Bois (1957/2007) describes the intention of some Blacks to thwart Whites. Using Manuel’s plan, Du Bois lays bare the reasoning, rationale, and game plan of Black survival after Reconstruction.

He would carefully avoid offense. He would always be polite, smile pleasantly and give good word to those who spoke. To those like the poor whites who were rude or cruel he would avoid all contact when possible, or get back at them surreptitiously so as to avoid the law. (p. 81)

From a young age, young Black children must learn the social order under the threat of their lives, or face the chain gang. The lesson learned is that the law protects Whites and injures Blacks avoid the police at all costs and never trust or help them in any way. Rather than developing, Manuel must strategize for survival. The opportunity to experience life is bounded by avoiding contact with people *seeking* to do harm.



DeGruy Leary (2005) maintains that vacant esteem is the belief about one's self-worth. This differs from what a person is actually worth. So, Blacks begin to see themselves through the eyes of the other—the dominant, more powerful, vicious, murderous white supremacist culture. They must internalize the view that the dominant culture has of them lest they die or are imprisoned. How else can they justify the sadistic torture some Whites are determined to impose upon them? There are risks associated with internalizing a white supremacist view of Blacks. Instead of understanding self and determining self-worth based upon authentic experiences, many Blacks may come to believe they are who the dominant culture says they are.

For some, believing that they have as much value as the dominant group will allow them, mitigates their actualized self-worth and they seek to constantly distance themselves physically and ideologically from other Blacks as the best option for survival. This creates cognitive dissonance between the multi-generational traumas Blacks have experienced since slavery. In schools, some Black children may look upon these behaviors as “acting white” (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Fordham, 1988, 1996; Ogbu, 2004). Black students who label their Black peers' achievements and advancement as “acting white” is another indication of vacant esteem.

DeGruy Leary (2005) explains that “[i]n general, the belief that one has little or no value produces behaviors that almost demands the devaluing of others” (p. 132). Both students are traumatized. One has determined that they must do everything in their power to show that they are not like the rest of the group. The other student decides that, by virtue of color caste and believed social inferiority, no matter how hard one tries, they have no-more intrinsic worth than another in the same color caste. Sadly, both students

are traumatized, both beginning with the stigma that Black students have little intrinsic worth. Navigating and surviving schooling's racialization process and academically achieving are survival skills forced Black youth (Harvey, 1984). As DeGruy Leary (2005) observes, "it is a testament to their strength that any one of them ever makes it out" (p. 132).

Theresa Perry (2003) argues that Black students encounter unique dilemmas that make achievement difficult. She identifies seven questions that Black students must ask in determining whether to pay the price for academic success:

*How do I commit myself to achieve, to work hard over time in school, if I cannot predict (in school or out of school) when or under what circumstances this hard work will be acknowledged and recognized?*

*How do I commit myself to do work that is predicated on a belief in the power of the min, when African-American intellectual inferiority is so much a part of the taken-for-granted notions of the larger society that individuals in and out of school, even good and well-intentioned people, individuals who purport to be acting on my behalf, routinely register doubts about my intellectual competence?*

*How can I aspire to and work toward excellence when it is unclear whether or when evaluations of my work can or should be taken seriously?*

*Can I invest in and engage my full personhood, with all of my cultural formations, in my class, my work, my school if my teachers and the adults in the building are both attracted to and repulsed by these cultural formations—the way I walk, the way I use language, my relationship to my body, my physicality, and so on?*

*Will I be willing to work hard over time, given the unpredictability of my teachers' responses to my work?*

*Can I commit myself to work hard over time if I know that, no matter what I or other members of my reference groups accomplish, these accomplishments are not likely to change how I and other members of my groups are viewed by the larger society, or to alter our caste-like position in the society? I still will not be able to get a cab. I still will be followed in department stores. I still will be stopped when I drive through certain neighborhoods. I still will be viewed as a criminal, a deviant, and an illiterate.*

*Can I commit myself to work hard, to achieve in a school, if cultural adaptation effectively functions as a prerequisite for skill acquisition, where “the price of the ticket” is separation from the culture of my reference group? (p. 4-5)*

Black students are forced to ask and answer these questions upon encountering preschool and throughout their academic careers. Education has become the battlefield upon which Black students have been forced to prove their worth and humanity. Discussions of the achievement gap continue to underscore Blacks' perceived intellectual inferiority.

Black students have never been allowed the opportunity to authentically engage with education. Education has become the proving ground to establish their intellectual prowess—their intrinsic self-worth. Even still, if Black students are able to prove their academic mastery, their intellectual expertise does not shield them from social stigmatization. They continue to be systemically racialized, as the educational system seeks to overcome, explain away, and ignore Black students success and failure without acknowledging how its curricula, personnel, and policies have directly and indirectly perpetuated the traumatization vis-à-vis the dehumanization of Black people. Instead of asking why Black student aren't achieving at the same levels as their peers, a more constructive and appropriate questions is: “How have African Americans, over generations, succeeded in maintaining their commitment to education and producing a leadership and intellectual class” (Perry, Steele, & Hilliard, III, 2003, p. 7)? More to the point, how have Blacks continued to survive the educational milieu when vacant esteem, as a manifestation of Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome, is passed on inter-generationally since the states asserted control over Black education?

Unfortunately, these are not the questions begging answers within the field. Daily, teachers see the manifestations of PTSS: vacant esteem, ever present anger, and racist socialization. These manifestations are often mistakenly labeled as abnormal, yet normalized within the system to ensure that all students understand that, in all ways, Blacks are considered inferior to their White counterparts. There is little speculation into why young Black students become suddenly angry in response to peers, teachers, or administrators. However, the inter-generational trauma associated with blocked goals and the fear of failure manifests as ever present anger.

Black students have had to suffer their own systemic dehumanization in textbooks and curricula that overlooks their ancestors' contributions to the socio-cultural climate they experience today. Just as young Manuel had no recourse to express his feelings regarding the devaluation of his self-worth, his mother's self-worth—telling the police officer that she'd "do anything" if the officer would "just let him go this time" (p. 81). So, he later surreptitiously drops a brick on the bully's head as punishment for his vile and wicked treatment of Manuel and other Black students who the young White boy bullied. How else could young Manuel deal with his feelings? The young White bully, his White friends, the White police officer, and Manuel's mother all resorted to violence in order to diminish his self-worth. Why would he not respond in the same "language" that everyone involved would understand? This, however, is less common. More often than not, devalued people will take out their frustration and anger on those closest to them, like their friends and family (DeGruy Leary, 2005).

Vacant esteem and ever present anger give way to racist socialization. Racist socialization involves Blacks internalizing and believing the negative identities traits that have been associated with their reference group. In other words, it is the internalization of the belief that whites are superior and Blacks are inferior (DeGruy Leary, 2005). Rather studying the linguistic history of our native African tongues, Black children were taught to despise and dispose themselves of their unique linguistic dialect (Woodson, 1933/1990). African literature was completely excluded as well as any African contributions to science, the development of industrial arts, husbandry, and chemistry (Woodson, 1933/1990).

Imagine the trauma a Black child must undergo as she learns that White people are the only people who have made lasting contributions in the world and that her people have done absolutely nothing of worth or note. As Carter G. Woodson (1933/1990) observed nearly eighty years ago, “[t]he present system under the control of whites trains the Negro to be white and at the same time convinces him of the impropriety or the impossibility of his becoming white” (p. 23). Blacks have had no outlet for the multiple generations of trauma the educational system has willingly leveled against them.

Manuel Mansart thought he could gain his humanity by intellectually surpassing whites at every turn. Some Blacks folks dismissed this line of thinking and sought to “get the best of whites by fooling them; by taking advantage their mistakes; by undercover conspiracy and hidden deeds” (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 87). Du Bois described the motivations to get over on and take advantage of whites as rooted in self-distrust and a “complex of deep-felt inferiority” (p. 87). He asserted,

Negroes had brains, but they lacked decent primary schools; sanitary homes; parents. They had small chance to learn English even from Southern whites. If, with this handicap of poverty, ignorance and disease, the blacks were forging forward, as they certainly were, it needed no admission of inferiority and no subterfuge of deceit to gain a place in the world. Their half-trained teachers in the elementary schools knew no English nor even elementary mathematics. Their training had been piece-meal and incidental. Negroes had as much ability as whites. Not for a moment could white folk stand what Negroes daily must endure (p. 87).

Despite whites inability to withstand the harrowing process of racialization, Blacks have been miseducated and misinformed. Real education, Woodson (1933/1990) argues, intends to inspire abundant living, “to learn to begin with life as they find it and make it better” (p. 29). Teachers have been made virtually powerless. “Negroes have not control over their education and have little voice in their other affairs pertaining thereto” (Woodson, 1933/1990, p. 22). The U.S. system of education has sought to systematically damage the very students it claims to want to help. Is there any wonder students have internalized portions of the dominant rhetoric surrounding their academic inferiority? Are we, as educators and as a nation, truly surprised at the ever-widening achievement gap?

Black academic underachievement has not occurred by happenstance, it is of design. Navigation and survival of said system is a testament to the love and grace of Black people, understanding that “not for a moment could white folk stand what Negroes daily must endure.” In letter to his nephew commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of emancipation, James Baldwin (1995) explains,

Well, you were born, here you came, something like fifteen years ago; and though your father and mother and grandmother, looking about the streets through which they were carrying you, staring at the wall into which they brought you, had every reason to be heavyhearted, yet they were not. For here you were, Big James, named for me—you were a big baby, I was not—here you were: to be loved. To be loved, baby, hard, at once, and forever, to strengthen you against the loveless world. Remember that: I know how black it looks today, for you. It looked bad that day, too, yes, we were trembling. We have not stopped trembling yet, but if

we had not loved each other none of us would have survived. And now you must survive because we love you, and for the sake of your children and your children's children. (p. 6)

We owe our children more than survival; now, we must create the space for them to thrive.

### **The Material Detriment of Racialization**

The material detriment of racialization manifests as Whiteness as property, racism and White supremacy normalized, and interest convergence. Du Bois (1957/2007) employed critical race theory (CRT) with his use of storytelling. The *Black Flame* trilogy provides the “necessary context for understanding, feeling, and interpreting” (Ladson-Billings, 2009). This context forms the basis of school inequality that Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) observe, where:

1. Race continues to be a significant factor in determining inequity in the United States.
  2. U.S. Society is based on property rights.
  3. The intersection of race and property creates an analytic tool through which we can understand social (and, consequently, school) inequality.
- (p. 48)

Du Bois (1957/2007) elucidated how racism and the process of racialization have been systemically woven in the education of Blacks. CRT is the tool best suited to understand how education, as a social institution/structure, interacts with other social institutions and structure to produce social inequality. The current achievement gap rhetoric begs detailed analysis of the ways it contributes to psychically and materially traumatizing Black youth.



The material detriment education has caused Black youth shows up in a number of ways. Tom Mansart asked for Colonel Breckinridge's support regarding the economic future of Blacks. Tom's agenda was clear, fair work at a fair wage without the threat of mob rule. Though education did not grace Tom's agenda, it was in place for Manuel. Tom lobbied Breckinridge for the survival of his family and the family of the union men he represented. Attending to labor and the vote were Tom's primary goals. He told Breckinridge that the Black stevedores he represented wanted victuals not votes.

Blacks, the South contended, "must think of themselves always as workers and never as thinkers or owners; nor as men in the sense that whites were men. Contrary to this Southern belief was the system of Negro schools "lugged in by the white Northern Carpet-baggers, who ignorantly insisted that Negroes were men" (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 34). Southern sentiment cried that educating Blacks was beyond "stupid;" "It was criminal misleading of a simple people born to be servants of men" (p. 34). This is precisely the pervasive *ideological hegemony* that allows racism to pervade every institution and social interaction among people in the United States (Marable as cited in Bell, 1987). Racism was not simply in the water, it was the water.

Ideological hegemony, Bell (1987) explains, drawing from Manning Marable, is the collaboration of "all of our institutions of education and information—political and civic, religious and creative—[that] either knowingly or unknowingly provide the public rationale to justify, explain, legitimate, or tolerate racism" (p. 156). Though it has tangible outcomes, it is nearly impossible to combat ideological hegemony, because it is intangible. Though race has been scientifically proven to be biologically unfounded, society still clings to race as a mode of social division and separation—the basis on

which to discriminate, arrest, and prosecute. Throughout the novel, the process of racialization is made clear.

Though many Blacks voted and even held state and federal congressional offices for over a decade after Emancipation, those numbers, under the threat of mob rule and unbidden violence in the South, dwindled to nearly none (Du Bois, 1935/2007). This is an example of the way ideological hegemony played out in the broader social context. The unchecked violence, murder, rape, lynching, pillaging, and plundering of Blacks particularly in the South made racism the mainstay of social interaction in the South. Racism's endemicity became inherent. Complexion predicated property. If one's complexion was light they were awarded all property rights therewith. Being Black held no rights that the law would protect. The process of racialization, in *The Ordeal of Mansart* and society-at-large placed a market value on Whiteness while completely divesting Blackness of any value at all. Cheryl Harris (1995) explains,

...slavery made human beings market-alienable and in so doing, subjected human life and personhood—that which is most valuable—to the ultimate devaluation. Because whites could not be enslaved or held as slaves, the racial line between white and black was extremely critical; it became a line of protection and demarcation from the potential threat of commodification, and it determined the allocation of the benefits and burdens of this form of property. White identity and whiteness were sources of privilege and protection; their absence meant being the object of property. (p. 279)

Blackness, by virtue of observing the past actions of this society, is automatic social dehumanization—physically and intellectually. The very idea of slavery began with

some inherent inferiority and the will and means to kill to prove it, just in case the first theory is disproven. The law was established to protect property, things as well as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Whiteness as property is protected under the law. This is evident when Scroggs steals young Manuel's geography book. Manuel is not punished for defending himself and protecting his property, he is punished for hitting a White person. No matter the crime to Manuel, Manuel has the potential to be violently harmed or killed for damaging property and he is not a human being himself. The act of dehumanization may often come from the very people who value our humanity enough to equip others with survival skills no matter how painful.

As the Supreme Court held in *Scott v. Sandford* (1853), as property, Blacks possessed no rights. They simply were not human. As the Jerusalem superintendent told Manuel, "Get this: You are in a Southern town and remember that here a black man, no matter what he is occupies an inferior place and obeys his betters" (p. 142)! There exists no gradation of humanity, either one is human or one is not.

## **Conclusion**

"We were all victims of our culture's racism." (Lawrence, III, 1995, p. 235)

*The Ordeal of Mansart* provides the roots for the tree the Du Boises planted at 31 Grace Court. The novel details the early life of the fictional Manuel Mansart, anointed in his father's blood, born the "Black Flame," burning for cleaning with a thoughtful and sympathetic flame. In *The Ordeal*, Manuel's life is the story of the intersection among Black education and process of racialization in the United States from the end of Black Reconstruction through 1910.

The world Mansart inherits in the wake of his father's murder, the world the young boy encounters through his own experiences, and the world he seeks to impact as an adult share the story as Manuel becomes a student, teacher, and principal as well as a man, husband and father. Du Bois shows the ways in which social institutions work together to emotionally and economically traumatize Blacks. Escaping former biological and ideological explanations, racism is racialization—a dynamic process that determines who is and who is not white, who is human and who is not. Through clever writings, Du Bois shows how racialization has harmed Blacks and stifled many attempts at education.

The death of the Supervisor of Colored Schools, at the end of the novel, signals the death of the hold of the old generations on the progression of equality. Though sweeping changes seem imminent, changes in Black education are slow to come in *Mansart Builds a School* (Du Bois, 1959/2007). Mansart received accolades and promotions; however, the “Negro problem” was ever present. Racialization gives way to colonization. With the Negro still disenfranchised and unable to seek legal redress in Atlanta, white supremacy controls the lives, actions, and outcomes for Black Atlantans. If *The Ordeal of Mansart* is the root of the tree, *Mansart Builds a School* is surely the tree's trunk.

## Chapter 5: Schooling as Colonization, Meanwhile, *Mansart Builds a School*

### Introduction

The slave trade was a profitable business for white Americans. South Carolina and Georgia held the highest numbers of people in bondage. New York, Rhode Island, Massachusetts profited considerably from the slave trade. Quoting periodicals written between 1850 and 1860, Du Bois (1896/2007) observes,

“Few of our readers,” writes a periodical of the day, “are aware of the extent to which this infernal traffic is carried on, by vessels clearing from New York, and in close alliance with our legitimate trade; and that down-town merchants of wealth and respectability are extensively engaged in buying and selling African Negroes, and have been, with comparatively little interruption, for an indefinite number of years.” Another periodical says: “The number of persons engaged in the slave-trade, and the amount of capital embarked on it, exceed our powers of calculation. The city of New York has been until of late [1862] the principal port of the world for this infamous commerce; although the cities of Portland and Boston are only second to her in that distinction. (p. 123)

In 1993, Howard University spearheaded the archeological and bioanthropological analysis of the African Burial Ground just blocks from Wall Street in downtown New York. Blakey, Rankin-Hill, Goodman, and Jackson (1993) conclude, due to high incidents of muscle pulling away from the bone, “[i]t is clear that most men and women were exposed to arduous work for extended periods of time” (p. 546). Higher incidents of impacted deciduous teeth were found among the children interred in downtown New York, which is attributable to premature weaning, poor nutrition, and little access or

knowledge of dental care (Mack, Goodman, Blakey, & Mayes, 1993). Slaves were overworked (Blakey, Rankin-Hill, Goodman, & Jackson, 1993) and subjected to extreme violence (Wilczak, Watkins, Null, & Blakey, 1993).

Many were complicit in stripping millions of free Africans of their humanity. To this point, from 1700 on, Rhode Island “became the greatest slave-trader in America” (Du Bois 1896/2007, p. 23). As David Von Drehle (2011, April 18) prompts, though “white society was not ready to deal with the humanity and needs of freed slaves” (p. 47) it was indeed slavery “that had broken one nation in two and fated its people to fight over whether it would be put back together again” (Von Drehle, 2011, p. 42).

The history of educational trauma Blacks endured should be contextualized among slavery and Jim Crow as the dynamic process of racialization and, subsequently, colonialism. Racialization is the dynamic process that establishes racial caste in the United States. Acknowledging the ever-changing, responsive system of racialization, colonialism enforces and reifies racialization.

In *The Ordeal of Mansart*, Du Bois (1957/2007) describes the horror of the Atlanta Riot in 1906. Four days of mob violence—murder, rape, and pillaging of Black communities—went unbidden in September, 1906. This is the harrowing effect of colonialism—a theory of domination promulgates division, discrimination, and violence (Fanon, 1963, 1967; Horvath, 1972). Once society acquiesced to a racialized color caste, physical violence ensures viability of colonialism.

Slavery was part and parcel of the colonization of the United States. This is not to overlook the genocide exacted upon the native peoples before Europeans murdered them and stole the land. Rarely is violence used against the dominant group. Suffering the risk

of death and/or physical harm to self or family together with disenfranchisement, illiteracy, poverty, disease and crime illustrates the process by which colonialism is achieved (Du Bois 1944/1985). Oppositional groups are created to guarantee its success: settler and native, colonialist and colonized (Fanon, 1963). Racialization and colonization actively exist and work in tandem with the other to engender the status quo.

One vehicle of colonization is the process and application of standardization through K – 12 schooling. Educational disparities since the Civil War continue to directly impact the lives of African Americans in the United States today. Each of these features stands alone and, together, they are mutually reinforcing.

At the turn of the twentieth century, W.E.B. Du Bois (1903/2003) surmised that “the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line” (p. 15). Here, the colorline points the differences between Black and White, human and “not-quite” human, liberation and domination. Evaluating the educational system in *Mansart Build a School*, the second novel in Du Bois’ *Black Flame* trilogy, shows how physical and psychological violence, domination, and discrimination comprise the educational system. Illiteracy, economic exploitation, poverty, disenfranchisement, starvation, crime, and disease are all characteristic of colonization and mutually reinforcing (Du Bois, 1944/1985; Fanon, 1968; Rabaka, 2007). Illiteracy undergirds economic exploitation and poverty. Poverty bolsters economic exploitation and starvation. Disenfranchisement ensures the other features of colonization. These characteristics of colonialism and the process that instills them in society are vital to our discussion of standardization, domination and dehumanization in *Mansart Builds a School* (Du Bois, 1959/2007).

This chapter investigates the impact colonization, specifically in education, has had on the traumatization and dehumanization of Blacks since the turn of the twentieth century. The chapter begins with a discussion of colonialism and colonization in education as preliminary analysis for the survey of colonization in Du Bois' (1959/2007) *Mansart Builds a School*. Divided into four sections, "Becoming the *Black Flame*," "I Burn Slow," "Jean Du Bignon: The White Black Girl," and "The Mansart Family," each section uses short quotations and long selections from the text to illustrate the feature of colonization in education and society-at-large.

The retelling of the storyline includes short and long quotations to attest to the trustworthiness of the retelling of the story. Further, the use of the text to tell the story is a feature of what Gates (1988) labels "the trope of the Talking Book." These text bits become the multigenerational dialectic analysis of colonization, critical race theory, PTSS, and racialization within the existing text that remain relevant today. The manifestations of colonization are identified and discussed as ever present anger, vacant esteem, and racist socialization as well as interest convergence. A critique of gradualism as a mode and function of colonialism is included at the end of the chapter.

### **Colonialism: A Theme of Domination**

Few scholars have been able to agree upon the definition of colonialism for a myriad of reasons. Horvath (1972) argues that, though colonialism has been an influential historical process, "Western scholars have not really come to grips with the phenomenon," citing: 1) insufficient cross-cultural perspective, 2) a lack of theoretical perspective, 3) a lack of flexibility in definitions of colonialism, and 4) and ultraconservative attitude toward words and their meanings as the basis for an



underdeveloped of a theory of colonialism (p. 46). Horvath suggests that a definition of colonialism is necessary as “the goal of the academy is the discovery of order” (p. 45). Concrete definitions of social phenomena not only provide order, but begin a dialogue that could potentially initiate the “systemic process selection and arrangement of variables,” specifically regarding colonialism (p. 45). Horvath’s definitional analysis of colonialism suggests a theory that explains and/or predicts said phenomenon. He writes, “therefore, colonialism refers to that form of intergroup domination in which settlers in significant numbers migrate permanently to the colony from the colonizing power” (p. 46).

Horvath (1972) draws the distinction between colonialism and imperialism, regarding imperialism as “a form of intergroup domination wherein few, if any, permanent settlers from the imperial homeland migrate to the colony” (p. 47). Using Horvath’s definitions of colonialism and imperialism, both phenomena, as theories of domination and exploitation, are predicated largely upon the numbers and presence of colonizers in the colony. While Horvath’s definition of colonialism as a theory of domination is more readily accepted, it completely overlooks Blacks’ experiences with domination and exploitation in the United States since the seventeenth century and the indicators that suggest an explanation or theory thereof. While the absence of definition of colonialism prolongs the theory of the phenomenon, the indicators of colonialism have been widely noted.

Du Bois (1944) identifies poverty, illiteracy, disenfranchisement, and inhibited social progression and development as indicators of colonialism. Du Bois, however, used a broader definition of “colonial.” Du Bois (1994) defined colonialism as:

A colony, strictly speaking, is a country which belongs to another country, forms a part of the mother country's industrial organization, and exercises such power of government, and such civic and cultural freedom, as the dominant country allows. But beyond this narrower definition, there are manifestly groups of people, countries and nations, which while not colonies in the strict sense of the word, yet so approach the colonial status as to merit the designation semicolonial. The classic example of this status has long been China. There are other groups, like the Negroes of the United States, who do not form a separate nation and yet who resemble in their economic and political condition a distinctly colonial status (p. 229).

Du Bois defined colonialism to include criteria of social oppression that expands Horvath's narrow definition predicated upon the number of colonizers and the permanence of their presence in a colony. Colonialism does not always mandate the stealing the land of the native. The process of colonizing Blacks in the U.S. began after Emancipation, further entrenching and reifying their inhumanity in the broad social context.

Slavery was a part of the initial colonization of the then territories of current United States. Upon emancipation, Blacks were granted their freedom but lacked protection under the U.S. legal doctrine. Many Blacks found themselves in a unique "semicolonial" status. Although the U.S. was not the first slaves' home of origin, their economic and political conditions mirrored those of colonized nations. Their racialized status made the process of colonization, or standardization, possible and necessary after emancipation from slavery.

Colonialism destroys the cultural norms of the existing nation and prepares it to be a colony—under the cultural rules and norms of the colonizing country. Fanon (1967) identified the laws of the “psychology of colonization,” one being: “In an initial phase, it is the action, the plans of the occupier that determine the centers of resistance around which a people’s will to survive becomes organized” (p. 47). What the colonists creates, the colonized reject. It is around those fictive caricatures of the colonized, that the colonized rebel. They are, in a sense, the only ways the colonizer and the colonized can communicate.

James Collier (1905), in the early part of the twentieth century, suggested that colonists carry an idea of civilization in their minds. His view of colonization diminishes and, consequently, ignores the brutal physical and psychological harm inflicted upon the colonized: “An emigrant community that settles in a new country, where it has to battle with adverse physical conditions and hostile indigenes, undergoes inevitable denigration” (p. 253). Given the period and tenor of his article, it appears as though Collier indicts the indigenous people for the initial deterioration of the idea of modern civilization that the colonizers forcefully inflict upon the “hostile indigenes.”

A theory of colonialism and colonization, however, must disregard the thoughts and feelings of the native people, as its sole purpose is to usurp the land and silence the people possibly exacting free or near-free labor from the colonized. This is done through murder, rape, and theft. As Franz Fanon (1963) describes, colonialism “is not a thinking machine, nor a body endowed with reasoning faculties. It is violence in its natural state...” (p. 61). And though colonization is the extermination of a people, their culture,

and their humanity, it is true that, as Collier asserts, the new colony creates a grander civilization.

Colonization, Collier (1905) contends, is in the “new peoples formed by colonization that new institutions, new arts, new ethical sentiments, new religions and philosophies, and new literary forms are found to arise” (p. 258). These new cultural elements are the product of the tenuous relationship between colonists and the colonized. Fanon (1967) argued, “It is the white man who creates the Negro. But it is the Negro who creates negritude” (p. 47). Blacks semicolonial status undergirds the creation of such a new civilization. The new civilization and culture do not emerge through the silence and capitulation of the colonized, but through the agency and inevitable incongruence of endless violence and dehumanization. Perhaps dehumanization persists, but perpetual violence cannot continue for, as Fanon (1963) suggests, colonialism will only yield “when confronted with greater violence” (p. 61).

David Livingstone Smith (2011) argues that dehumanization is based on out-group biases and out-group homogeneity biases, but is not sufficiently the cause of dehumanization. Smith insists that it is the essentialism of natural kinds that is responsible for dehumanization. He explains,

when we dehumanize people, we think of them as *counterfeit human beings*—creatures that look like humans, but who are not endowed with a human essence—and that is possible only because of our natural tendency to think that there are essence-based natural kinds. This way of thinking doesn’t come from “outside.” We neither absorb it from our culture, nor learn it from observation.

Rather, it seems to reflect our cognitive architecture—the evolved design of the human psyche. (Smith, 2011, p. 100)

In other words, human beings are hard-wired—genetically programmed—to dehumanize those we don't believe share a collective human essence.

Though this seems to diminish the argument that colonization is a form of dehumanization, the two contentions help us better understand education as a process of standardization that does two things. First, education provides a network of avenues for people to prove common human essence. Second, those that fall short of the goal of civilization, culture, and basic skills are more likely viewed as counterfeit human beings. These “people” may look like humans, but they are unable to access the innate spirit or spark, that would unite them with the rest of the “real” humans.

James Baldwin (1963) described an encounter he observed after appearing on a television program with Al Hajj Malik El-Shabazz (Malcolm X). A White man approached El-Shabazz and asked him, “I have a thousand dollars and an acre of land. What's going to happen to me” (p. 60)? While direct, the man's question cuts to the heart of Stone's argument. The man appears to believe he is truly human—society, through custom and law, has endowed his humanity. At the height of the Civil Rights Movement, this man possibly understands that, if given enough power, Blacks will assume some type of power over him. The mention of the property may symbolize his desire to make a deal or his fear of attack and/or theft. His question speaks to the fear of retaliation some Whites hold for their involvement in and/or acquiescence to racialization. Colonization is a process designed to acculturate the natives, and in this case, Blacks as the recipients of “semicolonialism.”

The very idea of education and schooling assumes Blacks inhumanity. They lack the very essence of humanity and must be taught how to replicate it. With this model in place, Blacks would never realize their humanity, because they never had it.

Colonization is a process of standardization that forces the colonized to become interlocutors in their own dehumanization. Schooling, as a method of socialization and standardization, is the medium for racist socialization, ever present anger, and vacant esteem. Moreover, the effects of colonization vis-à-vis schooling continues to sustain a White supremacist culture that upholds Whiteness as property and allows secondary and tertiary social benefits for Blacks only when Whites are the primary beneficiaries of social, cultural, and material capital.

### **Colonization and Education**

Education has often been described as a form of liberation—the supposed social equalizer that provides each individual all with the same opportunities. Education as a system of teaching and learning across the nation has been the vanguard social institution that has disregarded equality. In fact, it has been the dominant structure to enact and exact social inequality. Education simultaneously creates and demonstrates colonialism as an explanation for or theory of domination. Therefore, the process of colonization never truly ends and is constantly responding the current and ever-changing social strata.

Asa Hilliard (1978) discusses the failure to adequately discuss a theory of domination in education. In “Equal Educational Opportunity and Quality Education,” Hilliard (1978) exposed how an educational theory of domination serves to illustrate the intentional teaching and performance/modeling of domination and oppression. Hilliard decried the 1954 *Brown v. The Board of Education* as an educational victory for anyone.

Without fully understanding how education contributes to the domination and dehumanization of Black students, Hilliard warned that the discussion of “affirmative action,” “ethnic studies curriculum,” “quality education,” “teacher competence,” and other viral equity topics in education will be confused.

Hilliard (1978) asserts that teacher education courses are ineffective, forcing conformity to white supremacy as the social standard and norm. Like standardized test publishers and developers, educators perpetuate domination, including their own domination, through their dominance over children and the education they receive or do not receive. Hilliard (1978) describes the impact that the absence of a theory of domination has on education:

It is the absence of such a theory which makes sterile and powerless our courses in educational psychology, educational history, educational sociology, education psychology, education research, educational methods, and educational anthropology. It is the absence of such a theory which permits, even demands, that educators approach the practice of education from the perspective of universalism and standardization. For example, standardized test publishers and developers are unable to critique their own product because they are able to focus only on the mechanics of standardization and are not mentally free enough to raise questions about the fundamental concept of, and rationale for, standardization, or about the basic nature of the behaviors which are being observed. We have here another example of how the failure to account for domination and oppression leaves us with an inadequate explanation for educational events. (p. 114)

Hilliard highlights 1954 as a turning point in educational and social history. Though important, the educational history leading up to the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision is particularly important for pinpointing the theory of domination Hilliard described. Du Bois' (1959/2007) *Mansart Builds a School* offers a context to understand education amidst the broader social setting and how racialization and colonization move through most social institutions.

Standardizing schooling for all students was never a societal goal. Different educational goals persisted for different communities. Du Bois (1959/2007) described Lanark, North Carolina, as a town "proudly aware" of its schools. People paid additional taxes for the upkeep of the educational system. There were few Blacks in town and they were not provided for in the city school system. They did, however have their own school in the county and a Rosenwald school had been arranged. In Atlanta, educational aims for Black and White students were quite different, along with expectations and outcomes. Arnold Coypel knew this after visiting the Black schools in Atlanta at Manuel's request. Coypel, Atlanta's new superintendent, a White man, "felt that there was a certain blatant, ostentatious and deliberate discrimination against Negroes that was beyond his comprehension, that stirred only wrath and protest" (p. 12). The audacity of pure privilege exerted without care or concern, boundless with no thought of an apology, stirred Coypel.

The unchecked exertion of White supremacy affirmed Whiteness and that bid White people the right to do exactly as they pleased regarding Blacks. Academic achievement became the phrase "du jour" to exert domination over what students must learn and to mystify a conversation that assumes and predicts Blacks' supposed



intellectual inferiority. Who would Black students be inferior to—whose and to what norm(s) are Black students and other students being held? Hilliard (1978) knows.

It is this sleepy and seemingly innocent notion of “norm” which has become almost an ideology in American education—unilaterally decreed. This ideology of the “norm” permits a “standardization of curriculum,” a “standardization in assessment,” and a standardization in faculties, textbooks, and even in educational priorities. These standardizations become the “norm” and later even the “standard” of excellence. Naturally, it is the Euro-American cultural tradition which becomes the platform from which all must view the world and the model of the behavior for the world. (p. 117)

Inequality informs our discussion of academic achievement, yet it is rarely addressed in conversations that seek to discuss and perhaps find a solution to achievement gap, in part because any conversation about the achievement gap is a conversation about dehumanization—another tool of domination and a form of violence exacted on Blacks throughout the history of the world (Du Bois, 1930/2007, 1944/2007, 1961/2007, 1968).

### **Becoming the *Black Flame***

The second novel in the *Black Flame* trilogy opens with conversation among White women—Mrs. Coypel, an upwardly mobile White woman, and Mrs. Baldwin, the mayor’s wife. Mrs. Coypel was galvanized as she sat in Mrs. Baldwin’s living room admiring the size of the room and the furniture—planning her escape from small town Lanark, North Carolina. Though she lived in Lanark her entire life, upon visiting Atlanta, Mrs. Coypel “suddenly became aware of how tawdry and sordid this little North Carolina town in the foothills really was” (p. 2). Mrs. Coypel decided that her husband should get

to know Atlanta's mayor, John Baldwin. If Arnold Coypel "could attach his wagon to this rising star [...] they would be dragged out of that backwater of small town gossip and principal interest and set in the midst of a great, swirling, pushing, powerful city [that] was bound to be a great city, easily the greatest in the South, one of the greatest in country" (p.2). Unmoved, Arnold Coypel was pleased with his current position as superintendent of schools in Lanark.

After logic, tears, and "hysterics," Mrs. Coypel appeals to her husband using their school-aged daughter. A Black nurse assumed care and education of eight-year-old Zoe Coypel. Mrs. Coypel had little to do with her child, that is, until, "Mrs. Coypel saw Zoe as the path to Atlanta. She was convinced that the education and future of the child could make Coypel see the need of more money and wider opportunity" (p. 4). The implied inferiority of the Coypel's Black nurse assumed her inability to educate Zoe. The child became the path to the power her mother craved in Atlanta:

She therefore rather suddenly discovered that Zoe's education was being woefully neglected and that Negro nurse was the last person to be entrusted with any part of it. She dismissed the nurse and took increased and personal care of Zoe; read books and learned of Atlanta's new and efficient kindergartens and grades for white children. (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p.4)

Superintendent Coypel vacillated between Lanark and Atlanta. In Lanark, he made a "community of five thousand white people education conscious" (p. 4), in Atlanta he was unsure of any impact he might have. Unlike Jerusalem, Georgia, Lanark was a town of "well-to-do farmers and merchants in the commission business, and a few industries. There was no depressed white working class [...] Service and menial work

and common labor were performed by Negroes...from...town or the surrounding county” (p. 4). Most important was, that in a town with little socioeconomic variation, “the white people had become rather proudly aware of their schools. They paid their extra taxes quite willingly and the simple but beautiful high school on the main street was a source of great civic pride” (p. 4). Juxtapose this great sense of pride in Lanark, North Carolina with Manuel Mansart’s constant battle to locate materials, resources, technology, and space to service his Atlantan students. Concerned with the care and education of his daughter, Coypel assumed the Atlanta superintendency of Atlanta schools. His first course of business was to interview Manuel Mansart for the Superintendency of the colored schools.

Thirty-seven year old father of four and husband, Manuel Mansart found himself managing five dilapidated schools and 40,000 Black students. During his interview, he told Coypel how residential segregation trends allowed Blacks to assume entry into five twenty-year-old schools as new schools were being built in the newer, Whiter parts of the city. All five schools held a morning and an afternoon session to accommodate the Black student comprising one third of the entire student population in Atlanta public schools. Teachers were paid between \$800 and \$1000 with loads of “sixty to eighty and more pupils” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 10).

Coypel was different than Manuel expected. They were able to speak frankly about the state of education for Atlanta’s Black students. Coypel found Manuel “undoubtedly honest” (p. 10). Coypel saw, first-hand, how discrimination made obvious and discreet material differences in Black students’ lives. When compared to white schools, he observed,

“[o]n the other hand, one had to delve down in unpaved alleys or decadent streets to find the colored schools. Most of them were firetraps and unsanitary and the confusion of overcrowding made functioning impossible. The teachers were harassed or indifferent. The discipline was a matter of threats and yells and helplessness; and yet out of it and through it there was a certain push, spirit and inventiveness and uncurbed efficiency and a jolly spirit of comradeship. If all this was harnessed and housed, disciplined and directed...” (p. 12)

Coytel was disgusted by the vast differences between the education of white and Black Atlantans. He immediately phoned the mayor with budgetary appropriations to make the schools more equal.

Mayor Baldwin was outwardly sympathetic to Coytel’s concerns. Baldwin reassured him that his was “no ‘nigger hater,’” but he had little desire to know many Blacks (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 13). He acknowledged that Blacks were a permanent fixture in Atlanta and, though the Negro schools were “wretchedly neglected,” Mayor Baldwin told Coytel that Atlanta was still a “poor white town, and a poor white section.” Baldwin informs Coytel that it was his ultimate goal for Whites to excel Blacks past the point that Blacks could no longer keep up.

Like many major cities throughout the United States, Atlanta politics controlled the public schools. Black schools were given the short shrift in an effort to cultivate, build, and nurture white public education. Education was made Whites’ property right and a legally protected tool that ensured Whites’ continued social privilege and supremacy (Harris, 1995; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). This was the state of education Manuel Mansart inherited once he is named supervisor of Atlanta’s Negro schools.

### **“I Burn Slow”**

Manuel Mansart received a five hundred dollar pay increase once he was installed as the supervisor of the Negro schools in Atlanta. He was promised two new schools and a slight pay increase for the teachers. As Manuel assumed his new position, Atlanta and the world were rapidly changing.

The Great Fire of 1917 changed the face of Atlanta. Burning most of the fourth ward of the city, ten thousand African Americans were left homeless with damages totaling nearly \$5.5 million. The fire lasted eleven hours and “three hundred acres and three thousand dwellings; forty-two stores and three hundred and fifty garage sank to ashes” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 24). Across the country, race riots erupted in East St. Louis (1917), Houston (1917), Chicago (1918), and Washington D.C. (1919) along with the U.S. entering the first world war in 1917 “after furnishing food and arms to both sides for three years” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 25).

Both Douglass and Revels Mansart were drafted into World War I. “There was little chance for exemption, which white students easily got” (p. 29). The upholding of the fifteenth amendment to include Blacks in the armed forces was the “first real triumph of the NAACP” (p. 29). The race question plagued the United States as well as the country’s reach abroad. Amidst all of this, Manuel Mansart assumed the arduous task of educating Atlanta’s Black students.

As he conducted his first meeting as supervisor of Negro schools, he knew that many of the teachers resented his presence and position. “He knew that they were bringing to bear on him the resentment which they felt toward the whites but could not effectively express” (p. 39). So, Mansart organized a weekly meeting of teachers in his

home to discuss and research Negro history. Mansart uses the weekly study group to highlight the importance of the Harlem Renaissance to American literature and Black cosmopolitan resistance as well as the Niagara Movement to the NAACP and race relations.

Some viewed Booker T. Washington's death as the turn of "new education" in the South. Southern Blacks were disenfranchised and unable to guide the education of their children. As a result, White southerners assumed the responsibility of educating southern Blacks. Northern churches continued their philanthropy until World War I. After the war, though, the funds began to dry up due, in part, to the

increasing cost and partly because of the call of other causes, but also because the new South stridently promised to assume the burden of Negro schools provided southern advice and direction replaced northern. But for this the South asked a price: northern gifts must be handled by southern whites and white education must take precedence over Negro in time and cost. (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 64)

Southern whites controlled the education of and for all southerners. All many Blacks could do was idly suffer Whites' cruel and inhumane educational policies.

The great churches of the day, the Urban League and the NAACP stressed better education for Black folks, continuing the educational crusade since the Civil War. Public schools for Blacks across the country were in horrible disrepair and lacked resources in comparison to schools for White students and significantly fewer Black high schools (Du Bois, 1959/2007; Anderson, 1988). A part of the white Southern educational philosophy and psychology measured the merit of educational facilities by their property ownership, further casting poor Black education, people, and communities as inferior.

At the university level, Black colleges only received funding so that White colleges and universities could continue to receive federal funds. Federal stipulations demanded Black colleges receive funds, however the dispersion of federal funds was at the state's discretion. As John Baldwin tells Coypel, appointing Coypel to the chancellor of Fulton University, "What we'll try right off is to increase appropriations for white education to five million a year; and Negro appropriations to half a million" (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 68). Whether or not these words were actually verbalized, existing disparities among Black and White educational appropriations verified a system that spent \$1 on Black education to \$10 spent on White education.

Mansart was hired as the president of the new State School for Negroes. A part of Baldwin's plan to expand the university system was to "unite both private and state higher training for Negroes under single state control" (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 67). Baldwin appointed Coypel dean of the University of Georgia. As Coypel was appointed chair of a "powerful and well-financed committee of the proposed University System," he was also operationalized with the power of the purse (p. 66). Mansart was a figurehead. Coypel gave Mansart as much operational power as he can without creating large waves among the powerful Whites in Atlanta.

Many White trustees attempted to bribe Manuel to look the other way in running the school—both monetarily and socially. In a conversation with a contractor who sat on the state school's board of trustees, Manuel refused to immediately sign a contract without review and take the graft the contractor offered. Upon meeting Manuel, the white contractor greeted Manuel by his name—which indicated his view of Manuel as a man worthy of a name other than boy. Once Manuel asserted the power Coypel granted

him, the contractor threatened Mansart's job and referred to him as boy. As Manuel showed him that he was not easily led and would exercise his power as a man and official working on behalf of his students, the contractor threatened Mansart's ability to provide for his family and his manhood—thereby dehumanizing him and attacking his ability to care for his family. He excluded Manuel from ever, disregarding age, attaining and level of power, respect, culture, and privilege the man had to acknowledge let alone respect.

The board of trustees assumed Manuel Mansart could be bribed with money. His refusal to cooperate led the board to assume that Manuel was holding out for more money. When the assembled board offered Manuel more graft and he refused, they threatened his job and his life. Despite disrupting the board's plan to use federal funds to pay themselves, White contractors were hired to work on the Black state school at union wages. Black labor was denied participation in building the schools intended for their communities and their children.

Manuel spent a quarter of a century at the Georgia State Colored Agricultural and Mechanical School, from 1920 – 1946. He hoped his sons would join him the education of Black Atlanta. His sons, however, actively and enthusiastically pursued other avenues. His oldest son, Douglass, was interested in insurance. Revels, his second son, wanted to nothing more to do with the South and entered law school in New York. The third child, Bruce, was preparing for college but had not chosen a major. His youngest daughter “did not count,” but had an interest in music (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 72).

More broadly, history was separate, distorted; “there being the history of the colored world written and unwritten, and a general history of the white world which both worlds shared” (p. 73). Though colonialism and colonization the world over were



important, “it was, however, in Georgia a minor matter and aroused passing interest” (P. 75). Black Georgians had other, more pressing issues to be addressed. They pressed the legislature, “not so much to get it to do things for Negroes as to keep them from various kinds of new oppression” (p. 73).

This “New Education” Du Bois described, portended how Blacks would begin to use the political machine to increase funds for Black schools. Black folks used the vote to vote down bond issues aimed at advancing White schools. Manuel paid attention to this particular intersection of education and Southern politics.

### **Jean Du Bignon: The White Black Girl**

W.E.B. Du Bois (1959/2007) entitled the chapter that introduced Jean Du Bignon into the storyline as “the white black girl.” Du Bignon chose not to deny her African heritage despite her light complexion, much to the chagrin of her grandmother, Mère Du Bignon. The Du Bignon family had been established in Louisiana since the 17<sup>th</sup> century. There were white Du Bignons and Black Du Bignons—it was widely known among Louisianans. Jean, Du Bois explained, was neither Black nor white. Jean’s mother, Marie, married an “octaroon” from a neighboring plantation. She, also considered an “octaroon” or one-eighth Black, was the daughter of parents granted Whiteness. Her great-grandmother, Marie, however, was the offspring of Maurice, Mère Du Bignon’s son, and his Black concubine.

Jean Du Bignon’s character highlights the choice at the confluence of culture and color caste. Her character signifies the fluidity of racial boundaries and the flux of people caught on the fringe of social acceptance—too White to be Black and too Black to be White. Whites’ rejection of Jean and Blacks’ hesitancy to accept her emphasized the

many facets of the color-line. Jean nebulously confounds the color-line. Her racial ascription and affinity are compounded and countered by her sex and gender.

Jean immediately began to organize the front office for the State School. Du Bignon's skin privilege was made obvious, depending on who knew her heritage. She made no effort to hide her racial affiliation. She told her grandmother that her pursuit of doctoral training in Chicago was due to her interest "in this matter of colored people because they explain the whites" (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 83). Jean existed in a world without a color-line, not simply because she fit the outward requirements for Whiteness. Her experience of the world was not without difficulty. "Had she been black she would have encountered difficulties of one kind. Invariably, she was taken for white and then other difficulties arose. It was almost bitterly resented—by Blacks and Whites—when she made known her drop of Negro blood" (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 91).

Through it all, she made the administrator's office run smoothly. She hired new people and purchased new filing cabinets, typewriters, and increased office efficiency. She demanded respect for Mansart and his authority. She installed a lock on Mansart's door that she manipulated from her desk when White officials, asserting their privilege and supremacy, continued to barge in Manuel's office even after being told he was busy. She told a textbook distributor that though the school may receive excellent bargains, "But one bargain you refuse to give and that is the respect which is due a State official, and without which he cannot do his job. We'd rather pay more for books and less for insult" (p. 90). It was made obvious for both Whites and Blacks that perhaps Ms. Du Bignon "might wield more power on both sides of the color line than [...] suspected" (p. 90).

Manuel's tenure at Georgia A & M makes obvious just how Black colleges were indirectly and, sometimes, directly, run by Whites. Northern White philanthropists controlled Black colleges through donations and, in the South, White boards of trustees ran the state schools. "The new colored state colleges now arising in every Southern state had Negro presidents but they were usually, in law or in custom, subordinated to the presidents of corresponding white schools" (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 81). Both Blacks and Whites criticized State schools. Whites thought the schools' curricula were offering too much and Blacks thought the schools lacked aim. Mansart persevered. "Manuel was able to put into the institution the curriculum of a modern high school and in addition that of a college suited eventually to train men and women who could enter life and the graduate schools of the North" (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 97).

### **The Mansart Family**

President Manuel Mansart had to live strategically. From the way he chose members of the Board of Trustees to his religious affiliation, he was constantly negotiating his public face. Sometimes, he asked that his family acquiesce to his desire to maintain a particular balance between White and Black worlds—to satisfy as many people as possible to benefit students and their education. Slowly, the State School began to grow. Better teachers were hired for poor pay. Sports teams developed and garnered public attention. Manuel was well respected among his community. Throughout it all, Jean Du Bignon's service was invaluable, though she was "often a tired and lonesome worker" (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 111). Manuel's view of the Negro experience began to shift.

There had been a time when to himself the American Negro had appeared as a chosen people, a group dedicated to the emancipation of the dark and tortured people of the world. As he grew older, he realized that this was an exaggeration. Negroes were not exceptional in soul and sacrifice. They were just human. They had all human frailties, with some of the lower and meaner emphasized by what they had suffered. (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 111)

Mansart took on a different attitude toward Whites—they were not all sadists to be avoided. Under their “ruthless greed and sadism” concealed “human hearts and decent desires” (p. 111). Coypel continually renewed Manuel’s faith in decent Whites, which in turn, increased his steadfast dedication to Black education.

The strides Mansart made were often overshadowed by grim facts of the day. The same year Manuel assumed the presidency of the State School, there were sixty Blacks lynched that year. Of this national display of tortuous extermination particularly of Black men, through Manuel, Du Bois (1959/2007) intimated,

It would be difficult for an outsider to realize what lynching meant to the American Negro and how the number of lynchings served as a sort of barometer to [Mansart’s] hope and despair. No reliable records were kept before 1882, and even those afterward were not thoroughly established. In fact, every Negro knew killing of Negroes by mass murder was a long-ingrained habit in the South. (p. 112)

Du Bois offered another side of Whites that proved the conclusion Jean Du Bignon cited to her grandmother for pursuing a graduate degree: *Blacks explain the Whites*.

Many Blacks astutely described the harrowing experience of being Black in the United States. These accounts have not been circulated with White supremacist history that ignores the voices and experiences of the tortured and oppressed. *Mansart Builds a School* employs the Mansart children to show how the following generation appropriated and experienced the trauma of Southern caste and racialization.

Douglass Mansart was Manuel's oldest son. Once he returned from the war, he was eager to leave the South and begin his life as a businessman in the North. He arrived in Chicago just as the 1919 riot began. Shaken by the riot, Douglass returned to Atlanta to "study and work and plan a life" (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 116). Douglass sought to make enough money to buy his own liberation either in the United States or abroad. He studied his father's political position and found it wanting. Though his father wanted him to obtain a classical education, teach, and succeed him in running the State School and eventually the colored state university, Douglass "didn't want to live in the South, he didn't want to teach school, and indeed, if the truth were known, he didn't want to be a Negro. The only way of escaping the penalties of being black was to make money, and he proposed to devote his life to that" (p. 117).

Douglass wanted direct political power, unlike the indirect power granted his father. He was troubled when Virginian John Mitchell, Jr., the Black financier of the Mechanic Bank in Richmond, Virginia, and owner of Richmond's Black newspaper, "The Planet," was criminally charged and eventually bankrupted once Mitchell chose to buy and retain ownership of the White movie theater in downtown Richmond despite Whites' admonishment to sell the theater back to their community.

Douglass watched as his mentor, Stanley Perry—a Black man, lost his insurance company after state officials found the Standard Life reserves impaired and increased his stock, forcing him to increase the number of shares available for sale. White investors secured majority interest in Perry’s companies and “thus into the hands of the whites disappeared a colored insurance company with paid up capital of \$250,000 and over \$30,000,000 worth of insurance in force, and \$4,000,000 in assets” (p. 122). After the demise of Mitchell and Perry, Douglass leaves Macon after a tense exchange with his father. Manuel goes to see a racist labor leader to unite white labor with Black labor. Douglass observed his father leaving through the side door of the building and confronted him the following morning.

He told Mansart that he was thoroughly ashamed of him; that he had lost the respect which he had once had because he had found out that his father was a coward and a lick-spittle, an Uncle Tom and a white folks’ “nigger”; that whatever he had accomplished for this state school, and he may have accomplished something, he had paid too much for. He had bought it at a price which was the betrayal of the manhood of his race. For a person in his position to ride up on a freight elevator and beg crumbs from a professional low-born “nigger”-hater was the last straw. He Douglass, was leaving the South forever.

Mansart listened and made no answer. He said simply, as Douglass went out: “Good-bye, my boy, and good luck!” And then alone, he bowed his head upon the table and his shoulders shook. (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 130)

In 1928, Douglass Mansart was elected alderman in Chicago, Illinois.

Upon returning from the war, Revels Mansart determined to attend college, law school, and sit on the bench. “He was going to work, not for humanity nor for ‘his people,’ but for Revels Mansart” (p. 146). After returning from the war, he married a White woman and the first year of marriage “could only be described as combination of Heaven and Hell for the young couple” (p. 149). Financial difficulties coupled with social isolation forced the couple to divorce. Revels finished college and law school. He set up practice with two other attorneys—one Irish, the other Jewish. Mansart took an unusual case of an Indian merchant from Calcutta. While working on the case, he was approached by a White army acquaintance, Clayton. The two agree to steal a keg supposedly filled with Confederate gold. Clayton promises Mansart \$5,000 if he secured the keg.

Revels switched the keg with another keg full lead and waste and kept the original keg for himself. He kept the keg as collateral in case he ever needed to use the gold. He doesn’t though, as the Indian merchant received a large settlement and paid Revels well. As a result of the lavish settlement, Revels entertained a wide variety of friends, married a schoolteacher, and adopted a child. He was appointed to the bench and “gradually recognized as one of the best magistrates of the city” (p. 164). He decried placing his son in New York City public schools. “In Harlem, the meager number of school buildings were overcrowded by the regular colored inhabitants who were average workers and servants but increasingly overwhelming by poor, and ignorant migrants from the South” (p. 166). He proposed to move to Westchester, but his wife rejected the idea. The family remained in Harlem.

Bruce Mansart was Manuel's youngest son and second youngest child. He was an excellent quarterback and took little interest in schooling. He was interested in electricity. Only fifteen when his brothers were drafted, Bruce was very lonely and distraught. "Between football and his private experiments in electricity, his life was passed" (p. 134). Bruce met Zoe Coypel on three different occasions. The first time they met, twelve-year-old Bruce carried Zoe to safety after the young girl began to cross a busy highway. Mrs. Coypel admonished Bruce, telling him to "never touch a white girl" (p. 134)! Bruce and Zoe met once again. Taken with each other, they share a profound bond as they gazed into each other's eyes. The gaze, a second too long, was followed by a racially motivated brawl. Bruce was the quarterback for the State College, and Zoe's boyfriend is quarterback for Tech—the White school.

A football player for the White team accused Bruce of crowding Zoe off the sidewalk and a fight ensued. As a result, several Black players were taken into police custody and released. The police, however, kept Bruce. "Once in the city jail, Officer Branigan took off his coat, rolled up his sleeves, and with the help of his fellow officers beat Bruce until he was insensible. Bruce was never again the same person" (p.136). As a favor to Coypel, the governor placed a telephone call to the presiding judge and Bruce was released with a fine of \$500. Though Manuel wrote a check, they were wont to wait to receive cash from the bank—an insult to Manuel's credibility and integrity.

Bruce left Georgia and never returned. He suffered consistent migraines as a result of the police brutality. He eventually gave up. He summoned the police, "he confessed not simply to the murder of the man on the floor but to the murder of the white guard in Birmingham and his escape from the prison. He also told them frankly that



there was a third murder but the time and place of that he would not confess” (p. 144). Bruce Mansart was convicted of his confessed crimes and sentenced to death. He was, “a cold-blooded, self-confessed murderer, a man broken in strength and ability early in his manhood. He gave promise of nothing but a life of crime” (p. 144). Mansart eventually claimed the body of his youngest son. Manuel, in order to save his social position, told the school and the town that Bruce died of pneumonia. He was the son his mother worshipped and the son Manuel could not come to fully discipline. The victim of a self-inflicted suicide, his voice soft and his manner so gentle, “even the white world felt his charm” (p. 134).

The chapter dedicated to Bruce Mansart was entitled, “The Beautiful Brown Boy.” The chapter describing Sojourner Mansart was titled, “The Homely Black Girl.” Throughout the novel, Sojourner Mansart was mentioned as a mentionable afterthought. There was little positive in the text about the youngest Mansart child other than she was not remarkable. In fact, Du Bois (1959/2007) used much of the chapter to detail the background of the man Sojourner eventually married. She was an accomplished violinist and married Roosevelt Wilson, a Baptist minister.

### **The Psychic Detriment of Colonization**

The Mansart children illustrate a few of the overarching attitudes and circumstances of the generation of Blacks following the generation Emancipation freed. Douglass, though seemingly named for abolitionist and former slave Frederick Douglass, had no desire to succeed his father or *to be Negro*. Douglass pursued money and politics to buy himself out of his racialized status. Juxtapose Douglass’s rejection of being Negro with his berating of his father’s pandering—calling him the White man’s “nigger” for the

social, political, and education uplift of Blacks and betraying his manhood. How is it possible that a man who had no desire to be Black and wished to buy his way out racial oppression, blamed his father for his betrayal of his manhood, when Douglass's beliefs and actions mimicked his father's?

Both Manuel and Douglass illustrate DeGruy Leary's (2005) discussion of disrespect as an attack on one's manhood. Manuel was willing to sacrifice his manhood to obtain more for the greater good—much like Manuel's father selflessly sacrificed his own life. DeGruy Leary (2005) writes,

Issues of respect and disrespect are central to the African American experience. A history as a people of hundreds of years of slavery, Jim Crow, the Klan, lynching, police brutality and the like would certainly have some influence on such perceptions. Add to this our personal experience of the injustice that runs throughout American society and it is not surprise that we are hypersensitive about matters of respect. (p. 175)

Douglass's hypersensitivity and inability to deal with and surmount normalized racial disrespect forced him from the South forever. Moreover, he maligned his father's actions and left, destroying Manuel's hope of a successor. Education disinterested Douglass. Though he imagined a windfall to be made with products concerning education, he was not drawn to the field or the profession. This may be attributed to the disrespect he observed his father withstand in order to provide an education for generations of Blacks.

DeGruy Leary's (2005) doctoral research on the connection between African Americans and historical trauma proved that disrespect

was as responsible for violent behavior as being the victim of, or witnessing violent acts. Being disrespected was more responsible than being the effect of the daily stressors that go with living in urban settings. I also found that issues of respect to be the most significant antecedent in the expression of violence. (p. 169)

Though Douglass refrained from violence, he verbally abused his father and left in a fit of anger. A bitter rejection of southern disrespect prompted Douglass to continue with his plan to earn enough money to no longer endure any harm to or disrespect of his masculinity. Douglass conflated his masculinity with his humanity. Douglass most desires the recognition of his humanness. To term it masculinity, denies women their humanity placing greater emphasis on the affirmation of socially accepted gender performances. Bruce Mansart's life, on the other hand, ends a long-standing battle with societal disrespect and victimization.

Bruce represents the following generation's interaction with racialization and criminalization of Black men. Bruce is "the beautiful brown boy"—athletic, charismatic, undisciplined, and spoiled. His grades at the state school are barely above passing and those passing marks he received due to the respect owed his father as president of the state school. Du Bois (1959/2007) uses Bruce's athleticism to critique the place athletics occupied at the collegiate level. Du Bois vis-à-vis Mansart thought athletics to be "distracting and costly and led to complications. Whatever educational value they might have could be better obtained by real work" (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 133).

Bruce had few choices. His interest in electricity remained dormant, unchallenged. "A laboratory for physics would have been heaven, but the colored high

school had no apparatus and the private collection which Bruce could amass was very unsatisfactory” (p. 133 – 134). Suffering the trauma of both of his older brothers being drafted and with little creative outlet, Bruce preferred athletics to general studies. This was in direct opposition to what his father wanted for him. “He wanted Bruce to begin to think of his life work as he would probably graduate the next year [in 1925]” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 133)

For most of his life, Bruce was traumatized. His brothers left him for the war at fifteen. He was a favorite of his eldest brother, Douglass. Douglass returned to Georgia, but not for long. Bruce was never able to realize his full potential. The lack of financial resources and social inequality denied him the opportunity pursue his academic interests. After saving Zoe Coypel from crossing a crowded highway, Mrs. Coypel admonished both Zoe and Bruce yelling: ““Baby, aren’t you ashamed of yourself! Get out, boy! Don’t you ever dare touch a white girl” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 134)! In his second meeting with Zoe Coypel, Bruce is traumatically brutalized by the police. As a result, he “was never again the same person [...] His spirit was twisted, his disposition soured. There was the headache that never left him, always hurt, and at times changed from faint discomfort to a piercing flame that drove him half insane” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 136). Interestingly enough, the Black flame that his father became is the flame that drives Bruce nearly insane.

When the pain of his headaches “beat him toward unconsciousness he knew just what [he was sworn to do]: he was going to kill a policeman and rape a white girl. He just had to or he could not live” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 139). He was wrongfully imprisoned, accused of stealing, unable to secure regular work as an electrician without

drawing the threat of harm from White laborers. It is little wonder why Bruce, a young man barely over the age of twenty-five, felt he had been “beaten by life” (p. 144).

Bruce suffered from vacant esteem (DeGruy Leary, 2005). After killing a police officer and meeting Zoe Coypel for the third time, Bruce tried to “persuade himself that the vengeance which his manhood absolutely demanded was now settled and that he was going to begin an honest life under his own name” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 146). The pressure is too great and Bruce invites his own suicide, confessing to crimes he had evaded with an alias. Similar to today’s youth, Bruce’s character illustrates the fulfillment of Black men looking to die.

These are desperate young men, believing that there is no hope of a future. They neither think nor care about their lives a year from now, let alone five, ten, or fifteen. Few of them expect to live past their early twenties. Life for them is to be lived until they go to prison or get killed. The despair among many youth in inner-city communities runs deep. Many of them have seen more poverty, violence, and degradation than any child should ever see. They are not afraid to die. They are afraid to live. It is a testament to their strength that any one of them ever makes it out. Invited suicide is one indication of vacant esteem. (DeGruy Leary, 2005, p. 132)

Bruce assuaged his manhood and disrespect through murdering a police officer and nearly raping Zoe Coypel. Douglass sought to establish his manhood through money and politics. Manuel overlooked his masculinity for the advancement of the education of his people. Revels Mansart sought to have “a decent life in spite of American color prejudice” (p. 146). Each Black man, in their own way, experienced vacant esteem, ever

present anger, and racist socialization. All three converge in the case of Sergeant Caldwell.

Caldwell, stationed in Anniston, Georgia, found himself kicked from a train car. The conductor and motorman approached the sergeant, brandishing weapons with every intent to do further bodily harm. The officer pulled his revolver and killed the conductor and wounded the motorman. His right to a military trial was ignored. He was tried in a civilian court, found guilty, and sentenced to death by hanging. Just before his sentenced was carried out, Caldwell said:

“I am being sacrificed today upon the altar of passion and racial hatred that appears to be the bulwark of America’s civilization. If it would alleviate the pain and sufferings of my race, I would count myself fortunate in dying, but I am but one of the many victims among my people who are paying the price of America’s mockery of law and dishonest in her profession of a world democracy.” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 113)

Though this is not what DeGruy Leary (2005) labels ever present anger, there is a matter of fact manner that many Blacks hold in response to the inequality and injustice they experience living in the United States. Caldwell’s awareness of the place that he occupies is clear; he is conscious of being sacrificed for America’s dishonesty and mockery of the law. This “unveiled contempt” for the system that disallows Blacks their humanity seems to share sway with ever present anger as a manifestation of PTSS.

Manuel, particularly, endured racist socialization at home and at work. As he conducted his first meeting as supervisor of Negro schools, he knew that many of the teachers resented his presence and position. “He knew that they were bringing to bear on

him the resentment which they felt toward the whites but could not effectively express” (p. 39). DeGruy Leary (2005) asserts that Blacks inability to celebrate the successes of other Black is racist socialization. She argues that these feelings of racist socialization are understood,

When viewed from a historical perspective, it is understandable why African Americans tend to feel threatened by the accomplishments of one another. As stated earlier, slaves were divided in many different respects: the house slave from the field slave, the mixed race slave from the black slave, etc. These different designations meant the access to, or the denial of, privileges and it was common practice for slave owners to set one class of slave against another.

(DeGruy Leary, 2005, p. 141)

A profound sense of competition among slaves prompted feelings of jealousy, bitterness, and resentment that Du Bois illustrated in *Mansart Builds a School*. The “crabs in a barrel” mindset serves to protect those slaves and, eventually, generations of free Black from fear of being alienated, inadequate, and inferior.

DeGruy Leary (2005) explains that the promotion of a Black colleague is often viewed as betrayal to some of the other Black employees. We have been trained and acculturated to “believe that black people are at the lowest level of progress and achievement, that we are lazy, untrustworthy and criminal. So it follows reason that when someone black is promoted over another black person, the person left behind experiences a profound sense of inferiority” (DeGruy Leary, 2005, p. 166). Manuel Mansart, as superintendent of the colored schools in Atlanta, was quite different from his predecessor.

After the death of John James, Manuel applies for his position as superintendent of colored schools. Manuel interviews with Coypel, an Atlanta implant, who has no idea of the state of education in Atlanta, specifically for Black students. Coypel didn't expect the size of the Black student population nor did he realize that "their schools must engage much of his attention and plans" (p. 8). Raising the concern with the mayor, John Baldwin described John James and the type of superintendent he wished would replace James. James was,

"Good old 'nigger,' of the old faithful sort. Sorry to lose him."

"Who was he?"

"Superintendent in charge of the colored schools."

"Oh, you have a colored superintendent?"

"Oh, just a name—no power; just a figurehead to save the Superintendent from annoyance. We have now an application from the ranking principal of the colored schools to succeed and that poses a problem."

"Is he a good man?"

"Yes and no. He's pretty well trained—graduated from Atlanta University and has done some graduate study there [...] This colored principal is named Manuel Mansart. I met him once when he came to Princeton with his colored singers. Later I helped him to his first job. He's done pretty good work here, but I don't know. He's got brains and ideas. He can't be treated like old James. But how can we treat him and not run into trouble? We can't have a firebrand on our hands. If he gets the appointment he's got to be a 'good nigger' or go. So that's your problem, Coypel. Go to it." (p. 9)



Although Manuel's new position seemed to generate ire and jealousy from his colleagues, he had only as much power as Coypel would allow. Manuel was labeled a firebrand—what could be more fitting for the *Black Flame*.

### **The Mansarts and Education**

The education of the Mansart children had emphasized being unselfish, not lying, nor cheating, nor stealing. Yet much of this moral teaching was nullified by the example of the surrounding white world. (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 146)

Revels Mansart was the only Mansart child to finish college and earn an advanced degree. Douglass took classes upon returning to Atlanta shortly after witnessing the Chicago riot. Bruce never finished his course at the State School. For the most part, Sojourner Mansart was overlooked and ignored. “Her mother ostentatiously neglected her and her father, when he remembered, overdid his efforts to be nice, which Sojourner was sure came not from wish but rather from his sense of duty” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 170). Mansart longed for his two older sons to receive a classical education and join him in running the State School and eventually the colored college. In a letter to his first-born son returning from World War I, Manuel writes,

“I write this specially to urge you to think of the future. There seems to be a pretty good chance of something unusual happening to me, and I want you to be a part of it. I wish you would hurry home and finish your college course at Atlanta, then perhaps go north for some post-graduate work, and by that time I may be able to find a place, and an important place for you.” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 114)

The Mansart children reject the very profession that provided the lives to which they had become accustomed. Education, for Douglass, was not financially lucrative and could not provide him with the currency necessary to purchase his manhood and racial liberation. Revels used education to his advantage to make a life for himself and his family.

After opening his own practice, Revels married a schoolteacher and adopted a child. His encounter with the white world gave him great anxiety. “What galled and cut him to the bone was the fact the he was still an outsider; that always, no matter what his accomplishment or position, a colored man was not counted as a man” (Du Bois, 1959/2077, p. 165). He was excluded from social clubs and “that meant more than denial of natural ambition or of comfort or loafing [...] One could not get a hold of private information or secure the personal influence which was often so necessary” (p. 165). Social contacts were vital to success. Though Revels Mansart had no problems securing a living for his family, his exclusion prompted thinking around the education of his son.

Unlike the day that Manuel Mansart walked into his interview for the Superintendent of the Colored Schools in Atlanta, think that “[h]is oldest boys would expect his father to knuckle under to the whites” (p. 10), Revels planned to give his child a quality education. New York public schools were overcrowded and “[a]s it was, the public schools of Harlem were no place for Mansart’s boy” (p. 166). His wife, however, changes his mind. She challenges his belief that schools in the suburbs of Westchester were better than those of Harlem.

“In some ways [Westchester schools will be better], of course. In others, they will face him with race and class problems. He is twelve and entering high school

in new and unexpected circumstances. From being first and envied among poor colored children, he will be last and an outsider in a new world. The teachers will resent a Negro in their classes. The parents will rage and complain. The students, just at the cruel age of adolescence, will leave him outside of their thought and action. They will crucify him.” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 168)

This is precisely the fate of the children of desegregation after the implementation of *Brown v. The Board of Education*.

### **CRT: Interest Convergence, Whiteness as Property, and Gradualism**

A dominant Southern white philosophy was that educational facilities should be measure by ownership of property. The rich should have good schools; the poor, bad schools or none. This was heritage from slavery. It was modified after 1880; the whites should have the better schools because they pay most of the taxes and have better brains; Negroes should have schools, but schools suited to their needs and these needs corresponded with the demands of white employers for profit.

Here the Hampton and Tuskegee philosophy saw eye to eye with Big Business. (p. 65)

Du Bois (1959/2007) uses this conversation with the Chinese ambassador to illustrate interest convergence. Derrick Bell (2004) states interest convergence in two rules:

*Rule 1.* The interest of blacks in achieving racial equality will be accommodated only when that interest converges with the interests of whites in policy-making positions. This convergence is far more important for gaining relief than the

degree of harm suffered by blacks or the character of proof offered to prove that harm.

*Rule 2.* Even when interest-convergence results in an effective racial remedy, that remedy will be abrogated at the point that policymakers fear the remedial policy is threatening the superior societal status of whites, particularly those in the middle and upper classes. (p. 69)

Du Bois intertwines interest convergence with the gradual, or liberal, approach to equality in a conversation between the Chinese ambassador; Oswald Villard, who was “not only liberal by birth, but his other grandfather represented Big Business” as well as being the president of the NAACP and Booker T. Washington’s close friend; and Hamilton Wright Mabie, editor of “the widely influential” *Outlook* (p. 62). In the conversation among men, Mabie indicated that it was impossible to maintain democracy and maintain the Negro as “a second class citizen, disenfranchised and lynched” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 63). Villard maintains that allowing the Negro to raise himself, albeit slowly, was working until

“The Boston contingent led by [William Monroe] Trotter and Ida Wells Barnett refused to cooperate. A less radical group joined, but they came to lead, not to follow, to tell us, not to listen. Through the *Crisis*, they took over the policy of the NAACP and demanded not only equality before the law for Negroes and the right to vote, but as they brazenly proclaimed, ‘every right which belongs to an American citizen’” (p. 63).

Villard, in the interaction Du Bois (1959/2007) described, seemed to desire a diffident approach to Blacks’ demand for equality. The idea that Blacks could be brazen in the

demand for equality is an interesting view of equality. For many, equality is not something to work toward. Based upon the democratic aims of this society as delineated in the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, equality is not bestowed, but rather, it simply is. The oppressed/liminal experience of recently freed men and women sought to show the persisting injustice of the existing legal and social doctrine—a doctrine that forced Blacks to follow and not lead, to listen and not alert.

CRT makes clear the ways in which an aggressive social approach would demand social, legal, and political equality for all American citizens regardless of culture or color or comfort of and for the white majority. This contradicts the very fiber of a White supremacist society that must be consulted in order for Blacks to obtain the level of citizenship that Whites would be most comfortable with. Many Blacks sought to clearly express their tyrannized experiences living in a White supremacist society with the expectation that change would soon follow given the democratic and egalitarian creed the country's binding documents espoused. That, however, was not the case. These liberal enticements, while championing equality, were not intended to be fully realized by Black Americans or other subjugated groups. The Chinese ambassador asked if Blacks went too far in their assertion of equality and demand for full citizenship. Villard answers, "Not perhaps too far, but certainly too fast" (p. 63).

Peggy McIntosh (2000) describes white privilege while reifying the structure of white supremacy in the United States. McIntosh (2000) explains white privilege as, an invisible package of unearned assets which [she] can count on cashing in each day, but about which [she] was 'meant' to remain oblivious. White privilege is like a weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides,

codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks” (p. 148).

The conversation Du Bois describes among Villiard, Mabie, and Wu Ting Fang, Chinese ambassador, is a discussion of White privilege and the entrenchment of White supremacy in the United States.

The idea that Blacks must ask for equality in a way that does not affront White Americans or to wait for Whites to become socially acclimatized to social equality for all. This assumes that equality is a property right that is determined and bestowed according to one’s skin color and, if someone is not of an appropriate hue, social institutions and structures as well as personal attitudes and behaviors determine who is deemed human and worthy of social equality.

Assuming that Blacks must ask or should ask for equality reifies the cultural believe in Blacks’ inhumanity. The presumption is that Blacks would ask Whites to bestow or concede Blacks humanity—in either scenario Whites are afforded the mystical authority to determine what it is that makes another human. Further, having to ask for permission to be human encompasses an approach to gradualism that CRT critiques. Du Bois, (1944/1985) explained,

We Negroes who in the last half century have convinced ourselves of our equality with mankind and our ability to share modern culture, scarcely realize how high a wall of prejudice based on color we have still to surmount today. This makes us all the more eager to force recognition of our worth, and too often forgetful of how the burden rests on us as all peoples, to increase and increase rapidly and widely among the masses of people within our group who are still depressed in

poverty, ignorance, and disease, and incapable of adding to the total of the emerged classes, the ability, physical strength and spiritual wealth, of which they are possessed. (p. 235)

The demand for humanity demands the recognition of worth that Blacks should not seek from Whites. Whites cannot bestow anything of worth on another human being that they cannot grant themselves. Requesting humanity will guarantee its void. A person is— with or without the validation of another. The demand for humanity implies that it was a quality never possessed. This is yet another insidious function of racist socialization and the manifestation of multigenerational trauma Blacks experience as the result of racialization and colonization as assessed by PTSS.

### **Conclusion: Colonialism, Colonization, and Decolonization**

Vitally important to education and social progress, the influence of the *Brown* decision is vast and far-reaching. The 1954 Supreme Court decision historically, socially, epistemologically, ideologically, and methodologically changed how students were educated. Identifying a theory of domination present in education since emancipation is imperative to our understanding and remedying colonialism and colonization in education. Du Bois (1944/1985) contends that the indicators of colonialism and semicolonialism are varied, yet “before we generalize, make comparison and seek remedies, we must stop to examine certain specific types of colonial countries” (p. 230). The law becomes the stage on which large social ideals are played out and education is the proving ground for the manifestation of the law (*de jure*) that undergirds existing (*de facto*) white supremacy that the law favors lighter complexioned human beings’ White superiority.

Nationally recognized and well-funded action from the executive office countered *de facto* and *de jure* social precedents. As Whiteness as property and social privilege was observed in the way the law has protected or ignored Whites' threatening Blacks with the risk of grotesque physical harm and social domination. This is the interest convergence Derrick Bell (2004) labels *Brown* as well as the *Emancipation Proclamation* in his book *Silent Covenants*. *Silent Covenants* illustrates the ways in which *Brown v. The Board of Education* benefited melanin-rich human beings only when other melanin-depleted humans stood to purposely and inherently benefit more. Describing a letter Lincoln wrote to *New York Tribune* editor, Horace Greeley, Bell (2004) writes,

Here was, for perhaps the first and last time, a president of the United States acknowledging that the civil rights of blacks, even the basic right not to be a slave in a society dedicated to individual liberty, must take a lower priority to the preservation of the Union. (p. 54)

Lincoln's motivation for the *Emancipation Proclamation* was he presumed to be in the best interest of the polity and less centered on his own moral turpitude.

The *Brown* decision opens education up to a discussion surrounding interest convergence theory in education. This decision placed education as the social foundation upon which equality could be achieved. Du Bois (1944/1985) demands the investigation of phenomena before seeking remedies. Therefore a detailed theory of domination should be observed. Du Bois' *Black Flame* trilogy offers the development of domination present in the educational system since Emancipation.

Racialization was, initially, the quasi-biological process of creating a horizontal caste for social control divided according to the varying presence of melanin.



Racialization served as the foundation for colonialism. Colonization is the standardization of the process of domination. Du Bois' (1959/2007) *Mansart Builds a School* showed how domination through racialization is standardized as a public school administrator and college official. Manuel Mansart, the novels' protagonist, observed the process of standardized colonization one generation removed from slavery, from the beginning of the twentieth century to just after the stock market crash in 1932.

As Collier (1905) suggests, civilization is in the mind of the colonizer. As long as the colonizer is willing to murder in order to maintain and assert privilege, the colonizer will always reign supreme. The respect for life and the will to live often changes the idea of civilization for the colonizer. The colonized come to see themselves through the eyes of the colonizer. Whiteness allows some colonizers to boldly ask and answer *what can I get away with?* Franz Fanon (1963) provides an answer, "The settler pits brute force against the weight of numbers. He is an exhibitionist" (p. 54). This exhibitionism includes horrific acts of unbridled murder and rape specifically targeting darker hued humans. Manuel Mansart's life observes the experience of unbridled pure hate and disregard for entire groups of people based upon race "...for race was not color; it was inborn oneness of spirit and aim and wish" (p.88). Either one demands humanity for all, or they are murderous exhibitionists—despite their racial affiliation.

Reiland Rabaka (2007) critiques postcolonial theorists asserting that colonialism has ended or that independence from European colonizers has been established and upheld. It is impossible for one group to gain independence from another or for a particular behavior to end when there is little agreement as to the behaviors and thought processes that categorically define colonialism. For the purposes of this chapter, the

common characteristics of colonialism as defined by W. E. B. Du Bois (above) assists in better understanding colonialism in this context. Further, all of these characteristics are found in many urban schools with higher concentrations of students of color qualifying for free and/or reduced lunch.

Some willingly entertain the ways in which colonization has impacted their existence while others ignore the price paid by others for their unearned privilege and will to benefit from the oppression and dehumanization of others. Regardless of relationship with privilege and subjugation—all Whites benefit. Some Whites benefit more than others, but for the most part, all Whites benefit. Though science has attempted to justify White supremacy and superiority, race is not a biological category. In fact, science has proven just how similar human beings are, with only one hundredth of a percent accounting for the genetic variation among Homo Sapiens (Jablonski, 2006).

Lemert and Bahn (1998) speculate that Anna Julia Cooper writes “On Education” sometime in the 1930s. Possibly a foreword for an uncompleted book on education or a speech, Cooper describes the ultimate goals and achievement of education. Cooper (1998b) speaks of educating the whole man to “insure the highest return of the entire product as its best” (p. 249). The highest return Cooper refers to ensures that the training of the mind, body, and spirit will “convert [ ] him into a beneficent force in the service of the world” (p. 250). More than using education “to enable a man to increase his salary or find a better paying position” (Woodson, 1933/1990), Cooper calls teachers to minister the “Gospel of intelligence” especially for

a people whose need it greater than the average need around by reason of past neglect,—a people who are habitually reasoned about *en masse* as separate,

distinct, and peculiar; a people who must be fitted to make headways in the face of prejudice and proscription the most bitter, the most intense, the most unrelenting the world has ever seen” (p. 250).

Here, Cooper establishes the connection among culture, education, and trauma. She illumined the wretchedness of racism and its affect and effect on Blacks. Though Cooper does not directly refer to the dangers of racism as trauma, she highlights the much-needed care for a people who carry the weight of racial condemnation that enabled men to lynch for sport, rape, and starve children, women, and men.

Cooper fills out Du Bois’ theory of double consciousness. Du Bois (1903/2003) describes double consciousness as the war many Blacks find themselves torn between an American identity that boasts superiority world-wide and a Black identity that stamps each individual with a badge of inferiority. From the fray, Blacks have been little able to forge a true self-consciousness. Cooper acknowledges Blacks as neglected people who persist to progress in spite of the plague of racism. She calls for affirmative action in the way of care for the bloodletting of a group of people who continue to forge ahead in the pursuit of genuine equality.

We too often bide our time counting and ordering past occurrences, events, and experiences hoping to find nonexistent liberation in an inescapable cycle of systemic defining, classifying, and explaining of past phenomena—a search for a theory to explain away our past. Du Bois (1896/2007) calls us from this knotty tangle, by helping us to understand ourselves as a progressive people who should not shrink from large societal issues that brands our knotty social fabric. Ending several hundred years of the African slave-trade was not a moral or ethical victory. Few white Americans expressed disgust

with the lack of decency and ethicality in the utter dehumanization of millions of enslaved people across centuries, the world over.

With the faith of the nation broken at the very outset, the system of slavery untouched, and twenty years' respite given to the slave-trade to feed and foster it, there began, with 1787, a system of bargaining, truckling, and compromising with a moral, political, and economic monstrosity, which makes the history of our dealing with slavery in the first half of the nineteenth century so discreditable to a great people. Each generation sought to shift its load upon the next, and the burden rolled on, until a generation came which was both too weak and too strong to bear it longer. One cannot, to be sure, demand of whole nations exceptional moral foresight and heroism; but a certain hard common-sense in facing the complicated phenomena of political life must be expected in every progressive people. In some respects we as a nation seem to lack this; we have the somewhat inchoate idea that we are not destined to be harassed with great social questions, and that even if we are, and fail to answer them, the fault is with the questions and not with us. Consequently we often congratulate ourselves more on getting rid of a problem than on solving it. Such an attitude is dangerous; we have and shall have, as other peoples have had, critical, momentous, and pressing questions to answer. The riddle of the Sphinx may be postponed, it may be evasively answered now; sometime it must be fully answered. (Du Bois, 1896/2007, p. 137)

Our attempts to refashion education in our current context could help us to end the consistent and persistent process of colonization both in the United State and abroad.

## Chapter 6: The Color of the World

### Introduction

It is difficult to characterize a nation. Hardly any classification of its motives is all wrong; none is completely right. The only final judgment is what happens and that is difficult to see as whole and grasp entire. Complete and accurate measurement of what men do is not attempted; it is not even envisioned as possible or desirable. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 22)

Racialization and colonization are processes of colonialism. More contemporary definitions of globalization refer to the reach and standardization of colonialism around the world. The slave-trade and slavery were part-and-parcel of British colonial dominance. Once slavery was established in the United States, the racialization process occurred to further reify and make tangible the privileges associated with White supremacy. After racialization was established, the perpetuation of the colonial structure demanded the colonization of Blacks. Similar to the application of worldwide colonialism, the United States set the precedent for socially entrenching colonization that permeated all areas of colonial life. For the purposes of this chapter, the worldwide extension of national infrastructure defines globalization.

*Worlds of Color*, the final novel in W.E.B. Du Bois' *Black Flame* trilogy, contextualized the United States' culture and social organization among the cultures and social networks of the world. More than a simple comparative study, Du Bois attempts to, as written in the chapter's epigraph, "see as whole and grasp entire." In *Worlds of Color*, Du Bois attempted to share his *understanding* of the world not simply to compare bits and piece of it.

At the end of *Mansart Builds a School*, Mansart was puzzled. Students were, more and more, unable to pay already low fees. Many enrolled to avert unemployment. The college became more of a relief agency rather than a meeting place of ideas. This was precisely the reason that made “teaching these youngsters what was happening to the world, all the more pressing” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 261). Manuel wanted to see the world to understand it, if it were to ever unite. Though he felt disconnected, he knew that there was something he could and needed to learn from the world.

Here, more than ever, he felt how cut off he was from the real world. He was in a world apart—a worthy world, a world which must and would survive and yet, if it was to become a part of the white world, these worlds must understand each other increasingly. And they did not. (p. 261).

*Worlds of Color* demystifies the world from which Manuel felt estranged.

W.E.B. Du Bois was an avid traveller. Of his travels, Du Bois (1960/ 2001) writes, “I took a trip recently that lasted nearly a year. I have already traveled widely. I had been to Europe fifteen times. I had been to Asia. I had circled the world” (p. 200). It is no surprise that W.E.B. Du Bois would write a book like *World of Color*. The first two novels in the *BFT* illustrate the ways racialization and colonization, tools of White supremacy, worked in tandem to dehumanize Blacks. The third novel contextualized racialization, colonization, and dehumanization among the experiences of the peoples of the world.

Without knowledge of the world, Manuel’s education was singular in focus—specifically regarding the Negro Problem. Du Bois (1961/2007) discussed Manuel’s simple approach to the Race Problem as the confluence of education and morality. “The

Race Problem encompassed more than that—it included the role of industry, the plight of the worker, and the work of the trade union” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 7). The Negro was at a disadvantage. Du Bois (1960/2001) wrote, three years before his death and just over fifty years ago, that the United States was losing its influence in the world.

There was a time when as leader of a new democracy, as believers in a new tolerance in religion, and as a people basing their life on equality of opportunity, in the ownership of land and property, the United States of America stood first in the hopes of mankind. That day has passed. (Du Bois, 1960/2001, p. 200)

Americans yearn and thirst for democracy, yet democracy, as Du Bois observed, in the U.S. disappeared, if it ever truly existed (Du Bois, 1960/2001).

In the late 1950s Du Bois took a trip that altered his views of the world. Of his travels to England, Holland, France, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, Germany, the Soviet Union, and the Chinese Republic, Du Bois (1960/2001) wrote,

It radically changed my whole point of view. I saw first that America and its actions since the First World War was thoroughly condemned by the civilized world; that no other country was so disliked and hated. The British and the Dutch while restraining their expression of dislike behind good manners and for fear of our wealth and power, nevertheless, did not like America or Americans. That the French could hardly mention Americans without calling them dirty; that the people of Czechoslovakia and Germany blamed America for the cruelties which they suffered and for the difficulties which they were facing. That the 200 million people in the Soviet Union regard Americans as their greatest threat and the 680

millions of China hate America with perfect hatred for treating them as subhuman. (p. 201)

Du Bois was well aware of the anti-American sentiment in the mid-twentieth century. Though the *BFT* was written in the years before the writing of this last passage, the attitudes and antipathies other countries held toward the U.S. did not fester overnight—nor have they dissipated to any great degree.

*Worlds of Color* accomplished what Du Bois (1944/1985) instructed nearly twenty years prior to its publishing. The effects of colonialism and colonization were omnipresent throughout the world. Colonial and quasi-colonial people were impoverished, illiterate, unlearned, disenfranchised, and un-/underdeveloped. The characteristics of colonialism varied across nations and people, but “before we generalize, make comparisons and seek remedies, we must stop to examine certain specific types of colonial countries” (Du Bois, 1944/1985, p. 230). This is the task Manuel Mansart undertook in *Worlds of Color* because, like many Blacks during this time, “we and Mansart know nothing of the central problems of the colonies in the world” (p. 7).

### **Globalization and Education**

Education has been federally funded and state administered enterprise since Reconstruction. *The Ordeal of Mansart* (Du Bois, 1957/2007) and *Manuel Builds a School* (Du Bois, 1959/2007) illustrate the impacts of racialization and colonization on Black education since Emancipation. The process of colonization as researched, observed, and described by W. E. B. Du Bois (1959/2007) in *Mansart Builds a School*



positions the last novel in Du Bois' *Black Flame* trilogy, *Worlds of Color*, for a discussion of globalization.

Globalization, for Du Bois, centered on the “study [of] colonial and quasi-colonial status in various part of the world” (Du Bois, 1944/1985, p. 230). Derrick Held (1991) defines contemporary globalization as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa” (p. 9). The advent of the global economy continues to drives labor and education, concurrently. Du Bois (1961/2007) understood that settling the Negro problem rested in equalizing the role of teacher and laborer. “Indeed, because of the fight against Booker Washington’s ideas there had grown something like enmity between teacher and laborer just which in the world labor was forging forward to its own” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 7). Du Bois illustrated this tension in *Mansart Builds a School* between Manuel Mansart and his son, Douglass. Teaching didn’t pay enough for Douglass and, for Mansart it was the only mode of advancement against a sadistic social caste that championed White supremacy.

The role globalization plays in education is quite significant and borders on urgent. The Great Depression signaled the crippling impact of a stagnant world market (Du Bois, 1959/2007, 1961/2007). A discussion of American education is of little consequence without contextualizing American schooling among schooling worldwide. Education, under this auspice, is the development of skills and to what end those skills will be applied. Increasingly throughout each generation, students, more and more, are positioned as international citizens. Globalization serves to expand or narrow the aims of education. Carlos Alberto Torres (2002) argues,

Whether education as a publicly shared invention, contributing to civic life and human rights, can thrive depends on the future of globalization—a future that may offer the internationalization of the ideals of a democratic education or may reduce education, and civic participation, to narrow instruments of remote and seemingly ungovernable market forces. (p. 364)

W. E. B. Du Bois understood the pressing need to contextualize American education among the training and education across the world. This last novel explores the tensions that globalization and education mutually reinforce.

This chapter analyzes Du Bois' *Worlds of Color* as a centralized discussion of the worldwide economy and education. Globalization may expand worldwide civic participation and human rights or limit state autonomy and national sovereignty to establish and continue an unchecked global market (Torres, 2002). *Worlds of Color* contextualizes American education, particularly the disparities among Black and White education in the United States, among the education and labor markets of Europe, Asia, the West Indies, and Africa. Du Bois implants his personal and professional recollections and reflections verified among the world's historicity.

The chapter will chronologically summarize the novel's storyline to craft a counterstory using the text of Du Bois' (1961/2007) *Worlds of Color* as a classical counterstory. Analysis and text are interwoven to illumine Du Bois widening grasp of globalization. This understanding of globalization is then applied to *Worlds of Color* to incorporate other themes arising from the text—racialization and colonization. This mutigenerational dialectic counterstory stresses longstanding issues confronting American Blacks as well as those issues and concerns that require more present attention.

Using incidents from the novel, I will then discuss how racist socialization, as an effect of Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome, appears in the novel and may impact students contemporarily. I will continue to explore whiteness as property and colorblindness, as tenets of critical race theory (CRT), within the novel to inform the discussion of education and globalization. Lastly, I will identify overarching hermeneutic and signifying themes that emerge to summarize my findings.

### **Preparing for Sabbatical**

*Worlds of Color*, the third novel in W. E. B. Du Bois' *Black Flame* trilogy, finds sixty-year-old Manuel Mansart in 1936. Though Manuel does not feel particularly old, "[l]ife seemed suddenly to raise warning of its inevitable end of things which must be done and plans which shrieked for final laying" (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 1). World War I, the Great Depression, and the New Deal were profound events that left Mansart debating the "Negro Problem" to which he had devoted his entire life. As college president Manuel had overcome the graft that initially sought to divert federal funds for "Land Grant" schools to Whites. Though federal funds were dispersed, many of the southern states receiving federal funds were in charge of the allocation of those funds. Du Bois (1961/2007) wrote, after overcoming graft,

There followed a phase of deliberate cheating: founding cheap colored schools, flimsy and scantily built, half-manned and run by black stoolpigeons owned by white grafters. Protests came from honest Southern white educators and from federal officials, and of course from Negroes. Rivalry rose with the better known private colored colleges like Fisk, Atlanta, and Talladega. Desperate effort in Washington kept inspectors or even cabinet officials from having any real power

to compel the white South to treat Negro state education fairly. Under the sacred aegis of “States Rights,” the cheating of Negroes flourished in education as in so many other facets of life. (p. 2)

Separate but equal doctrine reigned. Virtually everything was separate and nearly all of it was unequal, and the doctrine privileged Whites in nearly every way imaginable. It was only when the White public schools were improved and Land Grant colleges were made larger and more elaborate were Negroes schools made larger and better equipped. Black colleges simply benefited only as White colleges tremendously benefited.

A national movement to curtail or eliminate standard Negro colleges had long existed. Interest convergence (Bell, 2004) forestalled the elimination of state-supported Negro colleges. Many of the Negro college presidents were aware of the deficits in spending among White colleges in comparison to their Black counterparts. In fact, it was such an extraordinary game Black presidents played “making white morons do what they were determined not to do” (p. 2). Playing the game was not without its drawbacks. One president was unseated by another rival who “bid lower for power. Sometimes an honest man inadvertently lost his own soul...” (p. 3). All in all, Mansart enjoyed “playing the game.” It was commiserating with other Black collegiate presidents that prompted Mansart to tour each Black Land Grant college culminating with a meeting of all of the Colored Land Grant College presidents at Southern University in 1936.

Seemingly, Blacks were determined to ensure college education for their youth. “If it was not furnished in the South, it would be sought in the North and no dependence on luck or ability or discrimination in marking, would avail to stop it” (p. 6). Manuel saw but one answer: Black colleges in the South or admitting Blacks to all Southern

institutions of higher learning. The “Jim Crow” climate of the South was not ready for integration in 1936, so Big Business stepped in.

Big Business supported a meager “Negro College Fund,” endowing smaller private Black southern colleges like Fisk, Atlanta, and Dillard (Du Bois, 1961/2007). Neither southern nor northern state universities were immune to Big Business control. “These universities must be under political control and thus Big Business would control democracy” (p. 7). All of this was discussed at the colored presidents’ meeting. It was here that Manuel’s sabbatical to Europe was encouraged to “broaden his vision of the Race Problem” (p. 7). Few of the collegiate presidents were interested in the suggestion. They saw it as a personal decision. “They did not realize how far in settling the Negro problem the role of the teacher was overshadowing the vital role of the worker” (p. 7).

Jean Du Bignon was to spearhead, in Manuel’s absence, an unparalleled “cooperative, continuous sociological investigation in each state as a scientific beginning. It would be a controlled laboratory test on a grand scale unequalled in history” (p. 7). Allowing Jean to start the study was rather odd due to her sex and racial assignment. Jean’s great-grandmother was Black. It was a fact she choose not to hide and, in doing so, readily cast her lot with the majority of Black Americans. It was her sex that caused the greatest issue,

...for Negro men of action still harbored unconscious prejudice against women, stemming in part from the fact that family rebuilding among Negroes stressed “the woman in the home”; and partly because Negro girls were far out-numbering boys in school and thus presenting a severe problem of sex competition in earning a living. (p. 7)

Jean undertook planning Mansart's trip abroad. She felt he needed "total spiritual change" in addition to a respite. "He needed to see a world divorced from the essentially trivial and temporary question of skin color which had always been the center of his thought and action, and to realize that to mankind at most times and in most places color of skin was no more important than color of hair or length of foot" (p. 8). She planned travel to England, France, Germany, China, and Japan, securing lodging and guides for Mansart's journey. She sent him to New York for tailored suits. She assisted the president with his table manners, teaching him to eat a soft-boiled egg from the shell. Jean arranged all for Manuel including a year off with full salary. In June 1936, Manuel Mansart set sail for Europe.

On the boat, Manuel caught up with long-neglected reading. He found that European powers were fairly peaceful for roughly one hundred years. "Wars for colonial empire, on the other hand, were continuous, linking imperial Europe and eventually North American in world domination of the darker peoples of the earth" (p. 11). Frozen out of the larger international profits, Germany, Italy, and Japan demanded a fair share of existing and future colonies. The First World War was the result. Of the war, Du Bois (1961/2007) writes,

The world markets and the gold standard ceased to function, and Russia came forward with a design to challenge free industry by planned economy for the raising of workers' income and power.

Desperate effort was made from 1918 to 1929 to restore the world market and the gold standard; and to resist Communism in Russia. It was the irony of fate that just as Western Europe was practically united to overthrow Russia by

force of arms, the system of culture which had lifted the West to world dominance during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, built on conquest of India, Negro slavery in America, the Sugar Empire, and Cotton Kingdom and the Industrial Revolution, crashed in unprecedented ruin. (p. 11)

### **The Sabbatical**

#### **The Color of Europe**

Manuel began his tour of Europe in England—the guest of Sir John Rivers and his family in Essex. Sir John was rather intrigued by Manuel’s presence, his wife harbored her own concerns. She had heard disconcerting stories of Black Americans. “But a generation removed from actual savagery, the poor things could not of course be expected to have much culture; and fine as it was theoretically to make it pleasant for a deserving black teacher,” she’d wished her husband had discussed the matter with her first (p. 12).

Manuel was awestruck with the leisurely approach to life his hosts displayed. They breakfasted at nine most mornings. This was in direct opposition to Manuel’s beginning his day’s work at seven. Visitors called throughout day, particularly during afternoon tea. Though he did not continue the habit, Manuel promised himself he would continue to enjoy afternoon tea upon his return to the United States “perhaps because it was so unusual at that time of day to stop everything and enjoy pleasant gossip and delightful tid-bits in the open or by the blazing hearth, in complete relaxation” (p. 13).

There conversations with his hosts and their guests about the state of the American Negro and the colonial tide in Africa. When Lady Rivers asks Manuel of his opinion of the most striking feature of British culture, Manuel responds: “Your idleness”

(p. 14). Though Manuel enjoys the respite, he relays his concerns surrounding such indolence. Raised to work for his livelihood, Manuel finds it difficult to “rest so much while others work so hard” (p. 14). Sir Rivers comes to his wife’s, and nation’s, defense, informing Manuel of the tenuous work of his grandfather, trading gold, pepper, and tin. “He raised capital in England to develop the mines, hired natives to work them, brought in British technicians to direct this work; from the results of this, I and my family live” (p.15). Manuel lauds his grandfather’s industry and contribution to human knowledge through the extraction of tin for human use. Manuel asks the gentleman,

“Your grandfather’s discovery of tin in Nigeria deserved reward. But not repeated reward; not continuous reward. Not extravagant reward. And reward for the discovery should go to the discoverer and not to his children. The tin belonged to Africa, not to England. After the discovery, it was certainly as much the property of the Africans as of the British. The British brought knowledge of extracting tin for use. This was of greatest importance. But this knowledge and technique was public property in Europe. Englishmen learning and using this knowledge deserved pay for their work. But not repeated and eternal pay. And this pay should go to the one who applied this skill for what he did and not to others who did nothing. And the machines and tools should be paid for, but paid for once, not continuously. Their repair should be paid for, but paid for once, not repeatedly. In other words, Sir, I can see clearly that your grandfather deserved pay for his work, for his effort in acquiring skill; for materials imported and used in their repair. But, pardon me, Sir, if I ask where do you come in? What effort are you being paid for? The black workers who served your grandfather got paid



once; their descendants are being paid not for what their fathers did but for what they do now. Why this difference between the pay of the European and the African? Both should be paid for their effort—should they not?—and for nothing else.” (p. 15)

Later, the Rivers’ youngest daughter, Sylvia, and a companion took Manuel to London’s East End. Manuel’s company rumples his shirt, removes his jacket and tie, and provided him with a hat so that he better fit in “the slums.” One particular memory haunted Manuel’s memory for some time. A drunken female prostitute carried a crying babe in her arms. The proprietor of the bar yelled at her to quiet the baby or leave. The woman dipped her filthy handkerchief in her gin and placed it in the baby’s mouth. This and all Manuel sees in the East End changed him. “For the first time he realized that white men and women in a civilized country and in the twentieth century could suffer in degradation, helplessness and crime quite as much as any Negroes whom he knew in America; and, he surmised, as much as Negroes and Asians suffered overseas” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 20).

After his stay in England, Mansart visits France and Germany. His month-long stay in France introduced him to the Eiffel Tower, the Seine, the Left Bank, and Notre Dame; Bois de Boulogne, Montmartre, the Eternal Fire within the Arc de Triomphe, the Palais Royale, and the Moulin Rouge. Manuel asked his guide to interpret living in France. As an individual European country, the French are “the shopkeepers climbing into gross corporations, immortal, infernal, supermen, armed to the teeth, owning all ability; controlling thought and news; maiming, murdering and driving men insane” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 22). Yet, they are different from Americans as they still have truth-

tellers, writers and artists who are “unbribeable [and] unsaleable, looking Death straight in the face” (p. 22). And, placing the country amidst the broader continent, Manuel’s companion states,

“And France is Europe. For five hundred years, all Europe has fattened on the entrails of Asia and Africa and built her glory on the blood and guts of ‘chinks’ and ‘niggers.’ What a brave and mighty folk we are, and how unrivalled and unprecedented in lying and murder!” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 22)

To this point, Manuel had given little thought to the color-line including economic equality. Most of his life, he considered the color-line as “admission to street cars, trains, schools, and restaurants” (p. 23). Slowly, Manuel Mansart began to contextualize his broadening understanding of the nation-state among his experience of the world. He traveled from France to Hitler’s Germany.

Manuel is left to experience Germany without the careful planning of interested friends to guide his journey. His travels were sponsored by a group of Americans of German descent who sought to bring Germans and Americans together and, belatedly, thought that including a Black man might be advantageous. Mansart toured the country, visiting Switzerland and Geneva. Upon seeing the Swiss Alps, he remarked to himself, “With all its dirt and sin and disappointment, this world is a beautiful, a very beautiful thing” (p. 28). Manuel eventually finds himself in Munich at the Museum of Technology. He asks his tour guide, “Sir, when Germans have all this and can use it, why do they fight” (p. 28)? While at lunch, the guide answers Manuel’s question. He explained that Germany was to be one of the three great self-sustaining nations of the nineteenth century world. German science, music, and social investigations led the

world. “Germans would think, France would feel, and let England trade” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 29). But the world was rapidly changing and Germany had to become an armed nation.

It was a world which was not built of nations unified, each with its own educated directing and laboring classes; but part of a new organization of dominant nations where the working classes were not mainly within the nations but in colonies overseas. And we Germans had no colonies and unless we got colonies we were going to fall far behind in what was a world fight. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 29)

Colonialism, as a wave, swept the world. Peace was kept until just after the turn of the twentieth century. Germany “gave Africa to France and Britain, and ignored Asia” (p. 29). Germany, along with Austria-Hungary, Turkey/Ottoman Empire, and other smaller countries fought for a slice of the “colonial pie.” For German survival, it became imperative to “restrain England and France in their headlong economic imperialism” (p. 29). In Beyreuth, a stop made in honor of his musical daughter, through artistry and song, Manuel saw what the German “soul” lost in the first Great War. For many Germans, Adolf Hitler was the man to hold Germany together and restore her to her former glory.

Mansart converses with a German Rabbi who explains the plight of Jews throughout Eurasia. From the early 1500s, Jews were forbidden to work as artisans, farmers, or traders. As a result, German Jews became bankers and merchants, “and in alliance with the privileged classes made their way and gained partial freedom” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 33). The French Jews aligned with Big Business and were enjoying a great deal of prosperity. British Jews joined in commerce and politics. The Russian Jews

joined with laborers to advance socialism. Mansart asked the Rabbi if he thought socialism would “win.” The Rabbi tells Manuel that every country has some degree of socialism—including Roosevelt’s New Deal. Socialism’s triumph was delimited only by its leader or dictator. “The ignorant mass cannot lead itself into economic emancipation, requiring scientific technique and capital, with the forces and classes now against it” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 34).

In 1936 Germany, Hitler situated Germany’s prosperity with great corporations and sought to exterminate the country, and eventually the world, of those intimately acquainted with economic liberation and the scientific capital to maintain such freedom. For many, the downfall of the German empire leading to world war was its failure to participate in colonial domination. Though the entire country suffered, Jews, because of their forced profession and common cause with the aristocracy, gained the enmity of the majority of laborers and shopkeepers. In light of the persecution German Jews were facing and would face, the Rabbi encouraged Blacks to unite with the poor Whites and laborers who often led the mobs and lynched innocent men and women rather than the old planter class and new Northern money. “You have got to change your alliances or you are going to lose” (p. 34).

Upon leaving the country, Manuel remembered his primary goal in Germany to learn of industrial education. He discovered that Germany did not use industry as a form of education, but used education to perfect industry. “So too, Mansart knew that in America the white philosophy back of the Tuskegee idea was not to use industry to teach Negroes, but Negroes to help industry” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 34). He learned that Siemens, the oldest and largest German corporation, employed over sixty thousand

highly skilled European laborers and saw an annual profit of \$100,000,000. The model for education drew 150 apprentices yearly to study for four years. These were academically bright students, the children of employees preferred. From twelve to seventeen, these pupils were paid to continue their course. “They were entering a life of work, would follow it all their working years and be pensioned after they were retired...with a skilled working class, educated for a specific work, it was evident to Germany that democratic control of the state could not be entrusted to them” (p. 35). Though these workers were able to vote in smaller, localized issues, “in the great matters of government policy, general laws and the distribution of capital, of industrial aim and organization, of colonial administration, there was no democracy” (p. 35). Germany condemned communism with “furious propaganda against the Soviets” (p. 35).

It was this propaganda that impacted Manuel. It was propaganda, he believed, that was the greatest invention of World War I—“the systematic distortion of the truth for the purpose of making large numbers of people believe anything authority wished them to believe” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 36). Hitler used propaganda to the ultimate advantage. “Newspapers, public speakers, the radio, expositions, celebrations, books and periodicals, every possible vehicle of information and training, including schools, were used on German people to teach them that they were the most remarkable people on earth...” (p. 36). There is, perhaps, little difference among the use of German propaganda and the American process of racialization that seated Whiteness as a supreme property to be protected at all costs and, in every area, coveted.

### **The Color of Asia**

Mansart travelled from Germany to China. Though discouraged by many American and European friends, he decided to abandon his plan to arrive in China by the

Mediterranean and booked passage on the Trans-Siberian railroad. Manuel thought he would spend a month in Russia, but, without prior security clearances, he was refused the right to stop there. He continued onto China where he learned of the European colonization of China.

Manuel admitted that he knew little of China and her history. He did not know the West had crushed China and its inhabitants through the Opium Wars and the slave trade that sent unskilled Chinese laborers to the United States at the end of the nineteenth century. He had only discovered that “the long-enslaved, raped and murdered peasants of China were at last reeling to their feet, covered with blood and lice, to rule a world” (p. 40).

Manuel entertained the superintendent of Chinese elementary schools, a Chinese collegiate president, banker, merchant, and civil servant in conversation around China’s global positioning. Many of the social issues facing China were also present among the colonized of the world, including Black Americans. The Chinese superintendent informed Manuel that the school system was complete with Chinese teachers replacing well-meaning yet subversive Whites. Although the number of schools was low, schools were growing. The merchant asserted that China’s chief difficulty lay in industry. The people were poor, “miserably poor,” and “foreign capital can easily get work done at the lowest wages and there is yet no effective effort to keep the income of the poor much above starvation” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 41). Labor unions were virtually ineffective in light of foreign competition, which kept wages low. Nearing the middle of the twentieth century, China began using her own money. The country was moving forward but the complication of foreign monopolization of industry made total emancipation a distant

dream. The college president introduced the brute force and cunning of the Japanese to Manuel's attention. The president shared with Mansart,

“The Japanese are our kin. We gave them the civilization which they have developed. But today they despise us because we are victims of Western aggression which they barely escaped, and because of their power they propose to replace the West as our masters. It is explicable that we hate so fiercely our own Asiatic brothers who plan to treat us worse than the foreign devils from beyond the seas.” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 42).

Unsure of what he would encounter, Manuel soon left China for Japan.

Despite the great bitterness the Chinese seemed to harbor for the Japanese, Mansart received a great welcome in Japan. “No sooner had he set foot in Japan than he felt himself in a colored nation who hated the white world just as he, despite all effort, did himself” (p. 40). In letter home, he described Japan as a spiritual, independent, self-sufficient country that neither feared nor envied the white world. In his observation, he concluded:

“There is poverty in Japan; there is oppression; there is no democratic freedom. But nowhere in the modern world is there higher literacy, as newspaper circulations of one, three and even five millions prove. The Japanese laborer is not happy but he is not hopelessly discontented [read: discontented], for he belongs to the same class and family as the highest Japanese. They will guide and protect. He will obey.

“To me, the tragedy of this epoch was that Japan learned Western ways too soon and too well, and turned from Asia to Europe. She had a fine culture, an

exquisite art, and an industrial technique miraculous in workmanship and adaptability. The Japanese clan was an effective social organ and her art expression was unsurpassed. She might have led Asia and the world into a new era. But her headstrong leaders chose to apply Western imperialism to her domination of the East, and Western profit-making replaced Eastern idealism. If she had succeeded, it might have happened that she would indeed have spread her culture and achieved a co-prosperity sphere with freedom of soul. Perhaps!” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 43)

Mansart left Japan near the end of 1936. For ten days, he sailed, landing on “an unbelievable land of raining sunshine and everlasting flowers, called Hawaii” (p. 43).

January 1937, found Manuel in California before the great Golden Gate. Manuel Mansart returned to Macon, Georgia, only to determine that a month’s survey of the West Indies must be included in his study.

### **The Color of the West Indies**

Upon arriving in Macon, Mansart find Jean Du Bignon suffering from overwork and infirmity. She tells Manuel, “You know, our colored men I think even more than white, are not yet used to seeing authority in the hands of a woman” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 44). Many of the men resented her authority over the study of Negro colleges. Manuel suggested Jean tour the West Indies to complete their study of the world’s colonies. Run down and tired, after the holidays, Jean Du Bignon set sail from Miami to Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and the Bahamas.

The beauty of the islands struck Jean—mountains stretched high with colorful flowers dotting the length of the landscape. “And then, still amazed, she was depressed by the poverty, ignorance, and disease crawling upon them, dotted here and there with



white vulgarity and tourist extravagance” (p. 45). In Cuba and Jamaica, Du Bignon observed an aristocracy of color rising to power resembling that of white Europeans and Americans. The thirst and quest for power was exacted on the backs of the black laboring peasantry. So mystified by their masses struggle out of filth and sorrow, many mistook “European race superiority and American robbery and rape [as] the uplift of man” (p. 46).

Upon her visit to Haiti, Jean spent the day with Dr. Duval. Dr. Duval was educated in France and taught in Haiti for quite some time. From midday to sunset, Duval shows and tells Jean the story of Haiti. She tours the battlefield where Dessalines and Capois overthrew Rochambeau and the French army. She walked away from her time with Dr. Duval understanding Haiti’s history.

From the day when the English overcome the French in Asia and conquered India; when the French, rich from slavery in the West Indies, found their nation overthrown at home and threatened by a demand for the equality of worker, black white; when the English tried to seize the West Indies; when Napoleon tried to enter Asia by way of Egypt and Toussaint L’Ouverture overthrew French, English, and Spanish; when the French workers tried to unite black and white in one struggled and the British subordinated the black worker under the white and bribed the white with higher wages, the color line stood until Russia abolished it and save the world from a war of colors. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 51)

Replete with this information, Jean understood what happened to Haiti since. Great Britain resettled its investments in the West Indies, finding new investments and growing capitalism in African and Asian colonies. “Thence came the industrial revolution and the

new imperialism, born of the blood of Negro slaves” (p. 51). Jean continued on from Haiti to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands to long think of the message she wanted to bring back with her from the West Indies.

### **The New Home Front**

Upon her return from the West Indies, Jean Du Bignon was made titular dean of the college. She spent a large amount of her time planning for the “southwide study of education.” She contacted presidents from both the Colored and White Land Grant institutions. She invited several noted sociology professors and a few notable “social thinkers of the nation” (p. 52)—White and Black. Jean planned the conference for 1938 to be held at the state college.

Upon his return, Mansart undertook the beautification of the state college grounds. He took a particular interest in Black economic development, but he wanted students and teachers to realize “what the world meant now as a place to live in” (p. 53). Manuel began to see the world as a shared united macrocosm. “He began to think himself as part of humanity and not simply as an American Negro over against a white world” (p. 53). His beautification efforts brought sculpture, flowers, paintings, and a music department to the college.

Du Bignon’s conference was modestly attended. She was disappointed yet hopeful. Her main goal to form relationships among other scholars at various Black colleges accomplished. She wanted to experience the labor movement to see if she could make change in the labor unions. “She determined, therefore, to take her summer vacation of three months away from the college to cross into the neighboring but far-off white world and learn what a textile factory really was” (p. 61). Jean apprenticed for

three months and joined the union. Labor leaders expressed their disappointment with the movement. Determined to do something about it, Jean found herself in Atlanta at the state labor union office.

At the office, Jean encountered Zoe Coypel. Zoe married Joe Scroggs, the state labor leader. Jean initially worked under the alias of Jean Smith. She wanted to protect the college as best she could and for her own safety should her racial affiliation be revealed. She chose to be honest with Zoe, revealing her true identity. Zoe asked about Bruce Mansart. When Zoe found out he was hanged, she, “with tears in her eyes, said, ‘What a loss, what a horrible loss to the world, when a man like Bruce Mansart is driven from work to crime by senseless prejudice’” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 63).

Du Bois (1961/2007) reflected on World War I and its aftereffects. “Two million blacks rushed North to work in Northern iron and steel industries, to make automobiles, to pack meat, build houses and do the heavy toil in factories” (p. 67). During the Great Depression, though, all workers, regardless of racial ascription, were impacted. Blacks were especially affected.

...[I]n the case of the Negro worker, everything was worse in degree. The loss was greater and more permanent; technological displacement began before the Depression was accelerated. The unemployment and fall in wage struck black men sooner, lasted longer, and went to lower levels. In the rural South their education almost ceased, white Southern city schools were crowded to suffocation.

Above all, in the Negro’s case, local and federal relief helped him last. It was easily explicable human nature that the unemployed white man and the

starving white child should be relieved first by local white authorities who regarded them as fellowmen and regarded the Negroes as sub-human. Then came Recovery through the New Deal. The CIO was formed. The Negro entered the ranks of union labor and, with the nation, braced himself for a new future. This future, however, involved the Negro's own inner development, which Jean must now study. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 67)

### **The Emerging Black Middle Class and the Role of Religion**

Jack and Betty Carmichael left Harlem for Springfield, Massachusetts. Betty, Manuel Mansart's niece, thought Harlem "too crowded and too Southern in sentiment" (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 68). In Springfield, Betty becomes the private nurse for an aging white abolitionist, Cyrus Taylor.

Cyrus Taylor did as much for the Carmichaels as he could. He was as much of ally to them as he could be. "He had been an abolitionist almost from birth and never forgot the thrill of harboring fugitive slaves" (p. 71). When Betty was first hired, the young Mrs. Carmichael refused to serve her in the private dining room. "Cyrus had long been a chronic and crotchety invalid and had recently dismissed the third nursed in succession, which the hospital, on of his philanthropies, had furnished him" (p. 69). All of the nurses prior to Betty were all White and served lunch in the private dining room. Mrs. Carmichael chose to serve Betty in the kitchen. Cyrus "nearly broke up the household of his son where he lived, because his daughter-in-law wanted to treat Betty as a servant and serve her meals in the kitchen" (p. 71 – 72).

When Jack Carmichael needed work, his wife encouraged him to talk to Cyrus Taylor. Cyrus calls Jack crazy for wanting to open a neighborhood grocery store.

“Fine, but crazy! If your store was poor you’d scarcely make a living. If it was good, the landlord would hike the rent and if you climbed over that, the big grocery chains would buy you out.”

“Suppose I refused to sell?”

“You’d sell all right before they got through. But don’t take my word. Try it. Go ahead! I’ll see you get \$5,000 credit with the wholesalers. But I tell you, Carmichael, you don’t realize what a world you’re facing” (p. 74).

Not only did Taylor set up a credit line with the wholesalers, he buys the building where Jack’s grocery store was located. Once Cyrus died, Jack’s grocery store closed. As Cyrus predicted, he was unable to compete with a larger grocery chain across the street.

Jackie Carmichael was a lively boy of eight when his family, including his grandmother moved to Springfield. Because his parents rented a home near the Taylor home, this “put a colored child into one of the best public schools” (p. 69). White families were concerned about property values, as the Carmichaels were the only Black family in the neighborhood. Due to Cyrus’s intervention, the Carmichaels eventually bought their home but not without White backlash and a modest amount of threat—none which were explicitly stated or carried out. One of only a few Black students in his school, the principal suggested that “perhaps Jackie would be a bit lonesome among so many whites and that transportation—” (p. 70). Betty was adamant that Jackie was enrolled in the school.

“Jackie started in with three fights in his first term” (p. 70). In the first fight, similar to young Manuel Mansart, Jackie was brutalized by four White children. The second fight was a draw, “Jackie sported a black eye, as a sort of badge of courage” (p.

70). The third fight “resulted in the so thorough beating of a very prominent young man that the principal thought he had to take a hand” (p. 70). After the first two fights, Betty was prepared for the principal’s call. On his invitation, Betty went to see the principal and said,

“Yes, Mr. Principal, I know all about it and am glad you called me in. When three months ago a bunch of your hoodlums jumped on one little colored boy and beat him almost senseless, you had no complaint. I suppose you thought that would drive him out of your select school. It didn’t. He wasn’t brought up that way. The next time he had a better chance and came out very well. You didn’t complain that time and neither did I. Now, however, one of your rich pets has had some teeth knocked out and you threaten expulsion. Go ahead and try. Here is the card of my lawyer who Mr. Cyrus Taylor recommends. He thinks it might be a good idea to find out just who owns the Springfield public schools.” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 70)

Cyrus Taylor’s death signaled a shift for the Carmichaels. Losing his influence closed any number of doors for the family. The social milieu was changing though and other doors began to open for the Carmichaels. After a larger grocery chain closes Jack’s grocery, Betty urges Jack to go to the Catholic Church to join the Machinists’ Union. Jack meets with the Irish Catholic priest. He is advised to contact an Irish Catholic bishop. One week later, Jack is accepted into the Machinists Union as an apprentice. The Bishop tells Jack,

“Don’t mistake this gesture,” said the Bishop genially. “It is not a free gift. It’s a small yielding to my request and to their own apprehension. But it

may lead to something broader and finer. I'm glad to have been of some little service; but here again, I acted because I see the world on the edge of a struggle between races and colors which may tear civilization asunder. I want to do my bit to avoid that. No, no, no thanks! Good day and call again.” (p. 85)

Sojourner and Roosevelt Wilson symbolize Black religion in the South.

Roosevelt is, at first, a Baptist minister Macon. He leaves Macon, for the African Methodist church in Birmingham, Alabama. For two years, Wilson toils in the Church. In 1940, he runs for the bishopric of the African Methodist Church. Both Roosevelt and Sojourner are disappointed by the high-level politics that Roosevelt must engage for the position. His bid for the bishopric was defeated and, for the trouble caused, he was moved to small parish in Annisberg, Alabama.

Roosevelt chose not to veil his dislike for the new bishop and, his next in line, the Presiding Elder. As a result, he and Sojourner found themselves in the African Methodist church in Annisberg, located right next to a whorehouse. “This, of course, was the sort of thing that used to take place in Southern cities—putting white houses of prostitution with colored girls in colored neighborhoods and carrying them on openly” (p. 91). This type of house of prostitution was eventually phased out under White protest and, with more education and higher wages, Black resentment.

[T]he situation of Kent House was more subtle. The wages involved were larger and more regular. The inmates were white and from out of town, avoiding local friction. The backing from the white town was greater and there was little publicity. Good wages, patronage and subscription of various kinds stopped open

protest from Negroes. And yet, Wilson knew that this place must go or he must go. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 91)

The Kent House, in the Black Bottom of Annisberg, Alabama, was a bit of an unusual house of prostitution and Roosevelt Wilson determined that either he or the Kent House had to go. The Kent House suspiciously burned after Roosevelt had a particularly earnest conversation with one of his parishioners. Although the assailant was not captured, Wilson was sure he knew the culprit.

Once the house of ill repute in the Black Bottom burned, it was Sojourner who made sure that Kent House was not rebuilt. Though race relations between White and Black Annisberg were tenuous for the next year, eventually the little African Methodist church began to prosper. Wilson knew no one to thank other than Sojourner. “Although Wilson had been in black despair for months, it was Sojourner who had the vision and the courage to look forward to the development of this work and to realize what her position was as the wife of the pastor” (p. 94). The church became solvent and community projects were executed. “The Bishop praised him, collected more money than was due, and again after three years shunted him to Mobile” (p. 94).

In Mobile, Sojourner discovered her pregnancy after vomiting in her dinner plate among guests. Her husband seemed dazed as he held his wife. Sojourner whispered to her husband, “I don’t want a baby, I want a bishop” (p. 100). So, Sojourner made up her mind to buy the bishopric for her husband.

Sojourner consulted with her brother, Douglass, in Chicago. Douglass offered to loan \$10,000 to his sister to seal her husband’s position in the Church. Sojourner was taken aback by such a high figure, asking Douglass if he was joking. He was not joking.



Douglass reminded her, “The price at the last General Conference was about \$5,000” (p. 104). Douglass makes a deal with his sister that he would loan her \$10,000 to elect her husband Bishop of the African Methodist Church. If her husband lost, Douglass expected no repayment. If Wilson won, Douglass would give the bill to Roosevelt with the expectation of payment.

As Roosevelt, drunk with the possibility of winning the bishopric of his own accord, makes his way to the podium to accept the bishopric, a delegate stops his requesting more money than he and Sojourner initially agreed upon. Wilson is astonished to discover that his wife bought the bishopric for him. Despondent, Bishop Roosevelt Wilson received counsel from the Bishop of Texas. He tells Wilson of the solitude and peace of mind slaves found in religion.

“Before you were born, your fathers, or perhaps better, your mothers were led to believe that the explanation of this world was not simply a Devil of utter Evil, but also a loving Father who in his won good time would take his obedient children up in a chariot of Fiery Death to a world of Happiness. In the dirt, degradation, toil and license of plantations, under the fervor of black prophets, this solution of the puzzle of existence was revealed to them in brief moments of frenzy among a screaming mass of people singing:

‘Shout O Children, Shout, you’re free!’

“Then a miracle happened. They became free. But they were not happy. They were hungry and naked, and new preachers had to build a new church on top of the old. We tried to make this church a meeting-house where we could have what we lacked at home—heat, company, food, song. But not only this—there

must be a Meaning. Gradually, that imagined heaven of slavery days must be brought down to earth, but not too swiftly. Conversion by miracle, shouting to God in person—the religious orgy must slowly disappear.” (p. 106)

The Bishop of Texas relays the changes religion has made in response to the people and the time period.

Church, for many Blacks, became a taste of heaven on earth. Through slavery and emancipation, many Blacks placed their faith, community, and spare money in the community church. On any given Sunday, several members of the Black community so led, the African Methodist Church mentally, physically, spiritually, educationally, culturally, emotionally and socially were fed. The very religious orgy that found women overcome by the Holy Ghost served as Manuel’s baptism to the community after the death of his father. After seeing her son-in-law murdered, Aunt Betsy takes Manuel to the church. Amid the congregants she called forth Africa as she made her way through the church. Juxtaposed with First Congregational of Springfield, Massachusetts, religion served different purposes. At First Congregational:

Everybody “believed” in religion; most were by profession “Christians,” that is, they “believed” in God, the sacrifice of his son Jesus for men’s sin, and eventual reward of men in heaven or punishment in hell. They “believed” in prayer. But none of this professed belief had any real practical effect. Nobody or certainly very few believed that a request to God would have any effect on what would occur; few believed really in God as a powerful person who was conducting the world benevolently according to some great plan. Most people of Springfield regarded Jesus as a good man long dead, who left a moral program which nobody,

least of all an American, could really live up to. And yet, this professed belief and practical rejection of its implications had a subtle but disastrous effect on honesty of character, telling the truth, and ability to reason clearly. People got so used to saying one thing and doing another, asserting honestly what they knew was untrue, and calling logic what was patently illogical, that religion as a real moral force was at a low ebb in the city. Moral standards existed to be sure, but there were based on hereditary culture patterns—the influence of persons recognized as respectable, and the actual results of current conduct on everyday life. Children were brought up in such an atmosphere of contradictions that they ignored, indeed had to ignore, advice and example. How could a man who was bad be called good? How could you love your enemies and refuse to speak to them on the street? How could you turn the other cheek and fight for your country, right or wrong? How could you lie and tell the truth for the sake of the same God? And who was this God, anyhow, and where was He and what should we do about Him, while ignoring His existence most of the time? It was such a situation that brought anger and frustration when a concrete question demanded answer, as in the matter of letting a family with dark faces join a group of professed followers of God, whose faces were whiter in color. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p.77)

## **World War Again**

### **Clandestine Plans and the Toll of War on the World**

The outbreak of war surprised Manuel Mansart. He began to question his purpose and his dream. Just returning from worldwide travel, Manuel thought he observed a

world interested in maintaining peace. “Yet, here was war again and not, in truth, a new war but as was not suddenly clear to him, the same old struggle for destruction which for centuries had been the content of history” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 108). Manuel felt the need to get away and arranged to stay with Revels and his family on a trip to New York where he felt “nearer to the center of things, and that [was] necessary [...]” (p. 109). Revels invited his father to accompany him to a conference at his chapter of the Colored Masons.

The meeting’s attendees gathered around noon. There were delegates from several countries across the world, twenty-three groups, in all, were represented. A delegate roster was made, distributed, and collected at the meeting. Every participant prominently displayed a number, except the chair. The only person without a number presided. He addressed the assembly with little formality. He advocated “Peace through Non-resistance.” He told those gathered that Hitler’s “most dangerous gift” wasn’t war, “but the Big Lie—making truth inaccessible by the monopoly of communication” (p. 111). Revels and his father speculate about whether the man who presided over the meeting was, in fact, Mohandas Gandhi. From this meeting there were four worldwide actions steps to occur in the event Franklin Roosevelt was elected President. They were:

1. To ask Japan to attack the U. S. A. without warning.
2. It was guaranteed that when Russia was conquered, Germany, Britain and France would protect Japan from injury and grant her necessary access to world trade.
3. When the U. S. A. declared war, British industry would see to it that the U. S. A. did not attack Germany or help Russia.

4. After the war, France and Italy as well as Germany were to be recognized as co-partners with Britain and the U. S. A. as leading directors of world trade, industry and finance. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 115)

That November, Franklin Delano Roosevelt was re-elected president for a third term.

Had Roosevelt not had to divert his attention from domestic policy to war, things might have gone quite differently. Du Bois (1961/2007) inserts his own commentary.

None can say how Franklin Roosevelt would have gone in reorganizing the economy of the nation if the work of the first eight years of his reign had continued and expanded. We might now live in a different world. But war intervened and once again, as so often in the past, ruined the future of mankind. (p. 117)

Germany set her sights on establishing Russia as her colony. This began a wave of events that forced world war. The outcomes of World War II left millions dead and Russia unconquered. In reflection,

The Germans destroyed 72,000 towns and villages, leaving 25,000,000 people homeless. They demolished 32,000 industries; they tore up 40,000 miles of railroads with stations, telegraph and telephone offices; they destroyed 40,000 hospitals, 84,000 schools and 44,000 libraries; they ransacked 100,000 farms and drove off 70 million head of horses, cattle sheep and goats. Their damage to state industrial enterprises had been estimated at \$128 billion. Sixty-one of the greatest power stations were blown up. Coal mines and oil wells were destroyed. Public buildings, museums and churches were ruined. The Soviet Union lost seven million of its people in war, and perhaps as many more in civilian life. The

British Empire lost a million persons and the U. S. A. about the same. The Germans lost at least ten million. The war cost the Soviet Union \$200,000,000,000. The U. S. A. gave her in net Lend-lease about five percent of this sum. Never before in the history of man had a single nation sacrificed so much for the salvation of the world. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 121)

### **The Black War Effort**

Domestically, things were beginning to shift. In 1941, with over one million Blacks unemployed, Blacks began to demand work to assist the war effort. Though government had a larger role in industry and, “there was a chance it would permanently become much wider,” Blacks began to “voice their boiling inward revolt” (Du Bois, 1959/2007, p. 121). Philip Randolph, whom Du Bois labels “a colored socialist who had been hounded and imprisoned and finally lured to trade unionism,” threatened to gather 50,000 Black folks to “march on Washington” (p. 122). Jean was pleased. To her thinking, Randolph acted at a fortuitous time. With anti-war sentiment high, Jean asserted “the loyalty of Negroes means more today than it did even in the First World War, and in the First World War it was indispensable. I have an idea that we are going to see some yielding on this matter” (p. 122). Mansart was doubtful.

Blacks were a minority with an even smaller educated and wealthy constituency. In fact, the government did not yield. More than twelve million people were able to vote and Roosevelt did not want to jeopardize his program and party. “Since, however, Roosevelt did not dare ask Congress for a law compelling the admission of Negroes to war industry, he induced his friends to discourage immediate pressure” (p. 122). Mrs. Roosevelt, New York Mayor LaGuardia, and other notables “tried to ally unrest and persuade Negroes to wait. But preparations for the march went on” (p. 122).

The march was scheduled for July 1. June 28, 1941, Roosevelt assembled Randolph and other key Black leaders at the White House along with members of his Cabinet and of the Office of Production.

They discussed the situation earnestly. Finally, the President, knowing that he could not get action from Congress and realizing that the Negroes would not yield, offered to issue Executive Order 8802 to insure “full participation in the national defense program by all citizens of the United States regardless of race, creed, color or national origin.” (p. 122)

The march was cancelled and the Fair Employment Council created. A commission was appointed with two Blacks and the chair, the white principal of the Negro Hampton Institute. There were “strong words” in Georgia and elsewhere, but the order was executed.

Blacks assumed one of the greatest political victories since Emancipation. “This was even more important than equal distribution of relief funds” (p. 123). With this action, Roosevelt secured the Black vote for the Democratic Party. In retrospect, the author asked, “And yet when Negroes sat down and took careful account, what had they won and lost” (p. 123)?

Yes, lynching almost disappeared. But something worse than Lynching had taken its place, and that was systematic and nationwide injustice in the criminal courts. Negroes, forming twelve percent of the population of the United States, composed from 30 to 80 percent of the prisoners held in jail. They invariably form the great majority of the prisoners for life, and of the 3,219 persons in the country executed between 1930 and 1952, 1,732 were Negroes. All

this meant that Negroes were being arrested more often than whites, were being railroaded to prison and given longer terms, and publicly killed twice as often as whites. Compared to lynching, this record was far worse and more degrading and fatal for black folk.

And what about the basic matter of earning a living? Negro slaves earned nothing beyond subsistence, from 1619 to 1863—a span of 244 years. From 1863 to 1900, the wage of Negro workers, if not stolen from them, was paid at the rate of \$200 to \$400 a year for each family. After the war, the average might be half the average wage of white workers.

They were beginning to vote and hold office, and yet the majority of Negroes in America were still disenfranchised by law or custom or by fear of violence or denial of work. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 123).

Over 500,000 Black soldiers fought in World War II. Of this number, 500 were commissioned officers and 500 were in the Medical and Dental Corps. There were 200 nurses and 150 chaplains. There 100,000 Blacks serving in the Navy and 16,000 in the Marine Corps. Black soldiers still felt the sting of race hate and oppression in the United States. One soldier wrote home:

“We thought about conditions as they exist in the States. We were elated to go into battle and perhaps die for rights that we, as Negroes, had never known. But the heart-breaking part about it was that the people we were to fight against could get better opportunities in our own country than we could. All they had to do was to get there.” (p. 124)



During the war, Judge Revels Mansart entertained a Japanese guest in his New York law offices. In their discussion, the Japanese visitor shared with Revels that, domestically, revolution was near. There was little justice for many people currently incarcerated. The New Deal helped Black folks last, if at all. Out of one million native people in the U.S. in 1500, only 300,000 survived. Almost 1.5 million second generation Japanese citizens were herded into concentration camps as the U.S. entered the war. Add to these, the millions of degraded and disappointed Whites sharing a similar experience with Americans of color. The visitor asks, “Judge Mansart, is this no sound basis for revolt” (p. 126)? Revels’ consternation continued even after his visitor left. He began to question old beliefs.

Especially, he saw a world ruled by industry and banking in a colonial imperialism of monopoly, reaping wealth from war. It was becoming clear to him that the concept of business as service to mankind was yielding to the idea of business as power over men. We were working not so much to fulfill the wants of men as to rule men and enable the comfortable few to use the miserable many. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 127)

The year was 1943. The same Japanese visitor in Judge Mansart’s offices found his way to Hitler as the fatal siege at Stalingrad was underway. He relayed a message from Japanese Emperor Hirohito requesting German aid for an outnumbered Japanese military force. He informed Hitler, “If you will turn back now and subdue England and the American forces resting there, the pressure on Japan will be lessened. Simultaneously, black revolt may break out in the United States” (p. 127). The revolt did not happen as Revels predicted, “but, as President Mansart down in Macon knew, it was

deep and bitter unrest and it might grow to something more dangerous to all America, black and white” (p. 128).

Riots in Detroit and Harlem proved Manuel Mansart correct. In Detroit, 50,000 Black laborers made their way to the city to work. They fought for their jobs and, in June, Roosevelt sent 6,000 Federal troops in to stem the “beating, killing and destruction of the poorest and blackest” (p. 128). The Harlem riot seemed to have no explanation. “Yet, it was in reality clearly part of the pattern which had spurred the president’s effort to open industry to black workers. It was one aspect of the world-wide colonial exploitation of colored folk. Harlem was being persistently exploited, and its black folk wanted bread and jobs and less clubbing by the police” (p. 128 – 129). The riots upset Judge Mansart as he predicted his son was taken away from college and drafted into the army and the war effort.

Revels Mansart, II, was disinterested in most things in his life. He passed his classes, enjoyed athletics but did not participate, had few hobbies, and little interest in his female peers. As he entered college, he gave thought to joining his father in law, but neither he nor his father were enthusiastic about the endeavor. Young Mansart considered medicine but had no interest in illness. He rather enjoyed flying and entered World War II as one of the Tuskegee Airmen.

Revels enjoyed the Air Corps. He endured less racial segregation than other branches of service. Soon, he grew disillusioned with war. He saw death and destruction and little children running alongside army trucks begging for food.

Suddenly, he was sick of it all. Even enemies were human. This, then, was war!

He was not punishing enemies. He was not striking against armed and evil men.

He was starving little children, raping young girls and crucifying their old fathers and mothers. He laughed as he received his final orders to fly to Rome. Eternal Rome! He rode out and soared into the sky. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 133).

After bombing a monastery, Revels Mansart, II, “swiftly curving the nose of his plane earthward, he fell ten thousand feet, closing his eyes as the plane drove its nose a hundred feet into the ground of Italy” (p. 133). There was no funeral.

### **Roosevelt’s Murder**

President Roosevelt was ill and his reputation among corporate finance didn’t win him any awards.

American corporate finance, centered in an ever-growing network of powerful banks, was developing wider control of industry and trade. Into its power fell the owners of property, the technicians, the newspapers, editors and publishers; the broadcasters and actors; even the laborers. The great and growing monopoly of money and credit was moving toward the absolute rule of the nation and even the world. This super-power hated Franklin Roosevelt with perfect hatred. They cursed this crippled traitor to his class, who after refusing Hitler’s blackmail, joined Communists to prevent American business from corralling the earth. These insane seekers for power swore by earth, heaven and hell to kill the God-damned meddler and wipe his memory from history. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 142)

There were mumbled allegations of possible murder. Du Bois (1961/2007) tells of a Black man who heard of the plot to kill the president.

He said, “There were men who med down there in total darkness so that none could see the others’ faces. They whispered, ‘He is sick—he must be made

sicker. He must die. Before the United Nations is born, he must be buried. Five persons are close enough to touch his body—they must be reached. One of us must be assigned to get to know each of these enough to tamper with them. There is influence, pressure, fear. There is money—there is no limit to the money. By hook or crook; by knife or gun; by poison or drug; by God, Franklin Roosevelt must die before April 25, 1945.

Men said this is a fairy tale and cannot be true. Others replied, “Not literally perhaps, but in substance it cannot be false.” For Roosevelt died April 12, 1945, in the 63<sup>rd</sup> year of his life and in the twelfth year of his reign as President of the United States. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 143)

#### **Of the Fourth Generation**

Douglass brings his son, Adelbert, to attend the State College. Mansart and grandson talked at great length about, “Truman, who had suddenly become President” (p. 144). Douglass, who was later elected to the State Senate, knew Truman, as they were both politicians from the Midwest. Of meeting Truman, Douglass assessed,

“But Truman’s real handicap, and one he will never escape, is his lack of a fundamental and broad education. He is essentially a good-natured man who wishes most folks well. He has ability and a clear mind. But he does not know the world. History, to him, is a closed book. He has no conception of science; he does not read; he does not listen to the world’s real teachers. He never learned how to study. He was always, essentially, a ‘show-off.’” (p. 145)

Manuel was pleased with Adelbert. He awaited the day the young Mansart would teach on campus. Mansart attends his granddaughter’s wedding in Chicago. Adelbert is adamant in his refusal to attend the ceremony. He knew his sister’s intended husband,

who was a doctor, “a man nearly twice as old as his sister but very successful, very indeed” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 146). Adelbert describes Dr. Steinway to his grandfather.

He split fees with consultants and specialists, even with druggists. He made out prescriptions at high prices when the same medicines were available in patented form at a much lower price. He was a good diagnostician but did not waste time on diagnosis when he thought a hastily prescribed pill would do. A variety of machines, gadgets and medical apparatus was installed in his office, all calculated to impress his patients. He often turned patients over to the nurses who put them through treatments which required the use of these various machines. This did them no harm, but it cost them more money. He had no scruples about recommending operations by surgeons with whom he had worked out business arrangements and often sent his patients to hospitals when it was not absolutely necessary. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 146).

Dr. Michael Steinway thought people should choose their doctor and pay them. He objected to “social medicine.” Mansart did not truly enjoy the ceremony. While in Chicago, he received a letter from his son-in-law African Methodist Bishop Roosevelt Wilson, inviting him to attend the organization of the United Nations (UNO). As Bishop Roosevelt had been named a consultant to the United Nations, Mansart was more than pleased to go, “for he had high hopes in the UNO” (p. 147).

Upon arriving in San Francisco, Mansart had the opportunity to converse with a diverse group of young adults about the state of the union. With Big Business, the young White woman, “grew up with it” and became “one of its products” (p. 149). Her father

was a ruthless banker in Atlanta who “gambled in human beings until he lost a huge fortune and blew out his own brains” (p. 149). She intuits evil lurking. She tells her companions,

“I tell you, there is evil in the air. We are in today for a scientifically conceived and directed propaganda which will put Goebbels to shame. Listen, I was at Dumbarton Oaks last September as an ornamental guest whom most of those present regarded as a spy. I was not housed in the decorous old manor house with the officials—no, I was at that other mansion back in the forest. There the rulers of the earth gathered and listened and plotted. There were wires and wireless which connected us with every center of power in the world. Messengers and messages were endless and uninterrupted. We held our breath, whispered, shouted and celebrated. What a web those spiders began to weave.” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 150)

Of course, Sally is right. In the midst of nations uniting, the war was changing. The United States would drop the atomic bomb on Nagasaki, Japan. It was “ a frightful catastrophe, killing 150,000 persons and maiming others to the second and third generation. It was the most awful deliberate mass murder that modern civilization had ever seen” (p. 155).

In a conversation with his son-in-law after the dropping of the atomic bomb, Mansart commends Big Business and the creators of the “industrial miracle” (p. 156). Bishop Wilson responds,

“Yes, indeed we must, but we must not let American business choke us, destroy our souls, prevent democracy and ruin taste and art. Mass production is

too often mass slavery and stoppage of progress. Americans used to be able to choose different types of autos. Now they are all alike. Shoes have not altered since 1700; they are still wide at the heel and narrow at the toe, while the human foot is just the opposite. In clothes, homes, buildings, individual taste is captive to profits for mass manufacture. There can be no mending, patching or repairing; we throw away shirts, trousers, pots and pans, waste wool, tin, copper, and steel to rape more from the earth for more private profits. We build roads for speed not for scenery; we erect buildings for floor space not for comfort. We hold inventions off the market if they threatened profits. We use patents for monopoly, not to encourage ability and genius. We are slaves of our industry instead of its masters. Is this necessary? Can we not improve it? And must we fight the Soviets to help ourselves and the world?" (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 157)

### **Dismissal, Marriage, and Death**

Somehow it seemed to him that his students as individuals, and the seething dark millions back of them were melting away from his influence. Once they were all his people. He had had his arms about them and was protecting and guiding them. This was no longer true. Other things, the world itself, had intruded, had come between him and the Negro people. He had been sucked up into greater and wider causes—Peace, Socialism, the meaning of all life. He wanted now to rid himself of diversion and get back to the Negro problem, to concentrate all his energy and hope there. And yet, if he and his folk were part of this wider world, how could he or they ever be really separate. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 169)

Mansart's trips outside of Macon increased. He knew he needed to tend to the colored university, but it was his quest for Love, Truth, and Beauty that slowly prepared him for retirement. Jean spent three weeks in Europe and attends a Parisian concert of world-renowned vocalist Paul Robeson. After Robeson makes remarks at that very concert that the press labels Communist, Manuel Mansart finds John Baldwin in his office. Baldwin and Mansart lively discuss Communism and Big Business. Baldwin cuts the conversation short, telling Manuel that his travels were a mistake. Moreover, Baldwin recommended Mansart fire Jean, using her attendance at Robeson's concert as justification. "She is a firebrand I am afraid, and we have got to get rid of her. Now Mansart, if you want to play along with us we want you to remain here as president of the institution. Otherwise, we are going to get someone else" (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 174).

Mansart paid little attention to the thoughts of and rumors surrounding the Board. Adelbert, Manuel's grandson graduated college and was assisting in the Little Theater on campus, was drafted and sent to the "mud and blood of Korea" (p. 175). Harry Truman narrowly missed starting World War III. In June of 1950, Truman sent 50,000 Americans to their death in Korea. Truman acted without congressional consent or sanction from the United Nations. One hundred thousand more were wounded in action and the first year alone drew \$5 billion from "education, health and housing which the nation sorely needed" (p. 175). Ten months later, Truman withdrew troops from Korea unable to advance U.S. troops past the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel and the Chinese army.

Jean lectured on Communism and eventually found herself the target of a federal investigation. After being acquitted of all charges, Jean was dismissed from the State



College due to her the speculation of treason. Mansart proposes to her in an effort for her to take care of herself. She politely declines.

“I am going to refuse not because of the silly matter of age, which has nothing to do with my love and affection for you; nor because of the disgraceful fact that a difference in color in America must for a moment move us, but for the plain truth that your marriage to me just now would mean loss of your own position.” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 183)

So, Jean accepts a position with the secretary of the state of the union organization. She proposes to infiltrate the White unions to “lead them gradually to admitting Negroes to the Textile Union and so begin that integration of the laboring force in the South which, in the long run, will settle the economic problems of the nation” (p. 183).

Adelbert returns to the United States after the Korean War took his right arm. His father sent him to Paris, to study at the Sorbonne. He wanders out of his classes to the courtyard to hear a learned professor lecturing on International Law. Adelbert listens,

“In fact, if European dominance or the rule of—” he had paused there and had not added, “the White Race,” as logically he would have had he not become conscious of the colored faces before him. Curious, the thought struck him, how colonials and Asiatics and Africans were crowding into the universities since the war. Well, it was a tribute to civilization and to the white peoples.... It was here that Adelbert left. What the professor had been saying seemed to him pure poppycock. In fact, education as it was called in the world and as it unfolded itself around him, was becoming increasingly distasteful. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 188).

### **Retirement**

Manuel is relieved of his duties as president of the colored State College. After a year's wait the university awarded him a small pension of \$2,500 annually. He and Jean married and settled into a wonderful companionship.

Upon his death, Manuel prophesizes to his family much the way his grandmother did when she brought him into the world. Surrounded by his family, Mansart knocking at death's door, opened his eyes as said,

“It was a nightmare. I know it now. I am back from a far journey. I saw China's millions lifting the soil of the nation in their hands to dam the rivers which long had eaten their land. I saw the golden domes of Moscow shining on Russia's millions, yesterday unlettered, now reading the wisdom of the world. I saw birds singing in Korea, Viet Nam, Indonesia and Malaya. I saw India and Pakistan united, free; in Paris, Ho Chi Minh celebrated peace on earth; while in New York—”

He paused as if exhausted and lay back in Jean's arms. [...] Gently Jean closed the lifeless eyes.

And so died Manuel Mansart, in the seventy-eighth year of his life—and of the emancipation of the Negro in America, the ninety-first.

Over his dead body lay a pall of crimson roses, such as few kings have ever slept beneath. (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 240)

### **Post Traumatic Slave Disorder**

Du Bois highlights one of the binds of the color line. Blacks internalize the cultural message of inferiority, and, even though they may sense discomfort at the

thought, exact harm through what they've been told, thought, or believed. This bind of the color line demands the belief that the lighter someone's skin complexion, the more superiority they hold. Adelbert Mansart, Manuel's grandson, confided in Jean that he abhorred complexion discrimination he encountered in Chicago from his. Du Bois (1961/2007) described Adelbert's experience:

He did not like his home. He particularly disliked (in fact he said "hated") his mother. He did not like his sister. His father was good enough but had hardly any time for him.

It turned out that the real trouble centered in the fact that Douglass' first child was a girl, light-skinned and pretty, whom the mother adored and exhibited. Her hair was brown but very kinkly, and her mother from the first had had it straightened and oiled and pressed weekly. And then the second child, good-looking and a boy, was disliked and almost disinherited in his mother's affection because his skin was dark. (p. 145)

Similarly, Richard Rodriguez (2000) writes of his experience having a dark complexion and being Mexican. Growing up, he remembered assuming "dark skin a burden" (p. 115). His sister, too, suffered from a dark complexion. Rodriguez writes,

I knew that she suffered for being a "nigger." As she came home from grammar school, little boys came up behind her and pushed her down to the sidewalk. In high school, she struggled in the adolescent competition for boyfriends in a world of football games and proms, a world where her looks were plainly uncommon. (Rodriguez, 2000, p. 115)

He also remembered sitting in the kitchen listening to his aunts revealed in having light children and discussed the fear of having a dark son or daughter, offering remedies for darker complexioned children. The situation Du Bois used Adelbert to illustrate and Richard Rodriguez's experiences are the manifestations of racist socialization, or internalized racism. Wijeyesinghe, Griffin, and Love (1997) defined internalized racism as "The result of people of targeted racial groups believing, acting on, or enforcing the dominant system of beliefs about themselves and members of their own social group."

Adelbert and Rodriguez are penalized, ostracized, and ignored by their family members because of the color of their skin. Through Adelbert, Du Bois (1961/2007) describes a common phenomenon among not only Blacks but other people of color as well. The ways that internalized oppression manifest is different for every individual. There are, however, similarities between the two young men.

Adelbert's mother nearly neglects him because of his skin color. Rodriguez described the torment and bullying his sister suffered outside of the home and the negativity surround darker complexion he observed as a young child in the midst of his family. During slavery, White slave owners would increase their stock, raping and impregnating Black slave women. The more like the owner a child was, the child received different, often perceived as better, treatment. As a result, "Light skin became associated with an improved quality of life" (DeGruy Leary, 2005, p. 140). Du Bois used the interaction to signal an issue present in the community. That it still resonates with me, as the researcher, today is significant.

The impact of observing the trauma his mother and father encountered daily along with the trauma patterns, responses, and behaviors they inherited, created hatred in

Adelbert. His father was more concerned with making enough money that would efface his racial placement and his mother was colorstruck—providing differently for her children based upon their complexions. This manifested as ever present anger. Because “he exhibited too clearly his Negro blood [...] From early childhood, then, he grew up hating his family and the world” (p. 145). His father placed him in white schools, but once Adelbert came of high school age, he chose to enroll in Wendell Phillips High “which was in effect a colored school in a Northern city where schools were not supposed to be segregated by race” (p. 145). Though the school was overcrowded, the teachers were knowledgeable and the school well equipped. Adelbert enjoyed school and did well earning the regard of his peers.

Adelbert wanted to be a man different from his father. He was intent on going to his grandfather in Macon. “He wanted to live in a colored world which was satisfied with being colored” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 146).

### **Critical Race Theory Lens**

Manuel, in conversation with Sir John Rivers (see above), asked an essential question: *Why this difference between the pay of the European and the African?* Mansart reasoned, “The black workers who served your grandfather got paid once; their descendants are being paid not for what their fathers did but for what they do now” (p. 15). Sir John Rivers answered that property, as the result of law, to explain the difference in pay. Sir John espoused the British belief that some families are superior and, thereby, meant to rule the world. The *right to rule* is granted by natural selection and property rights assigned, in varying degrees, to those assumed to have been born for it.

Following the line and logic of this argument, using classical theory to interpret the concept, property refers to all personal rights (Harris, 1995). Harris (1995) defines the concept of property as defined during the founding era, as

not only external objects and people's relationships to them, but also all of those human rights, liberties, powers, and immunities that are important for human well-being, including freedom of expression, freedom of conscience, freedom from bodily harm, and free and equal opportunities to use personal faculties. (p. 280)

This definition of property undergirds the pedagogy and epistemology of colonialist oppression rooted in the processes of racialization and colonization. Through his question, Du Bois (1961/2007) debunks the myth of Whites' right to protect White privilege and supremacy through the issuance of tangible and intangible property.

Contextualizing this in a conversation around contemporary education, students who are blighted by the achievement gap are denied external objects, adequate buildings, current technologies, and accurate information, but they are also denied human rights, liberties, powers and immunities. The denial of the freedom of expression and conscience manifests as strict uniform adherence and zero tolerance policies that privilege the infraction and not the students' words. Many are unable to defend themselves from classroom and system-level infractions. Further, many Black and urban parents, as their students' only advocates, are disenfranchised through the penal system and, thereby, silenced. Urban students, particularly urban students of color are rarely free from bodily harm as many pass through metal detectors to gain entrance to school. They are further subjected to bodily harm as police and private security officers are given carte

blanche to probe, detain, and subdue students by any means necessary—including chokeholds, tasers, and pepper spray.

While seeking not to assert his privilege over Sir John, Manuel tells Rivers of a perspective of which he has no knowledge. Manuel calls attention to United States' Race Problem and whites' bred belief and pursuit of the privileges that maintain white supremacy.

Gradualism, as a social salve for racialization, colonization, and globalization, allows time to care for past and present wounds. It allows time to heal all wounds and offers the current generation time to forget the trauma of the day. It could be a form of protection for either party. It, however, gets little accomplished. White folks get to victimize and dehumanize—which is a form of oppression that attacks the intended receiver unexpectedly, often for no reason at all.

Some Blacks take on the veil of victim that allows them to blame their victimization on the very thing that they choose to prevent them from realizing their talent and full potential. Educating children for warfare and/or skilled labor is the current order of the day. From video games to actual war zones existing in core of most major cities around the United States, children—from an early age—learn to assert dominance over another or to fight the natural inclination that they are *not* inferior to a group of people, who for better or worse, are just different in perception. Just as we are willing to accept the notion of still separate and unequal, we can adopt other notions of education and schooling that do not dehumanize all human beings by virtue of the social system it is positioned in.

The social fabric should not be stretched because of our persistent inability to envision better schools for all; our goal is to make sense of it as a gift to the generations that must follow. Individually and as a various social groupings committed to the same cultural ideals, one social interaction must require respect, compassion, and understanding. Human rights are property that has been protected for the rich White ruling class since the beginning of the rule of the Britons in the 1500s (Painter, 2011). Because those human rights translate into property for the few who have the “complexion for the protection.”

### **Conclusion**

As Revels, II, plunges his airplane toward the earth, ten thousand feet above the earth, the hollow ring of Fanon’s (1963) writing on colonialism and violence echoes and resonates, undergirding Du Bois, “At the level of individuals, violence is a cleansing force. It free the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect” (p, 94). Young Revels was more than happy to take his own life given the weight of the lives he had taken and the phantasmagoria that accompanies his death. It is as if Du Bois begs the question, what is the true collateral damage of war?

Blacks were gaining increasing access to greater parts of the world. Able to assess the standard of living of other people of color in the world, like the young soldier says (see above), the people he fought had better economic and labor opportunities in the United States than he did. Invited suicide (DeGruy Leary, 2005) is not a new phenomenon for Black males, especially those with few outlets available to them. Revels and Adelbert were both disenchanted with life as the fourth generation of Mansarts, free



from the bondage of slavery. Revels, II, showed little interest in anything save flying. The very interest that gave him freedom was the one interest that helped him commit suicide. Though Adelbert's story ends differently, the effects of his mother's internalized racism and his father desire to be free of race through amassing large amounts of money assisted Adelbert from checking out of his familial unit, rejecting the trappings of color and of wealth.

Once free from slavery, the United States looked at its quasi-colonial "nation" of Blacks, many of whom had every intention of realizing their liberation, and completely turned its back. As Franz Fanon (1963) suggests,

When a colonist country, embarrassed by the claims for independence made by a colony, proclaims to the nationalist leaders: "If you wish for independence, take it, and go back to the Middle Ages," the newly independent people tend to acquiesce and to accept the challenge; in fact you may see colonialism withdrawing its capital and its technicians and setting up around the young State the apparatus of economic pressure. The apotheosis of independence, and the colonial power through its immense resources of coercion condemns the young nation to regression. In plain words, the colonial power says: "Since you want independence, take it and starve." (p. 96 – 97)

Blacks were placed outside of the nexus of state and federal support. Not only did the infrastructure not support and bolster their emancipation, it retarded the effort of a newly liberated people for decades through disenfranchisement, increased violence and mob rule, police brutality and vigilante justice, and denial of schooling with obsolete curricula that underscored Black inferiority. The nation looked on telling its new Black citizens to

take their freedom and starve despite the toil and labor expended in developing the existing comfort and reality the colonizing country continues to reap and enjoy.

## Chapter 7: Understanding the *Black Flame*

### The Novel

W.E.B. Du Bois' *Black Flame* trilogy, though historical, is comprised of novels. The novels provide another version of history that is important to include not only in the literary canon, but the historical record as well. Keith Byerman (1994) described the historical novel as “the placing of real people in fictional situations” (p.142). Byerman’s analysis of the *BFT* labels the works as monologic, assuming the reader has little knowledge or “rememory” (Morrison, 1992). According to Byerman (1994) the history Du Bois writes in the *BFT* is the history he wrote over the course of his career as a sociologist and a historian. The novel form provides Du Bois another outlet—prophesy. Byerman (1994) explains:

By allowing for the imagination, he can express his moral indignation and his version of the apocalypse without being accused of emotional excess or subjectivity. He puts the words in the mouths of madmen and conspirators, so that he can say what he feels must be said but what would be scandalous and perhaps even irresponsible to say in his own voice. To the roles of historian and novelist he adds that of prophet. (p. 140)

Byerman correctly identifies Du Bois’ proficiency for placing scandalous words in the mouths of madmen and conspirators. Nearly all of the characters Du Bois introduced in the texts have some ideological bent they espouse over the course of the novel. Though it is difficult to believe that Du Bois was fearful of being labeled scandalous or irresponsible. As Byerman (1994) writes at the beginning of his analysis, “he is very old: eighty-nine at the time of publication of the first volume” (p. 139). It is

more plausible that Du Bois wrote the novels with very little concern about how he or the *BFT* would be received.

Though eighty-nine with the first novel was published, Du Bois began writing the novels in his early eighties after what he deemed a successful bid for senator of New York. Du Bois had little certainty that he would win the senate seat, but he was surprised at the number of votes he received even under speculation of socialist leanings (Du Bois, 1968). Du Bois began writing the trilogy in 1951 after being indicted for his involvement with the peace movement. Forced to surrender his passport, he began writing the work he had envisioned since 1935, after *Black Reconstruction* was published. Du Bois was embittered. He was blacklisted from nearly every agency and institution he had assisted, believed in, and/or helped found (Du Bois, 1968; Du Bois, 1971). The trilogy symbolized, more likely, Du Bois growing freedom of speech that accompanied his increasing age and ire with the country and culture he studied his entire life. In fact, as Arnold Rampersad (1990) described, “The unattractive aspect of Du Bois’ personality—his lack of tact, his arrogance, and his coldness—concealed what was perhaps the most significant single force of his complex mind, shaping the basic choices of his life, influencing the quality and style of his vocation” (p. 284).

Byerman (1994) analyzed the *Black Flame* trilogy for Du Bois’ use of narrative voice, supplanting Du Bois’ voice as the omniscient narrator. Borrowing his own words from other nonfiction writing from his oeuvre, Du Bois interjects his personal ideology and tone in writing the novels. Byerman (1994) argues,

it is difficult to distinguish this voice from those of certain characters, which suggests an author with little interest in character development. Characters are

consistently identified by the ideologies they articulate or the allegorical roles they perform, all of which are colored by the biases of the narrator. Even “historical” figures are less persons than function of a particular historical interpretation. Thus, the trilogy is clearly monologic in design and execution. (p. 151)

The conflation of characters into ideologies and symbolic roles in the texts are part and parcel of the literary endeavor. Characters are the symbolic splinters of any author psyche, beliefs, and/or ideology regardless of the genre. Toni Morrison (1992), recipient of the Nobel Prize in Literature, argued that similar to history, U.S. literature is the commentary on “the transformations of biological, ideological, and metaphysical concepts of racial difference. But the literature has an additional concern and subject matter: the private imagination interacting with the external world it inhabits” (p. 65). It is the private imagination of the reader and the private imagination of the author that Byerman (1994) overlooks in his critique of W.E.B. Du Bois’ *Black Flame* trilogy.

Keith Byerman is a White professor of English and Du Bois was a Black sociologist and historian. Du Bois saw history “from the dark underside of America. Though this view is sometimes distorted, it is still vital to the general perspective” (Rampersad, 1990, p. 275). Henry Louis Gates (1988) defines this dark underside of America to which Rampersad refers, as the discrete Black difference. Though Byerman (1994) mentions race in his analysis, racism is rarely mentioned.

The narrow conception of *BFT* character accessing only greed, hatred, and idealism as motivations is telling. According to Byerman (1994), “This small range allows Du Bois to bring a kind of scientific logic to human subjectivity. He wants to

offer a rational explanation for the irrationalities of human existence and action” (p. 152). Few of those, if any, familiar with Du Bois’ oeuvre of historical and sociological work would assert the opposite to be true. Du Bois, as one of the preeminent researchers of the twentieth century, understood the impossibilities of rationalizing irrational human reality and behavior.

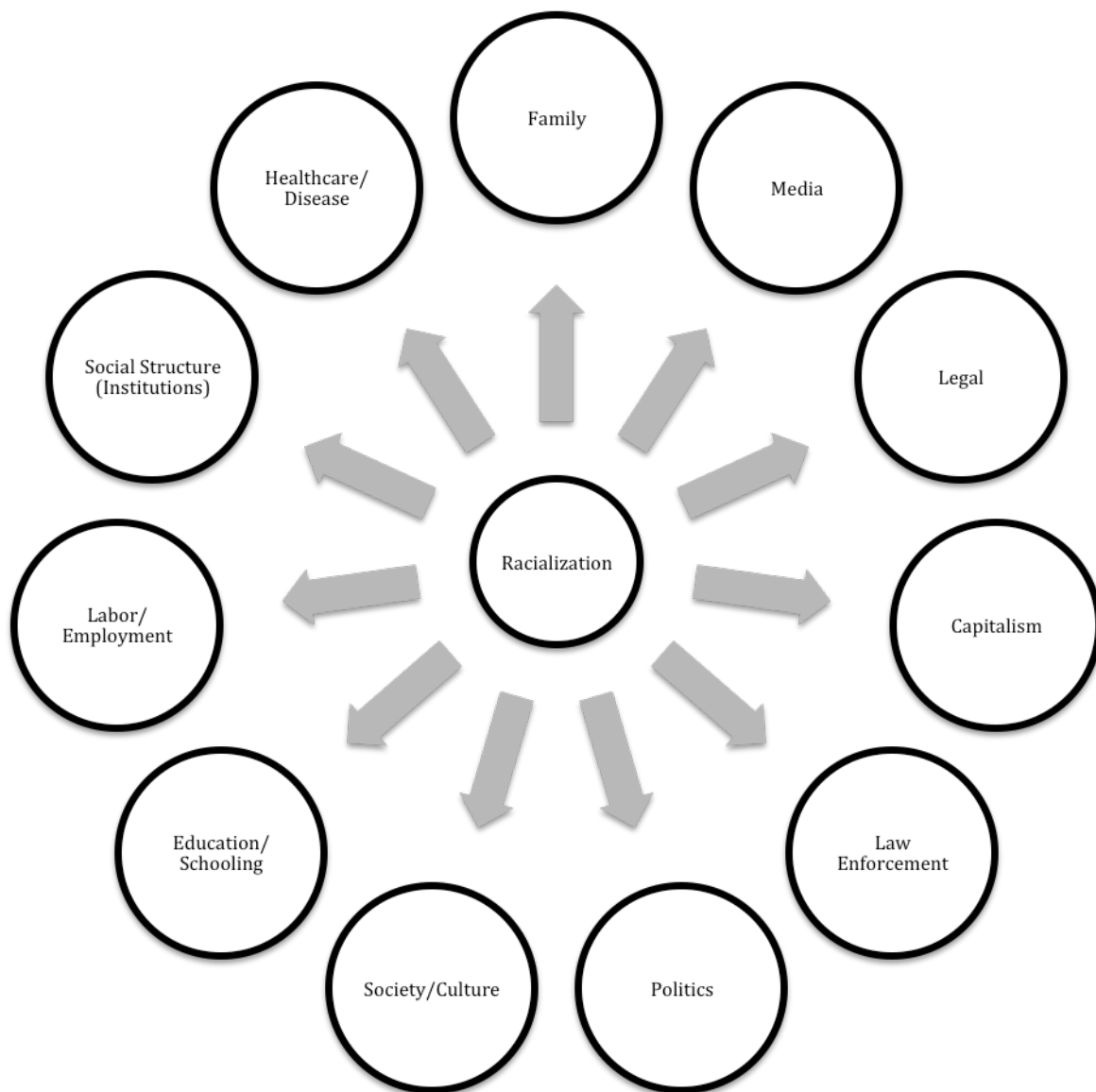
Unfortunately, Byerman’s critique, like traditional canonical literature, “is free of, uninformed, and unshaped by the four-hundred-year-old presence of first, Africans and then African Americans in the United States” (Morrison, 1992, p. 4-5). Just as Blackness was satirized in the White imagination, Blacks are also “quite capable of establishing the necessary distance between themselves and their condition to Signify upon white racism through parody” (Gates, 1988, p. 94). Each novel is replete with Signifying parodies and satire. These stylistic choices might be lost to a white reader without direct notice of the double-speak within the text. The external politics determine the internal style of the novel (Bakhtin, 1981). This is not to imply that White readers cannot grasp the “double-meaning” of the text (Gates, 1988). However, Du Bois’ vernacular is clearly Black, as he is Black, but his double-speak is not denoted by the use of African American vernacular throughout the text. Signifyin(g) (drawn from Gates, 1988), as Du Bois employs it throughout the *BFT*, “is to engage in certain rhetorical games” (p. 48). Most Black authors Signify—the social denial of her and his humanity places them outside of the standardized (read: white) stylistics of the literary canon. Understanding the function of the novel is key to understanding the themes in the *Black Flame* trilogy.

## **Themes Throughout the *Black Flame***

### **Racialization**

Racialization is a relational process that identifies those with humanity and places the burden of privilege and supremacy on others. The process operationalizes racism as the immediate response to ensure the preservation of White supremacy. This process, in tandem with social institutions and structures, is dynamic and responsive, constantly shaping and reshaping cultural behaviors, norms, and practices. Racialization affects all areas of social interaction and all social institutions (Figure 3). Through the *BFT*, racialization organizes society and continues the dehumanization of Blacks.

**Figure 3: The Process of Racialization**



The noticeable similarities of Mansart and Du Bignon exist on different sides of the color line as well as along gender/biological sex lines. White women are the only women with identities in the book—excepting Betty Carmichael and the assertive, adult Sojourner. Betty Carmichael character has more depth due to her profession and connection to an affluent, well-connected White man. Betty also represents how Black



women led families as the result of their ability to make enough money to support their families with or without the presence of adult men. To protect his family, Jack Carmichael left his wife and child after committing a crime. He stumbled upon his family years later with no true training or skill. Betty trained as a nurse and had stable, steady income. She often helped Jack along the way—telling him to talk to Cyrus Taylor and to join the machinists union. Du Bois (1961/2007) expresses the frustration of many Black men, then and now,

“I grew up thinking that a man’s work was his life; his way of doing what he wanted to do, which was the same thing in my mind as to what the world wanted done. Of course, I soon learned better, but concluded that a man could easily find out how his ability and desire could best help to do what the world needed. That didn’t work out. So then it was a search for any useful work whether I liked it or not, provided it supported me and left enough time for me to do what I most wanted to do. Even that was denied. Now I’m face to face with doing what I am not interested in, or even hate working at, and having no time left for my own life. That, it seems to me, is the plight of the mill hand, and I don’t like it.” (p. 83).

Jack described labor as a prison, inescapable. Racialization, too, is inescapable. Jack’s racial *thrownness* (Young, 1997) preset his destiny to labor. He did not go to prison nor did he desire his forced profession. Despite his choice, he seemed duty-bound to achieve a predetermined goal, to slave despite his dream and desire for another means of support for himself and his family. No matter how he chose to try to break free from his *thrown*

identity, social boundaries existed and were created to ensure his plateau in the labor market. Racialization includes the intersection of race and economics.

Black labor, education, and economic market go hand in hand throughout the *BFT*. Du Bois brings to bear the push for industrial training after emancipation well into the twentieth century. Blacks were never intended to be trained as a part of industry, but to carry forth industry. The interest and educational expenditures made Black industrial training for cheap labor a reality on the behalves of Big Business and the political structure. Many Blacks remained disenfranchised, though many had the opportunity for upward mobility like Revels, Douglass, and Sojourner Mansart and the Northern Carmichaels.

Despite his disaffection of his forced profession, Jack still had to endure “the plight of the mill hand.” Frantz Fanon (1963) argued, “in the colonies, the economic substructure is also a superstructure. The cause is the consequence; you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich” (p. 40). Racism is the broad brush that sweeps across all of the institutions, structures, and superstructures that organize society. White supremacy mutually reinforces economic wealth—then becomes and reproduces cultural schemas as well as material reality. The evolution of education in the South evidenced that.

Fanon (1963) contends that a discussion of colonialism should include a Marxist analysis. There was never parity among state expenditures for education under the “separate but equal” doctrine—at any level of education. Black elementary schools were subpar when compared to White elementary schools in the same area. White high schools had no competition in expenditure for nearly forty years, as few Black high

schools existed (Anderson, 1988). As the White college system was forming, the Colored State Schools across the South offered a high preparation that was much different than the curricula offered at White college and eventually universities. Separate and unequal was established as the norm—in schooling and the broader social structure and institutions.

The long-term effects of multigenerational trauma in education and the larger society manifested in the life choices of Manuel Mansart's children—particularly his sons. Douglass Mansart, named for abolitionist Frederick Douglass had no desire to follow his father into education and schooling. He observed the ways his father was constantly disregarded, disrespected and divested of his masculinity and his humanity. Douglass was determined to go north, to earn enough money so that he and others would forget that he was Black. Du Bois uses Douglass' migration to symbolize the waves of Black migration to the North after slavery, Reconstruction, and Jim Crow. Douglass's character also displays the tension between Black leaders' call, like that of Frederick Douglass, for Blacks to remain in the South and stake their claim to the land they developed and the newer generation's desire to start afresh and new in the North away from prior generations of hurt, trauma, and degradation.

Bruce was the son of wasted talent. Unable to channel his passion for electricity and invention, Bruce rather enjoyed the activity he was next best at: sports. Du Bois included his own commentary around the place of sports at the collegiate level, using Mansart's ambivalence toward sports and that time that could be better spent on the practical cultivation of skills. Bruce Mansart's character is siphoned into a life of crime. Though Bruce was responsible for the illegal activities he chose to participate in, many of

the characters in the book point toward his first arrest as pushing him toward a life of crime. Once in the web of illegality, Bruce wants to get out, but cannot. In turn, he gives up, preferring to confess his crimes in exchange for escape by death.

Revels Mansart, as his name suggests, took great pleasure in not returning to the South like his brother. Douglass chose money to neutralize and mitigate the mental, emotional, and material impacts of racism and racialization. Revels never really saw himself as a man worthy of the respect due his White peers and colleagues. Revels, II, the fourth generation of free Mansarts, mimicked Bruce's lack of direction and drive. In the end, his suicide marked his own desperation to escape racism and the utter destruction of war.

Sojourner Mansart suffered the intersection of race, color prejudice, and sex. She is often overlooked and forgotten—and so mentioned in the text. As Revels and Douglass were drafted, Du Bois questioned Bruce's choices for a companion. It was never to be Sojourner. Sojourner's education is not mentioned except for violin lessons she took from a Jewish musician as a young adolescent. Those lessons ceased when the White community found him teaching a Black student. To maintain his livelihood, he gave up teaching Sojourner.

Sojourner was described as timid and unattractive, overlooked and often ignored. Until Reverend Roosevelt Wilson, a Mansart family friend, noticed her. Even still, she took a backset to the career goals and aspirations of her husband. Douglass' son, Adelbert Mansart is the voice of race-consciousness among the newest generation of Mansarts. Indeed, Adelbert's sister is mentioned only as his mother's light complexioned

and therefore favorite child and when she is married. Sojourner's child, a young girl, is only mentioned tangentially.

Jean Du Bignon exemplifies the fluidity of race to the exclusion of gender. Though moderate mention is made surrounding Jean's sex, her racial affiliation and ascription are more vital to the novels' storyline. Du Bois acknowledges that Jean's light complexion allows her to wield power on both sides of the line than was initially anticipated. Jean symbolized race not as a biological construct but as a point of view and alliance of mind, spirit, and action. Her experience of society exemplified how race is arbitrarily assigned. Jean had to tell most people she was Black. It was only in doing so that she was treated as a Black woman. Even then, Jean's treatment of the world was more privileged than that of a darker complexioned Black woman.

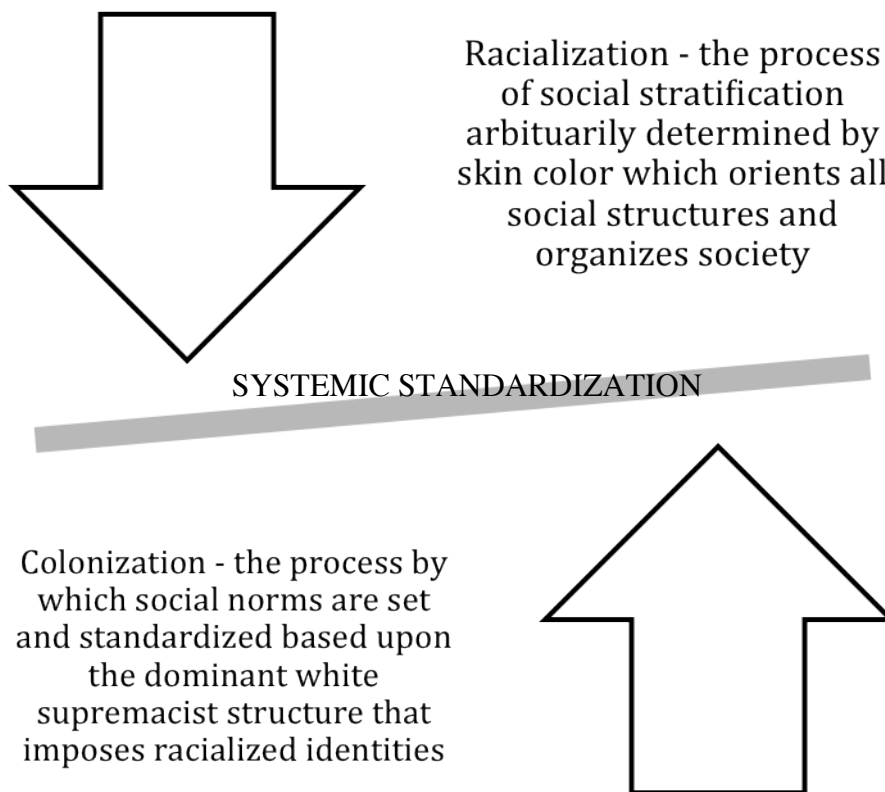
Through the storyline of the novels, Du Bois discussed socialism as a means of escaping racism and racialization. One of the predominant themes of the novels was a prescient discussion of socialism and the use of propaganda to dissuade U.S. public knowledge of socialism and communism. Through travel, conversation, and commentary in the novels, a relevant discussion of socialism is carried along throughout each novel. Du Bois, in the quest for peace, was socialist in perspective and understood the biased representation of socialism among the political structure that privileged corporations and Big Business more than the needs and desires of the proletariat. In the United States, the proletariat was disenfranchised and at odds over complexion differences.

### **Colonization**

Colonization and racialization are mutually reinforcing throughout the novels. Colonization, for American Blacks, stemmed from colonialism. Blacks, however, were

divested of their land thereby granting them what Du Bois (1944/1985) termed “quasicolonial” and “semicolonial” status. Colonization is a process of standardization. Like racialization, colonization is dynamic and constantly responding to both White and Black exemplars to create systemic standards (Figure 4). Colonization is a masked tool of dehumanization. A standard appears, on the surface, to shape and uphold equality. However, it actually assumes division among people according to skin color and class as the standard is predicated upon White supremacist ideology that invalidates the humanity of people of color.

**Figure 4: Systemic Standardization**



Jean Du Bignon and Manuel Mansart led a teacher and student conversation about Blacks' quest to become Americans versus their acknowledging and battle the world labor problem specifically in Africa and Asia. One teacher asked if Blacks could avoid the world labor problem and focus on becoming American. Manuel answered,

“No. Becoming American does not mean automatic settlement of our problems. It means sharing the problems of Americans, and believe me, they've plenty. These problems we must understand beforehand, lest we land as a dead weight and complicate the question we ought to be ready to help solve. We must not be content to loaf in a provincial racial enclave. We must emerge into the greater world even before we become Americans. Perhaps we can then lead them out of the woods.” (Du Bois, 1961/2007, p. 66)

Du Bois pushed limited colonized Black thought to global thought. The passage seems to debunk Black thinking that becoming American or being fully recognized as American qualifies Blacks' humanity. As the qualifications for humanity are questioned, another question arises: who determines who or what an American is? The standard and burden of proof for humanity are seemingly determined nebulously. Standardization is intentionally vague in order to exclude those people, actions, behaviors, thoughts, and ideologies that begin to overlap with existing standards. Standards and norms must be responsive and exclusive in order to maintain the existing order. White supremacy is an epistemological system that exists under duress and in opposition to the dehumanization of those who are deemed non-White.

Social relationships may change the standards, but the existing oppositional mutually reinforcing relationship stays the same, as it must. The Scroggs family

exemplifies this relationship in the *Black Flame* trilogy. The Scroggs family is a working-class white family that persists in taking out their lack of money and social standing on the liberation of Blacks. A Scroggs lobbied Colonel Breckinridge to align the power and prestige of the planter class with the sheer number and force of poor Southern Whites. It is a young Scroggs that stole Manuel's geography book and slapped him about the face. It is a young adult Scroggs who drunkenly stumbled into Manuel's classroom to tell Manuel's pupils that a Black Army regiment did not rescue Teddy Roosevelt in the Spanish-American war. The Scroggs cling to the utter domination and dehumanization of Blacks to bolster their own humanity that is often ignored by the Whites with the power and profits they envy.

The Scroggs symbolize the social and socio-economic stratification among Whites. The unification of White wealth with White labor fostered the belief in the White working class that humanity, particularly their humanity, was tied to their Whiteness. The White owning class spread the belief that the only barrier to wealth for poor and working-class Whites was Black labor. So, poor and working-class whites allowed their resentment of Black labor and laborers to fester into enmity. White supremacy, as a system of legal redress and property protection for Whites, ensured that this enmity—when it became violent—was sanctioned, unchecked, and unpunished. This was the gift of White supremacy. Poor and working-class Whites murdered, raped, and stole from defenseless Blacks. Their only reward: legal sanction. Some poorer Whites were able to gain enough financial stability to become White wealth, but on the whole many remained impoverished blaming Blacks for the lack of wealth White skin was expected to naturally imbue.



Nearly all of the themes for racialization include, reinforce, or signal colonization. As mentioned above, racialization and colonization are mutually reinforcing. Both build together simultaneously. As the definition of race changes, colonization responds to alter cultural conceptions of and responses to race. The process of racializing people, behaviors, thoughts, actions, and expressions responds to the alteration of cultural conceptions and response to race. They are the lasting legacy of colonialism and the keys to White supremacist hegemony. As mentioned above, Blacks would do well to situate their experiences and perspectives of race, racism, racialization, colonialism, semi-/quasicolonialism, and colonization globally. Expecting full social participation and recognition, as the bestowal of humanity vis-à-vis Blacks' assertion of the rights and privileges of full citizenship could, quite possibly, remain forever unrequited. As Smith (2011) understood,

For a population to be dehumanized they have to be perceived as a race (a natural human kind) with a unique racial essence. The racial essence is then equated with a subhuman essence, leading to the belief that they are subhuman animals. The function of dehumanization is to override inhibitions against committing acts of violence. (p. 264)

Dehumanization, therefore, exists in Whites' assertion of supremacy and Blacks' consistent struggle for full social participation and equal rights. The very fight to exist on another's terms and through their definition ensures failure and reifies the system of dehumanization and inequality.

## Globalization

Modern conceptions of globalization are colonialist in their approach, but do not make any mention of colonialism in its definition. In his review of research on globalization and education, Joel Spring (2008), drawing from the inaugural issue of the *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, offered the journal's vision of globalization and education; it being:

[...]globalization and education would be considered as an intertwined set of global processes affecting education such as worldwide discourses on human capital, economic development, and multiculturalism; intergovernmental organizations; information and communication technology; nongovernmental organizations; and multinational corporations. (Spring, 2008 drawn from Dale & Robertson, 2003, p. 332)

Education discourses around the world characterize globalization to develop human capital, progress life long learning to improve job skills, and education for economic development. The mass international migration of workers has prompted a global discussion about multiculturalism and the global flow of information. Education is no longer bounded by the nation-state. Instead, the nation-state has been replaced with broader societies that are not geographically or culturally bounded, but rather economic and political organization, the civil society, and culture (Spring, 2008).

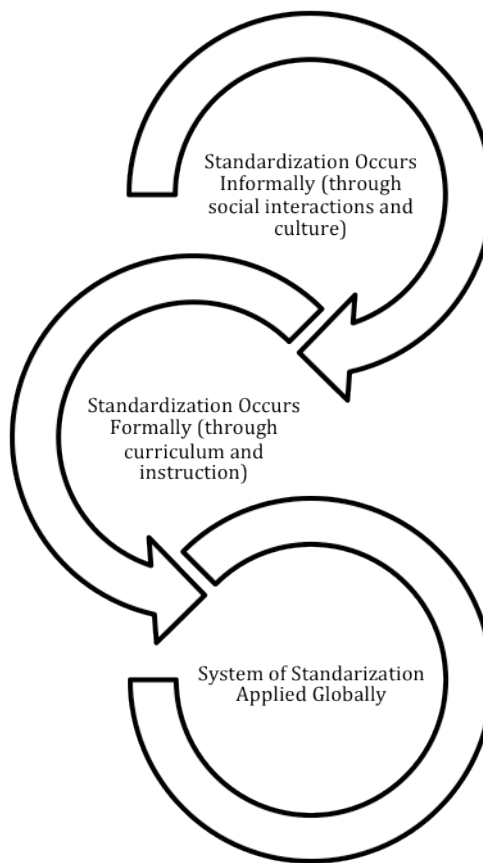
Philip Fisher (1999), in his research on American literature and the culture of creative destruction, asserts that the primary business in the United States is business. "Or, to speak metaphorically, the business of America is immigration, not only of persons but also of the things and of the systems that willed change makes possible" (Fisher,

1999, p. 154). Globalization exports a system of standardization that makes immigration possible. The increasing standardization of English as the language of commerce across the world, for example, implies the metaphorical exportation of language. Immigration is no longer a physical geographical change. With the advent of ever-advancing technologies, immigration becomes a mind-set that accompanies the globalization of commerce as well as formal and informal education.

More contemporary definitions of globalization emphasize the differences between it and comparative education. Globalization is interdisciplinary and less concerned with comparing educational systems by nation-state. The world has become a divergent marketplace that has opened to include more of the world's workers, specifically those worker's able to participate in the world's knowledge economy. Advances in globalization and education fail to mention the work Du Bois began on the subject in his travel, study, and research abroad.

*Worlds of Color* highlights the use of formal and informal educational practices that Du Bois observed dominating other parts of the world through colonial, quasi-colonial, and neo-colonial practices (Figure 5). Formal education—curriculum and instruction—as well as the informal education people of color around the world receive through various social institutions (see Figure 3) create standardized norms that are imposed the world over as Du Bois observed the colonialism that capitalism and Big Business were taking to the world.

**Figure 5: The Process of Globalization**



Du Bois' lifelong interdisciplinary study of the social organization of the U.S. rarely receives the recognition it deserves. His work and research on the world scarcely receives any attention from the broader academy. *Worlds of Color* is Du Bois' glimpse at the social organization of the world, seeking to fit the puzzle pieces of singular nation-state history among the world's historicity. The first two novels set the stage for a more inclusive discussion of the social organization of the world. Labor and education were often combined as the history of the White world played out.

Some may describe Du Bois' (1961/2007) *Worlds of Color* as a comparative study, however there exists a deeper analysis. The first two novels set up the third novel.

Du Bois (1957/2007) asserted that the “Age of Business” began in 1900. It was at the turn of the twentieth century that

The Corporation was the Frankenstein of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, contrived by the lawyers of the 19<sup>th</sup>. By 1950 in America it would be the Robot ruler of Man. It had neither Body to be kicked nor Soul to be damned; but in the present century it owned the Earth and enslaved Mankind. (Du Bois, 1957/2007, p. 261)

In his study of *The Art and Imagination of W.E.B. Du Bois*, Arnold Rampersad (1976) asserted that the major events of the twentieth century were related to the “twin strains of race and capital.” Rampersad assessed the novels as highlighting the conspiracy of modern colonialism. Roosevelt’s death signaled the reassertion of the sovereignty of capitalism in the United States (Rampersad, 1976). Du Bois’ study of globalization included the formal and informal educational and cultural influences of the extensive reach of colonialism and capitalism. He further sought insight into the discourses on human capital, economic development, and multiculturalism these influences advanced. Current discussions of globalization do not mention specifically address colonialism excepting a postcolonial analysis of globalization. This is highly problematic when colonialism is not a relic of the distant or near past—but rather a highly dynamic transmuting process that exists contemporarily.

The postcolonial analysis “sees globalization as an effort to impose particular economic and political agendas on the global society that benefit wealthy and rich nations at the expense of the world’s poor (Spring, 2008). Although colonialism is predicated upon purloining native labor and resources from colonies that have been violently robbed of their land and a living wage, colonialism cannot be discussed without attention to race.

Colonialism, for centuries, has been White masochism unleashed on scores of the Brown and Black peoples of the world.

The history of a people must be understood before it can be interpreted and comprehended among the history of others. Manuel, the Black messiah—the Black Flame, seeks to not only contextualize the Negro Problem among the world’s history but to understand it among the larger world’s narrative. One must grasp a section before the whole is pieced together.

### **Summary**

The *Black Flame* trilogy illustrates just how the field of education is poised to facilitate a broad social conversation around the how the entire social structure contributes to and turns on the dehumanization of Blacks. Schooling, as a site of formal education, has imposed systemic norms upon students thereby upholding and perpetuating the dehumanization of Black students. This dehumanization is as traumatic as the slavery’s denial of humanity. Black students unknowingly acquiesce to the burden of their parents traumatization as well as there own in a system that never intended to acknowledge their humanity and, in fact, continues to daily deny it.

*Brown v. The Board of Education* showed the disparate inequalities as well as the insufferable harm Blacks endured, specifically in education. Education has become the proving ground upon which society attempts to level the societal playing field. Lani Guinier and Gerald Torres (2003) in their groundbreaking research on race, power, and democracy use the metaphor of the miner’s canary to describe our noxious social predicament. Miners at the turn of the century would take canaries into the mines with them to detect toxic gases in the mine. If the canary died, the miners knew that deadly

gases were present and their lives were in grave danger lest they leave the mine immediately.

Guinier and Torres (2003) identify Blacks persisting social and actual demise as the canary signaling a panoptic view of the entire social structure and the harmful effects it has on all present. W.E.B. Du Bois' *Black Flame* trilogy presents the education of Black students as the canary. Black people vis-à-vis education suffered tremendously since the responsibility for their education was relinquished to the states after Black Reconstruction in the 1880's (Du Bois, 1935/2007). Though *Brown* ushered in a myriad of social changes including equal access, Black students have disproportionately experienced significantly unequal outcomes. Many researchers argue that the myth of Black inferiority and the achievement gap explain the disparate outcomes among Black and White students, when, in fact, the education of Black students has never been equal and efforts to reconcile that blatant fact have been short-lived, never fully funded or earnestly undertaken. The question remains: Do we continue to sustain a system that, by its very design, has been established to continue the promulgation of the dehumanization and traumatization of Blacks?

Changing schooling, as a broad social institution and cultural instrument, poses a unique quandary, as education does not exist in a vacuum. In order to fix schooling and education, more broadly, the entire social structure must be addressed and changed. If the entire social structure is not addressed we will continue to bleed humanity until there is nothing and no one left. However, as *Brown* and the Black Reconstruction have shown, education is a ripe and fertile starting point for social change.

The ideals and aims of education must change. In fact, the entire social fabric must be undone and refashioned anew. This is not a lofty charge. The education of all of our youth is indeed our calling—our most noble and imperative—lest we continue the figurative and literal bloodletting across the world. Du Bois (1944) wrote,

Instead of envying and seeking desperately outer and foreign sources of civilization, you may find in these magnificent mountains a genius and variety of human culture, which once released from poverty, ignorance and disease, will help guide the world. Once the human soul is thus freed, then and only then is peace possible. There will be no need to fight for food, for healthy homes, for free speech; for these will not depend on force, but increasingly on knowledge, reason and art.

The first answer to such a proposition will be: all this is impossible. To raise the level of culture means in the first place that you have got to educate the masses. Now education costs money. The United States spends much per capita upon the education of its youth and yet for satisfactory results the appropriation for education ought to be doubled tomorrow. . . . The people say that with the widespread poverty of the world, civilization cannot pay for the education of the masses. Without education you are going to continue to have preventable disease and as a result of poverty, ignorance and disease you are going to have crime. . . This is the paradox which faces the world and centers itself in the question: is poverty inevitable and therefore because of poverty must we endure ignorance, sickness, crime and periodic wars? (p. 242-243)



Peace is not a lofty goal; it is imperative for the survival of humanity. Humanity is bound to individual humanity collectively. Through years of lived experience and research Du Bois argues that education is a viable option to rid the world of poverty, disease, crime, and war. Yet, we have yet to attempt education in this fashion. There is no explanation if not for the continuance of poverty, disease, crime, and war. Paulo Freire's (1990) work to educate Brazilian peasants produced such stunning results that his system of literacy education was to be established across the country. When the political regime changed in Brazil, the system was abandoned and Freire exiled. There is no greater power than knowledge.

Ultimately, we are virtually the same. People experience the gamut of pain and suffering similarly. One cannot dehumanize another human being without first dehumanizing himself. Jablonski (2007) contends that less than .01% accounts for the genetic variation among human beings. Despite skin color, religious affiliations, gender, sex, orientation, and geographic location our biological differences have no statistical significance aside from that which we have socially created and agreed upon. Together, we share the benefit and burden of the knowledge we create from our collective teaching and learning.

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