

The First Fissure: The Du Bois-Washington Relationship from 1898-1899

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Abstract

The strained relationship between W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington would define the bipolar intra-race debate about means, methods, and ideology in fighting discrimination throughout the 20th century. Du Bois' insistence on the Talented Tenth and organized protest contrasted Washington's insistence on economic autonomy, industrial education, and accommodation on issues of social segregation. This ideological divide, however, was fueled by a personal feud that would continue throughout their relationship, which stemmed from what Du Bois saw as a betrayal in 1900 by Washington in a recommendation dispute over a school superintendence position in Washington, DC. Although their relationship was problematic prior to the superintendence issue, the Du Bois - Washington rift was exacerbated by the formation of the National Negro Business League, Du Bois' review of *Up From Slavery*, the Boston Riot of 1903, and the publication of *The Souls of Black Folk*. This paper examines the strains between Du Bois and Washington, emphasizing Washington's early time in Boston and the Alabama controversy between them regarding William E. Benson's Kowaliga Academic and Industrial Institute in 1898, and provides insight and understanding about these two major leaders in the Black community during the era of Jim Crow.

In 1895, just months after the death of Frederick Douglass, a thirty-nine-year-old schoolteacher-the president of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama-gave a speech in Atlanta that made him famous. Booker Taliaferro Washington accepted segregation as a temporary accommodation between the races. In return, he wanted White support for Black efforts for education, social uplift, and economic progress. "In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers," Washington famously argued, "yet one has the hand in all things essential to mutual progress" (Washington, *Up from Slavery* 221). Washington's Atlanta Compromise (as it came to

be known) was not trumpeting permanent second-class citizenship for African Americans. Instead he wanted Black self-improvement that would ultimately earn White respect, and thus a seat at the negotiating table as equals somewhere down the road.

He believed that White southern intransigence was such that there was no fundamental advantage for advocating publicly and dramatically for rights. He had many examples at his disposal to prove his point. In such a situation, the only way to fight was to grow stronger within the paradigm, rather than trying to change the paradigm itself; just as a military unit

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would wait for reinforcements when hopelessly outmanned. "I do not favor the Negro's giving up anything which is fundamental and which has been guaranteed to him by the Constitution," he argued. "It is not best for him to relinquish his rights; nor would his doing so be best for the Southern White man." Still, there is a fundamental difference between relinquishment and outright advocacy that could only set everything back (Lewis, 258).

Many Black critics saw Washington's compromise as a slippery slope that would cause more problems than it could ever hope to solve. Chief among them would be William Edward Burghardt Du Bois, though he would come to his anti-Washington position slowly. In fact, he originally celebrated the speech and had a cordial if not productive relationship with Tuskegee's leader. But by 1898, the relationship started to falter, and the two would become personal and ideological foes whose public battle would engulf the movement for Black rights and begin a substantive discussion of how to get them.

Their conflict would ultimately frame the debate about civil rights throughout the 20th century. Despite the common caricature, the two were not divided by conservative and radical politics: if Du Bois is the lynchpin of a lineage that runs from Frederick Douglass to Martin Luther King, Jr., it is just as easy to pinpoint Washington as the connective tissue that binds Martin Delaney and Malcolm X.

Of course, this kind of problematic oversimplification—the Hegelian reductionist model of Black history after Reconstruction—creates more dilemmas than it solves, omitting the cacophony of voices surrounding these leaders, forgetting the legitimate influential leadership of others, and assuming a two-party bipolar caste to debates involving the best methods for countering white supremacy. Still, such disa-

greements exist for a reason. There were massive numbers of influential backers of Tuskegee, but all tended to defer to Washington on major policy issues. William Monroe Trotter was a Du Bois ally and staunch opponent of Tuskegee, but his radicalism left him far less influential than Du Bois.

The conversation between Washington and Du Bois would define the age and lay the foundation for the ideologies of the post-World War II Civil Rights Movement. It was a conversation that included many voices, many opinions. It evolved over time, becoming fiercer and more personal as the years progressed. It produced disharmony of ideas that made it anything but a bipolar debate, even though it would ultimately shape the contours of two influential biographies and the two dominant strains of activist strategy.

And so the strained relationship between W.E.B. Du Bois and Booker T. Washington would define the bipolar intra-race debate about means, methods, and ideology in fighting discrimination throughout the 20th century. Du Bois' insistence on the Talented Tenth and organized protest flew in the face of Washington's insistence on economic autonomy, industrial education, and accommodation on issues of social segregation. That ideological divide, however, was fueled by a personal feud that would continue through the life of their relationship, and that personal feud, though less important in the long-term shaping of the ideological divide generated by the fissure between the two, would still set the boundaries of that fissure.

The nascent onset of that dispute generally appears in most accounts in 1900, in what Du Bois saw as a betrayal by Washington in a recommendation dispute over a school superintendency position in Washington, DC. That first sign of weakness in their relationship was then exacerbated by

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the formation of the National Negro Business League, Du Bois' negative review of *Up from Slavery*, the Boston Riot of 1903, and the publication of *The Souls of Black Folk*. Adolph L. Reed, for example, has argued that the divide between the two "derived largely from the fact that Washington had established a monopoly over access to patronage sources," though Reed views any real conflict as impossible without the clear strategic and ideological rifts resulting from the racial mores of the White South (Reed 60-64).

In Hugh Hawkins' famous 1962 collection of essays concerning Washington "and his critics," he placed the genesis of the public divide in 1903 with the publication of *The Souls of Black Folk*. Hawkins mentioned the Tuskegee Machine's continual power play but placed Du Bois in the role of instigator, arguing that his frustration with what he saw as Washington's role in the Black loss of political rights and the overemphasis on industrial over academic education drove the initial split and continued to widen the gap as the years progressed. The growth of the feud between Du Bois and Washington in the years prior to its public explosion in 1903 occurred simultaneously to Du Bois' move away from academic sociological work and into more activism and writing for popular audiences. It was not a move caused by Washington, but Du Bois' need to serve as a counterweight to what he saw as overtly problematic accommodations emanating from Tuskegee, which surely played a role in that transition (Hawkins, vii-viii; Green & Driver, 19).

Such analyses lead to the general conclusion that, in the words of David Levering Lewis, "Du Bois and Washington, in speaking for two dissimilar socioeconomic orders, were really speaking past each other rather than to the same set of racial prob-

lems and solutions; but Du Bois, for all his Victorian sensibilities and elitism, had the advantage of speaking to the future, while Washington, business-oriented and folksy, spoke, nevertheless, for the early industrial past" (Lewis 502).

The relationship between Du Bois and Washington, however, was problematic even before the Washington School District problems of 1900. A relationship that was for all practical intents cordial between 1894 and 1897 felt its first strain two years before the Washington, DC occurrence. Most significantly, that strain happened largely without the participation of Du Bois. His sense of betrayal, then, after Washington demurred from recommending him for a position in the capital's school district, seems at least somewhat justified, even though a secondary administrative position was far less suited to Du Bois' particular talents than his teaching position at Atlanta University.

Du Bois arrived in Atlanta in 1897, but to Washington, he would always be a Boston dandy. Late in 1898, Washington and Editor T. Thomas Fortune met with a group of Boston critics of his program at Young's Hotel (Boston). Each of them castigated Washington and Washingtonian thought, the concluding speech given by lawyer (and Harvard football coach) William H. Lewis, who would eventually turn to become a Washington man. The Tuskegee leader responded patiently with prepared remarks that addressed none of the angry concerns, but it was clear that the rift between Tuskegee and Boston had calcified into something virtually permanent (Harlan, vol. 5, 50). And Du Bois, though uninvolved in the Young's Hotel incident, was Boston to his core.

Alexander Crummell was not. Crummell was a pan-Africanist Episcopal minister who spent twenty years in Liberia be-

fore returning to DC. His work at combine both po cacy, ending on I retired at age se ment, however, C in race politics. H count came with Washington. (Or 71). "The Americ save the materi problem," he wr the Negro brain, ty! They say to t thinking, philo work of the nati work. That is yo your gain and a lot of Negro lea and are carried the head of those ington (Crumme

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fore returning to a pulpit in Washington, DC. His work at St. Luke's Church would combine both political and religious advocacy, ending on December 9, 1894, when he retired at age seventy-five. Even in retirement, however, Crummell remained active in race politics. His chief frustration on that count came with the influence of Booker Washington. (Ordfield, 7-11; Adeleke, 70-71). "The American people care for nought save the material outcome of the Negro problem," he wrote in 1898. "The ideals of the Negro brain, life, character are a triviality! They say to themselves-'we will do the thinking, philosophizing, the scientific work of the nation-but you Negroes must work. That is your destiny and that will be your gain and advantage.' And there are a lot of Negro leaders who catch at this bait, and are carried away by the delusion." At the head of those Negro leaders was Washington (Crummell letter).

"Letters, literature, science and philosophy," for Crummell, had to be a central part of the development of Black America, "not at some distant day, but *now* and all along the development of the race. And no temporary fad of doubting or purblind philanthropy is to be allowed to make 'industrial training' a substitute for it." Such was not a call "that every Negro shall be made a scholar," Crummell wrote. "No one can make a thimble hold the contents of a bucket! But what it does mean is this, that the whole world of scholarship shall be opened to the Negro mind; and that it is not to be fastened, temporarily or permanently to the truck-patch or to the hoe, to the anvil or to the plane; that the Negro shall be allowed to do his own thinking in any and every sphere, and not to have that thinking relegated to others" (Crummell 200-203).

His was a devotion to the dual strains of classical education and Black rights, and it is no wonder that the young Du Bois was a

fan. Du Bois' political philosophy had by no means crystallized by 1895, the year he would finally meet Crummell face-to-face. When he returned from his European education in 1894, he began applying for teaching positions at Black colleges and universities, knowing that no White college would hire him. Among the institutions where he sent letters of inquiry was Tuskegee, a school founded and operated by the husband of one of his classmates at Fisk. Du Bois ultimately received offers from Lincoln University in Missouri, from Wilberforce College, and from Tuskegee University. He chose Wilberforce because it offered more money than Lincoln. The Tuskegee offer was the last to arrive, and so was eliminated by default. "It would be interesting to speculate," he later wondered, "just what would have happened if I had received the offer of Tuskegee first, instead of that of Wilberforce" (Du Bois, *Autobiography* 185; Du Bois, *Correspondence* 38).

Regardless, in 1895, Du Bois was teaching languages at Wilberforce, but despite his pleas the university was uninterested in his proposed sociology course. He was frustrated-he had chosen Wilberforce over other offers and felt he was being ill-used-but found relief the following year when he accepted a temporary appointment at the University of Pennsylvania (Green & Driver 9). For Du Bois and for everyone interested in the state of Black America, however, 1895 was dominated by two events beyond the scope of the academy. First, on February 20, Frederick Douglass, the titular head of Black America since the late antebellum period, died of a massive heart attack at his home following a meeting of the National Council of Women, leaving the women's rights movement, the Black rights movement, and minority rights in general, badly damaged ("Death of Fred Douglass" 1895).

Perhaps even more importantly, his death would leave a power vacuum at the top of the African American political community. It was a coveted position, to be sure, and so later that year a thirty-nine-year-old schoolteacher, Booker T. Washington, gave a speech in Atlanta that made him famous. Booker Washington was okay with segregation as a temporary accommodation. He stated "When it comes to business, pure and simple, it is in the South that the Negro is given a man's chance in the commercial world." Black people shouldn't expect too much, he argued, but should welcome menial labor as a first step in the struggle for progress. Black and white southerners were historically linked, and black southerners would remain loyal. "In our humble way, we shall stand by you with a devotion that no foreigner can approach, ready to lay down our lives, if need be, in defense of yours, interlacing our industrial, commercial, civil, and religious life with yours in a way that shall make the interests of both races one" (Washington, *Up from Slavery*, 217-240).

Then, after accepting segregation, he argued against militant protest. "The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremist folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing." Washington was convinced that as economic progress came, whites would concede rights (Washington, *Up from Slavery* 224).

It was a divisive message, to say the least. Black critics like Crummell saw Washington's compromise as a slippery slope. They thought the idea that economic progress would somehow earn the respect of White people was unjustified optimism at best, rank delusion at worst. W. Calvin

Chase, editor of the *Washington Bee*, for example, wrote in November 1895 that Washington "said something that was death to the Afro-American and elevating to the White people. What fool wouldn't applaud the downfall of his aspiring competitor?" (Norrell 134; Harlan 225-226). A George N. Smith editorial in *Voice of Missions* thought that supporters' comparisons of Washington to Douglass were "as unseemly as comparing a pigmy to a giant—a mountain brook leaping over a boulder, to a great, only Niagara" (Harlan, vol. 4, 69; Foner 344-347).

While Du Bois ultimately would become the most influential of those critics, it was a position he would reach over the course of several years. In fact, he originally interpreted the speech as beneficial and maintained an occasional correspondence with the Tuskegee leader. "My Dear Mr. Washington," wrote Du Bois, "Let me heartily congratulate you upon your phenomenal success at Atlanta University—it was a word fitly spoken" (Harlan, vol. 4, 26; Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* 55). In 1895, when Du Bois wrote Washington to congratulate him on the Exposition Address, he also wrote the *New York Age*, T. Thomas Fortune's paper, commenting that "here might be the basis of a real settlement between Whites and Blacks in the South, if the South opened to the Negroes the doors of economic opportunity and the Negroes co-operated with the White South in political sympathy" (Harlan 225). If Black America got economic concessions in return for political concessions, perhaps there could be a legitimate détente between the races.

The words were those of an academic in the process of developing into a leader, of an entrant onto the political stage coming to grips with his own positions. Even Du Bois, however, upon meeting Alexander Crummell, bowed to him "as one bows be-

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ultimately would be the result of those critics, it would reach over the top. In fact, he originally wrote such as beneficial and editorial correspondence leader. "My Dear Mr. Du Bois, "Let me place you upon your pedestal at Atlanta University-it is spoken" (Harlan, vol. 4, *of Dawn* 55). In 1895, he wrote Washington to contribute Exposition Address, *of York Age*, T. Thomas commenting that "here is a real settlement between the blacks in the South, if the Negroes the doors of unity and the Negroes of the White South in politics (in 225). If Black Americans concessions in return for peace, perhaps there could be between the races. Those of an academic in stepping into a leader, of political stage coming in positions. Even Du Bois meeting Alexander him "as one bows be-

fore the prophets of the world" (Harlan 225-226). Du Bois "spoke to him politely," he said of their 1895 meeting, "then curiously, then eagerly, as I began to feel the fineness of his character, his calm courtesy, the sweetness of his strength, and his fair blending of the hope and truth of life" (Du Bois, *Souls* 161).

Historian J.R. Oldfield has called Crummell "a spiritual father figure" to Du Bois, but the bulk of that guidance came because Crummell had no such existential dilemmas about the proper side of the race rights fight. His position against Washington ultimately led him to create a new organization that would cauterize those dual strains of classical education and Black rights. And so, along with Francis Grimke, Clark College's William Scarborough, and Washington lawyer John W. Cromwell, Crummell created the American Negro Academy on March 5, 1897 (Moss, 1-2). The Academy's constitution presented it as "an organization of authors, scholars, artists, and those distinguished in other walks of life, men of African descent, for the promotion of Letters, Science, and Art." It was a publishing house, a learned society, and an advocacy group for higher education for Black America, and inherent in that advocacy was a renunciation of the industrial emphasis of leaders like Washington (Moses 365-366).

Du Bois was involved with the Academy from its inception and served as one of its vice presidents. It was, after all, the "voice of the talented tenth," as historian Alfred Moss has described it (Moss 2). Later that year, Du Bois published "The Conservation of Races" as the Academy's second occasional paper. "The American Negro has always felt an intense personal interest in discussions as to the origins and destinies of races," wrote Du Bois, "primarily because back of most discussions of race with which he is familiar, have lurked cer-

tain assumptions as to his natural abilities, as to his political, intellectual and moral status, which he felt were wrong" (Du Bois 1897; Moses, "W.E.B. Du Bois" 275-294). Participation in the Academy, however, did seem to fit with the pedigree of an academic activist, and "The Conservation of Races" didn't include anything that could cause Washington offense. The stakes of Du Bois' participation, however, would be raised when on September 10, 1898, Crummell died, leaving for the moment, a power vacuum that would be filled in the interim by John Cromwell (Moss 62-64). Ultimately, though Du Bois would be absent from the December annual meeting because of his Atlanta University schedule, the board would elect him president "by acclamation," wounding would-be candidate Cromwell and placing Du Bois squarely in opposition to Washington (Moss 64); or, perhaps cementing an opposition that burst from the realm of sublimation, from the realm of passive-aggressiveness, in a separate incident the month prior.

William Benson was an Alabama native. His father, John, was born a slave, but had grown in the 1880s and 1890s to own much of the land near Kowaliga Creek, Alabama, where he originally worked in bondage. John had, in fact, earned enough money that he could send William to Howard University in 1892 (Sznajderman & Atkins 24-25; Cox 42-43; Villard 711-714). William returned with his degree in 1895, that auspicious year that witnessed the death of Douglass and the ascent of Washington. For those in Elmore County, Alabama, 1895 was far more notable for the racial violence practiced against the Black population. John Benson even wrote to Booker Washington in April explaining the racial turmoil that gripped the region (Harlan, vol. 3, 544-555).

Most immediately, the violence con-

vinced William Benson to devote himself to bettering the lives of local Black children. Several Alabama schools had been developed in the late nineteenth century: Snow Hill Normal and Industrial Institute were in Society Hill, Alabama, Mt. Meig's Institute was in Cotton Valley, and Calhoun Colored School was in Calhoun. All were ostensibly modeled after Hampton Institute and Tuskegee University (Luker 135). And so John Benson donated ten acres and lumber for a new, two-story school building. William formed a glee club and traveled the area giving performances for donations. It was a long process. In 1896, for example, arsonists set Benson's store on fire. Benson was, however, in contact with Washington, who gave the young upstart his endorsement (Harlan, vol. 4, 243-244). Within two years, the Kowaliga Academic and Industrial Institute was completed (Sznajderman & Atkins 25).

Among the Board of Trustees were Washington, Oswald Garrison Villard, Emily Howland, Hollis Burke Frissell, and Francis J. Garrison. It was an impressive roster for the small school in central Alabama, but it was a group in a transitional phase, waffling between the educational theories of Tuskegee (on one hand) and Du Bois (on the other)-or, perhaps, between Hampton (on one hand) and Fisk (on the other). Villard, of course would, toward the end of the next decade, help found the NAACP. Another trustee, Isabel Hayes Chapin Barrows supported Booker T. Washington and helped finance Kowaliga. She led a life of diverse interests, but served for a time as part of the medical school faculty at Howard University (Sznajderman & Atkins 25). It was, in other words, a group-for the most part-that respected Washington as a leader and supported Black education when it could, but didn't necessarily believe the Hampton-Tuskegee model was

superior to all others. Washington realized this even before they did. The differences in educational models wouldn't become part of the public discourse until Du Bois made it such in the early 20th century. For most White activists, Black education was Black education. But Washington knew the difference between a Hampton and Howard degree. He knew that Benson was a friend of Du Bois. The nuance of such relationships was far more important to Tuskegee's leader than it was to others with an interest in Kowaliga.

Emily Howland would stay loyal to Tuskegee. "The school at Kowaliga has made good progress," Washington reported to her, "but one of the troubles is that these young people don't want to wait for things to grow in a natural way. I have had to speak with Benson rather plainly about several matters lately and I think it will do him good." For Howland, Benson was "the child of wealth, for his environment, so we cannot expect practical work-a-day wisdom from him" (Harlan, vol. 4, 409-410; Harlan 1975). Benson, of course, was indeed an impatient rich kid, but the likeness to Du Bois cannot be avoided. Washington's clique also saw Du Bois as an impatient rich kid. He too had no desire to "wait for things to grow in a natural way." Though Du Bois was not directly involved in Kowaliga, its creation by his friend Benson and the collection of personalities it brought together inadvertently created a tangible divide between him and Washington and ultimately set the educational agenda for the next two decades.

There was a steady devolution in Washington's thinking from that point forward. "One thing that makes me a little doubtful about Kowaliga is that Mr. Benson is not inclined to take advice, and for this reason he does not secure the hearty co-operation of the people in the vicinity of Kowaliga, to

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 he wrote in June 1898. "Mr. Benson likes to
 travel about from place to place, and I am
 sure a good portion of what the school re-
 ceives is spent in this way" (Harlan, vol. 4,
 425-426). He was painting a portrait of a
 wealthy, entitled know-it-all who wouldn't
 accept the bridle of Tuskegee leadership. It
 was a portrait he would paint of Du Bois
 until Washington's death in 1915.

When Benson went to New York and
 visited T. Thomas Fortune, whom he as-
 sumed to be an ally, the editor was unim-
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 ment yesterday," he reported to Washing-
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 (Harlan, vol. 4, 478-479). Boston, the intel-
 lectual home of Du Bois and the actual
 home of his more radical ally William
 Monroe Trotter, a place that had already
 proven itself to be against the Tuskegee
 ethic.

On November 8, 1898, Washington re-
 signed from the Kowaliga Board of Trus-
 tees. Howland and others urged him to
 stay, assuming that having his name at-
 tached to the school would help it survive.
 But Washington would not budge. Benson
 was not "inclined to treat a trustee with
 that delicate courtesy which is required to
 keep a trustee interested." He was "whim-
 sical, spasmodic and rather superficial"
 (Harlan, vol. 4, 506, 512, 516-517; Sznaj-
 derman & Atkins 25). In other words, he
 had an educational philosophy more in
 line with the American Negro Academy
 than with Tuskegee, and because of that he
 failed to show Washington the proper de-
 ference.

By December, one month after Wash-
 ington's resignation from Kowaliga, T.
 Thomas Fortune would look with disgust
 on William Hayes Ward, editor of the *New*
York Independent, who compared the work
 of Washington favorably with that of Du

Bois and Clark professor William H.
 Crogman. "The idea of Dr. Ward compar-
 ing you and your work to that of Crogman,
 Du Bois and such!" Fortune wrote in a let-
 ter to Washington. "It is awful. It is dis-
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As of early January 1899, Edward Hen-
 ry Clement, editor of the *Boston Evening*
Transcript, would write to Washington that
 "I was shocked the other night to hear a
 reference to your policy in a meeting of
 colored men, hissed. Turning to my next
 neighbor in the pew I asked, 'Is he not hit-
 ting at Washington?' and the answer was,
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 tion to his counsels among Blacks.' In any
 candid editorial comment on the situation
 this surely cannot be ignored with safety,"
 he wrote. "I confess that I wonder at, and
 admire, your reserve and am not at all sure
 that yours is not the course of wisdom in
 the thickening difficulties which beset the
 upward path of your race" (Harlan, vol. 5,
 5).

Despite the antagonism, however, Bos-
 ton remained a financial cash cow for
 Tuskegee. And so, in March 1899, Wash-
 ington returned to the city on a fundraising
 junket and included Du Bois and Paul
 Lawrence Dunbar on stage with him at the
 Hollis Street Theater. The division between
 him and Du Bois still seemed salvageable
 early in 1899, but even if it was not, this
 kind of contact occurred and would con-
 tinue to occur for the next decade. The
 presence of Du Bois and Dunbar was large-
 ly to eliminate them as competition for his
 audience, but both Du Bois and Dunbar
 bested Washington in oratory and recep-
 tion. "Dr. Du Bois read an original story
 and Mr. Dunbar recited from his own po-
 ems," Washington explained. "The theatre
 was filled with representatives of the most
 cultured and wealthy men and women in
 Boston, and was said to be the most suc-

cessful meeting of the kind that had been held for a good while" (Washington, *The Story of My Life and Work* 325). It was, however, Du Bois and Dunbar who made it successful, and Washington's supporters weren't pleased with Tuskegee's leader being outdone by oppositional forces-or, at the very least, known allies of oppositional forces. It was after this meeting that Washington's handlers decided to send him to Europe for a vacation. Or, as Washington explained, "Some of those who attended this meeting noticed that I seemed unusually tired, and some little time after the close of the meeting, one of the ladies who had been interested in it asked me in a casual way if I had ever been to Europe. I replied that I never had." She asked if Washington had ever considered it, and he told her he hadn't. "This conversation soon passed out of my mind, but a few days afterward I was informed that some friends in Boston, including Mr. Francis J. Garrison, had raised a sum of money sufficient to pay all the expenses of Mrs. Washington and myself during a three or four months' trip to Europe. It was added with emphasis that we must go" (Washington, *Up From Slavery* 97; Du Bois, *Autobiography* 237). Garrison, of course, was one of the remaining trustees at Kowaliga.

The differences between Washington and Du Bois were clear, and the slip in Washington's momentum following the Hollis Street presentation, and his resulting trip to Europe, only exacerbated those differences. Upon his return, beginning in 1899 and following the early fissure between the camps of Du Bois and Washington, Tuskegee's leader began employing "advance agents" of Tuskegee whose job was not only to promote Washingtonian ideas, but also to damage *Boston Guardian* editor William Monroe Trotter and other Washington critics. Peter Jefferson Smith,

for example, founded both the *Boston Advocate* and *Boston Colored Citizen* to compete with Trotter's *Guardian*, though both publications failed (Fox 40, 70-72).

Though Du Bois was often frustrated with his methods, he and Trotter were friends and, often, allies. His association with Boston would always make him a target of Tuskegee's dirty tricks. But by early 1900, Du Bois had yet to directly attack Booker Washington. The two still had a speaking relationship, and would for years to come. But the rift between them had grown largely without his participation, through Du Bois' rise to the presidency of the American Negro Academy and the educational conflicts at Kowaliga Academic and Industrial Institute. As Washington was developing his resentments, Du Bois was developing the sociology department at Atlanta University. His "Laboratory in Sociology" would ultimately lay the groundwork for works like "The Negro Landholder of Georgia" (1901) and *Some Notes on Negro Crime, Particularly in Georgia* (1904). Still, his early years in Atlanta were largely unpleasant. Georgia gave Du Bois his first real exposure to lynching and other racist violence. In spring 1899, his son Burghardt, only two years old, died of diphtheria. Additionally, Atlanta University, in his opinion, devoted too much time to idealistic theoretical work instead of empirical sociological research that could find real-world answers to actual problems affecting the race. His work was never adequately funded while at Atlanta University-work, he argued, that "would have thrived if Booker T. Washington had not blocked support for the project." That support most likely would have come from White philanthropy, over which Washington had considerable influence (Du Bois, "The Laboratory in Sociology" 160-163; Du Bois, 1940; Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn* 67; Du

Bois, *Souls of E Driver* 14). That Tuskegee's leader would provide a lifeline to a University for superior D.C.'s Black school ultimately refused to develop did not directly university sociology interpret the slight himself and his other might.

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Bois, *Souls of Black Folk* 207-214; Green & Driver 14). That didn't mean, however, that Tuskegee's leader couldn't help him find a way out. Du Bois looked to Washington to provide a lifeline for his escape from Atlanta University in 1900 by recommending him for superintendent of Washington D.C.'s Black schools. When Washington ultimately refused, based largely on assumptions he developed through incidents that did not directly include the Atlanta University sociologist, Du Bois was free to interpret the slight as a personal attack on himself and his family, as any grieving father might.

The rift would grow from there. Washington would steal from Du Bois in his surreptitious creation of the National Negro Business League. Du Bois would provide a blistering review of *Up from Slavery*. In 1903, the Boston Riot would become the first public, visceral attack on Washington and his ideas. Though Du Bois was not present, the instigation of allies like Trotter tied him to the event. That same year, he published *The Souls of Black Folk*, complete with his "Of Booker T. Washington and Others" essay, which would attack the Tuskegee ideology and very clearly draw distinctions between the two camps. A failed summit between the leaders in 1904 would lead to further rifts exacerbated by Du Bois' Niagara Movement and Washington's attempt to sabotage it. Such public displays of disaffection, however, were not the genesis of a fractured relationship between Du Bois and Washington. They were rather crevices that developed from a first fissure, which started to open not in 1900, but two years prior in the tumultuous final months of 1898.

That fissure would ultimately have important implications over the following decades. The debate between Du Bois and Washington would help define the ideological framework for fighting discrimina-

tion throughout the twentieth century. It would become a high-minded contest between the principles of liberal arts and organized protest on one side, and economic autonomy and industrial education on the other. The personal feud that coincided with that philosophical divide, however-born as it was not on a stage in Atlanta or a classroom at Harvard, but rather in a small school in rural Kowaliga, Alabama-would set boundaries for the behavior of both men throughout the rest of their lives.

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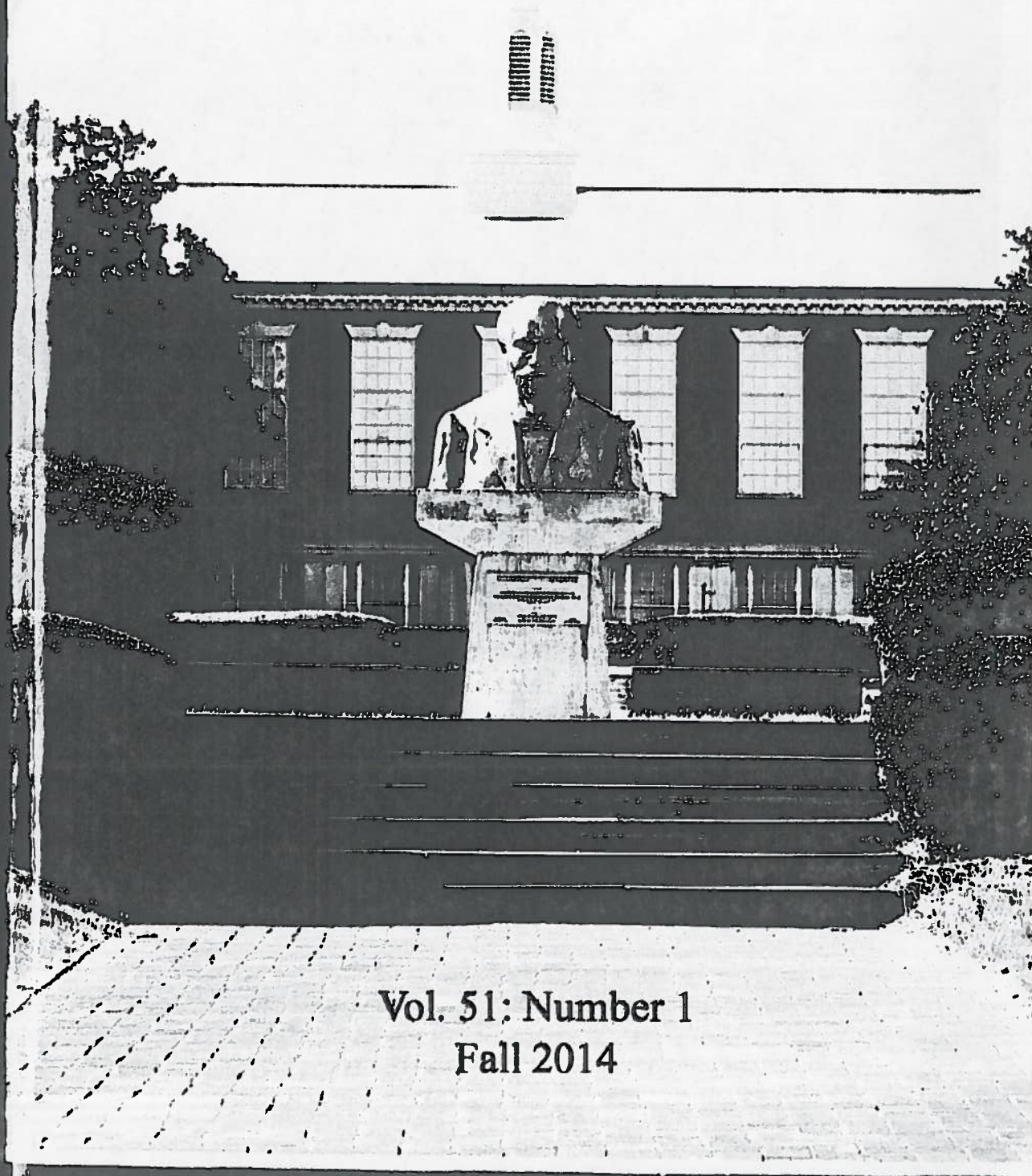
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