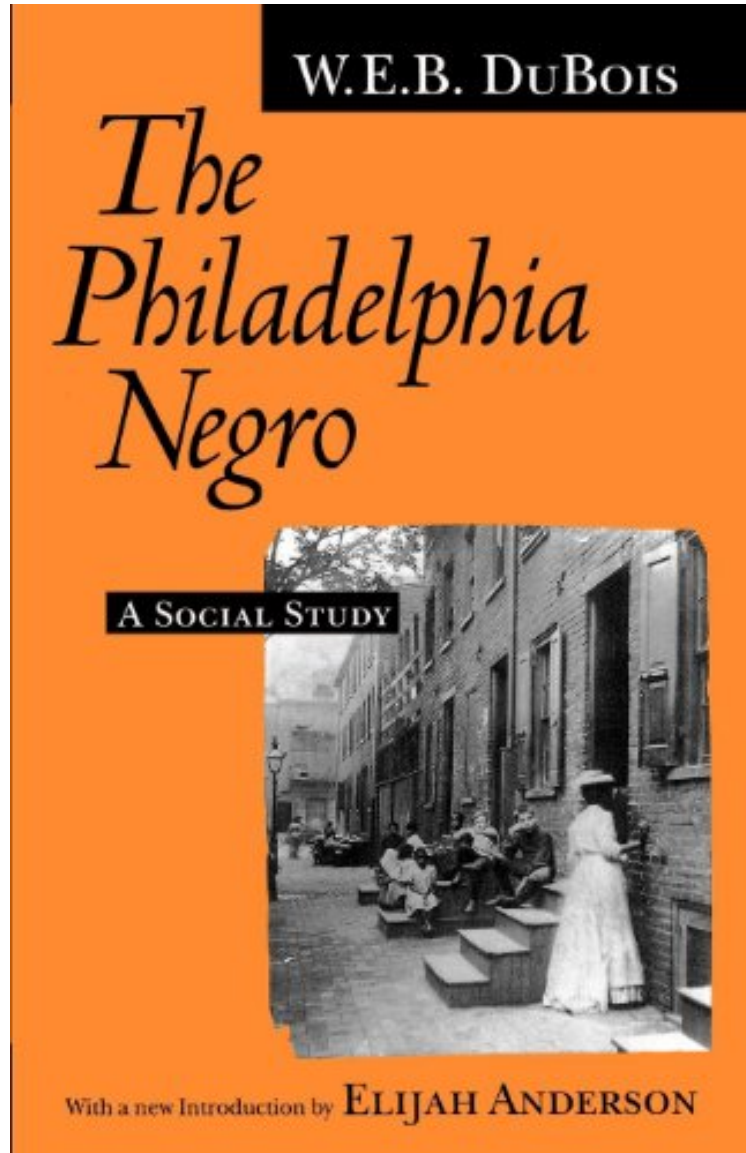


(Library ebook) The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study

## The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study

W. E. B. Du Bois

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**W. E. B. Du Bois : The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study:

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In 1897 the promising young sociologist William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (1868-1963) was given a temporary post as Assistant in Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania in order to conduct a systematic investigation of social conditions in the seventh ward of Philadelphia. The product of those studies was the first great empirical book on the Negro in American society. More than one hundred years after its original publication by the University of Pennsylvania Press, *The Philadelphia Negro* remains a classic work. It is the first, and perhaps still the finest, example of engaged sociological scholarship—the kind of work that, in contemplating social reality, helps to change it. In his introduction, Elijah Anderson examines how the neighborhood studied by Du Bois has changed over the years and compares the status of blacks today with their status when the book was initially published.

"A credit to American scholarship. . . . It is the sort of book of which we have too few, and of which it is impossible that one should have too many."—from the Yale Review, May 1900 "What made Du Bois's study remarkable in its day was its rejection of prevailing assumptions of inherent racial differences, thus bearing on issues much wider than those indicated by its title. It is also notable as a thoroughly modern piece of social research. The problems faced by Philadelphia's blacks, he argued, had nothing to do with their supposed racial proclivities, but derived from the way they had been treated in the past and their relegation in the present to the most menial and lowest-paying jobs."—Times Literary Supplement

From the Back Cover In 1897 a young sociologist who was already marked as a scholar of the highest promise submitted to the American Association of Political and Social Sciences a "plan for the study of the Negro problem". The product of that plan was the first great empirical book on the Negro in American society. William Edward Burghardt DuBois (1868-1963), Ph.D. from Harvard (class of 1890), was given a temporary post as Assistant in Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania in order to conduct in-depth studies on the Negro community in Philadelphia. The provost of the university was interested and sympathetic, but DuBois knew early on that white interest and sympathy were far from enough. He knew that scholarship was itself a great weapon in the Negro's struggle for a decent life. *The Philadelphia Negro* was originally published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in 1899. One of the first works to combine the use of urban ethnography, social history, and descriptive statistics, it has become a classic work in the social science literature. Both the issues the book raises and the evolution of DuBois's own thinking about the problems of black integration into American society sound strikingly contemporary. Among the intriguing aspects of *The Philadelphia Negro* are what it says about the author, about race in urban America and about social science at the time, but even more important is the fact that many of DuBois's observations can be made - in fact are being made - by investigators today. In his introduction to this edition, Elijah Anderson traces DuBois's life before his move to Philadelphia. He then examines how the neighborhood studied by DuBois has changed over the years, and he compares the status of blacks today with their status when the book was initially published.

About the Author Elijah Anderson is Charles and William L. Day Professor of Social Science, and Professor of Sociology, at the University of Pennsylvania.