

Document A: Booker T. Washington (Modified)

Booker T. Washington was born a slave in 1856 and was nine years old when slavery ended. He became the principal of the Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, a school designed to teach blacks industrial skills. Washington was a skillful politician and speaker, and he won the support of whites in the North and South who donated money to the school. On September 18, 1895, Booker T. Washington spoke before a mostly white audience in Atlanta.

Ignorant and inexperienced, it is not strange that in the first years of our freedom we began at the top instead of at the bottom; that a seat in Congress or the state legislature was more attractive than starting a dairy farm or garden.

A ship lost at sea for many days passed a friendly ship and sent out a signal, "Water, water; we die of thirst!" The answer from the friendly ship at once came back, "Cast down your bucket where you are." A second time the signal, "Water, water; send us water!" ran up from the distressed ship, and was answered, "Cast down your bucket where you are"The captain of the distressed **vessel** (ship), at last **heeding** (listening to) the **injunction** (order), cast down his bucket, and it came up full of fresh, sparkling water.

To those of my race I would say: "Cast down your bucket where you are"—cast it down in making friends with the Southern white man, who is your next-door neighbor. Cast it down in agriculture, mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service. . . . No race can prosper till it learns that there is as much dignity in tilling a field as in writing a poem. It is at the bottom of life we must begin, and not at the top.

To those of the white race who look to foreign immigrants for the prosperity of the South, I would repeat what I say to my own race, "Cast down your bucket where you are." Cast it down among the eight millions of Negroes, whose **fidelity** (loyalty) and love you have tested. . . . As we have proved our loyalty to you in the past . . . so in the future, in our humble way, we shall stand by you with a devotion that no foreigner can approach. . . . In all things that are purely social we can be as separate as the fingers, yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress.

Source: *Excerpt from Booker T. Washington's 'Atlanta Compromise' speech, 1895.*

Document B: W.E.B. DuBois (Modified)

The most influential public critique of Booker T. Washington came in 1903 when black leader and intellectual W.E.B. DuBois published an essay in his book, The Souls of Black Folk. DuBois rejected Washington's message and instead called for political power, insistence on civil rights, and the higher education of African-American youth. DuBois was born and raised a free man in Massachusetts and was the first African American to earn a PhD from Harvard.

The most striking thing in the history of the American Negro since 1876 is the rise of Mr. Booker T. Washington. His leadership began at the time when Civil War memories and ideals were rapidly passing; a day of astonishing commercial development was dawning; a sense of doubt and hesitation overtook the freedmen's sons. Mr. Washington came at the psychological moment when whites were a little ashamed of having paid so much attention to Negroes [during Reconstruction], and were concentrating their energy on dollars.

Mr. Washington practically accepts the alleged inferiority of the Negro races. Mr. Washington withdraws many of the high demands of Negroes as men and American citizens. He asks that black people give up, at least for the present, three things—

First, political power; Second, insistence on civil rights; Third, higher education of Negro youth,

— and concentrate all their energies on industrial education, the accumulation of wealth, and the **pacifying** (calming down) of the South. As a result of this tender of the **palm-branch** (peace offering), what has been the return? In these years there have occurred:

1. The **disfranchisement** (taking away the right to vote) of the Negro; 2. The legal creation of a distinct status of civil inferiority for the Negro; 3. The steady withdrawal of aid from institutions for the higher training of the Negro.

Mr. Washington's doctrine has tended to make the whites, North and South, shift the burden of the Negro problem to the Negro's shoulders and stand aside as critical **spectators** (onlookers); when in fact the burden belongs to the nation, and the hands of none of us are clean if we do not all work on righting these great wrongs.

Source: W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Chicago, 1903).

Document C: Ida B. Wells Barnett

Ida Wells's life, started in adversity and fueled by controversy, surely had a strong influence on her approach to rhetoric. Ida Bell Wells was born on July 16, 1862, in Holly Springs, Mississippi, the first child of Jim Wells and Lizzie Warrenton Wells. The Emancipation Proclamation, abolishing slavery in all states in rebellion, including Mississippi, was issued some two months later and took effect on January 1, 1863. The Wells family became politically active members of the Holly Springs community and sent all of their children to the local Freedman's Aid school, later named Rust University. In 1878, Ida Wells's parents and one infant brother died of yellow fever, and she found herself at sixteen parenting her five surviving siblings, a responsibility she chose over separating the family. Soon after the fifty-mile move to Memphis from Holly Springs, she sued the Chesapeake, Ohio and Southwestern Railroad for forcibly removing her from the ladies' train car, a process during which she bit the conductor's hand. Although she won the 1884 suit at the Circuit court level, the decision was reversed by the State Supreme Court.¹ She expressed her disappointment and her protective racial instinct in an April 11, 1887, diary entry: "I have firmly believed all along that the law was on our side and would, when we appealed to it, give us justice. I feel shorn of that belief and utterly discouraged, and just now if it were possible would gather my race in my arms and fly far away with them."

Logan, Shirley Wilson. "Voices of Democracy." University of Maryland. Last modified January 2007. <http://www.voicesofdemocracy.umd.edu/>.

The following pamphlet was first published by her in 1892 but was subsequently reprinted. The misspellings may be original.

...[My aim is to] give the world a true, unvarnished account of the causes of lynch law in the South.

This statement is not a shield for the despoiler of virtue, nor altogether a defense for the poor blind Afro-American Sampsons [a biblical Israelite leader] who suffer themselves to be betrayed by white Delilahs. It is a contribution to truth, an array of facts, the perusal of which it is hoped will stimulate this great American Republic to demand that justice be done though the heavens fall.

It is with no pleasure I have dipped my hands in the corruption here exposed. Somebody must show that the Afro-American race is more sinned against than sinning, and it seems to have fallen upon me to do so. The awful death-roll that Judge Lynch is calling every week is appalling, not only because of the lives it takes, the rank cruelty and outrage to the victims, but because of the prejudice it fosters and the stain it places against the good name of a weak race.

The Afro-American is not a bestial race. If this work can contribute in any way toward proving this, and at the same time arouse the conscience of the American people to a demand for justice to every citizen, and punishment by law for the lawless, I shall feel I have done my race a service. Other considerations are of minor importance.

...Henry W. Grady in his well-remembered speeches in New England and New York pictured the Afro-American as incapable of self-government. Through him and other leading men the cry of the South to the country has been "Hands off! Leave us to solve our problem." To the Afro-American the South says, "the white man must and will rule." There is little difference between the Antebellum South and the New South.

Her white citizens are wedded to any method however revolting, any measure



however extreme, for the subjugation of the young manhood of the race. They have cheated him out of his ballot, deprived him of civil rights or redress therefor in the civil courts, robbed him of the fruits of his labor, and are still murdering, burning and lynching him.

The result is a growing disregard of human life. Lynch law has spread its insidious influence till men in New York State, Pennsylvania and on the free Western plains feel they can take the law in their own hands with impunity, especially where an Afro-American is concerned. The South is brutalized to a degree not realized by its own inhabitants, and the very foundation of government, law and order, are imperilled. ...efforts brought forth apologies and a short halt, but the lynching mania was raged again through the past three months with unabated fury.

The strong arm of the law must be brought to bear upon lynchers in severe punishment, but this cannot and will not be done unless a healthy public sentiment demands and sustains such action.

The men and women in the South who disapprove of lynching and remain silent on the perpetration of such outrages, are particeps criminis, accomplices, accessories before and after the fact, equally guilty with the actual lawbreakers who would not persist if they did not know that neither the law nor militia would be employed against them.

...Near Vicksburg, Miss., a murder was committed by a gang of burglars. Of course it must have been done by Negroes, and Negroes were arrested for it. It is believed that two men, Smith Tooley and John Adams belonged to a gang controlled by white men and, fearing exposure, on the night of July 4, they were hanged in the Court House yard by those interested in silencing them. Robberies since committed in the same vicinity have been known to be by white men who had their faces blackened. We strongly believe in the innocence of these murdered men, but we have no proof. No other news goes out to the world save that which stamps us as a race of cutthroats, robbers and lustful wild beasts. So great is Southern hate and prejudice, they legally(?) hung poor little thirteen- year-old Mildrey Brown at Columbia, S.C., Oct. 7, on the circumstantial evidence that she poisoned a white infant. If her guilt had been proven unmistakably, had she been white, Mildrey Brown would never have been hung. The country would have been aroused and South Carolina disgraced forever for such a crime. The Afro-American himself did not know as he should have known as his journals should be in a position to have him know and act.

Nothing is more definitely settled than he must act for himself. I have shown how he may employ the boycott, emigration and the press, and I feel that by a combination of all these agencies can be effectually stamped out lynch law, that last relic of barbarism and slavery. "The gods help those who help themselves." --IDA B. WELLS-

Wells-Barnett, Ida B. "Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases." New York City, Oct. 26, 1892.



NAACP Leaders

	Washington	Dubois	Wells-Barnett
Historical Context:			
Audience:			
Purpose:			
Point of View: <i>Include a line where they are being persuasive, either logic or evidence.</i>			
Close Reading: What was DuBois's critique of Washington? Do you think he makes a good point? Why or why not?			
Close Reading: Did DuBois understand what life was like in the South?			
Close Reading: Does Wells-Barnett agree more with Dubois or Washington? Why do you think that?			
Significance: Which of these advocates is the better advocate for black rights?			



