THE PHILADELPHIA NEGRO AND THE CANON OF CLASSICAL URBAN THEORY

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Abstract

This paper outlines the urban theory of W. E. B. Du Bois as presented in the classic sociological text *The Philadelphia Negro*. I argue that Du Bois's urban theory, which focused on how the socially-constructed racial hierarchy of the United States was shaping the material conditions of industrial cities, prefigured important later work and offered a sociologically richer understanding of urban processes than the canonized classical urban theorists—Weber, Simmel, and Park. I focus on two key areas of Du Bois's urban theory: (1) racial stratification as a fundamental feature of the modern city and (2) urbanization and urban migration. While *The Philadelphia Negro* has gained recent praise for Du Bois's methodological achievements, I use extensive passages from the work to demonstrate the theoretical importance of *The Philadelphia Negro* and to argue that this groundbreaking work should be considered canonical urban theory.

Keywords: Race, Cities, Urban, Sociology, Du Bois, Classical, Theory

INTRODUCTION

After a century of systematic exclusion from the sociological canon, W. E. B. Du Bois's *The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study* (1899) (hereafter *The Philadelphia Negro*) has started to gain respect and recognition among social scientists (e.g., Anderson 1996; Hunter 2013a, 2013b; Katz and Sugrue, 1998; Morris 2007, 2015; Rabaka 2010). In the realm of classical urban sociology, this groundbreaking volume has long been overshadowed by works such as Georg Simmel's "The Metropolis and Mental Life" ([1903] 2002), Max Weber's *The City* ([1921] 1958), and Robert Park and Ernest Burgess's *The City* (1925). The omission of Du Bois's contributions to early urban theory is doubly problematic: not only did Du Bois advance crucial theoretical concerns that were overlooked by his contemporaries, but *The Philadelphia Negro* preceded all of these canonical works.

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Prior to the swell of renewed interest in Du Bois's sociology, *The Philadelphia Negro* was often cast—along with the other major sociological work of Du Bois's early career, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903)[1]—into the "social realist" literature with works such as Jacob Riis' *How the Other Half Lives* (1890) and Jane Addams' edited volume *Hull House Maps and Papers* (1895) (e.g., Castronovo 2007; Pizer 1995).[2] The bracketing of Du Bois's scholarship as realist literature rather than social science has downplayed the theoretical significance of *The Philadelphia Negro* and Du Bois's oeuvre more broadly. Contemporary scholars who have revisited and attempted to revive Du Bois's sociological contributions have largely praised *The Philadelphia Negro* on its empirical and methodological grounds (e.g., Bay 1998; Saint-Arnaud 2009; Williams 2006; Wilson 2006; Zuberi 1998). While Du Bois's achievements on these fronts were truly revolutionary in the context of late nineteenth-century social science (Bay 1998), the emphasis that contemporary Du Boisian scholars have placed on the work's empiricism and methodology rather than its theoretical contributions obscures the far-reaching implications of *The Philadelphia Negro* (Lewis 1993). Furthermore, the privileging of theory over empiricism in mainstream sociology (e.g., Krippner 2001; Sallaz and Zavisca, 2007) reproduces Du Bois's contemporary marginality, as the alleged lack of theoretical coherence and "generalizability" in his work (e.g., Mouzelis 1997; Saint-Arnaud 2009) keeps *The Philadelphia Negro* from its rightful place alongside the urban-theoretical work of Simmel, Weber, and the Chicago School.

In this paper, I outline the urban theory of W. E. B. Du Bois as presented in *The Philadelphia Negro*. Building on Marcus Anthony Hunter's (2013b) efforts to synthesize Du Bois's urban-theoretical contributions, I argue that Du Bois provided the most comprehensive analysis of the role of race and racial inequality in modern cities among early sociologists. Du Bois's understanding of how the socially-constructed racial hierarchy of the United States was shaping the material conditions of industrial cities prefigured important later work (e.g., Massey and Denton, 1993; Pattillo 2007; Sugrue 1996) and represented a theoretically richer conceptualization of "the modern city" than the canonized classical urban theorists. Given that contemporary urbanists have demonstrated that it is impossible to conceive of the modern city without foregrounding race and other dimensions of socio-spatial difference (e.g., Harvey 1989; Spain 1993; Wacquant 2008), this represents a major shortcoming in the urban-theoretical work of Park, Simmel, and Weber.[3]

An important difference between Du Bois and other early sociologists is that Du Bois's theoretical contributions are understated. No explicit theoretical model is to be found in the pages of *The Philadelphia Negro*. As scholars have argued, Du Bois's focus on empirical investigation reflected the intellectual context within which he worked—one in which biological racism, rather than sociological investigation, formed the "scientific" consensus about African Americans (Lewis 1993; Morris 2015). Thus, *The Philadelphia Negro*'s dense statistics, maps, and ethnographic data reflect in part Du Bois's effort to use social facts to repudiate Social Darwinists' racist conjecture.

The consequences of Du Bois's rhetorical choices are clear: if the century-long marginalization of Du Bois's work within American sociology was the result of racism and the entrenched interests of powerful academic institutions (Morris 2015; Rabaka 2010), then the density of *The Philadelphia Negro* has no doubt played a role in marginalizing Du Bois's theoretical insights even as the masterwork has enjoyed a small-scale revival in sociological circles since the 1990s. Following David Levering Lewis (1993), Hunter argues that "Du Bois's sociological analysis [is] . . . layered and embedded" (2013b, p. 4). Therefore, like Hunter, I present some of Du Bois's key theoretical contributions and thereby make Du Bois's layered arguments more explicit.

Hunter introduces the notion of "ecological conundrum" to highlight Du Bois's analysis of the racial-spatial dynamics of American cities' housing and labor markets—the ways that "the geography of opportunity (cultural, political, economic, or otherwise) is tied to the racial geography of the city" (2013b, p. 3). Focusing on Black agency and American racial history in the urban context, Hunter illustrates how *The Philadelphia Negro* has informed much contemporary sociology and can serve as a useful "bridge" between competing schools of urban-sociological thought in the present day. In other words, Du Bois's insights into the racialization of urban spaces can integrate contemporary ecological models (e.g., Sampson 2012; Sampson and Morenoff, 1997) with economically-driven models (e.g., Dear 2002; Zukin 1995), as well as add historical depth to studies of urban poverty and racial segregation (e.g., Massey and Denton, 1993; Sharkey 2013).

Here, I build on Hunter's efforts by placing Du Bois's work alongside the canonized urban-sociological works of the early twentieth century. What I present demonstrates that Du Bois's theorizations about Black life in a Northern city extend far beyond ghetto walls and explain much about the broader social conditions of modern cities. I focus on two key elements of Du Bois's urban theory: (1) racial stratification and (2) urbanization and migration. While these were far from the only theoretically generative elements of *The Philadelphia Negro*—as others have argued, the work's contributions in areas such as poverty, the labor market, criminology, the family, and religion have much relevance for scholars today (e.g., Anderson 1996; Hunter 2013b; Jones 1998; Rabaka 2010)—I focus on these two aspects because they highlight Du Bois's fundamental argument: the processes of urbanization and industrialization that occurred between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries were essentially shaped by the mass urban migration of Southern Blacks and the ensuing racial stratification that was reified in the spaces of the modern city. Crucially, Du Bois's analysis of racial stratification and urbanization/migration offer important correctives to the work of the other classical urban sociologists. Socio-spatial stratification by race/ethnicity was mostly absent in the work of Simmel and Weber; attempts by Park and the Chicago School to comprehend this phenomenon were often problematic (Morris 2015; Rabaka 2010; Yu 2002). In short, it was Du Bois—not Park, Weber, or Simmel—who put forth a critical sociological explanation of the intersection of race and the modern city and prefigured the dominant theoretical and empirical traditions of contemporary urban sociology.

THE PHILADELPHIA NEGRO AS GENERALIZABLE URBAN THEORY

One of the implications of the above-mentioned praise for Du Bois's methodological innovations in *The Philadelphia Negro* is that the work presents as a purely empirical work, rather than a theoretical one. However, Du Bois made clear that Philadelphia represented an ideal type in the study of cities, a place that he saw as a lens into the effects of racial stratification and migration in the industrial cities of the United States. With Philadelphia's history of Black inhabitants dating to 1638, slavery, emancipation, industrialization, and immigration had all shaped the social conditions of Philadelphia and its surrounding communities. As a result, Du Bois argued, "Few states present better opportunities for the continuous study of a group of Negroes than Pennsylvania" (1899, p. 10).

Du Bois argued that Philadelphia—and specifically, the city's Black Seventh Ward—offered generalizable knowledge about the conditions of American urban life at the turn of the twentieth century. Philadelphia's geographic location near the

Mason-Dixon line made it "the natural gateway between the North and the South" (1899, p. 25), and the city was a major destination for both Black migrants and European immigrants. Du Bois noted that the city "rank[ed] high in the absolute and relative number of its Negro inhabitants," with the second-highest Black population in the United States, behind Baltimore, and the third-highest proportion of Black inhabitants, behind Baltimore and St. Louis (1899, p. 50). In short, Du Bois argued, "the Seventh Ward present[ed] an epitome of nearly all the Negro problems . . . . [E]very class is represented, and varying conditions of life" (1899, p. 62). While he cautioned against "draw[ing] too broad conclusions from a single ward in one city," Du Bois contended: "[T]hat the social problems affecting Negroes in large Northern cities are presented here in most of their aspects seems credible" (1899, p. 62).

To further bolster the theoretical implications of the case study, Du Bois (1899) enlisted statistical comparisons with other cities in the United States and Europe. Philadelphia's racial composition was compared against American cities such as Washington, Atlanta, and Boston. Du Bois tracked poverty rates in Philadelphia's Black community against Charles Booth's (1889-1891) London studies. Health statistics were weighed against evidence from England, France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, and Italy. Black literacy rates were juxtaposed with those of Philadelphia's immigrant populations from Italy, Russia, Poland, Hungary, Ireland, and Germany. These comparisons illustrate Du Bois's contention that Philadelphia's Black community did not exist in isolation, but rather was bound up in global processes of capitalism, racialization, industrialization, and migration.

The density of figures and statistics on Black Philadelphians, coupled with extensive maps and ethnographic data, signals to some contemporary sociologists that Du Bois's study lacked the "generalizability" and theoretical coherence of other early urban-sociological texts such as Weber's *The City* ([1921] 1958). Yet, questions could certainly be raised about the "generalizability" of the canon of early urban theory. The unitary theories of cities offered by Weber and Park and Burgess, for example, were heavily influenced by their respective contexts. Park and Burgess's "concentric zone" model (1925), for example, is derived from the conditions of early twentieth-century Chicago (see Dear 2002). Weber's unitary theory is rooted in the history of Western European cities—note, for example, his broad dismissal of non-Western cities: "An urban 'community' in the full meaning of the word, appears as a general phenomenon only in the Occident. Exceptions occasionally were to be found in the Near East . . . but only occasionally and in rudiments" ([1921] 1958, p. 80). These pieces of evidence suggest that the sociological standard for "generalizability" has been applied inconsistently at best. *The Philadelphia Negro* indeed offers the requisite "generalizability" because Du Bois sought to explain ubiquitous late nineteenth-century processes of urbanization, migration, and racial stratification, and further, he made clear how both Philadelphia and the Seventh Ward were located within a network of American and European cities.

DU BOIS ON RACE AND THE MODERN CITY

In *The Philadelphia Negro*, Du Bois argued that the social spaces of modern American cities were reproducing racial inequalities; he outlined the social, political, and economic factors that were creating dense clusters of Black residents in urban neighborhoods such as Philadelphia's Seventh Ward. At the turn of the twentieth century, the Seventh Ward had "emerged as one of the largest concentrations of Blacks" in the

United States (Hunter 2013a, p. 9). In that context, Du Bois analyzed the interconnections among issues affecting the life chances of Black urbanites, such as education, poverty, public health, employment, and housing.

Du Bois argued that the racialization of Black urbanites differed from the racialization of other urban migrants, who in some circumstances were able to "assimilate" into the dominant White group: "No differences of social condition allowed any Negro to escape from the group, although such escape was continually the rule among Irish, Germans, and other whites" (Du Bois 1899, p. 11). This insight separated Du Bois's theoretical framework from the "ecological" models that would later be developed by Park and the Chicago School. Like Du Bois, Park's sociology of the city was concerned with migration and intergroup conflict; the Chicago School's ecological urban theory, however, described these urban processes as "natural" (Park and Burgess, 1925). Compared to the work of Park and his colleagues, Du Bois's analysis—which predated Park's by over two decades—offered a more empirically valid theory of urban processes, which helped explain the role of socially constructed racial hierarchies in shaping the material conditions of industrial cities in the United States:

> [Blacks and Whites] have in the past lived under vastly different conditions and they still live under different conditions; to assume that, in discussing the inhabitants of Philadelphia, one is discussing people living under the same conditions of life, is to assume what is not true. Broadly speaking, the Negroes as a class dwell in the most unhealthful parts of the city and in the worst houses in those parts; which is of course simply saying that the part of the population having a large degree of poverty, ignorance and general social degradation is usually to be found in the worst portions of our great cities (Du Bois 1899, p. 148).

Du Bois was especially concerned with the economic and political processes that were reinforcing racial stratification in American cities. Anticipating work such as Edna Bonacich's (1976) "split labor market" approach, Du Bois examined how urban labor markets and political conflicts were producing a bifurcation of the working classes—White immigrants from Europe were "assimilating" and gaining political power (i.e., completing racial projects; see Bashi 1998; Ignatiev 1995; Roedinger 1991), while Black migrants were constrained by racist structures:

> The lack of skilled Negro laborers for the factories, the continual stream of Southern [fugitive slaves] and rural freedman into the city, the intense race antipathy of the Irish and others, together with intensified prejudice of whites . . . all this served to check the development of the Negro (Du Bois 1899, p. 10).

Du Bois considered how working-class White European immigrants were able to leverage their privileged standing in the American racial hierarchy at the expense of Black laborers, themes picked up by later researchers on race and labor organizing in the city (e.g., Ignatiev 1995; Roedinger 1991; Wilson 1987):

> [P]artially by taking advantage of race prejudice, partially by greater economic efficiency and partially by the endeavor to maintain and raise wages, white workmen have not only monopolized the new industrial opportunities of an age which has transformed Philadelphia from a colonial town to a world-city, but have also been enabled to take from the Negro workman the opportunities he already enjoyed in certain lines of work (Du Bois 1899, p. 127).

For the "talented tenth" of Black urbanites, discrimination in the labor market circumscribed their upward mobility:

> [T]here are many Negroes who are as bright, talented and reliable as any class of workmen, and who in untrammeled competition would soon rise high in the economic scale . . . . However, in the realm of social phenomena the law of survival is greatly modified by human choice, wish, whim and prejudice (Du Bois 1899, p. 98).

Ultimately, Du Bois argued, for Black urbanites, there was no Weberian "calling" ([1905] 2001) to aspire to:

> [I]t is still the boast of America that, within certain limits, talent can choose the best calling for its exercise. Not so with Negro youth. On the contrary, the field for exercising their talent and ambition is, broadly speaking, confined to the dining room, kitchen and street (Du Bois 1899, p. 138).

Du Bois argued that the effects of structural discrimination hastened the formation of a distinct socio-spatial form: the Black ghetto. Du Bois's analysis illustrates how the Chicago School's so-called "natural" processes of "invasion and succession" (Park and Burgess, 1925, p. 50) were, for Black urbanites, highly circumscribed. The intergenerational out-migration from the city center to the suburbs and upscale urban neighborhoods was simply not possible under the spatially embedded and violently enforced American racial hierarchy.

The emphasis on racial stratification in Du Bois's urban theory complicates Park and Burgess's "concentric zone" model (1925, pp. 50–53), where there is no acknowledgement of how racialized power relations undergird racially- and socioeconomically-segregated urban areas (Hunter 2013b). In this theoretical model, Park and Burgess consider the modern city to be comprised of five distinct zones that radiate from the city's center: (1) "The Loop"; (2) a "Zone of Transition"; (3) a "Zone of Workingmen's Homes"; (4) a "Residential Zone"; and (5) a "Commuters Zone" (1925, pp. 50–51). Park and Burgess argue that over time, urban migrants work their way from the slums in the inner city to a "residential zone" that is "inhabited by workers who have escaped from the area of deterioration" (1925, p. 50).[4] Their model proposed that processes of intergenerational socio-spatial mobility were equivalent for all urban migrants; indeed, the fact that Black urbanites were relatively "stuck in place" seems to underlie Park's lament that, "The Negro is, by natural disposition, neither an intellectual nor an idealist . . . . His metier is expression rather than action. The Negro is, so to speak, the lady among the races" (1919, pp. 129–130).

Written decades earlier, Du Bois's analysis repudiates the Chicago School's model by framing the ghettoization of Blacks within a racialized socio-spatial power structure:

> [T]he occupations which the Negro follows, and which at present he is compelled to follow, are of a sort that makes it necessary for him to live near the best portions of the city; the mass of Negroes are purveyors to the rich . . . . In order to keep this work they must live nearby . . . . With the mass of white workmen, this same necessity of living near work does not hinder them from getting cheap dwellings; the factory is surrounded by cheap cottages, the foundry by long rows of houses, and even the white clerk and shop girl can . . . afford to live further out in the suburbs than the black porter who opens the store. Thus it is clear that

the nature of the Negro's work compels him to crowd into the center of the city much more than is the case with the mass of white working people (Du Bois 1899, pp. 295–296).

Additionally:

The final reason of the concentration of Negroes in certain localities is a social one and particularly strong; the life of the Negroes of the city has for years centered in the Seventh Ward . . . . To a race socially ostracized it means far more to move to remote parts of a city than to those who will in any part of the city easily form congenial acquaintances and new ties. The Negro who ventures away from the mass of his people and their organized life, finds himself alone, shunned and taunted, stared at and made uncomfortable . . . . Thus he remains far from friends and the concentered [*sic*] social life of the church, and feels in all its bitterness what it means to be a social outcast. . . . At the same time color prejudice makes it difficult for groups to find suitable places to move to—one Negro family would be tolerated where six would be objected to; thus we have here a very decisive hindrance to emigration to the suburbs (Du Bois 1899, pp. 296–297).

Despite these forces of ghettoization, Du Bois illustrated that upwardly mobile Blacks made attempts to move beyond the inner city:

Passing up Lombard, beyond Eighth, the atmosphere suddenly changes, because these next two blocks have few alleys and the residences are good-sized and pleasant. Here some of the best Negro families of the ward live. Some are wealthy in a small way, nearly all are Philadelphia born, and they represent an early wave of emigration from the old slum section (Du Bois 1899, p. 60).

Du Bois noted, however, that even the best efforts were typically thwarted by the discrimination that impacted Blacks in the housing and labor markets:

Leaving the slums and coming to the great mass of the Negro population we see undoubted effort has been made to establish homes. Two great hindrances, however, cause much mischief: the low wages of men and the high rents (Du Bois 1899, p. 193).

One of the insights that sets Du Bois apart from other early urban theorists is the focus on race and racial inequality as critical structures of modern cities. No discussion of race is to be found in the canonical urban theory of Simmel ([1903] 2002), and Weber mentioned ethnoracial segregation only in passing reference to Europe's Jewish ghettos ([1921] 1958). While Park discussed race in the urban context, his approach is tinged with biological essentialism and Social Darwinism (e.g., Park 1914, 1919, 1931; Park and Burgess, 1925; see also Deegan 1988; Morris 2015; Rabaka 2010; Yu 2002). Many of Park's theoretical devices were borrowed from the biological sciences, leading him to ignore racialized power relations and political economy in his analysis of modern cities (Dear 2002; Smith 1995). While Park was clearly attuned to segmentation by race and national origin, his equating of migration, mobility, and stratification to "natural" processes is patently asociological. Park's models lacked the sophistication of Du Bois's analysis on many issues, such as the circumscribed mobility of Black urbanites. Park and Burgess argued in *The City*:

[T]he segregation of the urban population tends to facilitate the mobility of the individual man. The processes of segregation establish moral distances which make the city a mosaic of little worlds which touch but do not interpenetrate. This makes it possible for individuals to pass quickly and easily from one moral milieu to another, and encourages the fascinating but dangerous experiment of living at the same time in several different contiguous, but otherwise widely separated, worlds (Park and Burgess, 1925, pp. 40–41).

The following passages illustrate Park and the Chicago School's predilection for Social Darwinism and overreliance on biological metaphors to explain sociological phenomena. In "The Conflict and Fusion of Cultures with Special Reference to the Negro," Park stated:

Admitting, as the anthropologists now seem disposed to do, that the average native intelligence in the races is about the same, we may still expect to find in different races certain special traits and tendencies which rest on biological rather than cultural differences (1919, p. 112).

In *The City*, Burgess argued:

The division of labor in the city likewise illustrates disorganization, reorganization, and increasing differentiation. . . . [I]nteresting occupational selection has taken place by nationality, explainable more by racial temperament or circumstance than by old-world economic background, as Irish policemen, Greek ice-cream parlors, Chinese laundries, Negro porters, Belgian janitors, etc. (Park and Burgess, 1925, pp. 56–57).

Invoking the language of the Eugenics movement, Park wrote of rural White migrants:

In the great city the poor, the vicious, and the delinquent, crushed together in an unhealthful and contagious intimacy, breed in and in, body and soul, so that it has often occurred to me that those long genealogies of the Jukes and the Tribes of Ishmael [both terms for poor Whites popularized by the Eugenics movement][5] would not show such a persistent and distressing uniformity of vice, crime, and poverty unless they were peculiarly fit for the environment in which they are condemned to exist (Park and Burgess, 1925, p. 45).

Further evidence of the Chicago School's sympathy for the Eugenics movement is found in a bibliographic section in Park and Burgess's *The City* (1925, pp. 214-217) called "Eugenics of the City," wherein Louis Wirth recommends titles such as "Urban Sterilization" and "The Danger of Deterioration of Race from the Too Rapid Increase of Great Cities."

On these points, Tukufu Zuberi argues, "Decades before the Chicago School of sociology rose to prominence, Du Bois had shown the uniqueness of the African experience in the United States generally and in the urban setting in particular" (1998, p. 183). Park and the Chicago School, in contrast, "confounded race . . . with ethnicity . . . . They interpreted . . . the urban plight of African Americans as comparable to the challenge European immigrants faced in adjusting to American life" (Zuberi 1998, p. 183). Indeed, whereas Du Bois emphasized the structural roots of Black marginalization in Northern ghettos, Park located racial segregation in "[p]ersonal tastes and

convenience, vocational and economic interests" (Park and Burgess, 1925, p. 5) rather than racialized power relations.

Overall, Du Bois's theoretical analysis of the ghettoization of Blacks in modern American cities illustrates the group's circumscribed urban mobility. He argued that structural racism and racialized economic competition with White European immigrants, coupled with the historic underdevelopment of Blacks vis-à-vis slavery, combined to reify the marginalized status of Blacks in a distinct socio-spatial form—the ghetto. In *The Philadelphia Negro*, Du Bois (1899) examined at length the social and economic impacts of Black ghettoization—topics such as educational and occupational segregation; poor housing conditions; wage discrimination; and the ghetto's parallel institutions. Du Bois also hinted at the ghetto's system of super-exploitation, a concept later illustrated by scholars such as Manning Marable (1983). Du Bois's analysis also anticipated recent scholarship on "the spatialization of race" (see Bonnett and Nayak, 2003; Delany 2002); in chapter 7, he illustrated how White society's perception of Blacks as "one homogeneous mass" (1899, p. 73) flattens difference in the Black community and creates the perception that all Blacks are "deviant" and "criminal," a phenomenon Elijah Anderson (2012) would later term the "iconic ghetto."

In sum, Du Bois's theoretical contributions on race and the modern city alone should place *The Philadelphia Negro* in the canon of classical urban theory. By accurately comprehending how race was shaping the social structures of the modern city, Du Bois not only prefigured much of today's most influential and widely cited urban social science (e.g., Massey and Denton, 1993; Pattillo 2007; Sugrue 1996), but also introduced a stronger framework for examining the interactions between race and the modern city than Park, Simmel, or Weber.

DU BOIS ON MIGRATION AND URBANIZATION

In *The Philadelphia Negro*, W. E. B. Du Bois makes important theoretical contributions at the intersection of race, urbanization, and urban migration—processes that largely defined the rise of the modern city. In this section, I illustrate how the Du Boisian urban-theoretical framework complements other classical works and adds to the sociological understanding of these processes.

Urbanization represented one of the foundational analytical frames of early sociological theory (Sassen 2000; Tonkiss 2005). Classical sociologists suggested that the modern city represented a fundamental reordering of social relations (e.g., Durkheim [1912] 2008; Simmel [1903] 2002; Tönnies [1887] 1957). These theorists often looked to cities to explain the transition from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft* and from mechanical to organic solidarity.

Du Bois was similarly concerned with the sociological implications of the rapid urbanization and urban migration that took place between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. In *The Philadelphia Negro*, Du Bois argued that the metropoles of the North represented spaces where human "raw material"—Southern Blacks and European immigrants—were "transformed" by the industrial social order (1899, p. 80). Du Bois analyzed urbanization with an eye toward these streams of migration and the coterminous rise of the industrial-capitalist economy. He wrote:

[W]e must bring to mind four characteristics of the period we are considering: (1) The growth of Philadelphia; (2) the increase of the foreign population in the city; (3) the development of the large industry and increase of wealth, and (4) the coming in of the Southern freedman's sons and daughters. Even Philadelphians

hardly realize that the population of their staid old city has nearly doubled since the war, and that consequently it is not the same place, has not the same spirit, as formerly; new men, new ideas, new ways of thinking and acting have gained some entrance; life is larger, competition fiercer, and conditions of economic and social survival harder than formerly (Du Bois 1899, p. 44).

Du Bois's attention to the historical dimensions of urbanization mirrors Weber's historiographical framing of European urban development. Like Du Bois, Weber focused on the economic dimension of cities—"the 'city' is a market place" (Weber [1921] 1958, pp. 65-68)—in addition to locating urban migration as a defining feature of the modern city: "Everywhere that it made its first appearance . . . the city arose as a joint settlement by immigration from the outside" (Weber [1921] 1958, p. 92).

Additionally, Du Bois argued that the city was a space of intergroup conflict, where Black migrants and European immigrants were cast into bitter competition on the labor market and subject to the caprice of global capitalism. Here, Du Bois's arguments find affinity with key points made by Simmel and Weber. Simmel's ([1903] 2002) theory of the city was highly attuned to the city as a space of conflict, though he focused more on how intergroup animus manifested itself at the individual level. On the urbanite's "blasé attitude," he wrote:

> Indeed, if I am not mistaken, the inner side of this external reserve is not only indifference but more frequently than we believe, it is a slight aversion, a mutual strangeness and repulsion, which, in a close contact which has arisen any way whatever, can break out into hatred and conflict (Simmel [1903] 2002, p. 106).

Weber, in contrast, concentrated on inter-city conflict, i.e., conflict among autonomous urban principalities and the city as a "fortress" ([1921] 1958, p. 75; see also pp. 76–80, 119–120, 181–183). For Black urbanites, Du Bois argued, these intergroup and interpersonal struggles were compounded by structural racism and individual prejudice. Within this sphere of conflict, Du Bois discussed the uneven development of human capital among various racial groups. Prefiguring work such as William Julius Wilson's *The Truly Disadvantaged* (1987) and Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton's *American Apartheid* (1993), Du Bois argued that slavery and racism—not biology or culture, as in the Chicago School's model (e.g., Park 1914, 1919; Park and Burgess, 1925; see also Morris 2015; Rabaka 2010)—had impeded the ability of Black migrants to collectively transition into industrial society:

> Apart from all questions of race, [the Negro's] problem in this respect is greater than the problem of the white country boy or the European peasant immigrant, because his previous industrial condition was worse than theirs and less calculated to develop the power of self-adjustment, self-reliance, and cooperation. All these considerations are further complicated by the fact that the industrial condition of the Negro cannot be considered apart from the great fact of race prejudice . . . (Du Bois 1899, p. 145).

Du Bois also considered how modern industrial cities socialized migrants with regard to criminality. For both Black migrants and European immigrants, Du Bois held that the social structure of the city channeled newcomers into crime-ridden areas, which he argued had a problematic effect on their socialization into the industrial order: "The new immigrants usually settle in pretty well-defined localities in or near

the slums, and thus get the worst possible introduction to city life" (1899, p. 81). Du Bois argued that this process was linked to the social production of crime:

> Crime is a phenomenon of organized social life, and is the open rebellion of an individual against his social environment. Naturally then, if men are suddenly transported from one environment to another, the result is lack of harmony with the new physical surroundings leading to disease and death or modification of physique; lack of harmony with social surroundings leading to crime (1899, p. 235).[6]

Du Bois argued that for Black migrants, the socialization to the city vis-à-vis slum areas was especially problematic due to what Loïc Wacquant (2005) would later term "the conflation of Blackness and criminality":

> It is often tacitly assumed that the Negroes of Philadelphia are one homogeneous mass, and that the slums of the Fifth Ward, for instance, are one of the results of long contact with Philadelphia city life on the part of this mass. There is just enough truth and falsehood in such an assumption to make it dangerously misleading. . . . A generalization that includes a North Carolina boy who has migrated to the city for work and has been here for a couple of months, in the same class with a descendant of several generations of Philadelphia Negroes, is apt to make serious mistakes (Du Bois 1899, pp. 73–74).

For Du Bois, such "serious mistakes" included racial profiling—"So frequent have these crimes become that sometimes Negroes are wrongfully suspected; whoever snatches a pocketbook on a dark night is supposed to be black" (1899, p. 263)—in addition to racial discrimination in the court system, anticipating later work by scholars such as Wacquant (2001) and Michelle Alexander (2010):

> It seems plain in the first place that the 4 percent of the population of Philadelphia having Negro blood furnished from 1885 to 1889, 14 percent of the serious crimes, and from 1890 to 1895, 22½ percent. This of course assumes that the convicts in the penitentiary represent with a fair degree of accuracy the crime committed. The assumption is not wholly true; in convictions by human courts the rich always are favored somewhat at the expense of the poor, the upper classes at the expense of the unfortunate classes, and whites at the expense of the Negro (Du Bois 1899, p. 249).

The urbanization processes that Du Bois documented in *The Philadelphia Negro* were largely in reference to the mass movement of people into industrial cities—Black migrants, White rural migrants, and European immigrants. Specifically, Du Bois focused on the "push and pull factors" that were spurring the mass urban migration of Blacks from the American South. Two decades before the publication of William Thomas and Florian Znaniecki's *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (1918), Du Bois outlined the social and economic forces that were driving rural Blacks from the Jim Crow South toward industrial Northern cities such as Philadelphia. *The Philadelphia Negro* served as an urban-focused complement to Du Bois's study "The Negroes of Farmville, Virginia: A Social Study" (1898), which offered an in-depth examination of the migratory streams of the American South—illustrating "the conditions of Southern Blacks in a small-town way station between rural life and city life" (Jones 1998, p. 114).

Du Bois considered the movement of Blacks from the South to be a product of three primary factors: racist violence, de jure discrimination, and lack of economic opportunity. He wrote, "Back of that stream is the world-wide desire to rise in the world, to escape the choking narrowness of the plantation, and the lawless repression of the village, in the South" (Du Bois 1899, p. 354). He further predicted:

> When the Negroes in the South have a larger opportunity to work, accumulate property, be protected in life and limb, and encourage pride and self-respect in their children, there will be a diminution in the stream of immigrants to Northern cities (Du Bois 1899, p. 355).

Du Bois also examined the "pull" factors that were underpinning Black migration to cities. Framing his analysis historically, he considered the impact of small-scale emancipations in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, such as Pennsylvania's Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery, passed in 1780. Du Bois argued:

> A careful study of the process and effect of emancipation in the different States of the Union would throw much light on our national experiment and its ensuing problems. . . . [T]he main facts [everywhere] are similar: the freeing of ignorant slaves and giving them a chance, almost unaided from without, to make a way in the world. The first result was widespread poverty and idleness. This was followed, as the number of freedmen increased, by a rush to the city. . . . The first result of this contact with city life was to stimulate the talented and aspiring freedmen; and this was easier because the freedman had in Philadelphia at that time [the turn of the nineteenth century] a secure economic foothold; he performed all kinds of domestic service, all common labor and much of the skilled labor (Du Bois 1899, p. 17).

In addition, Du Bois was interested in the act of migration itself. Marshalling data from his in-depth survey of Philadelphia's Black community, Du Bois drew several conclusions about the conditions of migration. Examining the age segmentation of recent Black migrants, he argued that the majority of the newcomers were single young adults who had come to the city in search of better employment opportunities, in addition to married individuals who were supporting families elsewhere:[7]

> That the Negro immigration to the city is not an influx of whole families is shown by the fact that 83 percent of the children under ten were born in Philadelphia. . . . The next great influx comes in the years from twenty-one to thirty, for of these but 17 percent were born in the city (Du Bois 1899, p. 75).

Additionally:

> The Seventh Ward is a ward of lodgers and casual sojourners; newly married couples settle down here until they are compelled, by the appearance of children, to move into homes of their own . . . . Some couples leave their families in the South with grandmothers and live in lodgings here, returning to Virginia or Maryland only temporarily in summer or winter; a good many men come here from elsewhere, live as lodgers and support families in the country . . . (Du Bois 1899, p. 165).

Du Bois also argued that migration to the North represented a more protracted process than numbers alone suggested:

> Much of the immigration to Philadelphia is indirect; Negroes come from country districts to small towns; then go to larger towns; eventually they drift to Norfolk, VA, or to Richmond. Next they come to Washington, and finally settle in Baltimore or Philadelphia (Du Bois 1899, p. 76).

Further, he argued:

> Much light, therefore, will be thrown on the question of migration if we take the Negro immigrants as a class and inquire how long they have lived in the city; we can separate the immigrants into four classes, corresponding to the waves of immigration: first, the antebellum immigrants . . . ; second, the refugees of war time and the period following . . . ; third, the laborers and sightseers of the time of the Centennial . . . ; fourth, the recent immigration . . . (Du Bois 1899, p. 79; see also accompanying tables, pp. 76–80).

In spite of what he considered the problematic elements of urbanization—racial segregation, increased crime, and the reification of the socially constructed American racial hierarchy—Du Bois held that the city was a potentially liberating space, especially for Black migrants escaping the Jim Crow South. For Du Bois, the thin line between liberation and marginalization underscored the reflexive relationship between the Northern ghetto and the Southern plantation:

> Manifestly such a course is bound to make that portion of the community a burden on the public; to debauch its women, pauperize its men, and ruin its homes; it makes the one central question of the Seventh Ward, not imperative social betterments, raising of the standard of home life, taking advantage of the civilizing institutions of the great city—on the contrary, it makes it a sheer question of bread and butter and the maintenance of a standard of living above that of the Virginia plantation (Du Bois 1899, p. 140).

In sum, the central emphasis that Du Bois placed on urbanization and urban migration mirrors, in multiple, concrete ways, and improves upon other classical theorists' inquiries into these processes. Like Weber, Simmel, and Park, Du Bois conceived the modern city as a reordering of social relations; as I have outlined, Du Bois's framework shares many theoretical concerns with these authors. Critically, Du Bois's insertion of racialized power relations into an analytic of urbanization and urban migration offers an important corrective to the other classical works, all of which ignored (Simmel and Weber) or misdiagnosed (Park and the Chicago School) this crucial dimension of modern cities. Rather than conceiving urban processes as "natural" or market-driven (as in Park's model), state-driven (as in Weber's model), or focused at the individual level (as in Simmel's model), Du Bois asserts the primacy of a socially constructed racial hierarchy and the systems of power that enforce and reproduce racial divisions in modern society. This crucial insight provides further context for Du Bois's broader contributions on race and cities and reiterates my contention that Du Bois should be considered a canonical urban theorist.

DISCUSSION

In this paper, I have made the case for the inclusion of W. E. B. Du Bois's *The Philadelphia Negro* in the canon of classical urban theory. The long overdue recognition

that this work has received in recent years has rightfully asserted the revolutionary empirical and methodological innovations that Du Bois introduced to the sociological discipline in 1899 (e.g., Anderson 1996; Hunter 2013a, 2013b; Katz and Sugrue, 1998; Morris 2007, 2015; Rabaka 2010). Yet *The Philadelphia Negro* is much more than "routine science" (Stinchcombe 1982); it is a masterful work of social theory that prefigured contemporary discourse on race, cities, and many other topics.

Du Bois's fundamental theoretical argument—that the processes of urbanization and industrialization that occurred between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries were essentially shaped by the mass urban migration of Southern Blacks and the ensuing racial stratification that was reified in the spaces of the modern city—has been echoed in many of the most significant urban-sociological works of the last thirty years (e.g., Massey and Denton, 1993; Pattillo 2007; Sugrue 1996). Contemporary scholars have validated the Du Boisian theoretical framework, reflecting "the importance and influence of economic and political regimes of cities, while also affirming and asserting the importance of race, history, and Black agency" (Hunter 2013b, p. 17). The remarkable longevity of Du Bois's ideas—in spite of a century of systematic marginalization within the sociological discipline (Morris 2015; Rabaka 2010)—speaks both to the quality of his theoretical framework and to the durability of the socially constructed American racial hierarchy.

The effects of Du Bois's marginalization within urban sociology were borne out over many decades. The theoretical agenda of Robert Park and the Chicago School dominated urban scholarship in the United States until the 1970s, when Du Boisian understandings of structural racism and political economy reemerged as part of the "new urban sociology." Generations of Park acolytes spent years attempting to empirically validate his "race relations cycle" (Winant 2000; Young and Deskins, 2001) and notions of "human ecology" (Smith 1995). These linear, Darwinian models of social processes had major flaws: Park and his followers examined race through the lens of assimilation rather than racialization, ignored the role of the state and private elites in shaping the material conditions of cities, and rested on deterministic ideas, like the concentric zone model, that were based on universalistic interpretations of industrial Chicago (Dear 2002; Zuberi 1998). While some of Park's ideas live on—notably in the neighborhood effects literature—contemporary urban ecologists have attempted to thoroughly cleanse Park's legacy of its problematic connotations and incorrect assumptions (see, e.g., Sampson 2012, pp. 31–52).

The legacy of Du Bois's theoretical ideas extends beyond any single "school" of urban-sociological thought. His efforts have been validated by the numerous contemporary scholars whose work unites structural understandings of race and urban processes with a historically-informed approach. Much of the "new urban sociology" took up one or more of these themes; the most influential early paper, Harvey Molotch's "The City as a Growth Machine" (1976), centered Du Boisian notions of political economy—rather than Park's assumptions of human ecology—as the theoretical basis for understanding cities.[8] Subsequent urbanists have produced a large body of scholarship upholding the empirical validity of the Du Boisian theoretical approach. Paradigmatic examples of contemporary Du Boisian urban social science include Mary Pattillo's *Black on the Block* (2007), Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton's *American Apartheid* (1993), Loïc Wacquant's *Urban Outcasts* (2008), and Thomas Sugrue's *Origins of the Urban Crisis* (1996), among many others (e.g., Arena 2012; Davis 1990; Hirsch 1983; Hunter 2013a; Kruse 2005; Lacy 2007; Marable 1983; Self 2003; Stuart 2011). While many examples of contemporary Du Boisian urban social science focus on processes of Black ghettoization in American cities, the Du Boisian approach helps scholars explain the divergent ways that racial hierarchies and capital flows structure

social space more broadly. Indeed, we see scholars using similar frameworks to under-stand places such as White suburbs (e.g., Lassiter 2006), elite urban neighborhoods (e.g., Smithsimon 2011), and immigrant enclaves (e.g., Dávila 2004).

While many of these urbanists cite Du Bois and in some cases explicitly develop a Du Boisian approach, they are the exception, not the rule. Indeed, it is quite possible for many a "new urban sociologist" to complete doctoral training without reading *The Philadelphia Negro* or Du Bois's other work: With Du Bois left off of syllabi and notably excluded from Park and Burgess's *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (1921) (known to sociologists as the "Green Bible"), where would most scholars have encountered the pioneering urban theorist? As revolutionary as the ideas put forth by Harvey Molotch and colleagues have been in reshaping how social scientists think about cities, one must wonder: what if Du Bois's ideas had been with us all along, shaping the theories and methods of urban sociology rather than languishing in anonymity? While counterfac-tual questions can be difficult, we can certainly assume that the last century of scholar-ship would likely have unfolded very differently. For example, Stanford Lyman notes that "after years of research" E. Franklin Frazier, a product of the Chicago School and one of the preeminent Black sociologists of the mid-twentieth century, finally "gave up the attempt to empirically verify the sequential order of Park's [race relations cycle] stages" (1968, p. 20). What if such a talented scholar had been building on the Du Boisian framework rather than spending decades struggling to corroborate a theoreti-cal model that simply does not square with the empirical realities of racialization in America? Further, contemporary urban scholars like Robert Sampson might not feel obliged to spend entire chapters of important works like *Great American City* (2012) parsing Park's ideas in an effort to reconcile their obvious faults with the Chicago School's central place in urban-sociological theory. Flawed notions of the "race rela-tions cycle" and "naturalistic" approaches to studying cities would have been dismissed long ago, rather than dominating the sociological agenda for decades and continuing to impact the ways sociologists discuss racial segregation, migration, and other urban processes.

Within the realm of classical urban-sociological theory, my task has been to ele-vate Du Bois and *The Philadelphia Negro* to the canonical status enjoyed by Georg Simmel and "The Metropolis and Mental Life"; Max Weber and *The City*; and Robert Park, Ernest Burgess, and *The City*. By foregrounding my arguments in Du Bois's own words, I have allowed his theoretical insights to speak for themselves, thereby dem-onstrating Du Bois's visionary analysis of the modern city. While Du Bois's oeuvre, like that of the other classical theorists, is not without its flaws (see, e.g., Hill Collins 2000; Rabaka 2010),[9] what I have presented here emphatically refutes the common assertion that Du Bois's scholarship lacked the theoretical coherence of sociology's *other* "founding fathers" (see, e.g., Mouzelis 1997; Saint-Arnaud 2009). While I have been critical of Du Bois's contemporaries, my comments do not unfairly malign work from a century ago. Rather, these critiques have shown that Du Bois's *The Philadelphia Negro*—produced prior to the other canonical works—proposes an urban-theoretical framework that is at least as robust as Park's, Simmel's, and Weber's. Furthermore, Du Bois's contributions at the intersection of race and the modern city represent a more sociological approach than Robert Park and the Chicago School's later attempts to analyze racial difference and racial segregation, not to mention the complete omis-sion of race in the classical urban theories of Simmel and Weber. Given the centrality of race and racial stratification to modern cities, this contribution alone should place Du Bois in the canon of urban theory.

Toiling in obscurity as an "assistant in sociology" at the University of Pennsylvania (Anderson 1996, p. xv), and later serving as the architect of empirical sociological

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studies at Atlanta University, W. E. B. Du Bois's extensive body of work has been largely invisible to sociologists for over a century. Now, at this moment of renewed interest in Du Boisian sociology, urban scholars should not dismiss *The Philadelphia Negro* as a quaint study of a lone Black community. Let us engage thoughtfully with this work, challenge it, and consider how Du Bois's insights can continue to inform today's urban-theoretical projects.

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NOTES

1. *The Souls of Black Folk*, like *The Philadelphia Negro*, is certainly transdisciplinary, evinced by its canonical status in fields such as literature, history, and African-American studies. While it is important to recognize the broad application of Du Bois's scholarship, asserting its sociological import is a critical task given the longstanding exclusion of his work from mainstream sociological discourse.
2. This is not to suggest that the work of Addams and her colleagues was asociological. As Mary Jo Deegan (1988) points out, many of the Hull House women had received sociological training—Edith Abbott and Florence Kelley, for example, held doctorates in political economy—yet were largely excluded from pursuing scholarly careers within academia. The marginalization of their work is surely a result of the same exclusionary processes that have kept Du Bois's work out of the sociological canon (see Morris 2015).
3. It is important to note that this paper is not a rehashed critique of these classical works; critical appraisals of the Chicago School's models in particular helped drive the "new urban sociology" of the 1970s and '80s and many of these critiques are shared by contemporary urban ecologists (see, e.g., Sampson and Morenoff, 1997; see also Abbott 2002; Dear 2002).
4. Ernest Burgess describes the process of intergenerational out-migration: "The significance of this [population] increase consists in the immigration into a metropolitan city like New York and Chicago of tens of thousands of persons annually. Their invasion of the city has the effect of a tidal wave inundating first the immigrant colonies, the ports of first entry, dislodging thousands of inhabitants who overflow into the next zone, and so on and on until the momentum of the wave has spent its last force on the last urban zone" (Park and Burgess, 1925, pp. 57–58).
5. See Nathaniel Deutsch (2009) and Colin Webster (2008).
6. In *The City*, Park makes a similar point: "The enormous amount of delinquency, juvenile and adult, that exists today in the Negro communities in northern cities is due in part, though not entirely, to the fact that migrants are not able to accommodate themselves at once to a new and relatively strange environment. The same thing may be said of the immigrants from Europe, or of the younger generation of women . . ." (Park and Burgess, 1925, p. 108). Notably, Du Bois is not cited here, nor anywhere else in Park and Burgess's volume. The Chicago School's lack of engagement with Du Bois's ideas—despite the fact that Park (a protégé of Booker T. Washington) and his followers were familiar with his work, occasionally citing *The Philadelphia Negro* and Du Bois's scholarship on the Black church in bibliographies while never directly engaging with these texts—is a topic discussed at length by Aldon Morris (2015).
7. See also Wilson (1987, pp. 63–108) on the age distribution within Black urban areas.
8. Note that Du Bois's analysis of American political economy would find its ultimate expression in *Black Reconstruction* (1935).

9. See Patricia Hill Collins (2000) for a discussion of Du Bois's lack of attention to gender oppression. She writes, "Du Bois may have acknowledged African American women's centrality . . . but this does not mean that he afforded gender the same analytical importance as race and class" (Hill Collins 2000, p. 42). See Reiland Rabaka (2010, p. 57) for a discussion of Du Bois's "problematic, if not outright aristocratic" views on topics such as sexual morality and "the talented tenth."

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