



# EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARS

These Educational Scholars resources were inspired by an episode of Dr. Muna Abdi's podcast *Becoming An Antiracist*, in conversation with Liz Pemberton and Jamel C. Campbell. And by the conceptual paper *Black skin, White theorists: Remembering hidden Black early childhood scholars* by Anthony Broughton. You can listen to the podcast by [clicking here](#), and read the conceptual paper [here](#).

Traditionally, the voices of the educational theorists and scholars we know and are taught in training are predominantly white voices and more specifically, white male voices. Their research was carried out through the lens of a white person, and while they might not have explicitly excluded children who were not white, disabled, neurodivergent or who did not fit the idea of a typically developing child, they did not explicitly include them either. The need to engage with scholars who see through different lenses and explore and share their work for all children is vital.

Educators are trained in these theories and will make judgements on children's learning and development based on their theoretical knowledge. The perspectives we know and learn will likely be the perspectives we apply to our teaching and support. Therefore, to support the learning and development of all children in our educational settings and to deepen our understanding of their diverse lived experiences, we need to ensure our understanding of how children learn and develop is also diverse.

These resources are just snippets of the lives and works of some educational scholars, and we encourage you to delve deeper, challenge your thinking and be open to new ideas and new voices. This collection will continue to grow. We hope you will come back to this space to find out more about the multiple voices in education you might not have come across yet.

# W. E. B. DU BOIS



## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (1868–1963) was an American sociologist, socialist, historian and civil rights activist. He was the first African American to earn a doctorate from Harvard, and he became a professor of history, sociology and economics at Atlanta University.

## W. E. B. DU BOIS' WORK

Du Bois introduced the term 'Double-consciousness' into social and political thought. It is a concept in social philosophy which originally referred to a source of inward 'twoness' commonly accepted to be experienced by African Americans because of their racialised oppression and devaluation in a white-dominated society.

"It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity." (Du Bois)

Du Bois wrote in the October 1919 "Children's Number" issue of 'The Crisis'. One of the goals of the magazine was to dispel the "grotesque stereotypes" of the "Dark Continent", a disparaging term used for Africa and its people. The article included commentary by Du Bois discussing children, stating that "to seek to raise them in ignorance of their racial identity and peculiar situation is inadvisable." Du Bois believed children should be taught their racial identity and social situation. Specifically, the creators of the magazine wanted to "make colored children realise that being 'colored' is a normal beautiful thing" (Du Bois).

# REFLECTIONS ON W. E. B. DU BOIS' WORK

Although Du Bois advocated teaching and discussions about race and the colour of skin with children over 100 years ago, this is still an area that (white) educators can find challenging - more often than not through fear of saying 'the wrong thing'.



Thankfully, we are increasingly being given progressive, positive messages through anti-racism experts like Liz Pemberton to have these important conversations, particularly with young children, and to celebrate the beauty of everyone's skin.

Books and resources are available to support these conversations, like 'My Skin, Your Skin' by Laura Henry-Allain MBE.



## REFERENCES

- Broughton, A. (2020). Black skin, White theorists: Remembering hidden Black early childhood scholars. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, p.1-16.
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