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**Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois**

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| Background: Economics of the Post-Reconstruction “New South”* Southern economic development following Reconstruction was difficult due to few towns and cities, the lack of capital (money to invest), the low rate of technological development, northern control of industry, northern control of banking, and the lack of an educated work force.
* Yet, in industry, textiles and cigarette manufacturing developed in the Piedmont, and some limited iron and steel manufacturing in began in Alabama.
* In agriculture, poor blacks and poor whites practiced sharecropping or tenant farming (renting land). By 1900, 70% of farmers in the South were tenants.

Background: Politics and Race Relations in the Post-Reconstruction “New South”* The Solid South emerged—a Democratic white voting bloc. Further, white Democrats controlled state governments: southern “home rule” by Redeemer governments.
* Some blacks still voted and held office, but Jim Crow laws curtailed black rights, especially voting rights. Lynchings and anti-black violence were common.
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| **Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. DuBois**Inequality between the South and North was paralleled with inequality between the races—*in both the North and South*. Among black leaders, there were divergent points of view for achieving black equality. Based on your textbook reading, who would have spoken the following words, Booker T. Washington or W.E.B. Du Bois?\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ #1 “To those of my race who depend on bettering their condition in a foreign land or who underestimate the importance of cultivating friendly relations with the Southern white man, who is their next-door neighbor, I would say: “Cast down your bucket where you are”— cast it down in making friends in every manly way of the people of all races by whom we are surrounded. Cast it down in agriculture, mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service, and in the professions.”\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ #2 “We want the laws enforced against rich as well as poor; against Capitalist as well as Laborer; against white as well as black. We are not more lawless than the white race, we are more often arrested, convicted, and mobbed. We want justice even for criminals and outlaws.”\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ #3 “We want our children educated. The school system in the country districts of the South is a disgrace and in few towns and cities are Negro schools what they ought to be. We want the national government to step in and wipe out illiteracy in the South. Either the United States will destroy ignorance or ignorance will destroy the United States.”\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ #4 “Our greatest danger is that in the great leap from slavery to freedom we may overlook the fact that the masses of us are to live by the productions of our hands, and fail to keep in mind that we shall prosper in proportion as we learn to dignify and glorify common labour, and put brains and skill into the common occupations of life; shall prosper in proportion as we learn to draw the line between the superficial and the substantial, the ornamental gewgaws of life and the useful. 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.” \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ #5 “We want full manhood suffrage, and we want it now, henceforth and forever. Second, we want discrimination in public accommodation to cease. Separation in railway and street cars, based simply on race and color, is un-American, un-democratic, and silly. We protest against all such discrimination.” |
| 1. What advice does Booker T. Washington offer black and white southerners given the racial and economic situation of the end of the late 19th century?Specifically, what should blacks focus on (and not focus on)? What role should whites play?      2. What are W.E.B. DuBois' criticism of Washington's advice?     3. Given the context of the times, to what extent do you agree with Washington's or DuBois' advice for African American southerners?  |