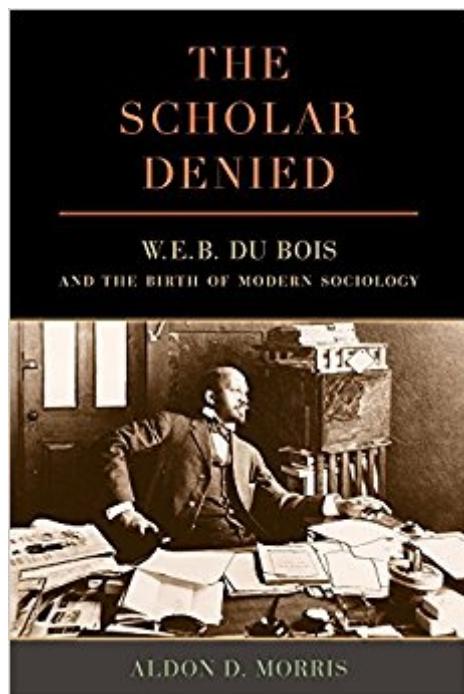


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# The Scholar Denied: W. E. B. Du Bois And The Birth Of Modern Sociology



## Synopsis

In this groundbreaking book, Aldon D. Morris's ambition is truly monumental: to help rewrite the history of sociology and to acknowledge the primacy of W. E. B. Du Bois's work in the founding of the discipline. Calling into question the prevailing narrative of how sociology developed, Morris, a major scholar of social movements, probes the way in which the history of the discipline has traditionally given credit to Robert E. Park at the University of Chicago, who worked with the conservative black leader Booker T. Washington to render Du Bois invisible. Morris uncovers the seminal theoretical work of Du Bois in developing a scientific sociology through a variety of methodologies and examines how the leading scholars of the day disparaged and ignored Du Bois's work. The Scholar Denied is based on extensive, rigorous primary source research; the book is the result of a decade of research, writing, and revision. In exposing the economic and political factors that marginalized the contributions of Du Bois and enabled Park and his colleagues to be recognized as the fathers of the discipline, Morris delivers a wholly new narrative of American intellectual and social history that places one of America's key intellectuals, W. E. B. Du Bois, at its center. The Scholar Denied is a must-read for anyone interested in American history, racial inequality, and the academy. In challenging our understanding of the past, the book promises to engender debate and discussion.

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## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"The story of The Scholar Denied is much bigger than a professional insider's debate about founders; bigger than something that only the History of Sociology Section of the ASA should bother with. It is also bigger than questions about who to include on our syllabi, or what stories we tell of the University of Chicago. It is a wake up call about our own professional doxa. It is a call to be just a little more skeptical about those sociological standpoints that purport universality when are not—and can never be. And it is a call to be just a little more open to those standpoints that get occluded: standpoints which would otherwise lead us to real and valuable insights into the social world, just as did the work of Du Bois. . . . The Scholar Denied is a powerful and persuasive plea to pay attention to those voices that might still be unwittingly relegated to the margins on the grounds of their ostensible particularism or subjectivism. And it is a reminder that the cost of such marginalization is not simply an ethical one, it is an epistemic one. And it is one that sociology cannot afford." (Julian Go Berkeley Journal of Sociology 2016-01-11)"Helps rewrite the history of sociology and to acknowledge the primacy of W. E. B. Du Bois's work in the founding of the discipline." (Diane Patrick Publishers Weekly 2015-11-27)"Aldon Morris takes a huge step forward in The Scholar Denied by placing Du Bois at the center of the sociological canon. . . . Morris should be congratulated for providing us a mandate to both think differently about and conduct more work on the legacy of this brilliant scholar." (Alford A. Young, Jr. Contexts 2016-02-04)"The Scholar Denied should be required reading for students of sociological theory and intellectual history. The book should spur new histories that do more than tack on Du Bois and other marginalized scholars as 'a kind of affirmative action,' but instead give their work its rightful, meaningful place in the canon. . . . While Du Bois's relationship with academic sociology evolved over his nearly seven-decade career, at the end, his commitment to Truth remained. Morris deserves recognition for reminding us of this aspect of Du Bois's legacy, insisting that the discipline of sociology come to terms with its own truths." (Monica Bell Los Angeles Review of Books 2016-02-09)"A fascinating study." (Publishers Weekly 2015-05-11)"Dr. Morris's The Scholar Denied is a raucous and, at times, sobering and maddening romp through a segment of intellectual life of the early 20th century that, even to the modern ears of The Diaspora, frequently sounds all too familiar." (Black Kos Daily Kos 2015-10-06)"Morris's book The Scholar Denied affords us insight into a historical moment when white audiences—especially within academia—often ignored, rather than sought out, the experiential expertise of black intellectuals. In particular, Morris details how white sociological and public audiences marginalized the scientific contributions of the sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois and other black social scientists working at the historically black Atlanta

University in the early 1900s." (Matthew Clair Public Books 2016-05-02)"Groundbreaking." (Hilary Hurd Anyaso Northwestern 2015-08-26)"This well-crafted, meticulously researched, and theoretically serious work will command engagement from the discipline writ large. . . . The Scholar Denied takes an enormous and sure-footed stride toward righting a great historic wrong." (Lawrence D. Bobo The Du Bois Review 2015-09-01)"Groundbreaking . . . A must-read . . . the book promises to engender debate and discussion." (Marshal Zeringue HEPPAS Books 2015-08-15)"An excellent addition to your library . . . Morris has done outstanding work. . . . I like to think that if DuBois were here, he would be proud to see it." (Donna Davis Seattle Book Mama 2015-10-19)"This book thus contributes to the sociology of knowledge, including baleful insight into the racist origins of the very discipline itself. . . . Essential." (CHOICE connect 2016-05-01)"Provides a fascinating and challenging introduction to one of the towering intellects of the twentieth century, himself a potent proof against the inherent inferiority of African Americans, an assumption he devoted his life to disproving." (Christopher N. Breiseth WhoWhatWhy 2016-08-04)"Magisterial study of WEB Du Bois' impact on sociology" (Sage)

“In *The Scholar Denied*, Aldon Morris tests, and convincingly proves, the belief, too long repressed, that W. E. B. Du Bois not only played a pivotal role in the birth of modern scientific sociology in America but was its founding father, on either side of the color line. Toppling prevailing truths like the towering genius at the center of this development, Morris’ account offers a fresh and crisply researched reinterpretation of Du Bois’ pathbreaking Atlanta school of sociology and is sure to be a major book.” •Henry Louis Gates, Jr., Alphonse Fletcher University Professor, Harvard University “Aldon Morris’ *The Scholar Denied: W. E. B. Du Bois and the Birth of Modern Sociology* is one of those landmark studies that change the way we think about a historical occurrence. This well-written book is replete with original insights that challenge conventional wisdom on the origins and development of American sociology. Morris’ meticulous scholarship, based on a careful analysis of revealing primary documents as well as secondary sources, details fascinating and new information regarding Du Bois’ seminal role in the development of scientific sociology and his relationships with Booker T. Washington, Robert Park, and other members of the Chicago school, and with the preeminent social scientist Max Weber. *The Scholar Denied* is a must-read for those interested in how race, power, and economics determine the fate of intellectual schools.” •William Julius Wilson, Lewis P. and Linda L. Geyser University Professor, Harvard University “Aldon Morris has given us a great gift: the truth of Du Bois’ genius and America’s

denial of it! Don't miss this pioneering text! •Cornel West "An eye-opening book! Aldon Morris has written a biography not of W. E. B. Du Bois the man, but of Du Bois's magisterial work and how it fared in the disciplinary scramble for preeminence. In the process, Morris turns the lens of sociological analysis on the discipline itself, with bracing and essential conclusions." •Frances Fox Piven, Distinguished Professor, Graduate Center of the City University of New York "This is a stunningly original history that should inspire both debate and self-reflection within and beyond the discipline of sociology for years to come." •Mitchell Duneier, Maurice P. During Professor of Sociology, Princeton University

This is an insightful, well written, and well told story of the dynamics of an important rivalry for influence on the epistemology of sociology as an emerging social science discipline. The politics of the Park vs. Du Bois rivalry on the race question is fascinating to read.

This book is definitely worth a read! It is both appalling and amazing how African-Americans have been and still are consistently "othered" and invisible. The title of this book says it all.

Morris considers DuBois the father of American sociology, and Morris is right. This is, of course, not the first time a Black man was robbed of credit for an accomplishment that was instead credited to a Caucasian American. It happens all the time. But until I ran across this scholarly study, I hadn't thought about DuBois and sociology because I had never studied the latter. As an admirer of DuBois's historical and political role, I was drawn to this book when I found it on Net Galley. Thank you to that excellent site as well as University of California Press for the DRC, which I was given in exchange for an honest review. It is available for purchase now. DuBois was a venerable intellectual, an academic light years ahead of most Americans of any racial or ethnic background. He was the first Black man to graduate from Harvard University, and in addition to his graduate work there, he also studied in Berlin under such luminaries as Max Weber and others. In Europe, he was treated as an equal by those he studied with, and I found myself wondering a trifle sadly for him, not for us in the USA, why he chose to return here. And the answer is so poignant, so sweetly naive, that I wanted to sit down and cry when I found it. Because once he had the empirical facts with which to debunk the whole US-Negro-inferiority mis-school of mis-thought, he genuinely believed he would be able to elevate African-Americans to a state of equality in the USA by laying out the facts. The racists that created Jim Crow laws in the south and an unofficial state of cold racism that let Black folk in the Northern

states know where they were welcome and where they were not, would surely roll away, he thought, if he could reasonably haul out his charts, his graphs, his statistics, and demonstrate flawlessly, once and for all, that discrimination against Black people was based on incorrect information. See what I mean? I could just cry for him. So although DuBois was the first American to go to Europe, study sociology, and return with more and better credentials than any American academic, he could not persuade anyone with authority to bring about change, was not even allowed to present his findings to anybody except Black people in traditional Black colleges, because another school of sociologists, the Chicago school, were busy promoting armchair theories based on little data, or bogus data, all showing that Black people simply were not smart enough to become professionals or take on anything above and beyond manual labor, and of course, he was Black, so he must not be that smart, right? Pause to allow your primal scream. It's galling stuff. Caucasian professors in Chicago had done a bit of reading, and with regard to Black people, decided that their craniums were too small to hold enough brain-iums. And just as there is one reactionary in every crowd that the newspapers will flock to in order to show that there is across-the-board agreement, so did Booker T Washington stand before any crowd that would listen to him (and the white academics just loved him), in order to say that it was the truth, that it was going to be a long time before the Negro was "ready" to do the difficult tasks involving critical thinking that had been so long denied him. Tiny steps; patience; tiny steps. Meanwhile, he extolled his fellow Black Americans to enroll their sons and daughters in programs teaching "industrial education" so that they would be ready to do manual labor and put food on their families' tables. All of the studies that backed this line of thinking were deductive, starting with the answer (inferior beings, manual labor) and then finding the questions to fit that answer. DuBois had done inductive research because he was searching for information rather than looking for a rational-sounding way to keep a group of people entrenched in an economic underclass. DuBois made the connection between the socialist theory he had studied and the material evidence before him: there were people getting rich off the backs of dark-skinned people, and they had a vested interest in maintaining Black folk as an underclass. Ultimately, he turned to political struggle, and that is how I knew about him, not as a sociologist, but as a Marxist. He also became the father of the interdisciplinary field of African-American studies. He helped found the NAACP. This scholarly work, like just about anything produced by a university press, is not light reading. Rather, the author presents his thesis and synopsis, and then carefully, brick by brick, starts back at the beginning to build his case. His documentation is flawless, and his sources are diverse and strong. There is some repetition in the text, but that is appropriate in this type of writing.

He is not there to entertain the reader, but to provide an authentic piece of research that will stand the test of time, so there is a little bit of a house-that-jack-built quality to the prose. For serious admirers of DuBois' work, this will be an excellent addition to your library. For those interested in sociology as a field, this is for you, too. And to those with a literacy level that permits you to access college-level material and who have a strong interest in African-American history and/or civil rights, this is a must-read. For these readers, I recommend, in addition, *The Souls of Black Folk*, which I had not regarded as sociology-based material until now, though I have read it twice; and a collection of speeches by DuBois, which I have been intending to review for some time, and which will soon grace this page of my blog. Morris has done outstanding work, and I like to think that if DuBois were here, he would be proud to see it.

This is a must read for anyone interested in the history of modern sociology. A game changing book that will forever alter the history of American Sociology.

The Kindle version does not have actual book page numbers. If you are reading it for research where you would actually like to cite page numbers, then don't buy the Kindle version. This is just sloppy on the part of the publisher to not include actual page numbers. I'm still reading the book and will comment on the content once I'm done. It is quite interesting so far.

Good one so amazing

Incredible book. A must-read for all sociology majors.

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