Name MODEL

Text W.E.B Du Bois, "The Souls of Black Folk"

According to Du Bois, the American black population pursued a series of ideals to accomplish social progress: freedom from slavery, the ability to vote, and education.

For the first part of the history of blacks in America, "slavery was indeed the sum of all villainies" and "Emancipation was the key to a promised land" (80, 81). Achieving freedom from slavery, however did not solve their social problems. They still held their "accustomed seat at the Nation's feast," enduring social evils from poverty to persecution by the Ku-Klux Klan (90-91, 102).

Disappointed by their position despite their "freed" status, the black population made voting the new ideal offering hope for social progress. Voting had brought about social progress in the past—including Emancipation—and it seemed a way to achieve more social power (108-110). The ideal of political power became the next pursuit and was accomplished with the Fifteenth Amendment (105-106). Even with the power to vote, however, the striving black population found themselves generally remaining in a social status of "half-free serf(s)" (113).

Eventually a new "powerful movement" arose around the ideal of "book-learning" (114, 115). Where political power had failed, learning the "letters of the white man" emerged as a pathway out of their low status to "heights high enough to overlook life" (117, 119).

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