
was born on February 23, 1868 in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. He was one of the most influential black leaders of the first half of the 20th Century. Dubois shared in the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, or NAACP, in 1909. He served as its director of research and editor of its magazine, "Crisis," until 1934.

Dubois was the first African American to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1896. Between 1897 and 1914 Dubois conducted numerous studies of black society in America, publishing 16 research papers. He began his investigations believing that social science could provide answers to race problems. Gradually he concluded that in a climate of virulent racism, social change could only be accomplished by agitation and protest.

At the turn of the century Dubois had been a supporter of black capitalism. Throughout his career he moved steadily to the political left. By 1905 he had been drawn to socialist ideas and remained sympathetic to Marxism throughout his life. Dubois acted in support of integration and equal rights for everyone regardless of race, but his thinking often exhibited a degree of black separatist-nationalist tendencies. In 1961 Dubois became completely disillusioned with the United States. He moved to Ghana, joined the Communist Party, and a year later renounced his American Citizenship.

August 27, 1963, on the eve of the March On Washington, Dubois died in Accra, Ghana, shortly after becoming a Ghanan citizen.