

II. Organizational Information

Mapping the Du Bois *Philadelphia Negro* is a faculty-directed research, teaching, and community outreach project at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Design. Pilot work began on the project in spring 2005 and the funding was first obtained in February 2006. The project aims to recreate the foot survey W.E.B. Du Bois conducted of the Old Seventh Ward in Philadelphia in 1897 that served as the basis for his classic book, *The Philadelphia Negro*. Du Bois conducted this study of the "Negro problem" at the request of the College Settlement Association and University of Pennsylvania. He chose the Seventh Ward—Spruce to South, Seventh Street to the Schuylkill River—because the area was the heart of black Philadelphia at that time. Our research team is using geographic information system (GIS) mapping and historical census data to identify the 28,000 people who lived there at the turn of the century.

Specific goals of the project include:

- Creating curriculum materials for college and high school students relating to Du Bois, urban history, and spatial data analysis;
- Producing new scholarship relating to Du Bois's research methods, the patterns of race, immigration, and migration in Seventh Ward, how and why the Seventh Ward changed over time, and the role of physical and social environment in public health;
- Involving the broader community so they can learn about Du Bois and how Philadelphia neighborhoods have change so we can pay tribute to this over-looked aspect of Philadelphia's African-American history.

At its heart, this project aims to generate a dialog about race. Talking about how race and racism affect our lives is difficult for most of us. Talking about racial discrimination at the turn of the 20th century creates an opportunity to begin this conversation in a way that may feel safer. Because the racial disparities in health, education, housing, and employment that Du Bois documented persist, these conversations about historical discrimination relate directly to the issues we face in Philadelphia today.

Over the past two three years, we have accomplished the following:

- **Developed a website (www.mappingdubois.org).** A student graphic artist designed a logo and website banner and a student web programmer create the website. The site features a project overview, team photos and biographies, team blog, photo albums, news coverage, grant proposals, and essays we have written.
- **Developed Seventh Ward GIS.** We have collected and mapped 1900 US census data for the Seventh Ward for an interactive online GIS application on our website that will allow visitors to make thematic maps and see who lived at each address.
- **Collected historical photographs, health data, and newspaper clippings.** These include approximately 100 photographs of the Seventh Ward from 1880-1920 and 1,000 newspaper clippings from the 1890s relating to health. We have collected data on births

and deaths that will all be available through the interactive mapping application and hospital admissions data.

- **Developed and conducted walking tours.** We have conducted several walking tours of the Seventh Ward and the first draft of a pamphlet describing many of the sites.
- **Given presentations about the project.** The project director has given two dozen presentations to classes, local community groups, and at academic conferences across the country. The Mapping Du Bois project was featured on NPR's program, "Day to Day," in a story about mapping health disparities and on a local black talk radio show.
- **Developed partnerships with local high schools.** We are working closely with the School District of Philadelphia to incorporate our curriculum materials in the resource guide for the required African and African-American history course (see letter of support from Dana King). We have made a total of six visits to our two initial partner high schools—Philadelphia's Masterman High School and New Jersey's Eastern Camden County Regional High School—providing them with information about the project and obtaining valuable feedback from students. Starting in March 2008, the project director began eight computer-based class sessions on "Mapping Du Bois, Mapping Neighborhoods" with students at West Philadelphia High School.
- **Created research opportunities for students.** To date, 25 high school, undergraduate, and graduate students have participated in this project through paid research assistantships, internships, social work field placements, and independent studies. In addition to students from our partner high schools, this has included two students from West Philadelphia Catholic High School, undergraduates from Haverford College, the Art Institute of Philadelphia, the University of Pennsylvania's Urban Studies and Digital Media and Design Programs, graduate social work, city planning, and spatial analytics students, and doctoral history, education, and nursing students. More than one-third of these have been students of color.

This project distinguishes itself from other research and curriculum development efforts by using GIS technology to study urban and African-American history. While GIS is used widely through sites such as GoogleEarth and MapQuest, there have been only a limited number of online examples featuring historical mapping.

III. Purpose of Grant

The Mapping Du Bois project has received funding from the National Endowment for Humanities (NEH), University of Pennsylvania Research Foundation, and Robert Wood Johnson Health & Society Scholars Program (approximately \$250,000 since 2006) for the collection of census and health data and creation of the online interactive mapping website. This has allowed us to create resources for teaching, but these grants have not allowed us to develop the curriculum materials, themselves. Given the demands under which Philadelphia public school teachers work, we want to develop materials that are ready to use rather than expect teachers to figure out how to frame and implement our maps and data. We have a new grant pending with NEH to develop a curriculum guide and assignments for high school and college

students, but this would not allow us to complete two specific curriculum projects—a documentary and board game about Du Bois and his survey of the Seventh Ward.

NEH requires that we NOT focus specifically on Philadelphia. While we believe that Du Bois and his story about the Seventh Ward is of relevance to a national audience, we do feel this work has special meaning for Philadelphia residents and that we should give special attention to education and outreach projects here. Our previous funding does not provided support for our community outreach initiatives—including a mural of Du Bois currently to be created this spring. Most Philadelphians are familiar with South Street and many even know that nearby Mother Bethel was the first AME church in the country. But few know that that area was the heart of black Philadelphia during the 19th century. Why does this matter? What difference would it make if Philadelphia residents knew more about this part of our history? We don't know for sure, but knowing that Fidler Square and Washington Square West were not always predominantly white may change how African-Americans feel about visiting and living in the area. It may help people to understand that neighborhood change has been shaped by political and economic forces and institutional racism. Knowing about the black, immigrant, and white families that lived together in the Seventh Ward can enrich our lives—black people and white people, alike—providing a pre-segregation example of a neighborhood living. Studying Du Bois's book, *The Philadelphia Negro*, may help us talk about race and racism as they relate to the racial inequalities in our public schools and housing. Philadelphia is the poorest, most violent large city in America, and the poverty and violence here disproportionately impact people of color. Understanding our history—in particular, the chapter of Philadelphia history written by the great intellectual and civil rights leader W.E.B. Du Bois—offers a way of moving forward.

Goals and Activities

With this proposal, we seek to capitalize on several timely opportunities: (1) the need for curriculum materials for the required African-American history course in Philadelphia public schools; (2) a mural of Du Bois being created in the spring of 2008 by the Mural Arts Program; (3) the launching of Laurel Hill Cemetery's Urban Mourning after-school program in September 2008. Specifically, we seek support for the following:

1. Documentary by and for high school students

Two high school students from West Philadelphia Catholic High School with previous experience making documentaries have filmed a number of interviews for a 20-30 minute documentary. The documentary is intended to introduce high school students and others to Du Bois and *The Philadelphia Negro*, explaining why the book was important and how it is relevant to us today. To date, they have interviewed Michael Nutter (who thinks everyone should read *The Philadelphia Negro*), V. Chapman Smith, head of the National Archives in Philadelphia, Elijah Anderson, the sociologist who wrote the introduction for the most recent edition of the book, Anthony Montiero, a Du Bois scholar from Temple University, Dana King, the School District of Philadelphia lead coach for the African-American history course, and a current (white) and a former (black) resident of the Seventh Ward. We need funding for the two students to continue

filming and editing, attend classes at SCRIBE Video, and for a graduate student to assist with the editing. The project director is currently enrolled in a class, “Planning a low-budget documentary,” at SCRIBE. (See documentary overview included as an attachment).

2. Board game for high school students

We have developed a prototype for a board game that uses a historical map of the Seventh Ward as its game board and characters based on real people identified through archival sources (including criminal mug shots). We have developed a game card template, based on Trivial Pursuit, that allows teachers and students to create their own questions, as well as a limited number of our own questions. We need additional funding to allow undergraduate and graduate students to develop additional game questions and rules for the game and to create copies of the game for distribution (See image of game board, game card, and game pieces included as an attachment).

3. Copies of *The Philadelphia Negro* for the Free Library of Philadelphia

The Mural Arts Program is creating a mural of W.E.B. Du Bois on the fire station at Sixth and South Streets, in response to our proposal in October 2006. We expect that this project, as well as publicity about the launch of our online Seventh Ward GIS later this spring, will create new interest in *The Philadelphia Negro*, so we would like to purchase copies of the book for the Free Library of Philadelphia. Jimmy Calnan, a current resident of the Seventh Ward (who is starring in our documentary) made this proposal after being frustrated in his efforts to borrow a copy of the book from the library. The 53 libraries in the Free Library of Philadelphia system together have fewer than a dozen copies of the book. We would like to purchase two copies for each library (see letter of support from Anne Silvers Lee, Free Library of Philadelphia).

4. After-school program for middle-school children

We are working with the Urban Mourning Project at Laurel Hill Cemetery to develop materials and lesson plans for after-school programs serving children in Philadelphia who have been exposed to violence. The program will involve middle-school children, so we need to develop materials different from what we are designing for high school and college students. Each lesson will be based on one of the chapters from *The Philadelphia Negro*. For example, we will use the chapter entitled, “The Organized Life of Negroes” to engage the students in an exploration of the organizations and memberships that give meaning to people’s lives today. We will staff this program with a master of social work field placement student (unpaid), but we need funding for materials for working with the children—journals, art supplies, and printing and laminating large-format maps.

Who will carry out the activities?

The Mapping Du Bois Team includes a growing number of students, teachers, and community members. For the activities described in this proposal, we will work closely with the Mural Arts Program (specifically, Sherman Fleming of Art Works and Cathy Harris in the Community Murals Division), City Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds-Brown and her staff, and artist Willis Humphries. The documentary will continue to be filmed and edited by two high school

students from West Philadelphia Catholic High School with editing assistance from a graduate student and instructors at SCRIBE Video. The board game will continue to be developed by undergraduate and/or graduate research assistants. We will continue to work closely with Dana King at the School District and teachers at Masterman and West Philadelphia High Schools. The Seventh Ward resident Jimmy Calnan will work with the public libraries and a social work field placement student will work with the after-school program.

Timeline

All of the proposed work will be completed within one year. We will complete the interviews for the documentary early in the summer of 2008 and debut it in December 2008. We will complete and distribute the board game by February 2009. Copies of *The Philadelphia Negro* will be purchased and distributed to libraries during the summer 2008. The after-school program will run from September 2008 – June 2009.

Technology Management and Sustainability

Much of the Mapping Du Bois project involves extensive use of web and mapping technology and the Cartographic Modeling Lab at the University of Pennsylvania will be responsible for managing that technology. But none of the activities described in this proposal depend upon technology once they have been created. None of the first four activities we proposed require any additional funding to sustain. Once we create the mural, documentary, board game, and distribute copies of books to libraries and schools, these resources will be available for many years. We will continue to seek grant funding for other aspects of the Mapping Du Bois project and expect that these funds will allow us to continue to support, and even expand, the after-school program.

Evaluating our Impact

We are very interested in assessing the impact of our activities. We are hopeful that a highly visible mural on street frequented by youth of all colors, city and suburban population, tourists and residents will generate curiosity about Du Bois and dialog about race and neighborhood change. It will be difficult to assess the impact of the mural once it is completed, but we will evaluate the process by determining the number of people who participate and asking them to complete evaluations of their experience (in particular, the youth in the ArtWorks! program). We will assess the impact of the documentary, board game, and after-school program through written (or online) evaluations by students and teachers. We will work with the Free Library of Philadelphia to track how many times copies of *The Philadelphia Negro* are checked out.