

# One More River to Cross



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In One More River to Cross, Professor Nigel I. Malcolm argues that the rhetoric of W.E.B. Du Bois contributed to a sense of individual and group failure among African Americans. Du Bois also created a need to explain the reasons for the failure of the group, as well as that of individuals within the group, specifically those within a segment of the black population deemed "the talented tenth." Professor Malcolm's work explores not only the root causes of this sense of failure among Blacks, but also the way in which some members of the talented tenth seek to cope with failure. Critiquing the writings of Derrick Bell, Randall Robinson, and Shelby Steele, Professor Malcolm reveals the ways in which these authors explain the choice of an individual or a society between consolation and/or compensation for perceived failures among Blacks. He argues that whether an author emphasizes the past or the present, the spiritual or the material, the self or the society, the inevitable result is a powerful rhetoric with implications for the future of race relations, as well as advancement among Blacks in America. The discussion of rhetoric is tied into the failure of the post-civil rights era and to W.E.B. Du Bois's earlier discussions of the talented tenth and its role among Blacks.

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