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Sommario/riassunto

In 1897 the promising young sociologist William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (1868-1963) was given a temporary post as Assistant in Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania in order to conduct a systematic investigation of social conditions in the seventh ward of Philadelphia. The product of those studies was the first great empirical book on the Negro in American society. More than one hundred years after its original publication by the University of Pennsylvania Press, *The Philadelphia Negro* remains a classic work. It is the first, and perhaps still the finest, example of engaged sociological scholarship—the kind of work that, in contemplating social reality, helps to change it. In his introduction, Elijah Anderson examines how the neighborhood studied by Du Bois has changed over the years and compares the status of blacks today with their status when the book was initially published.
