

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910816776803321
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Titolo	Lines of descent : W. E. B. Du Bois and the emergence of identity // Kwame Anthony Appiah
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge, Massachusetts ; ; London, England : , : Harvard University Press, , 2014 ©2014
ISBN	9780674419346 0-674-41935-9 0-674-41934-0
Edizione	[Pilot project. eBook available to selected US libraries only]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (240 p.)
Collana	The W. E. B. Du Bois Lectures ; ; 14
Disciplina	973.04960730092
Soggetti	Education - Philosophy African Americans - Education African American intellectuals
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Front matter -- CONTENTS -- Introduction -- Chapter One. The Awakening -- Chapter Two. Culture and Cosmopolitanism -- Chapter Three. The Concept of the Negro -- Chapter Four. The Mystic Spell -- Chapter Five. The One and the Many -- NOTES -- ACKNOWLEDGMENTS -- INDEX
Sommario/riassunto	W. E. B. Du Bois never felt so at home as when he was a student at the University of Berlin. But Du Bois was also American to his core, scarred but not crippled by the racial humiliations of his homeland. In Lines of Descent, Kwame Anthony Appiah traces the twin lineages of Du Bois' American experience and German apprenticeship, showing how they shaped the great African-American scholar's ideas of race and social identity. At Harvard, Du Bois studied with such luminaries as William James and George Santayana, scholars whose contributions were largely intellectual. But arriving in Berlin in 1892, Du Bois came under the tutelage of academics who were also public men. The economist Adolf Wagner had been an advisor to Otto von Bismarck. Heinrich von Treitschke, the historian, served in the Reichstag, and the economist

Gustav von Schmoller was a member of the Prussian state council. These scholars united the rigorous study of history with political activism and represented a model of real-world engagement that would strongly influence Du Bois in the years to come. With its romantic notions of human brotherhood and self-realization, German culture held a potent allure for Du Bois. Germany, he said, was the first place white people had treated him as an equal. But the prevalence of anti-Semitism allowed Du Bois no illusions that the Kaiserreich was free of racism. His challenge, says Appiah, was to take the best of German intellectual life without its parochialism--to steal the fire without getting burned.

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