

Moments at the veil

“Living between two worlds within the Afro-Dutch community”

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Abstract

“It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others...” (Du Bois, 1903, p. 16-17) This research paper explores the experiences of Afro-Dutch men that reside in the inner cities of The Netherlands. By interviewing 10 Black men this research brings attention to how Blackness is experienced within a White dominant culture and the interactions that emerge from this social construct. With the theories, regarding the concept of double consciousness, of Du Bois and Fanon as a foundation, the goal of the interviews was to identify particular experiences that confirmed the two-ness that Black people have been through between their Black and Dutch identity. This resulted in stories that show traces of racial stereotyping, labeling, and othering, but mainly a dominant White narrative that explains these experiences on a macro level with theories of Whiteness and its socially constructed standards. This research concludes that further research is needed as the data used is still limited to what has been collected in these interviews and therefore shows the urgency of Black studies in the Dutch context.

Foreword

During this research there have been many moments that sparked my interest, surprised me, and motivated me to keep on going, and also moments where I was disappointed in the system and sad for what my fellow Black brothers go through because of the way they look and also frustrated about certain stories that keep on shows how the system fails to see Black people as equal human beings. However, I want to thank every single soul that has contributed to this research in any way.

First and foremost, I want to thank my mother for always believing in and nurturing me with knowledge, love, and care that was one of the main reasons why I possess a certain Black consciousness nowadays. I also want to thank Bonnie French for believing in my research topic, being supportive, and always having fruitful feedback and room for expressing my feelings. I want to thank my peers Nella, Milan, Denise, Felicia Rose, and Samantha for engaging in my research and reassuring me when I felt the pressure of executing this study. I want to thank my friends that helped me with arranging a space for my interviews, clearing my head when needed, and telling me that they're proud of the work I am doing for myself and the Black community by doing this research.

The stories you are about to witness are very real, explicit, and full of emotions that you may notice instantly or not. They show how we as Black men in The Netherlands still deal with echoes of old oppressions and their consequences. Ultimately, I want to thank you for taking the time to read my research paper and indulging in the rich stories that were shared with me during this period.

June 2023

Daniëlo Mario Sillé.

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Introduction

*It feels so surreal.
It's in the small details.
Nobody else notices.
Something only, we can feel.*

*It feels so surreal.
The way we exceed our own reality.
Being born in a world where equal treatment isn't guaranteed.*

*It feels so surreal.
The waitress triple checking if I really reserved a table.
Itch of a label.
That stands for us Black people not being able...*

*d.m. sillé
from: 'plenty thoughts'*

The experience of feeling different or 'out of place' is something I've experienced personally and have heard, read, and seen within the Afro-Dutch community in The Netherlands. These events that occur in my personal life often show that having a dual identity as a Black man in The Netherlands can be very challenging at times, which intrigued me to explore these conflicting identities, within myself and the Afro-Dutch community. An example of this in my personal life is the recurring experience of astonishment from White Dutch people when I mention that I study at a university and am told indirectly and sometimes directly that it is very special for someone "like me". Or a familiar situation among Black Dutch people related to ethnic profiling when taking a flight at Schiphol Airport. To then be pulled aside in a room where mostly Black people are present. Another well-known phenomenon within the Afro-Dutch community, and in my case the Afro-Caribbean community in The Netherlands, is the process of refining the Dutch language as it's seen as more valuable than the mother tongue in Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao. This internalized quest to validation of the White-dominated society unveiled itself to me by seeing and hearing about family members who refuse to learn their children (of African descent) Papiamentu/Papiamentu which is the official language of the ABC-islands. These events forced me as an Afro-Dutch person to remind myself that I live between (at least) two different worlds in The Netherlands.

Being Black in a country where the majority of the population is White causes various interactions and constructs within society that come into effect at the expense of the minority group. This also caused discussions to arise regarding the validation of citizens as Dutch and

Non-Dutch, wherein citizens with a non-European migration background mostly tend to be perceived as non-Dutch even though they're born and raised in The Netherlands (Essed & Trienekens, 2008). Another research on the experiences of Afro-Dutch women within the Dutch labor market also showed that there is a certain presence of countless encounters such as prejudice, misunderstanding, and subconscious racism from White Dutch people towards Surinamese-Dutch women (Essed, 1991). Wekker (2016) also shows her perspective on these experiences by focusing on the concept of White innocence. This study showed the paradox in the Dutch culture where there is a denial of racial discrimination and colonial violence amongst White people in The Netherlands. One of the reasons why 2011, until the present is chosen for this study, is that around 2011 the foundation 'Nederland Wordt Beter' was founded and aimed at addressing and tackling 'Black Pete-racism' and institutional racism within The Netherlands (Nederland Wordt Beter, 2019). From this moment the awareness of being Black as well as Dutch began to increase amongst the Afro-Dutch community. Another reason is that this study aims to capture the contemporary experiences of Afro-Dutch people that reside in the inner cities of The Netherlands.

Even though scholars like Essed and Wekker have done quite some research on the concept's everyday racism and White innocence, this research will rather focus on the concept of double consciousness which could be related to the other concepts that already have been highlighted in prior studies. The reason for this is that the studies on double consciousness concerning the Black racial identity development of the Afro-Dutch community still is understudied. Another reason for this decision is that the ethnicity 'Afro-Dutch' already shows the duality that double consciousness covers by being a so-called hyphenated identity. A hyphenated identity stands for "*a label applied to those categorized as belonging to more than one sociocultural group, in terms of culture and ethnicity, where an actual hyphen is used (such as 'Anglo-Welsh')*." (Chandler & Munday, 2016). Therefore, this research will focus on *how double consciousness influences the Black racial identity development of Afro-Dutch men in Dutch urban cities from 2011 to the present day*. Just like Essed and Wekker, one of the goals of this research is to add knowledge to a certain way that the term 'racism' could be defined, which doesn't limit itself to only being great and elusive events from the past but only can be found in more subtle ways in society. This study plans to investigate this subject by conducting interviews with certain figures within the Afro-Dutch community to grasp the presence of experiences with the concept of double consciousness and how this is related to their identities as Afro-Dutch citizens in the inner cities of The Netherlands.

The concerning experiences that have been discussed so far in my personal life and Dutch academic research ultimately all lead to a level of alienation that specifically occurs within the Afro-Dutch community. When discussing contested identities with fellow citizens of the Afro-Dutch community it still appears that a lot of Afro-Dutch people are not even aware of this duality or merely experienced this dual identity. This is also one of the reasons why this study is of social importance. The results of this study can be used to educate the Dutch community so that we can be more conscious of our fellow citizens when interacting with each other.

Theoretical framework

The theories that will be covered are three concepts that in this study directly are related to each other. These key concepts in this research are double consciousness and Black identity development. The concepts will be elaborated accordingly.

Double consciousness

The concept of double consciousness in the academic field began in the early 1900s when Du Bois innovated this term by using it in one of his groundbreaking works ‘The Souls of Black Folk’ (Du Bois, 1903). Du Bois describes this concept in this book as follows:

“It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, – an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. (Du Bois, 1903, p. 16-17)”

This description of the experience of double consciousness shows the complexity it comes with when discussing it. It covers a thought process of being Black and American (non-Black) in the United States. Even though Du Bois described it as a ‘sensation’ in his first mention of this concept, he shows later on that this feeling, experience, sensation is more than a snapshot in one’s life. It’s rather a constant form of self-consciousness that consists of a sense of duality and competing thoughts and ideals that has to do with their hyphenated identity. It’s also about

being affiliated with the cultural heritage of Africa while having to live within a White-dominated society with their cultural values. Du Bois (1903) also mentions this phenomenon as the inequality between these two groups (Black and White Americans) where the Black individual has to understand, live in a White world, and grapple with the “painful double consciousness” which ultimately leads to conflict and less self-confidence. This “second sight” as an Afro-American is also often described as “the veil” in the works of Du Bois. Du Bois (1903) also speaks of a “color line” in American society which underlines the idea of Du Bois that the experiences of double consciousness reach further than the individuals going through it. It’s rather a political struggle that stands for Black people living in a White world and its systemic practices which remind them of “the veil” that Black people have in front of them in this society. Despite the weight of political incentives regarding this concept, this study will focus on the personal experiences of the respondents in question rather than deep-diving into the political dimension of this concept.

The notions of Du Bois in this early work incited countless other academics who continued to discuss and build upon these ideas. However, Fanon was not directly influenced by the works of Du Bois in the early 1900s. Fanon (1967) discussed double consciousness by approaching it from a psychological perspective. In his search to comprehend and explore Blackness, Fanon defined this experience of double consciousness as a condition that stems from colonization and rather is an echo of these brutalities instead of solely a systemic matter. And compared colonizers with colonized instead of Black and White Americans in Du Bois’ works. This approach shows that the concept of double consciousness applies to more minority groups and descendants of colonized civilizations. An interesting difference when defining double consciousness according to Fanon is that the colonized descendant is rather given two frames and sustains it by believing in the colonized (e.g., Black people) worldview that was purposely molded by the colonizers (e.g., White imperialists). It is something that the colonized descendants have to be liberated from this internalized colonizer worldview. However, he does not deny the White European perspective which played, and still does, a great role in creating this phenomenon called double consciousness in this particular sense. The essence of double consciousness according to Fanon is that one learns how to view oneself through the perspective of others. This definition of double consciousness shows that it can also purposely be applied to open new discussions between different groups, in this case, the Black and White community. The example given in the introduction, which shows the quest of constantly refining the Dutch language at the expense of Papiamentu, relates to the internalization of the colonizer’s perspective. In this case, it’s the relationship between Afro-Caribbean citizens who have close

ties to The Netherlands because of prior colonization. One of these internalized ideas expresses itself by taking on the Dutch language and seeing it as something key to opening doors to thriving within society. This goes at the expense of the mother tongue on these islands (e.g., Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao). To take on a language is to take on the culture of the colonizer's worldview according to Fanon (1967).

As long as this idea of consciously and unconsciously searching for validation from White-dominated civilizations lives on, this "painful double consciousness" or condition, as Fanon (1952) describes it, will not be able to be cured.

In this research, the aim will be on being Black (of African descent) and Dutch at the same time. These theories on double consciousness led to a research question that focuses on exploring how the racial identities of Afro-Dutch people develop with the influence of these feelings of a dual identity that portrays the struggle to remain true to the Black culture while at the same time conforming to the dominant White society (Du Bois, 1903).

Based on these prior studies there could be concluded that the formation of one's Black (collective) identity is influenced by many factors. In this research, the focus will be on the influence of double consciousness that thoroughly has been examined in the ground-breaking works of Du Bois and Fanon (Du Bois, 1903; Fanon, 1967). The relevance of this study is that there is a great lack of academic research on the Afro-Dutch community when it comes to the influence of double consciousness, in particular, on their racial identity development.

Black Identity Development

When discussing the formation of such racial identity, in particular of Black people, it is of great importance to discuss one of the pioneers of Black identity development theories, namely the psychologist William E. Cross Jr. Cross is best known for the 'nigrescence model' which includes five stages: (a) Pre-encounter, (b) Encounter, (c) Immersion-Emersion, (d) Internalization, and (e) Internalization commitment (Cross, 1971). The reason for this model is the relevance that it maintained over time as it's used in multiple studies on racial identity development since it's been published by Cross (Durkee et al., 2021; Rogers et al., 2020; Crawford et al., 2002; Tatum, 1997;). Besides, the absence of a built-upon model in the Dutch context also weighed in when selecting the original idea of Cross. This model starts with a stage wherein the old identity, which mostly is a dominating Euro-American worldview, is documented that will act as a baseline measurement of racial identity development. The following phase is when the individual encounters a certain personal or social event that is so

shocking that the individual either gains interest in the Black worldview or shows aversion and clings to the old worldview that they're used to. This is when the opportunity arises to construct a Black consciousness and leads to the third stage which according to Cross (1971) is one of the most interesting ones. This stage is divided into two phases: immersion of Blackness and all its cultural, sociological, and political elements. The first part refers to a state wherein the individual starts comparing the old Euro-American worldview with the newly discovered Negro worldview. This comes with many mixed feelings involving disgust and hatred to admiration and deep-rooted Black nationalist feelings. The second phase of stage three is when the individual starts to rationalize all these comparisons and emotions between the old and newly discovered Negro worldview. Cross (1971) also describes this as the phase wherein the individual can determine the strengths and weaknesses that lie in Blackness and is lessened in its egocentric focus. The fourth stage covers a transition from tense, emotional, and defensive feelings to calm, collected, and safe feelings. In this stage, the individual often diminishes the anti-White feelings which creates the opportunity for more flexible ideologies and to renegotiate friendships with White people. Still, the Black community is the reference group that the individual clings to but this time combined with a more nonracist perspective on the world. The final stage of the nigrescence model covers the distinction between remaining committed to the Black reference group and continuing on the path to execute activities that will add value to the group, for instance becoming a social activist. The other scenario in this model is that the individual discontinues involvement in the political significance of the Black community and internalizes all the Blackness formed upon that moment. Cross (1971) concludes that to transition to the Black identity, it is of great importance that the "self" continues to be involved to battle the problems that the "group" encounters in this particular worldview. An example is a respondent who started to engage more with the Afro-Dutch community or on Afro-Dutch matters since the murder of George Floyd in 2020 and the spark of the BLM protests around the world and also in The Netherlands. This social and personal event incited a great group of Afro-Dutch people to immerse in these matters and start thinking in a certain way that makes them contest their dual identities on a greater level. Another example is a respondent who started to engage more with the Afro-Dutch community or on Afro-Dutch matters since the murder of George Floyd in 2020 and the spark of the BLM protests around the world and also in The Netherlands. This social and personal event incited a great group of Afro-Dutch people to immerse in these matters and start thinking in a certain way that makes them contest their dual identities on a greater level. Cross et al. (2022) also reinforce this idea of applying the nigrescence model to explain what motivated Black people to collectively

engage in this discussion. In this study, the focus will be on exploring these social and personal events in the form of stories to understand how far Cross' theory can be applied. However, this research will not be exclusively limited by this model, because of the nature of this study which is exploring phenomena that can be explained in multiple ways. This reveals itself in the form of literature, such as 'De Goede Immigrant' which focuses on experiences with a dual identity in The Netherlands, or 'Black Man in The Netherlands' which covers the worldview of an Afro-Caribbean man who lived in the Caribbean as well as in The Netherlands and observed his own hyphenated identity (Dipsaus Podcast, 2020; Guadeloupe, 2022).

Data & Methods

This research aims to determine how double consciousness of the Afro-Dutch community forms their Black racial identity. To examine this topic this research will be of qualitative nature that will shape a better understanding of how double consciousness affects this process of racial identity development. This research will be conducted by executing (recorded) semi-structured interviews with Afro-Dutch respondents. First, the data collection methods will be discussed, following how the data will be analyzed, and last, the limitations of these decisions will be discussed.

Data collection

The data collection method is by conducting 10 semi-structured interviews that are of phenomenological nature which means that the interview questions will focus on particular experiences with double consciousness from the Afro-Dutch perspective. These interviews will be recorded with consent and will be taken after receiving a signed consent form. The interviews also will be held in Dutch and the quotations will be translated as carefully as possible for this thesis. The theories of Du Bois and Fanon will underlie the topic list of these interviews. The main objective is to probe and understand the worldview of Afro-Dutch men regarding their dual identity in The Netherlands. The reason why this particular way of interviewing is chosen is that when speaking of certain experiences within the Black community it is important to set examples of these events to gain sight into the Black worldview that Cross (1971) discusses in the nigrescence model.

The sample group will consist of Afro-Dutch men that live in the inner cities of The Netherlands and have at least one parent that is of African descent. Participants will be

purposely nominated by using the nigrescence model (Cross, 1971) and also will be at least in stage three (immersion-emersion) of this model to ensure that they have a certain understanding. This stage is partly characterized by its attention to the rationalization process concerning the Euro-American worldview and the Black worldview, which leads to a certain level of Black consciousness that early was discussed in the studies of Du Bois and Fanon. As a result of a certain personal or social event that is so shocking that the individual either gains interest in this Black worldview. According to this information some of the respondents will be purposely selected. An example of this nomination process starts with looking at one's involvement in activism regarding Blackness and the Afro-Dutch community. This can be determined by learning what their occupation is, for example, board leader of an Afro-Dutch student organization. This already shows the involvement and the presence of a certain Black consciousness and worldview. These individuals are deemed to be of value in this study because of the rich experiences and encounters they have experienced in their lives. The example given of George Floyd and the unraveling collective activism amongst Black people globally is also a great example of how Cross' theory can be applied to nominate the most valuable respondents in the context of this research (Cross et al., 2022; Cross, 1971). This respondent would be ideal to interview about their experiences because now with this world view this person is more likely to be able to raise awareness of themselves when there is an encounter that highlights this conflict between the two worlds and share them in the interviews.

Prior studies on Afro-Dutch and immigrant communities discuss three groups: Surinamese, Antillean, and African people (Cárdenas & Fleischmann, 2022; De Witte, 2014; Ouali, 2007). The Surinamese participants correspond to the people that originated in Surinam which is located in South America. The Antillean participants will be referred to as Afro-Caribbean people as the term Antilleans is outdated and in particular people of Curaçao, from my living experiences, show a trend of Black people that insist that people call them Curaçaoan instead of Antillean. The third category is people of African descent which refers to participants, or at least one of their parents, who originated in a Sub-Saharan African country. The last category will be '*Other*' which will include Black participants that have an ethnic origin that relatively is less prevalent in The Netherlands. The first participant will be acquired through notable Black-oriented organizations that are Dutch-based, for example, Afro-Dutch student organizations. In addition to the criterion of being in at least stage three of the nigrescence model, the following participants will also be nominated through snowball sampling. This is a method that makes participants nominate other potential participants. The reason why snowball sampling is suitable for this study is that these key figures in such organizations are already

highly involved in issues concerning the Afro-Dutch community and already have a network which is important to identify Afro-Dutch people who have thought about and reflected upon their own racial identity.

Data analysis

The interviews will first be transcribed from the recordings and then will be coded by using thematic analysis. This is a method that is used to identify common or overlapping themes, ideas, and patterns. The interview transcripts will be analyzed deductively in Atlas.ti to see if there are any patterns or similarities between participants in regards to the Du Boisian and Fanonian theories on double consciousness. When unraveling the racial identity development, the transcripts will be analyzed with a semantic approach to document certain statements that show their identification with their Black identity. Hereby the nigrescence theory of Cross (1971) will be used to nominate and determine at what stage the respondent might be. And when exploring the personal experiences with double consciousness, the analysis will be more of latent nature to reveal what underlies certain statements of the participants and to detect events that correspond with the theories of Du Bois and Fanon on double consciousness. One of the themes that may be explored is the presence of Du Bois' "veil" and Fanon's framing of the internalized worldviews of the colonizer, and what experiences may underline these ideas. After the interviews, there will also be new theories that emerge from the context of the data that is collected and will be linked with the pre-selected theories that are discussed in the theoretical framework.

Limitations

The nature of this research is a subject that personally also occurs in my worldview and life as I am a Black person that is researching the experiences of fellow Afro-Dutch people. This also means that at moments it can be harder to find nuances as I could be unconsciously looking for certain themes or ideas that resonate with my own experiences. However, this could also be helpful to detect certain situations during the interviews and ask relatively more relevant follow-up questions to collect information-rich data. By using the method of peer reviews with fellow students that are also conducting their master thesis, I tend to gain more reliability and objectivity in the study results. Another limitation is that the existing theories partly focus on the African-American population. In this research, I am aware that the definition of being Black in the United States differs from the Afro-Dutch people. That is why the (existing) theories will

be implemented carefully when conducting the research. Another limitation that I have is the short period for this study to conduct research, because of this I decided to narrow it down as much as possible while maintaining enough space to explore the concepts mentioned within this thesis. However, the room is also still there to add perspectives that help explain the topics in question.

Results

This chapter will cover the findings and analysis of certain statements made by the interviewees during the data collection of this research. The focus will be on describing and analyzing specific experiences, regarding the double consciousness, of Afro-Dutch men that reside within Dutch inner cities. The main objective is to comprehend what major theories may be at play when discussing these experiences. The experiences of these respondents confirm already existing theories regarding Black people on a global scale.

Findings

In the interviews, we can see that this state of mind, double consciousness, occurs in different contexts. Within this section, these different realms will be discussed by sharing the corresponding stories.

Double consciousness online

The first respondent was a Black young man that resides in Amsterdam and is of Ghanaian descent. His name is Daniel Owusu and he is 24 years old and identifies himself as a Muslim Ghanaian man. He was born and raised in the multicultural Bijlmer which is in Amsterdam Zuid-Oost. Daniel's experience with his Blackness being exposed by the White majority was described in several situations within the interview. However, one story was remarkable when speaking of the occurrence of double consciousness according to Du Boisian and Fanonian theories. He described that in the time that he was a Twitch¹ streamer, he daily received hate comments and online overt racism from White spectators, who were the majority of the spectators within his community. In the following statement, Daniel describes how one of these interactions went:

¹ a platform that is predominantly used by gamers that share their (live) gaming experiences and interact with their online spectators.

“For example, while streaming I had one time that uhm I was streaming, and when I finished... What you can do on Twitch is when you finish you can transfer your viewers to another person's stream, so then that person gets your viewers and then you watch along. That's just to show love. And I had it with this one White girl. Streamer uhm, I had been chill with her from an event with a group of people so I did it with her and she did it with me more often. So, I did it to her. And then a viewer of hers said "Hey look a Black one". So, I think what the fuck, what is that comment? I say huh, I checked that girl like: "Yo check your viewer because this can't be." She went and laughed. I thought, "Heh? Why is she laughing?" This is pretty serious, isn't it? This..." Because you can easily ban someone from your chat, kick them, whatever. So, then I told her again: "Listen, you saw what happened. Why are you laughing about this?" She said: "No... it's just a viewer.”

This story describes how Daniel encountered a situation wherein he was a victim of (online) hate crime and had to see how his fellow Twitch streamer watched it happen and didn't interrupt or say anything but instead laughed about it. And after that, she raised the idea that Daniel was overreacting. This experience brought up feelings of shock, pain, and disappointment. Daniel elaborated in his interview how he encountered hateful comments online and the lack of support from his fellow friend that did not interfere and even downplayed his experience. This situation shows how the feelings of a Black man were totally denied and even hurt in the form of aggravating comments. This also forced Daniel in the position of rethinking his sense of self-worth as a group of White people deny it in several ways. This internal two-ness of wanting to be part of the online and offline streamer community and uphold his Black identity shows how double consciousness is at play. Du Bois' (1967) veil prevents these Dutch White people see Daniel, a Dutch Black individual, as a Dutchman and from treating him as a fully human. This form of dehumanizing behavior also occurred in Virgil's explicit story and shows that on different levels these triggers arise and force Black individuals into the double consciousness discussed in this research.

Another interview that followed shortly after was held with Rudy van der Beek who is 32 years old and was born and raised in The Hague. He identifies himself as a Black man with Surinamese roots. Rudy is quite politically engaged and also co-founded a Black student organization that prioritizes the needs of Black students in The Netherlands. In this conversation, Rudy mentions a certain phenomenon that may be related to Daniel not being taken seriously by his fellow Twitch streamer. Rudy brought up the term “Happy Negro”

which he defines as follows:

“What you often get to see is the "Happy Negro Phenomenon" in brackets. That people perceive us as happy entertainers. Uh because those footballers and some artists are so tame that you're either rebellious or you're one of those "good ones".”

This phenomenon states a classification and a certain White perception that divides the Black individual into two stereotypes. Which is being a happy entertainer like Black football players or Black artists or being labeled as a rebel. Rudy further clarifies how this phenomenon comes into practice in the following statement:

“The one who makes funny jokes on the work floor, who always knows how to throw fun dances during Friday afternoon drinks. But what's more, people can then also deny your expertise. Because they put you in the frame as some uhm undisguised Black Pete who comes to dance and sing and jump merrily. Who casually throws his dance moves at the Friday afternoon drinks. But when it comes to your expertise or a leadership role, people don't see you in that role. Because people are uhm not used to Black leadership.”

Rudy describes that a certain stereotype of the Black individual is accepted by the White majority within The Netherlands. And deviating from this idea will result in being perceived and framed as revolting. The consequence of being the “Happy Negro” according to Rudy is that it will deny the expertise that the Black individual has. Within this rhetoric, these personal traits can't co-exist or even exist and the Black individual is limited to being a “class clown” or “rebel”.

Double consciousness in higher education

Unequal treatment is a topic that came to light during the conversation with Benny Osei. He is 26 years old and was born and raised in The Hague. Benny identifies himself as a Dutch-Ghanaian man from The Hague. In this conversation, he mentions how he experienced unequal treatment within higher education in Rotterdam. Benny addresses how he was enrolled for the study Creative Media and Game Technologies at Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences, where he was the only Black student amongst a majority of White students.

During this first year, he encountered some obstacles that forced him to retake a course. When he asked the teacher to clarify the feedback that wasn't clear to him, he was quite puzzled. Because he did witness the teacher clarifying and helping other students that were White. He states by saying:

“And then you also uhm then I also noticed uhm... Other people that do get helped sooner. Or more... that they try harder with teachers..”

This distinction was confirmed again when Benny tells, that he wasn't invited to the so-called 'Propedeuse conversations' while all of the other students were. This resulted in feelings of inequality, exclusion, and lack of empathy. This also led him to stop following this study and enroll somewhere else. He then tells how he had positive experiences at The Hague University. The main difference that Benny mentions is the provision of information that is needed. In the following situation, he differentiates this experience within both schools:

“Like uhm I in Hogeschool Rotterdam... I had to deliver a form to the dean for dyslexia and that was it. And at Haagse Hogeschool it was more of uhm. So uh again you had to apply for something for dyslexia and then I had had more education about BSA, for example. I didn't know anything about the BSA at Rotterdam University. And at The Hague University, I knew more about it and they also said if you have certain home situations. Then you should also bring it up...”

This situation shows that the lack of providing information influences him as a Black man in his considerations about his study career. In the end, Benny also declares that he has a legit reason:

"...and basically, I did have a legit reason for that, because I was a caregiver for my mother.”

The fact that certain White people did not make an effort, in his experience, to provide equal treatment and make sure that every student can have a successful career, shows that Benny was stuck between two worlds that are colliding where the needs of White students were prioritized. It's almost as if the competence of the Black student was doubted. During the interview of Benny, we see that even in the higher education system encounters with double

consciousness take place from the point of view of an Afro-Dutch man that lives in the inner cities of The Netherlands. In one of his stories, he elaborates on how he was excluded from critical information which eventually led him to change his studies. All because of their lack of interest and because he was different from all the other White students that attended the same study. Here u can see how Du Bois' (1967) veil is at play, because of the exclusion Benny had to deal with because of his Black skin. This also confirms that this racial barrier is also present in the Dutch context.

Double consciousness on the work floor

The stereotypes created by the White majority are also something that surfaced in the conversation with Jaden Tjong-A-Tjoe. He is 28 years old and born and raised in Rotterdam. He identifies himself as a Javanese-Surinamese Dutchman. During this interview, Jaden brought up a situation where he shows how certain stereotypes were at play in his consideration of how to behave. This situation was when Jaden worked in construction in a rural place called Woerden. The residents in this place were predominantly White and the same goes for his colleagues. The following statement shows one of these considerations:

“When it came to writing out invoices. I didn't do that, had a colleague do it, whenever we were on a job together, even though I also had the same authority.”

Jaden tells that at the time he avoided certain responsibilities in order not to risk conforming to a certain stereotype that the White majority, in this case, a rural area, have about Black people. Jaden also suggested that this behavior also started from the fear of being accused of something because of his skin color:

“Uh, I was intentionally not going to do that because, of course, I could have the chance that if anything is ever stolen there. And I have something to do with that. Or I have been in that safe that day that I am the one to blame because I'm colored.”

Another interesting addition of Jaden during this interview is how he mentions that even though his job paid quite well, he wouldn't be able to compromise by living by these stereotypes and also racist jokes he had to endure during this time. This is clearly shown in the following statement he makes:

“Yes, it was a nice workplace, sure. But in terms of colleagues, it was not like that at all. Then I'd rather earn a lot less with a pleasant workplace than earning a lot and only being with White people who don't like me or who think I'm different or weird.”

Jaden shows that his Blackness is worth more than the money he can make amongst this group of White people. Jaden experienced double consciousness on the work floor when he purposely avoided being involved with tasks that concerned money so he will not be at risk of being blamed because of his skin color. This decision-making process of Jaden could be explained by Fanon's (1967) take on double consciousness, which states that double consciousness is about the colonizer and the colonized and that all events result from this relation. When looking at Du Bois' (1903) take on this moment it would be described as the moment at the veil, which is a “peculiar sensation” where Jaden looked at himself through the eyes of another. This experience shows the feeling of two-ness that Jaden had on the work floor.

Being questioned about your competence as a Black individual isn't something that only occurred in Benny's stories. Awad Dahir is 29 years old and was born and partly raised in Groningen and moved to the inner city, Capelle when he was eight years old. Awad identifies himself as a Somali-Dutch man. He mentions in his interview a situation wherein he encountered prejudices that he believed had to do with him being Black and stereotypical ideas. He applied for an internship and received the question if he had written the application letter himself. Just like Flavio's story with the police authorities, this was mainly about the way how this was carried out and not per se about the act itself. Because questioning applicants is also routine. Still, Awad states that this interaction left him puzzled:

“The first time yes you know I'm young I think I was about nineteen, twenty. You reacted... You just also uh really want that internship, because you also see so of your study program. You see you are falling behind; you don't want any delays. And I said yes, I wrote that letter myself. Yes, eventually I got hired and then I had to get three four-week checks on every outgoing e-mail letter before it went out. And now that I am an entrepreneur et cetera myself you would... you would think yes okay, it's an intern, I just have to check it. But that comment beforehand uh did make me see a different angle and I also think it was for a different reason so to speak.”

In this situation, Awad elaborates his thought process behind this interaction and he explains how the urgency and fear of falling behind made him endure this moment of puzzlement. And he also states here that for a month-long they kept checking every single mail that Awad sent, which according to Awad showed prejudice against his appearance. He concludes that this would not even be something he would think about if he didn't experience disbelief when applying for the internship. This small interaction made Awad question every other action of these White executives. This also shows how interactions with White people in advantaged positions can shape the world of a Black individual. Which leads to several moments of puzzlement and internal struggles.

A more extreme experience regarding this duality is that of Virgil Zandvliet. He is 34 years old and was born and raised in Rotterdam. He identifies himself as a Black man with Surinamese roots. In this interview, Virgil highlighted a situation that at the time had a lot of impact on him and resulted in him quitting his job at the company in question. In this conversation, Virgil elaborates on his ambition to succeed in everything that he does and the pursuit of greater success. During this journey, he engaged in sales and ended up becoming a partner manager within a company with White executive management and relatively more diverse sales agents. At this time Virgil was the linking pin between these two groups of peoples but also between these two worlds. Because of his experience with White people in professional environments, he knew how to speak their language. As a result of his success within the company, the owner invited him over for a Christmas dinner. According to Virgil, everything went well until the following situation unveiled itself:

“I think I had a champagne that night, I think. I am now standing at the kitchen table. Mm hu - or I should say I actually say kitchen island. Because his house was fucking huge. Yes, I'm standing by the kitchen island. And his kitchen island was just literally as big as... Just literally. Just like this room, so crazy. His house was a council house. The council house of Amerongen he had taken over. Uhm. And I remember he came up to me and he uh put his arm over me uh uh and said uh. He said, "G, I really need you." He said, "I really need you." He said: "Please still sell your soul. One more, one more year to me" he said "please come still be there one more year at least." He said "because uhm yes you are, you are really that exceptional negro." he said. Um, he goes again: "you really are that exceptional negro". And uh. I said, uh... okay... ”

Virgil encountered overt racism which left him puzzled and in disbelief. This situation shows how the classification and discrimination against Black people still are at play even though he's "exceptional" according to the White owner of the company. It also insinuates that the Black individual only matters for this group of people when they are either the "Happy Negro" as Rudy mentioned earlier or when they offer significant opportunities for White people like Virgil's executive. Virgil explains further how this affected him and what went through his mind during the weekend after the situation:

"So, this is crazy and I really have been stuck with it all weekend bro. Yeah, I was thinking did the man really say I'm exceptional? Am I supposed to feel flattered now?"

This statement shows how Virgil struggles with comprehending what has been told to him. He doubted whether he should take it as a compliment or a harshly offensive insult. This example shows how double consciousness can be at play within the thought process of a Black individual in The Netherlands. When Virgil went to seek redress at his executive about this situation it once again was confirmed and there was no sign of remorse or guilt. When he exposed his feelings about these harsh comments, his executive suddenly downplayed these thoughts by denying his feelings. Virgil describes this as follows:

"And then it was like: "Yeah, no. What I mean is just that I see a lot of potential in you. And uh uh yeah. When I just look at how you present yourself and how uh how you work. And uh you know uhm you're just real. You have... you rise above yourself. And uhm just fast forward to that night. Before he said that. He also said to me: "When I was younger, when I was younger, then I wanted uh then I wanted to be like you. I really wanted to be a charismatic Black man." He actually said that!"

This reaction of trying to justify the wrongdoings against Black men also occurred in the experience of Daniel when he tried to address his feelings and pain. In Virgil's case, this even led to him being emotionally manipulated into believing that it isn't as harsh as he thinks it is by steadily downplaying his reactions to this hurtful experience. And also, to be told beforehand that a White man always wanted to be "a charismatic Black man" his whole life was more than surreal for Virgil at the moment. This also confirms the socially accepted idea of the Black man that was constructed by the White majority. Virgil's story concerning double consciousness on the work floor was the most explicit one that showed forms of overt

racism based on him being Black. His White employer telling him that he always wanted to be ‘*a charming Black man*’ like Virgil shows how he exotifies him and sees it as an asset rather than fellow humans. This so-called ‘*fetishized Blackness*’ also is suggested by Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967) where he argues that Whites ‘turn to men of color and ask them for a little human sustenance’ (p. 129), which is confirmed by Virgil talking about how his employer begs him to ‘sell his soul’ one more time because of his ‘*exceptionality*’ on the work floor. This again shows how this Black individual is being confronted with the racial barrier Du Bois (1967) argues in his work and how this veil makes it possible that Virgil is not fully seen as a human because of his skin color.

However, some experiences show that Black individuals can partly break free from this duality and its bearing. Joshua Gomes is 28 years old and was born and raised in Rotterdam. He also identifies himself as a “Rotterdammer” and adds that he sees himself as a Cape Verdean-Surinamese man. In his interview, Joshua explained how he experienced the differences between White people that were against him and White people that vouched for him. In the following statement, Joshua shares more context on this particular experience as a Black man in The Netherlands:

“...I come from... I’m working in a creative scene, so uhu. People are more open anyway. More open-minded. Uhm. And maybe we can go further on that. That’s maybe also the reason that the creative scene attracts me a lot because you actually have very little to do with racism there. You often get... Often it’s actually the other way around. A uh, a Black person or people from outside are actually praised more than a White person. And I think that’s also honestly why I might feel much more at home in such an environment.”

In this section, Joshua shows how him being Black is being praised and given equal treatment. The creative scene for Joshua is a safe space in his experience and he continues to elaborate on this experience:

“...If you if you’ve always felt different, a scene like that is like a warm bath, because... then you actually become what you... you’re not worshipped but you’re seen as an equal to every person that’s in that space. And I think as a human being it’s important that you shouldn’t have any thoughts at all about your skin color or about uh where you’re from...”

This statement underlies feelings of relief which he expresses by using the metaphor of a warm bath after a long time of feeling 'different'. He adds that in this environment he is seen as equal even though a vast majority is White. The non-presence of power imbalances based on skin color is something that Joshua did not experience in this environment. One of the main reasons for the differences amongst White people according to Joshua is the act of applying one single measure for a whole community. He describes this as follows:

"...I don't want to be putting all... everyone in the same basket, so I know when I talk about those White people in my high school, I know exactly who I'm talking about. But as soon as we move away from that, I'm back with very different White people. And the mistake we sometimes make it's the same mistake some White people make. Is to put everything in the same basket. And if we don't want that to happen, we shouldn't do it ourselves."

This statement shows how Joshua can distinguish two sorts of White people he has dealt with in his experiences. He also acknowledges how taking in a different perspective is essential to break free from the burden of double consciousness.

Double consciousness in public spaces

Experiences with being perceived as something you're not is also an experience that came across in the interview with Flavio Mendes. He is 29 years old and also was born and raised in Rotterdam. He identifies himself as a 'Rotterdammer' with Cape Verdean roots. The most remarkable situation that Flavio mentions when discussing his experience as a Black man in The Netherlands, is related to White police authorities and their perception of Black people. He describes how he and his two friends were walking home after the gym and how they suddenly were stopped very aggressively by the police as a result of ethnic profiling:

"So how we walk that road, we walk. We see one police van passing by. Okay, two police vans. Okay. We just walk by Kruiskade uh... it's a day-to-day thing. But that last van drove very slowly but watching us like that in a scheming way. End of the street we're blocked by two buses. And between those two buses were cyclists. Yes, from the police. Bro, they get off, and pull their guns. "Hands up! Hands up!", a friend

of mine had headphones on, they knocked those headphones off his head, we put our bags on the ground and I put my hands there.”

In this section, Flavio describes how normalized seeing authorities was for him and his friends. Still, he was shocked that this happened to him because he was far from this stereotypical “threat” that the police authorities rely on when ethnic profiling Black individuals. Being held at gunpoint was also very embarrassing and traumatic for Flavio and when the authorities stated that it was a false alarm, one police agent acted quite laconic and downplayed their feelings of injustice. In the end, he didn’t tell anyone because this experience was quite normalized as a Black man in areas where the crime rate relatively is higher than in other parts of the city. Another reaction of Flavio was that he had a lot of questions, which he stated as follows:

“And that was an assumption from the police. These guys are dangerous, so instead of them just calmly asking us, "Hey gentlemen please stand aside" and then just do your routine. Strictly though, because you do look for something. Yeah, for what do you have to pull a strap? For what do you have to scold us? For what do you have to humiliate us?”

According to Flavio, it is not about being stopped by the authorities, as he acknowledges that they have to execute their routine, but it’s about the way how they carried this out and that this experience for somebody else who for example lives in a rural area is perceived as far from normal. Flavio and his friends experienced extraordinary treatment because of the way they look.

Joshua states here that to be part of a solution we as Black individuals do not have to use one single measure to define the White community just as much as White individuals need to stop labeling everybody as the same. The question that may come up after this section is how did Joshua be able to have a turning point which led him to feelings of freedom, acceptance, and confidence?

White standards. That is a concept that the following respondent covers when talking about his experiences within The Netherlands but also in the country where his roots are. His name is Louis Boakye and he is 24 years old. He identifies himself as a Ghanaian man. The main topic that is in addition to the stories that have been shared by the other respondents, is the experience within a country where the majority of the residents are White, in this case,

The Netherlands, and within a country where the majority is Black. Louis starts by stating that he doesn't feel accepted within the Netherlands:

“Especially with the fact, if I have to be very honest, that I don't feel that we darker men are really accepted in the Netherlands.”

The reason why he feels like this is elaborated in two different situations. Firstly, he states that in rural areas it still seems like the culture is outdated:

"But it seems a bit like or separate from the big cities. Like you're still... Sixty years back or something, that when you're in a place like that, I can just walk around normally and people still have to keep looking at you two-three times like: "Yo, what's going on?"

These subtle and non-verbal interactions caused discomfort and incomprehension of why White people in those areas react like that when they see a Black individual. This is also part of the experience that Jaden had when he had his first job in a similar environment. The second situation is the puzzlement that has to do with coming back to The Netherlands after having spent time in the country where his roots are:

“The only reason they look crazy is maybe because they see you are from Europe, but you just notice the feeling of being home. A sense of we are together. We are one. You might be from Europe. That might be looked at a bit differently. But apart from that nobody looks at you funny because you are dark. And the fact that you have to realize that is yeah... is crazy. And then you come back here and then you notice... in a certain place you are looked at crazy whereas I do have sometimes, for example, I sit in the subways and even that I just sit next to someone. That I see people just clutching handbags. I think yo... like relax!”

In this statement, Louis explains how accepted he feels when he is amongst people that share the same appearances, skin color, culture and norms, and values. The only difference is being a Ghanaian man that resides in Europe but apart from that Louis states that he is not constantly aware of his skin color. Which is very unique in his experience. This leads Louis to explain how he had to face the differences between the Black and White world with an

example where people act out of fear because of the way he looks. Which also confirms the rhetoric of the Black man as a threat. This was also at play in Flavio's story when being held at gunpoint for something he did not do.

These interactions between people of color that come from Dutch inner cities and White people that reside in Dutch rural areas or cities where the population is disproportionately White are also a topic of discussion in the interview with Kevin Sarpong. Kevin is 22 years old. He identifies himself as a Ghanaian man. In this conversation, Kevin talks about how he as a Black man from a Dutch rural area got in touch with Black people that reside in Dutch inner cities. During this interview, Kevin also talks about how he experienced living with a couple of boys that came from Rotterdam and how this influenced his identity. In the following quote, Kevin states how this was the first time encountered another culture:

“And actually, because I lived with them. That was actually kind of my first uhm contact with a different kind of culture. Before that, it was mostly Dutch people.”

The fact that Kevin was in almost entirely White environments until this point is interesting. Kevin also goes on and tells how this encounter impacted him:

“I can pretty quickly just gravitate towards people, so I also often went to Rotterdam on weekends. Just to check okay, what's that lifestyle and how does that work, and just the slang they use. And I started adopting all that pretty quickly, but I did notice that that was real. Honestly, I did have a point that my body or my soul was kind of waiting for me to get into a position where I could touch this this new form of culture and then when I could touch it uhm yeah, and take it, that very much changed my personality and I started to form very much more into that person I am now. Uhm. And I started talking more like how I speak now. And a lot of people might say oh, that's fake, or something because you didn't grow up like that. But at the same time, I think of this is the way I feel at home. Only I have... just haven't come into touch with it yet. So that was actually uh... From that moment I did change a lot.”

He describes how he finally came to a point where he found like-minded people with similar complexions and cultural values. Even though Kevin did not grow up amongst these people and cultures, he still feels a certain connection that goes beyond his own comprehension at that moment. He talks about how he feels 'at home' within this environment and how he

unfolded his identity by spending time with people from Dutch inner cities. Kevin's situation is an interesting one because he spent a big chunk of his life in an environment where White people were the majority and still, he felt a certain connection with Black people from the inner cities. This situation shows that one explanation for the gap between people that reside in Dutch rural areas and inner cities is the affinity with the culture and sometimes deep-going connection with people from the city. This can also explain why the people Jaden had to deal with in the small town Woerden were more opposed to Black people because of the lack of connection, interest, and knowledge about Black people that come from Dutch inner cities. The next section will go deeper into the explanations behind all the stories above and what theories might be at play when examining these experiences.

Analysis

From the start of this research, the goal was to explore how Afro-Dutch men that come from Dutch inner cities experience double consciousness that Du Bois (1903) and Fanon (1967) discuss in their theories. The stories that were shared all show a moment where these individuals encountered this particular experience that Du Bois and Fanon call "double consciousness". In this section, the different perspectives will be explained and used to confirm certain theories already mentioned and new theories that emerged as a result of the stories told. First, we will look at how double consciousness appears on a micro level and what theories correspond with these interactions. After that, the perspective from a macro level will be taken into account to understand double consciousness on a greater level.

Double consciousness on a micro level

What we learn from these interviews is that certain interactions trigger the double consciousness within Black men. Louis talked about this trigger when he mentioned how fellow passengers used to grab their bags when he wanted to take a seat in the subways of Amsterdam. Which led him into a certain two-ness that Du Bois (1967) calls being at the veil. Louis also explains how he almost doesn't experience double consciousness when visiting his country of origin Ghana. This shows that the gap between cultures and encountering the unknown from a White perspective plays a big role in comprehending how these triggers emerge. Another take on understanding the double consciousness is by looking at these situations from Bhabha's (1994) postcolonial perspective that aligns with the ideas of Fanon (1967) concerning the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. An idea that

Bhabha (1994) discusses in his book *'The Location of Culture'* is *hybridity*. This is an idea that could partially define how the identity of the concerning Afro-Dutch men is made up. Hybridity focuses on the fluid character of a situation wherein two cultures, and nations meet and how the language, ideas, and material goods are shared between them. This aligns with Fanon's (1967) perspective on double consciousness, as Bhabha (1994) also discusses the colonized and the colonizer world in his works and how he argues that this space is a hybrid. This hybrid space is also referred to by Bhabha as 'The Third Space' which entails a sense of identity that shifts between two worlds: one of the colonizers and one of the colonized. This construct is also referred to as 'unhomeliness' which argues that one is stuck between two clashing cultures, resulting in the individual having an 'unhomely' feel which leads to expressing the desire to return or recreate home amongst people with hyphenated identities (Jamili & Rad, 2011). All the interviewees have mentioned in their own way how they were stuck in this *'third space'* and how this influenced their sense of self and identity. Virgil for example, had to deal with being exotified and fetishized while being put on a higher pedestal than his fellow Black colleagues. Or how Joshua managed to find a way to merge the two clashing cultures, within the creative scene, to feel *'at home'* and be free regardless of his skin color or how he looks.

Double consciousness on a macro level

The novelist Toni Morrison introduced an interesting concept in her novels that show how certain constructed mainstream understandings can determine and induce specific scenarios within society amongst different kinds of people. Jamili and Rad (2011) deconstructed the Western master narratives of some of Morrison's work and explain that in this case, this mainstream thought is about the interactions between Black and White people, whereas the master in this concept acts as a double entendre. On the one hand, it refers to the dominant narrative that is at play, and on the other hand, it refers to the (slave)master which, through long-standing oppression, caused various consequential to evolve. This idea of a dominant mainstream thought aligns well with theories about the role of Whiteness and White standards within society. These ideas suggest that when Whiteness is utilized as property rather than just an ethnic character, the power dynamics between Whites and people of color result in being more and more skewed. Harris (1993) for example theorized how Whiteness as a property in the American context was even legalized and translated into laws. This is an example of how the concept of Whiteness can be very influential on ethnic minorities within societies that

consist of predominantly White people. With this in thought, one could imagine how complex and deep-rooted this ‘*master narrative*’ is on a global and national level. Cross (1996) also suggests that as long as the Whites virtually have all economic, political, media, and educational power, it’s almost inevitable that the perceptions of other folks will be determined by the White majority. This may explain why the stereotypes exist that favor White people or why people like Jaden and Awad compromise on the work floor to avoid fulfilling these racial stereotypes created by the White majority. Rosette, Leonardelli, and Phillips (2008) also show in an experiment how Whiteness is being used and perceived as an exceptional resource that creates privilege over other groups. This research has shown that there is a connection between being White and being perceived as more capable of leadership functions. This also aligns with Rudy’s statement about society not being used to Black leadership. Another example of how Whiteness is used as the dominant culture to take advantage of it is in Johnson’s (2019) *Relating Worlds of Racism* which discusses the normativity of European-Whiteness and how ideas such as German Myths that ‘Black is not beautiful’, which contributes to the dehumanization of Black people and for example occurred in Virgil’s story. Or the idea that society is ‘all-inclusive’ and that there isn’t any room for seeing any colors or making that distinction between people. This normativity also leads to situations where in this case Black people are ‘*gaslighted*’ into believing that the Dutch White perspective is the most sensible which leads to the preservation of this culture. All these ideas contribute to the overall system of White standards which is an aspect of the properties of a dominant culture. The normativity of this system and its branches explain why people like these respondents have to deal with scenarios where their worth is being put on a scale that almost always works in favor of the dominant culture. This also explains why the unfavored ones have to deal with at least two separate worlds when residing in White dominant environments. And is thus also a possible explanation for all micro-level interactions.

Conclusion

Understanding double consciousness and the role that one’s identity has regarding this concept can be summarized as quite complex. The power structures involved, that descended from ‘old’ oppression, show us how influential a dominant White culture can be. Whether it’s

on a micro-level with experiences as being perceived as incompetent or on a macro-level which covers the idea of Whiteness as a standard and exceptional resource that exclusively favors this group within dominant White environments. This research showed us that the experiences of Afro-Dutch men from the inner cities all have one thing in common. The urge to be seen as equal to be free. This could lead to a situation where Black people can be liberated from the veil they encounter daily. In the end, we understand that to reach this we have to comprehend how current society within The Netherlands is constructed regarding concepts such as double consciousness, downplaying Black pain, and the normativity of Whiteness. What we can learn from this research is that the Black identity of Afro-Dutch men from the inner cities is constantly in transition and stimulated by certain experiences that make it possible for an experience like double consciousness to take place. We also have seen that these experiences between two different realms occur in different contexts and are not limited to certain scenarios. However, this research also shows that a certain consciousness of one's Black identity is key to this experience of two-ness and seeing the veil that Du Bois speaks of. Because of the nature of this brief research, there were also tons of other concepts and topics that came into discussion that all partly explain how the Black identity of an Afro-Dutch man from the inner cities develops and how double consciousness plays a role. Themes like labeling, othering, and also even populism have been identified during the data analysis of the interviews. When discussing follow-up research there are numerous options. There is room for deeper analysis of specific situations like Virgil's experience and what underlies the actions of his former employer that exoticized, dehumanized, and showed symptoms of fetishized Blackness in his doings in that period. Also, there could be looked at the greater picture to understand how European-Whiteness influences the experience of Black people within The Netherlands and what is at play when examining this social construct. Another interesting perspective that came to attention during this research is the collected data regarding what Blackness means in The Netherlands. All respondents had other ideas about what 'Black' means in The Netherlands, how this socialization went, and how internal and external actors played their role in molding their sense of Blackness. This briefly showed how some Afro-Dutch men defined Black as something geographical and how others linked it with cultural norms and values. The difference between Black people that reside in inner cities and those who reside in or come from rural areas is also something that can be studied further and also was briefly covered in this research by interviewing two respondents who both have spent their upbringing in rural dominant White environments. To understand concepts such as European-Whiteness, double consciousness, and fetishized Blackness it's important to

understand what it means for Dutch Black people to be Black and what it all entails. In the stories of these Black men that were interviewed, I sensed that this feeling and experience of double consciousness might have an expiry date. Which leads to the question: “*To what extent double consciousness is bearable for Black men in The Netherlands?*” For Awad, this interaction was acceptable because of the urgency and fear of falling behind. But Daniel for example did not endure this and stopped streaming because of it. Or Jaden switching jobs because of the amount the duality and its toll, just like Benny who also switched his study career path because of the unequal treatment. If further research and action on these matters keep on being understudied and unannounced, I fear that nothing will change as much as these Black individuals, directly and indirectly, crave. The positionality of me as a Black researcher interviewing Black people about their experiences was ultimately confirmed by the data but also by the interviewees why only under these circumstances these stories could see daylight. This shows the urgency of Dutch Black studies by Black scholars. And just like Audre Lorde (1979/1984a) told once: “The master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.” The desire to be seen as equal is what initiated this research and the same is what concludes it.

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Appendix I: Ethics & Privacy checklist



CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

INSTRUCTION

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed *before* commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website (http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Bonnie French, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: "Moments at the Veil: living between two worlds within the Afro-Dutch community"

Name, email of student: Daniëlo Sillé, 582231ds@student.eur.nl

Name, email of supervisor: Bonnie French, french@essb.eur.nl

Start date and duration: 17-04-2023, 2 months

Is the research study conducted within DPAS **YES**

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted?
(e.g. internship organization)

PART II: HUMAN SUBJECTS

1. Does your research involve human participants. **YES**

If 'NO': skip to part V.

If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research? **NO**

Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act ([WMO](#)) must first be submitted to [an accredited medical research ethics committee](#) or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects ([CCMO](#)).

2. Does your research involve field observations without manipulations that will not involve identification of participants. **NO**

If 'YES': skip to part IV.

3. Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary data that has been anonymized by someone else). **NO**

If 'YES': skip to part IV.

PART III: PARTICIPANTS

1. Will information about the nature of the study and about what participants can expect during the study be withheld from them? **NO**
2. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written 'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study? **NO**
3. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation at any time be withheld from participants? **NO**
4. Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants?
Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.). **NO**
5. Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by participants? **YES**
6. Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation)? **YES**
7. Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot give consent? **NO**
8. Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study? **NO**
9. Can participants be identified by the study results or can the confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured? **NO**
10. Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study? **YES**

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.

Regarding the questions that will be asked in the interviews the chance may occur that negative experiences will come to light. Because of the phenomenological nature of the interview questions, it is unavoidable that these topics will not be covered and researched thoroughly. Hereby also comes the collection of a special category of data which is the racial and ethnic origin of the participants. This research is about racial identity development and how this corresponds with theories of double consciousness which means that it is essential to collect this data. This study will also be used for a

personal social project which involves results and footage of segments of the conducted research. In regards of the footage, consent will be asked for this too in order to collect this category of data. However, it is possible to participate without capturing footage. This will be included in the informed consent form.

What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.). The participants will be informed thoroughly beforehand so they have sufficient knowledge of the research and what may be coming further down the path of this study. In regards of footage this will be included on the informed consent, so the participant can make the decision if they want to participate in the social project as well.

Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

There may be questions on experiences with subtle racism that can bring up negative emotions and maybe even traumatic experiences. This will be considered during the research and the participants will be given the space and freedom to disclose whatever feels safe and comfortable for them.

Please attach your informed consent form in Appendix I, if applicable.

Continue to part IV.

PART IV: SAMPLE

Where will you collect or obtain your data?

The qualitative data will be collected by conducting interviews and will be in an agreed location where the privacy of the participant can be assured.

Note: indicate separate data sources.

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

10 participants.

Note: indicate separate data sources.

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

Approximately 600.000 people (Afro-Dutch population).

Note: indicate separate data sources.

Continue to part V.

Part V: Data storage and backup

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

The data will be stored on my telephone which will be used to record the interview.

Note: indicate for separate data sources, for instance for paper-and pencil test data, and for digital data files.

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

Daniëlo Sillé.

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

After every data acquisition the data will be transferred to a hard drive and this will be checked once a week.

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

The names of the will be replaced with aliases and other personal data that may indicate the identity of the participant also will be anonymized. Only data that is crucial to the research, for example, the personal experiences with double consciousness will not be adjusted as they are direct study results that cannot be altered.

Note: It is advisable to keep directly identifying personal details separated from the rest of the data. Personal details are then replaced by a key/ code. Only the code is part of the database with data and the list of respondents/research subjects is kept separate.

PART VI: SIGNATURE

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: Daniëlo Sillé

Name (EUR) supervisor: Bonnie French

Date: 16-04-2023

Date: 16-04-2023

APPENDIX I: Informed Consent Form

Informatieblad onderzoek raciale identiteitsvorming van Afro-Nederlanders

In het kader van de masterthesis onderzoekt Daniëlo Sillé hoe Afro-Nederlanders hun raciale identiteit vormen. Hierbij wordt er voornamelijk aandacht besteedt aan de ervaringen van Afro-Nederlanders die zich bevinden in een zwarte, zowel witte leefwereld. Met de verzamelde data schrijft de onderzoeker een onderzoeksverslag.

Verloop

U neemt deel aan een onderzoek waarbij informatie wordt verzameld door u te interviewen en waarbij geluidsopnames worden gemaakt. Daarnaast wordt een deel van het interview getranscribeerd.

Het geanonimiseerde transcript en gepseudonimiseerde quotes worden opgenomen in de opdracht, welke alleen wordt gedeeld met de medestudenten en docenten.

Er bestaat de mogelijkheid dat er beeldmateriaal wordt opgenomen met als doel om de resultaten van het onderzoek te gebruiken voor een sociaal-maatschappelijk project dat als doel heeft om kennis te verspreiden over hoe bepaalde ervaringen invloed hebben op de leefwereld van Afro-Nederlanders. Dit is een apart persoonlijk project dat na de studie vervolgd zal worden. In het geval van deelname aan dit project zullen de persoonlijke gegevens niet geanonimiseerd worden, aangezien er beeldmateriaal is dat u zal identificeren. Mocht u niet deelnemen hieraan, zal uw privacy worden gewaarborgd.

Het is ook mogelijk om deel te nemen aan het sociaal-maatschappelijk project zonder beeldmateriaal, maar wel in de vorm van onderzoeksresultaten zoals citaties uit het interview.

Vertrouwelijkheid

Wij doen er alles aan om uw privacy te waarborgen. Naast de student die u interviewt zal alleen de supervisor (Bonnie French) toegang krijgen tot de geluidsopname. Er wordt op geen enkele wijze vertrouwelijke informatie of persoonsgegevens van of over u naar buiten gebracht, waardoor iemand u zal kunnen herkennen. In het onderzoek wordt u aangeduid met een verzonden naam (pseudoniem).

Vrijwilligheid

U hoeft geen vragen te beantwoorden die u niet wilt beantwoorden. Uw deelname is vrijwillig en u kunt stoppen wanneer u wilt.

Dataopslag

In het onderzoek zullen anonieme gegevens of pseudoniemen worden gebruikt. De onderzoeksgegevens worden bewaard voor een periode van maximaal een jaar. Uiterlijk na het verstrijken van deze termijn zullen de gegevens worden verwijderd.

Mocht u deelnemen aan het aparte sociaal-maatschappelijke project dan zullen uw persoonlijke gegevens (naam, leeftijd en etnische achtergrond) gebruikt worden. De onderzoeksgegevens zullen in dat geval voor onbepaalde tijd bewaard worden.

**Indienen van
een vraag of
klacht**

Indien u specifieke vragen heeft over hoe er met uw persoonsgegevens wordt omgegaan, kunt u deze stellen aan Bonnie French via french@essb.eur.nl

Door dit toestemmingsformulier te ondertekenen erken ik het volgende:

- | | JA | NEE |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Ik ben voldoende geïnformeerd over het onderzoek. Ik heb het informatieblad gelezen en heb daarna de mogelijkheid gehad vragen te kunnen stellen. Deze vragen zijn voldoende beantwoord en ik heb voldoende tijd gehad om over mijn deelname te beslissen. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 Ik neem vrijwillig deel aan dit onderzoek. Het is mij duidelijk dat ik deelname aan het onderzoek op elk moment, zonder opgave van reden, kan beëindigen. Ik hoef een vraag niet te beantwoorden als ik dat niet wil. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Voor deelname aan het onderzoek is het bovendien nodig dat u voor verschillende onderdelen specifiek toestemming geeft.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 3 Ik geef toestemming om de gegevens die tijdens dit onderzoek over mij worden verzameld te verwerken zoals is uitgelegd in het bijgevoegde informatieblad. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 Ik geef toestemming om tijdens het gesprek geluidsopnames te maken en mijn antwoorden uit te werken in een geanoniseerd transcript. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 Ik geef toestemming om mijn antwoorden te gebruiken voor gepseudonimiseerde quotes in de verslaglegging van het onderzoek. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 Ik geef toestemming om beeldmateriaal te verzamelen van het interview dat wordt afgenomen en te gebruiken voor het sociaal-maatschappelijk project dat in het openbaar tentoongesteld zal worden. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 Ik geef toestemming om mijn antwoorden te gebruiken voor gepseudonimiseerde quotes in het sociaal-maatschappelijk project dat in het openbaar tentoongesteld zal worden. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Naam deelnemer:

Naam student: Daniëlo Sillé

Handtekening:

Handtekening:

Datum:

Datum: