

**Allen West:** In my book *Guardian of the Republic*, I brought up a very interesting contrast between Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois and I think that that contrast has a lot to do with where we find ourselves in the black community today and maybe the entire United States of America and there could be lessons that are learned for the world. Booker T. Washington understood that the black community was under the dark specter of segregation but that did not mean that they had to be subjugated in their own drive for success, their own drive for excellence. And he saw that the key was in education. And that is why when he gave that incredible speech at the Southern Exposition in my hometown of Atlanta, Georgia, he talked about how we should give the black community a chance. And he fought to establish the institution that now is Tuskegee University. Back then it was Tuskegee Institute because it was all about developing skills, trade crafts and what have you for the black community. And if you think about early on, you had people like Madam C.J. Walker who is one of the first black female millionaires in the country before Oprah Winfrey came along. So that permeated throughout the community, the sense of education and success. But then what happened, it was a threat to some people when they saw the independence that blacks were able to have: their economic viability, their sense of strong education and tight family and communities. So, all of a sudden you get this thing called the NAACP. W.E.B Du Bois is brought about. He becomes a challenger to Washington. There are many horrific names and this is where we kind of get this whole Uncle Tom sell-out aura that comes about because they felt that Washington wasn't fighting. He wasn't radical enough. And when you go back and you see who are the people that founded and helped to fund the NAACP, these were progressive whites. And so here early on, you had this sense of subjugating the black community, this sense of seeing themselves as victims and they couldn't do anything about it as opposed to Washington who was saying that education is the great equalizer as I say, that no matter where you're born and no matter where you come from, you can achieve all your dreams. And that's why, here I am, a young man born in the inner city of Atlanta, Georgia. My father didn't graduate from college. My father fought in World War II as a soldier. My mother did graduate from college but she was a GS civilian with the Marine Corps headquarters. But they focused on education. And that is what enabled me to be where I am because they did not sit back and let someone else decide where their son Allen was going to go to school. They made that decision. So, I think if you look at that incredible contrast between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B Du Bois, where you had this person talking about good quality education, the individual being important, being able to reach and attain your own dreams even under that dark specter of segregation, as opposed to you just got to fight this system. You've got to be a radical and everyone is a victim. Look at how that has permeated to today and in the black communities and the inner cities all across the United States of America. You see the breakdown of the family. You see the lack of quality education. And then what you used to have in the inner cities with strong, black entrepreneurship, small businesses, that's been decimated.