

# In America, this is the cloud hanging over Black people's heads



## Your Turn

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Guest columnist

The following quote is from W.E.B. DuBois' in his 1899 book "The Souls of Black Folk:"

"Between me and the other world (the White world), there is ever an unasked question: 'How does it feel to be a problem?'"

The Wikipedia explanation accurately states, "This phrase essentially captures the feeling of being constantly perceived as a problem by society simply because of one's race, particularly referring to the experience of Black Americans in the United States."

I as a Black man in 2025 America thinking about the question "How does it feel to be a problem?"

Black people in America need only barely touch the surface of their everyday lives to know the dark reality of this question. It hovers over them like an

ominous heavy thunderhead cloud. The question is a perennial part of the American experience.

This is made all the more real by the most recent spate of federal and state mandates, retrenching and withdrawing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives and strategies. Thus the question is positioned in our minds as a 2025 social, political and cultural landmark, much like the Hollywood sign in California.

The difference between the two is that the one sign is a famous tourist

landmark, while the other is a figurative sign high upon the the hilltop of Black consciousness. This sign reads "Black citizens, how does it feel to be a problem?"

The impermeable nature of the question is a 21st century tragedy. All the more tragic is that the front side of the figurative sign reads "your Blackness is at best an inconvenience and at its worst a problem."

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