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Reflection 3
Honors 220 B

Reflect on what you have learned during this week in class. Some prompts that might be helpful to get you started (or not! Feel free to go rogue!). What have you learned about possible motivations Du Bois might have had when designing the visualizations for the Paris exhibit? What struck you about Du Bois the man? What surprised you about what you have learned this week? What do you wonder about? What are you learning about that is the most satisfying? The most frustrating? What do you want to know more about?

This week was about developing and applying our growing 'data literacy.' Given the modern applications in class, I spent a lot of time exploring other issues or implications surrounding that data. While we were going over the incarceration data, I took note of any numbers that stood out to me, or discrepancies that opened questions. For instance, one of the pages detailed population ratios within statewide prisons according to ethnicity. Under Alaska the magnitude of the Black imprisonment rate relative to the white imprisonment rate was 4.7:1. From past projects, I knew the population of black people in Alaska sat somewhere around 4%. This was part of the first step in data literacy, finding data that tells a story (and not making that data tell your story). Furthermore, that chart didn't have any data on the imprisonment rates of Indigenous peoples compared to white people, not even Alaskan Natives. In fact, only one graph demonstrated the existence of Indigenous people, and that was the one documenting juvenile custody. In terms of my familiarity with data, I'm so used to specific goals– goals with nuances, yes, but STEM outlined nuances. What I mean by that is there's no such thing as scientific subjectivity. If I'm looking at snowpack and ablation data in thinning-treated logged sections of forests, those numbers will tell me outright, "we documented more of a snowpack this year," or whether we saw more water retention in trees or not. Even if I'm secretly hoping that the logged section sees a worsened snowpack so they can't continue those "treatments," the raw numbers are not emotional (at least not categorically). And maybe emotional data is exactly the right word for it. While not everyone may see information on trees, mountains, or rivers as *emotionally* impactful, they certainly will for all human-centered data. So, a *lot* more subjectivity and interpretation comes into play when dealing with anthropocentric data. The numbers remain raw, but which angle you take– how you portray– becomes a lot less streamlined. And as I dipped my toe into the robustness of learning how to tell a story– a human story– with data, I gained so much appreciation for the level of thought that DuBois and his students and colleges placed into their work.