

**Aaron Douglas and Hale Woodruff:  
The Social Responsibility and Expanded Pedagogy of the Black Artist**  
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Abstract Summary

This study examines the expanded pedagogy and formal instruction of Aaron Douglas and Hale Woodruff, two African-American artists who came to prominence during the New Negro Movement, in the 1920s. The decades following the New Negro Movement marked a new era for the art education of African-American students when renowned African-American artists began to prepare future generations of artists and art educators. Douglas and Woodruff spent their tenures teaching the visual arts at historically Black universities in Nashville, Tennessee, and Atlanta, Georgia, respectively. They both had a profound influence on this new era of art education, in which they were situated in a Black experience in the segregated United States. I specifically explore to what extent and for what goals racial consciousness and Black content were a part of the instruction, artwork, and lives of Douglas and Woodruff. The majority of the data examined for this study was discovered in special collections in the archives of the libraries at Fisk and Atlanta Universities. Artist statements, letters, curricular materials, class and lectures notes, exams, interviews, artwork, and testimony of their former students were all closely examined to understand the political, cultural, aesthetic, and pedagogical influence of these two teaching artists. The data convincingly conveys that Douglas and Woodruff were influential figures outside of the classroom. My findings indicate that various political factors and the limitations of classroom instruction within these institutions did not allow Douglas and Woodruff to teach content which affirmed the historical and cultural significance of African-Americans in the United States, but their lives and artwork served as pedagogy which instilled racial pride, tenacity, and perseverance that was absent in the curriculum. I conclude the study with my speculation, as an art educator at a historically Black university, on the relevance of Douglas's and Woodruff's methods of educating African-American art students in the 1930s and 1940s to current students. Understanding how these two art educators effectively used their pedagogical, creative, and professional influence to earn the support of the Black community while navigating a White-male dominated field is critical to empowering and educating today's Black youth.

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