

The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man

James Weldon Johnson



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2013 Reprint of 1912 Edition. Full facsimile of the original text, not reproduced with Optical Recognition Software. "The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man" by James Weldon Johnson is the fictional telling of the story of a young biracial man, referred to only as the "Ex-Colored Man", living in post Reconstruction era America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Ex-Colored Man was forced to choose between embracing his black heritage and culture by expressing himself through the African-American musical genre ragtime, or by "passing" and living obscurely as a mediocre middle-class white man. Though the title suggests otherwise, the book is not an autobiography but a novel. However, the book is based on the lives of people Johnson knew and from events in his own life. Johnson's text is an example of a "roman à clef."

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