

Performing Americanness: Race, Class, and Gender in Modern African-American and Jewish-American Literature

Catherine Rottenberg



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This book offers a comparative analysis of modern African-American and Jewish-American narratives.In "Performing Americanness", Catherine Rottenberg raises important questions about what it means to be American through a wholly original analysis of modern African-American and Jewish-American literature. The book illustrates how the novels of Nella Larsen, James Weldon Johnson, Anzia Yezierska, and Abraham Cahan help us to understand the specific ways that gender, class, race, and ethnicity have regulated the identity formation of African and Jewish Americans, as well as the ways these categories have helped produce and sustain social stratification in the United States more generally. Through the author's comparative lens, new light is shed on fundamental internal and external conflicts - especially of identity that took place as both groups sought to move from margin to center by carving out a niche for themselves in mainstream American society.

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