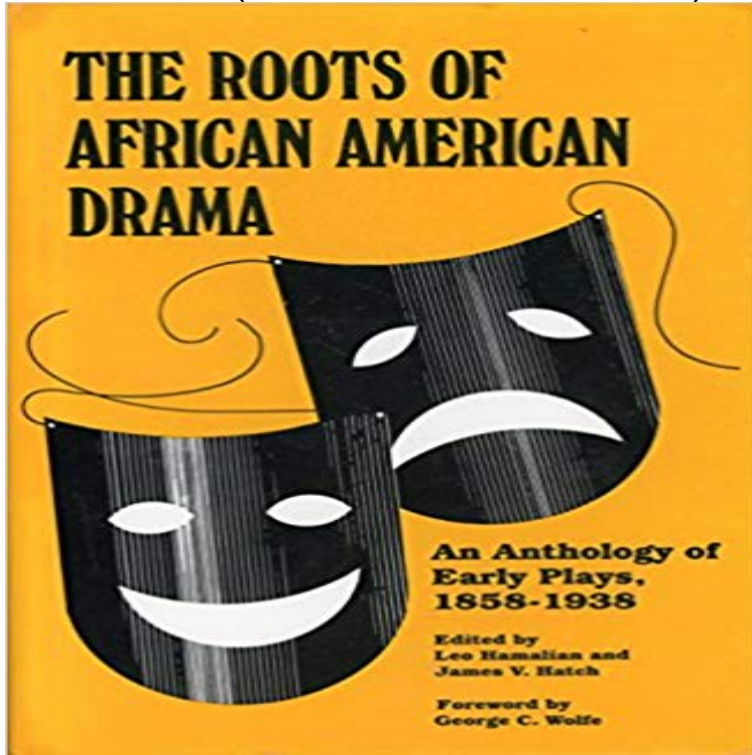


## The Roots of African American Drama: An Anthology of Early Plays, 1858-1938 (African American Life)



While many historically significant or interesting plays by white playwrights are easily found in anthologies, few by early African American writers are equally accessible. Indeed until the 1970s, almost none of these early plays could be located outside of a library. The Roots of African American Drama fills this gap. Five of the thirteen scripts included here have never been in print, and only three others are presently available anywhere. The plays represent a variety of styles-allegory, naturalism, realism, melodrama, musical comedy, and opera. Four are full length, eight are one-acts, and one is a skit. Their subjects include slavery, share-cropping, World War I, vaudeville, religion, and legend and mythology. In making their selections, the editors used a variety of criteria to insure each play is dramatically sound and historically important. They also searched for those scripts that were unjustly consigned to obscurity. Each selection begins with headnotes that place it in its historical and cultural context. Biographic information and a bibliography of other plays follow each script, providing readers with added sources for study.

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