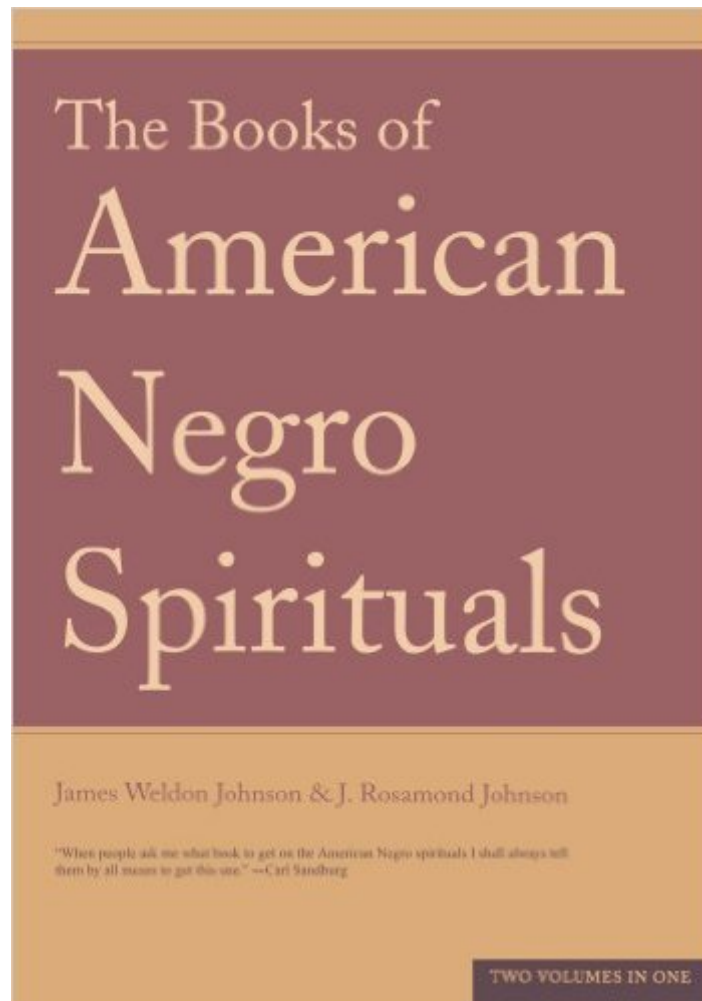


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# The Books Of The American Negro Spirituals



## Synopsis

In two elegant and masterly prefaces, James Weldon Johnson discusses the origin and history of more than 120 of the most significant spirituals known. Favorites like "Swing Low Sweet Chariot," "Deep River," and "Go Down, Moses" are arranged for voice and piano by his brother, J. Rosamond Johnson, and considered within their African tradition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is one of the best reference books available on the history of Negro Spirituals as well as a vast collection of songs - many of which have not been heard during our time. The preface begins with an awe inspiring poem "O Black and Unknown Bards". This is a must read for musicians, especially singers of Spirituals. Composers and arrangers would appreciate it's content as well.

This is perhaps the best compilation of African American Spirituals. Both of editor James Weldon Johnson's volumes are included as are his excellent introductions. The introductions alone are worth the price of the book and more. Johnson's brother provides the arrangement, as close as possible to the most likely way(s) in which they were originally sung. The words themselves are also as close as possible to the original wording. "The Book of the American Negro Spirituals" provides a first-hand accounting of the lyrical majesty and the creative genius of the enslaved African Americans as they integrated Christian truth into their daily suffering. Reviewer: Bob Kellemen, Ph.D., is the author of "Beyond the Suffering: Embracing the Legacy of African American Soul Care

and Spiritual Direction." He has also authored "Soul Physicians," "Spiritual Friends," and the forthcoming "Sacred Friendships: Listening to the Voices of Women Soul Care-Givers and Spiritual Directors."

i love spirituals and especially for a bass/baritone, the spiritual is a form that allows the low voice to shine. i purchased this work and have begun to enjoy working from sheet music with songs that previously, i only had the words, and maybe a recording to learn from. not much else to say. if you want to see how spiritual looked when they were first transcribed for musicians, this is a one stop source.

I am an opera singer, and was looking for some lesser-known spirituals to add to my repertoire, and this book has quite a few. They have accompaniments ranging from simple to moderately advanced. However, the preface -rather extensive- explains the methodology of the writing and performing of the songs, as was understood by the Johnson brothers, James Weldon and J. Rosamond. It's a great purchase, and invaluable to those of us who are interested in furthering our knowledge of this genre, and continuing to teach others about the contribution of spirituals to our lives and music today.

I was looking for a book that would be brief yet concise. Of course, I don't know all there is to know about Negro Spirituals, so I don't really know how concise it is; but it seemed to cover quite a bit of information that was useful to me. The authors speak from first hand experience, which was very helpful. Some songs were familiar to me, but many were not. I felt as if I gained a great deal from both the text of the book as well as the music and lyrics.

Wonderful book!!! Too bad I can't get it to stay open on the piano!! The construction of this book is shoddy, and really insults the wonderful music and commentary inside. Deserves a much better quality. The only way I can get it to stay open to the page is by literally breaking the binding and then holding it on either side with two hard back books. Too bad because the music, arrangements and commentary are stellar.

This is a good book to have when you're looking for something special to add to your church service or when you want to add a little 'ole spice' to the regular soloists' repertoire. The Books of the American Negro Spirituals has never let me down for som'tin new to the ear but old in our history.

It's wonderful to have all of this great music available in one volume. It's a treasure that will be very well used.

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