



## Reading Jean Toomer's 'Cane'

By Gerry Carlin

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Jean Toomer's Cane (1923) is regarded by many as a seminal work in the history of African American writing. It is generally called a novel, but it could more accurately be described as a collection of short stories, poems and dramatic pieces whose stylistic indeterminacy is part of its unique appeal. The ambiguities and seeming oddities of Toomer's text make Cane a difficult work to understand, which is why this lucid, accessible guide is so valuable. Exploring some of the difficulties that both the writer and his work embody, Gerry Carlin offers an enthralling account of Toomer's eloquent and exquisite expression of the African American experience. The Author Dr Gerry Carlin is a Senior Lecturer in English at the University of Wolverhampton. He teaches, researches and has published in the areas of modernism, critical theory, and the literature and culture of the 1960s.

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