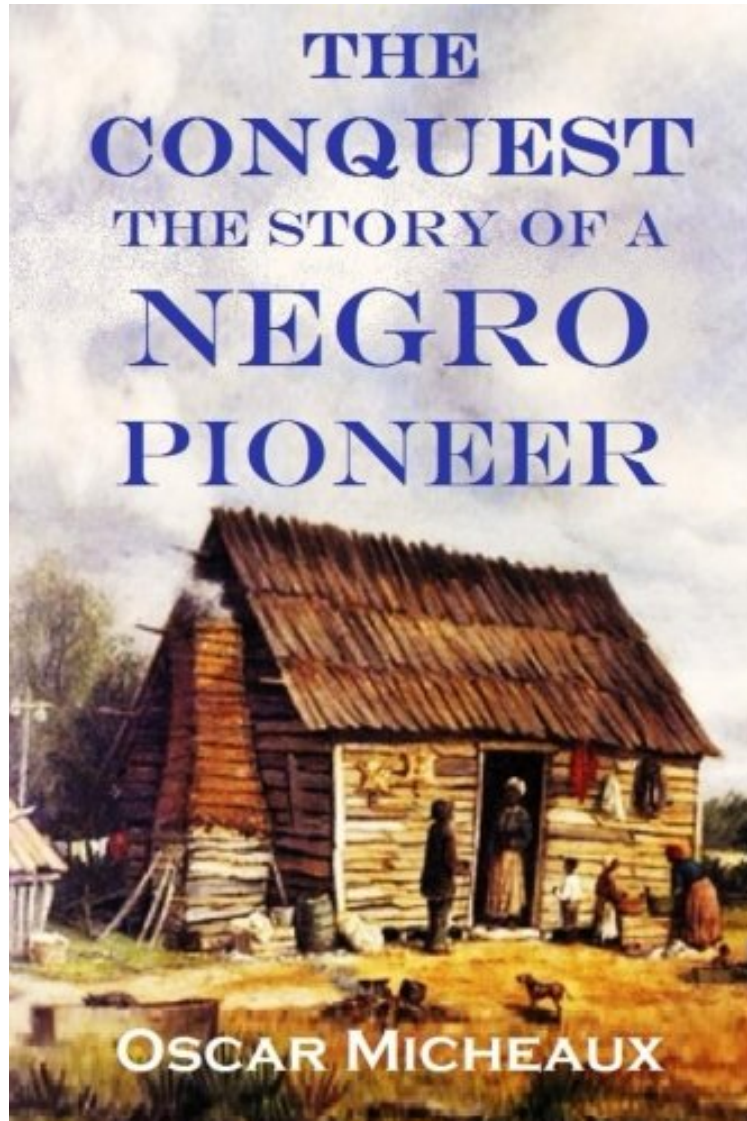


The Conquest: The Story of a Negro Pioneer

Oscar Micheaux

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Oscar Micheaux : The Conquest: The Story of a Negro Pioneer before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Conquest: The Story of a Negro Pioneer:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I was excited for this book. I had read ...By HelenI was excited for this book. I had read some back ground on the author. I was interested in the perspective of an African - American writer at turn of century, but it was either so poorly written or poorly edited that the sentence structure was too distracting to read.13 of 13 people found the following review helpful. oscar michaux's finest bookBy Martin J.

Keenan Oscar Micheaux wrote seven novels. "The Conquest" was his first novel, and his best. If you can only purchase one book BY Oscar Micheaux, this is the best. Prof. Jayna Brown's introduction is outstanding. Her introduction is tough but fair. The introduction places Oscar Micheaux in his historical context, as a conservative Booker T. Washington follower. This is the first reprint of "The Conquest" that is not a facsimile copy of the original typeset edition from 1913. As a result, the lettering, font and artwork in the book are modern and elegant. The book itself is autobiographical. But the book is about more than the struggle of one African-American. The book is also about a whole variety of topics: homesteading, railroading, rural America, and the urban vs. rural divide. I highly recommend this book to anyone interested in homesteading, railroading, farming, or American history. Micheaux was one of a kind. The same thing that was said about writer George Schuyler could also be said about Oscar Micheaux: "He woke up every morning to see which way the world was turning, and he took off in the opposite direction. He loved playing the role of the maverick."

Oscar Devereaux Micheaux (1884 1951) was an African American author, film director and independent producer of more than 44 films. Micheaux decided to concentrate on writing and, eventually, filmmaking, a new industry. He wrote seven novels. In 1913, 1,000 copies of his first book, *The Conquest: The Story of a Negro Homesteader*, were printed. He published the book anonymously, for unknown reasons. Based on his experiences as a homesteader and the failure of his first marriage, it was largely autobiographical. Although character names have been changed, the protagonist is named Oscar Devereaux. His theme was about African Americans realizing their potential and succeeding in areas where they had not felt they could. The book outlines the difference between city lifestyles of Negroes and the life he decided to lead as a lone negro out on the far West as a pioneer. He discusses the culture of doers who want to accomplish and those who see themselves as victims of injustice and hopelessness and who do not want to try to succeed, but instead like to pretend to be successful while living the city lifestyle in poverty. He had become frustrated with getting members of his race to populate the frontier and make something of themselves, with real work and property investment. He wrote over 100 letters to fellow Negroes in the East beckoning them to come West, and only his older brother eventually came West. One of Micheaux's fundamental beliefs is that hard work and enterprise will make any person rise to respect and prominence no matter his or her race.

From the Back Cover The novel portrays the aspirations and struggles of a black homesteader named Oscar Devereaux. Born on a small farm near Cairo, Illinois, one of thirteen children, Devereaux leaves home to work in the Chicago stockyards and finally graduates to the job of porter in a Pullman railway car. He is personable, industrious, and frugal with a purpose. After saving \$2,500, Devereaux goes to South Dakota and buys land. His object is not speculation for quick profit but the cultivation of property he can call his own. He plows and sows and sweats, and by the age of twenty-five has reaped an estate worth \$20,000. Success is sweet, self-respect is sweeter. But if the calamities he is exposed to as a homesteader are severe, so are those brought on by marriage to the passive daughter of a dominating preacher. About the Author Rarely reprinted and never before in paperback, *The Conquest* is introduced by Learthen Dorsey, a professor of history at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Also available in a Bison Book edition is Oscar Micheaux's 1917 novel *The Homesteader*.