

Tribhuvan University

History as Fiction and Fiction as History: Reading Doctorow's *Ragtime*

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By

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Abstract

Edgar Lawrence Doctorow's *Ragtime* (1975) is a novel which ironizes racism at the turn-of-the century in America. The racial discrimination between the whites and the blacks has been explained through the resistance to vandalization of Model T Ford of the colored man, Coalhouse Walker by the whites. The black people are brutally oppressed and exploited by the whites. Coalhouse Walker revolts against whites' oppression. In the novel *Ragtime*, Doctorow has patterned the revolt of Coalhouse Walker after the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s in America. The study highlights a reconditioning of traditional historiography through Doctorow's writing back of the history of black radicalism in the history of the Ragtime Era (1900-1920s). Doctorow has written the history of the Ragtime Era in fictional form by highlighting the contemporary marginal issues through revisionist perspective. The way Doctorow highlights the issue of marginalization ruptures the grand narrative of the Ragtime Era.

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