

Jacobs, Harriet Ann ^[1]

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Writing for Women

By Sarajane Davis, N.C. Government & Heritage Library, 2019

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A drawing of Harriet Jacobs by Keith White, 1994. Image from the State Archives of North

February 11, 1813-March 7, 1897 Carolina.

^[3]

Do you think you could write a book about your life?

How would you describe your family or school day? What information would you include about the world? Is there anything you could share to teach others about where you live? The information you chose to share might even inspire people to make a better world. Harriet Jacobs was a North Carolina native. Her life story to inspire people to fight to end slavery.

Jacobs was born into slavery in Edenton, North Carolina in 1813. She escaped to freedom when she made it to the North when she was 29 years old. Over the new few years, she lived around Philadelphia before settling in New York. In New York, Jacobs worked as a nurse and became involved in the abolitionist movement. Friends encouraged her to write her story to help bring more attention to their cause. She published her autobiography, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, in 1861. It was the first narrative released by an enslaved woman. Jacobs highlights the unique horrors women faced as slaves. The author's life story inspired people in the United States and abroad to end slavery and racism. She dedicated the rest of her life fighting oppression.

What issues would you want to bring attention to in a book about your life? What actions would you want to inspire people to take?

Andrews, William L. "Harriet A. Jacobs (Harriet Ann), 1813-1897." Documenting the American South. <https://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/jacobs/bio.html> ^[4]. Accessed January 7, 2020.

Jacobs, Harriet. *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (New York: Thayer & Eldridge, 1861).

Yellin, Jean Fagan. *Harriet Jacobs: A Life The Remarkable Adventures of the Woman Who Wrote Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2004).

Additional Resources

Jabour, Anya. "The Freedmen's Cause: African American Abolitionists." PBS. <https://www.pbs.org/mercy-street/blogs/mercy-street-revealed/the-freedme...> [5]. Accessed January 7, 2020.

The Abolitionists: American Experience. PBS Learning Media. <https://unctv.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/abolitionists/> [6]

Yellin, Jean Fagan. "Harriet Jacobs." NC Pedia. <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/jacobs-harriet> [3]

Image Credits

"Harriet Jacobs." Photograph. Flickr <https://www.flickr.com/photos/elycefeliz/6021656434> [7] (Accessed January 7, 2020).

"Harriet Jacobs 1813-1897." Photograph, 1996. North Carolina Highway Historical Marker Program.

<http://www.ncmarkers.com/Markers.aspx?MarkerId=A-72> [8].

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