

African Americans in Historical Fiction

A Long Way from Home by Connie Briscoe

Written by the author of the New York Times bestseller *Sisters and Lovers*, this novel of mothers and daughters, set in Virginia, tells the story of three generations of house slaves, from the time of President James Madison to the Civil War.

Rattlebone by Maxine Clair

This novel depicts the black Midwest of the 1950s, where towns could count their white folks on one hand. Meet several of Rattlebone's citizens: October Brown, the new schoolteacher with a camel's walk and shoulder-padded, to-the-nines dresses; Irene Wilson, naive and wise, who must grapple with her parent's failing marriage as she steps eagerly into adulthood; and Thomas Pemberton, owner of the local rooming house, an old man with a young heart.

The Wake of the Wind by J. California Cooper

Mordecai and Lilee meet as slaves on a plantation in post-Civil War Texas. As emancipation is declared, they head east with several other newly freed companions to look for a safe place to live. The tightly knit clan of former slaves prospers, but when lynchings in the area become frequent, they are forced to leave. Eventually they settle on an abandoned farm, where they survive economic depression and other troubles. When tragedy ensues, the next generation must assume responsibility for preserving the family.

The Bondwoman's Narrative by Hannah Crafts

A novel written in the 1850s by a runaway slave follows a young slave from a North Carolina plantation as she flees to the North and, after being pursued by slave hunters and forced to serve a difficult new mistress, finally obtains freedom in New Jersey.

Train by Pete Dexter

Quietly navigating his way between his hostile patrons and brutal fellow workers in 1953 Los Angeles, African-American caddy Train finds an unexpected ally in a police detective who encourages Train's ambitions and oversees a case involving a boat hijacking and a beautiful widow.

Passing by Samaria by Sharon Ewell Foster

Fleeing danger in her beloved Mississippi homeland, a young African-American woman seeks new life, love, truth and joy in romantic, turn-of-the-century Chicago.

The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman by Ernest J. Gaines

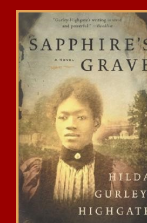
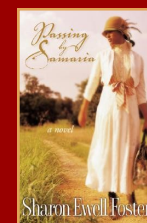
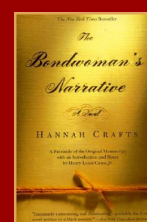
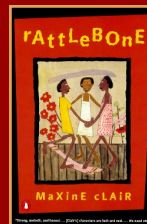
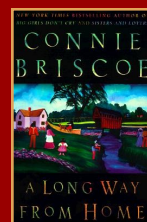
An old woman recalls her struggle against bigotry from her childhood during the Civil War to her participation in 20th-century demonstrations.

Sapphire's Grave by Hilda Gurley-Highgate

Sapphire, born to a woman sold as a slave in 18th-century America, uses her indomitable strength and defiant spirit to overcome the poverty and oppression of her life and passes on these qualities to her own descendants.

Mama Flora's Family by Alex Haley

This sweeping family saga of three generations in the mid-20th century is the final, brilliant inheritance from Alex Haley, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Roots*. At the center of this poignant novel stands the indomitable Mama Flora, matriarch of an extraordinary family of destitute Tennessee sharecroppers.



Free Man of Color by Barbara Hambly

Chronicles the adventures of piano teacher and surgeon Ben January, a free man of color, in 1833 New Orleans. The mystery involves the murder of the ex-mistress of a recently deceased Creole planter. Back home after 16 years in Paris, January intervenes. For his trouble, January becomes an unwitting scapegoat of the white suspects. Menaced by ruthless cutthroats, he must risk his freedom to absolve himself.

The Known World by Edward P. Jones

When a plantation proprietor and former slave – now possessing slaves of his own – dies, his household falls apart in the wake of a slave rebellion and corrupt underpaid patrollers who enable free black people to be sold into slavery.

Mudbound by Hillary Jordan

In this prize-winning debut, prejudice takes many forms, both subtle and brutal. It is 1946, and city-bred Laura McAllan is trying to raise her children on her husband's Mississippi Delta farm – a place she finds foreign and frightening. In the midst of the family's struggles, two young men return from the war to work the land. It is the unlikely friendship of these brothers-in-arms that drives this to its inexorable conclusion.

Right as Rain by Bev Marshall

Living and working side-by-side on the rural Southern farm belonging to their white employers, Tee Wee and Icey forge a bond based on their shared servitude and their equally painful pasts.

Song Yet Sung by James McBride

A tale set against a backdrop of slave rights conflicts in the 19th-century Chesapeake Bay region finds young runaway Liz Spocott inadvertently inspiring a slave breakout from the attic prison of a notorious slave thief.

Sugar by Bernice McFadden

Set in a small Arkansas town in the 1950s, a tale of loyalty and friendship between two women finds Jude turning to the church after the death of her daughter, and to a young woman who turns out to be a prostitute.

Leaving Cecil Street by Dianne McKinney-Whetstone

Surrounded by block parties that liven up the summer nights of their 1969 Philadelphia home, Joe and Louise find their marriage falling apart, a situation that is complicated by the tragic illegal abortion of their daughter's best friend.

Beloved by Toni Morrison

After the Civil War ends, Sethe longingly recalls the two-year-old daughter whom she killed when threatened with recapture after escaping from slavery 18 years before.

Freshwater Road by Denise Nicholas

Celeste Tyree, a young black collegian, leaves Michigan for Mississippi in the summer of 1964 to help found a Freedom School and a voter registration project. Soon she confronts truths about herself and her own family.

Getting Mother's Body by Suzan-Lori Parks

Learning that a company plans to dig up the area where her mother is buried, supposedly with a cache of jewels, Billy Beede, poor and pregnant, heads for Arizona to rescue her mother's body and search for the jewels that could bring her a new life.

Knee Deep in Wonder by April Reynolds

Helene Strickland returns home to the South in 1976 for her aunt's funeral full of unanswered questions about her family and determined to probe the mysteries of her aunt and grandmother.

