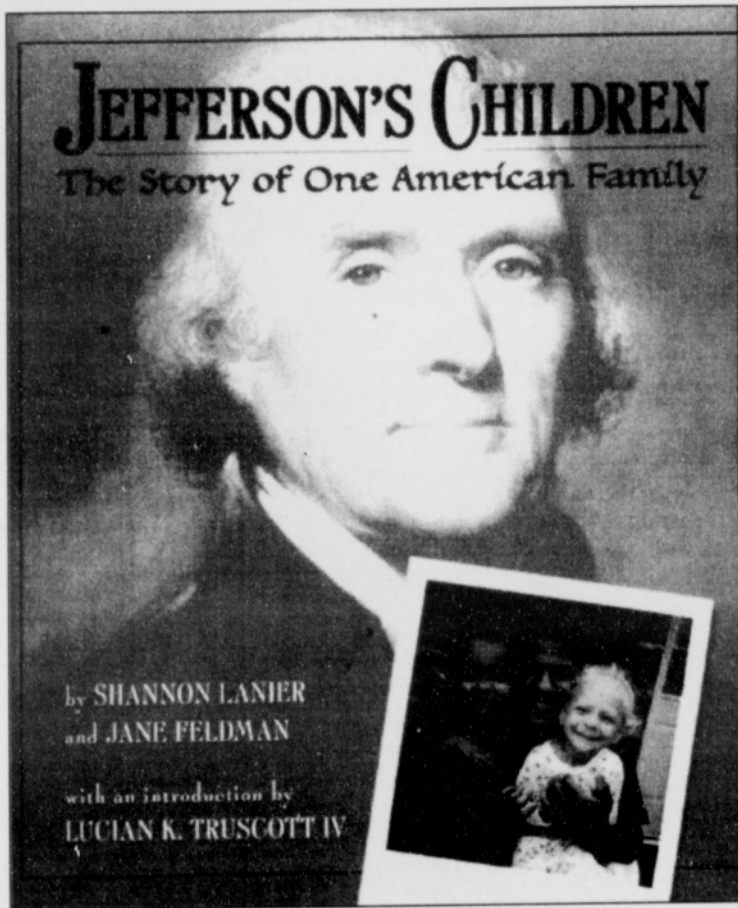


In Print

Jefferson's Children



The Story of One American Family

By Shannon Lanier and Jane Feldman Random House; 2000

Jefferson and his African American slave Sally Hemings – had been passed along from lips to ears down through the generations without benefit of official historical documentation.

Now 21 years old, Shannon is telling all of America about his family in *Jefferson's Children: The Story of One American Family*. Shannon and his coauthor, photographer Jane Feldman, traveled across the country for twelve months to meet and talk with members of Shannon's family.

Together they have created a book which gives eloquent testimony in photographs and interviews, that Thomas Jefferson had not one but two families: the first with his wife Martha and the second with Sally Hemings.

When Shannon Lanier was in first grade, he stood up on President's Day and announced to his class that Thomas Jefferson was his ancestor. Shannon's teacher told him to sit down and stop telling lies. No one believed him. Why didn't they? Because Shannon Lanier is black, and the story of his family – that they had sprung from the union of Thomas

The Hatbox Baby

By Carrie Brown . Algonquin Books; 2000

This time, Brown takes us into the heart of the 1933 Chicago World's Fair – a place where barkers, gawkers, dancing women, dwarfs, marvels of nature, Parisian cafés, colorful exhibits, peep shows, and premature infants are commonplace... premature babies?

Dr. Leo Hoffman – a famous (and to some infamous) doctor and pioneer in neonatology finances his research by overseeing the very popular Infantorium, an exhibit of live, premature babies displayed in incubators. By the end of the summer and the fair, Dr. Hoffman, along with Caroline Day, the beautiful Fan dancer whose performances take place next door to the Infantorium, and her dwarflike cousin and protector St. Louis Percy all come to have a stake in one special, very fragile baby's future.

Inspired by the real life and work of an early neonatologist (who displayed infants throughout Europe and the United States, including Coney Island), Carrie Brown takes us into a strange world of the fair – filled with freaks, marvels, mysteries, and miracles. *The Hatbox Baby* is a richly imagined story, celebrating love's transforming power and calling into question the notion of what is "normal."



Reaching Back

By Linda Waters Ethnic Books; 2000

What do you do when you are a woman with everything going for you, a career, a handsome man in your life, money, freedom etc., and you suddenly inherit the responsibility of an ill parent?

Renda Sionarro's life mirrors two worlds. She is a talented, beautiful fashion-model-turned-fashion-designer in New York City, miles away from Magnolia, Louisiana, where she is simply known as Mrs. Evelyn's daughter. Her daddy's death forces the savvy business woman to pack her bags and head south to face her demons of the past and help her mother adjust to life only to find herself being pulled back to the life she fought hard to escape. Her mother's sudden illness forces Renda to incorporate career, love, and family and reach back for a part of the life she left behind.



An Eighth of August

By Dawn Turner Trice Crown Publishers; 2000

Narrated by a chorus of voices, *An Eighth of August* begins with the Sunday church services of the 1986 celebration, a year after a terrible tragedy rocked the people of this close-knit community. The festival proved the backdrop for a vividly moving story that weaves together the lives and voices of the residents of Halley's Landing. We hear from strong-willed Flossie Jo Penticott and her estranged daughter, Sweet Alma, whose relationship has been torn apart by an unimaginable sorrow; Flossie's scatterbrained sister-in-law Thelma and her salt-of-the-earth husband, Herbert, who remains spirit, and large home provide refuge for the weary; and May Ruth, an eccentric older white woman who fits in like any other family member.

As we grow to know and love these characters, we witness how this Emancipation Festival will offer up its own particular brand of freedom

and herald a change in each of their lives. Like Gloria Naylor, Dawn Turner Trice draws us into a remarkable world in *An Eighth of August* and invites us to spend time with a group of extraordinary individuals who linger long after the story is complete.

