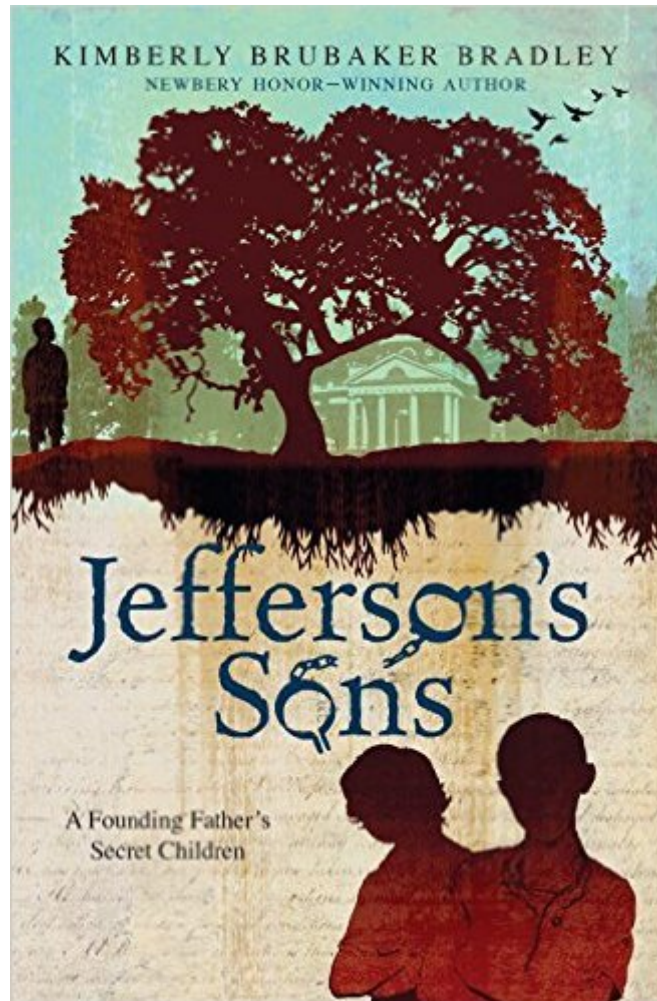


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# Jefferson's Sons: A Founding Father's Secret Children



## Synopsis

Â This story of Thomas Jefferson's children by one of his slaves, Sally Hemings, tells a darker piece of America's history from an often unseen perspective-that of three of Jefferson's slaves-including two of his own children. As each child grows up and tells his story, the contradiction between slavery and freedom becomes starker, calling into question the real meaning of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This poignant story sheds light on what life was like as one of Jefferson's invisible offspring.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0600 (What's this?)

Paperback: 400 pages

Publisher: Puffin Books (January 10, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0142421847

ISBN-13: 978-0142421840

Product Dimensions: 5 x 1 x 7.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (53 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #29,098 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #46 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1800s #82 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > African-American

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

When I was in high school I started reading Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved* on my own. At the time, my mother said something about the book that I've been turning over in my mind ever since. She noted that the novel was remarkable because it showed that even the best possible slave situation was still an intolerable one. There is no "good" slaveholder, no matter how nice they might be, and no matter how well they treat their slaves. I understood a bit of this but I've never really encountered a book for kids that approaches this idea. I'd say that a good 95% of middle grade novels written for kids about slavery tend to show the same idea. The slaveholders are all evil except for one or two wives/daughters/granddaughters who teach our hero/heroine to read. Kids know that people who own slaves are bad so what's the point in throwing in questionable morality? Yet Jefferson's Sons

couldn't exist under those restrictions even if it wanted to. If a good chunk of the American population has a hard time wrapping its head around the idea that the Founding Fathers owned slaves then how much harder would it be for an author of children's literature to bring the point up? Kimberly Brubaker Bradley doesn't just tackle the issue of someone like Thomas Jefferson owning slaves, though. She tackles the notion that he owned his own children as well. To pull this storyline off and to make it child appropriate, Bradley has a couple tricks up her sleeve. And danged if it doesn't pay off in the end. To her I doff my cap. Three residents of Monticello. Three boys with a connection to its owner, Thomas Jefferson.

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