

Jessie Redmon Fauset

Editor, Poet, Essayist, Novelist

Jessie Redmon Fauset saw the Harlem Renaissance as a historical educational opportunity. For her it was a chance to tell the stories of African Americans through the lens of other blacks and not through the lens of white writers.



Fauset was born on April 27, 1882 in Camden County, New Jersey. She attended Cornell University where she became the first African American woman elected to Phi Beta Kappa, the academic honorary society.

After graduating from Cornell she moved to Washington, DC and taught high school. In 1912 she moved to New York and became a literary contributor to *The Crisis Magazine*, a publication of the NAACP. She later became the magazine's literary editor.

While working at *Crisis* she published her own short stories, essays, reviews and poems.

In 1924 she published her first novel, *There is Confusion*, a story about prejudice and discrimination.

Much of Fauset's writing featured light-skinned middle class characters. She said the goal in her writing was to present "the homelife of the Colored American," without the melodrama or caricature that she saw from white writers.