

# Slave narratives

[Sociology](#), [Slavery](#)



During the times of slavery many people opposed the thought of forcing someone to do everything they say, to own someone. They believed in the freedom of others and to treat everyone equally. There were many abolitionists and slave narratives who wanted their side of the story to be heard. Aunt Harriet Smith was a black woman from Homestead Texas and Aunt Phoebe Boyd from Dunnsville Virginia, both slave narratives. Aunt Harriet Smith was married to Jim Smith. They white folks killed her husband and she never knew why they would do such a thing, he was an honest man who went to church and always did what he was told (Soul, 2003).

During one of her interviews Harriet was asked how long ago she could remember from her slave days, she could remember all the way back when she was thirteen years old. Harriet could successfully remember everyone's names as well, all the white children, her owner, everyone of the slaves she was around, and people she came into contact with on a regular basis. Her owner had first purchased her grandmother and from then on owned the rest of her family from there on down. One thing she was extremely faithful to was church.

They allowed the white people to go to church in the morning and the black people were allowed to go at night. They had a white preacher and he was always telling them to behave themselves. If the black slaves were to act up then the preacher would tell there owners and they would be punished. She believed that there was a God, and he would help them. The slaves were never taught to read and write, the only gossip they had was the stories they heard during church about slaves being mistreated.

This was something all the slaves would talk about when they seen each other and were able to communicate and talk. Harriet said that the white people were good to them. Her owner never hurt any of them. Her owner treated her well and whenever her and her family would hear about slaves being mistreated it would shock them. They felt bad for the slaves that were being abused. At one point in her interview she was asked why she went by Aunt Harriet Smith and she said by putting the word Aunt in front of her name was a sign of respect, and people respected her.

During the Civil War, she could remember sitting with her two cousins on the white picket fence just watching the vehicles driving up and down the road. They loved the white picket fence and their owner didn't care if they say there. They would watch the soldiers all day long walk up and down the road. One of the reasons they loved watching so much because all the soldiers were colored soldiers (Smith, 1941). During the whole interview Aunt Harriet Smith was very optimistic, she always hoped for the best and didn't really have anything to say that was too negative.

Even when she talked about her husband being killed, the only thing she kept talking about was how good of a man he was. She never turned the conversation into a negative one. Aunt Phoebe Boyd was also a slave narrative. She was very fond of the Lord and always believed that something better was coming. Smith, Harriet. "Voices from the Slavery Days." *The Liberty of Congress*. N. p. , n. d. Web. 14 Oct. 2012. . Soul. "AFRICAN-AMERICAN SLAVE: Aunt Harriet Smith On Church, Slavery & Punishment." YouTube. YouTube, 24 Apr. 2009. Web. 14 Oct. 2012. .