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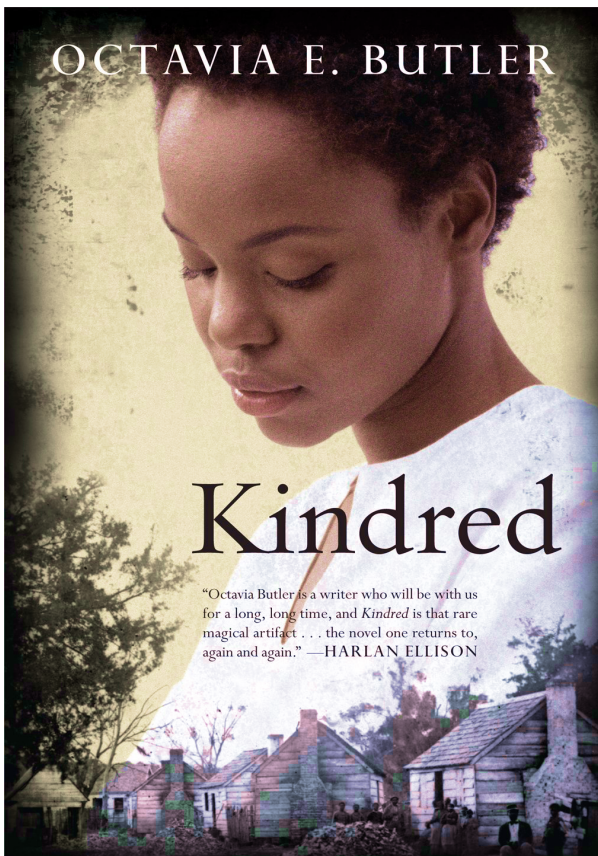
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# Octavia Butler

## Kindred | Background

**Directions:** The best way to remember authors is to act as though they are people that you know in real life. Try to remember the basics, but also random facts about each author. In the long run, it is the random things that we retain. This is an autobiographical overview of Octavia Butler.



### **Octavia Butler (1947-2006)**

Octavia Butler was an American science fiction writer. She grew up in California. Her father died at a young age and her mother cleaned houses for predominantly white, affluent families. Octavia was raised mainly by her mother and grandmother. This strong feminine influence and her insight into the injustice of white supremacy were infiltrated in her works. She made a space for Blacks in a genre that was primarily associated with white, male writers.

She grew up with a negative self-image. She was six foot tall, big for her age, and dyslexic. In school, she was often bullied. However, she found solace in the world of books and developed an affinity for science fiction. She spent a lot of time at the local library.

In college, she pursued writing. Octavia was passionate about her work. Despite her mother's wishes for her to have a steady income doing secretarial work, Octavia pursued the life of an author. She maintained "mindless" jobs so that she could stay up until two or three in the morning writing. Her first book, Kindred was published in 1970.

It is rumored that a Civil Rights activist in her college class, speaking against inferior treatment of races other than white, inspired Octavia to publish her work. Kindred weaves time travel and socio-economic and racial issues that still plague and haunt society today into a text that enhanced the capability of science fiction as a literary genre. Her writing style not only infuses real life characterization, but also urges individuals to evaluate the complex inter-relationships between the past and contemporary society.

Octavia Butler died in Seattle, Washington, from health complications at the age of 58. However, her works and voice linger today as her contributions to the literary world continue to challenge the conventions of society.