

August 26, 1999

Desiree Urquhart
Cedar Lodge #7
672 Washington Street
Wellesley, MA 02482

Dear Ms. Urquhart:

I received your thoughtful request that I contribute to Children of the Dream, by Laurel Holliday and Bernestine Singley. As you know, issues relating to race in America interest me a great deal. However, I am afraid that I must decline your kind invitation. My schedule this year does not permit me to take on additional obligations of this sort, even for such a worthy project as this.

Congratulations on your recent graduation and fellowship. I hope your will extend to Ms. Holliday and Ms. Singley my best wishes for success in completing their important work.

Sincerely,

Hillary Rodham Clinton

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 26, 1999

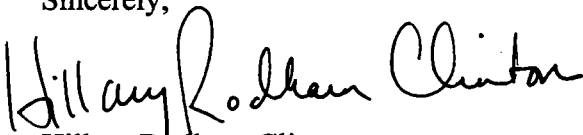
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July 15, 1999

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mrs. Clinton,

As a sister alum who has graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Wellesely College just two months ago, I was honored to meet you during the 1999 reunion gala. I am the Davis Scholar, one of only three African American Davis graduates this year, who was hostess to the Classes of 1924 and 1929 near your table.

When we met, I briefly mentioned to you that I was on my way to Washington in August on a fellowship ("sistership" in Wellesleyese) with Arena Stage. You challenged me to go out and continue to be an ambassador for Wellesley. I accept your challenge with the understanding that it only reinforces the promise I have already made to President Diana Chapman Walsh to carry on Wellesley's legacy of serving others.

Now I have a challenge for you.

My mentor and dearest friend, Bernestine Singley of Dallas, Texas, is co-editing an anthology on race with Laurel Holliday, editor of "CHILDREN OF THE DREAM: Our Own Stories of Growing Up Black in America" (Simon & Schuster 1999). Their anthology will be a unique literary text that will present personal narratives on the writers' racial experience and consciousness here at the end of the century.

Ms. Holliday and Ms. Singley are assembling an impressive list of thirty contemporary award-winning black writers and white writers who have already demonstrated their ability to write with power, passion, and clarity on the issue of race. They have secured commitments for articles from some of the nation's most well-known and strongest voices on race: Prof. Patricia J. Williams (Wellesley '72), Columbia University School of Law; Prof. Derrick Bell, New York University College of Law; Courtland Milloy, Washington Post columnist; Leonard Pitts, Jr., Miami Herald columnist; Jim Schutze, Dallas Observer; Kimberly Grob, Virginia Quarterly Review; and, of course, Ms. Singley and Ms. Holliday, both of whose latest work can be seen in CHILDREN OF THE DREAM.

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The anticipated publication date for the anthology is late fall of 2000, which means that finished articles will be due January 1, 2000. When Ms. Singley asked me if I thought you would consider being a part of this challenging undertaking, I responded that you were a perfect candidate to be counted among the brave and formidable lot of voices in such an anthology.

While at Wellesley, I learned that you tossed aside a prepared speech in favor of your own impassioned extemporaneous message to fellow graduates during your commencement in 1969. That is why I believe in my heart that the Wellesley woman who spoke her mind thirty years ago is up to this challenge today. Wellesley College is continuing to analyze its own racial and ethnic climate through informal discussions with students, faculty and staff in hopes of creating a more hospitable environment for minorities. This anthology, which will be available on college campuses across the country, can help guide the way.

It is an opportunity for you and other thinking Americans of influence and power to share your personal awareness of the continuing impact of race inside the villages, of which you so eloquently speak, where our children are being raised. I will contact your staff within the next two weeks to see if you will accept my challenge as I have accepted yours. And if the answer is yes, as I hope it will be, I will then put Ms. Holliday (LaurelHoll@aol.com) or Ms. Singley (irie7@flash.net) in touch with you.

Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton
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Thank you for considering this request. I look forward to seeing you at future reunions and to meeting you in the White House before you leave Washington. Your staff may be contacted at (212) 465-5763 during business hours should you have any further questions.

Good luck to you in your political pursuits. If I may be of assistance to you in your campaign efforts, (be it in New York where I am until my fellowship begins, or while I'm in Washington), please do not hesitate to call upon your sister alum.

Sincerely,



Desiree Urquhart
Wellesley DS '99