

295 Redding Road, Fairfield, Connecticut, May 20, 1964

Mr James Forman;  
Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee,  
6 Raymond Street,  
Atlanta 14,  
Georgia.

Dear Mr Forman:

For some months I have been working on a series of interviews with Negro leaders in different parts of the country as the basis for a long article contracted for by Look magazine and a book by Random House. I have interviewed at length people like Judge Hastie, Dr King, Robert Moses, Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young, Aaron Henry, Gilbert Moses, Lolis Elie, Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin, Wyatt Walker, and Charles Evers. These and a good many more somewhat less known to fame. I should feel that my work was very incomplete if I did not have a session with you. Can we work this out? If you will set a date I'll undertake to be there.

I should have introduced myself, I suppose. I am a professor at Yale and a writer. Among my novels are Band of Angels, The Cave, and All the King's Men.

And I should say that the kind of interview I am trying to do is not exactly like the ordinary newspaper thing. I want some sense of how the mind of the man interviewed works on a number of different questions, some sense of his personality, some sense of the kind of motivations he has, some sense of the society he envisages. So we couldn't knock it off in a half hour. A good long conversation would be required. I know that this cuts into a heavy schedule, but perhaps you will see some value in this. I hope so.

Very sincerely yours,

Robert Penn Warren.

PS Would there be any chance of this before June 1, or June 10? I should not be available May 29, or June 6 and 7.

Earlier letter in February