

President Barack Obama
C/O Joe Paulsen
1250 24th Street NW, Suite 300
Washington D.C. 20037

Dear Mr. President:

Our connection is nearly a quarter century in the past, but, not surprisingly, remains vivid in my memory. By amazing coincidence I was tasked by Random House in the mid-1980s to be the editor of *Art of the Deal*. And then I was the publisher in the mid-1990s of *Dreams from My Father*. It never occurred to me that these books would become emblematic of two succeeding, and very different, presidents.

I have maintained for years that I was seriously remiss in not asking you to sign a copy of *Dreams* when the first edition was released in 1995. It turned out that my copy was in the house of my son Evan (who, I believe, you know) and he more or less graciously gave it up. David Axelrod is our near neighbor on Lake Michigan and after discussing the issue with him over lunch this summer, I had the thought that a world class Christmas present for our two older grandsons, Benjamin (age 13) and Peter (age 12) Sanford would be the book carrying your signature, addressed to them.

So that is the mission in contacting you through Joe and courtesy of David.

After your keynote speech in 2004, I called the heirs of our Times Books/Random House imprint at Crown Books to alert them they had an asset on their backlist if they could reclaim the rights. I don't know the exact sequence thereafter, but it turned out that Crown had already had the idea. I was sorry not to be the publisher of the re-issued book. But it remains one of the significant satisfactions of my now very lengthy publishing career that for our \$40,000 advance I was able to support one of the greatest literary achievements ever by an American president.

At the time of your inauguration in 2009, I assembled the small staff that had worked on Dreams to share our recollections of what the experience had been like. The consensus was that we regretted you had not been more trouble, so we would have more anecdotes. I wrote a column on the topic that was then appearing on The Daily Beast and am enclosing it for your amusement.

All the best to you and your extraordinary family.

Peter Osnos

To recap:

The boys are Benjamin and Peter Sanford

Please return the book to me at

900 West End Avenue Apartment 16A

New York, New York 10025