

Spring Valley Senior High School
Rt. 59
Spring Valley, NY 10977
March 8, 1994

3-28-94
RECEIVED

Chief Wilma Mankiller
c/o St. Martin's Press
175 Fifth Avenue
New York, Ny 10010

Dear Chief Mankiller:

Before your book even hit the stores, we had ordered thirty copies to use in my tenth grade Honors English class. Hardly the kind of teacher to ask for a book I had not read, it seemed that the publication occurred at exactly the right time for us in terms of our classwork and discussions. We had just finished Margaret Craven's I Heard the Owl Call My Name, and on the very day The New York Times reviewed your book, the class discussion centered around the idea that the removal of young children to attend school robbed them of an opportunity to feel knowledgeable and comfortable with their own traditions and culture before they were forced to make judgements about accepting or becoming part of another tradition or culture. I went back to the teachers' room, grabbed my Times, and read the review. As I finished, my department chairman walked in and asked if I had any book requests. The class and your book were destined to meet.

While I have already finished Mankiller, my class is in the process of reading it and writing a reaction journal - their feelings about the ideas you express. I hope that those reactions will be the source of our discussions. Then, as a final project, they will write a reaction paper, hopefully synthesizing for themselves the ideas we discussed earlier about Margaret Craven's book, their feelings about Margaret Walker's Jubilee, which we are now studying, and your book.

I would like to invite you to our class if you should, at any time, be in the New York area. We are only 45 minutes from New York City. If that is impossible, and if you have the time, it would be wonderful for these students to hear from you, and if you have any suggestions and/or comments about the way we are approaching our need to become more aware of the different cultures and people existing in this country, we would all benefit.

At any rate, I would like to send you copies of the final papers that these students write. I am looking forward to a series of very stimulating discussions from a group of diverse, intelligent, and aware young men and women, and I hope those views will be expressed in their papers.

Enclosed, too, is a photo of the class

We hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Wendy Dembeck
Wendy Dembeck