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## Martin B. Duberman to Professor Silver, 6 January 1963

Martin B. Duberman

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PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY

Jan. 6, 1963

*Department of History*

Dear Professor Silver,

I am editing a volume of essays on the abolitionists, and Robert Durden, who will be one of the contributors, suggested your name when I asked him for further recommendations. It of course struck me at once as a fine idea, and I wondered if you might be persuaded to join us?

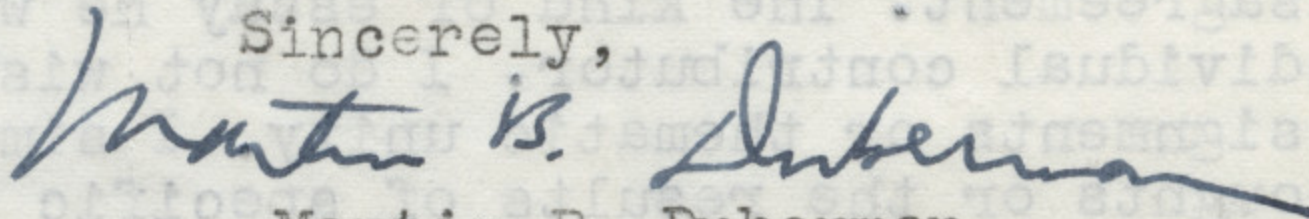
Let me tell you a bit about the volume. There has been so much recent fermentation and disagreement on the abolitionists that I thought a series of original essays on the subject by leading specialists, would be both timely and useful. I do not hope that we will be able to resolve differences of opinion. I look on the volume instead as a way either of adding, by way of an ~~essay~~ essay on a specific topic, to the body of existing factual information, or, by a more broadly interpretative essay, helping to clarify some broader area of disagreement. The kind of essay he would write would be left to the individual contributor. I do not wish to impose either specific assignments or thematic unity. I simply want to gather together the thoughts or the results of specific research of a number of specialists in the field.



The response from those I have contacted has thus far been very favorable. Almost everyone has promised an essay and welcomed the opportunity to put his ideas or research materials on paper. Benjamin Charles, Robert Durden, John Thomas (the new biographer of Garrison), Irving Bartlett, Harry Wilson (university of Wales), Staughton Lynd, Jim McPherson (recently completed a doctorate on the abolitionists during and after the Civil War) and Don Mathews (finishing a study of Methodism and Abolition) are already on the roster. C. Vann Woodward has responded favorably, and is trying to come up with an idea for an essay that pleases him. I have also recently contacted David Potter, Eric McKittrick and Leon Litwack, and am awaiting their reactions. I would be very pleased--and honored--if you would consider contributing an essay. I wonder, too, if I could prevail on you to suggest someone teaching in a Southern school, who is also a specialist in the field, and who might wish to contribute. The list of contributors is getting a little top-heavy with men who teach in Northern Universities, and I am anxious for the volume to represent as broad a spectrum of opinion and regional reactions as possible. I thought you might have some suggestions in this regard.

I look forward to hearing your reaction to all this. I particularly hope that you will yourself find the project appealing and wish to contribute to it.

Sincerely,



Martin B. Duberman