

My life's work has been to overcome the barriers that stop us from seeing each other as human beings. Language barriers and barriers of "race" and poverty have separated us and far too often made us incomprehensible to each other. I seek ways to close such distances and open authentic communication among persons regardless of their differences.

I fight against retreating into a comfortable space where I can forget the struggles of others. We must actively and fully acknowledge each other, all of us working as hard as we can to talk to each other and help each other whatever our language or culture or position in society.

In my writings on Renaissance French and African literatures I have always attempted to look past what may seem to be incoherent to the twenty-first century West, in order to understand ways of thinking that are deeply different from our own and pass on that understanding to others.