For something over a year now I have been reading rather widely and doing a lot of talking with Mississippians in an effort to find out why the people here act as they do.

Though I probably won't come up with anything very new, I am planning during the summer to write my presidential address for the Southern Historical Association. Tentatively, my subject will be: "Mississippi, the Closed Society."

It has occurred to me that you might be willing to share with me any thought you may have had regarding the reasons for Mississippi being at least a little different than most of the rest of the states.

I realize this is an imposition (which you have a perfect right to ignore) and certainly I would not expect any lengthy dissertation. But I would greatly appreciate your help in trying to explain Mississippi to the world in general.

Sincerely,

James W. Silver