

FACING THE RISING SUN

Perspectives on African American
Family and Child Well-Being



Oronde A. Miller



**Institute for Family and Child Well-Being
Bowie, MD**

Copyright © 2010 by Oronde A. Miller

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission from the Publisher except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews. Address all inquiries to IFCWB, P.O. Box 2374, Bowie, MD 20748.

Published by The Institute for Family and Child Well-Being
Bowie, Maryland
<http://www.ifcwb.org>

Library of Congress Control Number: 2009932266
ISBN 978-0-9824840-1-2

First U.S. Edition
September 2010

Printed in the United States of America

Editorial Assistance: Karen Butler, Jaiya John, Khari Miller
Cover Design, Cover Photograph, Book Layout: Oronde A. Miller

This book is dedicated to...

...my daughter, **Aya Nyela**, and my son, **Damani Askia**. You are a bright shining light. Every day you help me to better understand and appreciate that life truly is a continuous *process of becoming and re-becoming*. You carry within your soul the wisdom of the Creator and our Ancestors. Go forth and share your message with the world, as we continue to reclaim *Our Way*.

...my brother, **Khari Askia Miller**. You've been with me since the beginning. As we both know, that's not to be taken for granted. I admire and appreciate your example of courage and determination, so many times in the presence of tremendous adversity and challenge. You possess an inspiring *warrior spirit* that demonstrates the capacity for individuals to learn, transform and *re-become*. I always find inspiration in your story.

...my parents **Georgella and Ellword Miller**. If my single contribution during this lifetime is to be nearly as great a parent to your wonderful grandchildren as you have been to Khari and me, then my greatest potential accomplishment will have been achieved. Thank you for your example of how to live a life of service, personally and professionally, in support and protection of our community's most valuable resource... our children.

...the founding executive director of Homes for Black Children in Detroit, Michigan, **Ms. Sydney Duncan**. It was your compassionate spirit and courageous leadership while developing and guiding this nation's first African American adoption agency that made our family possible. I will forever be grateful for your role in providing Khari and me with the priceless gift of a family.

...our **Ancestors**, and the countless generations of **children and families** whose voices have never been heard, and whose stories have never been told.

DO NOT REPRODUCE

Appreciating...

The Creator, Giver and Sustainer of All Life, and The Ancestors.

There are many individuals and organizations whose contributions have influenced and shaped my thinking about the work of healing and transforming African American families and communities. The following are among them...

My lifelong circle of support and encouragement... Georgella and Ellword Miller, Khari Miller, and the many extensions of the Miller and Burgess families. Aya Nyela and Damani Askia for your encouragement to hurry up and finish. Amina Watson, for your patience and encouragement during these final stages. Delores and Elbert Nance, Christopher Brigmon, Dennis Gibson, Kevin Gibson, Brett Allen, Yohance Maqubela, and Jaiya John for your consistent encouragement and guidance through this process.

The early professional path... The National Center Staff: Jacquelyn Bailey Kidd, Jaiya John, James Craigen, Rebecca Jones Gaston, Tara Patterson. The Advisory Council: Sydney Duncan, Robert Hill, Ruth McRoy, J. Toni Oliver, Walter Perkins, Joseph Crumbley, Ruth Amerson, Zena Oglesby, Cynthia Willard, Linda West, Linda Whitfield, Anne Brown, Clarice Walker, Mae Best, O. Delmar Weathers, Sandy Lawrence, Wendy Lewis Jackson, C. Lynne Edwards. The Illinois Steering Committee: Annetta Wilson, Michael Burns, Cretora Barnett, Marcia Williams, Addie Hudson, Terry Solomon, Frances Elbert, Debra Dyer-Walker. National Association of Black Social Workers (NABSW). Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi). Black Administrators in Child Welfare (BACW). National Black Child Development Institute (NBCDI).

The Elders, Pioneers, Friends & Colleagues... Wade Nobles, Na'im Akbar, Marimba Ani, Kobi Kambon, Anthony Browder, Haki Madhubuti, Carol Spigner, Jestina Richardson, Rev. Richard Richardson, Andrew Billingsley, Jeanne Giovannoni, Sondra Jackson, Sharon Lowe, Erwin McEwen, Dorothy Roberts, Aminifu Harvey,

Joyce James, Leonard Dunston, G. Rosaline Preudhomme, Gregory Owens, Sandra Chipungu, Millicent Williams, Heidi McIntosh, Siobhan Trotman, William Thorne, Terry Cross, Joe Kroll, Barbara Needell, Ernestine Jones, Anna McPhatter, Gwen Outen, Laura House, SoNia Gilkey, Max Maurice, Robert O'Connor, Kikora Dorsey, Jackie Contreras, Anita Shannon, Cheryl Blanchette, Kary James, Madge Haynes, Regina Schofield, Chiemi T. Davis, Antoinette Malveaux, (Virginia) Ginger Pryor, Yakiciwey Washington Mitchell, Bernard Caliman, Anthony Williams, Russell Woods, Carlette Randall, Carolyne Rodriguez, Constance Rice, Patsy Sellers, Lyman Legters, Gloria Burgess, Sania Metzger, Karina Jimenez Lewis, Leonard Burton, Liz Squibb, Ernie Cathcart, Jorge Cabrera, Kristin Ward, Shawn West, Malcolm Hightower, Todd Shenk, JooYeun Chang, Donna Parish, Brenden Hargett, Pamela Watkins, James Gibson, Kristen Weber, Gayle Samuels, Gretchen Test, Jana Rickerson, Natalie Burke, Lucille Echohawk, Carlette Randall, Bernadette Blount, Frank Lamere, Sarah Hicks, Sandra Jimenez, Marva Hammons, Zeinab Chahine, William Bell, David Sanders, Kathy Barbell, Fran Gutterman, Betsey Rosenbaum, Susan Kelly, Khatib Waheed, Ralph Bayard, The extended circle of friends and colleagues from Casey Family Programs and the Alliance for Racial Equity in Child Welfare, Participants and Faculty from the Casey Family Programs Disproportionality Breakthrough Series Collaborative (yes, all 175+), Ruth White, Natalie Lyons, Ada White, friends and colleagues from the Child Welfare League of America, AdoptUSKids, the Children's Bureau, The judges involved with the Courts Catalyzing Change work of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, Uma Ahluwalia, and indeed Brenda Donald and the leadership team at Maryland DHR for bringing me into the world of public child welfare and human services.

I remain thankful for all of the other individuals not mentioned by name, but who have shaped my thinking about this critically important work, especially my Ohio birth families, the Taylor's and the Lane's.

I am especially grateful to Karen Butler for squeezing in time and tapping those earlier journalism skills to provide editorial assistance on the final manuscript.

CONTENTS

Preface 1

An Adinkra Values Framework 7

Introduction 11

1 - Renewing the Call for Activist Professionals 21

2 - Permanency Matters! Affirming Every Child's
Existence in this World 27

3 - Reflecting on the King Holiday: Will *We* Be Caught Sleeping
Through a Great Revolution? 33

4 - Affirming Every Child's Existence: Child Welfare Beyond
Child Protection and Intervention 39

5 - Kinship Care Down In The Delta: Celebrating a
Tradition of Family Taking Care of Family 45

6 - A Celebration of African American Mothers 51

7 - A Celebration of African American Fathers 57

8 - Redefining the Mission of Child Welfare Systems 63

9 - Jena 6: An Overview and Critical Analysis	69
10 - Stephen Biko and the South African Black Consciousness Movement: Implications for African American Family Well-Being	83
11 - One Person's Testimony: Rediscovering Your Voice During Life's Most Difficult Days	99
12 - Reflections on Another Child Fatality: We Must Do Better By Our Children	111
13 - Toward a Healing Vision for Child Welfare Practice	121
14 - Why I Write What I Like... and Why You Should Too!	143
Data Profile: State of African American Children in America's Child Welfare System	169
About the Institute for Family and Child Well-Being	173
APPENDIX: Organizations and Resources	189
A Note About the Author	193

Preface

The essays compiled in this book are born most immediately out of my desire to make sense of the experiences of African American children and families caught in the web of this nation's child welfare and juvenile justice systems, and the experiences of professionals in various institutions and systems that work with and on their behalf.

In writing these essays, and making them available in book form, I am clear that any successful effort by African Americans to reclaim and protect our children and families must begin with an acknowledgement that *ideas matter*. In order to support the healing and development of African American families and communities, we must first acknowledge, and then change, *how and what we think* about African American families and communities. I am clear about the power of ideas, and hope that in reading this book you also further appreciate the importance. As we clarify our ideas, our practice and our personal commitment will naturally respond to this shift. This applies to African Americans as well as others genuinely concerned about and committed to the healing and development of African American families and communities.

Facing the Rising Sun is about the ideas and values that govern our work with, and on behalf of, African American children and families. It's my attempt to articulate a set of ideas

FACING THE RISING SUN

based upon a set of values and assumptions about what is good for children, families and communities. It is also a set of observations about the ways in which systems and institutions try hard, yet come up short in supporting the real needs of families and communities. This book does not pretend to provide a set of "ultimate" answers, magic wand solutions or five-point plans. I believe the answers exist within the various communities around this country. My hope is that the ideas shared within this book help those of you who are genuinely concerned about African American children, families and communities assess and reassess your own assumptions and judgments about the challenges we continue to face every day.

Facing the Rising Sun may appear to be relevant only to individuals somehow connected to this nation's child welfare or juvenile justice systems. Upon reading, however, one may quickly realize that the messages in this book are much broader in its scope, relevance and implication. This book can most appropriately be considered a meditation on the integrity of the African American experience in this country, and the ways in which systems influence that experience.

It's about the responsibility we all share to care for and support one another, thus creating families and communities in which all of our children thrive. It's about the responsibility we all share to create a safety net within our communities so that children and families, when struggling, can get the kinds of support they need, thereby minimizing the need for punitive human service and juvenile justice system involvement. It's also about the ways in which this nation's human and social service systems could be transformed *from* systems that assess for

FACING THE RISING SUN

individual pathology and ration supports and services to those considered most cooperative and deserving, *into* systems that proactively identify fundamental needs and support the healing and development of human beings and family systems in ways that are culturally affirming and integrity-based.

What about the title and cover?

In 1972, Andrew Billingsley and Jeanne M. Giovannoni published a book entitled *Children of the Storm: Black Children and American Child Welfare*. In my opinion this book stands as the most thorough analysis and survey of the African American experience with this nation's child welfare system to date. *Shattered Bonds*, a more recent contribution by Dorothy Roberts, adds great and updated richness and texture to this story. I became aware of Billingsley and Giovannoni's work during my early years working in the field of child welfare.

In most discussions about the plight of African American children in this nation's child welfare system I hear little to no mention of this critically important work, yet almost four decades later it remains just as relevant in its analysis. I implore everyone to revisit *Children of the Storm* as a critical step in reorienting ourselves to the experiences of African American children and families with this nation's child welfare system.

The African American experience in this country, especially our involvement with this nation's child welfare, juvenile justice, and other punitive systems, is indeed appropriately characterized as a storm. This storm experience has severely disrupted the cultural fabric of our community, especially the socialization of

FACING THE RISING SUN

our children and the fabric of relationships within our families and communities. This very storm experience has always been met with resistance and a fundamental commitment among African American families to persevere and restore our community's way.

This enduring spirit of resistance and commitment is most eloquently captured in the poem of James Weldon Johnson, *Lift Every Voice and Sing*. This poem, said to have first been performed in February of 1900, would be put to music five years later by James Weldon Johnson's brother, John Johnson, and has, for many generations, been recognized as the Black National Anthem. In this poem, James Weldon Johnson implores us to raise our voices to the skies, tell the story of African people in this country and throughout the diaspora, and (informed by our faith, wisdom and hope) continue on the path of our God, our ancestors and our native land. This book's title was inspired by the closing lines of the poem's first verse, "*Facing the rising sun, of our new day begun, let us march on, 'till victory is won!*"

Facing the Rising Sun is offered as a reminder that after every stormy night or season comes a beautiful and life-sustaining sunrise. Our individual and collective responsibility is first and foremost to be *mindful* (in the truest sense of this word) of the sunrise, its healing properties and potential, and the reminder it represents that a new day is beginning. My personal prayer and meditation is that every rising sun reveals a community of families, professionals and organizations standing with renewed clarity of purpose and courage, and a fundamental commitment

FACING THE RISING SUN

to the healing and development of African American families and communities.

An Adinkra Values Framework

During my years in college and graduate school, I wondered why so few of our professors ever discussed the concepts and theories of child development and socialization developed by African people over the centuries. I became increasingly more familiar with some of the spiritual concepts and ideas that evolved in Ancient Kemet (commonly known as Egypt), Kenya and Ghana in particular - all of which spoke directly to the fundamental notion of human development and socialization as a process of spiritual growth and development. It remains clear that there is a wealth of information and wisdom in the experiences and history of African people waiting to be tapped and utilized in the healing and development of African people in this country and around the world.

The symbols found across the bottom of the book cover are Adinkra Symbols developed among the Akan people in Ghana. According to W. Bruce Willis, in *The Adinkra Dictionary*, while the Adinkra Symbols evolved as a part of the mourning rituals and practices of the Akan people, they are increasingly used as a symbolic language/system for communicating the "philosophy, religious beliefs, social values and political history of the Akan people." These symbols carry with them messages about the cultural substance of a people. I offer the symbols on this book cover as a conceptual foundation upon which we can

FACING THE RISING SUN

organize practices and systems to support the continued healing and development of African American families.








Oronde A. Miller

September 12, 2010

DO NOT REPRODUCE

AN ADINKRA VALUES FRAMEWORK

(symbols featured on the book cover)

	<p>Gye Nyame <i>"Except for God"</i> symbol of the supremacy of God</p>
	<p>Akoben <i>"War horn"</i> symbol of vigilance and wariness</p>
	<p>Sesa Wo Suban <i>"Change or transform your character"</i> symbol of life transformation</p>
	<p>Sankofa <i>"Return and get it"</i> symbol of importance of learning from the past</p>
	<p>Akokonan <i>"The leg of a hen"</i> symbol of nurturing and discipline</p>
	<p>Aya <i>"Fern"</i> symbol of endurance and resourcefulness</p>
	<p>Mate Masie <i>"What I hear, I keep"</i> symbol of wisdom, knowledge and prudence</p>

Note: The explanations for the Adinkra symbols featured above are based on the descriptions provided in *The Adinkra Dictionary: A Visual Primer on the Language of Adinkra*, by W. Bruce Willis.

DO NOT REPRODUCE

FACING THE RISING SUN

DO NOT REPRODUCE

DO NOT REPRODUCE

Introduction

"Ultimately, these essays are but one example of how each of us can find a way of reflecting on our experiences and raising our voices in the interest of improving the life experiences of children and families."

This book is a collection of essays written within the last few years. Each of the essays was inspired by my continuing reflection on both my personal involvement with this nation's foster care system, as well as my professional involvement in this nation's ongoing quest to transform child welfare practice. The essays in this book primarily explore the meaning and significance of the African American child welfare experience, and offers a framework through which this nation's system of human services can become more humane in its approaches, thus more responsive to the families and communities they are charged with supporting. Understanding some of my personal and professional background should help the reader in

FACING THE RISING SUN

understanding the context in which I experience, reflect upon and make sense of this work.

My brother and I were placed in foster care at an early age in a small Ohio town. Our White mother was unable to care for us, and her relationship with our African American father was strained at best. With no support from her family, and her sincere desire for us to have a better life, she placed us in foster care with the hope that we would be adopted by a loving family that could provide for us in a way that she knew she couldn't. Our father and his family didn't find out until later. When they did find out they attempted to get us out of foster care, but were told by the authorities they were too late and were turned away.

After spending a few months in foster care in Ohio, and subsequently in Detroit, Michigan, we were adopted by a wonderful African American family in Detroit. We knew we were adopted as far back as I can remember, although I don't remember learning anything about our birth parents or those early experiences until I was an adult. Growing up, I never felt that my adoption was a strong part of my identity, or that of our family's. I also don't remember being teased about it by family members or being treated any differently as a result. We were a part of the family.

I was incredibly shy and self-conscious growing up, especially during high school and my early years in college. I was extremely nervous, guarded and quiet in relationships (especially so early on), and had a hard time trusting and

FACING THE RISING SUN

confiding in others. I was very cautious about who I shared my most personal thoughts, feelings and frustrations with. I loved to debate people in classes and in organizational settings where it was always about concepts and ideas; however, I rarely exposed how I felt about things at the heart and spirit level. I am still making sense of what my personal "heart and spirit" work is about as I continue along this journey we call life. I am clear, however, that this is the part of the work that is sorely missing in the professional fields we refer to as child welfare and human services in this country.

After graduating from high school I went on to attend Howard University in Washington, D.C., where I switched academic majors from electrical engineering, to computer operated business information systems, and then to the major and minor degree programs I finally fell in love with... elementary education and African American studies, respectively. Inspired by some of my experiences studying elementary education and African American studies, I decided to forego my initial plans to teach in one of the newly formed African-centered elementary academies in Detroit and pursued my graduate studies in developmental psychology (still at Howard University).

I loved the work I was a part of, and exposed to, while working with Dr. Wade Boykin and his graduate student research team, all focused on the role of culture in shaping the schooling experiences of African American students in America's public school systems. My role in supporting that

FACING THE RISING SUN

ever-evolving work continued to outpace my ability to complete my own doctoral degree requirements, and I eventually took a leave of absence, just short of completing my doctorate. I still haven't finished, but I am committed to going back and completing my degree.

It was during what was supposed to be a short break in my doctoral process that I “accidentally” started my career work in child welfare (I previously worked part-time as a counselor in an independent living program). My good friend and former professor Dr. Jaiya John was doing some consulting work at a newly formed center that was being housed under the umbrella of the Howard University School of Social Work. This new center was the National Center on Permanency for African American Children (NCPAAC). This center had recently been formed by a group of African American foster care and adoption experts, with the goal of identifying and resolving barriers to permanency for African American children in foster care.

The first big work effort of the NCPAAC was to develop a national database of waiting African American families. Because of the Center's collective expertise, it was highly sought out for guidance by other organizations and agencies throughout the country. One of the larger projects the NCPAAC committed to was a partnership with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services to develop a local “success model” for recruiting and retaining adoptive families to care for African American children in foster care. To help

FACING THE RISING SUN

develop an infrastructure to support the Center's evolving work, Jaiya assumed the role of Associate Director for the National Center, and hired me as a research associate to support the Center's research and data-related work. I had no idea at that time that I would quickly find myself involved in work that would help me to more fully understand who I am and the significance of my own personal life experiences and journey.

Given the composition of the NCPAAC advisory council I had an opportunity to interview and learn from the elders, as it were, of this nation's African American adoption and child welfare movement. I learned a great deal about the politics (economic, racial and cultural) of child welfare practice and policy, and more importantly about the role of racism and cultural oppression in shaping the experiences of African American children and families involved with this nation's child welfare system. It was a great and (as I appreciate more and more) truly unique environment in which to learn about child welfare.

Also during this early period, I learned that one of the pioneering adoption agencies represented on the NCPAAC's advisory council (Homes for Black Children in Detroit, Michigan) was the actual adoption agency that brought my brother and me from Ohio and placed us in our adoptive family. I was soon informed that the NCPAAC's staff (very small at the time) would be traveling to participate in the agency's thirty-year anniversary conference, during which I

FACING THE RISING SUN

would have the opportunity to meet the founding executive director, Ms. Sydney Duncan. To this day, the moment in that hotel ballroom during which I met Sydney Duncan and her staff for the first time has been the most memorable experience I have had since being professionally involved in this work. The integrity-filled work of that adoption agency and its staff forever changed my life (and my brother's), and set me upon a life course I continue to travel. While my love and appreciation for my birth mother and father grows stronger every day, it was through the work and service of Homes for Black Children that my brother and I received the gift of family. That gift has been priceless.

Given my personal experience and the way I was introduced to child welfare practice and policy, I was very skeptical and distrustful of the professionals working in the child welfare system in general and public child welfare agencies in particular. I make a distinction between the actual public child welfare agency (which is the state and/or local government's decision-making entity that handles child protective services and foster care) and the larger child welfare system, which includes the public child welfare agency, as well as the courts, attorneys, child advocates, private community-based organizations that provide supports and services to families, mandatory reporters, therapists, and others. The work of the NCPAAC was largely focused on identifying the historic shortcomings of the child welfare system, and highlighting the ways in which these pioneering African

FACING THE RISING SUN

American adoption agencies pushed through some of the barriers within these monstrous and bureaucratic systems.

As I gained more experience working for other local and national organizations and child welfare foundations, I continued to learn about the system's complexities, how the system has evolved over time, and the integrity and commitment of a great number of people working within these systems. There are a large number of people working to make a difference in these systems throughout the country, within very challenging environments. These individuals must be celebrated and honored for what in many cases is truly heroic work on behalf of children and their families. I also realize that commitment and good intentions among individuals working within these systems has not been enough for too many of our children and families.

I've been fortunate to have had the opportunity to work directly for, and alongside, a number of leading national organizations, foundations and child welfare experts. Throughout these experiences my interest in and commitment to this work has always been centered around understanding and responding to the dynamics and experiences of African American children and families, and making this country's child welfare systems more effective and humane in doing the same. In doing so I've gained a greater appreciation for the similar struggles of Native American / Indian and Latino individuals and organizations that are likewise working toward equitable treatment and improved outcomes for children and

FACING THE RISING SUN

families in their respective communities. Many of the ideas included in this book's essays are consistent with those advocated by individuals in these various racial and cultural communities.

My professional experiences related to understanding and resolving the inequities experienced by African American children and families involved with our child welfare systems remind me a great deal of the cumulative experiences I had growing up, during my undergraduate years and also during my graduate school years at Howard University. The majority of this nation's child welfare systems (including the public agencies and their partners and stakeholders) are still reluctant to deal with the hard and complex dynamics of race and culture in the shaping of American society, the influence of race and culture in shaping their institutional structures and practices, as well as the relevance of race and culture in shaping the experiences of children and families involved with their systems. The same can be said of many of the national organizations and foundations they look to for guidance and advice.

If this field is to realize its full potential and effectiveness, the people working within it will have to more fully understand and appreciate the racial and cultural underpinnings of its origins and present operations, as well as the deeper meaning and implications of race and culture in shaping the developmental experiences of the children, families and communities they serve. If the field does this in a

FACING THE RISING SUN

meaningful way, it is my expectation and hope that it can more fully embrace the proactive “helping” and supporting role it is poised to play, reducing the need for the predominant and punitive “saving” (or protecting) role it tends to overwhelmingly embrace today.

My experiences working in the field thus far give me greater hope that this kind of transformation of child welfare is indeed possible. It will increasingly depend, however, on child welfare professionals and social work educators opening up their training and decision-making processes to additional and previously marginalized perspectives on the work of child welfare in particular, and ideas of family and child well-being more generally. It will depend on child welfare organizations and systems opening up their doors, conference rooms, board rooms, court rooms, as well as court chambers to the children, families and communities that have been most directly impacted by their practices and policies. It will require an increased level of critically reflective practice, creative thinking and courageous risk-taking among the professionals most committed to this transformation to help move this massive system in a different direction.

The essays in this book are my way of sharing brief reflections and perspectives as I continue to engage in this work. My hope is that the various topics, perspectives and ideas shared in these essays serve as departure points, if you will, for you to dialogue more with your colleagues, classmates, friends and relatives about different aspects of African

FACING THE RISING SUN

American family and child well-being in general, and the ways in which our society can more effectively support improved outcomes for children and families. Ultimately, these essays are but one example of how each of us can find a way of reflecting on our experiences and raising our voices in the interest of improving the life experiences of children and families. I thank you for your interest in this book, and hope that you find value in the ideas and perspectives contained within.

The essays that follow have not been thematically organized, although some of the essays are more closely aligned in topic and content than others. The ordering of the essays in this book follows that in which they were originally published. The final essay, *Why I Write What I Like... And Why You Should Too!*, is the only essay included that was previously unpublished.

A NOTE ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Oronde Miller is the Founder and Executive Director of the *Institute for Family and Child Well-Being*. He has served as Senior Director of Strategic Consulting for Casey Family Programs; Senior Research Assistant at the Child Welfare League of America; Research Associate for the National Center on Permanency for African American Children; and as Chief of Staff for the Maryland Department of Human Resources (Maryland's Human Services Agency).

An educator and psychologist by training, Oronde has a particular interest in family dynamics, schooling and education, and the reclamation of traditional African methods of character formation and development among children and adolescents.

Oronde and his brother briefly experienced foster care as young children, before being adopted and raised in a wonderful African American family in Detroit, Michigan.

Oronde currently lives in Prince Georges County, Maryland, just outside of Washington, DC.

Oronde is available for select readings and lectures. To inquire about potential participation in an event, please visit www.ifcwb.org, or email Oronde directly: omiller@ifcwb.org.