

Members of the
Senate Judiciary Committee
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

October 13, 1991


Dear Senators,

I worked as a Special Assistant to Clarence Thomas at the EEOC from 1985 to 1986. I am writing because I am amazed and outraged at the "fatherly ambience" that he is getting away with projecting as an image of his office. Let me make it clear: I am not claiming that I was the victim of sexual harassment.

Clarence Thomas pretends that his only behavior toward those who worked as his special assistants was as a father to children, and a mentor to proteges. That simply isn't true. If you were young, black, female and reasonably attractive, you knew full well you were being inspected and auditioned as a female. You knew when you were in favor because you were always at his beck and call, being summoned constantly, tracked down wherever you were in the agency and given special deference by others because of his interest. And you knew when you had ceased to be an object of sexual interest -- because you were barred from entering his office and treated as an outcast, or worse, a leper with whom contact was taboo. For my own part, I found his attention unpleasant, sought a transfer, was told one "just doesn't do that," insisted nonetheless and paid the price as an outcast for the remainder of my employment at EEOC.

I can understand why some of his special assistants are coming forward to his defense: he is the most powerful black man they know and possibly, the most influential they will ever know. They want to retain contact because they will need it to survive and to advance in a very tough world. But the atmosphere of absolute sterile propriety permeated by loving, nurturing but asexual concern is simply a lie. Women know when there are sexual dimensions to the attention they are receiving. And there was never any doubt about that dimension in Clarence Thomas' office. I have told all of this to Senate staff including the Chairman's staff in the weeks following the nomination. But in light of the importance which both ambience (in his office) and credibility have now assumed in these hearings, I felt obliged to communicate this in writing in order to put this on the record publicly.

Sincerely,


Sukari Hardfield

517 Rock Creek Church Road N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20010

AFFIDAVIT

District of)
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Sukari Hardnett, having been duly sworn, make the following statement:

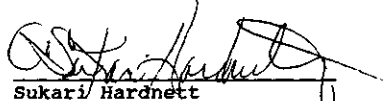
1. I worked as a Special Assistant to Clarence Thomas at the EEOC from 1985 to 1986.
2. I am amazed and outraged at the "fatherly ambience" that he is getting away with projecting as an image of his office.
3. I am not claiming that I was the victim of sexual harassment.
4. Clarence Thomas and those who have testified on his behalf would have us believe that his only behavior toward those who worked as his special assistants was as a father to children, and a mentor to proteges. That simply isn't true.
5. If you were young, black, female, reasonably attractive and worked directly for Clarence Thomas, you knew full well you were being inspected and auditioned as a female.
6. You knew when you were in favor because you were always at his beck and call, being summoned constantly, tracked down wherever you were in the agency and given special deference by others because of his interest.
7. You knew when you had ceased to be an object of sexual interest -- because you were barred from entering his office and treated as an outcast, or worse, a leper with whom contact was taboo.
8. For my own part, I found his attention unpleasant, sought a transfer, was told one "just doesn't do that," insisted nonetheless and paid the price as an outcast for the remainder of my employment at EEOC. That is why I resigned and left the EEOC.
9. Statements made under oath by Clarence Thomas' staff were simply untrue. They asserted I had been dismissed because of failure to pass the bar. Untrue. They characterized my position as a kind of law student internship. Untrue. I held the position of Special Assistant and my desk was located in the Chairman's suite.
10. I believe I understand why some of his special assistants are coming forward to his defense: he is the most powerful black man they know and possibly, the most influential they will ever know. They want to retain contact because they will need it to survive and to advance in a very tough world.
11. But as respects the atmosphere of absolute propriety, they were

either totally unaware of the reality or they engaged in active misrepresentation. It is certainly possible that some were in fact accorded the genuine respect they described.

12. To maintain that Clarence Thomas' office was untainted by any sexuality and permeated by loving, nurturing but asexual concern is simply a lie.

13. Women know when there are sexual dimensions to the attention they are receiving. And there was never any doubt about that dimension in Clarence Thomas' office. I know it. Clarence Thomas knows it. And I know he knows it because he discussed some of the females in his office with me.

14. I have told all of this to Senate staff including the Chairman's staff in the weeks following the nomination. In light of the importance which both ambience (in his office) and credibility have assumed, I felt obliged to communicate this in writing in order to put this on the record publicly.


 Sukari Hardnett
 517 Rock Creek Church Road N.W.
 Washington, D.C. 20010

Subscribed and sworn to
 before me this 14th day
 of October, 1991.


 Notary Public

My commission expires

My Commission Expires October 31, 1994.

