

## **CURRICULUM of**

### **GAIL MILISSA GRANT**

Author and Public Speaker  
Rome, Italy

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## **SUMMARY**

In 2001 I retired from the United States Foreign Service after serving more than twenty years as a cultural and public affairs attaché. As a diplomat, I directed international public relations and cultural exchange programs, and recruited and led culturally diverse teams toward that end. I am fluent in French and Italian, and skilled in public speaking and Presidential press advance work.

Writing, however, is my first love and I am now able to pursue it full-time while working as a freelance speaker. My primary writing project, a memoir on my family's impact on the early civil rights movement, was published by the Missouri History Museum in October 2008. It was awarded the Benjamin Franklin Book of the Year 2009 (autobiography/memoir) and an Award of Merit from the American Association of State and Local History in 2010.

Since retiring, I have worked as a consultant for U.S. Embassies in Italy, France, Austria, and Morocco, traveling throughout these countries to address professors, students and the general public on my book and U.S. civil rights issues. Besides discussing my writing, topics have included:

- “Antecedents to the Modern Civil Rights Movement”
- “The Pre-1954 Fight for Civil Rights”
- “Black History: Recapturing My Heritage”
- “Contemporary Issues in Black America”
- “The Use of Primary Resource Materials in Writing Memoir”

In addition, I have presented my book at over sixty venues, including Oxford University, Columbia University, and the Smithsonian Institution, and have been interviewed on radio and television.

## **FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER EXPERIENCE** U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND U.S. INFORMATION AGENCY (1980-2001)

### **Examiner, Board of Examiners, Washington, DC 1997 - 2001**

- Recruited, interviewed, and/or hired approximately 1,000 foreign service and diplomatic security officers annually.
- As team leader and member, devised and conducted behavior-based assessments of candidates through rigorous daylong process.
- Invented novel recruiting presentation using visioning techniques to transport U.S. audiences to overseas locales.
- Was recruited for short-term assignments to do press advance for President Clinton in Hong Kong, Tanzania, South Africa, and New Zealand, and to direct public diplomacy programs at embassies in Italy and Portugal.

#### **Program Development Officer, Office of Arts America, Washington, DC 1994 – 1996**

- Administered program that sent arts management specialists (museum personnel, conservators, theatre directors, etc.) to U.S. embassies in order to assist their counterparts improve local institutions.
- Launched fund-raising strategy for private sector co-sponsorship of USG international art exhibitions; produced advertising materials; and identified potential donors.
- Convinced front office to delay elimination of staff function; spearheaded office reorganization; and assisted with outplacement.

#### **Program Officer, Washington Foreign Press Center, Washington, DC 1993 - 1994**

- Designed and conducted media tours throughout the U.S. on multilateral trade issues for foreign correspondents, resulting in unprecedented coverage in leading European newspapers and a new series on southern American cities in the Pusan Daily News (2 million circulation).
- Organized press briefings with White House and Cabinet-level officials on issues of interest to Canadian and Latin American journalists.

#### **Branch Public Affairs Officer, United States Embassy, Brazil 1991 - 1993**

- Managed embassy's public outreach program in Minas Gerais, Brazil's second most important state.
- Increased media coverage of U.S. foreign policy and society by 30%.
- Supervised Brazilian staff of seven and oversaw \$250,000 program budget.

#### **News Watch Officer, Operations Center, Washington, DC 1989-91**

- Assured smooth functioning of round-the-clock news watch center.
- Monitored and reported on all major print and broadcast media for senior management.
- Handled full range of emergencies from personnel stationed abroad.

#### **Country Affairs Officer, Office of African Affairs, Washington, DC 1986-88**

- Supervised management of eleven cultural and public affairs centers at U.S. embassies in West Africa from Washington headquarters.
- Evaluated work of 80 U.S. and foreign employees and approved \$5 million budget.

#### **Assistant Cultural Attaché, U.S. Embassy, France, 1982 - 85**

- Directed program that enhanced study of U.S. in French higher educational system.
- Organized speaking tours for prominent U.S. authors, including Toni Morrison, Elizabeth Hardwick, and Nikki Giovanni.
- Inaugurated countrywide English language teacher program.
- Served on Fulbright Commission Scholarship Board.
- Conceived and produced embassy's first journal on U.S. literature for distribution to French-speaking countries worldwide.

#### **Public Affairs Assistant, U.S. Embassy, Norway 1981 - 82**

- As trainee, was involved in all aspects of embassy work, i.e. political forecasting, economic reporting, press and cultural programming, and administration.
- Organized ambassador's first official trip outside Oslo.
- Lectured on U.S. education, culture and society.

## UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND MUSEUM EXPERIENCE (1974-80)

**Assistant Professor/Lecturer** Howard University, Washington, DC  
Departments of Architecture and Fine Arts

**Archives Technician** The Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC  
The National Museum of American Art

## PUBLICATIONS

**“At the Elbows of My Elders: One Family’s Journey Toward Civil Rights,”** Missouri History Museum, October 2008. *Benjamin Franklin Book of the Year 2009 in autobiography/memoir category.*

**“Josephine Baker: The Honor of Her Company,”** Missouri History Museum online magazine, [www.mhmvoices.org](http://www.mhmvoices.org), Spring 2007.

**“Upstairs, Downstairs: Recollections of an Embalmer’s Daughter”**, Gateway Heritage Magazine, Volume 26, number 2, Fall 2005, Missouri Historical Society.

**“Presentation”**, introduction to Focus magazine’s issue entitled, *Le Roman Afro-Americain*, US Embassy/Paris, 1983.

## AWARDS

**Benjamin Franklin Book of the Year 2009** (autobiography/memoir) from the Independent Book Publishers Association for “At the Elbows of My Elders: One Family’s Journey Toward Civil Rights,” Missouri History Museum.

**Award of Merit** from the American Association for State and Local History for “At the Elbows of My Elders: One Family’s Journey Toward Civil Rights,” Missouri History Museum.

Meritorious Honor Award, 1996, United States Information Agency).

Numerous U.S. Department of State group awards, 2001, 2000, 1999, 1991.

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

**M.A.**, Art History, Howard University, Washington, DC 1974

**B.A.**, Art History and Archaeology, Washington University, St. Louis, MO 1972  
Year Abroad Program, Italian University for Foreigners, Perugia, Italy, 1969

Group Process Consultation training, NTL Institute in Bethel, ME, 1995

Fundraising Strategies Seminar, The George Washington University, Washington, DC, 1995

Executive Management and Media Skills Seminars, Foreign Service Institute, Washington, DC, 1988 & 1996

International Communication Graduate Seminar, The American University, Washington, DC, 1986

Intensive French and Portuguese language training, Introduction to Norwegian,  
Foreign Service Institute, Washington, DC, 1981 & 1991

## PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

PEN American Center  
The Authors Guild