

FRANCES MCSTAY ADAMS

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Background

- Awakening interest in women's issues
- Economic hardships
- University of Minnesota, B.A. 1936
- Student jobs
- Journalism major
- PR work for fraternities
- Mother's remarriage ends in divorce
- Justice for working people
- Leo Burnett Advertising Agency
- Marriage

Pre-Foreign Service

- Move to Washington D.C. – meets Esther Peterson and Eleanor Roosevelt
- Americans for Democratic Action
- Freelance work in radio
- Women journalists
- Val-Kill committee
- General Motors strike as volunteer PR person
- ADA organizing committee
- Childcare arrangements during this period
- Lifelong ADA friends
- Goes to work when first child is 9 months old
- Work on Latin America for Rockefeller
- President Roosevelt's interest
- More development of skills, knowledge of activities in various countries

Civil Rights

- Interest and activities in civil rights dating to 1942
- Civil rights activities through ADA and DC
- Coordinating groups for Home Rule and Civil Rights
- How much earlier various movements started than most people realize

Foreign Service

- Husband flunked FS exam while a graduate student
- Husband's education
- Husband enters State Dept., later passes exam and is assigned to Quito
- Family's losses in World War II
- Charles Lindbergh
- Shortwave radio rebroadcasts in Quito to help sell the U.S. war effort

Develops radio and other types of programs built around child literacy and maternal and health issues
Volunteers in child health programs
Not considered on a professional level
Experiences opposition to working from Embassy officer
Current employment situation for FS spouse

U.S. and Civil Rights Work

Returns to U.S.
Begins work on ADA organization and created ADA study trips abroad
Doris Foster, another FS spouse
Focus of ADA travel study groups on politics in England and other countries visited
Childcare on ADA study trips
Rheumatoid arthritis after birth of second son
Work in civil rights in late 1940s
Leadership discussion group at McLean Gardens with League of Women Voters
How FA got into the women's movement without consciously realizing she was part of a movement as a working woman in the 1930's
1946-1950 in U.S. working with the Inter-American Education Foundation
Obstacles for professional women
Work and life in Washington during World War II
Housing in Washington

Cairo, Egypt

1950-1952

Move to Cairo and work on women's issues there
Cultural differences as these apply to women
Volunteer in literacy programs
Burning of Cairo, 1950
Not evacuated from Cairo
Director of Fulbright Program Cairo
Ambassador Caffery unsympathetic to women's issues
Caffery's instance on protocol

New Delhi, India

1952-1955

Move, under Ambassadors Bowles and Allen
Ambassador George Allen
Work on evaluation of U.S. films sent to India by USG
Republican vs. Democratic representation in ranks
Involvement with American Women's Club
Protocol incident at Ambassador's wife's tea
Mrs. Caffery's obsession with protocol
Becomes president of American Women's Club
Refugee situation as result of partition of India and Pakistan, 1948
Arrest in Kashmir
Earlier arrest of her husband in Ecuador
Supportive husband

Representational responsibilities
Founding of the American School in India
Researched various countries' propaganda programs for the Rockefeller Committee in India
Ability to capitalize on being from a different culture to help develop career
Social service work through American Women's Club in Great Britain
Incident of discrimination in American Women's Club
Betsy Whitney
Institutes program of Embassy briefings for wives in London
Briefing programs enhance morale
Adlai Stevenson's visit to India
Volunteers at BBC as writer and voice

Baghdad, Iraq 1963-1965
Move
Iraqi coups and attempted coups around 1963
Jobs in Washington 1959-1963
Joins the Women's National Democratic Club
Iraqi women's lives and issues
Assisted writers and researchers who came to Iraq on research into lives of Iraqis
Divorce of Iraqi-American couples in Iraq
Iraqi coups – gunfire in the streets
Indian Ambassador becomes good friend
Anti-Americanism in Iraq
Making friends among Iraqis

Amman, Jordan 1966-1967
Development of the "Jordan Today" program
Life and activities in Jordan
Studies of women's issues in Jordan
Education of women

Lahore, Pakistan 1967-1970
Volunteer activities at Consul General's residence
Preparation of history of Lahore consulate and brochure on collection left by former CG Andrew Corey

Back to the U.S.
Work on the UN International Decade for Women with Irene Tinker
Gets involved in women's organizations and works on women's issues for WNDC
Activities at WNDC (at time of interview in 1991)
Work on Seminar "A Wake-up Call for Democrats"
WNDC members participate in demonstrations on Women's Rights
Other WNDC activities
Bill Moyers speaks at WNDC
Discussion on behavior of congress

Women's voting power, issues of importance to women
Discussion of Doug Wilder's prospects as candidate