

VERNITA PEARL FORT

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EDUCATION SYSTEMS ECOLOGY, EVOLUTIONARY BIOLOGY, SYSTEMS DYNAMIC MODELING

- 1976** Master of Science Degree, Tropical Ecology and Evolutionary Biology,
Yale University, School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, New Haven, CT
- 1974** Bachelor of Science Degree, Natural Resources Systems Management,
University of California, Berkeley, School of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Berkeley, CA
- 1972** University of Ghana at Legon, University of California, U.C. Berkeley Exchange Program, Volta
Hydroelectric Dam, Volta Basin Ecology, and Ghana Population Dynamics, Ghana, West Africa
- 1996** System Dynamic Modeling, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA

EDUCATION ECONOMICS AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 1985-88** National Economics Association Doctoral Fellow, University of Maryland, College Park, MD
- 1984** Economics and Commercial Studies Program, U.S. Foreign Service Institute, Washington, DC
- 1991** Development Studies Program, U.S. Foreign Service Institute; American University, Washington, DC

EDUCATION COMMUNICATION PHILOSOPHY, HUMAN RIGHTS, PERFORMANCE, AND MEDIA

- 2012-15** Institute of Communications Research, College of Media, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Graduate Major: *Music and Human Rights in the People's Great Turning*
Graduate Minors: Film and Dance
- 2017** University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT, *Africana Philosophy, Communication, and Transformation*
- 2013** University of Sheffield, Sheffield, England, *Musical Understanding: Philosophical, Psychological
and Neurological Approaches*
- 2008 University of the West Indies, The Sir Arthur Lewis Institute for Social and Economic Studies and
The Institute for Sustainable Development, *Music, Digitization and Development*, Kingston, Jamaica

EXPERIENCE HUMAN RIGHTS, GLOBAL DEMOCRACY, A NEW UNITED NATIONS, AND THE ARTS OF TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

- 2020-Present** **Research Scholar**, Center for African Studies and the Women and Gender in Global Perspectives
Program, at the University of Illinois Global Institute, Urbana-Champaign. Research focus:

*The Africana World and Global Democracy:
Transforming the United Nations and
the International Order through
the Arts of Transitional Justice*

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2003-Present **Founding Director, Lead Researcher, and Producer of the Music and Human Rights Project (MHRP), previously named Transformation, Ethics and the Arts (TEACO)**
Accomplishments over nearly 20 years

Special Advisor to the Principal, Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts, a Caribbean-wide tertiary institution based in Kingston, Jamaica, accredited by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design in the United States

Conceived, collaboratively designed, and implemented the International Human Rights Festival of scholarship, symposia and the arts in Jamaica with its music and human rights communities, 2018

Developed and Won the Award for the *Best Visual Display of Research Award* from the International Communication Association, *Music and Mind for Human Rights*, 2014

Conceived and designed a Transdisciplinary Human Rights Institute with the College of Law, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, adaptable for universities around the world, 2014

Directed the opera, *La Púrpura de la Rosa*, the first opera of the Americas (Peru), collaboratively repurposing it with international artists from empire to empowerment, using Boalian/Freirean technique, at the School of Music, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL, 2015

Advised Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO) on Cultural Industries and Development for United Nations sponsored initiatives in Jamaica

Chief Operations Officer for the United Music Industry of Jamaica, Kingston, Jamaica

Encouraged creation and directed film on launch of the National Youth Orchestra of Jamaica and its preparation, supported by Venezuela's El Sistema Orchestra, and produced a promotional documentary film entitled *CHILDREN MOVED BY MUSIC, MOVE SOCIETY*

Directed and produced other film shorts, including *PEARL, Master Voices on Music's Power*, and animated film shorts on the *Neuroscience of Music and Morality*. See "Film Works" below

Make presentations globally on music, human rights, and humanity's civilizational shift in Asia, Europe, Latin America, and the U.S., facilitating problem-solving across communities, sectors, and generations on music, human rights, transforming the U.N., and humanity's civilizational shift

2020-Present **Facilitator for Local and Global Democracy and Justice, Includes Racial Justice Lens, Skill in Action**, with communities, nations, and their local, national, regional and global organizations

2008-2009 **Visiting Scholar**: College of Media, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL

EXPERIENCE **DIPLMACY AND DEVELOPMENT: U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID), U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE (USDOS)**
1976-2003

2002-2003 **Acting Director, Southern Africa Office, Africa Bureau (AFR/SA), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Washington, DC**

Led the AFR/SA team composed of Mission Directors across Southern Africa, their staff, and the Washington, D.C. staff, in the research, design, implementation and evaluation of the numerous projects that constituted each of the seven bilateral programs (Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe), the Regional Center for Southern Africa based in Botswana, and the Lesotho and Swaziland programs. A few illustrative accomplishments include:

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- Led design of the Southern Africa Food Security Program that saved thousands of lives.
- Led interagency team of USAID, State, and U.S. Departments of Justice and Treasury to produce the Anti-Corruption Program with Zambian government and then replicated prototype.
- Supported extending Takalani Sesame Street, now syndicated across Africa as public education. Muppet Kami with HIV/AIDS addressed prevention and treatment, signaling program's power.
- Led AFR/SA/USAID \$20 million Global Development Alliance for public-private partnerships.

2000-2002 Deputy Director and Acting Director, Middle East Affairs Office, Asia and Near East Bureau, (ANE/MEA), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Washington, DC

Co-led ANE/MEA team composed of Mission Directors across the Middle East and North Africa, their staff, and the Washington, D.C. staff, in the research, design, implementation and evaluation of the numerous projects that constituted each of ANE/MEA's five bilateral programs (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and West Bank/Gaza) and five non-presence programs (Israel, Yemen, Algeria, Tunisia and Oman) in the Middle East. USAID spent \$2 billion per year on Middle East programs, about 30% of USAID's total annual budget. A few illustrative accomplishments include:

- Enabled inter-agency cooperation forming Gore-Mubarak (U.S.-Egypt) Economic Partnership.
- Led design of new USAID/Yemen program that opened at U.S. Embassy/Yemen.
- Renewed support for *Seeds for Peace* that connected Palestinian and Israeli youth for peace.
- Critiqued USAID's "Future of Iraq" and Israel programs from development ethics perspective.
- Managed the U.S.-North Africa Economic Partnership and Middle East Democracy programs.
- Spearheaded ANE/MEA's Information and Communications Technology program

1995-1999 Caribbean Regional Economist **U.S. Agency for International Development (USAD), Kingston, Jamaica, Caribbean**

Served as the Economist for the Jamaica Bilateral Program and the Caribbean Regional Program. I provided expertise in macroeconomics, microeconomics, social economics, ecological-economics, political economy in the collaborative design, identification, implementation, or evaluation of programs. I also guided an eight-person team in implementing the environmental program with the same 14 Caribbean countries. A few illustrative accomplishments include:

- Worked with the U.S. National Security Council, the White House, and an inter-agency body to prepare for the Summit between President Clinton and the 14 Caribbean heads of state that produced the *Partnership for Prosperity and Security in the Caribbean* agreement.
- Served as a member of U.S. delegations to the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development to negotiate development, trade and ecological agreements.
- Regularly served as Acting Mission Director and Acting Deputy Mission Director as requested.
- Identified, designed, implemented and/or evaluated the following projects and activities, producing diverse benefits for intended beneficiaries:

Governance and Economic Policy	Clinton Regional Initiative
Micro-enterprise Development	North Coast Development Project
Eminent Speakers Series	Environmental and Coastal Resources
Creative Industry Development	Caribbean Disaster Mitigation
Business Cluster Development	Environmental Network
Fiscal Policy Management	Uplifting Adolescents

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1991-1995 **Regional Economist, Regional Development Office for the Caribbean, (RDOC), U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Bridgetown, Barbados, Caribbean West Indies.**

Served as the Economist for the Eastern Caribbean Regional Program. I provided expertise in macroeconomics, microeconomics, social economics, ecological-economics, and political economy in the collaborative design, identification, implementation, or evaluation of programs. A few illustrative accomplishments include:

- Led USAID Mission involvement in the first United Nations Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 1994.
- Carried out research on poverty alleviation, on the role of culture in economic development, and on regional economic integration, defining USAID's regional strategy in the Eastern Caribbean.
- Mounted regional conference on the role of culture in economic development.
- Introduced ecological-economic systems modeling as tool for policy making in the region.
- Represented USAID at the annual Consultative Group meetings hosted by the World Bank, and at other regional, international, and UN meetings concerning the Caribbean.
- Assisted governments increase citizen participation in developing their national budgets.
- Facilitated local public advocacy think tanks through Joint Center on Political Studies Workshop.
- Identified, designed, implemented and/or evaluated the following projects and activities:

Guyana Stabilization	Caribbean Health Policy Planning
Grenada Privatization	Dominica Agricultural Diversification
Grenada Fiscal Reform	Caribbean Population and Development
Guyana Food Assistance	Eastern Caribbean Investment Promotion
Small Enterprise Assistance	Environment/Coastal Resource Management
Guyana Economic Equity	Guyana Poverty Assessment and Reduction
Dominica Structural Adjustment	Caribbean Policy Design and Implementation

1988-1991 **Economist, Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Washington, D.C.**

Developed, implemented, and evaluated economic development policies, programs and projects primarily with Caribbean officials and citizens. Also provided guidance on the economics of natural resources and the environment, to the leadership of the Latin American and Caribbean Bureau and the larger Agency. A few illustrative accomplishments include:

- Designed/implemented path-breaking study on "The Economic Valuation of Natural Resources for Improving National Income Accounts and Developing Accurate GNP Figures in Costa Rica." Several countries have employed this framework developed with the World Resources Institute to monetize ecological impacts. The UN has since standardized environmental accounting.
- Facilitated U.S. participation in the multi-donor/multilateral effort to achieve economic recovery in Guyana, the second most impoverished country in the western hemisphere at the time.
- Completed analysis and represented USAID in the negotiations of the "U.S. – Caribbean Economic Consultation" sponsored by Congressman Crockett to increase collaboration between representatives of U.S. and Caribbean governmental, grass roots, academic, private sector and labor organizations for improved development results.
- Designed a research project implemented by the Bureau, to measure the social and economic impacts of macroeconomic policies, including structural adjustment, on the poor.

1985 **Natural Resource Management Specialist, Bureau for Asia and the Near East, U.S. Agency for International Development, Washington, DC**

Advised the Asia Bureau on the design, implementation and evaluation of multiple forestry and watershed management initiatives in the Asia region including the India Social Forestry project.

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1984-1985 **Economist, Bureau for Africa, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Washington, DC**

Conducted research on actual and potential intra-African trade between 18 West African countries, and as well between diverse sub-regions of the continent. Analyzed determinants of aggregate flows of U.S. foreign assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa, for Congressional presentation.

1982 **University Instructor of Watershed Management, Chiang Mai University, Thailand, Sponsored by USAID, Bureaus for Science and Technology and for Africa, Washington, D.C.**

Developed and taught course featuring lectures, fieldwork, and laboratory experiments towards identifying valuable and viable economic and ecological alternatives to opium production, in collaboration with three colleagues from the University of Colorado.

1979-1983 **Regional Natural Resources and Environment Advisor for West and Central Africa, USAID, Regional Economic Development Services Office, Abidjan, Ivory Coast, Africa.**

Provided natural resource, environmental and energy expertise to USAID Missions and client governments of 25 West and Central African countries, as the first Foreign Service Officer ever fielded in an ecology position. A few illustrative accomplishments include:

- Assisted teams to design-out environmental problems, earning trust, and in idea of ecosystems.
- Assisted nations integrate ecological priorities into core of their national development strategies.
- Gave educational presentations at numerous international fora on ecology and development.
- Collaboratively identified, designed, implemented and/or evaluated projects as the following:

Africa Renewable Energy Initiatives
Guinea Community Forestry
Zaire Watershed Management
Niger Range and Livestock
Mali Land Use Inventory
Ivory Coast Game Ranching
Regional Remote Sensing
Regional Agro-Forestry
Ghana Energy Planning
Mauritania Land Reclamation

Regional Integrated Pest Mgmt.
Africa Farming Systems Research
Senegal River Basin Development
Casamance Integrated Development
Guinea Bissau Forest Management
Mauritania Renewable Resources
Niger Forestry and Land Use
Guinea Bissau Rice Production
Regional Environmental Training
Gambia River Basin Development

1976-1979 **Ecologist, Bureau for Science and Technology, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Washington, D.C.**

- Led the design team for the Kenyan Range Management Project.
- Wrote speeches for the USAID Administrator on Environment and Development.
- Drafted the Ecology and Forestry Sector Strategy for the Sahel region.
- Assisted field missions in employing remote sensing tools in project and program work.
- Prepared environmental analysis for the Tanzanian Tsetse Control Project.
- Fostered USAID's commitment to forestry through position papers and invited presentations.

1976 **Researcher in Applied Ecology, New Alchemy Institute, Falmouth, Massachusetts.**

Participated as a member of the Institute's research team which carried out research, published results, and gave tours to educate about society's increasing need for, and our investigations on: 1) Solar and wind energy systems for electricity; and 2) Ecological farming systems of organic food production

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1975 **Regional Planner, Association of Bay Area Governments, Berkeley, California.**

Contributed to Land Capability Earthquake Preparedness Studies for the San Francisco Bay Area.

LANGUAGES **English; Fluent French** while living in the Ivory Coast, working throughout West and Central Africa.

PUBLICATIONS

1994 “Ecology, Economics and Ethics: Considerations for Sustainable Development Policy” in *Business Government and Society: Caribbean Writings on Caribbean Issues* ed., 1995, Anyadike-Danes, Eastern Caribbean Consultants, Calliope House, Oistins Hill, Barbados, West Indies.

1982 "Balancing Animals with Vegetation for Optimal and Sustained Productivity; A Case Study of Methodology from the AID Niger Range and Livestock Project," *Proceedings from the 1981 USAID Conference on Energy, Forestry and the Environment in Africa*, Nairobi, Kenya.

1982 "Environmental Considerations and Tools in Project Identification and Design," *Proceedings, 1981 USAID Conference on Energy, Forestry and the Environment in Africa*, Nairobi, Kenya.

PRESENTATIONS **Delivered the following papers and presentations at conferences in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, and the United States:**
PAPERS

10/2016 “Yale Ecology Infuses a Career across Diplomacy, the Arts, and Human Rights.” Yale University, School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, invites alumni to speak about their careers.”

2/2015 “The Role of the Arts in Community Building and in Human Rights,” *Just Governance Conference*, Initiatives of Change, Panchgani, Asia Plateau, India

1/2014 “Developing a Visual Display of Transdisciplinary Research on Music and Human Rights: The Process, Benefits and Challenges of Multi-Modal and Applied Scholarship,” Institute of Applied Media, Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Winterthur, Switzerland

5/2014 Beyoncé Knowles, and Tessanne Chin Disrupt Business as Usual: The Global Music Sector through a Political Economy of Human Rights Critique,” *Popular Music and Radical Politics*, panel International Communication Association Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA

5/2014 “Music and Mind for Human Rights: A Transdisciplinary Analysis,” International Communications Association (ICA) Annual Meeting, Interactive Poster Session, ICA honored this invited submission with the *Best Visual Display of Scholarship* Award, Seattle, WA

4/2013 “The Neuroscience of Music and of Morality as Questions of Human Rights,” *Institute of Communications Research Reunion* and *The Graduate Student Appreciation Lecture*, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL

12/2013 “Neural and Digital Networks of Hip-Hop: Considerations for Feminism, the Global South and the Global Order,” *Conference on Gender, Sexuality and Hip-Hop*, Tulane University and the Anna Julia Cooper Foundation, LLC, New Orleans, LA

7/2013 “What is the Role of Music Capability and Group Music Participation in Children’s Emotional, Cognitive, and Moral Development?” *International Summer School on Musical Understanding: Philosophical, Psychological and Neurological Approaches*, University of Sheffield, England

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- 6/2013** "Music, Morality and Phenomenology," International Communications Association, Panel entitled *Conditions of Mediation: Phenomenological Approaches to Media, Technology and Communication*, London, England
- 6/2013** "Music, Morality, Mind: Voices from Jamaica's Music Community, Philosophy and Neuroscience Intersect" International Communication Association, Panel entitled *Communications Science: Evolution, Biology, and Brains*, London, England
- 5/2013** "PEARL, A Storyboard towards Critical Autoethnographic Dance Film, *Congress of Qualitative Inquiry*, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL
- 5/2013** "What the Field of Communication is Privileged and Poised to Do: A Performance Beginning in Watts," *Congress of Qualitative Inquiry*, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL
- 7/2012** "Capitalism and Culture as Questions of Ethics: The Jamaican Music Industry as a Microcosm," International Colloquium on *The Caribbean that Unites Us*, Casa del Caribe, Santiago, Cuba
- 4/2012** "The Origins of Music as a Primordial Communication Form," *University of Illinois Communication Collaboration Conference*, University of Illinois, Springfield, IL
- 3/2012** "Notes, Norms and Neurons: Voices from Jamaica's Music Community, Ethics and Neuroscience Intersect," Community of Scholars Program entitled, *Broadening Participation, Broadening Minds, Creating New Knowledge*, Graduate College, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, IL
- 3/2012** "Dance, Neurons and Norms," Invited lecture presentation for *Dance Education* course for dance majors, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
- 9/2010** "A Career with the U.S. Agency for International Development and Beyond: Towards a World that Works for 100% of Humanity," *African Studies Speakers Series*, Center for African Studies, University of Illinois, Champaign/Urbana.
- 3/2008** "Dr. Norman Girvan on Technological Change through the Amplifier of Jamaica's Music Industry," *Reinventing the Political Economy Tradition of the Caribbean*, Sir Arthur Lewis Institute for Social and Economic Research Conference, University of the West Indies, Mona, Kingston, Jamaica
- 2/2007** "Reggae Music's Influence on Tourism and the Economy," *Bob Marley Symposium*, Bob Marley Foundation, Bob Marley Museum, Kingston, Jamaica
- 7/2007** "Digital and Mobile Technology in Jamaica's Music Industry: Opportunities and Challenges for Long Tail Gains in an Emerging Market Economy," Presentation to the Boards of Directors for Jamaica Trade and Investment (JAMPRO) and the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts (EMC), EMC, Kingston, Jamaica
- 3/1993** "The Business of the Environment," *The Private Sector and Economic Development Conference* Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, Roseau, Dominica, Caribbean, West Indies
- 1/1993** "Ecology and the Economy: The Pivotal Nexus for Restructuring the Eastern Caribbean," Training module presented to participants in the Executive Masters of Business Administration Program for the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus, Barbados, Caribbean, West Indies
- 11/1990** "Economic Justice and the Environment," Keynote Address, Princeton University *Workshop on Environmental Action; Organizing for Racial Diversity*, Princeton, New Jersey

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- 5/1990** “Ecological Economics: Questions of Class, Ethnicity and Gender,” Howard University *Environment and Development Conference*, Washington, D.C.
- 4/1990** “Ecologically and Economically Viable Communities,” Yale University “*Workshop on Environment and the Quality of Life: Lessons from the Third World*,” New Haven, Connecticut
- 1/1990** “Ecology, Economics and Ethics: Towards Alleviating Poverty,” University of Cincinnati conference on *African Perspectives on Scientific Inquiry; From Chaos to Order*, Cincinnati, OH
- 9/1989** “The Economic Valuation of Natural Resources for Revising National Income Accounts,” Seminar for the USAID mission in Costa Rica, San Jose, Costa Rica
- 7/1988** “Africa and the Environment,” Keynote Address, Africare Annual Board Convocation, Africare, Washington, D.C.
- 8/1981** “Watershed Management: A Coherent Approach for Managing Natural Resources in the Tropics,” Chaing Mai, Thailand
- 7/1981** “Natural Resource Economics in African Development,” East-West Center Symposium on *Techniques of Economic Valuation for Natural Systems*, Honolulu, Hawaii

SHORT FILM WORKS

- 2012** *Master Voices on Music’s Power*, sequence with Philosopher/Choreographer Rex Nettleford; Berklee College of Music Neuro-Music Therapist/Saxophonist Dr. Kathleen Howland; Winner of *The Voice* Tessanne Chin; Cultural Scholar Dr. Carolyn Cooper; and Vocalist Etana, 3 minutes
- 2011** *SOUND rEVOLUTIONS*, short film on the power of music through Jamaica’s diverse music community showing, telling and playing what is a global story, 5 minutes
- 2011** *PEARL*, autoethnographic dance film treating the political economy of the United States and the globe as lived through Pearl’s life. From Chicago’s south side and South Central Los Angeles, she grew up to become a scientist, an economist, a diplomat and a performer for dignity, 5 minutes
- 2011** *A Principal on Music*, short film following the Principal of the Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts as he walks us through the only regional institution of its kind in the Caribbean, and its potential for creating transformative change, 6 minutes
- 2010** *Children Moved by Music, Move Society*, film on the launch of the Jamaican Youth Orchestra modeled after Venezuela’s world-renowned youth orchestra, El Sistema, that fights poverty and crime with music, 10 minutes
- 2009** *25 Umbrellas*, co-produced with Colleen Cook, short film memoir on the power of creatively addressing challenges, even those of denigration, through honoring the humanity of all people, including those who do not do so, 5 minutes

STAGE

- 2015 Opera Director (Freiere/Boal), from empire to empowerment, *La Púrpura de la Rosa*, Urbana, Illinois
- 2013-2014 Choral Vocalist, University of Illinois Black Chorus, Urbana-Champaign
- 2005-2008 Solo Vocalist, Jazz, Classical, Rhythm and Blues, World, and Broadway, Caribbean, West Indies
- 2001-2003 Tyrone Murray Dance Company, Washington, D.C.
- 1990 Assistant Choral Director for Dr. Ysaye Barnwell, Sweet Honey and the Rock, United States
- 1989 Urban Bush Women, Dance and Musical Theater, Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C.