

# Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Anita Hill

PERSON

Hill, Anita

**Alternative Names:** Anita Hill;

**Life Dates:** July 30, 1956-

**Place of Birth:** Okmulgee, Oklahoma, USA

**Residence:** Waltham, Massachusetts

**Work:** Waltham, Massachusetts

**Occupations:** Lawyer

## Biographical Note

Lawyer and professor Anita Hill was born on July 30, 1956 in Lone Tree, Oklahoma to Erma and Albert Hill. She received her B.A. degree in psychology in 1977 from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma, and her J.D. degree in 1980 from Yale Law School in New Haven, Connecticut.

Hill began her law career as an associate at the Washington, D.C., law firm of Wald, Harkrader & Ross in 1980. In 1981, she worked as an attorney-advisor to the assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, and then, in 1982, for the chairman of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. In 1983, Hill was hired as an assistant professor at the O. W. Coburn School of Law at Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Then in 1986, she moved to the University of Oklahoma College of Law, where she taught commercial law and contracts for ten years. During that time, Hill provided testimony in 1991 before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee for the nomination of Clarence Thomas to the U.S. Supreme Court. In 1997, Hill accepted a position as a visiting scholar at the University of California, Berkeley. Then, in 1998, she joined the faculty of Brandeis University, in Waltham, Massachusetts, where she has taught African and Afro-American Studies, Legal Studies, Social Policy and Management, and Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies, becoming University Professor in 2015. In 2011, she became of counsel to the Boston law firm of Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll. Hill became chair of the Hollywood Commission and inaugurated the Gender/Race Imperative at MIT in 2017.

Hill is the author of *Speaking Truth to Power* (1997), *Reimagining Equality: Stories of Gender, Race and Finding Home* (2011), and *Believing: Our Thirty-Year Journey to*

End Gender Violence (2021). She also co-edited *Race, Gender and Power in America: The Legacy of the Hill-Thomas Hearing* (1995), with Emma Coleman Jordan. Hill is the subject of the book *Strange Justice: The Selling of Clarence Thomas* (1994) and the films *Strange Justice* (1999), *Anita: Speaking Truth to Power* (2013), and *Confirmation* (2016). She has frequently spoken about race and women's rights and been a frequent contributor to publications focused on the issues of national and international commercial law as well as bankruptcy and civil rights.

Hill was selected as a Fletcher Foundation Fellow in 2005, received the Louis P. and Evelyn Smith First Amendment Award from the Ford Hall Forum in 2008, and received the UC Merced Alice and Clifford Spendlove Prize in Social Justice, Diplomacy and Tolerance in 2016. She holds honorary degrees from Simmons University, Dillard University, Smith College, Lasell University, the Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, Mount Ida College, Emerson College, Wesleyan University, and Lesley University. Hill became an American Bar Foundation Fellow in 2019 and was named one of the most influential women of the century by Time magazine and was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2020.

Hill lives in Waltham, Massachusetts.

Anita Hill was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on April 21, 2022.

## Related Entries

**Oklahoma State University** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**B.A.**

**Yale Law School** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**J.D.**

**Eram Grade School** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Morris Middle School** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Morris High School** [STUDENTOF]

[from ? to ?]

**Wald, Harkrader & Ross** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1980 to 1981]

**Associate**

**U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1981 to 1982]

**Assistant**

**Equal Employment Opportunity Commission** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1982 to 1983]

**Assistant**

**O. W. Coburn School of Law at Oral Roberts University** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1983 to 1986]

**Assistant Professor**

**University of Oklahoma College of Law** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1986 to 1996]

**Professor**

**Institute for the Study of Social Change at University of California, Berkeley**

[EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1997 to 1998]

**Visiting Scholar**

**Brandeis University** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 1998 to ?]

**Professor**

**Wellesley College Newhouse Center for the Humanities & Wellesley Centers for Women** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 2007 to 2008]

**Visiting Scholar**

**Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll** [EMPLOYEEOF]

[from 2011 to ?]

**Counsel**

**Hollywood Commission** [MEMBEROF]

[from 2017 to ?]

**Chair**

**Zeta Phi Beta** [MEMBEROF]

[from 2017 to ?]

**Honorary Member**

**Gender/Race Imperative** [MEMBEROF]

[from 2017 to ?]

**Founder**

**Human Rights Law Committee of the National Bar Association** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Chair**

**National Women's Law Center** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

**Board**

**Boston Area Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights** [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

## **Board**

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