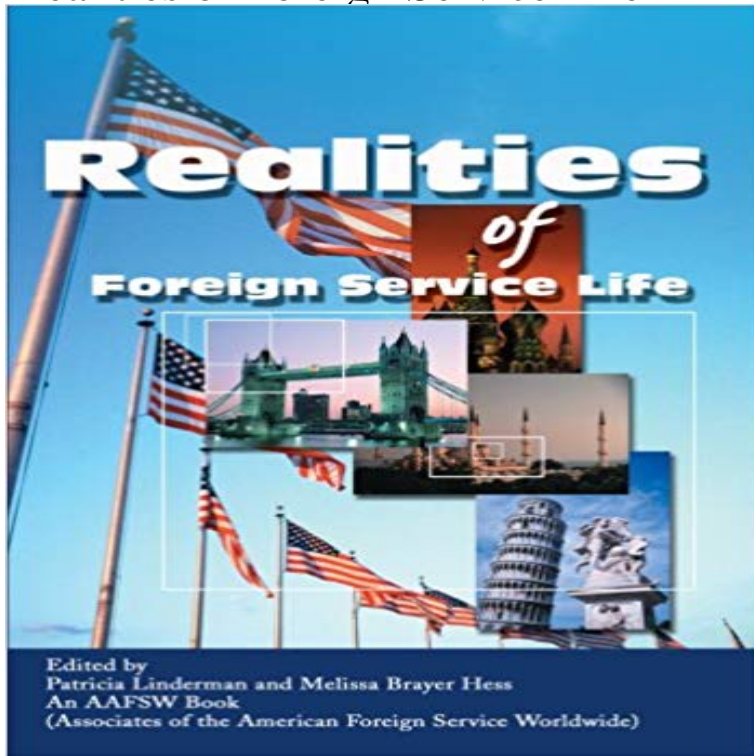


Realities of Foreign Service Life



Mention a diplomatic career and most people imagine high-level meetings, formal dress and cocktail parties. Few stop to think that behind the occasional glitter of official functions are thousands of families facing all the routines and crises of life—births, deaths, childrearing, divorce—far from home, relatives, and friends, in an unfamiliar and sometimes unfriendly country and culture. This book provides reflections and perspectives on the realities of Foreign Service life as experienced by members of the Foreign Service community around the world. The writers share their unvarnished views on a wide variety of topics they care about: maintaining long-distance relationships, raising teens abroad, dealing with depression, coping with evacuations, readjusting to life in the United States, and many others. These are stories from the diplomatic trenches—true experiences from those who have lived the lifestyle and want to share their hard-learned lessons with others. If you are new to the Foreign Service, this book will offer insights and practical information useful in your overseas tours and when you return home. Even if you are a seasoned veteran of the Foreign Service, the reports and reflections of others may encourage you to compare and evaluate your own experiences. If you (or your partner) are contemplating joining the Foreign Service, this book can serve as a reality check, giving you honest, personal perspectives on both the positive and negative aspects of Foreign Service life. If you are a student wondering what the Foreign Service is all about, this book will broaden your knowledge and provide you with an insiders view not found in any textbook.

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