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INTERVIEW WITH
ANNETTE LaMOND
SLOAN ORAL HISTORY
AUGUST 14, 2012

A: Annette
B: Bob
G: George

G: It is August 14, and this is George Roth and Bob McKersie interviewing Annette LaMond for the Sloan Oral History project.

B: I want to report on one thing. You asked about the archives. You said you were curious what had happened to Phyllis's papers.

B: George and I were talking. We need to talk with the archivist at MIT to make sure that the kinds of things we're putting together with these interviews and transcripts fit in with the program they have.

I know you were curious about one of the projects that Phyllis probably never got to complete. I think that was one of the things you mentioned in your letter.

A: That's correct. She was working on a family history, which I think would be very interesting to work on.

B: So we have to see whether her archival material has been annotated. Sometimes things just go over there in boxes. In come cases, the archival process actually inventories it so then there's a nice…

A: There's probably a finding aid, because they would have been there for a while. Although libraries do tend to get behind.

B: Right. But it's something we ought to check on. I don't know whether you have any interest yourself in –

A: Absolutely. I did speak with one of her other protégés about this, but I wasn't encouraged, so I didn't pursue it.

B: Is that Julianne Malveaux?

A: Yes. She indicated she would carry it forward.

B: How recently did you talk with Julianne?

A: This was right after Phyllis died.

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B: I've had one or two contacts with Julianne since Phyllis died, but not for a few years. Do you have a copy of this program?

A: I do. I brought my own file. Later we can trade what we have. But I have the program from her, the memorial service, and I have several clippings. You can have this from the *Baltimore Sun*, because she was from Maryland.

B: Yeah. Lester and I went down for the memorial service for her.

A: I'm sorry I didn't go to that. I'd like to know how it was.

B: Well, it was a wonderful event in that church in that section of Baltimore, where many generations of African Americans have lived. It was a very special time. And she had sisters, and you probably knew some of her relatives. Did you?

A: No. Every now and then I knew that someone was coming up to Boston to visit.

B: Because her relatives weren't around here.

A: No. They were in Maryland.

B: They were pretty much in the Baltimore area.

I guess the place to start, Annette, is for you to say a little bit about how you connected. You said there was this interesting connection through Yale, that you both had connections with Yale. Anyway, why don't you tell us how your journey with Phyllis started?

A: All right. I graduated from Wellesley College in 1971. I was an economics major, a very naive economics major, because it wasn't a very quantitative program. My husband wanted to go to art school at Yale, so I applied to the Ph.D. program in economics at Yale. When I arrived, I was one of three young women in the program. It was a strange time to arrive, the fall of 1971, because that new class followed a class that had been regarded by the senior faculty as very rude. That was the beginning of radical economics, and they were very challenging to people, like Jim Tobin and the others. So the senior people all refused to teach the introductory theory courses.

So here I am with a background not that quantitative, one of three women. The classes were absolutely mystifying. Three or four people taught theory, and they would come in – I don't think they were particularly coordinated. One was Joe Stiglitz, but he wasn't the greatest lecturer in the world. He was a little bit cute in his approach.

It wasn't that pleasant an experience. Later, I found out the guys in the class were all getting together in the evening to figure out what in the heck had happened in class during the day. But I was just sitting alone in Sterling Library, going over my notes. The only lifeline was Janet Yellen, who had been the teaching assistant. (She is Vice Chair of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve; she has already moved on. I think she was teaching at Harvard.) She'd left behind a wonderful set of theory notes.

One course I did love was Economic History, but I was too young to realize that I

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should have shifted over to Economic History. Anyway, I went through the two years, and I did my general exams and my oral exams. But I knew by the beginning of the second year that I wasn't captivated by economic theory. I didn't really have that way of thinking about the world. So, I started thinking about going to business school, and Sloan School was attractive to me because I could use all of my coursework to leapfrog over the first year. So I came here in the fall of 1973. At the very beginning of the year I decided I would look around for a research assistant job. I sent my resume over to Phyllis because it was an economics- oriented thing that involved writing. I think she'd already hired Richard Baehr to be her assistant. But I can still remember walking into her room, and she was just full of welcome, so positive. And she was so excited that I'd been to Yale for the two years in economics. So, somehow she must have found the money to have a second research assistant. It was lots of fun working with her. What she was doing – maybe you have a lot on this project already?

B: No.

A: During her time with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission she'd been involved in research. They began looking at AT&T, and requesting a lot of data. She was in charge, and the company dumped a warehouse-load of data. Phyllis was dogged in arranging for people to go through it. I think the company was anticipating that it would be a racial discrimination case, possibly. But the focus turned out to be on discrimination involving women. That case was successful, from the government's point of view, and from the company's, because it opened up a whole new resource for them.

But Phyllis had renewed her academic associations by bringing various experts in to work on the data. The project I was hired for was to help put together a colloquium of people to come to MIT to present papers. The papers were later put together in the book that you probably have. It was an MIT Press book.

B: Primarily on the AT&T case? That was a landmark case, right? It was probably people like Jim Heckman. Was he involved?

A: Yes.

B: Lester might have been involved, too, Lester Thurow?

A: I should have gotten out my book. Yes. Phyllis was really very – she liked Lester very much. He was a younger generation, and she was very kind to him, and encouraging, because she got to know him at a difficult time in his life when his first wife was dying. I don't know any of the details because she was very discreet. But I have the feeling he talked to her a lot about his family and his life.

There were others. I remember getting a call from Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who is in the book. She was in a snit about something. She thought maybe – she was obviously looking for a higher court appointment even then. She was a professor at Columbia, but she knew something might happen for her. I remember Phyllis fielding that phone call. Greg Loury had a paper in the book. I served as a reporter for the conference, so I took a number of the papers and wrote one- or two-page summaries.

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B: Did the conference take place after the decision came down from the EEOC?

A: Oh, yes. It took place here in the – I don't know if it was in the fall or the spring of the year – but it was over the 1973-74 academic year.

G: It was a colloquium, not a conference, right?

A: A colloquium. Yes.

B: Right, that resulted in a book.

A: I've always had kind feelings for Ron Ferguson. I don't know if you're going to be talking to Ron. Ron and Greg Loury were in the Economics Department. They were young black men. Phyllis had so many people whom she encouraged, and she was encouraging them. I'd written a summary of one paper, and Ron came up to me and said, "I didn't understand the paper until I read your summary." I felt so complimented! I'm not sure that I really understood the paper either, but I figured I'd try to put it in some shape that people could get into it.

B: Where is Ron Ferguson, now?

A: I think he may be at BU.

B: Backing up a minute, you still were working on your Ph.D. at Yale when you came here.

A: No. I'd pretty much given up the idea of completing it there. I didn't have any ideas for what I wanted to write on. I was too young when I went to graduate school.

B: So you enrolled in a degree program here, when you came?

A: Yes. I was in a master's program. It was at the Sloan School of Management.

G: Course 15?

A: I received a master's degree from Sloan in 1974. My degree from Yale is dated 1973.

G: So you placed-out of many of the first-year courses?

A: Yes, which was a mistake, when I look back on it, because I was friendly with some of my classmates, but it wasn't in the same way. Also I was married, and I was involved with Phyllis, and this fun colloquium.

G: Were there many women in the program at the time?

A: There were a few.

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G: I know because that's one of the questions – we looked back at when some of the first women came. Paula Cronin was student then, too, wasn't she?

A: She may have come later.

B: Going back a step earlier, I'm trying to think of the name of the professor at Wellesley who must have been, was it –

A: Carolyn Shaw Bell. She was a pal of Phyllis's, too. Phyllis had so many friends.

B: She's responsible for quite a few women going in academics. I don't know whether you know Lisa Lynch? Do you know that name?

A: I've heard of her name.

B: She's now dean of the Heller School. She would attribute her career in economics to Professor Bell. I'm sure there are many people who have studied at Wellesley who got the economics bug as a result of her influence.

A: Yes, that's another story where I majored in economics. It wasn't because of Carolyn. Shall I tell you why I majored in economics?

B: Sure.

A: I went to high school in Europe, and there weren't that many women who went to university. I was part of a group of friends, and I was told by one of my friends that a woman couldn't major in economics. This is before I went to Wellesley. I said, "Well, I'm going to major in economics." [Laughter] I try to follow through on things.

B: An act of rebellion. [Laughter]

A: If I'd taken art history my freshman year, I probably would have been an art historian.

B: Coming back to the time when you were with Phyllis, you mentioned that there was another research assistant.

A: His name was Richard Baehr. Phyllis would have us over for dinner. I believe he was married, too. I remember going to dinner at Phyllis's apartment with Ron Ferguson and Glen Lowery, and Richard. Phyllis loved to entertain and show new things that she'd acquired.

B: It was in the Prudential Building.

A: Yes. Well, her first apartment was on Mass Ave, and she didn't like that very much. It was in toward Central Square. It was sort of a high rise, but she loved her apartment at

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the Prudential.

And she had a great appreciation for art. It was always fun to see things that she'd acquired. One of her great pleasures was having one of MIT's two seats with the Museum of Fine Arts. That was a great pleasure for her, and she invited us to various events there, which trustees and big donors go to. She was on the board of the Society of Arts and Crafts—not through her MIT connection, but from being such an outgoing positive person. Do you know where the Society of Arts and Crafts is, their store on Newbury Street? There are always wonderful things. It used to be a labor of love. A group of women. Hans Loeser's wife, Berta Loeser, was one of the key people there, the Cambridge people. He's a lawyer. Well, he's dead, now. Phyllis came in one day as a customer. She was so positive; she probably went out as a member of the board. So that's a great organization.

She was also on the board of the State Street Bank. By chance, we lived near the Edgerlys, so Will and Lois Edgerly are good friends of ours. Will spoke at her memorial service. He could talk about Phyllis being on the board.

B: On the board at State Street.

A: She was also on the board of the Brookings Institution. I think maybe in her first meeting, she was seated next to Robert McNamara, and she developed a great friendship with him. They shared a birthday. I don't know if it was the same year, but they were both born on the same date, June 9 I think. She liked him so much and always thought it was curious that they had the same birthday.

B: When you were here, she hadn't been here too many years before that.

A: I think she'd only been here for one year, so she was still a visiting professor.

B: Yeah, so maybe it was 1972 that she came.

A: I think it was during that year when she was offered the permanent position and she felt so happy about it.

B: Right, because this is a point where I can put something on the record. At that point, in 1971, I became Dean of the School of Industrial Labor Relations at Cornell. I had known Phyllis from doing research work in the area, working with the data that was coming out of the EEOC, called EEO-1 Data. Starting in 1965, all corporations above 50 workers were required to… it was part of the Civil Rights Act that Lyndon Johnson got passed after he became President. I think the Act was passed in 1964 and the first set of data was 1965. Phyllis was really the research director, even though her title was I think Assistant Research Director for Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. She pulled together people. She got to know Lester and Jim Heckman and Orley Ashenfelder. Do you know that name?

A: Oh yes.

B: He might have been involved in AT&T book. Fiennes Welch -- a whole cluster of

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people were called in to start analyzing the data, saying, "Can the data help us understand where there's discrimination, where there's exclusion?" So Phyllis was very much on the scene in 1965 through probably 1972.

The reason I'm making the connection is, having known her, when I got to Cornell, I said, "We've got to get Phyllis Wallace here on the faculty." So I tried to recruit her. She even came up to the school for a visit. It was at that point when MIT was also making this opportunity available and she said, "I'm not sure I can feel comfortable in Ithaca, NY." It's kind of a small town. So she came here in 1972, a year before you arrived.

A: Speaking of Lyndon Johnson, I think someone should go and study the photos in the archives of the White House because she got a call to come down for the signing of the Civil Rights Act from the President's office. So I think she got very close.

B: I've seen one picture. The LBJ Library in Texas has got some great photographs, and there is one where he's signing and there's a whole cast of people standing behind him. I don't remember recognizing Phyllis in the picture. It's mainly Civil Rights leaders who are standing behind him, but I'm sure there were lots of pictures taken because it was such an important piece of legislation to have been passed. So somewhere there's probably a picture of her with President Johnson.

A: Phyllis actually started out as a Soviet economics expert.

B: Yes, I want to come to that because you said in your letter you thought maybe she was getting to the point where she would go back and take advantage of her knowledge of Russia?

A: Not that she was getting there, but after everything that happened in the 1990s, who knows? She probably would have gone to her background and looked at Russia in a new light.

B: Did she ever talk with you about her work with the CIA?

A: No, she was fairly circumspect about that.

B: When she finished getting her Ph.D. at Yale, was this her first employment? She had difficulty finding a job, not only being a woman, but also being African-American. At some point soon after finishing her Ph.D., she went to work for the CIA and became an expert on Russia. That was her desk within the CIA. But that's part of their culture, you don't talk about it. You sign on, when you go to the CIA, that when you leave you don't talk about it. And she was, as you say, very circumspect.

G: How long would she have been there?

B: Well, we have to recollect when she got her Ph.D. from Yale. I don't have that in front of me.

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A: It would have been the late 1940s, I think. I believe she went straight through. Do you know the story of how she came to go to NYU?

B: No.

A: Well, she was from Maryland.

B: Oh! I think I have heard this, yes. Go ahead. It's going to come back.

A: Her path would have taken her to the University of MD but the university was segregated. So the state paid to send her to NYU, which opened up a whole new world. She loved New York. That was the amazing thing about Phyllis. There are many people who, faced with discrimination, would harbor some bitterness, even a tiny corner, but there was none of it. She loved NY. She loved the theater. She loved the people.

B: Yeah, I'm glad you mentioned that. In fact, what we've got to do… Did you go to the service yourself?

A: Yes.

B: We recorded it, and I think we can find the recording. The recording has never been transcribed that I know. That would be important, to get that transcribed, because a lot of people were telling vignettes and little stories about Phyllis because we had the open-mike period.

A: Yes. I remember when Will Edgerly went up.

B: Right.

G: Who would have the recording, Bob?

B: We'll have to look.

G: Meaning you might have it?

B: I may have it. I will look. Get that transcribed. So she probably was in the CIA from the late 1940s until the Commission was established. Now whether she had any other government employment, because the commission wasn't established until the Act was passed in 1964. Maybe it was established in 1965. So you have a good chunk of time there from the late 1940s to the mid-1960s.

A: It would be interesting to see her resume, as it was when she came here. She probably has the detail.

B: But you mentioned how she became a focal point in so many ways, and the social network she had. You mentioned people like Ferguson and Loury—a whole network of…

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A: Julianne Malveaux. I think Julianne must have come into her circle the year after I left.

B: I remember her final remarks, right.

A: Alice Rivlin was a pal of hers.

B: That's the Brookings connection, I would think.

A: Yes. After I finished up, I had a brief job with a bank, and then realized I really did want to finish my Ph.D. So I was back in Boston, and Phyllis was very encouraging and we stayed connected.

B: So you went back to Yale then?

A: Well, I worked at a distance.

B: You didn't have to take up residence then? You had satisfied it already.

A: Yeah, unfortunately. Darryl Wykoff let me use the computers at the Harvard Business School, so it all worked out.

G: So you finished your degree in 1974, and then went to work at the bank?

A: Just briefly. Then I started working for Harbridge House with more congenial people who were interested in economics.

Then with Charles River Associates, so I was back with a bunch of Ph.D. economists again. I was working full-time and working on my dissertation once the idea and the data set came to me. My Ph.D. is '79. So there was a bit of a gap there.

B: The folder you brought along, Annette, are there things in there that we should make copies of?

A: Let me tell you what I have. They're probably things you have.

I have the note in the *Management Review* after Phyllis died.

I have something from Sloan in Winter, 1987. "Phyllis A. Wallace, scholar activist…"

Here's the picture with Alice Rivlin and Lester Thoreau and Phyllis. Do you have this?

Here's a nice picture of her in 1967.

It's been a while since I read this. May 1948. Phyllis A. Wallace, Ph.D. student at Yale with the economists and then fellow-student John Butler. There are some of her other books. I'd forgotten about this *Pathways to Work* book. That was very important.

Unemployment among Black Teenage Females. That was Lexington Books, 1977.

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This is a draft of an acknowledgements page for something.
Here's from the Harvard Business School, a service award. Why did she get this?

B: She probably invited you to the event, right? That's why you have that.

A: It's just a copy.

B: They had an event where they recognized her.

A: I don't recall going to the event.
Here's the Friends of the Nubian Gallery.
This is from the MFA.

B: It's great that you've collected these items.

A: This is from the MFA preview that comes every two months. There's a nice picture of Phyllis.

B: We should make copies of this, if that's all right.

A: I don't know. Too bad I don't have the original, but I'm sure you could get them. That's a nice photograph. Actually, I do have it. You can have that copy.
I gave you the copy of the obituary from the *Baltimore Sun*.
I have the obituary from the *Boston Globe* and *New York Times*, you must have two.

G: I'll scan it so we have it in an easier form.
What was your relationship like with Phyllis after 1974?

A: We were friends. We stayed in touch. She'd come over for dinner. We'd go to her house for dinner, her apartment.

G: Through getting your Ph.D.?

A: Yes. Actually I was very excited after the election in 1992 because one of our neighbors in Cambridge was Bob Reich. I thought it would be fun to get Bob and Phyllis together because Bob was on his way to being Secretary of Labor. But that didn't happen. Phyllis died in January, and I think Bob was just getting ready to be Secretary of Labor.

B: There are a lot of things that just stop dead in the water. That was such a shock, the way she just died in her sleep.

A: She'd been to the doctor recently. But it really came out of the blue.

G: It was a heart attack?

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B: Must have been.

A: Apparently. Joyce Yearwood called me. I can still remember how shocked I was. When I look back and see she was only 69. Gosh! I don't know if this has helped you.

B: It's a great window into a remarkable person.

A: If there was just some way to capture her pure delight and interest in people. She just loved to talk and she was…

B: Right. Just wonderful energy.

G: Bob, what about you? When you came here, you had obviously tried to recruit Phyllis. Then you end up here. How did you tell Phyllis about that?

B: We laughed about it! I said, "I couldn't get you to Cornell, so I came to MIT!" She was a fabulous colleague. The connection she had to so many important people and important topics. I got here after the work on the AT&T project, but she was heavily involved with teenagers. She was always working on these big policy questions.

There were a number of other people who worked under her. I forget her first name, last name is Kelly. She got her Ph.D. That would be something else we could do, is go back and see her students who got their Ph.D. under Phyllis.

Ben Harrison's wife. Her last name is Kelly. We can find these things out.

A: Oh, I remember her. What's his name from Northeastern? Bluestone.

B: Bluestone worked with Ben Harrison, and Harrison was married to Kelly. She's down on the Cape somewhere. She was a Ph.D. student under Phyllis. There would be others we could track down. And you mentioned Ron Ferguson over at BU. We'd have to check that.

A: I would definitely talk to Ron, because I think Phyllis was like a mother figure. Being in the Economics Department is kind of a difficult thing for the toughest of people. And she had to have encouraged him to keep going.

Glenn was full of confidence. He would have kept going without Phyllis, but Phyllis was helpful to him too.

B: I've lost track of Glenn Loury.

A: He may be at BU.

B: Then there was a couple by the last name of Jones, do you remember? They were very close to Phyllis.

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A: What were their first names?

B: Seems to me he was a graduate of Harvard Business School and she was involved with the Boston Foundation at one point.

A: I don't recall.

B: That would have been into the 1980s. I didn't come here until 1980.

A: By that time Phyllis and I might have a long conversation on the phone once a month or so, but it wasn't like the day-to-day when I was around here. When I was working on my Ph.D. I saw her all the time.

B: Right.

G: Was she on your dissertation committee?

A: No, I don't think she ever even read my thesis, my dissertation.

G: But sounds like she talked you through some of it.

A: Well, she encouraged me to keep going. The other person here who was really helpful was Paul MacAvoy. Have you talked to Paul MacAvoy?

B: I'm hoping to, actually this coming weekend, because I knew Paul from University of Chicago days, and then Paul came here. Must have come in the late 1960s, I guess, around 1965-66. He would have overlapped during this period that you were here. Did he go to Yale from here?

A: No, I think his Ph.D. is from Yale. I think he may have gone to Cornell. But you would know that since you were at Cornell.

B: Paul spent quite a bit of time at Yale.

A: Oh, that's right. He did become the head of the school

B: The school that was relatively new.

A: Well, anyway, he was the person who was on my Sloan thesis. He was the editor of the *Bell Journal of Economics.*

B: Right. That's always been his area. Primarily he was into utility regulation, wasn't he? Gas?

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A: Yeah. So it was a joint thesis. I had this deadbeat partner who was supposedly writing with me, but I did all the work. Paul said, "I would have nominated this for a prize, but you did all the work." But the prize was getting publication in the *Bell Journal of Economics.*

B: Right. Paul's retired. We visit friends up in the Hanover area, and Paul has a place somewhere up there. I'm hoping to connect with him this weekend and take along a recorder, because he was here for this same period of time, late '60s through early '70s.

A: Yeah, he was an impressive figure for the School. There was something very collected about him…

END OF RECORDING

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