

Interview with Dr. Lynne Reid, S. Burt Wolbach Distinguished Professor of Pathology at Children's Hospital for the Archives for Women in Medicine at the Countway Library at Harvard Medical School on June 30, 2006 by Dr. Carol Nadelson.

DR. CAROL NADELSON: I'm Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard and the Director of the Office for Women's Careers at Brigham and Women's Hospital. I have the pleasure of interviewing Dr. Lynne Reid who is the S. Burt Wolbach Distinguished Professor of Pathology at Children's Hospital. Lynne, I'm grateful for you to be here and as you know there is an old saying that people who write history create it. So I'm particularly grateful that you're here helping us create history. And as you know the Archives for Women in Medicine is very important to all of us to learn about our past and to look to the future. So what we wanted to do here is to learn something about your career and the landmark position you've been in, what you've done, and how you felt about it. I'd like to begin by asking you what stands out in your academic career?

DR. LYNNE REID: I suppose the people that I've worked with and they've mainly been young colleagues and then they became middle-aged colleagues and we've had a splendid relationship and it's been the one's whose careers I feel I have been able to help and nurture. So I would put that probably top of the list.

CN: Go on.

LR: All right. And of course, I started in Australia and then I went to England. And then I became Dean of our Medical School over there. And had a lot of experience with therefore people of different nationalities. And then it was after that they invited me to come to

Harvard. And that again just continued. We had a marvelous mixture of people from different.

CN: Can you tell me something about how you came here?

LR: Yes. I'm a little embarrassed because I was asked if I would come and consult for Sidney Farther's successor. And I said, well, yes, I'm going to American in February, March, I've got to give a lecture in Chicago so I'll drop by, says she cheerfully thinking they just wanted to talk to me about it. And then it was Christmas Eve, my secretary came and said, Dr. Reid, there is somebody very anxious to see you. Who's very cross because he's been sent to see you. But he wants to go the opera. And he's being kept late, Fred Rosin, he's being kept late for Covent Garden. So I said to my secretary, well, please ask Dr. Rosin to come in. So he came in and said, well, you've gathered that I'm furious because I'm going to be late fro Covent Garden but I've come because they want to offer you the job. I said, but I haven't even visited, I don't think I'm interested in moving. Which as I say those famous last words because I ultimately did move. But that was how it happened. And by colleagues and friends because I was Dean at our school and I knew that London University was in a pretty difficult financial position because we were very much over budget. And they had not kept up the budget properly for the post graduate studies and the for the post graduate research. So when I really thought about it and looked at my colleagues and I talked to them and they said, oh, but it would be so wonderful. They were all thrilled. So that was how it happened.

CN: And how has it progressed?

LR: Well, I hope to think it's progressed very well because of the people who came, oh and I must tell you, there was quite a stir because I brought sixteen of my colleagues with me when I came. [laughs] And someone at questions in the House of Commons and they got a rather sort of reply that was a little supercilious. Because someone said, we're losing our bright, young people and the reply came back, oh, England has always exported it's bright, young people but this is a middle-age range. [laughs] So we became known as the middle-age range. But in actual fact, of course, the good thing was that we were London University was in rather dire straits financially and we were able to come out and, mind you I still had to raise the funds. But you could raise the funds here. And that was marvelous.

CN: So you think that it was a really good career choice?

LR: Yes, I think it was. It really was.

CN: Could you say something about what the high points and the positives were?

LR: Yes. Well, I suppose the high points were that we seemed to be doing something that was needed and was appreciated. And it was very much structure. It was experimental pathology as well as clinical and human pathology. But it was the research side that was important. And people who came out with me, a number of them said, well, you know, Prof would love to come but you know, we'll have to come back and look after our aging parents. But we could at least give you three years or four years something like that. So we had a very happy team for well, I suppose we still have. Because a number of them are still with me. There are one or two of them that we have an agreement. We don't say how long we've worked together. [laughs]

Because I've got one person who came to me when she left school and then I said to her, you know, I never wanted to leave but, if I'm the only one on your CV it's going to look very bad. So now you've got to go and be a, I sent her off to be a, this is Rosalie Jones, sent her off to be a consultant at the Caralinkska. And then I sent her to India to be in charge of the technician and hospital training for the whole of Pakistan. So she had a whole year of doing that. And then she came back to us here. And is still here.

CN: It sounds like you were being a wonderful mentor for her?

LR: Well, I think that is the one thing they all say. Oh God, you don't realized how lucky they were. And all the people who know, my people, say, they don't realize. They've had it so good. They don't realize how lucky they were. I suppose I was very happy.

CN: What you're saying then is in many ways the people were the most important high points to you.

LR: Yes. Yes. Of course there were the actual scientific parts of it.

Because the whole of the archery anatomy and structure and behavior under experimental conditions became extremely important. And the whole question of hypoxia was fascinating because it became so important to the Chinese. And you see, they hung Chinese, they in fact, behave at altitude the way the Indians do. But, of course the Chinese were fascinated by the way Tibetans could deal with high altitude. And with all the unhappiness that has gone on between Tibet and various, parts of the ethnic groups that are joined there, it's really been a very important study. And I suppose that was one of the high point's when they said, we want you to be vice-president of the high altitude studies that we're going to put on in Beijing. And I thought,

oh, yes. We'll have about twenty vice presidents and we'll all sit in a row. But no. I was in fact, the vice president. And it was of the most frightening times in my life.

CN: When was that?

LR: Well, that would have been, help me. Tienamon Square. About--

CN: Oh, in the late '80's.

LR: Yes. And it was about, because they put off the actual meeting to begin with because of Tienammon Square. But then we went back to it. And that was when I was the vice president. But it was so extraordinary because the people on the committee they were all men but me. No, we had one Russian woman general. And we had a Frenchman who was also, had been the high altitude guru. And the high altitude was so important with competition, with the prizes and so on. That everybody was into altitude but this particular Frenchman was furious because the Russians had a woman general. And they didn't have a woman general in the French army. [laughs] And we used to go out to these dinners and of course, they were all drinking vodka and you know, I don't drink spirits usually, just some wine. But I thought, God, I can't let the side down like this. So I sat next to this steel woman general and I thought well, whenever she has a sip, I'll have a sip. [laughs] So we were drinking vodka at rather a great rate I suspect. But not really, it was all perfectly above board. But these were marvelous people and of course I was at the military center because that's where we had the meeting. And we actually lived in the military camps. And that was all very interesting and very exciting.

CN: You mentioned being aware that you were the woman and the vice president and I wonder if you could say something about how you felt being a woman effected your career?

LR: There was a certain amount of course, of teasing would go on. They boys would say, of course it's perfectly obvious why you're asked to all the meetings. Just because you're young and pretty. And I'd think, [unclear]. But of course, the real thing was that you had to be professional. And that's what I always so to the women. You've got to be decent people, good people and you've really got to behave professionally. And I think that was how I found that I got through and was accepted.

CN: So you thought there was some barriers or obstacles?

LR: Yes.

CN: Would you say something about that?

LR: Well, the sort of thing when I first went back to England, there were a number of people that I had already published quite a bit and they would have liked me to go on and work with them, gone to work with them. But I always remember one person who said, can I travel back with you to London? This was after a medical meeting, I want to talk to you about coming to work with us. And then I said, well, I've already accepted to go to Romalton Hospital. Oh, he said, then I'm not interested in you if you've already made a decision. It's only if you're prepared to come and work with me that I want to know anything about you. So you occasionally got very ungracious replies like that which I think you have to be a little thick skinned about that, don't you?

CN: Yes. I wonder if you thought there were obstacles that made it more difficult for you in other ways to?

LR: No. I always remember one marvelous person who was the editor of Thorax. He sat next to me one day at the medical meeting and he said, you know and of course in England it's not uncommon for the men and women to call each other by their sir names because the boys call each other my their sir names. And he said to me, you know Reid, you won't be able to go back to Australia. They won't want you back because you've turned your back on them. And he felt that very strongly. He said, they'll never accept you back to Australia. And that didn't worry me too much because by that time I had decided to come to the Bromton. And I'd had wonderful chiefs in Australia who had also been at the Bromton so I wasn't worried too much about that. But the other thing where I think we were lucky in Australia it was a colony. It was a new country. And there were, it was sort of accepted that women had to carry more than their share, you know? And that you would be able to be a doctor and to really take part.

CN: So you felt, you grew up in an environment that was more accepting?

LR: Yes. Yes. And of course part of the war coming did that.

CN: How so?

LR: Well, you see, yes. The war came and they, Australia had lost half it's army doctors in Greece and Crete. They were dead or prisoners of war. And the government suddenly said the medical student is a reserved occupation. Nobody can give up being a medical student unless they fail. Now, the extraordinary thing was we had a lot of boys in our year who were 17, 16, 17 and couldn't go into the army until they were 18. And they all said, we'll do one more year,

medicine and get our first year of medicine and then we'll go into the army. Join our brothers and our buddies but of course they couldn't. And many of them did. They just failed. But of course, can you imagine the family problems, you know. I mean, I had a number of friends and colleagues you know the father saying to the boy, you already got two brothers who are prisoners of war, you've got two brothers in the army, can't you just stay home for the sake of your mother. You know a woman who had already got four boys out of her life. And they were rather hard times for a lot of them, for the boys. But actually we all, and we had to do one year training in one year shorter. And everything, a thesis and so on.

CN: So you could be finished earlier and foot practicing?

LR: So we finished earlier. Yes, exactly. But the good part of that and things so often have a good thing, that then the troops started coming back from the islands. So men who had been in the army all through the war were now coming back and they were told they could have one year to come into the medical school and catch up. And so we had wonderful colleagues who came back and actually did catch up. So there was always that part of it.

CN: So the years in Australia were good for you?

LR: Yes, they were good for me.

CN: What made you decide to leave?

LR: Well, there was a great tradition in Australia that you did your first degrees out there and then you did your membership of the College of Physicians, The Royal College of Physicians. But then you would go to England to do your post graduate training. And my parents only let me get married actually because they said, well, you've got to go to



England and finish your training. And of course I had an awful marriage so that was just as well it did go wrong. But the other thing was that was how it happened. I decided that I would go to England and would go on studying and doing research. So that was how I went to the Bromtom and became mixed up there and became Dean of the Bromton.

CN: That must have been a first.

LR: Yes. Yes. It was. Yes. And I think I was the first professor of experimental pathology in England. So there were a few first.

CN: So a field first and a woman first.

LR: Yes. Yes. And they were good years. And as I said, the collegiality because I think the English are pretty decent how they treat their juniors. [laughs] I wouldn't say they all are but most of them are. And that was good. So and then to come out here and of course, I had traveled out here a lot but I had never actually lived here. But that was--

CN: How did you make the decision to move here?

LR: Well, I think there was a sort of feeling that because the university, the post graduate part of the university was so difficult financially, there was a feeling that really it was much better to get out from England. That although they would come back one day, at the moment they were really in a rather--

CN: So there were others who had thought that as well as you?

LR: Yes. Exactly.

CN: Not only the people who worked for you but other--

LR: No. No. No. It was generally accepted that we were in a bad trow of dis pond, if you like, and we would have to get out of. And that was I

think, really what made me feel that well, if I could take the people that I had working for me. And I know when they asked me out here, I came out and looked and I visited. And I used to make notes everyday, everyone I met, when I had a little question, I would think could my people survive in this sort of set up. Because you know, these were English technicians and English Ph.D.'s and you know coming up with their degrees and I used to think, I wonder how they'll do in America. Will they survive? That used to be my touchstone at the end of the day. How would these ones survive in America. Because I used to get rather bad letters because it was all in the papers, you see. I thought you know, you must feel very ashamed of taking our wonderful young people to this rat race. [laughs] Well, you know, anything less than a rat race would be hard to imagine.

CN: So it sounds like you felt the experience coming here was pretty positive.

LR: Oh, yes, I did. Yes. Yes.

CN: Both career and personal?

LR: Yes. Yes. My private life I was very much it was a commute of marriage really. Because my husband had said, well, you've got to get to America, we're not going to keep you here, they're killing you. So that was all right.

CN: That was good for you?

LR: Yes, that was good for me. So that was fine. As I say, the way the young ones coped I thought was good.

CN: Tell me something more about your family you mentioned.

LR: Well, my mother and father, well my father was badly wounded in the first war. And had a badly wounded right arm. But he didn't lose

his arm. But it was very restricted. And one of the things I always remember as a child was that he was determined to get his arm able to do all the things he wanted to do with it. And when I was a little girl, he couldn't get his arm from here up to here. And when he wanted to tie his tie, he would pin one tie to the other tie and then hold it there and tie it. And then he would undo it. But by the time I was a medical student, he had got to the stage that he could, in fact, tie his tie without having to pin to ties together. So he had great conviction and he was very good looking after his arm. And finally did very well with it. So that was good. But it wasn't tell I became, when he said, you know I've always wanted, that's my father, I've always wanted to be a doctor. But he didn't tell me that until I'd become one. [laughs]

CN: What was his field?

LR: Well, he was because again he had been during the war he was in the services. He was actually in France and was wounded. So he had more or less had to go into the military. Oh and my grandmother, bless her heart, Grandmother Reid, a rather grim Scottish woman, who my father adored because she was a wonderful old lady. But she had come out to Australia on a sailing ship. She took, this girl of 18, three months on a sailing ship to get to Melbourne where here brothers were. And her brothers had this wonderful farm outside Melbourne and so she came and she lived with them and she married. And I think she had six children. And my father oh and then her husband died of diabetes and I think my father got his education as a choir boy at St. Paul's Cathedral in Melbourne. He had a beautiful voice and that's how he got his education. And then he finally became a manager of one of the London offices of one of the big

companies in Australia. And that's how we went to school in England which was one of the best things that happened to me because we went to a wonderful school called, it was one of the Girls Public Day School Trusts. Have you every heard of them?

CN: No.

LR: No. Well, the fathers' felt that they wanted the daughters to have had some of the advantages that the boys got with the great big public schools. And they founded this series of schools called the Girls Public Day School Trusts. And as you know, public school over there is a private school. And they founded these schools.

CN: So you went there from when to when?

LR: Well, we went there from when I was 11 to when the war came.

CN: And then you went back to Australia?

LR: Then we went back to Australia, yes. Yes. Much to our fury because my father's firm said we're not keeping a married man with children in London all through the blitz. You are put onto a ship and sent across the Atlantic.

CN: What about your mother?

LR: Well, she was musical. That had been her great love. She was a very good pianist. But she didn't have a career. She was a homemaker. But I think on the whole just supported that she liked, she hoped her girls would do something in life.

CN: So she was supportive.

LR: Yes, she was. She was supportive.

CN: It sounds like both of your parents were.

LR: Well yes. Yes, they were.

CN: They were pleased with a career in medicine?

LR: Yes, yes, they were. Yes. My mother was always less, she came less to terms with I think, those thing in life. Whether it was she wished she'd had the opportunities that her daughters had. I don't know.

CN: So there were two of you.

LR: Yes. There were two of us. And my sister is a very good mathematician and she always wanted to be an engineer. But then when she got it, she was one of the first woman, I think to go through the engineering degree but she decided she didn't really like it. [laughs] So she gave it all up. And just went on in and married and had three or four children. So.

CN: Where is she now?

LR: She's now in South Australia, married and with about four children. It's rather touching because we had a falling out because my sister felt that my father should have left the will differently. Not that it was a rich will, but everything, he left everything to my mother. And then when anything happened to her it would be divided between us. But my sister was determined. She said this is ridiculous. Mommy should leave it all to us and we will look after her. And I said, well, over my dead body because I knew that was precisely what my father didn't want. And it was precisely what my mother feared. So it didn't make for quite the smoothest relations between my sister and me.

CN: Is that still true?

LR: Yes. But we don't need to see each other. She lives in Australia and I live here. [laughs] But it's very touching because my nieces now and nephews write to tell me and said, we're so sorry we don't know more about you Aunt Lynne. But we've just had another baby. And they

tell me about their babies. [laughs] But families are funny things, aren't they?

CN: Uh huh. But it sounds like there was a lot of support growing up.

LR: Oh, growing up we had a lot of support. Yes.

CN: Tell me something, we were talking about the up side of your career decisions and all of that, were there down sides to?

LR: No. I don't think really.

CN: So you don't think there were any low points?

LR: Oh I suppose the low point, I have had personally was that we had a slightly crazy woman in the department who tried to make trouble for everyone. And who blamed me for not having supported her. And of course, Gordon Votor agreed we had done everything we could to support her but she was rather crazy and was an immigrant from Eastern Europe. And the bottom line of that she was determined to make trouble and she did. And I actually had to go through a trial by jury.

CN: Really. She sued you.

LR: Yes. Yes. She sued. And so that was not a very pleasant or happy time because and of course it turned out that she was, she was mentally unstable and was under a psychiatrist.

CN: Well, you know there are some people who talk about women who reach the top not being supported of younger women and I guess that's quite a controversial issue.

LR: Yes.

CN: And it sounds like a more complex kind of situation then just the usually jealousy or whatever.

LR: You're absolutely right, it was. Her child was under a psychiatrist. She used to have to visit a psychiatrist. And she was a major problem to people. Not just in our department but in, she was in neurology, a neuropathologist.

CN: And this was in England?

LR: No.

CN: It was here.

LR: No. No. It was here. But she and she used to have these sort of tantrums almost. She'd come and--

CN: So that must have been a hard time for you?

LR: That was a hard time. But Gordon Votor fortunately was always the most supportive that he knew all the background to it and what she was like. But no, those things are not good. And they're very unhappy making. Because you always think, what did we do that was wrong. And of course, we really hadn't done anything that was wrong. She was determined to make trouble. So that was not very happy. But we won. Which was, yes, the lawyer that we had was one of the people for whom I have the greatest respect. He was absolutely impeccable the way the whole things was, because he said to me when we were leaving because we hadn't heard the result. He said, I just want to tell you, that if we lose this case, they will never forgive me because I did not let anyone in court know that the person making trouble for everyone had already made said these awful things about you and had done terrible things. And she really had. So, but I never let on in court because he said, I always felt that every family has their problems. And that women she was a problem to everyone. But I've never forgotten the day the jury filed out. I'm sitting there thinking oh

God how is this going to go? And every jury man and woman went down and they went like that. As much as to say, up with it. You know, keep going.

CN: That must have been really gratifying.

LR: Oh that was because you know, it was the last thing and I wasn't looking for anyone to be so friendly. But I think the lawyer was very, very clever. Because there were lots of women on the jury, he said you know, all I could think of was knowing what we had to bring out about this woman in court finally. That they must have felt so sorry for the husbands and to put up with someone like her. [laughs] But they were all on your side by the end of it. But it was a horrible thing to be involved with.

CN: Would you say that that was the lowest point? Were there other low points?

LR: Well it probably was the lowest point. Because the very sort of, you know, being someone standing up in a court of law saying this woman didn't support us. This woman didn't do this, she didn't do that.

CN: When you had devoted your career to supporting people.

LR: To supporting people. You're right. So I think that was all right. And of course the sad thing was Gordon Votor died just about that time. But anyway. And I suspect that was a low point when he died. Did you ever know him?

CN: No, I didn't.

LR: Well he was pathologist but of course, he ultimately finished up with a tumor and trust a pathologist to get something that nobody quite knew what it was. There was no good protocol for treatment.

CN: So that was hard time for you.



LR: That was a hard time. Yes. But again, you know, there've been very collegial people at Children's.

CN: So you had good mentorship too?

LR: Yes.

CN: All along it sounds like.

LR: Yes. And I had in Australia because one of the great Australian pathologist was Sir Roy Cameron who was the first person to be President of the Royal College of Pathologists in Australia. And he was an Australian. And then he came to England and when I came to England he took me under his wing and mentored me. So that was wonderful. Those people have been very--

CN: In some ways you're saying that at the heart of things good mentorship was critical to you--

LR: Yes.

CN: And you felt that you pay back--

LR: Yes. Yes.

CN: In that way.

LR: Yes. And that's an important way to payback. I know you know. It is so that's one someone like Rosalie Jones and even Maureen Saepal. All of these people I worked with both when they came to England on their sabbaticals and I came out here. They've all been novice and colleagues. So I think yes, mentoring is very important but giving back what you've received

CN: When you look your at your career over time and the way academic medicine is going now, what would you say particularly to young women thinking about it?

- LR: I think you can do it. If you want to do it, go for it. It will be hard work and you'll have to apply yourself to it. But I would still come back and say, but if you're professional and you live by the Golden Rule you'll make it.
- CN: Did you feel that there were any sacrifices you had to make that you maybe regret?
- LR: No. I don't think so. No. I often thought I'd love to have done one or two of those trips that Warren Zapel did. The ones when they went to the South Pole and so on. But because I know they would have taken me if I'd even as much as lifted a finger. But I always felt that I people who relied a bit on me and that I wouldn't want to find that I couldn't get back if I was needed. So I think that was one thing I consciously gave up. I thought--
- CN: Poor students trainings, mentees.
- LR: Yes. Mentees and family members that were relying on me by that time.
- CN: In what way?
- LR: Well, getting a bit older. And feeling that if you went away and they got sick and these people do get sick you know. When you get to the South Pole. And if you can't get back from there, there's not much you can do about it. Because you know, just a couple of months ago, Warren Zapel, they lost one of their people on the Antarctic expedition. And they got, and the first thing he said to me, Lynne, she didn't die on my watch. I simply dread, dread that they got the woman out of the South Pole but they got her to New Zealand and then she died within three days. And that to him was just terrible. So, and dear Nicki, she used to say to me, can't you do something? She

knew what the children go through when their father's go to the Antarctic. And they know if the child was sick, the father couldn't get back.

CN: They go for an extended period of time?

LR: Well, yes. Well, it may just be for the summer, take the time that they can get down there. But it's still, you know, you're miles from anywhere. And you may manage to fly back if there is a plane coming out. But the chances are there won't be a plane. And Nicki used to say to me, if there's ever anything you can do to say the dads' just be a bit sympathetic to your children and your wife. Because she said, you know, the children cry themselves to sleep. They're so frightened something will happen to their father. So it's a lot, isn't it, when you think that a family goes through those sorts of things. Well, I suppose people who go climbing mountains and go up Everest, they're all taking risks, aren't they?

CN: They certainly are. And it sounds like you were also erring on the caution.

LR: Yes. Yes. And I think when the particularly, well, when you get to the South Pole, they've got certain things now. I think it's much safer than it used to be. But it's still very risky.

CN: Were there other sacrifices you felt you made for a career?

LR: No. I don't think so. No.

CN: What do you think at this point the major challenges for young women particularly are in pursuing an academic career?

LR: I think it's knowing that you will get a certain amount of ribbing, of teasing, of not being accepted. And there will be, oh you really should be just at home having children. That's what your real life is.

And that's also very off putting and can be very negative for women, I think. Don't you? If you're going to feel in the community you're considered to be not much of a mother if you're going to--

CN: You lose either way.

LR: Yes.

CN: You're either a bad mother or a bad career person.

LR: Yes. So you're going to lose. And there's going to be a comment about it. They're going to, so you're going to have to put up with it. On the other hand, if you do it, there are women who can do it out there? Who can be decent citizens and human beings and--

CN: Certainly if we look around us at what's happened here at Harvard. There's been a big change.

LR: Yes. Yes. And we've got so many of them. Haven't we?

CN: We're up to 100 women professor.

LR: And that night when Eleanor Shaw had the women speaking, we, were you there for that?

CN: Yes.

LR: They spoke so well, didn't they?

CN: Uh huh.

LR: So I think it's getting there. But you've still got to be prepared to stand up and take the heat a bit, haven't you?

CN: You certainly do.

LR: Yes. Yes.

CN: But it sounds like as you look back on your career, you sound very positive about it.

LR: Yes, I think I am. Because I always remember one of the first visits I ever had when I came out here. Someone who was working with Eleanor Shaw, she said, oh, I want to come and see you. I'm in faculty development. And this woman came in and sat down. And said now, tell me. Tell me all the obstructions you've had since you came to Harvard. Tell me all the negatives. And I'm not sure there are any negatives. Oh, she said, you're totally English. Thinking travels and everything's right. Everything is right in the world. And I said, I'm not sure I was quite that naïve but, no, I said, well, she said, do you ever ask to go and have drinks, a beer with the men on a Friday night? And I said, as a matter of fact, I've been invited by them all to be a regular member of their beer drinking party on a Friday night. But I said, I don't happen to like beer very much. So [laughs] I'm never actually worried, but I said, I do go occasionally just for the sake of meeting them. But she seemed to think it was quite unheard of that they would want a woman to come and have a beer with them on a Friday night. But you know, these were the people with the worries, I think, don't you?

CN: Well, it sounds like you feel very upbeat about your career, about your colleagues about the choices you've made. And you feel as one of your colleagues.

LR: I suppose there are a couple of things that I something wish I had done a bit more positively. They wanted me to, I was invited to spend the week or every second week with someone who was getting right into molecular biology. And I've often thought, I wished I'd done because it would have been a terrific thing to have done at that time. But on the other hand, if you were in charge of a department, it was a new

one, and you were bringing people on, you have to again, make some choices. And so it wasn't so much that you said, well, I couldn't do it or can't do it. But I don't consider that the very top priority.

CN: Well, taking your responsibility very seriously is very important to you then?

LR: Yes. Yes. I think so. So those were the other sort of things that I thought well, perhaps if I had been a bit more energetic about that I might have gone a bit further in molecular biology. But again, I've had young colleagues who've wanted to do it. And all I had to say was fine. We'll give you the right setting and you can have the right time off and become well versed and trained in these things.

CN: So again, nurturing others and being a mentor was gratifying then for you.

LR: Yes. It did. And it worked out extremely well for the department and colleagues, you know.

CN: You feel that running the department was then a very positive experience?

LR: Yes. I do. Yes. Yes. And again, you get some wonderful colleagues like Harry Kosokawitch and one of the quietist people on the face of this Earth. But marvelous. And Rosemary Jones, people like that. Warren Zapel working with all of those people very closely.

CN: As you look back, have your attitudes or views about things changed much over the years?

LR: No. I don't think they have a lot. I think perhaps would feel that I might have underestimated some of the opposition that women have to face. You just sort of, I felt well you have to get on with it. And the sooner you got on with it the better.

CN: Could you say more about that? What kind of opposition?

LR: Again, just the sort of the slight feeling that you get when you get a group of men together and particularly if they're bit jealous of the women. Because let's face it, a lot of the women do very well. And they've got very good qualifications, and can hold their own. So if you get a man or a group or guys who are a bit snarky about that, then that I think can be difficult for women. And so I think it's worth knowing that you may have to take some negative feedback in that way. But again, one gets the feeling more and more that women are accepted, I think, don't you?

CN: It seems that way.

LR: Yes. Yes. So I think that's encouraging.

CN: But it sounds like your personal experience was more positive and that you didn't feel you had the kinds of obstacles some people may have felt they had.

LR: Yes. No, I don't think so. No. Well, I've been very lucky with a lot of my colleagues. They've been very good and very supportive. And I think the guys also are increasingly broad minded. Because when you come to appointments and promotions and you've got to deal with some committees, you may have take a fairly firm stand. I mean if you're the chairman of the committee or you're a woman or something--

CN: And you've had that experience.

LR: Yes. Yes.

CN: What do you think was the hardest decision in that area that you've had to make?

LR: We had one, yes we had one man who was very conceited about his contribution, about his own position and he was put on a committee and he tried to poison the committee against one or two people.

CN: He wanted his way.

LR: Yes. Wanted it his way. And that clearly had to be settled. [laughs] And that was I think, where you had to know the quality of the people you were dealing with and you had to draw them in on it. Because you couldn't say, or at least you had to go to sometimes, I've been to a Dean, said, look. This is happening. And I'm prepared to fight it but you've got to know what we're fighting. And this may get rather nasty because there's somebody who's already making phone calls and writing letters and trying to yes, to poison the committee.

CN: So you would talk about taking a direct approach to that.

LR: Yes. Yes. I think. Now, of course there are times to be very, I suppose judicial or tactful about it. But the trouble is if you get too much like that, you miss the point.

CN: How so?

LR: Well, I'm thinking of this, I still go back to this particular case, and if you just said, oh well, we'll just talk to them and say, try to be a little more reasonable. Well, that was just going to miss the point completely. Because this man had already talked to half a dozen people and had tried to upset two or three committees and influence what they were going to do. And you really couldn't let that happen.

CN: What were you troubled most by, the unfairness you felt in it?

LR: Well, I suppose you could say unfairness. But I'm not sure life is always as fair as it should be. But I was more troubled about the lack



of integrity. Here was someone who was you know, really in a position to know what was happening and now was trying to make it.

CN: So integrity was really important to you all along?

LR: Yes. Yes. And I think it was to a lot of good men. Because we had, I can remember this particular instance where it was one of the men and he said, look, I think we've just got to talk about this. And he said, you know, we guys sitting on here, we're very glad we've got the women on the committee. Because you women got much more moral strength than we guys have. [laughs] I was always rather touched at that. He said, you're not going to stand by and let somebody completely mess everything up just because they're being petty. And they finally rallied and said, look. This has got to stop--

CN: And you were able--

LR: And we were able to do it. And they were very supportive. So I think there is a time where you do have to sort of stand up a little bit.

CN: So there was more than one woman on the committee? And you both felt the same way?

LR: Yes. In fact, I'm not sure if I wasn't the only woman on that committee. Yes, I think probably was.

CN: The only one.

LR: Yes. Yes. Yes.

CN: But you were viewed as the person who upheld the integrity of the committee?

LR: Yes. Oh yes. And the men agreed. And the men wanted it upheld. The men said, thank heaven you're there to help us.

CN: What do you make of that?

LR: Well, I guys like to be liked. Wouldn't you agree? [laughs] Guys like to be liked. And you know, it's not easy to sort of come out and say, oh, they say, she's getting a crabby old woman, I'm sure that's what they say about me now. I mean, he's getting crabby, old. He's getting. But that's hard for a guy. Or can be. But again, for a good guy it's not.

CN: And you've met your share of them.

LR: Well, yes. Yes, exactly. Because you know, when I came, and I have a lot of men who come to work for me. The surgeons. They all wanted to research. And they wanted to do research with me so they'd come. But then I know that when it came me giving them advice about their future in surgery, I wasn't the best person for that. So I, there were three or four wonderful guys like Bill McDermott, and so on. I could just give him a call on the phone or I'd say, could I put my head around your door. And I'd say, what would you do? Oh and he'd tell me. He'd talk to me and say what he'd do. And that was marvelous.

CN: So you really valued the collegiality.

LR: Yes. I really did. And that was very big compliment I reckon that they would.

CN: I wonder if there is anything that you think of as we've been talking for a while that you'd like to add or you think you'd like to say or wish I had asked?

LR: No, I don't think so. I think you've really asked things in a very searching way and very important way. No. Probably the one thing is that there are times where you've got to stand up and be counted. Does that make sense.

CN: I think that's a very important message.

LR: Yes. Yes. Yes. Because one of my precious memories with Eleanor Shaw and it is a precious memory, the crazy woman who came to me and said, now I want to know all the problems you've had. She said to me, could I have lunch with you? She said [unclear] I don't know what to do. She said, we've appointed this woman and she's a menace. [laughs]

CN: So you could be helpful to her.

LR: And she said, I don't know what to do. She said, you know what everybody is going to say? Eleanor Shaw is just being difficult. She's being a difficult woman. But I know all I could say to her was never let them blackmail you Eleanor. Never let them blackmail you. You're not being difficult, she's the one. So you've just got to say, no, I made the wrong choice. You can put it whatever way you like.

CN: And what happened?

LR: Well, she left. I mean, she realized she wasn't a bit popular. Nobody thought she was God's gift to everyone. She went around telling people how they should be running careers. [laughs] And it was terrible for Eleanor. So on the one hand it was terrible for her because this was her first appointment. She was a Harvard new Dean. And this woman was sort of [unclear].

CN: And another place where you were an important mentor for somebody.

LR: Well, bless you. Yes. Yes. Yes, I guess. But no, and I was so glad because that's out of a woman's character. She's not a bit like that. You know. At least I'm told that she can be if she wants to be but then anyone knows that.

CN: We won't get accused of that.

LR: We'll all get accused of that. Exactly. But no. It was very good that she did get out of that. Because that would have been a bad thing. Whereas she had a good run. Didn't she? She really did. Which is wonderful

CN: Yes. Lynne, I'd really like to thank you for doing this. It's really been a joy.

LR: Well, thank you.

CN: And I look forward to talking to you many times in the future.

LR: Bless you. Bless you. Well thank you. I hope it was the sort of thing you wanted or felt you needed.

CN: I think it will help create memories for people and places where we can look back.

LR: Yes.

CN: One of the important parts of history is knowing it and using it and making it live in the future. And it's important that we know about the people have been our leaders and pioneers.

LR: Yes.

CN: So thank you.

LR: Not at all, thank you.

End of Interview