

If you could give me your name, age, job title and your job description?

Lynn Matthews, 62, and I'm a member of a five man special advisory board with the Institute of Cultural Affairs and my job description is to advise the staff of the Institute of Cultural Affairs in every dimension of their life, their business as to how they can most effectively carry out the objectives of that corporation.

Could you say a little bit about the Institute of Cultural Affairs?

The Institute of Cultural Affairs is a research and training center which has 111 offices in 32 nations around the world. It is concerned with intergrated social and economic development in communities and working most intensively in rural villages, as well as in urban communities.

You had mentioned that your job description had to do with advising the staff on how they could most effectively carry out the objectives of the Institute of Cultural Affairs. Could you talk about those objectives?

The objectives are defined each July when the representatives from the 111 offices around the globe come together and work through their objectives for the coming year. The objectives for this year are to take a battery of impact courses which have been created by the staff of the Institute of Cultural Affairs and to take those courses, there's a course for women, for youth, for the business community, and Town Meetings for local communities. One of the main objectives for this year is to extend the geographic area for where these courses are held and also to intensify and target those courses for sociological impact.

What would a typical day look like for you? 22

Well my day begins quite early. This advisory board resides in Chicago except for 3 months out of the year when the offices are visited. The five of us meet at 5 a.m. in which for one hour we work together on either the immediate issues that are facing the work of the Institute or sometimes we spend that time working on the long range issues as to where various programs of the Institute need to be directed. Now I forgot to mention Ms. Shanklin that another thrust of the work of the Institute besides the economic and social development we're doing in communities is the establishment of what is known as Human Development Projects around the globe, of which there are now over 300 in existence. That is another dimension of the work of the ICA. Now to get back to a typical day. From 5-6 we deal with long range and immediate issues and then at 6 we meet with the volunteer staff that serve as consultants and leaders in the programs of the ICA and we participate in a daily ritual that reminds us that comprehensively stated, our task is to care for the innocent suffering of this world. After that ½ hour ritual, we gather for breakfast as a group and that meal last for an hour. We sing some songs, singing is very much a part of the programatic thrust. Any program of the Institute sings songs, Community Youth Forums, Global Women's Forums, etc. So we sing songs. We have a corporate conversation together some quote that we've picked up from many sources and then discuss the news happening over the

past 24 hours. And the remainder of that hour, we take some dimension of the task of the ICA and talk about it. We might for instance, talk about what it would mean after 2 years in one of these Human Development Projects, to pull out of that community. What would need to happen within a 2 year period to insure that the community had all the training, all of the methods and that the local leadership is equipped to carry on the work of that community. That is a typical thing we might do in that time. Then at 8, we meet in our office space and the first thing every day we look at the most pressing things that need to be checked on and attended to. And then the rest of the time we work through strategies and tactics that try to keep us geared to the future and yet at the same time stand attentive to how well the impact courses are being set up relative to the target that we have defined for ourselves. That takes most of the day. In this capacity of this 5 person board, we are in daily contact with some of our global offices who will call in for recommendations.

How did you get trained for your position?

My formal training was that I graduated from college in English Literature with a 16th century emphasis and I never figured except for giving me some poetry, that it has been too helpful in my present work because we are concerned with just what's going on in the world, what the trends are that are moving us into the future and are concerned with building for ourselves a geo-socio analysis of the various nations which we are in so that we can care in a way that that nation or community in that nation needs to be cared for. So I would have liked to be trained in economics, political science and history. That would have really equipped me formally for the work I'm in but I have not had that kind of training. I'm not apologizing for that cause I think I'm well trained to be doing what I'm doing by virtue of working very close with ICA staff and the kind of interchange, the kind of planning that is done by that staff in a large context has equipped me to do what I'm doing and there has been an accumulative kind of training and knowing just by virtue of doing it for 15 years.

You've been in this particular position for 15 years?

No. Before I was a member of this special advisory board, I worked as a staff of the Institute in the management division and during that time, it's only been in the last 10 years and the last 5 more intensively, that we had offices outside of North America and so the work of the ICA has enjoyed a very rapid growth and expansion. That is partially due to the fact that we have brought to bear some very effective methodologies to awaken communities to their potential and train people in local communities to exercise their citizenship. When I was in management, the training was building very comprehensive financial systems that could operate globally. That was the main residue of those years. Because management is such a crucial element in any group, I consider that very good training for my present job.

How did you choose this particular job? Did you get promoted and how did you decide to work with the Institute?

Well to the first question, this particular job of the advisory board has just in the past 3 years been formalized as a full time job and it does not constitute a promotion in the sense that you would think of promotion relative to the way business functions. I think in the first place the 5 of us were selected by the Institute staff to fill this role and the basis of selection which is not surprising is some longevity, another factor I think in my case is, no I know is that I'm a woman. The ICA staff is concerned that women exercise roles such as the one I'm playing. Other criteria are first hand knowledge of how the programs of the ICA have evolved through the years, a grasp after the kind of comprehensive job that we're trying to do and an understanding of the social philosophy that's under its foundation out of which our programs are built. I've been a member of the advisory board for some 8 years. This is my second year full time. Before this last two years, the board operated in a more informal basis. Putting it into a full time job has been a necessary move because of the increasing complexity of working globally. It's not unlike any organization that works globally if you think of any of the agencies - United Nations, the multi-national corporations, any volunteer organization that is in the third sector such as the Red Cross. Our world is such that it takes some people giving their full time attention to just how you most effectively configure yourself and create the system to operate as a global group. For instance now, one of the issues, long range tasks that we give our thinking and researching is just what it would mean for us to have a charter to function such as the Red Cross. The board has the time to think on these kind of issues.

"Well it started a long time ago. We, my husband and I considered ourselves a team. We were in the teaching profession. My husband was a professor at Colgate University, then moved to Southern Methodist. His field was social ethics. Together we made the decision that the kinds of forms and structures which were going to be forged out finally were not going to happen the classroom situation. Where that happening will take place was out in local communities, where the rubber hits the road. 15 years ago we gave notice to SMU, a year before we planned to leave. During that year we began to look around for groups that were trying to seriously give their attention to the new world which was obviously coming into being, what it needed to look like, what just needed to happen. We began our work with a group located in Austin, Texas who were working with university students, who lived in a residential situation and they began to dare to forge out a curricula that would be an awakening tool. We did curricula for the disciplines of science and philosophy, psychology and art, sociology and history. Part of who we were as a beginning group, was a group which was particularly concerned with the social institution of the church and there was curricula forged out to articulate the new theology, the new ethics that the 20th century had brought into being. After 6 years there, the group of 14 people that were serving as the staff decided to launch out again. We saw that one of the 3 revolutions that was

*being concerned with...*

the urban, the coming together of huge numbers in the urban centers of North America and the kind of complex issues that this was raising. So we decided to make the move, to come to Chicago and base our work here. That was 1962. We located ourselves on the westside of Chicago, and there in the next 3 years created the basic model for what needed to happen in a local community in integrated social and economic development."

What do you like about your job?

I like being forced in that role to stand present to what comes to me as the whole world. I found that when I worked in management which is still a most exciting field as far as I'm concerned, I found it was very easy to get my action confined to a very small context. In my present job, you can hardly begin to do it or be in a position to give recommendations to our staff around the globe unless you are on top of the geo-socio situation around this globe and be able to articulate as part of the context for very practical responses, where the trends of history lie in our times. It's a job that constantly bumps me over against my limitations. To get the whole picture but at the same time, frees me to find, discover for myself, methods to just do that. Standing present to the world and then having to act out of that in a radically particular situation.

On the other side of such an "devastating" like as you just articulated, how would you talk about what your dislikes or frustrations are in relation to your job?

My frustrations come at the point of building a system of effective interchange for our staff that's in all locations. We've tried many ways but in my opinion we still do not have the right way or a system of knowledge access in relation to our own operations. Now I find that very frustrating because I think it's very crucial. You see, every place we're working, in response to a very particular situation, there are some tremendous models being created that would be effective on the other side of the world but we have not been able to create an effective system of interchange. Now that's not dislike exactly is it. I dislike getting up at 5 a.m. in the morning, yet at the same time that hour of reflection when your mind is clear is extremely helpful and I wouldn't have it otherwise but I don't like to get out of bed at 5.

It doesn't seem that you have a real dislike in terms of your job. One of the reasons I asked you that question is because in the book Working by Studs Terkel, one of the major images that you get is that there are so many people out there who dislike their jobs. They feel trapped, that their creativity is not asked for or sustained and it's something that they totally isolate from their lives, where as it seems in terms of your job, it is your life.

Well I think the Studs Terkel book is a great book and incidentally we use that book in one of our courses and conversations. It is a fine medium for serious conversation, probably at the point that you were mentioning because it is tragic that most people spend a good part of their waking lives at their work and not to sense that as a significant endeavor. Part of our rehearsal at 6 in the morning reminds us that every individual has a signi-

ficant contribution to make to this world. I can remember when I worked at other places before I arrived here. It used to be when your workmates would irritate you and you wanted to wipe them off the face of the earth but because of the rehearsal that every individual has creativity to give to the world, and "I'm not saying that I don't get frustrated with my colleagues, they just send me up the wall at times, and yet in the midst of looking at how that can be turned or how that situation can be a creative situation rather than a destructive one is helpful.

One of our operating methodologies is that we always ask ourselves in our work, in any situation whether it be personnel problems or whatever, is what is the major contradiction that is going on in the midst of that situation and that very contradiction is the door to the future. And I think that's foundational relative to finding your work exciting. Just bitching about your colleagues and finding fault with what's going on is not creative but raising the objective question of what is the contradiction in the situation in which you then have all kinds of ways to move on it in the sense that you are moving effectively. I think this is very important in our work and in our community work especially. We call that Contradictional Thinking and its one of our methodologies which I'm sure 10 years down the line I probably would not be making this statement but at the moment I would say being able to spot the contradiction, the method of Contradictional Analysis I'd put it at the top of all the methods we have to give.

What changes would you like to see in relations to the Institute and your particular job?

Well I've already mentioned the change relative to finding ways to effectively gather our data and also retrieval. I'd like to see a change in that direction. At the moment we are working in 111 offices in 32 nations. We are moving more and more as a staff that is inter-cultural. One of the changes relative to the next 5 years is a staff that is more contrived of non-Western personnel. That is not our situation and that is because we've just moved into working globally. I think a change in our training methods for our staff. What is an effective system that very quickly and in depth allows them to be inside crucial and pedagogical methodologies that we have created, to allow them to get inside those methods and training at this point is just fair.

What is your vision of the future?

"I think just what are the effective strategies, when you think of the 2 million villages in the world the Institute staff would say that we haven't done our task until those 2 million villages are given the possibility to create a community that cares structurally and in depth for everyone in that community. It's obvious that an organization like the Institute is not going to be able to have staff in 2 million villages around the world, so that raises the question about strategy, and relative to that kind of practical vision and we would call that a practical vision. *Some people would label that an im-* practical vision, but it raised the question of what are the strategies, how do you do it strategically and what are the tactics to do that strategy? At the moment, we are using the tactics of Human Development Projects, Impact Courses, Training Schools around the globe, It's an X factor at this point but over 5 years from now, our strategies and tactics in light

of that practical vision will have to shift quite a bit. One of the methodologies that has been created by the Institute is our methodology of motivation. If there is any one thing that has given the work of the Institute recognition by other groups that are concerned, it would be that method. Where as we have done some fine work in that area, we have not quite unlocked the key. It's nothing we're anxious about because the staff constantly feels that those methodologies will emerge up out of the local. They'll become apparent. Local people have been told for so long that they do not have anything to contribute and once you begin to work at the local level its so amazing what kind of wisdom . is really there.

Were you able to have a family? How did you manage?

The first few years I really was not related to the work of the Institute. I was taking care of young children and if I could live those years over again, we would have immediately devised some way in which I too could be full time engaged in the work. At SMU I participated in normal faculty wives activities such as the League of Women Voters and the Committee for the United Nations. My extra time outside the home was spent in that way. It really was not until we moved as a family that our intuitions of what the world needed began to get a life focus. Until we moved into 5th City and began to actually try to create a working model at the local level, where you were out to not solve one of the problems but all of the problems of that community, to create the kind of stories and symbols. It wasn't until then that our work began to get focused and so we were a different kind of team up to that point. At that point, as a family team we really became engaged in the same kind of activity and certainly began to include the boys. They participated in that. We were doing model building in a section of Chicago that is 99% black. Our boys participated because they were in the schools in that neighborhood and came to have the incredible experience of what it means to live outside of suburbia. I feel as a family, that has been the most valuable education we could have given them.

If you had a choice, what would you really want to be doing?

I would not change my job. Now if you asked what would I do if somehow or other the ICA went out of existence, I think at my age of 62 I'd just find another group doing the same thing, but the area of action that will always intrigue me is politics. How I ever got into English Lit. I'll never know. Having worked so many years in management, that too is another field I think I would consider going back to school for at my age and getting formally grounded in management systems. What I know has been through just doing, creating systems for an evolving, and growing group. I was trained to teach school and yet for one reason or another, it was not my choice as a vocation. Now I think something like what you are doing with useful skills, preparing people to take their place in the world and have a skill that is marketable that kind of teaching I could get excited about. But teaching English Literature just never compelled me at all. Even after I finished getting my training, I went into business. I never found business boring, it was never routine for me even though I held routine jobs.

As a woman who has obviously lived through changes in terms of the image and role of the woman as an equal partner, how would you talk about that in relation to your work?

I think we've gone an incredible journey on that. We were pretty traditional in our staff positions in regards to women. Yet there has been a group of women in our staff who seriously raised the question which the feminist revolution was bringing to consciousness as it applied to us. We've gone a ways but I do think that we have a lot farther to go. As a staff, we still are reluctant to give certain positions to a woman, just because she is a woman. That is an anomaly for us because it is counter to everything we stand for. So I think we have a great deal further to go. I think the women on our staff know that just being a woman is not enough. We've learned you have to earn the right by doing your homework, that you have to be just as prepared to excel. It's a shift that has taken place through the years. The women staff would do secretarial work, nitty gritty work, now their are women on our staff in some positions of leadership. But as I said we are still reluctant. For instance, in our work in India, we've been more open to giving women positions of responsibility. I think we have to in North America.

For myself, up until 20 years ago, in this team I was a member of with my husband, I took on the traditional roles. I was interested in the world but I acted it out traditionally. It took me 15 years to realize, to begin to act out of the resolve that I was a solitary individual that had to decide independently of any images that I thought my husband had. It took 15 years for that resolve to come for me. Up to that point, volunteer work was my engagement, I'm not down playing volunteering, it's a crucial dynamic in our society but I began to think on the other side of that in terms of a career and becoming a career woman.

What sustains you?

I think basically what sustains me is that the ICA staff works corporately and where I practically experience this sustenance is, as I said, I hate to get up at 5 a.m. and get started. But the corporate meal where we take an issue of our task and corporately work with it, discuss it, get our input in it, project it into the future. I find it a very sustaining happening and it gets my mind spinning. I find reading-if I get too busy and consider it unimportant to step back from my job and read say the Christian Science Monitor, I find if I let too many days go by without doing that, there's a certain kind of driedupness that happens. Or if my consciousness is not assaulted by something other than what happens in the context of my job. I read before I go to bed. Historical books, great women, women who've dared to be, who risked in such a way that they've come under public scrutiny. The corporateness of our staff, I have a hard time imagining what work would be like if that kind of team operation didn't take place. Corporate action where you have the chance to do your homework, create the model, and have the chance to throw it out to your colleagues and have them speak back to it. Humor sustains me. When I find myself getting uptight I say "Lyn,

don't take yourself too seriously, don't take what you're doing too seriously and that throws you into humor, or I find that humor for me moves almost over to the celebrational. Just having fun but fun that's not unrelated to what you are doing. Certain relationships in our staff sustain me. We have an elder, a wise old man, and on a very periodic basis I like to go shoot the breeze with him about anything. That's a sustaining dynamic. That's about it. I find such an interview sustaining..."